

# THE SPIRE

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

February 2018, Volume 21, Issue 2



## From the Pastor

**Looking for ways to make peace and work for justice?**

**Want to meet like-minded peacemakers?**

**Peace Camp may be for you!**

The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America / Bautistas por la Paz will hold its annual Peace Camp this summer at Keuka College, Keuka Park, NY, July 2-7, 2018. Peace Camp features speakers, training sessions, music, good company, thought-provoking and heart-expanding interactions. The theme for this year is *Decentering Power & Privilege: Becoming the Stranger*.

The Baptist Peace Conference offers:

- Excellent and challenging programs on a variety of ways to practice peacemaking in your own community.
- Connections to a progressive Baptist community.
- Appropriate peacemaking programming for children and adults of all ages.
- Peacemakers come from all over North America to attend.
- (For young adults) a vibrant, active, and passionate young adult group.

Because our church is a member of BPFNA, we have scholarships available for 2 first time attendees. You provide transportation, and the scholarship covers registration, room and board. If you are interested, please speak with Janet Davies, or look on the bulletin board.

## IN MEMORIAM



Richard "Josh" Billings died January 16, 2017 in hospice care at the Orchard View Manor in Riverside, East Providence. He was born on November 3, 1927 in Rome, NY, the son of Warren Chesborough & Edith Keeler Billings. After graduating from the University of Michigan in 1949 with the Bachelor of Arts, he then earned his J.D. from University of Michigan Law School in 1952. He met Patricia Bloomfield-Brown in 1949 while both were summer employees at the Rocky Point Inn, an Adirondack resort hotel at Inlet, New York. He was a dishwasher and she was a

waitress. They were married September 1, 1951. Coming to Rhode Island as a newly minted attorney, Richard rose to become a senior partner with Hinckley, Allen & Snyder where he was from 1952 until his retirement in 1997.

Joining by letter on March 26, 1953, Richard was the last person admitted to FBCIA as an "associate member." The church created this category in 1923 for individuals coming from evangelical churches that did not practice immersion, and he was a Methodist. An "associate member" was barred from being a deacon or even voting on deacons, but this second-class category was eliminated in 1955. Richard quickly became a significant member of the church, and he chaired the committee that oversaw the massive restoration of Meeting House in 1957 -1958. He served on many other church and CBS committees, including the Christian Education, Budget and Finance, Properties & Sexton, By-Laws, and Church Enlargement Committees, but most notably as Moderator or Deputy Moderator of the Church and Charitable Baptist Society for a number of years. His first term as Moderator of the church came in 1966, followed by 1968. In 1971 and 1972 he was simultaneously Moderator of the CBS and Deputy Moderator of the church. After the decision was made to elect the same person as Moderator of both entities, Richard served both in 1975, 1976, and 1977. In 1978 he was elected Deputy Moderator of both church and society. In addition, for many years Richard handled the legal affairs of both church and society. Among his various community activities, he was president of the RI Philharmonic Society at one time. A collector of art and antiques, he was an avid skier despite having had polio as a two-year old. He is survived by Patricia, his wife of sixty-six years and his daughters, Spencer Nineberg and Hope McCulloch.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### John Clark Nursing Center Visit

Join the choir on Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup> on a trip to John Clarke Retirement Center in Middletown. You will be able to visit

with our members there and hear the choir sing. Barbara Staples, Juanita Bedard and Dot White are all in residence at John Clarke. We will leave following a light lunch of soup and bread in Fellowship Hall for an early afternoon concert and time of fellowship. If you need a ride, transportation will be available. More details will be provided as the date approaches.

### The Podcast is up!

The Baptist Joint Committee featured Stan Lemons, Jamie Washam, and "Roger Williams" on their recent Roger Williams Day podcast.

The podcast can be accessed here:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/baptist-joint-committee-podcast/id995051912?mt=2>

<http://bjconline.org/roger-williams-day-podcast/>

Take the Roger Williams quiz:

<https://quiz.fbapp.io/roger-williams-day>

## WINTER FUN DAY AT CANONICUS

For ABCORI Youth  
and summer campers

February 10, 2018 1-3 PM

Shaub Dining Hall

Ages 11-up

(Younger welcomed with  
adult accompaniment)

Indoor and outdoor activities  
(dress appropriately)

Games, hikes, if possible

Sledding (bring a sled)

And snoman making

Hot cocoa provided

Bring snacks to share

## BOARD OF MISSIONS

Thank you to everyone who helped make the goals of Missions & Outreach possible in 2017. Your support is a vital part in making a difference both locally and globally. Thank you so much!!

### PICA

Remember to bring in your non-perishable items for PICA's food pantry. In January we will focus on bringing in another item in high demand: cans of tuna fish. This is one step we can take to combat hunger in our neighborhood.

### Save the Date!

Thinking about summer plans in the new year? The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America will hold their annual **Peace Camp** this summer **July 2-7** at Keuka College in NY and is open to children and adults of all ages. Their topic is Decentering Power & Privilege: Becoming the Stranger. There are two vouchers available to those wanting to attend. Please see Janet Davies if you'd like to know more to plan ahead.

