

A Celebration of Jesse's Ministry

Our esteemed pastor of 17 years, Jesse Garner, retires at the end of October. Jesse will preach his final sermon on October 21. Later that afternoon, we will celebrate his ministry and leadership of First Church in a reception at the Germantown Cricket Club from 4-6 pm.

The honorary hosts of the celebration of Jesse's ministry are Phil Steinberg and George Schneider, who were on the PNC that called Jesse to be our pastor in 2001.

Everyone is invited to the celebration.

Please RSVP to the church office. Rides can be organized for those who need transportation.

Contributions towards a gift for Jesse may be sent to the church office. (Please include "Jesse's gift" in the memo line.)

We look forward to gathering with the Garner family and friends to honor Jesse, to celebrate our life as a congregation under his pastorate, and to wish him a happy and well-deserved retirement!

—Cynthia Decrucq, Dave Huting,
& Patti Sassoli



All our Meals and All our Living

First, I would like to offer a very sincere word of thanks to everyone who has hosted (or yet will host) Lester and me for a dinner in their home as a part of the "Welcome Table, Open Door" dinner series this fall, as well as those who have offered us hospitality of their own initiative. It is a wonderful thing to be welcomed so warmly to a new congregation.

This extravagant welcome expressed through table-fellowship puts me in mind of a line from one of my favorite hymns, "All our meals, and all our living, make as sacraments of thee."

What does it mean to think of all our meals and all our living as sacraments?

A sacrament is classically understood as a visible sign of an invisible grace. And grace is nothing more, and nothing less, than the unconditional, unearned, and unmerited love of God. The grace of God is made known to us chiefly in Jesus Christ, but indeed all of creation sings the praise of God's goodness. The breath we draw and the air we breathe are gifts from God, because we surely didn't make them ourselves. The abundance of the earth which comes to us as the food we eat and the water we drink,

are gifts from God. We could follow this line of thinking indefinitely, but it can be summarized with the words of the Psalmist, "It is God that has made us, and not we ourselves."

One of the great mistakes that humans are prone to make theologically is to divide the world into sacred and ordinary. I suspect we know that to treat any aspect of creation as ordinary is to belie the fact that everything is made by God, but it is tempting to do so, nonetheless. Think of the things we treat as sacred, and the things we treat as ordinary. Worship, prayer, and scripture are treated as sacred, and money, work, and time are treated as ordinary somehow.

These are false dichotomies. God didn't divide the world up into sacred and ordinary. God loves it all, from the tiniest speck of pollen to the mighty oceans. Sacramental living is simply recognizing that every minute and every atom of creation exist within the providential love of God. And when we remember that, every meal, every second of life, is holy. I love a couple of lines from the poet Richard Wilbur, "the world's fullness is not made, but found. Life hungers to abound and pour out its plenty for you."

—Baron Mullis



LECTIONARY

OCTOBER 7
Job 1:1; 2:1-10
Psalm 26
Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12
Mark 10:2-16

OCTOBER 14
Job 23:1-9; 16-17
Psalm 22:1-15
Hebrews 4:12-16
Mark 10:17-31

OCTOBER 21
Job 38:1-7; 34-41
Psalm 104:1-9, 24, 35c
Hebrews 5:1-10
Mark 10:35-45

OCTOBER 28
Job 42:1-6, 10-17
Psalm 34:1-8; 19-22
Hebrews 7:23-28
Mark 10:46-52

September 2018 at a Glance

Monday, October 1

11:00 am Congregational Care Team

Tuesday, October 2

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, October 3

10:00 am Worship Committee

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, October 4

6:45 pm Deacons Meeting

Sunday, October 7

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

9:45 am Lectionary Bible Study (MacColl Room)

10:00 am Children's Sunday School (Cochran Room)

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

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

Tuesday, October 9

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, October 10

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, October 11

5:30 pm Membership & Evangelism Committee

6:30 pm Trustees Meeting

Saturday, October 13

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

Sunday, October 14

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

9:45 am Lectionary Bible Study (MacColl Room)

10:00 am Children's Sunday School (Old Buttonwood Hall)

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

Installation of Rev. Dr. Baron Mullis

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

Tuesday, October 16

9:30 am WiseRetirees

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, October 17

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, October 18

1:00 pm Women of Wit & Wisdom (Old Buttonwood Hall) - "Won't You Be My Neighbor?"

