



FIRST & FRANKLIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

COMMUNITY *News*

NOVEMBER 2021



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

WORSHIP CALENDAR

November 7: Church of All Saints and Sinners
Memorial Listing for All Saints Day
Sirach 44: 1-15. Hebrews 11: 32—12: 2.

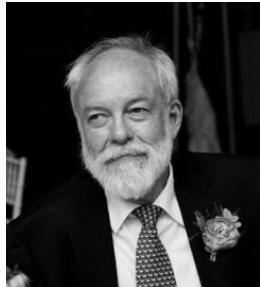
November 14: Flesh and Blood are not Enough
Jeremiah 37: 11-21.
I Corinthians 4: 8-21.

November 21: Family Systems, Family Table
Genesis 48: 8-22. Matthew 10: 26-39.

Nov. 28: Advent: Our Future without Fatalism
Jeremiah 33: 14-16. Luke 21: 25-38.

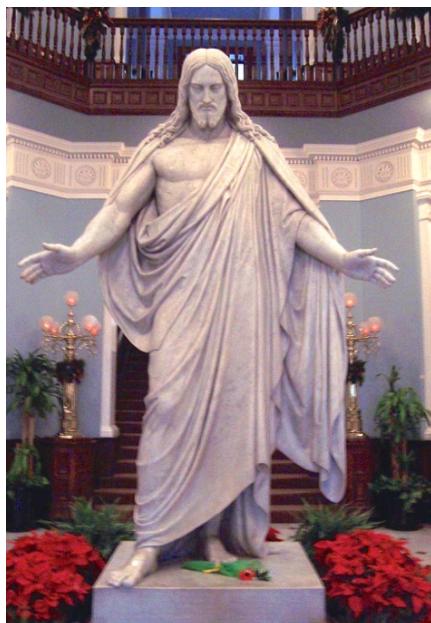
December 5: Preparing to Stand and Withstand
Malachi 3: 1-7. Luke 3: 1-14.

HOPE AND HERITAGE



Two weeks ago, five grand-daughters of William Wallace Spence visited the church to see the two Tiffany stained-glass windows done in honor of him and his wife. Two of the grand-daughters are by marriage, but the five (there's even a sixth, not present) were doing a bit of history with their get together, gathering from across the country. It reminded me of how my wife and her four co-sisters-in-law get together a bit independently of me and my brothers.

I had not known that Mr. Spence (1815-1915) had left such a significant mark on Baltimore. His home was where the Armory stands between Howard and Bolton Streets—the name of his house is now the name of the neighborhood and hill. He gave the Christus Consolator statue that stands at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, and the statue of William Wallace (1270-1305), the Scottish patriot (*Braveheart*), that overlooks Druid Lake. Along with such members as the Browns, the Murdochs, the McLanahans, the Pattersons, and the Reids, he was among the “Enterprising Presbyterians of Baltimore” recognized in an historical exhibit. See: <https://portraitcollection.jhmi.edu/portraits/spence-william-wallace>



Why this detail now? Because we will be welcoming some new members in November. The Session meets with them first, and then they stand before the congregation in worship. They, and not Mr. Spence, represent the future of Christ's witness in this place. But it is a false dichotomy to split hope and heritage.

Continued next page

Recently I went through the Kirk Room above the chapel with a former member who remembered some of the items stored there. This person was touched to remember the years of love that were recorded in the books and lavished on some of the objects. Again, the future of our witness is not up in that room—though we hope that the space will be used by a collegial tenant group. For that reason we have moved a lot of the materials to the room across from the church office.

What use is all that history, that core sample of spiritual life going back before the Revolution? It does counter our “chronological snobbery,” whereby we tend to honor the present too much. Ultimately, however, the whole collection of artifacts, books, and pictures is like a complex operating manual for the time machine that is the church.

Our church as symbol and structure is an invitation and container for spiritual exploration by our members and friends, especially the newest. The example of a W.W. Spence means something now that is different from what it did more than 100 years ago. What he undeniably gives us is a combination of Christian faith, expressed in The Divine Healer statue, and courage, expressed in a medieval freedom fighter and martyr.

The Wallace statue plaque carries this quote: “It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but freedom—for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself.” From the Declaration of Arbroath, 1320. It is certainly for that reason why many of our ancestors took up the sword, even if war seems less heroic today.

What the Christ Consolator statue stands for is hope, especially hope of healing. Many patients and hospital staff touch the statue or say a prayer when they see it.

