

The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

September 2017, Volume 20, Issue 9



From the Pastor

Late this summer, I received a letter in the mail from a local poet, Kate Colby. She wrote that she'd long enjoyed the messages on our sign out front, and proposed a partnership. Her books of poetry include *I Mean* and *Fruitlands*. *The Arrangements* is forthcoming in 2018. She's received awards from The Poetry Society of America and Rhode Island State Council for the Arts, and is the 2017-2018 Woodberry Poetry Room Fellow at Harvard. She grew up in Massachusetts and now lives with her family in Fox Point. She offered to serve as our poet "resident" from time to time. To that end, we will feature her poetry on our sign outside, making note that it is her work on our Facebook and Instagram posts. She plans to set up her own Instagram account to document the collaboration.

Here's a sampling of her work to whet your appetite:

*Is a river distinct from
or intrinsic to its banks?*

*What realism proves
we shall see.*

*A brain contains its cranium
when you think about it.*

An answer is out of the question

*On this day in history
there was more where
this came from.*

*The darkest place
makes room*

FBCIA NEWS



On Friday, August 18th Pastor Jamie Washam married Peter Berdos and Sandra Heyward. The informal wedding in the Manning Room was attended by family and friends.

On the last Sunday of August, Jason Shealy thrilled the congregation with his singing of "Ride on King Jesus."



Alas, the Dutch Elm Disease has killed another one of the American Elm trees in the church yard. The recent spell of dry weather stressed all trees, but this infected tree has died and will have to be removed. This tree was one of third plantings of elm trees and probably dates from the late 1940s. Twice before the Dutch Disease has killed all of the elm trees in church yard which is why different varieties of trees were planted during the great landscape project in 2012.



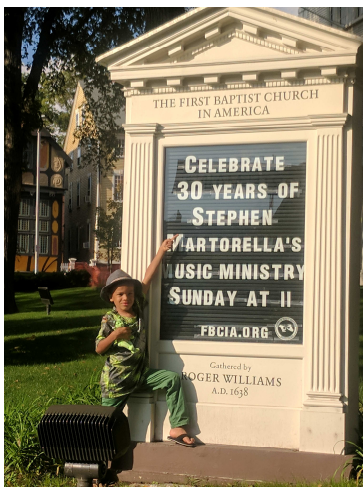
Because Pastor Jamie was going to be away the first Sunday in September, she asked our retired Assistant Pastor Linda Bausserman to fill the pulpit and preside at the Lord's Supper on that day.

Sunday, September 10 was Rally Day when the Sunday school resumed and the fall programs began. After church services a cook-out and pot-luck buffet was enjoyed on the lawn with Rob Jarbardan serving as grill master.



On Tuesday, September 12, the memorial service for Edith Rathbun was held at the Meeting House. At the time of her passing at 99 years old, Edith was the oldest member of the church. Pastor Jamie Washam presided and delivered the eulogy. Lisa McDonald and Ana Bernal, both great-nieces of Edith read Scripture passages in the service.

On Sunday, September 17, the church celebrated the thirty-year service of Stephen Martorella as Minister of Music. Stephen was honored and joined by fellow musicians, present and former choir members, and friends and colleagues. A piano trio opened the worship service with Stephen at the piano, Alexey Shabalin on violin, and Daniel Harp playing the cello. Stephen later spoke words of thanks to the church, and after the service he joined Pastor Jamie to greet everyone as they left the service. Then in the Fellowship Hall many gathered to further recognize Stephen's contribution and to show their appreciation. He was presented with an album of notes and letters and a facsimile check that represented a love gift from the congregation.



**Three Historic Providence Churches
Sponsor Lecture Series
Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the
Protestant Reformation**

***Experts Explore the Reformation from German,
Anglican and
Rhode Island/Baptist Perspectives***

PROVIDENCE, R.I., This October, Calvary Baptist Church, Central Congregational Church, and Grace Episcopal Church will host a series of three lectures commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

The lecture series will cover the German Reformation, the Anglican Reformation, and Roger Williams and the Baptist Reformation in Rhode Island. Featured speakers are Dr. Tara Nummedal, associate professor of history at Brown University; Dr. Jeannine Olson, professor of history at Rhode Island College, Dr. Stanley Lemons, historian of the First Baptist Church in America; Ray Rickman, executive director of Stages of Freedom; and Dr. Adrian Weimer, associate professor of history at Providence College.

The lectures will take place on three consecutive Wednesdays. The lectures will take place on three consecutive Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m. Oct. 11th: Central Congregational, Oct. 18th. Grace Episcopal, and Oct. 25th, Each will include a reception and question-and-answer session. The series is free and open to the public.

An (Almost) Free Lunch

I am looking for 4 – 6 individuals, couples, families, who would like to travel to Scituate after the service on Sunday, October 1 for lunch. Food will be provided, what you have to bring are members of the Walanga family. We will eat, have time for fellowship and play and on your way home, you will drop the Walangas at their home in South Providence.

Please see me on Sunday or contact me by phone or email [susanlepore@gmail] if you can help.

Thanks, Susan

The RISD Nature Lab turns 80!

