

LECTIONARY

APRIL 2 FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT Ezekiel 37:1–14 Psalm 130 Romans 8:6–11 John 11:1–45

APRIL 9 PALM SUNDAY Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29 Matthew 21:1–11

APRIL 13 MAUNDY THURSDAY Matthew 26:17-75

> APRIL 14 GOOD FRIDAY John 18:1-19:42

APRIL 16 EASTER Jeremiah 31:1–6 Psalm 118:1–2, 14–24 Colossians 3:1–4 John 20:1–18

APRIL 23 SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER Acts 2:14a, 22–32 Psalm 16 1 Peter 1:3–9 John 20:19–31

APRIL 30 THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER Acts 2:14a, 36–41 Psalm 116:1–4, 12–19 1 Peter 1:17–23 Luke 24:13–35

the Messenger

Why Maundy Thursday Matters

oly Week is the term we use to refer to the events that took place during the final week of Jesus' life. Four events in particular: his entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), the final Passover meal shared with his disciples and his betrayal (Maundy Thursday), his trial and crucifixion (Good Friday), and his resurrection (Easter). Although all of these refer to events that took place during Jesus' life, the idea of an annual commemoration of these events as a whole (ie, as *Holy Week*) did not become common in the church until well into the fourth century following Christ's birth, and was in large part the result of a pilgrimage made to Jerusalem in 330 AD by Emperor Constantine's mother, Helena, who was herself a Christian. While there, she "identified" several sites in Jerusalem as the places where each of those events had taken place, thus beginning a tradition of visiting those sites during an annual "Holy Week" as a way of re-tracing the steps of Jesus during those final tumultuous days.

As a result, each of those services developed over time to tell a specific piece of the whole story of Christ's death and

ħoly Week Services

MAUNDY THURSDAY • APRIL 13 The Lord's Supper - 7:00 PM

> GOOD FRIDAY • APRIL 14 Noon - 3:00 PM

EASTER • APRIL 16 Sunrise Vigil - 7:00 AM the Rev. Drew Harrison preaching Breakfast - 8:00 AM

Celebration! - 9:00 AM the Rev. Megan LeCluyse preaching Festival Eucharist - 11:00 AM the Rev. Jesse Garner preaching resurrection. To miss any one piece whether Palm Sunday, or Maundy Thursday, or Good Friday—was then to miss something integral to the whole story. Unfortunately, we've lost something of that sense over the years, and the experience of Holy Week today has become more like a cafeteria in which we pick and choose among the services, attending some but not others. Of course, there are all kinds of reasons we do that, most of them having to do with the increased demands on our time these days.

So I would urge you to make every effort to attend all the services of Holy Week, but if you can't, I would most of all urge you to attend the Maundy Thursday service on April 13 at 7:00 PM. To me, this service is the absolute heart of Christianity, the one service without which we don't see the whole picture. After all, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus every Sunday, not just on Easter. And while we do remember the words of Jesus at the Last Supper on other occasions, we don't commemorate his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and finally his betrayal by his own followers at any other time. I hope to see you there.

-Jesse Garner

Easter Egg Hunt

Join us for a great First Church family tradition on Easter Sunday for our annual Easter Egg Hunt. Children and parents are invited to gather in Buttonwood Hall at 10:00 AM and then we'll all go egg-hunting together. Eggs will be hidden all over and at various heights and difficulty levels so that children of all ages can participate. Stay late after the Celebration service or come a little early on your way to the 11:00 AM service and have a great time!

