



The FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
in PHILADELPHIA

est. 1698

LECTIONARY

NOVEMBER 6

Haggai 1:15b-2:9
Psalm 145:1-5, 17-2
2 Thessalonians 2:1-5,
13-17
Luke 20:27-38

NOVEMBER 13

Isaiah 65:17-25
Isaiah 12
2 Thessalonians 3:6-13
Luke 21:5-19

NOVEMBER 20

CHRIST THE KING
Jeremiah 23:1-6
Luke 1:68-79
Colossians 1:11-20
Luke 23:33-43

NOVEMBER 27

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalm 122
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:36-44

the Messenger

Stewardship

It's such an old-fashioned word. And like a lot of the words we still use in church, it's not a word we hear much anywhere else, at least not these days. I doubt most people today could even tell you what a "steward" is. Do you know?

No doubt that's why many churches have stopped using the term, and instead talk simply about giving. So why do we continue to use the term here? Mostly because no one has ever come up with a better word to describe what we mean by "stewardship" as we use that word in the church. Because stewardship means the care of something entrusted to you by its owner, and that—pure and simply—is the Christian view of life. Because we believe that everything we have, even the very breath within us, is something that has been entrusted to us by God, and therefore what we do with it—with our lives and all that we have—matters to God.

In other words, stewardship is the use to which all of us put our lives. How do you

spend your time? That's stewardship. How do you use your God-given talents? That's stewardship. What do you do with your money, and not just the portion you give to the church, but all of it? That's stewardship. Because it's not our time, our talents, or our money to do with as we please. It's ours to do with as pleases God.

We haven't talked as much as usual this year about stewardship, mostly because our focus right now is—and needs to be—on the ongoing congregational assessment as the first step in our pastoral transition. If you haven't already completed yours, please do so. But of course the work of the church goes on, and for that we very much need your continued support. You will shortly receive a pledge card for 2017 in the mail, and we will dedicate our pledges for the coming year during worship on Sunday, November 13. Let's all be good stewards of what God has given us.

—Jesse Garner



Annual Giving 2017 Commitment Sunday November 13, 2016

Join us at the 9:00 AM Celebration!
or 11:00 AM Worship Service
as we commit our pledges for 2017.

Moving First Forward

November 2016 at a Glance

Tuesday, November 1

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, November 2

10:00 am Planned Giving/Columbarium Team

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, November 3

6:30 pm Deacon's Meeting

Saturday, November 5

8:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's)

Sunday, November 6

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

9:45 am Christian Education

—Syrian Refugee Crisis (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)

12:15 pm Young Adult Brunch

Monday, November 7

10:00 am Reading Buddies

11:00 am Congregational Care Team

Tuesday, November 8

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, November 9

6:30 pm Nominating Committee

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, November 10

6:30 pm Session

Saturday, November 12

8:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's)

Sunday, November 13

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

9:45 am Christian Education

—Adults (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, November 14

10:00 am Reading Buddies

Tuesday, November 15

9:30 am WiseRetirees

6:30 pm Finance Committee

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, November 16

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, November 17

5:30 pm Membership & Evangelism Committee

Friday, November 18

6:00 pm Youth Retreat (at First Church)

Saturday, November 19

8:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's)

8:00 am UCHC Casserole Blitz

Sunday, November 20

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

9:45 am Christian Education

—Adults (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)

4:00 pm Choral Evensong
followed by dinner

Monday, November 21

10:00 am Reading Buddies

6:00 pm Worship Committee

Tuesday, November 22

7:00 pm Interfaith Thanksgiving Service @ Holy Trinity

Saturday, November 26

8:00 am Men's Bible Study (Cafe @ DiBruno's)

Sunday, November 27 - First Sunday in Advent

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

9:45 am Christian Education

—Adults (MacColl Room)

—Children & Youth (Cochran Room)

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

Monday, November 28

10:00 am Reading Buddies

6:30 pm Missions Committee

Tuesday, November 29

6:30 pm Budget Committee

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, November 30

7:30 pm Young Adult Group



Be a part of
The **FUTURE @ FIRST**



The Mission Study Team Wants Your Opinion!

