

The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

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From the Pastor

RIPPLES IN THE POND

Have you ever done something that you considered to be relatively trivial, only to learn later that your act had great meaning and importance to somebody else? In the 1870s, there was a woman whose name is lost to history. She lived at the Tewksbury Almshouse, a desperate place for desperately poor people. She was kind to a small girl who was living there with her brother, Jimmie. When Jimmie died, Annie was left bereft, with no support and no hope. The kindness and encouragement of this woman helped Annie to regain her equilibrium and to overcome the circumstances in which she found herself. Annie grew up to be Anne Sullivan, the renowned teacher of Helen Keller, who helped change the way that persons with visual and hearing impairments are treated to this day. A small pebble tossed in a pond in the 1870s is still causing ripples more than 130 years later.

A similar story can be found in our own American Baptist history. While studying Scripture on board their respective ships to India where they were to serve as Congregational missionaries, both Luther Rice and Adoniram Judson became convinced of the Baptist principle of believer's baptism. Upon their arrival in India, they were baptized and became Baptists. While far from trivial, this one action has created a tidal wave of good which exists to this day. Ann and Adoniram Judson became the first American Baptist international missionaries, while Rice returned to the United States to drum up enough support to keep them there. There are Baptists in Burma (now Myanmar) today who can still trace their family heritage to the one who heard the Good News from Adoniram Judson. And the Triennial Convention that Rice helped create is the parent body of all of the Baptist groups in America.

What lessons do these stories have for us today? Several come immediately to mind. One is that God is certainly at work in our world, helping our small efforts grow and flourish. Another is to be careful that the ripples we send out are positive ones. Perhaps the best way to view these stories, however, is as lessons in stewardship. God doesn't require that we plan the results of our actions. God simply asks that we give of the best we have to give. The unknown worker in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, gave love and concern to a small orphan child. Ann and Adoniram Judson gave their whole lives. Each of us as Christians needs to examine our resources and make sure that we are giving of our best. When we contribute to United Mission, when we agree to teach Sunday School, when we volunteer to go to New Orleans to build homes, when we assist refugees moving into our communities, we cannot know all of the ways that God will use those gifts. We can know, however, that he certainly will use them, allowing us to serve as God's hands and feet in our world.

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Ripples in the Pond

“As you know yourselves, Philippians, in the early days of my mission, when I set out from Macedonia, you alone of all our congregations were my partners in payments and receipts; for even at Thessalonica you contributed to my needs, not once but twice over.” Philippians 4:15-16

We see that ripples have been going out from the giving of unknown individuals even as long ago as the first century, when Paul’s travels were funded by the sacrificial giving of the church at Philippi. We don’t know the names of those individuals, but we certainly know the results of their stewardship.

What ripples are you sending out from your actions today?

¹ From American Baptist Stewardship Resources <http://www.abc-usa.org/LindClick.aspx?fileticket=1BCIskj1Gqc=&tabid=203>

In Memoriam



Arthur E. Marois, 97, died on October 27, 2017 at Good Samaritan Hospital in Brockton, Massachusetts from complications resulting from open heart surgery. Arthur was the long-time friend and companion of Lena Gates and attended FBCIA with her for many years. He was born in Fall River, MA, on April 6, 1920, the son of Arthur Charles Herve Marois and Mary Alice (Cox) Mario. After graduating from Durfee High School in Fall River, Arthur began working for the Hood Milk Company in 1938 and remained with them (except for military service during World War II) for forty-five years. He began by taking care of the horses that were used

for delivering milk from horse-drawn wagons. By the time he retired in 1984, he was the superintendent of the Hood Dairy on Harris Avenue in Providence.

Arthur entered the Navy in 1943 and served in the Pacific theater on the *USS Darby*, a destroyer escort of aircraft carriers. A 1st class radar operator, he was discharged in 1946. He returned to Providence to be the shipping foreman for Hood. He had married Rita Patricia Durand in 1941, and their marriage lasted until her death in 1979. He met Lena who was working at the Hood ice cream plant.

A Memorial Coffee Hour will be held after the worship service this Sunday at First Baptist Church in America.

FBCIA NEWS

This year is the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, that movement begun by Martin Luther when he nailed his 95 thesis to the door of the cathedral at Wittenberg, Germany, October 31, 1517. An eventual consequence of that action was the Puritan - Separatist movement in England which produced the Baptists by 1609. Then in 1638 Roger Williams gathered the first Baptist church in the New World in Providence. On Reformation Sunday the Roger Williams Family Association joined the congregation and were privileged to see Roger Williams (pastor #1) meet Rev. Jamie Washam (pastor #37) of this church 379 years later.



Church historian Stanley Lemons introduced Roger Williams to Jamie Washam. The incarnation of Williams was John McNiff, a National Park Ranger at the Roger Williams National Memorial. Hayley Baccaire was the ASL interpreter.

Two representatives of the "Connect All" movement visited the service and joined hands with Jamie Washam and Roger Williams. Manuel Frederick (R) from Germany, one of the founders of Connect All, and Andrew Tisba (L) from France are traveling around the world in their campaign to promote peace and understanding.