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April 2017 at a Glance

Saturday, April 1 9:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's) Sunday, April 2 - Fifth Sunday in Lent 9:00 am Celebration! Worship (Old Buttonwood Hall) 9:45 am CE Sunday School Planning Meeting for Parents (MacColl Room) 9:45 am Christian Education Adults: Lectionary Study (Penn's Village Rm) Children & Youth (Cochran Room) 11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary) 12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall) 12:15 pm Young Adult Brunch Monday, April 3 11:00 am Congregational Care Team **Tuesday, April 4** 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study Wednesday, April 5 6:30 pm Lenten Wednesday Thursday, April 6 6:30 pm Trustees Meeting 6:45 pm Deacons Meeting Saturday, April 8 9:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's) Sunday, April 9 - Palm Sunday 9:00 am Celebration! Worship (Old Buttonwood Hall) 9:45 am Spiritual Direction Group (Whitefield Room) 9:50 am Make a Joyful Noise (Old Buttonwood Hall) 10:30 am Ecumenical Service of the Palms (Rittenhouse Square) 11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary) 12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall) Monday, April 10 **Tuesday, April 11** 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study Wednesday, April 12 10:00 am Planned Giving Team Thursday, April 13 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 14 12:00 pm Good Friday Service Saturday, April 15 9:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's) Sunday, April 16 - Easter 7:00 am Sunrise Easter Service 8:00 am Easter Breakfast 9:00 am Celebration! Worship (Old Buttonwood Hall) 10:00 am Easter Egg Hunt 11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary) 12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall) **Tuesday, April 18** 9:30 am WiseRetirees 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study Wednesday, April 19 7:30 pm Young Adult Group Saturday, April 22 9:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's) Sunday, April 23 9:00 am Celebration! Worship (Old Buttonwood Hall) 9:45 am Christian Education Adults: Lectionary Study (MacColl Room) Children & Youth (Cochran Room) 9:45 am Spiritual Direction Group (Whitefield Room) 11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary) 12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall) **Meet Our Missions!** Monday, April 24 6:30 pm Missions Committee **Tuesday, April 25** 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study Wednesday, April 26 7:30 pm Young Adult Group Saturday, April 29 9:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's) Sunday, April 30 9:00 am Celebration! Worship (Old Buttonwood Hall) 9:45 am Christian Education Adults: Lectionary Study (MacColl Room) Children & Youth (Cochran Room) 11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

4:00 pm Evensong and Dinner

Spring Youth Retreat Planned in May

Save the date for this year's spring youth retreat! The retreat will start at 6:30 PM on **Friday**, **May 12th**, and we'll finish up at noon on Saturday. The Friday night activities will take place at First Church. Saturday morning, we will

head over to Bartram's Garden (5400 Lindbergh Blvd, 19143) from 9-12 for some outdoor work weeding, planting, and light maintenance.

-Emily Roan

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

On March 12, 2017 after 11:00 AM worship, and an enjoyable lunch served by the Deacons, a large crowd of First Church members settled down in Buttonwood Hall for the 2017 Congregational Meeting. To view a copy of the <u>2016</u> <u>Annual Report</u>, see the First Church website (fpcphila.org/annual-giving/).

Reporting on behalf of the Mission Study Team, Paula Gross presented the results of the on-line congregational assessment which had been taken this past fall (2016) by 191 members and regular visitors—more than our average weekly attendance. She expressed the team's appreciation for those who had completed the assessment, noting that the high participation was of great assistance in enabling the team to write its report. She noted that the results of the assessment showed First Church to be a healthy and energetic congregation and that it indicated our priorities as we begin the search for a new pastor. (View our <u>Mission Study Report</u> at fpcphila.org/future-at-first.)

Church Treasurer Craig Boddorff provided the 2016 financial report using a creative presentation, highlighting the year's results in terms of the operating income and expenditures. He also reported on the status of the endowment, the capital fund, and the Preserving First Fund. Mr. Boddorff noted an end-of-the-year surplus in the operating fund.

Elder Phil McMunigal presented the 2017 church budget, noting the changes from the previous year and explaining that the Budget Committee is working on a new capital spending plan.

Elder Jim Wilson, Chair of the 2016 Nominating Committee, introduced the members of that committee, thanking them for the efforts expended in finding candidates for the several boards and committees of the church. He noted that the session approved that the number of members on the boards for this year would be 14 for the Session and Board of Trustees and 15 for the Board of Deacons.

The following nominees were presented and elected by acclamation for the Class of 2020, unless otherwise noted:

Session	Board of Deacons	Board of Trustees
Karen Buzan (2019)	Jack Melvin	Cory Clippinger
Susy Christensen	Cynthia Olds-Greeley	Rebekah Horowitz
Heather Coyne	Courtney Russ-Friedman	Tom Lever (2018)
Cynthia Decrucq	Atticus Tsai-McCarthy (2017)	Robert Linck
Jennifer Hsiung	Don Williams	Cade Massey
Michael Smith	Philip Woehr	

Nominees were presented for membership on the 2017 Nominating Committee and elected by acclamation. Representatives from the congregation at-large are Allen Garner, Joao Magalhaes, Stella Tsai, and Rebecca Yep, with board representatives Allan Schimmel (Session), Cynthia Olds-Greeley (Deacons), and Rebekah Horowitz (Trustees).