My prayer for the new members is that they see our church as a brave enterprise of hope, and that they may join with us in Christ’s healing work.

See you in church!

Grace and Peace,

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

SESSION GUIDANCE REGARDING MASKS IN WORSHIP

Please be advised that Baltimore City has implemented an indoor mask mandate effective Monday, August 9, 2021, as of 9:00 A.M. for all persons, whether vaccinated or non-vaccinated. As a church we follow the public health guidance, based in science, designed to protect our neighbors and ourselves. Thus this mandate applies to our Narthex/Sanctuary/Chapel and all those attending services, and includes any attendees at church staff and committee meetings, Food Pantry, NA/AA/Al-Anon, weddings, visitors, etc. This mask policy also applies to members, visitors, and staff inside any of our campus buildings for other purposes, until the mandate is lifted.

CALL FOR USHERS, COFFEE-HOUR HOSTS, AND LITURGISTS



We need **YOUR** help to fill our schedule with ushers, liturgists and fellowship or coffee hour hosts (please individually wrap your food items at this time.)

Please consider this donation of your time as part of your gift to your church. Pull out your calendar and let's fill up those open spaces. Please reach out to the Worship Committee or the Church Office to sign up! Sign-up Sheets are also available on Sunday during Fellowship Hour in Reid Chapel.

NEW AUDIO ENGINEER: DANIEL KANTZLER



Daniel Kantzler is a recent graduate of UMBC with a degree in Music Technology. “My parents are from Belarus but I was born in Israel. We came to Baltimore in 2002. Currently I’m pursuing ventures in audio engineering and studying Japanese. In my spare time, I often compose music, practice drawing, and volunteer.”

MISSION STUDY RETREAT NOVEMBER 13, 8:30-NOON, HODGE HOUSE

Re-scheduled from November 6, this retreat will look at what is most important for First & Franklin to be doing in its ministry and programs—its mission. A small group is working with the interim minister on this process of discernment. A Mission Study is required by the Presbytery of Baltimore before a congregation can begin its search process for a new minister. “Mission” is understood broadly as the purposeful activity of the church in response to God’s call. It involves the church’s history, physical assets, finances, patterns of behavior and communication... and it must be self-critical. Ideally, it is not simply to help in writing the church information form that ministers will look at, and to guide Personnel and Nominations in the specifics of the position description, but to help the church see itself more clearly.

We had a Leadership Retreat back in April to look at particular social engagements and programs since the 1960's. That has helped guide us in dealing with the Center in Hodge House and the former Patrick Allison House and Henrietta Lacks House programs in Allison House, and to appreciate the direct service of the Food Pantry today.

Please come if you are curious about where we are as a congregation, or have ideas about what we should be doing. ALL are invited! For food planning reasons, please let the office know by phone or email.

Thank you!
Rev. Christian T. Iosso, Ph.D. Interim Minister

POSSIBLE MISSION OPPORTUNITY: TEMPORARY AFGHAN REFUGEE HOUSING

Earlier this Fall it looked as if Catholic Charities were going to be helping re-settle some of the 575 Afghan refugees coming to Maryland in the near future. The Center had asked First & Franklin to consider partnering with them and the Esperanza Center (related to Catholic Charities) to provide 2-6 weeks of housing for a group, in Hodge House. Recently we have learned that all refugees are going to be hosted through a group related to the international Red Cross. There still may be an opportunity to assist this welcoming process, in a way that would reimburse the church (and possibly Center and/or other churches) for the housing costs. Any proposal will be examined carefully and in relation to the church's commitment to peacemaking and reconciliation

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE – NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE



Food for thought from anonymous social media post:

So, I spent some time at a Food Bank today, and spoke to the people getting food. Here are some things I learned from those in need:

1. Everyone donates Kraft Mac and Cheese in the box. They can rarely use it because it needs milk and butter which is hard to get from regular food banks.
2. Boxed milk is a treasure, as kids need it for cereal which they also get a lot of.
3. Everyone donates pasta sauce and spaghetti noodles.
4. They cannot eat all the awesome canned veggies and soup unless you put a can opener in too or buy pop tops.
5. Oil is a luxury but needed for rice a roni which they also get a lot of.
6. Spices or salt and pepper would be a real Christmas gift.
7. Tea bags and coffee make them feel like you care.
8. Sugar and flour are treats.
9. They fawn over fresh produce donated by farmers and grocery stores.
10. Seeds are cool in spring and summer because growing can be easy for some.
11. They rarely get fresh meat.
12. Tuna and crackers make a good lunch.
13. Hamburger Helper goes nowhere without ground beef.
14. They get lots of peanut butter and jelly but usually not sandwich bread.
15. Butter or margarine is nice too.
16. Eggs are a commodity.
17. Cake mix and frosting makes it possible to make a child's birthday cake.
18. Dishwashing detergent is very expensive and is always appreciated.
19. Feminine hygiene products are a luxury and women will cry over that.
20. Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing.

