

MAY 2023 NEWSLETTER

FIRST & FRANKLIN

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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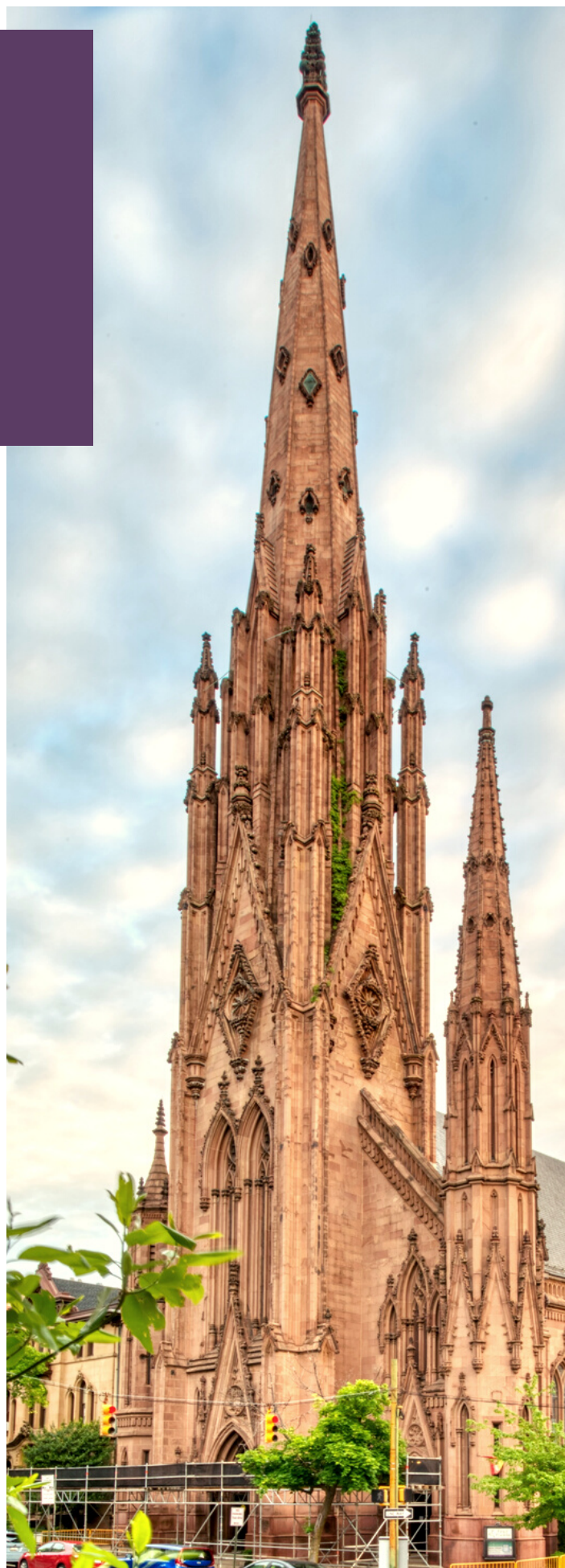
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PNC UPDATES

The Ministry Information Form (MIF) for the Pastor position here at First and Franklin is live on the Church Leadership Connection website! The PNC has begun reviewing matching and referral Pastor Information Forms (PIF). For those less familiar with the terminology, the MIF is essentially our 'job posting' and a PIF is a pastor's resume. As a reminder, this is a confidential process, we cannot discuss any specifics or candidates. However, we will keep you updated with numbers as we go along in the process. To date, we have received 28 PIFs. Please keep this search and our committee in your prayers as we move through this process.

COFFEE HOUR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are still needed to provide coffee hour refreshments on May 14th and June 11th. Members with the last name L-R 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.