Elder Joan Mount, a member of the Nominating Committee, explained that the denomination's recommendation for the size of a pastor nominating committee in a church of First Church's membership size should be seven people. The following nominees were presented for membership on the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) and elected by acclamation: Reggie Amoa, Andrea Bowman, Cynthia Decrucq, Courtney Friedman, Dave Huting, Diane Rogers, and Michael Smith. Dave Huting was named as Convener, with the responsibility of calling the PNC's first meeting.

And so a full and informative meeting was adjourned with prayer by Jesse Garner, with the hopes that all members present are well up to date on life at First Church.

-George Schneider

Make a Joyful Noise Celebrates Palm Sunday in Rittenhouse Square

Make a Joyful Noise, our monthly gathering of young children and parents to glorify God through music will be having an especially joyful time on Sunday, April 9th when we join the annual Palm Sunday Parade in Rittenhouse Square. Immediately following the Celebration service we'll gather to make and decorate musical instruments, and at 10:15 we'll walk over to Rittenhouse to join in the Palm Sunday Parade with other churches in the Center City area. Join us for a wonderful time of joyful noisemaking outside in Rittenhouse Square.

MISSION STUDY TEAM SURVEY RESULTS

A noted humorist ones posited that the great existential questions facing humanity are:

- 1. Who am I?
- 2. Where am I going?

3. When I get there will there be a place to park? Late in 2016 the Mission Study Committee asked you, the members of the First Presbyterian Church Family, to

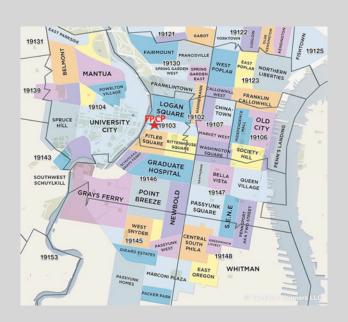
Zip Code	# of members	Neighborhood
19103	41	Rittenhouse Square
19106	21	Old City
19130	19	Spring Garden West / Fairmount
19146	17	Graduate Hospital / Point Breeze
19147	10	Bella Vista / Passyunk Square

The members of First Presbyterian reside not only in Center City Philadelphia, but also live in the Pennsylvania Suburbs and in New Jersey. The chart above lists the zip codes in which ten or more members reside. These account for 108 members total, which is less than half the congregation.

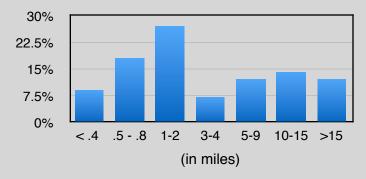
The home-to-distance data derived from the survey of 191 respondents shows a concentration in the church neighborhood but also indicates a contingent willing to travel a distance to attend. participate in a survey to gather facts about yourselves and to learn your opinions about the church.

What follows is about who and where we are now. Reflections on where we're going will come in future articles. The answer to the parking question, I'm afraid, is only known to the powers above !

