



# FIRST & FRANKLIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# COMMUNITY News

## APRIL 2021



210 W MADISON STREET | BALTIMORE, MD 21201 | (410) 728-5545 | FIRSTFRANKLIN.ORG

### WORSHIP CALENDAR

April 1: MAUNDY THURSDAY

Please read: John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

[Theology on Tap meets at 7:00 pm]

April 2: GOOD FRIDAY Service 7:00 pm

Texts: Isaiah 52:13—53:12; John 18: 1-19:42.

April 4: EASTER SUNDAY

Service 10:30 am with Communion

Please have bread & juice/wine at hand.

Title: **“Clear and Present Promise”**

Texts: Acts 10: 34-43; John 20: 1-18.

Liturgist: Scot Spencer

April 11: **“Wounds Healed & Remaining”**

Texts: Leviticus 21: 16-24. John 20: 19-31.

Liturgist: Jan Trammell-Savin

April 18: **“Living Stones”**

Texts: Joshua 4: 1-7, 19-24. I Peter 2:1-10.

Liturgist: Sarah Lloyd

April 25: **“Earth Day: Sustainable or Regenerative Hopes”**

Texts: Psalm 23; Mark 4: 21-32.

Liturgist: Marianne Shick

### Church Committee Meeting Schedule



4/5 - Mission & Education Meeting- 7:00 pm

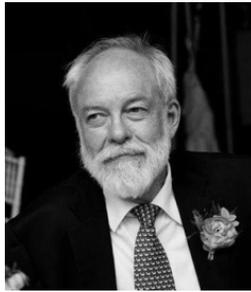
4/6 - Worship, Music & Arts Meeting- 7:00 pm

4/13 - Session Meeting - 6:30 pm

4/22 - Membership Meeting - 7:00 pm

4/27 - Finance Meeting - 5:15 pm

## THINKING FOR A NEW TIME



An opening word from Interim Minister, Chris Iosso:

Four weeks in! Honeymoon still on! And, due to Covid-19, so many of you yet to meet in person. It is an odd start, as we are still in zoom-world for worship and most meetings. Yet the warmth of your welcome comes through.

The tasks of an interim pastor are reasonably clear. I will reprint them regularly in a section of the newsletter, partly so we can see the progress being made. The bottom-line is that I am called to do “real” ministry, though on a term basis.

Coming in with new eyes, I will ask a lot of, “why,” questions. Many will have been asked before, so thanks for your patience right up front. Some answers may tell me why things didn’t happen. Reading the ‘signs of the times’ together, I hope we will often get to those moments when we say, “why not?!” And then we will do some new things.

Please add me to your prayer lists. I will make mistakes, and sometimes forget and make them twice. Tell me when you see it happening. Getting this newsletter out late is not a mistake, though; think of it as a bit of rehearsal for a hoped-for rhythm! Monthly newsletters will be posted on the website and sent hard-copy to those who request them. Again, many thanks!

We serve to together for the joy of the Gospel. We have a “goodly heritage,” but much of that manna cannot be re-heated. Even if we think we are in a wilderness, God is providing new manna—we need to be fast sometimes to scoop it up!

One key thing now is that we prepare for when people can come to worship in person, and with new needs for community and spiritual connectivity. Will we be ready for them? My prayer is that each of us, however long or short our membership or friendship, will feel God’s energy for the adventure of faith.

“T’is the spring of souls today, Christ has burst his prison, and from three day in the tomb, like the sun hath risen!”

That’s an old Easter hymn verse for our time of new thinking and action.

Grace and peace, Chris

Rev. Christian T. Iosso, Ph.D. Interim Minister



As we continue to enjoy the renewal that comes with Spring, it's time to freshen up outside of the campus buildings! Please join the Buildings and Grounds committee to help with weeding, mulching and giving some TLC to our grounds. While we have some tools for the work, bring a rake if you have it. Be sure to bring your protective gear: gloves, face masks and your water bottle so we can do our small part to save the environment! With your help, we can make a lot of progress in a little time.

Click the link and sign up here!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040b4ea4a822a20-springtime>



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|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 4/2 - Audrey Suhr     | 4/13 – Rol Anders      |
| 4/3 - Susan Lloyd     | 4/13 – Anne Silbermann |
| 4/11 - NKem Anaedozie | 4/22 – Jim Schroll     |

If we are missing your birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office!

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN BIRTHDAY OFFERING

Each year, the Birthday Offering awards grants to up to five programs. Primarily making possible capital improvement projects, the Birthday Offering supports domestic and international ministries, focusing on areas such as agricultural development, childcare, community organization, criminal justice, drug counseling, economic justice, elderly care, employment training, homelessness, literacy, violence or women's concerns.

For more information click: [Birthday Offering](#)

## STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY WITH MUSIC



Please join us in our beautiful courtyard for a church gathering to embrace Stewardship Sunday!

