

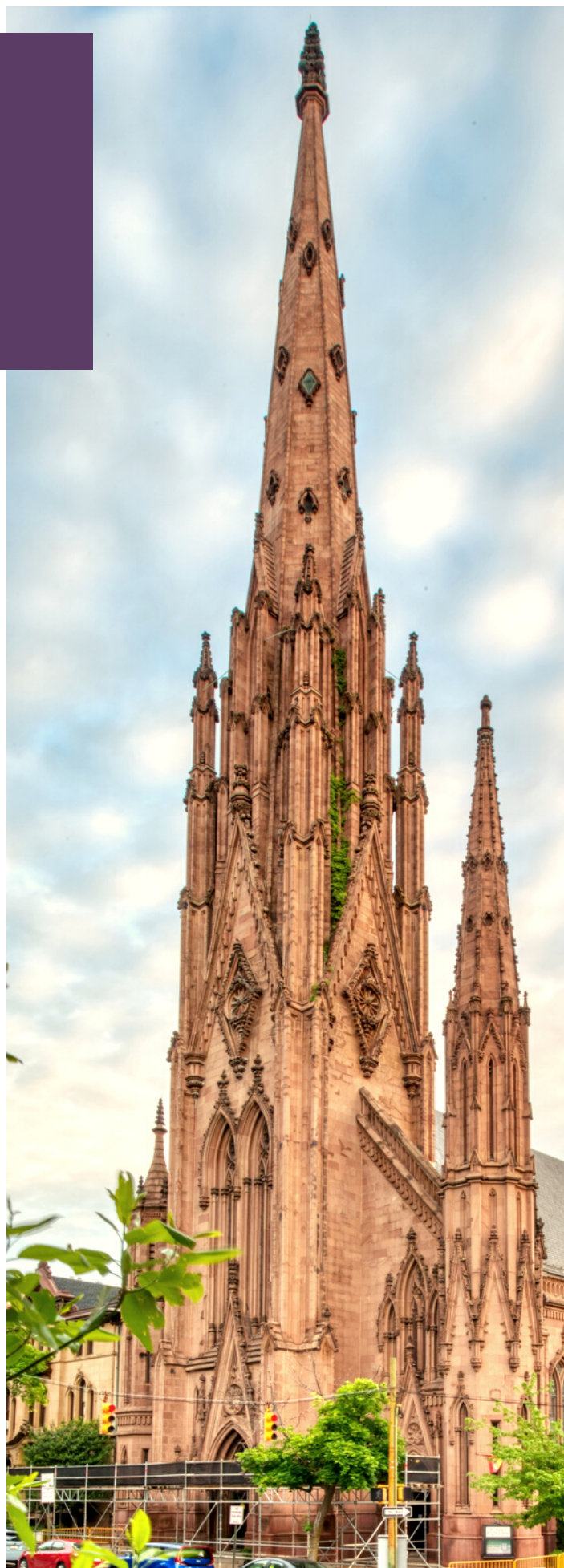
NOVEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

FIRST & FRANKLIN

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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A WORD FROM REV. STEVE NOFEL

At a gathering of church leaders last week, we were asked to ponder the question, “If you could ask Jesus for one thing today, what would it be?” To a person each of the dozen or so in attendance said basically the same thing. “Peace.”

As I too said peace, I realized my self-talk had been pretty unpeaceful lately. For weeks I have been saying to myself that I am feeling a little overwhelmed. The churches and the people in my churches whom I serve and whom I love need so much of me. My family, whom I love beyond imagination, need my time and attention. I need to be healthy so I can keep going like the Energizer Bunny for the sake of the people whom I love and Gospel, so I gotta carve out time out for healthy eating and exercise.

I have been feeling frenetic and frantic. My self-talk became more like self-scolding: “I gotta get (insert any task, exercise, report, visit, newsletter article) done!” “I gotta do and keep doing...Hurry...get onto the next thing...”

I was tempted to begin this paragraph with “My self-talk needs to change.” Then I realized that “need to change” would be just another task to help me feel overwhelmed and something else to scold myself about. My new goal is to give the negative self-talk a rest, and let Bible-talk in. None of us can get to “PEACE” by focusing on the unpeaceful.

As we move into November and the holiday season, I invite you to join me in Bible-talk. I will post a few positive Bible messages for us each week in the eblast and invite you to join me in focusing on them. Let’s start with PEACE!