Be a part of the *FUTURE @ FIRST*! Take the congregational assessment to share your thoughts, perceptions, and aspirations for the church as we begin the pastoral search

process. You'll find all of the information you need to complete the assessment on the [First Church website](#). If you prefer a paper copy, please call the church office (215-567-

0532). Contact the [Mission Study Team](#) with questions.

The assessment is being conducted October 30 through November 28. We want to hear from you!

Christian Education

Bible Studies

We have now multiple Bible studies taking place at First Church and we encourage you to participate in any one of them. Bible studies are a great way to get to know members of the church as well as deepen your understanding.

- Lectionary Bible Study with the Rev. Jesse Garner—Sundays at 9:45 AM.
- Men's Bible Study with the Rev. Drew Harrison—Saturdays at 8:00 AM.
- Community Bible Study with Delores Brisbon—Wednesdays at 10:00 AM. Contact Delores Brisbon (deloresbrisbon2201@comcast.net) for information.
- Women's Bible Study with Jerry Foote—Tuesdays at 7:00 PM. Contact Jerry at jerrykfoote@gmail.com.

—Jeff Halili

Youth Retreat

The Youth at First Church will be having a joint Youth Retreat and Mission Day with the youth from East Falls Presbyterian Friday-Saturday, November 18-19. For more information, please contact Emily Roan at emily.roan@fpcphila.org.

—Emily Roan

New Women's Bible Study

At First Church, we believe that studying the Bible is an important part of growing in faith and are always looking to expand opportunities to read and study God's word together. Group Bible study not only enables us to get closer to God through a better understanding of scripture, but also invites us into strong, affirming relationships with those who study with us.

First Church is delighted to announce a new opportunity for Bible Study, the newly formed Women's Bible Study, which will meet on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 PM beginning November 1st. Jerry Foote, a retired minister and new member of our community, will lead the group in study and conversation as they grow together week by week. Anyone who is interested, can contact Drew Harrison (drew.harrison@fpcphila.org) or Jerry Foote (jerrykfoote@gmail.com) for more information.

—Drew Harrison

Cornucopia of Gratitude

The *Celebration!* service is adding some color to Old Buttonwood Hall, and inviting everyone at First Church to be a part of it! For the next month, there will be ways for you to engage with something on the wall on the 21st Street end of the room. This month, as we celebrate fall, the harvest, and are moving towards Thanksgiving, a giant cornucopia will be hanging in



Old Buttonwood Hall. We invite you to fill it with all of the things that you are grateful for, and to read the responses that others have shared as well. Beneath the cornucopia you'll find pens and a variety of fruits and vegetable-shaped paper to write on, and tape to add it to the wall. We hope by Thanksgiving the cornucopia will be overflowing!

—Megan LeCluyse

Each One, Reach One

The Membership & Evangelism Committee is beginning a campaign called "*Each One, Reach One*" to encourage members of our congregation to go out of their way to welcome, include, and invite new people into our community. First Church is a very special place for many of us, and we can probably all remember a time when we were welcomed, taken care of, challenged, and loved by people in this community.

Not everyone has a warm, caring, and inclusive community to call home, but we believe that everyone should have the support of a community like ours. As the holidays approach, we will all have opportunities to invite people we know or welcome new visitors into the life of the congregation. You are encouraged to reach out to those around you and invite them to be a part of First Church and get to know the new faces you see in worship.

First Church is also looking to the future as we plan our budget for next year and work to ensure a smooth transition of leadership in the coming years. Because of these important seasons in the life of the church, we would like for the whole church to surround our leadership with prayer and pray for the continued generosity, wisdom, and commitment of the congregation.

As part of this campaign, on Saturday, November 12th, the Membership & Evangelism committee invites everyone at First Church to devote some time to prayer for those who visit in the coming weeks, for ourselves to be inviting and welcoming, and for the stewardship and leadership of the church as we approach the coming transition. On that day, wherever we are, each of us can ask God to continue to shape this church into a faithful, inclusive, and generous church, as God has for more than three hundred years.

