

Happy New Year!

Here's wishing for a healthy and happy 2018 to all of you and yours! And all our best wishes for this congregation for a wonderful year of transition as we call a new pastor and begin a new and promising era in the long life of this historic church. Our Pastor Nominating Committee is hard at work and keeping to an ambitious schedule that will come to fruition with the calling of a new pastor in—hope—late spring or early summer. Keep them in your prayers as they move into a very critical period in their work.

We finished up 2017 with positive momentum that we expect will carry

over into the new year. Our Moving First Forward annual giving campaign resulted in both more pledges and more new pledges than in recent years, a very positive sign. The work on our long planned Facilities and Maintenance Program (FAMP) is underway and when implemented will allow us to put the long term care and upkeep of our facilities on a stable and sustainable basis. The 2018 budget adopted by the Session in December further reduces the annual "draw" from our endowment, preserving more of those resources for the long term. All of which means we enter 2018 in a very strong position which bodes well for the future of First Church.

Some of you have asked about our Constitution Seminar led by Will Harris which has been an annual feature of the winter months here. We do indeed have plans for the 2018 version but it won't take place until April this year, just after Easter. The timing is no coincidence. Our theme will be Resurrection, as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the 14th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution and its effort to "resurrect" the nation after the terrible experience of the Civil War. Mark your calendars now for Wednesdays in April!

—Jesse Garner

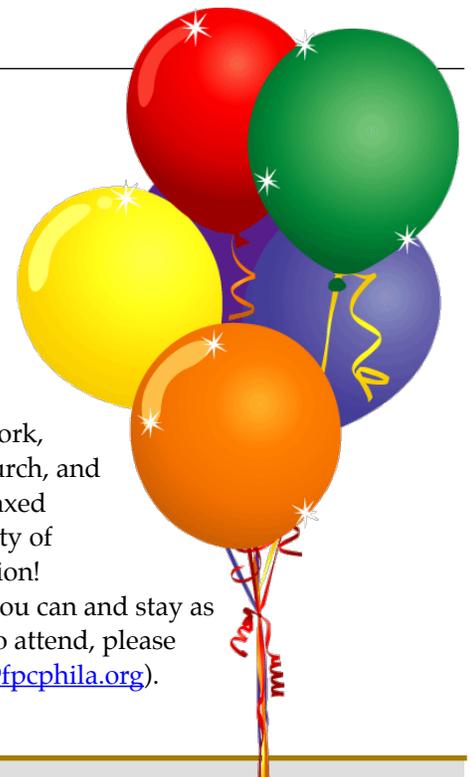
We're So Glad You're Here!

Thursday, January 18th
5:30-7:30 pm

The Membership & Evangelism Committee is sponsoring a special event in Old Buttonwood Hall to welcome many of the new faces in our midst. If you are a visitor, a friend, a potential new member, or someone who has joined within the last year, we invite you to come for an informal reception. Our Elders, Deacons and Trustees will be there, so it's a great time to meet the folks who serve on the boards of the church, ask them questions, or volunteer to get involved.

Most importantly, it is an opportunity to drop by after work, meet other new faces at the church, and get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere. There will be plenty of appetizers and great conversation!

Feel free to drop in when you can and stay as long as you wish! If you plan to attend, please email the church office (office@fpcphila.org).



JANUARY 7	JANUARY 14	JANUARY 21	JANUARY 28
Baptism of the Lord	Second Sunday after the Epiphany	Third Sunday after the Epiphany	Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
Genesis 1:1-5	1 Samuel 3:1-20	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalms 29	Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18	Psalms 62:5-12	Psalms 111
Acts 19:1-7	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	1 Corinthians 7:29-31	1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:4-11	John 1:43-51	Mark 1:14-20	Mark 1:21-28

January 2018 at a Glance

Tuesday, January 2

6:30 pm PNC Meeting

Wednesday, January 3

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, January 4

6:45 pm Deacons Meeting

Saturday, January 6

9:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's)

11:00 am Memorial Service for Doris Steinberg

Sunday, January 7 - Baptism of the Lord

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)

12:15 pm Young Adult "First Sunday" Brunch (Irish Pub)

Monday, January 8

10:00 am Reading Buddies

11:00 am Congregational Care Team

Tuesday, January 9

6:30 pm PNC Meeting

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

7:00 pm Concert - The Chestnut Brass Company

Wednesday, January 10

10:00 am Columbarium Committee

12:30 pm Women of Wit & Wisdom New Year Luncheon
Positano Coast Restaurant (212 Walnut St.)