First & Franklin's Sanctuary Choir

MAY CELEBRATIONS BIRTHDAYS

Deborah McCrimmon
Christine Wallace
David Dadds
John Kyle
Judy Dadds
Ron Pate
Frank McClelland
Denise Brandon
Laura Oldham
Sam Quigg
Mary Washington
Jim Harvey
Sandra Smith
Mary Anagnost
Dottie LaPenta
Susan Haugh

ANNIVERSARIES

Becky Brown & Tom Scuderi
Jim Harvey & John Johnston
Rev. Susan & James Haugh
Laura Oldham & Beth Seeley
Kara & Lee Schenk

GRADUATIONS

Steve Hollaway
University of Baltimore
M.F.A. in Creative Writing
& Publishing Arts

Jacob Noffsinger
University of Maryland - College Park
B.A. in Economics



AAA COMPLETES SEMESTER WORK ON HODGE HOUSE

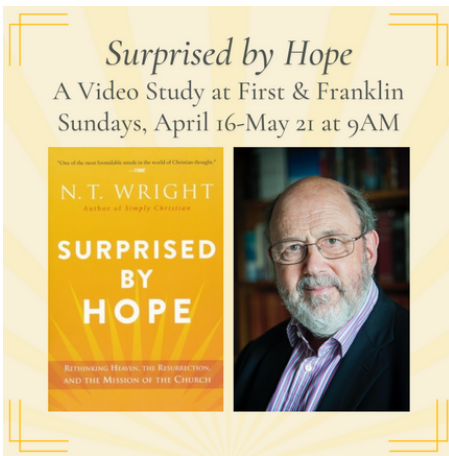
The Accomplished Arts Apprenticeship (AAA) program founded by the Peale Museum will complete its Spring Semester at the end of May. AAA aims to increase equity in preservation trades with specific focus on people from marginalized communities in Baltimore. Apprentices receive hands-on training in historic preservation and the program teaches professional as well as life skills. The trades skills being taught in this program lead to well-paid, meaningful careers that don't require a college degree but are both financially and creatively rewarding, helping strengthen and preserve communities and their cultural heritage. The apprentices restored 4 windows on the campus of First & Franklin using historically accurate materials and processes. They plan on returning in late Fall to continue their training with new students.



AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT DISPLAY

Two sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on display in Reid Chapel beginning May 21. The quilts will play a part in Sunday services that day. They will remain in Reid Chapel though the end of June. The display will commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the scourge of AIDS in Baltimore, and the pivotal part First & Franklin played in that history. On April 27th, 1983, the first AIDS Support Group in Baltimore outside of a clinical environment was held in Reid Chapel. On June 8, 1983 the first public AIDS Crisis meeting was held at First & Franklin to an audience of more than 300 people. In the following decades First & Franklin was a leader in the social justice movement for equality of LGBTQ+ people. As one of the first "More Light" churches in the country, First & Franklin began passing of the peace so that AIDS patients who attended worship would be touched physically by someone. The church also founded the AIDS Interfaith Network to support AIDS patients in need. We consistently worked with others to change the Book of Order regarding the ordination of gay and lesbian people, began performing same sex "weddings" in the 1980s, and filed an Amicus Brief in the case for same sex marriage in the state of Maryland. The quilts and First & Franklin will be a feature of one of Baltimore Heritage's "Five Minute History" videos, the week of May 22nd.

VIDEO STUDY: *SURPRISED BY HOPE*

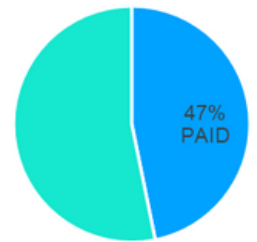


If Jesus was resurrected, does that mean that we will be resurrected too? What do the Bible and Christian tradition actually say about heaven and what happens after death? Through the month of May, the Adult Forum will discuss these issues in N. T. Wright's book *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*. Wright is probably the best-known New Testament scholar in the world, and the most prolific with 100+ books. Reading the book is optional. Each session will begin at 9:00 AM in Backus House with a 16-minute video presentation by N. T. Wright. We're meeting in May in Backus House because the AIDS Quilt is in Reid Chapel. Steve Hollaway is leading our discussions.