- *“Peace! Be still!” Mark 4:39*
- *“Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” John 14:27*
- *“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:4-7.*

Now let’s ask ourselves the question: What brings me peace of mind? Even if it is for just a few moments? I am praying that the Peace of God will indeed stand sentinel over our hearts and minds and we will find some peace by focusing on Bible-talk.



Grace and Peace,
Pastor Steve Nofel

NOVEMBER 2023 CALENDAR

- 11/3 Fri 12:00pm-1:00pm | Al-Anon (Backus House)
11/3 Fri 7:30pm-9:00pm | The Spire Series: S'amusant
11/4 Sat 10:30am-1:30pm | 12-Step NA Meeting (Reid Chapel)
11/4 Sat 1:00pm-3:00pm | Food Pantry (Backus)
11/5 Sun 9:00am-10:00am | Adult Education: All Saints Discussion
11/5 Sun 9:00am-10:00am | Sunday School: Toy Drive
11/5 Sun 10:30am-11:30am | Guest Preacher: Rev. Dottie LaPenta (All Saints)
11/7 Tue 7:00pm-8:30pm | Peacemaking Committee Meeting
11/10 Fri 12:00pm-1:00pm | Al-Anon (Backus House)
11/11 Sat 10:30am-1:30pm | 12-Step NA Meeting (Reid Chapel)
11/11 Sat 1:00pm-3:00pm | Food Pantry (Backus)
11/12 Sun | No Adult Education
11/12 Sun 9:00am-10:00am | Sunday School
11/12 Sun 10:30am-11:30am | Bridge Pastor: Rev. Steve Nofel (Communion)
11/12 Sun 11:30am-12:30pm | Stewardship Luncheon (Reid Chapel)
11/15 Wed 5:30pm-6:30pm | Finance Committee Meeting
11/15 Wed 6:30pm-7:30pm | AIDS Action Baltimore (Reid Chapel)
11/16 Thu 6:30pm-7:30pm | Building and Grounds Committee Meeting
11/17 Fri 12:00pm-1:00pm | Al-Anon (Backus House)
11/17 Fri 5:00pm-6:00pm | Baltimore School for the Arts: Opera Scenes (Sanctuary)
11/18 Sat 10:00am-2:00pm | F&F Leaders Retreat (Sanctuary)
11/18 Sat 10:30am-1:30pm | 12-Step NA Meeting (Reid Chapel)
11/18 Sat 1:00pm-3:00pm | Food Pantry (Backus)
11/19 Sun 9:00am-10:00am | Adult Education: Special Guest Josh Cole
11/19 Sun 9:00am-10:00am | Sunday School
11/19 Sun 10:30am-11:30am | Guest Preacher: Rev. Christa Burns
11/19 Sun 11:30am-12:30pm | Alternative Christmas Market
11/19 Sun 12:45pm - 2:45pm | F&F Leaders Retreat (Sanctuary)
11/20 Mon 5:30pm-7:30pm | WMA Committee Meeting
11/21 Tue 7:00pm-8:00pm | Mt. Vernon Belvedere Association (Reid Chapel)
11/22 Wed | December Newsletter Deadline
11/23 Thu | Thanksgiving Day - Office Closed
11/24 Fri 12:00pm-1:00pm | Al-Anon (Backus House)
11/25 Sat 10:30am-1:30pm | 12-Step NA Meeting (Reid Chapel)
11/25 Sat | No Food Pantry
11/26 Sun 9:00am-10:00am | Adult Education
11/26 Sun 9:00am-10:00am | Sunday School
11/26 Sun 10:30am-11:30am | Bridge Pastor: Rev. Steve Nofel
11/26 Sun 11:30am-12:30pm | Hanging of the Greens
11/28 Tue 6:30pm-8:30pm | Session Meeting

NOVEMBER FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

It's that time of year when we all start to think about year-end giving and planning for the next fiscal year. This month, I'd like to take a moment to address a few important topics related to First & Franklin's church budget.

Year-End Giving for the 2023 Budget

Our annual budget for 2023 depends on \$275,000 in contributions. We are grateful if you have already given to the church. As of September 30, we have only received 46% of our budgeted contributions for 2023. Are you able to help us finish this year strong?

If you would like your gift to be on your 2023 giving statement, we request receipt by the church office no later than noon on Friday 29 December 2023.



Pledging and Planning for the 2024 Budget

When we start planning for the 2024 budget, one of the key pieces we use to determine our ability to maintain our buildings and support ministries and mission is the level of giving that we can expect to receive. Your pledge is a non-binding indicator of how much you expect to be able to give this coming year.

