

THE SPIRE

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America



A Message from Pastor Jamie

Greetings Church ~

What a remarkable celebration! Deepest thanks to each of you for making the 250th anniversary celebration of the Meeting House such a resounding success. We enjoyed opening our doors for a weekend of art, history, tours, music, and more. The artwork featuring the Meeting House remains up for a bit longer, so if you haven't been able to check it out, make sure to do so soon! The Lego versions of the building are a big hit, as are the puzzles featuring the building. Check out the photos from the event further on in this newsletter.

Innumerable labors made this possible; this congregation and building continue to serve as beacons of welcome and refuge. May it be so for another 250 years!

Peace,

Pastor Jamie

An Invitation to Our Church Family

As we enter the season of **Advent**, we invite you to take part in a special church project: a **collection of stories, reflections, prayers, drawings and thoughts** that express what Advent means to you. Write a poem – or choose one written by someone else that you find meaningful. Any quotation you have come across that “speaks” to you about the Advent season would also be welcome.

Whether it’s a memory, a favorite tradition, a moment of quiet hope, a meaningful text, or a reflection on the coming of Christ—your words can help inspire and deepen our shared journey toward Christmas. You can submit more than one contribution if you wish. Children are welcome to participate too.

How to Contribute:

Write a short reflection (a few sentences to a page)

- Share a poem, prayer, personal story, drawing, reflection on a text or any other relevant response to the Advent season.

Send by November 23rd to Ruth Marris Macaulay at ruthmarrismacaulay@gmail.com

- Submissions may be featured in an **Advent booklet, The Spire, or online**

Together, let’s create a beautiful tapestry of faith, hope, and expectation.

And here is a text to get you started! Just a short response to it is all you need to submit.

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” — *John 1:5*

Camp Wightman

2026 SNOWBALL SLEEPOVER Traditional Camp Reunion

January 30 - February 1, 2026

January 30 - Feb 1. Drop-off is between 6–7 p.m. on Friday, and pickup is after lunch around 2 p.m. on Sunday. All meals on Saturday and Sunday are included. \$100.00

Sunday Morning Forum

10:00 AM - Every Sunday

09th: Steven Seay - John Calvin

16th: David Coon - Emulating Alice Jackson and Mary Campbell. Creating a permanent legacy for FBCIA

23rd: Rev. Washam - Baptist Peace Fellowship and Peace Camp

30th: The Peace Cathedral, Part 1: A documentary from Tbilisi, Georgia

Birthday's in November

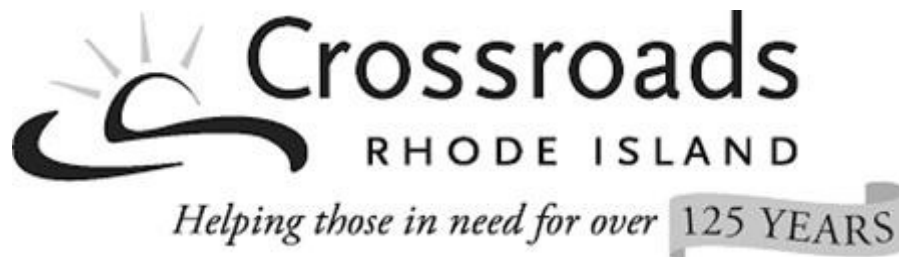
November 1, Ivins, Elizabeth

November 3, Schoonmaker, Joan

November 18, LaBanca, Joyce

November 27, Bausserman, Ann Marie

Missions and Outreach



On Saturday, November 15th at 10 am, Rick Wild, a volunteer manager at Crossroads, will give us a tour of their facility. Crossroads is located at 160 Broad Street in Providence and is the leading provider of housing and services to those experiencing homelessness in Rhode Island. There is parking in the rear of the building; and since it is a Saturday, there should be plenty of space to park. He will meet us there and then we will tour the old building (the former YMCA) and visit their new building across the street. The Summer Street Apartments have just opened and provide new and improved housing to the current residents of Crossroads' Tower apartments, expanding their single-occupancy rooms to fully-furnished, one-bedroom apartments. If you are interested in visiting Crossroads, please sign up in the Fellowship Hall.