 $-Craig \ Boddorff$, for the Mission Study Committee

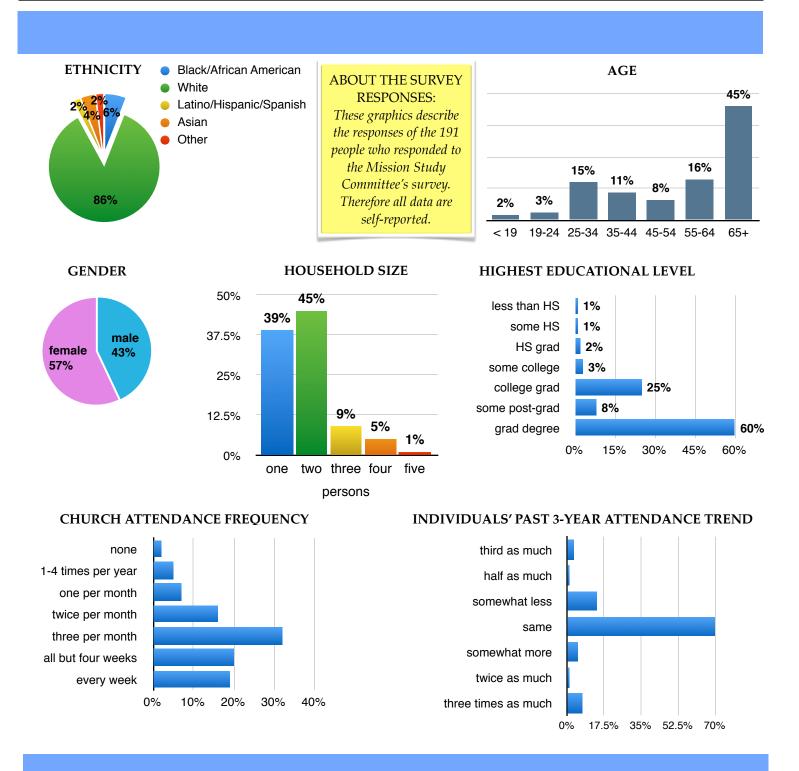


OUR HOME-TO-CHURCH DISTANCES



YEAR	Membership	Average Attendance	\$ Endowment
2016	237	175	7,060K
2015	236	176	6,946K
2014	228	162	7,220K
2013	209	150	7,138K

CHURCH STATISTICS - RECENT HISTORY



First Church Scholarship Winner Announced

Phuc Dinh is First Presbyterian Church's scholarship award winner for 2017. Phuc (pronounced "Fook") and his family arrived in Philadelphia in 2012. He grew up in Vietnam knowing limited English, but once here managed to get a 4.0! His gift with mechanical things lead to a deep interest in automobiles. He is in his second year in Community College of Philadelphia majoring in Engineering Science and is looking into Drexel and Temple for majoring in engineering. Here he is pictured with his favorite car (a Ford Mustang) at the Philadelphia Auto Show. Come meet Phuc on Sunday, April 30th during fellowship hour after the 11:00 AM worship service.



What Should Sunday School Look Like? Planning Meeting Parents on April 2

Some of the most important responsibilities churches have are the fulfillment of their baptismal promises to raise, nurture and teach our children and newly baptized members in how to live fruitful and faithful lives in obedience to Christ. In fulfillment of those promises, we hold Sunday School classes, youth retreats, worship services, and do our best to model faithful discipleship in our lives. Because we have a growing number of young families, we are expecting to need to do a lot of raising, nurturing, and teaching in the coming years!

In order to make sure that our programs are designed and shaped to teach our faith to our children, we'll be hosting a planning discussion in Old Buttonwood Hall to talk about what Christian Education offerings we'll need and want in the future. On April 2nd, during the Sunday School hour (9:45 AM), we'll be talking about our hopes, expectations, commitments, and abilities for Christian Education for children at First Church. We're hoping to provide offerings that work well with our schedules and provide opportunities for meaningful faith development, and we need the input of everyone to do so. We're inviting parents, stakeholders, potential teachers, and any who have an interest in fulfilling the promises we make as a congregation to the newly baptized to join us on April 2nd to talk about Christian formation at First.

Raising up the new generation of faithful Christians is an essential and joyful task, and we look forward to moving forward with a plan that helps families and children grow, learn, and experience Christ together.

—Drew Harrison

MEET OUR MISSIONS!

On April 23 (the Sunday after Easter), the Missions Committee will be hosting Fellowship Hour. We have invited a number of the groups that First Church works with to come to a tabling event during which they can distribute materials, talk to you about their missions, and let you know about volunteer opportunities. Representatives from ACHIEVEability, The Arc of Philadelphia, Kirkwood Camp, MANNA, Norris Square Neighborhood Project, Urban Mosaic, Urban Tree Connection, and the West Philadelphia Repair Initiative of Habitat will be present. Please plan to come to learn more about the work *you* are supporting and find new ways to serve your neighbors.

—Beverly Cowart

Young Adults @ First

Spring is here, well at least in terms of the calendar, and the Young Adults are gearing up to get back out exploring Philadelphia. We have seen many new faces this winter and are very excited to expand the group. In April, we will continue to attend the Wednesday night Lenten gathering until Easter Sunday. After, we will return to our Young Adults Wednesday night gatherings and finish out the month with Quizzo and a Disney movie and discussion. As the weather gets warmer we will begin hiking again and hope to do so by the end of this month. Other volunteer and weekend activities will be coming but are still in the works. Our goal is to grow closer together as a young adult group, fostering friendships, building trust, and creating a community of support and love for one another. For more information, contact <u>youngadults@fpcphila.org</u>.