The Finance & Stewardship committee has set a goal of having \$200,000 in pledges this year. This represents about 80% of our budgeted giving for 2024. Thus far, we have received pledges totaling \$60,000 (30%) of our goal. If you have not pledged yet, please consider your ability to go "all in" and to give generously in 2024. You can make your 2024 pledge at www.firstfranklin.org/pledge.

We depend on both contributions and fees that we earn from things like space rentals, weddings, and ticket sales to pay the bills for First & Franklin. Without your help, we will continue to draw on our endowment in an unsustainable manner. I will talk more about this in future update.

How does grant funding fit in?

We are incredibly grateful for the grant money that we have received thus far for both the ADA bathroom and the initial study for spire repairs/restoration. However, it is important to remember that these grant funds do not help us cover our operating expenses (staff, utilities, ministries, etc.). Grant funding helps us with projects that we would not otherwise be able to afford. We will continue to seek grant funding so that we can continue to revitalize our campus and buildings.

If you have questions about anything in this update, you can always feel free to contact me at amendelsohn@firstfranklin.org.

Alex Mendelsohn
First & Franklin Presbyterian Church
Chair, Finance & Stewardship

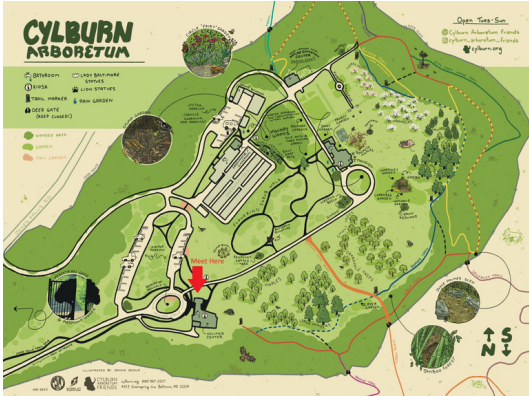
SPIRE SERIES PRESENTS: S'AMUSANT

On **Friday, November 3**, The Spire Series at First & Franklin will host early music ensemble S'amusant at 7:30pm. S'amusant is one of Baltimore's newest musical ensembles, featuring extraordinary artists Wade Davis (cello), Patrick Merrill (piano), and Melissa Wimbish (soprano). The group's program "Dreams and Fantasies" will cross boundaries from its early music roots to explore the music of Chopin, Fauré, 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."



NATURE WALK WITH ROLAND PARK PC

On **Saturday, November 4**, at 2:00pm, our neighbors at Roland Park Presbyterian Church will be hosting a nature walk at the Cylburn Arboretum. "Let's embrace the beauty of fall together with a hike at Cylburn Arboretum. The colorful foliage sets the perfect backdrop for heartfelt conversations and shared moments." No RSVP needed. Meet at the red arrow on the map!



SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATES

- **Beginning Sunday, November 5, 2023**, the students will collect new toys & games for hospitalized children. The collection will take place in the chapel in a labeled bin. On the Sunday before Christmas, they will give the toys to the children in an effort to make the recipients happier during their hospitalization.
- Calling all thespians. Not really, all you have to do is be able to read the short script. Our youngsters need your help with their Christmas presentation on **Sunday, December 10, 2023**. Rehearsal is ½ hour before service on the day of. Please call/text Deborah McCrimmon at 516-761-2412 in order to join the merry group.
- If you know youngsters between Pre-k and grade 5, please invite them to join our Multiage Class that meets each Sunday at 9:15am.

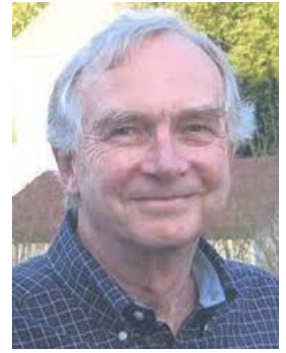


ALL SAINTS DAY

On **Sunday, November 5, 2023**, we will observe All Saints Day during our worship service. Did you lose a loved one in the year since our last All Saints service? Please consider submitting their name to be printed in the bulletin and read aloud in the service. Saints names can be emailed to apollitt@firstfranklin.org or submitted by phone at 410 728 5545.