In all the years I have donated food at the holidays, I bought what I thought they wanted, but have never asked. I am glad I did. If you are helping a family this Christmas, maybe this can help you tailor it more. I do me!

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 1:00- 3:00 p.m.



BIRTHDAYS:

2 - Scott Fulton
2 - Ken Davies
2 - Richard Drought
4 - Joan Gordon
5 - David Wallace
5 - Paula Crews
7 - Max Costa
10 - Amy Pucino
11 - Alec MacGillis
14 - Dorothy Janzen
16 - Iris Hoch
18 - Frank McNeil
20 - Rod Wright
21 - Laurel Oldach
26 - Sasha Koo-Oshima

ANNIVERSARIES

16 - Dottie and Mike LaPenta
17 - Meredith Piplani Smith and Craig Smith
24 - Sam Quigg and James Morgan
27 - Chris Iosso and Robin Hogle
30 - Paul Fowler and Frank McNeil

Did we miss including yours? Please let us know!

Please send YOUR news to the church office to include so we can celebrate together. Graduations, weddings, babies, work changes, new houses, you name it!

ADULT FORUM FEATURES TWO VOCATIONS

On Nov 14, the Rev. Steve Hollaway will take us to see parts of the ministry we do not normally see in his short essay, "Things Ministers Hate." Let office know if you would like a copy emailed to you, or posted. It looks at some of the trickier situations with wisdom and humor.

On Nov 21, Kate Rice, MD, a resident in pathology, will discuss her calling to work with patients she cannot exactly heal. How did she come to this calling, what are its rewards and challenges? In discussing this series earlier in the year, we noted that many of the TV networks have shows that glamorize the detective work done by coroners. Dr. Rice will help us identify the real dramas involved.

This series is expected to alternate with other programs and to feature other members and friends willing to share aspects of their vocations.

Would you be interested?

OPEN DOORS EVENT

By: Mike Johnson



Considering that we were in the midst of a pandemic and the church was literally surrounded by the Baltimore Marathon our event on Saturday on October 9th was a great time. Doors Open Baltimore is a program from the Baltimore Architecture Foundation that once a year gets people out to see fantastic architecture in a city just brimming with fantastic architecture. We opened our doors to people coming in off the sidewalk for 6 hours during the day and hosted two fifty-minute special tours at 1pm and 2pm that covered the history of all the buildings that have housed this congregation from 1761 to the present. Guests also learned the way that the protestant reformation in England and Scotland led to changes in worship spaces.

Our more than a dozen stained glass windows got their place in the sun as well, mostly in response to specific questions. 30 -40 ppl got to see our Food Pantry program in action!!! As they left, one woman asked me why all the Doors Open registered guests were not asked to bring a canned good for the pantry. I didn't think of that, but I may contact DOB to pass on that request. What made the event really work was the teamwork behind it. Three or four of us gathered at 9:30 in the morning to blow up colorful balloons to tie to the scaffolding and make signs to make our facade look as inviting as possible to passersby. All day long, members of the congregation welcomed guests, answered questions, gave out our brand new brochures and kept the energy level high. Please consider volunteering for a few hours next time. It's really fun.



The traffic through the sanctuary was pretty steady all day. We met lots of people and saw some in church the next morning. No event goes without a few glitches and ours were hilarious proving God has a sense of humor. Our helium tank had no helium. The person responsible for bringing twine had to search all around to get some. The wind kept blowing the balloons onto sharp metal parts and loudly popping them scaring us to death. About 10 people made their way up to the balcony without permission and we were lucky to avoid any unfortunate twisted ankles, tumbles down stairs or worse. In Reid Chapel, someone asked about the banners hanging on the walls and luckily, Chris was right there for me to make the hand off.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS



The team of four—John McLucas, Joan Gordon, Jim Harvey, and Chris Iosso—welcomed about a dozen pets and their owners in front of a fine arch painted by Becca Hollaway. The blessing was a prayer, a focusing of attention and a touch with water for connection to life (not baptism, but something non-verbal and affecting). We made some new friends and honored the larger world of animal-kind through those dogs and one cat. The love people have for their pets is a significant part of their lives and, for us, anything that involves love involves God.