Band of Boomers

A new fellowship group is forming at First Church! The Band of Boomers, aimed at people who were born between 1943 and 1960, will soon be gathering from time to time for fellowship, fun, and spiritual growth. Their first event, a trip to the new Museum of the American Revolution will be on May 7th.

It will begin at 1:00 PM with a group lunch at The Little Lion at 243 Chestnut Street and then continue on to the museum for tours and the special program, Philadelphia: A Revolutionary City. Please RSVP to Shellie Unger (<u>shellieunger@mac.com</u>) or Drew Harrison (<u>drew.harrison@fpcphila.org</u>). Space is limited.

Weekly Bible Studies

Women's Bible study meets on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 P.M. at the church. A Community Bible study led by Delores Brisbon meets on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 A.M. at the Old City Presbyterian Apartments (25 N. 4th Street). Men's Bible study meets on Saturday mornings at 9:00 A.M. at the café at DiBruno's (1730 Chestnut Street). All are welcome to participate. For information contact Drew Harrison (drew.harrison@fpcphila.org).



The Men's Bible Study Group at a recent meeting.

MEMBER NEWS

New Members

CHRISTOPHER and PAMELA GOLDING are recent transplants to Philadelphia from New York City. Both are originally from New Jersey; Chris is from Bedminster, and Pamela is from Morristown. Chris is an avid golfer, and Pamela loves spin classes and exploring the city. Both love to travel and visit with family and friends. Pamela and Chris first discovered First Church when they went to vote, then decided to visit and found such a warm welcome they decided to stay. They are expecting a baby in May, and are excited to be a part of First Church.

RANDY ORNER joined First Presbyterian Church via baptism at the Celebration service on Sunday, March 12th, 2017. He was born and raised in Shamokin, Pennsylvania, but now resides with his partner, Jim Schreyer. Randy worked as a nurse for many years before retiring in order to take care of

his mother. Randy is happy and thankful to have been adopted into God's family through First Presbyterian Church.

MARCY COE grew up in Darlington SC, where she attended Darlington United Methodist Church, which her grandfather had built. Her family moved to Philadelphia when she

was a teenager. She graduated college with a major in Psychology and a minor in English and has worked for physicians all her life. Marcy loves Rock and Roll music, her favorite Psalm is Psalm 27, and she is delighted to be at First Presbyterian Church.

Music at First

oly Week and Easter are approaching quickly, and there is a wealth of wonderful music to be offered. On Maundy Thursday, three gentlemen from the choir will sing a beautiful motet by Jean-Baptiste Lully, the famed court composer for Louis IVX of France. On Good Friday, the full choir will sing a variety of anthems and motets ranging from the baroque to the modern, interspersed with reflections on Jesus' seven last words. And on Easter morning, our service will be punctuated with glorious strains of brass, choir and organ, as we celebrate the risen Christ.

But the music doesn't stop there! We are very close to reaching our goal of \$50,000 for *Songs Overseas*, the choir's tour to Truro Cathedral in England in August. Two weeks after Easter, on April 30th at 4:00 PM, the choir will sing its last Evensong of the season. The *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* canticles will be sung to an exuberant setting by Herbert Howells, written for the choir of St John's College, Cambridge. The anthem will be John Taverner's soaring *Dum transisset*, telling the story of Mary Magdalen going to the tomb with spices to find her Lord is risen.

Following Evensong, the choir will serve up a delicious and fun spaghetti supper. During the meal we will be treated to a little show of cabaret and musical theater songs. I'm told there could possibly even be a *Sound of Music* sing-along. The only way to find out is to come and join us! The cost for dinner is only \$20, and the proceeds benefit our fundraising efforts.

-Andrew Senn

Penn's Village: Clergy Breakfast

Once more, First Presbyterian Church is showing great support for Penn's Village by joining us in hosting a breakfast for local clergy on April 27. The featured speaker will be Lydia Hernandez Velez, Deputy Mayor for Aging, and the program will highlight the way in which Penn's Village supports people as they makes choices about how and where they grow older. The breakfast begins at 9:00 AM and will be held in Old Buttonwood Hall. If you know a member of the clergy in the Penn's Village area (north side of Washington to south side of Girard Avenues, river to river) please encourage them to attend. For further information, contact <u>info@pennsvillage.org</u> or 215-925-7333.