—Drew Harrison

Music at First

SONGS OVERSEAS



On Sunday, October 16th, the Chancel Choir offered a service of Choral Evensong followed by a delicious homemade dinner, which they prepared for all in attendance. The purpose of the dinner was to kick-off a season of fundraising for the choir's trip to Truro Cathedral in England next August. After having received a personal invitation from Truro's Director of Music, Christopher Gray a few months earlier, the Session approved the fundraising campaign at their meeting on October 1st.

The fundraising goal is \$50,000, which will cover the cost of the choir. There is also a "Companion Tour" for any persons interested in joining the choir in England to follow their work, and experience living the "life of a Cathedral Choir." The cost of the Companion Tour is a very reasonable \$2,250. The monies being raised toward the fundraising goal, as well as the cost of the Companion Tour, covers airfare, transportation, lodging, and entry to various sites being visited.

While in Truro, the choir will shoulder the enormous task of singing for the daily services at the Cathedral. These choir residencies are offered to visiting choirs during the summer months, when the Cathedral Choir is on summer break. As a way to prepare for the trip, the choir is singing several Evensong services here at First Church. These services also allow us to step into another realm of music-making, one that comes out of a choral tradition dating back nearly 400 years.

Following each of these services, the choir is banding together to host delicious meals for the congregation, as well as entertainment. You get your souls fed, you get your bodies fed, and you get to experience a truly wonderful time of community and fellowship! The cost for each dinner is \$20 per person or \$40 per family.

Obviously, the goal is a large one. But, with as dedicated a congregation as we are, and as one that places so much importance on music in worship, we can certainly achieve this together. We cannot reach our goal simply through Evensong dinners — we are asking for your contributions as well. In addition to placing contributions in offering plates, there is now the "Vox Box." The Vox Box is located behind Gwen's desk in the office and

will serve as a receptacle for contributions toward reaching our goal. Feel free to use the Vox Box if you were moved by a particular piece of music, or your favorite hymn, or would simply like to contribute in honor of or thanksgiving for your favorite chorister. Contribute as many times as you would like; all

donations, regardless of their amount, are taken as equal and sincere tokens of appreciation for the fine music at First Church. Checks should be made out to First Presbyterian Church with "*Songs Overseas*" in the memo line, and your contributions are tax deductible.

We sincerely hope that you will consider helping us reach our goal by contributing as generously as you are able. If you would like more information on how you can help, or if you are interested in coming along as a companion, please speak with Andrew Senn. The *Songs Overseas* committee members are Judy Callan, Cory Clippinger, Miles Davis, Fran Kraemer, Patti Sassoli, Allan Schimmel, and Andrew Senn.

—Andrew Senn



EXCERPT FROM ANDREW SENN'S MUSINGS AT THE EVENSONG DINNER ON OCTOBER 16TH



"This past Spring, while on vacation in the United States, Christopher Gray (the Director of Music at Truro Cathedral in England) spent two days in Philadelphia. On the Thursday evening, he came to First Church and led a portion of our choir rehearsal. Afterwards, he said, 'This choir is really fantastic, you should bring them to sing at the Cathedral.'

The First Church choir has never undertaken any sort of tour, much less an overseas one. While it is an enormous commitment, I can tell you, as a veteran of several cathedral residencies, it is one of the most worthwhile endeavors — absolutely life-changing. It goes without saying that something like this is an extraordinary musical experience, even for professional

musicians. But, it is also a wonderful community-building and educational experience, being able to spend time in a 'far away land' all together — and learn not only about that country and its traditions, but also about one another. And, it is indeed a rarity for a Presbyterian choir to receive a personal invitation to an Anglican cathedral. That, in and of itself is a testament to the exacting musical standards we hold here.

First Church is fortunate to believe and to know that music is so much more than 'icing on the cake.' It is central to our worship life, and it is out of our worship life together which comes all of our ministries and mission. Music emphasizes the written Word, it reinforces the preached word, and it expresses that

which words alone cannot. Music is Gospel, Music is Mission, Music is Pastoral Care, Music is Outreach. And music is the most widely spoken international language.

My feelings tonight are those of gratitude — gratitude for the best ten years of music making I've had. Gratitude for this warm and wonderful congregation which I very much consider my family. Gratitude for the best head of staff anyone could ask for. And gratitude for this astounding menagerie of musicians who surround me every week, and lift our souls with their song. Realize, that, although I'm their leader, the music we have at this little corner of God's kingdom would not be possible without all of your support."