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, January 11

6:30 pm Session Meeting

Sunday, January 14

9:00 am Celebration! Worship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

9:45 am Christian Education

▸ Adults: Lectionary Study (MacColl Room)

▸ Children & Youth (Cochran Room)

9:50 am *Make a Joyful Noise* (Old Buttonwood Hall)

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

Monday, January 15

Church office closed for Martin Luther King holiday.

Tuesday, January 16

9:30 am WiseRetirees

6:30 pm PNC Meeting

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, January 17

10:00 am Worship Committee

7:00 pm Stand with Iraqi Christians: *Education at St. George's Church in Baghdad*

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, January 18

5:30 pm "We're So Glad You're Here" reception for new members and visitors

Sunday, January 21

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)

Monday, January 22

10:00 am Reading Buddies

6:30 pm Missions Committee

Tuesday, January 23

6:30 pm PNC Meeting

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, January 24

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Sunday, January 28

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)

Monday, January 29

10:00 am Reading Buddies

Tuesday, January 30

6:30 pm PNC Meeting

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, January 31

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Chancel Flowers

Every Sunday, together with the Word and Music, the beauty of flowers in the chancel have helped to attune our hearts to being in the presence of God. The cost of chancel flowers is generously donated by members and

friends to commemorate and honor loved ones with their dedications printed in the bulletin.

I am now setting up the flower calendar for 2018. Please consider signing up for a Sunday that is meaningful to you. The cost of an arrangement is \$75. Chancel flower

arrangements and dedications may be shared by more than one donor. If you are interested in donating chancel flowers for 2018, please contact me. On behalf of the deacons, I thank you for considering this valuable contribution.

— Anita McLarin
(anita.mclarin@fpcphila.org)

Concerts@First presents

The Chestnut Brass Company

Tuesday, January 9th @ 7pm

The Grammy-Award winning Chestnut Brass Company is noted for performances on both modern and historic brass instruments and has performed in all 50 U.S. states, Europe, South America, Asia, and on two State Department tours to Central America. They have appeared on over thirteen recordings on the Sony Classical, Naxos, Newport Classic, Polygram, Albany and Crystal labels.



The concert will include such historic instruments as cornettos and sackbuts, natural trumpets, keyed bugles, ophicleides and saxhorns. The program will also include works for modern brasses by Peter Schickele and Victor Ewald, as well as arrangements of jazz standards and of folk and roots music, as well as two works joined by organist Andrew Senn.

First Presbyterian Church holds regular Bible Studies

- **Women's Bible Study** meets weekly on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 P.M. at the church. For information contact Jerry Foote (jerry.foote@fpcphila.org).
- **Men's Bible Study** meets on the first Saturday of each month at 9:00 A.M. at the upstairs café at DiBruno's (1730 Chestnut Street). All are welcome to participate. Contact Mac McLarin (mac.mclarin@fpcphila.org) for information.
- **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). Contact Delores Brisbon (deloresbrisbon2201@comcast.net) for information.

Columbarium Update

The construction of the columbarium of First Church is complete. Even though several additional furnishings will be appearing in the space over the next few months, the columbarium is operational and is now being scheduled for commitment services of the inurnment of ashes. The space was formally dedicated during 11:00 A.M. worship on Sunday, October 15, 2017.

Questions have been asked by several in our congregation whether there will be a formal "inauguration" of the space, and when and how they will learn about commitment services during which ashes of deceased persons formally will be placed in niches. There are no plans for any public events beyond the formal dedication of the columbarium that took place this past October.

Commitment services for the inurnment of ashes will be small, private events planned by the decedent's family in conjunction with the pastor. Because of their private nature there will normally be no public information about commitment services. The size and nature of the columbarium space will require commitment services for the inurnment of ashes to be small, private affairs. These commitment services will normally be separate and not part of a public funeral or memorial service.

Niches in the columbarium continue to be reserved, and fifteen of the 135 niches have already been reserved. Anyone interested in learning more about reserving a niche in the columbarium should contact the church office.

— William Lake Leonard

STAND WITH IRAQI CHRISTIANS

On Wednesday, January 17th at 7:00 P.M., members of Stand With Iraqi Christians (SWIC) will speak in our church about their mission for those who were so violently displaced by ISIS in or near Mosul in Iraq.

The following article is about School of the Redeemer at St. George's Baghdad. SWIC has partnered with St. George's Anglican Church in Baghdad to help them expand their kindergarten program in Erbil into a full elementary school for students from age six (kindergarten) through twelve

(sixth grade). The expanded school, which will serve about 300 children, is scheduled to open in Fall 2018.