Starting the 9th of November, we will be collecting funds for AIDS Care Ocean State. This organization provides services to over 500 persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families in Rhode Island. It is also the largest provider of subsidized housing for persons living with HIV/AIDS. It currently has 127 clients residing in 48 apartments that the organization owns and operates. If you would like to support their work, you can donate by writing a check to FBCIA with "AIDS Care" on the memo line or by donating in one of the church envelopes and writing "AIDS Care" on the outside.



143,000 Rhode Islanders receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance or SNAP food assistance benefits every month. Judges ordered the federal government to continue providing food assistance during the shutdown but benefits will still most likely be interrupted. In addition, there is confusion about how long recipients will have to wait for this vital support. Food banks are desperate to provide help to families struggling with food insecurity. Our support of the Better Lives Rhode Island food pantry is especially important now. Bins are at the top of the stairs as you enter the Meeting House. The need is great; so please, consider donating.



Blessing Bags

This month, we need sanitary wipes for our Blessing Bags. We include these wipes with peanut butter crackers, granola bars, bottled water and socks in bags to distribute to individuals in need. You can leave these items in the bins in the Fellowship Hall. And please, take bags to distribute.



We are also collecting supplies for Youth Pride Rhode Island. Youth Pride hosts a community pantry that serves over 700 youth each year. The pantry is open during the week for young people in need of food,

clothes, toiletries, and/or school supplies. These items are free for them on a weekly basis. You can donate these in the Fellowship Hall.

FBCIA NEWS



On October 5th, the church celebrated Pastor Jamie's 10th anniversary as the 37th pastor of our church. She was greeted with applause as she came to the Fellowship Hall after the morning worship service and Communion.

Flowers and food filled the reception table as Jamie looked on as Sharon Gendron-Petroff, Steven Seay, and Rob Jarbadan came to enjoy the refreshments. Shown by a nose was Ary Peralta, the Sunday sexton, serving as the host and server at the table. The flowers represented "A Dazzling Bouquet" of our welcoming church.



250th Anniversary of FBCIA Building

On October 11 and 12 the church celebrated the 250th anniversary of the construction of the Meeting House with an all-day program of lectures, tours, panel discussion, exhibits of

arts and Meeting House ephemera, a visit by "Roger Williams", organ and choir music, and the preaching of Janet Cooper-Nelson, the recently retired Chaplain of Brown University.



John McNiff, retired National Park Ranger of the Roger Williams National Memorial, spoke as Roger Williams about issues of religious liberty in the context of England in the 16th and 17th centuries.

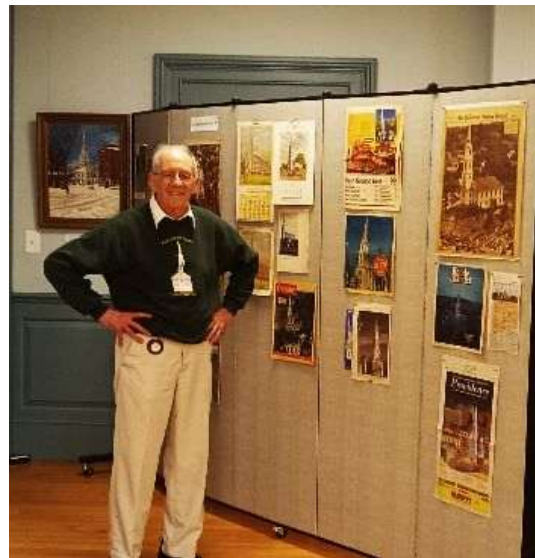
Trish Woodward, president of the Roger Williams Family Association, had a chat with her 10th great-grandfather, Roger Williams [a.k.a. John McNiff] in the Fellowship Hall.





C. Morgan Grefe, Executive Director of the Rhode Island Historical Society, presented an illustrated talk on the world of Roger Williams before he and his wife, Mary Williams, came to New England.