EVENSONG *for* THANKSGIVING

The Chancel Choir will sing a service of Choral Evensong on November 20th at 4:00 PM, where we will celebrate Thanksgiving together as a church family. Featured music will be John Amner's *Dorian Service*, Orlando Gibbons' *O God, the King of Glory*, and Edward Elgar's *Fear Not, O Land*.

Following Evensong the choir will serve a delicious "Not Your Typical Thanksgiving" dinner. The dinner is another fundraiser for the choir tour to Truro Cathedral in August of 2017. The cost is \$20 per person or \$40 per family. Join us for a time of food, fellowship, and giving thanks!

Norris Square Neighborhood Project

Norris Square Neighborhood Project (NSNP) promotes positive change through youth education, community leadership, green spaces, the arts and the celebration of Latino culture. NSNP provides key supports in environmental education, cultural enrichment, social justice and food access to youth and adults of the West Kensington and Fairhill communities through after-school, summer and garden programming. For over thirty years, NSNP, in conjunction with youth and community

residents, has been creating spaces of respite, recreation, and resources providing access to fresh produce. In the mid 1980s, NSNP, along with the women of Grupo Motivos, created garden spaces as a means to heal a community traumatized by violence, as well as celebrate the cultural richness of their Puerto Rican and Latino heritage.

Through their programming, NSNP serves low-income Latino and non-Latino high-school-aged youth. NSNP addresses the academic and social issues that afflict youth of the neighborhood through a structured model that utilizes service learning and hands-on project-based learning to enrich youths' academic experiences and foster cultural

pride and a sense of belonging. By providing arts-and-cultural learning experiences, students learn more about their cultures and those of their peers, a critical part of relating to peers and adults. Through NSNP's programming, youth overcome economic and social barriers to success in school and community.



Want to volunteer with NSNP? Volunteers provide critical support for youth and garden programming. They are able to help provide services in the community in a variety of areas including carpentry, technology support, skilled garden volunteers, event support, and other areas. Visit the [NSNP website](#) to learn more. To become a volunteer, contact

Amanda Cameron, NSNP's current volunteer point-person (volunteer@myneighborhoodproject.org or 215-34-2227) or Susan Davis at susan.davis@fpcphila.org.

—Susan Davis, Missions Committee

The Art of Aging Through Penn's Village

Penn's Village always strives to get its message of neighbors helping neighbors thrive, connect and engage out to a wider audience. The more people who know about our valuable resources for helping people stay in their own homes the better. We also seek to reach the children of older adults with this message.

That's why we were delighted to be the subject of The Art of Aging on ABC-TV on October 6. Here is a link to the segment filmed in our office at the church, so graciously provided by the First Presbyterian Church: <http://6abc.com/health/art-of-aging-penns-village/1542260/>

For more information on Penn's Village, contact 215-925-7333 or info@pennsvillage.org. Check out our website www.pennsvillage.org or find us on Facebook.

Random Acts of Dining in the Fall!

Following its summer success, Random Acts of Dining is kicking off its fall season! Groups have been sent out and everyone should be contacted soon to choose dates, plan meals, and get together for fun, friendship, and faith. We have 67 people signed up in 9 groups who will all gather for one or more meals to get to know each other a little better. Each group will have members old and new, young and old, and even recent visitors who would like to know the community better. It is a wonderful opportunity to make new friends and rekindle old friendships. If you missed the sign up period, don't fret! Random Acts of Dining will surely be back in 2017.

—Drew Harrison

You can make a difference... Volunteer!

MEMBER NEWS

New Members

Peter Bretschger

grew up in Southern California and attended USC for college, but has spent the last few years in New York City. He has now relocated to Philadelphia for work, and will be getting married here at First Church this coming December. Peter has joined the Chancel Choir, and he and Ingrid are excited to make Philadelphia their home.