6:30 pm Session

Sunday, October 21

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

9:45 am Lectionary Bible Study (MacColl Room)

10:00 am Children's Sunday School (Cochran Room)

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

4-6 pm *Celebration of Ministry of Rev. Jesse Garner
Germantown Cricket Club*

Monday, October 22

6:30 pm Missions Committee

Tuesday, October 23

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, October 24

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Sunday, October 28

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

9:45 am Lectionary Bible Study (MacColl Room)

10:00 am Children's Sunday School (Cochran Room)

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

12:15 pm Hold date for special meeting

Tuesday, October 30

7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, October 31

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Jesse Garner to Serve as Chair of the Board of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia

Have you wondered what Jesse Garner will be doing after he retires from the ministry? (That is, besides fishing!) Well, here's part of the answer: he will be serving as the new Chair of the Board of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia. The center is a nonprofit organization founded in 2004 dedicated to promoting interfaith understanding in the region.

Jesse has been on the board of the Interfaith Center for ten years. After

serving first as Secretary and later as Treasurer of the organization, he became the Chair of the Board this past summer. In his time on the board, Jesse has particularly enjoyed getting to know other board members from a wide variety of religious traditions.

From the beginning of his ministry here at First Church just before the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Jesse has sought to build bridges of understanding with other faith communities. Among these "bridges"

have been several classes here at First Church led by local members of the Islamic, Bahai'i, and Mormon traditions. Many of us benefitted from the new information and insights gained from those sessions. In his role as the Interfaith Center's Board Chair, he'll be using a different platform to further interfaith understanding and dialogue throughout the region at a time when it is needed more than ever.

—Carol Cook

THE PRESBYTERY OF PHILADELPHIA
AND
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA
CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO THE SERVICE OF INSTALLATION OF
THE REVEREND DOCTOR BARON ANTHONY MULLIS
AS THE SEVENTEENTH PASTOR OF
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA
DURING THE SERVICE FOR WORSHIP
11 A.M.
OCTOBER 14, 2018
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA
201 S. 21ST STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103
THE REVEREND PAUL TIMOTHY ROBERTS,
PRESIDENT OF JOHNSON C. SMITH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY PREACHING
RECEPTION TO FOLLOW IN OLD BUTTONWOOD HALL

THE INSTALLATION OF THE REV. DR. BARON MULLIS AS PASTOR OF FIRST CHURCH

On Sunday, October 14, 2018, members of the Presbytery of Philadelphia will join with us in our 11:00 AM service of worship to install the Rev. Dr. Baron A. Mullis as the 17th pastor of The First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia.

The Reverend Paul Roberts, President of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, will be the preacher. Johnson C. Smith is our denomination's only historically black seminary, and Baron serves as a trustee. Rev. Roberts is a much sought after nationally known preacher and speaker.

What is an installation and why do we have one? On the one hand, it's a matter of procedural business conducted by the Presbytery to say that Baron is our pastor now — so it is significantly and intentionally timed to occur one week prior to Jesse's retirement celebration. But at a much deeper level, a service of installation is about *commitment*. Baron is committing to be our pastor, to walk with us through good times and bad, to pray for us, speak the truth to us even when it is difficult, to love us, and be present in our lives. We are committing to support his ministry, to love him, to treat him fairly, and to follow where he and our Session lead us.

