

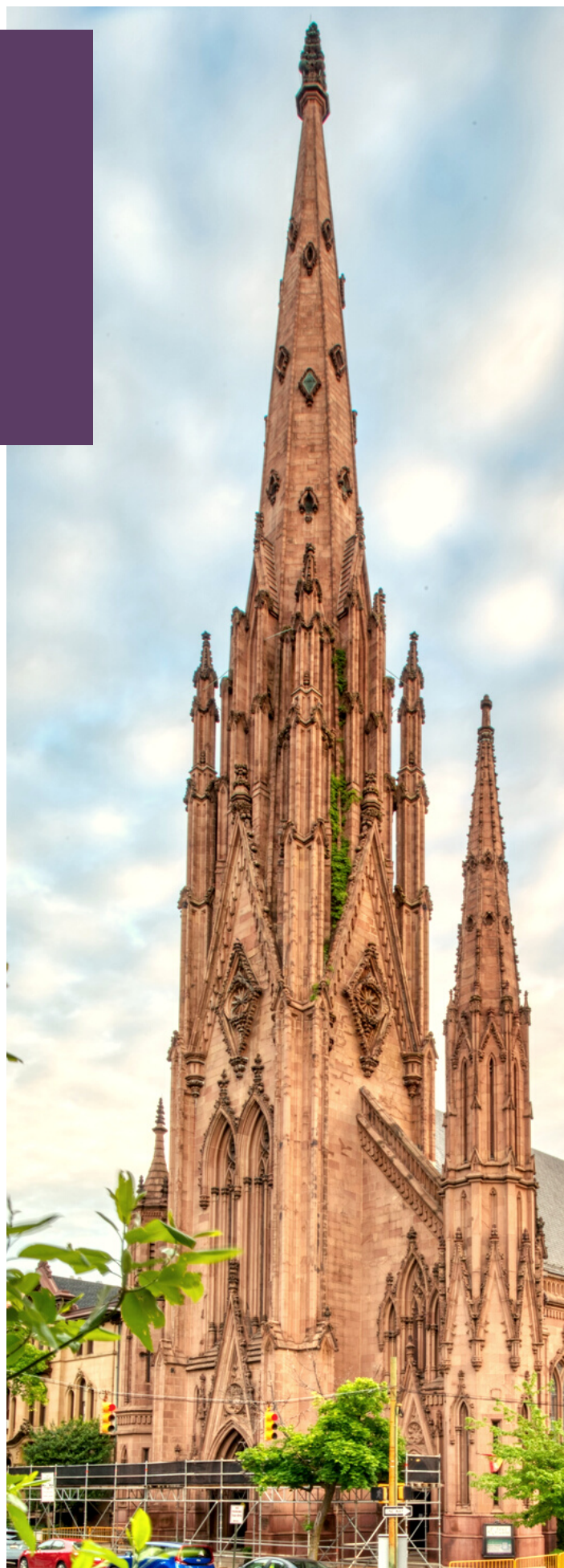
AUGUST 2023 NEWSLETTER

FIRST & FRANKLIN

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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AUGUST CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

Jyotirai Pucino Amin
Onyeka Anaedozie
Martha Armenti
Charley Boynton
Stephen Clark
Rhonda Cooper
Wallace Costa
Anne Culbertson
Paul Fowler
Madge Franklin
Linda Holfelder
Don Juedes
Darius Sanders
Doug Savin
Jim Sinclair
Bryce St. Clair
Geoff Wadsworth

ANNIVERSARIES

Rol Anders
& Audrey Suhr

Rev. Rhonda Cooper
& John Wolford

BLESSINGS OF A BLOWN TIRE

Originally Posted on October 17, 2012

From the moment I left First Presbyterian Church in Montrose, Colorado (135 mountain miles from home) on Monday, August 27 after the Committee on Ministry meeting, until I pulled into home in Cortez, CO some 6 1/2 hours later, I felt like good ole Charlie Brown. It seemed I had a black rain cloud only over my head – Good Grief! But you know what? In all that grief, I couldn't help but thank the Lord.

As I pulled out of First Presbyterian, my car felt funny. I no sooner made it to the main road when I could hardly steer it anymore. I pulled into a parking lot and found my left-front tire was completely blown out. Rats! I pulled out the jack and the tire iron and went to work. The lugs came right off. The car jacked up beautifully. And the tire was stuck solid tight. A Good Samaritan and I worked on it and were forced to give up.

I called my USAA roadside assistance for help. Assured of a mechanic in just a few minutes. I waited and waited and waited. Then he pulled up in an old Mercedes Benz. He said he wouldn't need his tools. Well, he couldn't get the tire off either. Just when he was about to go back for his truck, the tire popped off.