To quote Deborah Parker, Executive Director of SWIC, "The church and school are in a secure "green zone" so children who in the past were witnesses to destruction will be learning together in a safe, interfaith environment." Please come and hear their message of hope. H'ors d'ouvres will be provided.

Education at St. George's Anglican Church in Baghdad

The St. George's education program is what brings the most hope for the future of Iraq, and the Iraqi Christian population. For a few years St. George's has operated a Christian school dedicated to the Redeemer on the St. George's property. The existing well-established kindergarten and early-years school is being transformed into an establishment that takes children from infancy and nursery age right through to the age of 11. Students come from all segments of Iraqi society: Muslims, both Shi'i and Sunni, as well as Christians, Yezidis, and others. This ministry is truly inclusive.

At the same time it is proudly a Christian school, the School of the Redeemer. The staff are Christians. Parents, especially Muslim parents, have driven the call for expansion because they value it so highly. The school is properly registered with the Iraqi Ministry of Education and is well known and highly rated.

The private kindergarten provides day care with educational emphasis. It is a great success, with over 120 children enrolled year-round. For the past two years parents whose children have moved on to government primary school have been asking Father Faiz to expand the scope of the school to include the first six years of primary school.

Currently, the project is moving ahead. The building permit was obtained a few months ago and work commenced late spring, with a view of finishing the ground floor in time to take in the first two grades of primary school in October and continue to work on the other two stories toward completion and expansion to grade six by next October. Raising the considerable sum of money to complete this project is a great challenge, and must continue.

St. George's received some funding for the project, both from within the diocese and from some external charities. One main supporter is the SALT Foundation in the Netherlands. A number of our parishes in the diocese are contributing also, as well as friends who have lived in the Gulf and are now retired or moved on to other employment elsewhere. So far somewhat more than \$250,000 has been raised. The "grey" structure for the

building is now completed and work has begun on walls and internal fittings, plumbing, and electricity on the ground floor.

In addition, there is now a new project for an ecumenical library and computer centre for young and adult education. Established by a Dutch group,



the library and computer centre provide a valuable resource for the continual education of the young people of the city.

Please pray for the people of St. George's and all who use what it has to offer: prayer, praise, and practical compassion.

*Reported by The Venerable Canon Bill Schwartz, OBE
Archdeacon in the Gulf*

Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf

<http://cypgulf.org/about-the-diocese-of-cyprus-and-the-gulf/archdeacon-in-the-gulf/>

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MARGARET SOMERVILLE ORDAINED AT FIRST CHURCH

Margaret Somerville, a life-long member of First Church and the daughter of the Rev. Ernest and Nan Somerville, was ordained as a Presbyterian minister at First Church by a commission of the Presbytery of Philadelphia on December 31. The service Margaret planned was an amazing celebration of all that she has achieved and a fitting beginning as she became a Minister of the Word and Sacrament.

The well-attended service also had participants who have been integral to Margaret's journey. They included the Rev. Dr. Robert Robinson, Professor Emeritus, United Lutheran Seminary. Bob was Margaret's professor of Hebrew and Old Testament at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Rabbi Leah Moser from Reconstructionist Rabbinical College led the congregation in the chanting of Psalm 133 in Hebrew and administered the priestly blessing to Margaret. Leah and Margaret were *hevruta* partners, studying Hebrew text together while they were in seminary along with Dr. Robinson. The Reverends Peter Sime, Barbara Chaapel, Ken Ross, and Jesse Garner who have been part of Margaret's journey from her teenage and young adult years also took part in the service. Rev. Todd Stavrokos who has been Margaret's mentor throughout her years in seminary preached the sermon which was both touching and thought provoking.

Also taking part in the service was the Ordination Commission of the Presbytery which was made up of Ruling Elders, including our own Michael Smith and

Teaching Elders in our Presbytery. Margaret included several pieces from the Iona Community of which she has strong ties as does our church. One of the most moving moments of the service came at the laying of hands as Margaret became ordained. Teaching Elders, Ruling Elder, family, and friends who have walked alongside Margaret on this journey were invited to come up. There were so many who came up that the group swelled to the pews! Margaret gave the benediction which was a profound reminder that we are all called to go outside the Open Door to live the good news of the Gospel that we are all in relationship as children of God.