2023 PER CAPITA PARTICIPATION

First & Franklin is preparing to submit our annual Per Capita fee to the Presbytery of Baltimore and it is based on our membership rolls. Currently, we have less than 50% of our membership participating. This fee is split between the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly, allowing them to provide valuable resources and support for our various church needs. For instance, the Presbytery provides our Pastor Nominating Committee with information and administrative assistance that helps immensely with the Pastor search process. This year First & Franklin will pay \$40 Per Capita fee on behalf of each church member. For this reason, we encourage those who are able to make a designated Per Capita contribution of \$40 per person to help cover the cost of this annual fee. If you feel called to support First & Franklin and the Presbytery of Baltimore in this way, please send your contribution in an envelope labeled with your name and "Per Capita." These envelopes can be sent to the church office or placed in the offering plates on Sunday morning. You can also use this link to pay online: <http://www.firstfranklin.org/percapita>. Visit <https://baltimorepresbytery.org/per-capita/> for more information about Per-Capita giving.

Per Capita 2023
Participation



FLOWER MART OUTING

On Saturday, May 6th at 2PM, we invite you to join us for a group outing to the Annual Flower Mart in Mt. Vernon. We will meet in the M&T Bank parking lot across from the church, as there will be a wedding in the sanctuary that day. The Flower Mart features blooms, as well as plant, craft and food vendors, educational workshops, a hat contest, and musical performances. Additionally, we would like to identify ourselves as fellow Mt. Vernon citizens from First & Franklin, so the church will provide name tags. We will also have handouts for the crowd if anyone has questions. Please RSVP by 5/5 online or on the sign up sheet in the narthex.





BREAD FOR THE WORLD

Bread for the World is a Christian advocacy organization urging people of faith to join their voices together and speak on behalf of those who suffer from a lack of food. For over 20 years, First & Franklin has set aside time to advocate for policies and programs that can help end hunger in the U.S. and around the world. After church on Sundays April 30 and May 7, plan to spend a few minutes in Reid Chapel writing letters to our political leaders addressing policies that can make a difference. Pens, stationary, and information will be supplied. Every voice matters. With your support, we can make hunger a problem of the past.

SISSETON LEARNING CAMP RAFFLE

We have ten people who are going to lead the learning camp in Sisseton SD this July, five of them from our church. We have been given a quilt made by one of the Dakota men. We hope to raffle it to help cover expenses for the team. Tickets will be \$5 each or 3 for \$10. The quilt will be in Reid Chapel during coffee hour. Please see Marla Holt or Becca Hollaway to get your tickets. Checks should be made out to the Presbytery of Baltimore with the memo line for Sisseton Learning Camp but cash is welcome. Drawing will be held on July 16th.



FOOD PANTRY UPDATES

In the month of April, the Food Pantry distributed over 94 bags of groceries and 69 bags of produce to members of the Mt. Vernon Community. The numbers varied from previous months due to the Easter holiday, but the need for these services is greater than ever, with the ending of COVID nutrition support programs. Due to the AIDS Quilt Display, the Food Pantry has moved to Backus House and will distribute food at the door on 210 W Madison Street. We will return to our usual location in Reid Chapel at the end of June. Here is a note from one of our most dedicated volunteers, Randy Veale: *“Being there since day one in June of 2020, it is truly a great feeling giving back to my community as a resident for 35 years, although I have lived in Baltimore City all my life.”*

SERENITY BY 10:20

On Sunday, May 7, immediately after worship, the Worship, Music, & Arts Committee invites members and friends to attend a short walk-through orientation on how to prepare the Sanctuary for worship. Tasks include things like placing linens, flowers, and offering plates in the proper places, and lighting candles. We will be led by our Sexton, George Meagher, and by experienced volunteers. The orientation will also be streamed for those who cannot attend in person. Please join us!





FROM ELEGANCE TO EXTRAVAGANCE

On Friday, April 21, 2023, the Spire Series hosted violinist Jessica Tong and pianist Michael Sheppard for a concert program titled "From Elegance to Extravagance." The dynamic duo played four exceptional pieces by Franz Schubert, Francis Poulenc, Lili Boulanger, and Richard Strauss which showcased the full breadth of their expressive capabilities. Following the concert, an artist reception was held in Reid Chapel, where attendees were able to enjoy refreshments and rub shoulders with Jessica and Michael. Thank you to the Spire Series Donor Subscribers for making events like this possible.

