

THE SPIRE

First Baptist Church in America Newsletter

May 2023



Last Saturday was the groundbreaking for our garden. Thanks to the efforts of Jamie and Susan Lepore we received a grant to build raised beds along the wall below Benefit Street to grow vegetables and perennials. Eight of us began work by digging up sod, installing edging and cleaning up the yard and planting some perennials. We also contributed over \$700 of in-kind work toward matching the funds provided by the grant (\$10,000). Having a garden in the back is a wonderful way to connect with the community. People stop by and chat as we work. It provides evidence that we are not a museum but an active church. The food we produce will be a gift to the people in the community. And, we had a morning of good fellowship and a lot of fun getting dirty! We were a bit creaky when we left but we all made it to church the next morning. I hope that more of you will join us – there is still lots of work to be done. It's a great excuse to get out in the fresh air this time of year. Mary Oliver has written that "In spring there's hope, ...but in summer there is everywhere the luminous sprawl of gifts, the hospitality of the Lord."* May this garden be an expression of FBCIA's hospitality to the community.

*excerpt from "Six Recognitions of the Lord" in *Thirst*

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HOLY WEEK WORSHIP



After a light supper of bread and soup (five varieties), the church met for a Maundy Thursday service and Communion. Our "retired" Associate Pastor, Linda Bausserman officiated while Deacons Nancy Wake and Karen Marshall awaited to serve those gathered there.

Easter at FBCIA began with the traditional breakfast, followed by an Easter egg hunt by the children in the churchyard. Next came the worship service with special music in the auditorium.



The breakfast came at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall



Olivia Jarbadan and Ella and David Shealy raced to find easter eggs.



Nancy Forsstrom was the guest preacher and Larry Wilson was the worship leader



The U.S. Coast Guard Brass Quintet accompanied the organ and choir. Here they are accompanying Stephen Martorella playing the "Easter Fantasy" by Sondra Tucker

FORUMS FOR MAY

Sunday May 7th

Training Service Dogs: Colleen and Larry Whelpley

Larry and Colleen will extend our theme of hospitality to show how their work with service dogs provides opportunities for both trainers and those for whom these dogs can become a lifeline.

Sunday May 14th Mother’s Day Mothers, Mothering & More: Ruth Marris-Macaulay

This presentation and discussion will look at this day of celebration in a broader and more inclusive context.

Sunday May 21st Practical Hospitality: Colleen Whelpley, Ruth Marris-Macaulay & Others

We will hold a panel discussion and mini training session in the use of the stair lift, the defibrillator, and talk about practical ways in which we can include more people in learning how these devices work as well as other ways we can offer practical assistance to church goers.

Sunday May 28th is Brown Commencement We move to the summer schedule in June. Church will be at 10 am. Forums will resume again in September

GUEST PASTORS FOR MAY

- May 7—Paul Hayes
- May 14—Nancy Forsstrom
- May 21— Daryn Stylianopoulos
- May 29—No Worship -Brown Commencement

FBCIA NEWS

The Garden of Earthy Delights needs YOU!

We will be working in the garden for the next few weeks. This Saturday, April 29, we will continue to remove the sod. Hopefully we will be ready to spread mulch on May 6 and put the raised beds together and fill them with soil on May 13. If all goes well, we will be ready to plant on May 20.

We need help with all these steps. We are also accepting suggestions for vegetables to grow and donations of water and snacks to keep the gardeners going.

This garden will give us another opportunity to interact with the local community as we provide them with fresh produce and a chance to get their hands in the dirt.

THANK YOU!



Shalom to the church members. I would like to thanks all the church members in general for all your generosity to our family. Today we are the home owner, it’s because of you guys. You have been with us for the up and downs moment and you didn’t getting tired of holding us up. I can’t imagine how much the costs you have paid for shipping out of our household stuffs and for tickets for the whole family. You buy this house for us. Words can’t describe how happy everyone is in the house. Just say ☺ May the Most High God bless all of you abundantly.

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Dr. Jamie Washam, Pastor
 Stephen Martorella, Minister of Music
 Holly Edwards, Administrative Assistant
 Anne Gagan, Bookkeeper
 Tony Zambarano, Sexton
 Ary Peralta, Sunday Sexton
 Mauwa Bilobi, Childcare Worker



Daryn Stylianopoulos, senior pastor of the 1st Baptist Church of Needham, MA, was the guest preacher on April 16, She and Linda Bausserman enjoyed a moment after the worship service with a visiting man from Bulgaria.

On Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, a number of our members began work on the public garden in the backyard. Pictured here (L to R): Susan Lepore, Linda Bausserman, Pauline Ashworth, Ken Clauser, Karen Marshall. (not pictured: Ruth Maris Macaulay, Richard Lepore, Stan Lemons.)



Sunday, April 23rd Worship

My husband and I have been attending Sunday Service at The First Baptist Church in America over the last month. We were moved not only by the gorgeous organ and choral music for Earth Day but also by the Sermon on “Seed and Soil.”

During her Sermon, Rev. Nancy Willbanks mentioned author, Debra Rienstra, and the name of her book, Refugia Faith, seeking hidden shelters, ordinary wonders, and the healing of the earth. If you are interested in reading about this concept, the book is available on Amazon for \$23.99.