We will once again gather outdoors at a safe distance on Sunday May 16th!! We will ask that you bring your own chair (if able - we will provide folding chairs for those who need them) perhaps a stadium chair or nice folding or camp chair.

With an abundance of caution, we are also doing away with our regular potluck/buffet and ask that you bring your own lunch for you and your family. We will likely have people worshipping in person and remotely at that time so we will start at 12:30 pm, in order to give everyone time to get to the church, after the Zoom service.

We will also have some entertainment for the event, on the steps of Backus. Please see the biography and picture of this fine musician below. It will be so great to hear some live music and support local Baltimore talent, as well!



Originally from Harrisburg, PA, Lucas Chohany is often considered among the top folk musicians in the Baltimore/DC Area. He was previously the guitarist and mandolinist of the world-renowned April Verch Band. Lucas Chohany currently performs with several distinguished groups: The hammer

dulcimer/banjo duo Ken and Brad Kolodner, Nick and Luke, the Bumper Jacks, Uncle Baltimore, and Baltimore Swing Drop.

# THE AUSTIN PIPE ORGAN, PART 1

Jason Kissel, Minister of Music & Organist

The present pipe organ in the sanctuary at First & Franklin Presbyterian Church was built in 1961 by the Austin Organ Company in Hartford, Connecticut, and is the third significant instrument to be installed in our sanctuary since 1888. Pipe organs are handmade of wood, metal, leather and countless moving parts and electrical components. Wind channels distribute air generated by an electric blower throughout the organ, which is then pressurized in large reservoirs and wind chests above which the pipes stand. When the organist presses a key, a pallet is opened, admitting air into the pipe resulting in a musical tone.



The visible pipes at First & Franklin represent a small fraction of the total number of pipes, which in our case number approximately 3,000. Quality pipe organs can function for 100 years or more, provided they are given proper care. It is reasonable to expect that when a pipe organ reaches 30 to 50 years of age, substantial rebuilding may be necessary. Quality of original craftsmanship and subsequent maintenance, sanctuary climate control (or lack thereof) and technological advancements can all contribute to the long-term needs of a pipe organ.

While our Austin organ has had small to moderate repairs and tonal improvements made throughout the past 60 years, it awaits a major renovation.

Interestingly, other notable houses of worship in Baltimore, including the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen and The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer have similar pipe organs dating from the early 1960's, both of which have undergone major renovations in recent years.

Eliot Freese is the gifted artist and technician who has maintained the Austin organ at First & Franklin for nearly 20 years. Apart from routine tuning and cleaning, Mr. Freese is currently completing a small project to restore a part of the organ that was damaged by water during a severe rainstorm about two years ago. This project also gave us the opportunity to make some modest, but much-needed tonal improvements to the organ.

Please watch this column for more information on how pipe organs work, along with fascinating information on the organs at First & Franklin - past and present!

The anatomy of a pipe organ - more than any other instrument - most closely resembles that of the human voice, in that pressurized air is evenly distributed through vertical columns (pipes) to produce a unique, singing tone. In fact, the parts of an individual organ pipe include the toe, foot, mouth, tongue, upper lip, lower lip, body and resonator! It is no small wonder that the pipe organ has maintained a prominent role in Christian worship for over six centuries. Many pipe organs have the tonal resources of a symphony orchestra and the sustaining power to lead and support congregational singing. In the hands of a gifted organist, the pipe organ is able to undergird and punctuate the many components of a worship service - from its delicate, celestial tones capable of evoking the mysteries of God, to its awe-inspiring majesty that lifts our minds, spirits and gazes heavenward.

## 5TH ANNUAL BALTIMORE PIANO MARATHON

Sunday, May 2, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

Join us for an abbreviated, *virtual* piano marathon.

Five extraordinary local pianists will each offer a 25-minute program, including opening remarks on the music they have selected.

- Michael Angelucci - Matthew Palumbo -  
- Tian Lu & Yury Shadrin - Michael Sheppard -

*Music of Chopin, Huffman, Beethoven, and more!*

Join on Zoom, Facebook Live or YouTube; see [The Spire Series Facebook page](#) for details. How can you support the Spire Series?  
Buy a "virtual" ticket to help us pay the artists & sustain our programming.



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## LUNCH with CHRIS IN THE COURTYARD THURSDAYS 12 NOON – 2 PM

Weather, of course, will want to help us connect despite the need for a full all-clear on Covid. So please call ahead to the office and let us know if you would like to bring a lunch and share a bit of time to get acquainted with the interim minister. No serious agenda necessary, though if you have one, fine—we can chew on it together!



### 2021 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Over the past four weeks, we've heard meditations from many members of our congregation about what it means to them to give to First & Franklin -- and all that our community has given them in return. We hope that their words have inspired you to think about how you see God at work in this place and in your own life.