BSA: ARMSTRONG HONORS RECITAL

On Thursday, May 25, 2023 at 7:00pm, The Spire Series at First & Franklin will host The Armstrong Honors Recital by the Baltimore School for the Arts. This concert will feature selected students of the Class of 2023 and is named for one of Baltimore's great educators and BSA founder, Margaret Armstrong. Admission to this event is free. For more information: <https://www.bsfa.org/event/armstrong-honors-recital-3>



PRELUDE TO PRIDE

On Sunday, June 4, 2023 at 4:00pm, The Spire Series at First & Franklin will host pianist Sara Davis Buechner for a very special concert titled "Prelude to Pride." Noted for her musical command, cosmopolitan artistry, and visionary independence, Baltimore native Sara Davis Buechner makes a long overdue return to her hometown. She is one of the most original concert pianists and storytellers of our time, and as a proud transgender woman, it is most fitting that Sara would help us kick off 2023's Pride Festivities. Learn more about this incredible artist at <http://saradavisbuechner.com/>

POETRY READING: TIN EAR

The Music, Worship, and Arts Committee invites you to a poetry reading and book signing at noon on Sunday, May 28, in the church courtyard. Steve Hollaway will read from his just-released book of poems, Tin Ear. These poems reflect his concerns as a 70-year-old – in particular the experience of hearing loss and tinnitus. The language of faith permeates the book but it is not the faith of youth. Refreshments will be provided and there will be a chance for Q&A.





ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL

On Saturday, May 13th from 10am-4pm, there will be an arts & crafts festival in the lovely courtyard of the Village of Cross Keys. Join Laura Oldham & TURNING TRUE STUDIOS for a fabulous day for shopping small and supporting local artisans, makers and entrepreneurs as we pop-up with 50+ local vendors. A great opportunity to shop for Mother's Day, too!

FIRST & FRANKLIN IN HISTORY

May 12, 1779 - Colonel Paul Bentalou, founding member of First & Franklin, fought with General Pulaski as a Captain of 1st Troop Dragoons.

May 15, 1791 - The third church was completed on the same site as the previous church.

May 9, 1860 - The Constitutional Union Party (from the Southern States who opposed secession) held a convention in our old church - with Sam Houston of Texas in attendance!

May 30, 2020 - The proclamation of the endorsement of the Black Lives Matter movement.



A LETTER SHARED BY JOHN MCLUCAS

I'm attaching the monthly magazine from St. Columba's Church of Scotland, London. Notice p. 4, where they feature my letter about visiting them on Sunday, March 12. I got a great response just now from their pastor, Rev. Angus McLeod. Blessed be the tie that binds!



Dear Friends,

Greetings from Baltimore, USA

I was deeply touched by my visit to your service this past Sunday morning and by the warm welcome I received. I have been an ordained elder in my congregation, First & Franklin Presbyterian in Baltimore, Maryland, since 1990 or so, and am currently serving a term on Session. It felt like home to worship in such a familiar, orderly, focused, and uplifting style. Particular highlights were my long conversation with Rev. MacLeod, the sharing of Communion with him and Elder Heather, and delightful talks with a couple of congregants over tea afterwards. The materials your greeters and pastor shared with me are beautifully clear and thought provoking. I will pray through the rest of this Lenten season using the wonderful book you are using. I will convey your greetings to my own church this coming Sunday, and promise to visit every time I come to London. Any and all of your people will always be welcome at First & Franklin.

*Peace,
John McLucas*



EASTER FESTIVITIES

This year, First & Franklin continued one of it's many beloved Easter traditions- an Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt. Paul F and Frank M hosted the breakfast in Backus House, which featured mini-casseroles, as well as a number of delicious dishes brought by guests. Judy D arranged the Easter festivities for our Sunday Schoolers. Thank you to Beth for the beautiful photos.



1st row, left to right: Nkem, Nonso, Sophia, Evan, Don, Sophia, Judy.

2nd row: Nkem, Nonso, Evan, Sophia.

3rd row: Judy, David, Kris, Steve, Becca.

4th row: Paul, Sophia, Diana, Allie.