Annie LeCluyse

has been visiting First Church since her sister Megan began working here almost a year ago. Like Megan, she hails from Arizona and Kansas, where she went to college and where her family now lives. Annie loves the outdoors, is an avid recycler, and has taken on the role of Young Adult Team Leader with gusto. She can be found leading our Young Adults in thoughtful conversations, outdoor fun, and community service opportunities.



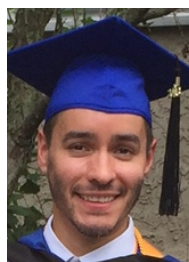
Seth Gee

is the son of a Lutheran minister. Seth grew up in Ohio and Michigan, and just graduated from Penn Law School. He is now working in international law at KPMG and living in the Rittenhouse Square area of Philadelphia. Since he started coming this summer, Seth has been a regular presence at Young Adult activities.



Farewell, Eddie!

It is amazing what can happen over five years. **Edison "Eddie" Guzman** came to First Church about five years ago as our Assistant Sexton. Our Eddie proved to be reliable and flexible with all of the changing needs of the church. He was also truly excited to be part of our witness at 21st and Walnut Streets.



Over the past two years, Eddie has been in school at the Philadelphia Technical Institute, studying to become a Physical Therapy Assistant. He graduated this summer, received one of the few hugs on stage from the President of the School at graduation. After graduating, Eddie immediately began studying for his board exams. Two weeks ago Eddie passed the boards and is now ready to start his new full time career.

One of the many blessings that Eddie has is his ability to be kind to everyone around him. During his five years at First Church, he has treated all of us with kindness and taken us with him in his heart. He did the same thing over the past two years at school with his classmates and faculty.

We will miss Edison's presence on Sundays, but we are all thrilled that he is moving on with a bright future.

—Dave Huting

Welcome, Michael!

Welcome to our new Assistant Sexton, **Michael Ellis**.

Mike has been learning the ropes from Eddie for the past several weeks, and will now take over the role on his own. Watch for an article in an upcoming issue of *The Messenger* to learn more about Michael. In the mean time, be sure to say hello!



Welcome to new members of our community

Jerry Foote is a retired minister in the PC(USA), having served most recently as a chaplain at Rosemont in Bryn Mawr, but has also served churches in the Delaware Valley. She taught piano for many years before going to seminary, and has enjoyed returning to teaching piano in retirement. Her husband **Chuck** is also a minister in the Baptist Church, and both are warm, caring individuals who are fun to talk to. Jerry is leading our newly-formed Women's Bible Study.



Apple Picking for First Church Families with Young Children!

First Church Families with Young Children got (mostly) together this October for a trip to Linvilla Orchard for apple-picking and fall fun! Though it was incredibly crowded, and we didn't all make it there or find each other, those that made it enjoyed great weather and great family fun. We gathered apples by the bushel, ate cider donuts and other fair foods, and took delight in the first ever trip to an orchard for some of us! I'm sure we will all think of it fondly as we eat apples deep into the winter months.

—Drew Harrison

The First Presbyterian Church IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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215-567-0532 fax: 215-567-7697 • fpcphila.org

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Jesse B. Garner, Minister

The Rev. Megan LeCluyse, Celebration Team Leader

The Rev. Drew Harrison, Membership and
Congregational Care Director

The Rev. Barbara A. Chaapel, Parish Associate

The Rev. Kenneth Ross, Parish Associate

The Rev. Herbert D. Valentine, Parish Associate

Mr. Andrew Senn, Director of Music & Organist

Ms. Gwendolyn Scott, Church Administrator

Mrs. Patti Sassoli, Director of Communications

Ms. Annie LeCluyse, Young Adult Leader

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

TRUSTEES

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
December issue of *The Messenger* to
communications@fpcphila.org by
Friday, November 25th.

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.

WINTERSHELTER volunteers are needed to serve meals each Monday evening during the cold weather months at Trinity Memorial Church, 22nd & Spruce Streets. Contact Suellen Smith (suellen.smith@fpcphila.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.

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.

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).



*Community Interfaith
Thanksgiving Gathering & Reception*

Tuesday November 22nd at 7:00 PM
Church of the Holy Trinity
Northwest Corner Rittenhouse Square



Like us on our [fan page](#) or join our [fellowship group](#).