TED DÜRR MEMORIAL SERVICE

On **Saturday, November 11**, a memorial service will be held for Ted Dürr, officiated by Rev. Ken Kovacs, 10:00am at Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Church. This church is located at 711 Maiden Choice Lane, Catonsville, Maryland 21228, on the Charlestown Retirement Community Campus.



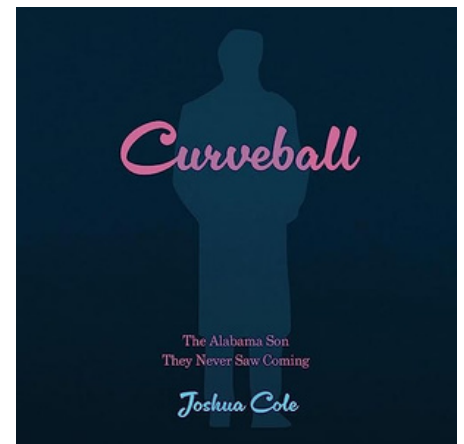
STEWARDSHIP LUNCHEON

On **November 12**, after worship, we will have an all-church Thanksgiving-style luncheon. This is a thank you for being "all in" with your stewardship, whether monetary or through your skills and time. Please bring a dessert, but all other food and beverage will be provided.

GUEST SPEAKER: ADULT EDUCATION

Josh Cole is a trans memoirist who grew up Southern Baptist in Alabama. After being a college softball star, he did a stint in the Army and Afghanistan as a woman. After moving to Baltimore for the Creative Writing program at the University of Baltimore, Josh went through the transition to male and was rejected by his parents. He married Will Cole in June 2022.

A classmate of Stephen Hollaway at University of Baltimore, Josh recently published his memoir, *Curveball: The Alabama Son They Never Saw Coming*. He will do a very short reading from that book in our worship service on November 19. Josh will also be talking about the book and his life in our **Adult Forum on November 19 at 9:00am** in Reid Chapel. We are hoping he will help us understand the trans experience and how First & Franklin can be a welcoming community.



HANGING OF THE GREENS

We will deck the halls on Sunday, November 26th after worship with our greenery and wreaths to dress the Sanctuary for the holiday season. Please consider joining in and hanging at least one wreath or help with the swags. If we have 10-12 people all pitching in the process will go quickly. The more the merrier!



ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS MARKET

Mark your calendars for the Annual Alternative Christmas Market on **Sunday, November 26** during coffee hour. For those of you new to this tradition, the Market is a practical way to refocus our attention on Christmas away from commercialism and towards the original message of Christmas: "Peace on Earth and Good Will Towards All". The Peacemaking Committee has picked 10 organizations who focus on "Peace on Earth". Representatives from these groups will be our guests at the Market to explain to you their organization's goals and to share stories about their work. Take time to listen and learn. It will be inspiring! You will be able to support these organizations by purchasing Christmas Cards at \$5 apiece. The money will go directly to the organizations you choose and you may send your Christmas cards, which will explain your donation, to friends, work partners, neighbors, and family members. This year's organizations include: First & Franklin Food Pantry, South Dakota Learning Camp, Cuba Partnership, Guns 2 Gardens, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Women's Housing Coalition, Family Survivor Network, and ROCA.

This year, on top of purchasing "gift cards" at the Market, you can also bring donations to projects supported by ROCA and Family Survivor Network. ROCA distributes Christmas presents to their clients and Family Survivor Network organizes gift baskets which are given to families who have lost loved ones to violence. More information will be available later this month.

For those of you unable to attend the Alternative Christmas Market on November 26, a Mini-Market will be held during coffee hour on **December 3**. Cards will be available for purchase without hosting representatives from the organizations. Please plan to join this joyful event and be a part of spreading the Good News of "Peace on Earth, Good Will Towards All".

NOVEMBER CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Maxwell Costa | Alec MacGillis |
| Paula Crews | Frank McNeil |
| Ken Davies | Laurel Oldach |
| Richard Drought | Amy Pucino |
| Scott Fulton | David Wallace |
| Joan Gordon | Rod Wright |
| Sasha Koo-Oshima | |

ANNIVERSARIES

- Paul Fowler and Frank McNeil
- Rev. Dorothy LaPenta and Dr. Michael LaPenta
- James E. Morgan and Ellwood (Sam) Quigg
- Meredith Piplani and Craig Smith

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS NEEDED

November always brings a change towards cool weather menus that celebrate cool weather crops and family celebrations. As you shop for your own meals, remember our neighbors who struggle to put food on their tables. What do you enjoy in particular this time of year that warms your heart and body that you can share? Here are a few suggestions:

- Cranberry sauce
- Corn meal or muffing mix
- Lentil and butternut squash soup
- Canned Pumpkin or Pumpkin Pie Mix
- Pie Crusts
- Spices -- cinnamon, ginger, cloves
- Baking Supplies -- flour, sugar, salt, baking powder
- Toilet paper for company

Place your donations in the Food Pantry donation boxes in the church narthex by the Sanctuary doors. Special treats are a nice way of saying we care. Thank you.