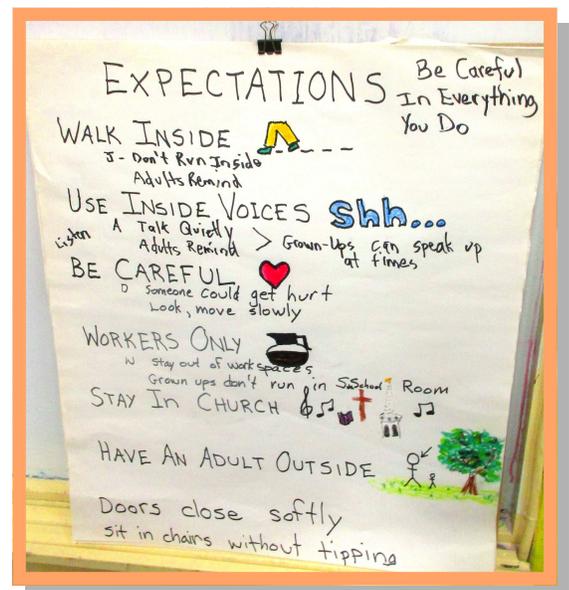
After the worship service, Deanna Beachen chatted with Roger Williams.

Dressed for Halloween, some of children from the Sunday school journeyed to Middletown to visit our women and their friends living at the John Clarke Retirement Center. Accompanying them were Karen Marshall and Bonyema, the mother of some



This past year we have had visitors from all over the United States and the world. France, Ireland, England, Scotland, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Japan, China, Iran, Canada, Hungary, Nigeria, Brazil, Israel, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Sweden and Russia. Pictured here from Left to Right with Pastor Jamie is Pastor Viktor Ryaguzov from the Transfiguration Baptist Church in Samara, Russia and Oleksandr Karnaukh, pastor of Second Baptist Church, East Providence, RI.

Children and parents met and established some guidelines for safe behavior for everyone.



[American Baptist Home Mission Societies](#)

Impact Puerto Rico immediately and directly through "Rebuilding, Restoring, Renewing Puerto Rico."

This American Baptist Home Mission Societies' initiative seeks to raise \$1 million by March 2018 through the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering.

100% of all donations target the urgent needs of American Baptist churches and mission partners in Puerto Rico.

To date we have received: \$347,480.41

Please encourage your networks to give by via our ABHMS website: www.abhms.org or **make a check payable to ABHMS** and on the **memo line place: OGHS-Puerto Rico.**

Please mail all checks to:

ABHMS

Attn: Kim Wilkins

OGHS-Puerto Rico,

P.O. Box 851

Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851

VIVA Puerto Rico!

Dr. Eddie Cruz, CFRE | Director

Mission Advancement & Passionary Movement

[Judson Press](#)

p [800.222.3872](tel:800.222.3872), x 2423

f [610.768.2470](tel:610.768.2470)

Donate NOW

White Cross Requests

List posted in Fellowship Hall

Donations will be going to Crossroads Community Baptist Church in Erie, PA.

This church serves a population of legal immigrants from Burma (Myanmar). Most families have arrived after years of living in resettlement camps on the Burma-Thailand border. The church assists people with needs, such as learning to drive, dealing with finances, medical care, school registration, legal advice, and so much more, as these families adjust to American culture.

YOU CAN HELP BY DONATING ITEMS ON THE REQUEST LIST AS WELL AS GIFT CARDS (VISA/MC OR WALMART) FOR MATERIALS.

Small Groups

Both of our small groups are starting new books so it is a good time to join us.

The Wednesday group (1:00-1:30pm) is starting Pond River Ocean Rain by Charles Lattimore Howard next Wednesday.

The Thursday group (6-7pm) is reading Sessions with Isaiah and will begin meeting Nov 30.

2017 BND Winter Coat Exchange Sites

Providence: State House Lawn – Across from the Providence Place Mall

Rain Location: Gloria Dei Church 15 Hayes Street, Providence

Coats distributed Friday, November 24th from 9 AM to 1 PM

Contacts:

Lauren and Pam Testoni – ricoadrive@gmail.com

Phil Edmonds philwhistle@gmail.com

*We are in need of scarves, hats, gloves, sweatshirts, and sweaters for children and adults.
No other clothing items, please.*

If you can donate a coat, please do so. If you can organize a coat collection, please do so. If you need a coat, please come take one off the racks. Free, no questions asked.

Providence Sites

Hot Club Providence – 25 Bridge Street

Contact: Sarah Bates

Bell St Chapel - 5 Bell Street

Contact: Tina Dolen - contact@bellstreetchapel.org

The Providence Center

530 North Main Street

Office located on the 4th floor

Contact: Priscilla Villa - (401)528-0160, pvilla@provctr.org

Providence Libraries:

Contact – Michelle Novello - 401-369-0500

South Providence Library - 441 Prairie Avenue

Olneyville Library - One Olneyville Square

Fox Point Library - 90 Ives Street

Washington Park Library - 1316 Broad Street

Wanskuck Library - 233 Veazie Street

Rochambeau Library - 708 Hope Street

Mt. Pleasant - 275 Elmwood Avenue

Smith Hill Library - 31 Candace Street

Planned Parenthood Generation Action program

Tampons and pads are among the most under-donated items to groups that aid homeless and impoverished women, but are some of the most necessary items in maintaining hygienic and healthy female bodies. When you make a donation of either of these products, unused menstrual cups, hot water bottles, unscented wet wipes or soap, or new and unused underwear, a woman has access to a level of comfort that is not financially afforded to her otherwise. There is a complete list of all products collected during this drive on the flier attached to the collection box. All donations will be used to create "period kits" that will be directly distributed to shelters or to homeless women via street outreach. There is a collection box under the coat racks in the hallway.