The spare was low on air. The mechanic followed me to Big O Tire in Montrose, about a half mile from where I turned off. A kid who must have been in his early twenties waited on me. He looked about 17 and seemed even younger as he told me off! "You shouldn't be too mad, look at how bald all your tires are." "Yeah. Yeah. Yeah." I asked him for four mid-grade all-weather Goodyears that came with a rebate. He had three. So, we went with four from company I never heard of but had 100,000 mile guarantee and came with a sizable rebate.

Then the youngster said, "We are backed up two hours, but don't worry, we will get you out by the time we close at 6:00." O heavens, 6:00! That would get me driving in the mountains in the dark. I don't see as well as most people in the dark.

Almost the moment he said the above, the rain clouds rolled into Montrose. I decided I needed a walk. I gave him my cell phone number and took off down the road. It was a nice walk. I stopped the Russell Stover's candy store, because I knew they gave free samples, and Home Depot, because it is always interesting in there. [Continued]

I arrived back at Big O at 3:45 ready to wait, and found my car was already on the rack. The guys got me out of there at 4:15. I would get home in the sunshine. Well, maybe not. It started to rain again as I left Montrose. Thunderstorms followed me all the way. Flash! Crack! Buckets of Rain! It all stopped at about the time I pulled into Cortez. It was a loooooong day.

You know, though I couldn't help but thank God for the blessings I kept seeing through that black old cloud. I blew out in Montrose only a few blocks from Big O. I could have had a problem on Lizardhead Pass. A very nice man tried to help. The mechanic was also very nice and did a great job getting that tire off. I caught a sale on four beautiful brand-new tires rather than paying the long "out of town" price. I enjoyed Russell Stover's and the free samples. In the rain coming home, I felt like an Formula One racer as I zipped along and I was loving it. If I had been on the baldies, I would have skidded and slid and heaven knows what. By the end of that long day, I wasn't really good ole Charlie Brown. I was still Steve, a grateful child of God.

I encourage anyone going through "stuff" (and we are all going through stuff like heart attacks – for cornsake!) to see the blessings even in the midst of it all and shout out with the Apostle Paul: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ." – Ephesians 1:3

Grace and Peace, Pastor Steve Nofel

AUGUST 2023 CALENDAR

- 08/01 Tue 7:00pm-8:30pm | Peacemaking Committee Meeting
- 08/05 Sat 10:00am-4:00pm | Gun Buyback Event
- 08/05 Sat 1:00pm-3:00pm | No Food Pantry
- 08/06 Sun 10:30am-11:30am | Guest Preacher: Rev. Rhonda Cooper
- 08/09 Wed 5:30pm-7:00pm | Finance Committee Meeting
- 08/09 Wed 7:00pm-8:00pm | Membership Committee Meeting
- 08/12 Sat 1:00pm-3:00pm | Food Pantry (Backus)
- 08/13 Sun 10:30am-11:30am | Bridge Pastor: Rev. Steve Nofel (Communion)
- 08/15 Tue 7:00pm-8:30pm | Education Committee Meeting
- 08/17 Thu 6:30pm-8:30pm | Building and Grounds Committee Meeting
- 08/19 Sat 1:00pm-3:00pm | Food Pantry (Backus)
- 08/20 Sun 10:30am-11:30am | Guest Preacher: Rev. Kim Nofel
- 08/21 Mon 5:30pm-7:30pm | Worship, Music, and Arts Committee Meeting
- 08/22 Tue 6:30pm-8:30pm | Session Meeting
- 08/26 Sat 1:00pm-3:00pm | No Food Pantry
- 08/27 Sun 10:30am-11:30am | Bridge Pastor: Rev. Steve Nofel

SO-LONG TO SUMMER!

First & Franklin will hold a Homecoming Picnic on Sunday, September 10th, to welcome back members, friends, and the Sanctuary Choir after this busy summer season. After our worship service at 10:30am, we will have lunch in Reid Chapel. This is a time to reconnect with our church family, share about your travels, and enjoy a delicious meal, courtesy of the Membership Committee. We invite guests to bring a side dish to share. All are welcome!



FROM BALTIMORE TO SOUTH DAKOTA

The Presbytery Group, which includes First & Franklin members Steve and Becca Hollaway, Marla Holt, and J Hyph, arrived safely in South Dakota on Saturday, July 22nd. Their goal was to provide educational classes that can help lead to opportunities for the Dakota children. The group enjoyed a potluck dinner with their hosts and worshiped with the Dakota Church. They returned on July 29th.