PS. During the month of October, the First & Franklin Presbyterian Church Food Pantry distributed a total of 158 grocery and produce bags to the residents in Mt. Vernon. Some of our regulars have been coming since day one in June of 2020, and we continue to serve new visitors each week.



EGENTON~ROBERTS FOUNDATION UPDATE

The Board of Managers for the Egenton-Roberts Foundation will be sharing news and information each month on one of the organizations for which we provide grant support. The Board is composed of First & Franklin Presbyterian Church members and active friends. The grants support programs for girls exclusively.

Through the Samuel Ready Scholarships, three students are currently being fully funded for their entire high school tuition through graduation. One of those scholars (Z. R.) attends Bryn Mawr and is in the graduation Class of 2024. They have been recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation for their academic achievements. Z. R. was also honored with the National African American Recognition Award. (Names are being withheld for privacy.)

THANKSGIVING DAY HOSTS NEEDED

Want some company for Thanksgiving Day? It's nice to be with people for that special meal. The Church Life Committee wants to know if you would like to be invited to someone's home for Thanksgiving, or if you would like to host someone and add a place or two at your table. We are asking you to fill out an online form to indicate interest either way, using the link below. You can also contact the church office (410 728 5545) to indicate your interest. We will do a little matchmaking and let you know who your host or guest will be.



COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to provide coffee hour refreshments on Sundays from November 5th through December 17th. Members with the last name A-D 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.

MD HISTORICAL TRUST GRANT

We are so grateful to be listed as one of the Historic Preservation Capital Grant Program awardees for FY23! The \$100,000 grant will be used to commence a study leading to the restoration of our iconic spire. We give our deepest thanks to Maryland Historical Trust for recognizing First & Franklin as an important architectural and cultural landmark worth preserving!



SPIRE SERIES: JOSHUA ESPINOZA TRIO:

On Sunday, October 1, at 3:00pm, the Spire Series at First & Franklin hosted our first artist of the 2023-2024 season - the Joshua Espinoza Trio! Latino-American jazz pianist Joshua Espinoza blends and bends genres into songs that are immediately relatable yet hard to define. 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. Their program included interpretations of music by John Lennon, Leonard Cohen, and Billy Joel, as well as originals from their second studio album *Songs From Yesterday*.



DOORS OPEN BALTIMORE RECAP

On October 7 from 11:00am-5:00pm, 83 people visited our church as part of Doors Open Baltimore, a citywide festival of architecture and neighborhoods. It is exciting that this year we hosted not just one but two historical exhibits, yet another way that we can use our campus to create relationships. Whether that increases revenue, raises the profile of our arts programs, or reaches out with the love of Jesus - that is always a good thing.

Michael Johnson expressed his sincere thanks to all who helped, and also to Hattie Russell for her beautiful signage on the corner and her assistance in doing research and spreading flyers around the neighborhood. For Mary McLanahan, helping with research and being a good person to bounce ideas off of and to provide details about people and events many years ago. For Rene, who used his vast historical knowledge of the church to help our visitors. For our session, who assisted with scheduling and logistics planning. For the Food Pantry folks who did their normal great job despite a bunch of strangers wandering around their workspace. George deserves special mention for setting up more than 24 hours ahead of time and assisting with clean up. Additional thanks to the Spire Series folks for donating tickets to a concert for our giveaway. And finally, thanks to Dave Pierson, who is always there with an outstretched hand, creating relationships.

VISIT SOUTH DAKOTA

The Sisseton Learning Camp in South Dakota is a dynamic ministry for Native American children to grow, learn, develop relationships, and work with staff and friends who show their love for the Lord. The camp offers learning in daily sessions such as Dakota Art and Culture, science, math, storytelling, and movement activities. The camp is for a week every July with incredible experiences with the children, tribal friends, and growing in the Lord! This is a joyous service of your time, talents, and love for the children! Come join us!