We did a short liturgy at the beginning, two prayers, a very short reflection, and our reciting a prayer of Francis of Assisi, saint and nature mystic. The group felt this was a rewarding start and should be continued, so that painted arch is stored on the third floor of Backus House. Enjoy the pictures!

WELCOME NEW SANCTUARY CHOIR MEMBERS

It is a joy to welcome the following people into the First & Franklin Sanctuary Choir. Each person brings unique gifts to this community, and our ministry is all the richer because of them!

Anne Culbertson, alto



Anne is a new volunteer singer, returning to First & Franklin after many years. Dr. Culbertson had a long career in music education, including as a teacher at the Friends School in Baltimore, and is excited to be singing with an excellent church choir.

Jake Elfner, bass



Jake recently relocated to Baltimore from Wisconsin, where he earned a Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. Jake is serving as a staff leader in the bass section. Jake's mother and brother enjoyed their first visit to First & Franklin on October 31!

Zhenya Gnedilova, soprano



Zhenya is a Ukrainian-born soprano, and relocated to Baltimore to begin graduate work at the Peabody Institute. In Florida, Zhenya served as a staff leader in the choir of First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville.

Alex Mendelsohn & Steve Roach, bass



Alex began at First & Franklin as a substitute organist and is now a volunteer singer in the Sanctuary Choir, and director of the newly formed handbell choir. Alex plans to formally join the congregation this fall. Although now employed in a different field, Alex worked for many years as a church musician.

Steve is a new volunteer in the Sanctuary Choir, and is enjoying developing his singing voice both in choir, and through private lessons. Steve's fascinating work includes serving as an art appraiser for the federal government.

Lauren Redditt, soprano/alto



Lauren is a graduate of the Peabody Institute and Baltimore School for the Arts, and is serving as a staff leader in the alto section.

Daveen Rim, tenor



Daveen grew up in New York, and moved to Baltimore to study at the Peabody Institute. An accomplished musician, Daveen is serving as a staff leader in the tenor section.

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Darius Sanders, tenor



Darius is currently a graduate student at the Peabody Institute, having moved to Baltimore from Wisconsin, where he studied at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Darius is serving as a staff leader in the tenor section.

Rachel Walsh, soprano/alto

Rachel is delighted to have found a strong community in the music ministry at First & Franklin, having sung in church choirs and rung handbells for much of her life. Rachel is volunteering in both the Sanctuary Choir and Handbell Choir.



EGENTON – ROBERTS JOINT BOARD GROUP PHOTO- Oct 30, 2021

Set up by dedicated members of First Presbyterian Church in the 1800's, a dedicated group of current members are elected each year to serve on a board to fulfill those original donors' purposes—now somewhat updated. The original plan of an orphanage is now a fund to assist young women of all backgrounds in Baltimore, MD. And, as can be seen in the photo, women members of First & Franklin can serve on the Board itself!

We celebrate with them this very occasional photo of virtually the whole group:



FELLOWSHIP/COFFEE HOUR AFTER SERVICE



Every Sunday after service there is fellowship/coffee hour, which allows members and church staff to mingle with one another over food and drinks.

The refreshments are brought in by members of the church that volunteer to bring them in each week. On Sunday, October 31st, 2021 we had a group of volunteers that went above and beyond for coffee hours with decorations and themed finger foods.

If you are interested in volunteering please email information@firsfranklin.org or sign up in person before or after service on the designated sign up sheet.

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.

FIRST & FRANKLIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

presents

THE SPIRE SERIES

2021 ~ 2022

Please mark your calendars for these two
upcoming fall/winter concert dates!

Individual tickets and Subscriptions are now on SALE!

In order to adhere to the current Baltimore City mandate, all persons will be required to wear a mask at our concerts and we encourage all to be vaccinated for the protection of themselves and others.



Monday, November 22, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

A program of spirituals

Limmie Pulliam, tenor

Mark Markham, piano

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

General Admission Pre-Sale \$20; Students \$10

At the Door: General \$25; Students \$15

www.firstfranklin.org/the-arts/the-spire-series



Sunday, December 12, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

Candlelight Choral Concert with the

First & Franklin Sanctuary Choir

First & Franklin Handbell Choir

Jacqueline Pollauf, harp

Jason Kissel, conductor

*First & Franklin Presbyterian Church
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