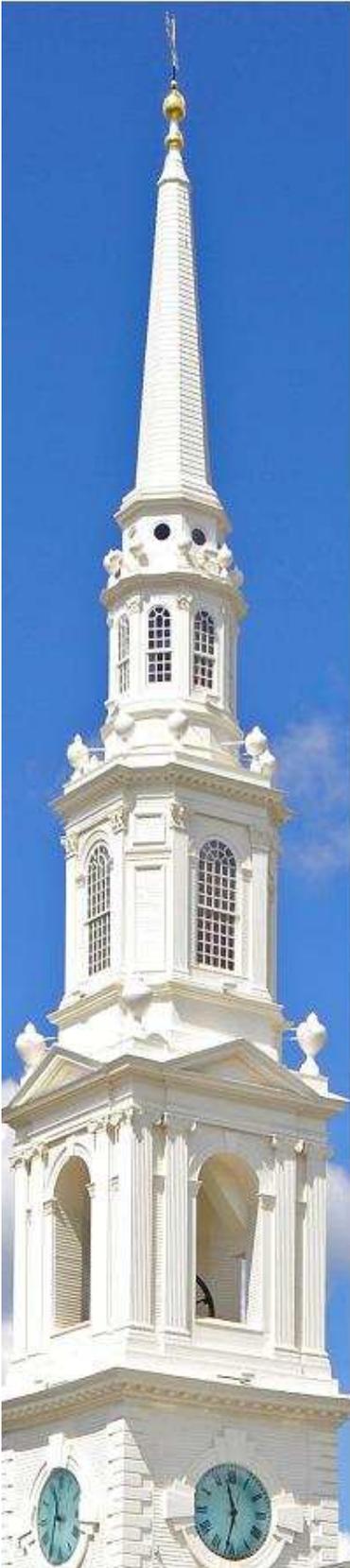


The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

February 01, 2017, Volume 20, Issue 2



From the Pastor

It can be easy to lose sight of our blessings in the midst of everyday struggles and schedules. To that end, consider this prose poem by Brian Doyle.

Such Delicious Absence

Given the unimaginably huge number of things that can go wrong,
And often do, and seem to sometimes go wrong in raging bunches,
Long steadily drumming runs of wrong, bursts of bad luck and bad
Fortune and accidents and illnesses and misunderstandings and ten
Mistakes caused by hurriedly trying to address the last eight things
That went wrong, isn't it incredible when just for a minute nothing
Goes wrong? Or a whole day? One whole day when you didn't say
That's not what I meant, or my bad, or I apologize, or overdraft?!?
Or how long have you had that cough? Or another new manifold?!?
Or anything of that sort or import. We train ourselves to play loose
Defense all the time, to patrol the perimeter, to calmly expect news
That will not be thrilling. You know when the phone rings at three
In the morning it won't be with good news. Yet whole hours go by,
Whole days, bursts of days, maybe a week, when wrong goes right
Past like it caught the wrong bus and isn't paying close attention to
The address. It will be back, sure it will; it never *stays* lost – but we
Should maybe mark and sing and savor and relish and revel in such
Delicious absence more than we do. I mean, I am the worst as to all
This, to me the absence of trouble only means it's growing stronger
Somewhere, and picking up speed; but maybe I am a fool and when
Nothing is going wrong that's what's supposed to happen. Maybe it
Is the case that we invented religious to personify just these matters;
The hell of a parade of things going wrong, and the heaven of none.

Jamie

Missions and Outreach Projects for February



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE
BLANKETS+**

For over 66 years, Church World Service has worked in partnership with communities in distress to identify needs and to access the resources they require to build the foundation for a more viable future. These resources include blankets, tents and food. CWS aid has been invaluable to individuals suffering during disasters.

Our church is one of 8,000 congregations across the United States that will sponsor a Blanket Month, providing funds to help people in need around the world. \$50 can provide five warm blankets for a family left homeless by a tornado or other disaster. \$110 can provide an emergency food package for a family of five for one month. For each \$5 contributed, a heart will be placed on our blanket you see in the photo. Our goal is to see 100 hearts, that is, to raise \$500 for disaster relief. Please join us by contributing generously to support this important outreach.



This month, in our adult forum, we are learning more about food issues - locally and around the world. Taking steps to do something locally is important. One way is by supporting PICA. PICA is the largest food pantry in Providence. In conjunction with their Friday night meal site, they feed over 8,000 people every month. They also provide intensive case management services to the homeless, people newly released from prison, those who are mentally ill and those who are suffering from addictions. Every step we take can make a difference. So please bring in your non-perishable food items for the PICA Food pantries.