The First Presbyterian Church in the City of Philadelphia

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CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Jesse B. Garner, Minister The Rev. Megan LeClyuse, Celebration Team Leader The Rev. Drew Harrison, Membership and Congregational Care Director Mr. Andrew Senn, Director of Music & Organist Mrs. Patti Sassoli, Director of Communications Ms. Annie LeCluyse, Young Adult Leader Ms. Sue Riemann, Interim Church Administrator PARISH ASSOCIATES: The Rev. Barbara A. Chaapel, The Rev. Kenneth Ross, The Rev. Herbert D. Valentine

CHURCH OFFICERS

ELDERS Class of 2017 Christina Carl, Jeff Halili, Larry Slagle, Suellen Smith, Jim Wilson Class of 2018 Jen Johnson, Rebecca Melley, Allan Schimmel, George Schneider Class of 2019 Beverly Cowart, Roselyn Hsueh, Philip McMunigal, Emily Roan, Patricia Sassoli

DEACONS *Class of 2017* Robert Cole, Elena Colon, Marc Lloyd, Cynthia Olds-Greeley *Class of 2018* Fred Barfoot, Miles Davis, Frances Kraemer, Cathy Lever, Jean Witmer *Class of 2019* Linda Deis, Edna Dick, Dave Huting, Anita McLarin, Evelyn Schwartz

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Class of 2017 Rebekah Horowitz, Tom Lever, Robert Linck, Cade Massey, Jon Rogers Class of 2018 Joann Bailey, Jeannie Boehner, Gary Christensen, Leila Vaughan Class of 2019 Craig Boddorff, Andrea Bowman, Mike Carl, Jennifer Gay, Robert Romano

THE MESSENGER

Patti Sassoli, Executive Editor Owen Robbins, Layout and Design

Please submit all information for the May issue of The Messenger to communications@fpcphila.org by **Monday, April 24**th.

Volunteer Opportunities

MANNA, an organization founded by First Church, needs volunteers to help prepare or deliver meals for people with HIV, diabetes, undergoing chemotherapy, or other conditions requiring quality nutrition. Contact Jen Stackhouse, Volunteer Manager at 215-496-2662 ext 138 or volunteers@mannapa.org.

READING BUDDIES volunteers are needed to help children learn to read, and make a friend. Volunteers are needed at First Church and other locations throughout the city. Contact Pat Quigg at readingbuddies@aol.com.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY'S WEST PHILADELPHIA REPAIR INITIATIVE (WPRI) is an

urban ministry that assists homeowners in West Philadelphia with repairs to their homes. The organization needs volunteers. Work can involve painting, installing sheetrock, windows, flooring, carpentry, etc. Volunteers do not need any experience. If you have interest in being a volunteer, please contact the Missions Committee at missions@fpcphila.org. **PENN'S VILLAGE**, an aging-in-place program for Central Philadelphia seniors, needs volunteers for driving, friendly visiting, light household tasks, administrative and technical assistance, and committee work. Call 215-925–7333, email info@pennsvillage.org or visit www.pennsvillage.org.

URBAN TREE CONNECTION (UTC) is a

nonprofit organization that engages children and adults from some of Philadelphia's most disadvantaged neighborhoods in community-based, urban-greening projects. Visit urbantreeconnection.org or contact Bruce Rapsher at utc@fpcphila.com.

THE UNIVERSITY CITY HOSPITALITY COALITION

(UCHC) provides hot meals to anyone in need on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and, during the academic year, Sundays, at sites in the University City area. Volunteers to serve meals are needed during the summer and academic breaks, when students are not available. In addition, First Church sponsors quarterly casserole "blitzes," in which we prepare 30–40 casseroles to be served at UCHC meals. These typically occur on the first Saturday of February, May, August and November, but check the bulletin for announcements. Contact Beverly Cowart (missions@fpcphila.com).

Easter Flower Dedications

In accordance with our long-standing tradition at First Church, we decorate the sanctuary for Easter by giving glory to God and remembering loved ones through contributions for flowers. To make a donation, please complete this form with your dedication and leave it in the donation box in the church office along with your check. (There is no designated amount.) The dedications will be published in the bulletin on Easter Sunday.

PLEASE DO NOT ENCLOSE CASH. Please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church" and note "Easter Flowers" in the memo line.

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL RESPONSES BY PALM SUNDAY (APRIL 9).

Your Name:

E-mail/Phone:

Check enclosed:

Dedication (please circle) In Memory/In Honor of _

Inquiries can be referred to: Anita McLarin (anita.mclarin@gmail.com).

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