Now, as we begin to enter the next season in the life of the church, we humbly ask that you help us plan this community's financial future. Sometime in the past month, you received an invitation in the mail to make your pledge for June 2021-July 2022. You can pledge by mailing the enclosed card back to the church office, or you can fill out our online pledge card at [this link](#).

However you choose to give, and whatever amount makes sense for your household, your gift will be vital to the ongoing work of our congregation in our community and the wider world. If you choose to pledge, please do so by **Friday, May 14**. We'll celebrate Stewardship Sunday in May with a socially distant gathering, and we look forward to expressing our gratitude in person.

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## INTERIM TASKS/ FOCAL CONCERNS

Interim pastors are hired by the Session, not the full congregation, subject to approval by the Presbytery of Baltimore, which also hires a firm to vet the candidate. Most candidates will have specific interim training on how best to accomplish or act on the following matters:

1. Listen and respond to emotions around previous pastor's departure with pastoral care; help congregation's leadership address un-finished business or conflicts;
2. Renewal/re-affirmation of identity, mission, values; find consensus on past stages of congregational life and achievements whenever possible (This would include assessing impacts of covid period as well);
3. Recognize and support changes in leadership to respond to changes in church and community, those changes to be summarized in a mission study and statement for F&F and Baltimore Presbytery;
4. Reconnecting as needed with presbytery/ denomination, community, and ecumenical partners and projects;
5. Identifying goals and next pastor/staff skill sets needed, preparing for the election of a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC--tho not staffing it), and staying till 1 month before new pastor starts.

Particular to First & Franklin:

6. Strategies on finances and buildings may call for project task force(s) in addition to the new committee structure, and/or a vision team w/interim pastor (IP) to draft the mission study.

For a fuller account of the interim process, its rules and expectations, see the Presbytery of Baltimore website, section from the Committee on Ministry manual: <https://baltimorepresbytery.org/ministry-resources/>

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## A SAD FAREWELL to Taylor



It is with heavy hearts that we have accepted Taylor Brooks' resignation as our Audio Engineer and master-of-all-things-tech! Taylor will be relocating to Richmond, VA at the end of April to join the Army [likely the National Reserves] where he will be stationed for four years before realizing his goal to attend medical school in the future.

Please join us in thanking him for his service to our congregation, not only as a valued staff member, but also a member of this congregation where he served as one of our Deacons in recent years. He will be dearly missed and we wish him all the best in his relocation and thank him for his willingness to serve our country.

## FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

Thanks to your continued generosity, the Food Pantry has been able to weekly meet the needs of our neighbors.

We continue to staff a food pantry in Reid Chapel every Saturday from 12:00- 2:00 p.m. There is a growing flow of neighbors with whom we are building relationships. We have built connections with residents at Westminster House for whom we drop off additional bags of food for those who cannot make the walk to Reid Chapel.

The good news is that we have seen a lessening of need, from 30+bags to around 20 bags shared each week. The sad news is that the need for food assistance still exists in our neighborhood. Your food and monetary donations support the church's ability to share God's love, which is a blessing for all.



Please continue to choose food items from the following list plus any items that you think would make meals a little special (such as condiments). Personal items are also excepted, such as soaps, shampoos, and feminine personal products. Peanut butter and jelly are items we try to pack in every bag and thus they run out first.

Please only send unopened containers and paper or plastic bags are needed for packing.

### Here is the list of foods we try to provide:

Apple sauce, canned fruit and dried fruit  
Rice and beans, Peanut butter and jelly  
Cereal or oatmeal and canned or powdered milk  
Tuna fish and other canned meats  
Spaghetti or pasta and tomato sauce  
Soup, Canned vegetables, Popcorn and cookies  
Paper towels, Toilet paper

How else can you help? We need volunteers to help collect and distribute food every Saturday. Sabrina Schumann is coordinating the volunteers. You may reach her by email at [ssschuma@gmail.com](mailto:ssschuma@gmail.com) or phone 240-481-6929. You can also help by spreading the word to those you know who are facing food insecurity.

Thank you, The Peacemaking Committee

*(Note: under the new Committee structure, this venerable committee is part of Education & Mission)*

## BREAD for the WORLD

Did you know:

- 270+ million people are facing extreme hunger – up from 135 million before the pandemic?
- 1 in 4 kids are at risk of hunger in the U.S.?
- 40% of Black and Latino families struggle with feeding their children?

The Peacemaking/Education committee is asking you to participate in the annual Bread for the World's **Offering of Letters** during the month of May. Bread for the World is a collective Christian Voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger here and abroad. The Offering of Letters Campaign is their annual invitation to pick up a pen to encourage our leaders to support legislation that impacts hungry and poor people.

Watch this space next month for more information about how we can make a difference.

## Share YOUR Good News and Ideas!

We would love to receive and share your news in the upcoming Newsletters. What would you like to see? Do you have milestone events to share – graduations, weddings, family updates? Please send them to the church office. You can call, email or use the Contact Us link on the website to send information to Wanda.