A reception followed that was hosted by Pat Quigg in memory of Ben Quigg and the Rev. Ernest and Nan Somerville. So many friends and family made the journey on New Year's Eve despite the freezing cold weather. All of her wide circle were well represented, from people she attended Sunday school with at First church, to her students from Friends' Central School, seminary friends and professors, members of both First and Gladwyne Presbyterian

Churches and now colleagues from the Presbytery were all in attendance to witness this remarkable day.

Margaret will soon be installed as the Associate Pastor of Gladwyne Presbyterian Church in addition to continuing her teaching duties at Friends' Central School. She also serves on the Board of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia.

—Susy Christensen

“Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”

Luke 1:38



Margaret giving the benediction.



Jesse presented Margaret with two gifts from the church: a necklace and limited edition print, both from Iona Scotland.



Margaret with her children and the portrait of her father, the Rev. Ernest Somerville.



Women of Wit & Wisdom

On Wednesday, January 10th, at 12:30 P.M., we will welcome the New Year with a luncheon at Positano Coast Restaurant, located in Old City, 212 Walnut Street, across from the Ritz 5 movie theatre. Positano Coast is easily accessible by public transportation. There is valet parking and on-street parking for those driving. We will meet at the restaurant. Please RSVP to the church office (office@fpcphila.org or 215-567-0532) no later than Monday, January 8th.

Positano’s menu of creative dishes offers options for everyone at an affordable price, along with a delightful dining atmosphere. We look forward to an afternoon of food, fun, and fellowship.

UPCOMING FOR FEBRUARY:

Women of Wit and Wisdom will meet for discussion on Wednesday, February 7th, at 2:00 P.M., in Old Buttonwood Hall. Our topic will be FOOD—a great subject! We will share our favorite recipes and choice restaurants. We will also offer our thoughts on food for the body and food for the soul. Don’t miss this interesting and inspiring event!

—Ginnie Mesibov

Riverside Christmas Party Gratitude

The Riverside Christmas party is a long-standing tradition at First Church for the residents at Riverside Apartments, a subsidized housing complex for seniors and those with special needs. This year, the party was filled with



PENN’S VILLAGE JANUARY PROGRAMS

Penn’s Village starts off 2018 with two interesting programs:

- ◆ *The Silver Binder: A Gift to Those You Love*
January 24 at 2:00 P.M. in the MacColl Room, First Presbyterian Church

Where are your important documents such as insurance policies, the deed to your home, bank and investment statements? Who will take care of your cat if you have an emergency? Who will take care of you? This workshop to get you started on what may seem like an intimidating task: organizing the vital details about your contacts as well as about your legal, health, and financial affairs.

- ◆ *An Economy That Works for All with Judy Wicks*
January 25 at 2:30 P.M. at Trinity Memorial Church at 2212 Spruce Street

Pioneer, entrepreneur and our neighbor, Judy Wicks, founded the iconic White Dog Café in 1983 and pioneered the “farm to table” movement. Judy will share her story with friends of Penn’s Village, her memories and photographs, including living in an Eskimo village in 1969, moving to Philadelphia in 1970 to cofound the Free People’s Store which became Urban Outfitters. Her life’s work is building a locally based economy that is green, fair and fun.

First Presbyterian Church and Trinity Memorial Church are both handicapped accessible. Please email us at info@pennsvillage.org or call 215-925-7333 to register.



snacks and punch, songs and poems, warm blessings, and good cheer. There were new friends and old friends who all came together to celebrate. The Christmas Spirit was present to all who participated at the party. A special thanks to all who helped to make this party a success!

—Jordana Woodford

Member News

New Members



ALAN PENTECOST is thrilled to once again be part of a welcoming church community. Having grown up in the faith he's been involved in some kind of spiritual group his whole life, including being a long-time volunteer and member of the Gay Christian Network and hosting a

Bible study and prayer group for LGBTQI Christians out of his home in South Philadelphia. In addition to his hobbies of bell ringing, piano, and working out, he works as a nurse in the Surgical ICU at Jefferson and recently returned from a six month leave of absence to hike the entire Appalachian Trail. Alan and his fiancé Arthur attend the 11:00 A.M. worship service.