Food Pantry Volunteers Needed

Are you looking for a meaningful and fulfilling way to help others in 2017?

First Baptist Church of Pawtucket needs more volunteers for its growing Food Pantry ministry.

The Pantry, which helps over 130 families a month in Pawtucket and Central Falls, is open Thursdays from 9 am-noon (except on first Thursdays and July-August). It recently added a Clothing Room, which also needs helpers.

Interested or know someone who might be? Please call First Baptist Pawtucket's church office at [401-725-7225](tel:401-725-7225). Thank you!

Drivers Needed

Walanga Selemani and his wife and eight children arrived in Providence in the summer from the Congo. They would like to attend our church, but do not have transportation. We need several individuals who would be willing to work together to pick them up on Sunday morning for church and take them home afterwards. They live on Broad Street near the Providence/Cranston line. Ideally, several people will volunteer and then you can work out a schedule so you are not committed every Sunday. If you would be able to help, please let Holly know.

FBCIA NEWS

Dear Pastor Jamie and Church Family,

I want to thank you for your warm hospitality on Sunday, January 29th. It was a blessing to worship with you and bring you God's encouraging word through Matthew 5:14-16. Many you continue to shine your light to the world, all the time!

I thank you for the check, which I am using to bless a ministry called Creation Care Ministries, whose focus is to educate our local churches with environmental stewardship efforts they can undertake.

I look forward to seeing you at our up-coming regional ministry efforts. May God continue to bless your ministry in Providence.

Peace and gratitude,
Rev. Sandra Dorsainvil
Associate Executive Minister
TABCOM

SNOW CLOSING

If there is a parking ban due to inclement weather in the City of Providence, the worship service and all activities held at the church will be cancelled until the parking ban is lifted. Please tune in to your local television and radio stations.

Thank you.

Friday Seekers and Potluck

The LaRomana mission team will be sharing about their recent work in the Dominican Republic at a Friday Seekers on February 24th.

Sign up in Fellowship Hall.

Potluck Dinner at 6 PM

Program at 7 PM

While Pastor Jamie was in the Netherlands attending her doctoral seminar, Tom McKibbens supplied the pulpit for two Sundays. He is greeting Joanne Schneider and Larry Wilson on January 22.



Sandra Dorsainvil, Associate Executive Minister for Mission and Stewardship for TABCOM [The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts] was our guest preacher on the final Sunday of Pastor Jamie's educational leave. She greeted Jessie Jarbadan at the close of the worship service.

Emily Jones, from the Rhode Island Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty, was the guest speaker at the Adult Forum on February 5. She led a discussion about the ways that churches and individuals could aid in the fight to reduce hunger and poverty in our state.



She's back. Pastor Jamie returned from her study leave in the Netherlands to tend to her flock. She is greeting Susan Lepore as Colleen Whelpley waits.

STEPHEN MARTORELLA

PERFORMS WITH

THE RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE SYMPHONY

ALEXEY SHABALIN, CONDUCTOR



ERNO VON DOHNANYI

VARIATIONS ON A NURSERY RHYME

Martin "Silent scream of the earth"

Mozart Symphony No.39

Tuesday

7:30 P. M.

February 28, 2017

Sapinsley Hall

Rhode Island College

600 Mount Pleasant Avenue, Providence, RI

General Admission \$10 Senior/Student \$5

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Holly Edwards, Administrative Assistant
Anne Gagan, Bookkeeper
Tony Zambarano, Sexton
Ivy Bermudez, Child Care Worker

2017 Sunday Calendar

- Sun. February 12**
- 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Forum: Food and Faith
Amy Nunn, Executive Director, RI Public Health Institute
Sunday School: The Good Samaritan
Luke 10:25-37
- 11:00 AM Worship: Pastor Jamie Washam
Worship Leader: Kathryn Palen
Greeters: Deanna and Sam Beachen
Ushers: Frank Nicholson and Tom Shackelford
Tour Guide: Joanne Schneider
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- Sun. February 19**
- 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Forum: Food and Environment (Genesis 1:29-31)
Sunday School: The Stories of the Lost
Luke 15:3-10
- 11:00 AM Worship Pastor Jamie Washam
Worship Leader: TBA
Greeters: TBA
Ushers: Tom Shackelford and
Tour Guide: Elsa Grieder
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- Sun. February 26**
- 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Forum: Creating Community
Sunday School: The Forgiving Father
Luke 15:11-32
- 11:00 AM Worship Pastor Jamie Washam
Worship Leader: Ann-Marie Bausserman
Greeters: TBA
Ushers: Tom Shackelford and
Tour Guide: Richard Aubin
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