TAKE OFF TO TAGUASCO

It's time to pick the dates for a visit with our partner church in Taguasco, Cuba. If you would like more information or are considering attended please call Betty Schroll at 410-647-2755 or by email bettyschroll@verizon.net.



EN ROUTE TO ACCESSIBILITY

Construction for the new ADA-compliant bathroom commenced in Reid Chapel on July 1st. So far, C. Moore Builders, Inc. has removed and relocated the marble statue in the narthex, demolished existing walls and framed the new walls, and installed plumbing and electric. We anticipate the project will be completed by Labor Day.

COFFEE HOUR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We currently have no volunteers to provide coffee hour refreshments on Sundays from August 13th through September 3rd. Members with the last name S-Z are encouraged to sign up. It only costs about \$10-15- enough to provide snacks for 20-25 people. A cake, pie, or pastry, a box of crackers, some bite size fruit, bread and jam, cheese, cookies - two or three of these items are a perfect choice! Any questions? Contact information@firstfranklin.org or call the church office at (410) 728-5545.



GETTING GUNS OFF THE STREET



August 5 is quickly approaching as we finish planning for our second Gun Buy-Back event. It will be held from 10:00am-4:00pm at Edmondson Village Shopping Center. This year we have partnered with the Archdiocese of Baltimore through Father Mike Murphy. He has been inspirational with his larger view of reaching out to Baltimore's west side by sponsoring a community festival simultaneously. The fair will include community speakers, health care services, free food, and music. The Baltimore Police will be on hand to handle and store the weapons. If you'd like to support our efforts, please consider posting our flyer (located in the narthex) in your neighborhood, or volunteer at the event to support clean up and other logistical needs.

ART UNDER THE SPIRE RETURNS

Art Under the Spire returned to First & Franklin on Friday, July 28th. The first installation is 25 watercolors by artist Scott Ponemone, which are being displayed in support of our Guns 2 Gardens program and the Gun Buy-back Event on August 5th. The exhibition is divided by the Reid Chapel's three walls. One wall, the "Guns," are the heart of the exhibition. They feature seven Target paintings, each showing a gun-range target held aloft by a person's arms. The opposite wall displays eight paintings of vegetables or young animals- the "Gardens" of the exhibition. On the third wall will images of infants, who are the witnesses to this world of "Guns" and "Gardens."



TOGETHER FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

On Tuesday, July 4th, 2023, First & Franklin members and friends got together for an Independence Day cookout in the church courtyard. The church provided hamburgers, hot dogs, and lemonade, and guests brought side dishes to share.



FEEDING THOSE WHO FEED THE HUNGRY

On Sunday, July 9th, the Peacemaking Committee hosted a picnic for the volunteers of the First & Franklin Food Pantry to say “thank you” for their dedication and kindness in serving our neighbors. The volunteers were grateful for the celebration, and felt the decorations, volunteer quotes, and gifts given by Judy Dadds were lovely.

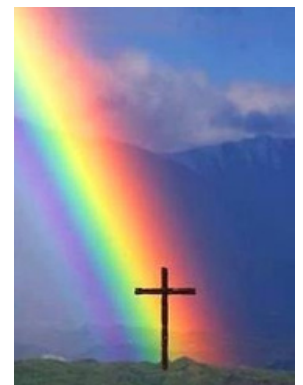
DONATE TO THE FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry continues to be an outreach to those in our community facing food insecurity. We have seen a small growth in numbers with a couple days reaching 40 people. Our volunteers continue to work hard in the heat while lovingly and respectfully communicating with our guests. Please consider donating canned goods to help tide our neighbors over from week to week. Cereal (hot or cold), dry milk, crackers, salad dressing, or toilet paper- All are needed and welcomed. Thank you!



ADULT ED GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

On Sunday September 10, Adult Ed will resume in Backus House at 9:00am with The Bible & Sexuality, Part II. In June, we worked to lay the groundwork for how we ought to approach our sacred story and began to delve through the "seven deadly texts" that have been used to set the church's sexual ethic and condemn LGBTQ individuals. In September, we will resume where we left off, continuing our journey through the Bible before wrapping up our guided discussion with questions about the role of the church and the nature of sexual ethics for First & Franklin. Anyone and everyone is welcome and encouraged to join and participate, regardless of where you find yourself on this issue of sexuality. You do not need to have been part of the June discussion to attend. Please contact either the church office or Kris Stinson for the study packet that class is using. As always, there will be donuts and coffee to fuel our discussion!





GETTING ALONG SWIMMINGLY

On Friday, July 21st, members Frank McNeil and Paul Fowler graciously opened up their home to their First & Franklin family for a pool party. It was the perfect opportunity to get to know each other and spend time in community outside of our usual Sunday routine. Thanks to everyone who came, and to our generous hosts!