Deaths

DORIS B. STEINBERG died on December 13, 2017, at Cathedral Village in Andorra. She was a long-time and active member of First Church, where she served on the Board of Trustees and in many other capacities. Mrs. Steinberg resided in the East Falls section of Philadelphia for over 40 years, and in 2011, seeing the need for a support system to help older adults age in place rather than move to nursing or retirement homes, established East Falls Village. Mrs. Steinberg adapted the template of the national village movement begun in Boston in 2002 with the founding of Beacon Hill Village. Penn's Village, whose office is in First Church, is the Center City branch of the village movement. Doris was an active supporter of other organizations in East Falls, including the Falls of Schuylkill Library, a branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

Born in Philadelphia, Doris grew up in Sellersville, Pennsylvania and attended Sell-Perk High School and Temple University. She worked for many years in the Development Office at the University of Pennsylvania.

Doris is survived by her husband, Philip, daughters Susan Steinberg and Mary Satterthwaite, four grandchildren, and a brother. Visitation will be held at McIlvaine Funeral Home, 3711 Midvale Avenue in East Falls on Friday, January 5th, from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. A memorial service will be held at First Church on Saturday, January 6th, at 11:00 A.M. On-street parking will be available (with placard).

Young Adult News

The Young Adults want to give a BIG "Thank You!" to everyone for taking part in the Giving Tree this year. We provided 5 Young Adults in the PRIDE Program and 25 members of the Achieving Independence Center at Valley Youth House with many gifts!

The Young Adults will be starting the New Year with brunch at The Irish Pub on January 7th after the 11 o'clock service and will continue our Wednesday Night Programming. We enjoy good discussion around many different topics, including movie nights and nights out at area restaurants, which will be continued throughout the next couple of months. 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. We are excited to see new, and returning, faces and invite all young adults to join us! For more information, contact youngadults@fpcphila.org.

—Annie LeCluyse



The Young Adults enjoying their Christmas party, hosted by Jesse & Allen Garner.



The First Presbyterian Church

IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

201 South 21st Street • Philadelphia, PA 19103
 215-567-0532 fax: 215-567-7697 • fpcphila.org

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Jesse B. Garner, Minister

The Rev. Megan LeClyuse, Celebration Team Leader

Mr. Andrew Senn, Director of Music & Organist

The Rev. Jerry K. Foote, Director of
 Congregational Care

Ms. Sue Riemann, Church Administrator

Mrs. Patti Sassoli, Director of Communications

Ms. Annie LeClyuse, Young Adult Leader

The Rev. Barbara A. Chaapel, Parish Associate

The Rev. Kenneth J. Ross, Parish Associate

The Rev. Herbert D. Valentine, Parish Associate

CHURCH OFFICERS

ELDERS

Class of 2018

Jen Johnson, Rebecca Melley,
 Allan Schimmel, George Schneider

Class of 2019

Beverly Cowart, Karen Marston,
 Philip McMunigal, Emily Roan, Patricia Sassoli

Class of 2020

Susy Christensen, Heather Coyne,
 Cynthia Decrucq, Michael Smith

DEACONS

Class of 2018

Fred Barfoot, Miles Davis,
 Cathy Lever, Jean Witmer

Class of 2019

Linda Deis, Edna Dick, Dave Huting,
 Anita McLarin, Evelyn Schwartz

Class of 2020

Jack Melvin, Cynthia Olds-Greeley, Courtney
 Russ-Friedman, Don Williams, Philip Woehr

TRUSTEES

Class of 2018

Jeannie Boehner, Gary Christensen,
 Tom Lever, Leila Vaughan

Class of 2019

Craig Boddorff, Andrea Bowman, Mike Carl,
 Jennifer Gay, Robert Romano

Class of 2020

Rebekah Horowitz, Robert Linck,
 Cade Massey

THE MESSENGER

Patti Sassoli, Executive Editor
 Owen Robbins, Layout and Design

Please submit all information for the
 February issue of The Messenger to
 communications@fpcphila.org by
 Wednesday, January 24th.



Volunteer Opportunities

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.

Girls' Leadership Camp program at Bartram's Garden is to help build a new community garden and farm while learning about the environmental impact of growing our own food. Volunteer days are every month on second Saturdays starting in October.

MANNA, an organization founded by First Church, needs volunteers to help prepare or deliver meals for people battling life-threatening illnesses. Contact Manna's Volunteer Services at 215-496-2662 or volunteers@mannapa.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.

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.

Norris Square promotes change through youth education, community leadership, green spaces, the arts and the celebration of Latinx cultures.

Hosts for Hospitals provides families in need of lodging when coming from out-of-town to the city for medical care the option of staying at a locally administered volunteer host-home or group facility.

The Arc of Philadelphia advocates with and for all children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, to promote active citizenship, self-determination, and full inclusion.

**FOR INFORMATION ON
 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
 CONTACT
 missions@fpcphila.org.**



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