### Drivers Needed!

We need drivers on Saturday, February 10, to take some of the children to Canonicus for their winter fun day. The event is from 1 - 3, so the commitment would be from 12 - 4. This is an indoor/outdoor event so you don't have to be out in the cold, but if there's snow and you want to sled you can.

We could also use mittens and hats in a variety of sizes for the kids who are going who don't have proper winter gear. All donations should be at the church by Thursday, February 8 at 7 PM.

**The Read Across RI book for 2018 is The Hate You Give by Angie Thomas.** "Sixteen-year-old Starr lives in two very different worlds: one is her home in a poor black urban neighborhood; the other is the tony suburban prep school she attends and the white boy she dates there. Her bifurcated life changes dramatically when she is the only witness to the unprovoked police shooting of her unarmed friend Khalil and is challenged to speak out though with trepidation about the injustices being done in the event's wake." -- Cart, Michael Copyright 2016 Booklist

You are invited to join a book discussion on Saturday, March 17 at the church before the author comes to Rhode Island, April 13/14. We will meet at noon and have a light lunch while we talk. You can request a copy of the book through your local library (hard copy or ebook) or buy a copy from your favorite bookseller.

Please sign up on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

**American Baptist Women Ministries of Rhode Island** is having a mission and service day on Saturday, March 10, 8:30 - 2:00 at Lakewood Baptist Church. (225 Atlantic Ave., Warwick). The focus will be Elder Care Ministries featuring Keynote Speaker Reverend Kathryn Palen, ABCORI Associate Executive Minister for Elder Care Ministries. There will also be conversation circles, a "traveling purse offering" to support our state project and a collection of feminine hygiene products.

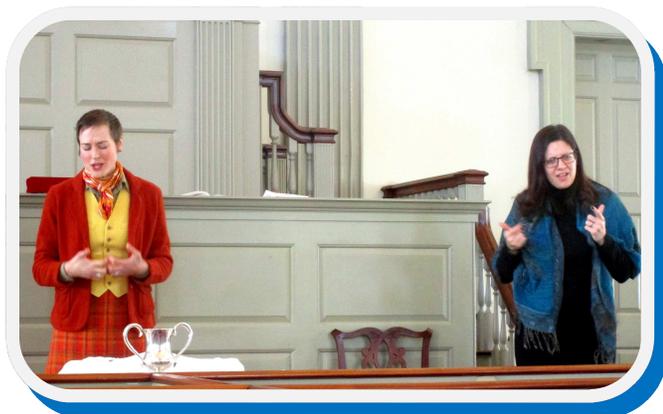
Lunch will be provided by the ladies of Lakewood. In order to prepare enough food, **please register by e-mail, text or phone to Elaine Williamson at [elainebw02888@gmail.com](mailto:elainebw02888@gmail.com) or 401-226-5040 by March 2.**

## FBCIA NEWS



Pastor Jamie offered the invocation at the 10th Annual Interfaith Vigil at the State House on January 3. This vigil is sponsored by the Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty. [She is seen in the lower right hand corner.]

The children joined Pastor Jamie for the children's sermon on the first Sunday of the new year.



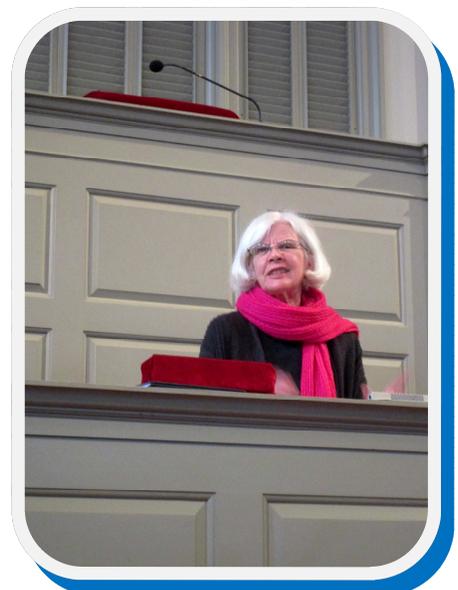
The pastor led the prayers of the people and Hayley Baccaire, the ASL interpreter, signed for the hearing impaired.

While Pastor Jamie was in the Netherlands on her study leave, Kathryn Palen, Associate Executive Minister of ABCORI, filled the pulpit on Sunday, January 21. She greeted Priscilla Steadman after the worship service.



The Rev. Dr. Delinse Jean, the newly elected pastor of the First Haitian Baptist Church of Rhode Island, came to worship at FBCIA on his first Sunday in the state. Accompanying him was Yves Michel Laguerre from Boston.

Our former Associate Pastor, Linda Bausserman, filled the pulpit on the second Sunday of Pastor Jamie's educational leave.



# Hyperion Knight

## Piano Recital



*photo credit Rick McKay*

### **Program:**

**Johann Sebastian Bach:** Selected Inventions;  
Transcriptions, including the “Little Fugue” in g, BWV 578

**Ludwig van Beethoven:** Sonata no. 21 in C,  
op. 53 “Waldstein”

**George Gershwin:** Suite from *Porgy and Bess*

**The First Baptist Church in America**

75 North Main Street, Providence

Sunday, February 25, 2018, 2:00 PM

Free and open to the public.