Stanley Lemons, Historian of FBCIA, showed some the many uses of the iconic image of the Meeting House in etchings, photographs, postcards, calendars, advertisements, book covers, souvenir plates and tiles, menus, placemats, posters, and newspaper and Baptist publications.





Charlotte Carrington-Farmer, Professor of History at Roger Williams University, gave an illustrated talk about Mary Bernard Williams, the overlooked wife of Roger Williams.

The Proteus String Quartet played music for the prelude to the morning worship service and then accompanied the organ and choir in the anthem "We Built This House," composed by Jonathan Sturm who was a member of the church and choir from 1986 to 1991.





Janet Cooper-Nelson, recently retired after 35 years at Chaplain at Brown University, greeted people after the morning worship service; shown here with (L) Suan Lepore and (R) Nladi Kolishovsaka.

Celebrating Ary Peralta - Sunday Sexton

Ary Peralta, the Sunday sexton for the past three years, moved to Florida and was honored by the church on his final Sunday, October 12th.

Ary Peralta received the applause of the people.
Holly Edwards is in the back.





Since Ary was moving to Florida, it was thought that he ought to have an appropriate set of sunglasses. Andrew Sowers helped him with the move.

The Cake



**Nadeli and Georgi Kolishovaki and the expectant baby
were given a shower on Sunday afternoon October 19.**

Naledi and Georgi were the guests of honor, and Susan and Richard Lepore were among those honoring them.





Naledi opened gifts while Georgi beamed. Pastor Jamie enjoyed the sight.

Some of those attending the party lined up for refreshments in the dining room: (L to R) Jideobi Washam Unaka, Trina Swanson, Michael Zhang, Georgi Kolisovaski, Ken Clauser, and Richard Lepore.



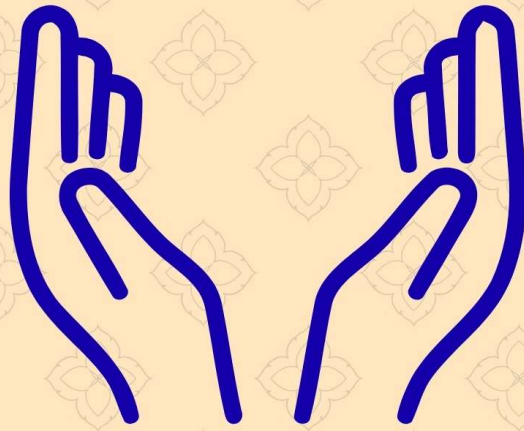
Announcements

INTERFAITH SERVICE

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

7-8 p.m.

**70 Orchard Ave, Providence, RI
Sanctuary**



**Hosted by Temple Beth-El in
partnership with St. Martin's Church**



TEMPLE BETH-EL
Congregation Sons of Israel and David



ST. MARTIN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Little Free Library

Our Little Free Library is always in need of more books. If you have some to share, please place them in the little library directly (and do some browsing while there!) or leave them in the office for distribution over time. Thanks!

Driveway Parking

A gentle reminder that parking in the church driveway on Sunday is reserved for those with mobility issues and small children. You do not need a handicap placard. Please try to pull up when parking so others are also able to park there. Thank you.

Statement of Welcome

Roger Williams gathered the First Baptist Church in America in 1638 on the bedrock of religious liberty, with its principles of soul freedom and the separation of church and state. Together, we continue our ministry of welcome and liberation.

This congregation honors its Baptist heritage. Many of our members are lifelong Baptists and others come from varied denominational and religious backgrounds. We welcome all people of every age, race, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, cultural background, socio-economic status, mental or physical ability, marital status, and any other distinctions of society. We are diverse people united in Christ. We remain a safe harbor.

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Rev. Dr. Jamie Washam, Pastor
Stephen Martorella, Minister of Music
Holly Edwards, Administrative Assistant
Anne Gagan, Bookkeeper
Tony Zambarano, Sexton
Victoria Pfanstiehl, ASL Interpreter
Ashley Muchiri, Nursery Asstistant
Mangye Walanga, Elementary School Teacher
Jayonna Harris, Elementary School Teacher

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