SOUNDS TO INSPIRE

First & Franklin's Spire Series is proud to share the line-up for our 2023-2024 concert season! This program is committed to building community through the presentation of extraordinary performance artists in one of Baltimore's most beautiful sacred spaces. The series features local, national, and international talent and includes both free and paid concerts. If you'd like to be among the first to know about future seasons and special events, please consider becoming a Donor Subscriber. Besides being a valued donor, you will be helping to support great music in a great space along with educational opportunities for students. Contact Jason Kissel at jkissel@firstfranklin.org or visit firstfranklin.org for more information!



Sunday, October 1 | 3:00pm Joshua Espinoza Trio

Latino-American jazz pianist Joshua Espinoza blends and bends genres into songs that are immediately relatable yet hard to define. He has performed with such luminaries as Sean Jones, Warren Wolf, Miho Hazama, Jihye Lee, and Chuck Redd. Alongside bassist Kris Monson and drummer Jaron Lamar Davis, the Joshua Espinoza Trio explores the undefined space between jazz improvisation, classical chamber music, pop music, and folk traditions. His debut album "Journey Into Night" is available on all platforms.

Friday, November 3 | 7:30pm S'amusant

S'amusant is one of Baltimore's newest musical ensembles, featuring extraordinary artists Wade Davis (cello), Patrick Merrill (harpsichord), and Melissa Wimbish (soprano). The group's program, *Dreams and Fantasies* will cross boundaries from its early music roots to explore the music of Beethoven, Schumann, and Arvo Pärt. The group says, "Our mission is to perform this music with style and panache, and to have fun while doing it."





Sunday, December 10 | 4:00pm Candlelight Choral Concert

The First & Franklin Sanctuary Choir, directed by Jason Kissel, will present their annual Candlelight Choral Concert on Sunday, December 10th, 2023 at 4:00pm. This yearly tradition celebrates the holiday season with choral literature and carols, as well as support from gifted harpist and friend of the choir Jacqueline Pollauf. Join us in the glow of the candlelight to revel in music, beauty, and the joy of Christmas.

Friday, March 8 | 7:30pm Karen Slack, soprano Mark Markham, piano

Hailed for possessing a voice of extraordinary beauty, a seamless legato and great dramatic depth, American soprano Karen Slack has garnered international renown for her artistic versatility, charisma and entrepreneurial endeavors. A recipient of the 2022 Sphinx Medal of Excellence, Slack is known for her dynamic and passionate performances in both lead operatic roles and on the concert stage; as a sought-after collaborator, curator, and artistic advisor; and for her ground-breaking approach to engagement.

Pianist Mark Markham is widely recognized as one of the great artists of his generation. His international career encompasses performances in North and South America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Equally at home as a soloist, a collaborator with some of the finest singers in the world, a jazz pianist, or a vocal coach, his interpretations have been praised by the public and press alike. The Baltimore Sun praised his performance of Liszt and Chopin for his “big, rich tone,” “abundant power” and “sensitively using a wide palate of tone coloring.”



Friday, April 12 | 7:30 pm
Svet Stoyanov, percussion

Praised by the New York Times for his “understated but unmistakable virtuosity” along with a “winning combination of gentleness and fluidity,” Svet Stoyanov is a driving force in modern percussion. Winner of the prestigious Concert Artists Guild International Competition, Svet was also presented with the Johns Hopkins University Alumni Award. He has been a featured concerto soloist with the Chicago, Seattle, and the American Symphony Orchestras, as well as solo performances in Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center and Taiwan National Concert Hall. Svet returns to The Spire Series with a dazzling program that will showcase the full spectrum of sound through a wide variety of instruments!



Thursday, May 23 | 7:00 pm
Armstrong Honors Recital

The Spire Series is proud to host its close neighbor, Baltimore School for the Arts, for the annual Armstrong Honors Recital. This special event showcasing select members of the graduating class of 2024, is named for one of Baltimore’s great educators and BSA founder, Margaret Armstrong. Admission to this event is free.

Sunday, June 2 | 3:00 pm
Prelude to Pride
Paul Bisaccia, piano

Paul Bisaccia is the first artist to have recorded the complete solo piano music of Gershwin, and his PBS television special Gershwin by Bisaccia has been broadcast throughout the U.S. and viewed by millions. The American Record Guide says, “For Gershwin interpretations, Bisaccia wins hands down.” Michael Feinstein calls Paul Bisaccia and the Great American Piano his second television show for PBS, “imaginative, fun, well played and totally satisfying.” It is fitting, then, that Bisaccia's all-Gershwin program for The Spire Series will feature the beloved composer's Rhapsody in Blue.