RISD is celebrating its 80th anniversary of the Edna Lawrence Nature Lab. On Saturday October 7th, after dark, they will be projecting images of the Lab, jellyfish and other animals onto the south exterior walls of our church. Please come by and celebrate 80 years of our good neighbors.

Hurricane Relief – You Can Make a Difference

All of us are praying for the residents of the Gulf coast affected by Hurricane Harvey and the people of the Caribbean, Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas affected by Hurricane Irma. This is a humanitarian crisis. Families are uprooted. Schools are damaged. Businesses are at risk. Churches are hurting, damaged, and serving. As congregations we will want to respond through special offerings, as well as ongoing prayers. Undoubtedly, there will be opportunities in the future for hands-on mission events to assist the rebuilding efforts in the area.

It has been heartening to see the outpour of concern and prayers for the residents of the Gulf coast. We have been both thankful and amazed at the remarkable efforts of professional and volunteer rescuers who have risked their own safety for the benefit of neighbors known and unknown. Often unnoticed has been the immediate response of faith communities both large and small. Amidst their own challenges, hundreds of congregations are incarnating Christ's presence in ministry.

Among the hundreds of lines written and spoken concerning this crisis, were words penned by Rev. Dr. Doug Jackson of Corpus Christi, TX. Referencing Acts 27:29 he writes: "Whatever storm savages your ship, wherever it drives or maroons you, cast whatever anchors of action you can from the stern, gaze with whatever sight you can to the future, and kneel in between. If, in that moment, your praying seems more like wishing, don't worry. Claim the name of Christ over whatever you've got, and know that God's got you."

Beyond our prayers, the most effective way for us to help is through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. **100% of your gift will go to those trying to recover from this disaster.** The money will arrive quickly and will be distributed by our ministry partners who already have infrastructure in the area and will know where the greatest needs are. Even before our special offerings are received, our American Baptist Home Missions Societies has released \$10,000 of previously donated One Great Hour of Sharing funds to Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma relief efforts.

Here are three more ways you can help:

Make a direct donation right now. <http://bit.ly/2wobcw0>

Write a check to FBCIA and write "hurricane" in the memo line.

Buy items for "hygiene kits" that Church World Service will give to those affected by the hurricanes in the US and the Caribbean and to those impacted by floods and earthquakes around the world. Buy any of the items listed below and bring them to church by Sunday, September 24. Our items will be part of a larger donation made by the American Baptists Churches of Rhode Island.

One hand towel measuring approximately 15" x 28" to 16" x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish towel or micro-fiber)

One washcloth

One wide-tooth comb removed from the package

One fingernail or toenail clipper removed from the package

One bath-size bar of soap in the wrapper

One toothbrush in the package

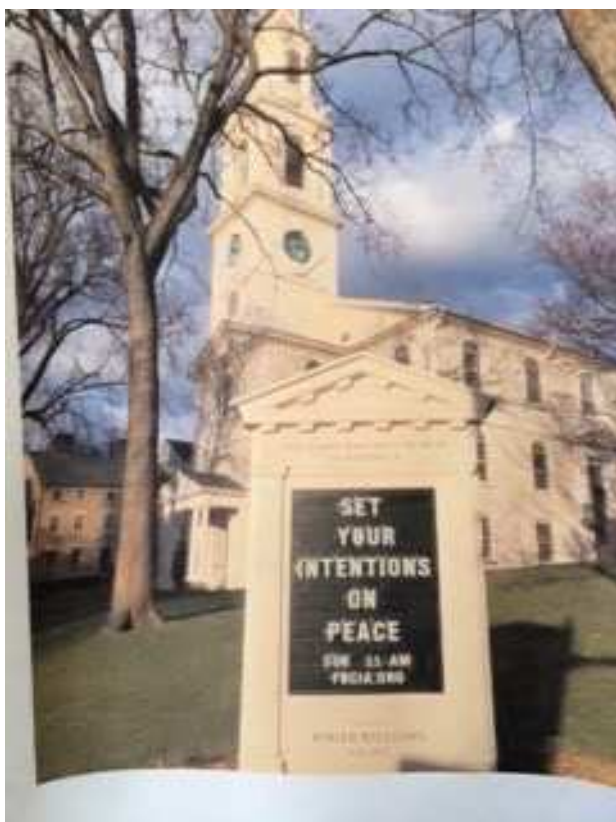
Ten standard size Band-Aids

All items need to fit inside a one-gallon plastic zipper closure bag. Remove the excess air from the bag and seal before boxing. Do NOT add any extra items or toothpaste. A tube of extended expiration date toothpaste will be added to each hygiene kit just prior to its final journey.

The Baptist Peacemakers of RI present
**RESISTANCE
MUSIC**



Peace
Notes



suggested
donation \$10

Sunday, October 15th at 2:00 pm

featuring Linda Bryant Wiles and April Beth Wiles

highlighting music made as a response to war, conflict
and ethnic divides

including works by Chopin, Debussy, Ravel and Menotti

honoring those who have resisted by joining in the conflict
and using art to encourage peaceful resolution

Refreshments and fellowship following the concert

