



THE SPIRE

First Baptist Church in America Newsletter
December, 2022

Advent 2022

Advent seems to have come suddenly this year; that is its way.

Darkness comes earlier each day, the winds slice a bit colder each night.

The final Sunday in November we lit the first candle of Advent, a promise of more light to come.

Thanks to each of our Advent candle lighters this year.

Donna Puckett

Jarbadan Family

Shealy Family

Walanga Family

Howard Thurman's prayer still resonates:

I Will Light Candles This Christmas

Light of joy despite all sadness,

Light of hope where despair keeps watch,

Light of courage for fears ever present,

Light of peace for tempest-tossed days,

Light of graces to ease heavy burdens,

Light of love to inspire all my living.

Light that will burn all year long.

Peace,

Pastor Jamie

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◇ **Beautiful Day**

Christmas is coming! And for those on your easy (or hard) -to-buy-for list, please consider sending a gift box of delicious granola and/or coffee from Beautiful Day RI. Most of you know they are a wonderful non-profit based here in Providence, working hand-in-hand with refugees from places like Burundi, Iraq, and DR Congo, to provide hand-crafted granolas and coffees. With every single bite or sip, you contribute to a job-training program that helps our community thrive! [Beautiful Day | Proudly made by refugees in Providence, Rhode Island](#)

Beautiful Day | Proudly made by refugees in Providence, Rhode Island

Beautiful Day is a gourmet granola company with a mission to help refugees, especially the most vulnerable.

◇ **New Year's Day Dinner**

New Year's Day Dinner, January 1, 2023. Since 1978 on every New Year's Day that fell on Sunday (seven of them) the church has had a dinner after the morning worship. The meal is the traditional Amish New Year's Day dinner: roasted pork loin, sauerkraut, apple sauce, mashed potatoes, bread & butter, and chocolate cake. [In 2017, black-eyed peas and greens were added, reflecting Southern New Year's food.] Folks will need to sign up for this meal, and there will be a modest charge for the meal. Please make your reservation with the church office. A sign-up sheet will be posted in Fellowship Hall.

◊**Sunday Forums for December**

For the next two Sundays in December, I would like to have a panel of 3 or 4 people from the congregation who are willing to share their thoughts on the topics of Love and Joy. We would then open it up to all in attendance at the Sunday Forum. I have created a few discussion questions here to kick things off. Please contact me if you would like to participate in either discussion.

DECEMBER 4th LOVE

What do we mean by Christian love?

How do we infuse our lives with it?

What does it really mean to love our neighbors?

Why is it so hard to love our neighbors? What can we do to address this?

DECEMBER 11th JOY

What gives us joy?

How do we make sure to find joy in everyday moments?

How can we bring joy to others?

Why is it important to contemplate joy during advent?

DECEMBER 18th PEACE

I am bringing in an outside speaker who has presented forums before, **John Minahan**. He teaches World Religions, Philosophy and Psychology at Lincoln School and was previously Head of the English Department. He has a degree in theology, a Master's in music and a PhD in English Literature.

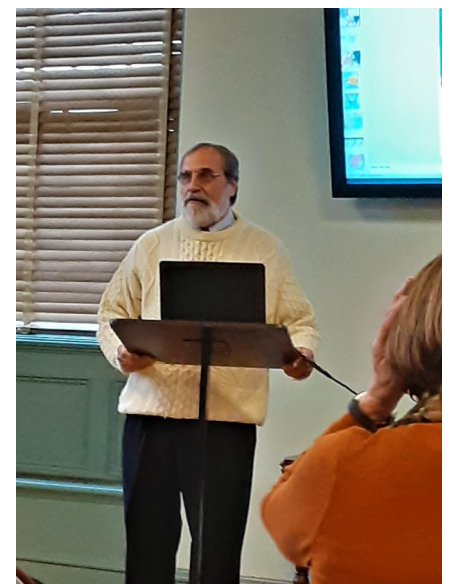
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◇ **Around FBCIA**



Rev. Dr. Lihua Zhou was the guest preacher at FBCIA on November 13. She serves the Chinese student fellowship at the Community Church of Providence. Dr. Linda Bausserman was the worship leader, and as chair of ABCORI's Standing Committee on the Ministry, she had overseen the ordination of Dr. Zhou.



Myron Stacihw, a son of Ukrainian immigrants and educator, consultant to museums, and an expert in historical and historic preservation, led a discussion about Ukraine in the Adult Forum on November 20. The choir sang "Oleksandr Konysky," ("A Prayer for Ukraine") in the Ukrainian language in the worship service itself.



Brown University Professor Katharina Galor brought her seminar class on "Sacred Spaces: Synagogues, Churches, Mosques" to the Meeting House on Monday, November 21 to meet with Pastor Jamie Washam and Church Historian Stanley Lemons to learn about our meeting-house and church.