Installation is about celebrating the ministry that we anticipate we will do together for the decades to come. So please plan to be present in worship to celebrate the start of our new season together, and to remain for a reception following the service to greet Baron's family and friends who are present to celebrate this day.

Women of Wit & Wisdom

Women of Wit & Wisdom launched our second season with a delightful luncheon in Old Buttonwood Hall on September 12. It was a joyful time of bonding with our sisters at First Presbyterian Church.

On Thursday, October 18, at 1:00 pm, in Old Buttonwood Hall, we will be showing the movie, *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* followed by discussion and light refreshments. The film features the well-beloved Fred Rogers of the TV series, "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" and takes us into the heart of a creative genius who inspired

generations of children with compassion and limitless imagination. Rogers was a musician, puppeteer, writer, producer, and Presbyterian minister whose sweet-tempered idealism influenced the world.

Don't miss this treasure of a film. Please RSVP by October 16 to

womenwitwisdom@fpcphila.org or by calling Ruth at (908) 938-1243. And, yes, you may bring a friend!

—Ruth Camisa and Diane Rogers



Digging up old bones...

About two years ago, my father's sister (who lives in Philadelphia) and I got together for our annual "summer lunch." She is the family genealogist and has done extensive research into that side of the family, dating back to the 16th century. She told me about my *great, great, great grandfather*, Joseph Senn (1810-1882), who was an organist and composer. Born in Ravensburg, Germany, he spent the last 40 years of his life as organist at St. Gallus Church in Tettnang, a small city near the Bodensee. She casually suggested that I should try to find some of his music. Never turning down a challenge, I set about trying to do just that!

I've spent the past year in communication with the current organist of St. Gallus, as well as his elderly predecessor who wrote a musical biography of that church. Included in that book is a whole chapter on "Grandpa Joe." Unfortunately, I found out that, around the turn of the last century, many important documents and musical scores from churches in Germany were consolidated into one central location within each diocese. Some decades later, those pieces made their way to various libraries, archives and universities all over the country. This became the biggest wrench in the works, as the paper trail stopped after the consolidation. Thus I had no real way of knowing where his music eventually wound up, short of calling and emailing dozens of Universities and archives. Another ripple in the water was that we actually found TWO different Joseph Senns — both composers around the same time, the "imposter" working close by in Austria. And, having found a few small pieces by the other Joseph Senn, I'm glad to say that "mine" was the better composer!

Through the research of the two aforementioned organists, we were able to locate Joseph's *Missa Solemnis* at the University of Tübingen, a large scale work for choir,

orchestra and soloists. We know this to be by my relative, since there was mention of it in church records. Obviously the facsimiles of the original parts I received were in manuscript form, and there was no full conductor score. Over this past summer, I took on the laborious task of creating a modern performing edition from the original parts. The joys of modern technology have enabled an utterly fascinating journey, to see these individual parts come together on the screen in front of me, and to be able to hear them via computer generated sounds. We have a list of at least a dozen other pieces — masses and motets — that Joseph Senn composed, and hopefully over time I will be able to track those down as well.

This coming November, I will ring in my 5th decade; and though I'm not huge on birthday celebrations, I do like to mark the decades with something extravagant — as I did with my 30th. On **November 11th at 7:00 PM** the choir with many friends, along with an orchestra of 22 players, will bring Joseph Senn's *Missa Solemnis* to life in a 40th birthday concert! I couldn't tell you when this piece was last performed, though I'm guessing not since the time when the music was consolidated. It will definitely be an American premier!

I'd like to extend a hearty invitation to each and every one of you, my First Church family, to join with me in this momentous occasion! This concert will also conclude our *Concerts@First* fundraiser, and will be a ticketed event. Tickets will be available for \$10 in advance from the church office, or \$15 at the door. There will be a celebratory reception following, where I will have copies of the original parts on display. I look forward to seeing all of you on November 11th for a truly memorable occasion!

— Andrew Senn

Concerts@First

presents

Digging Up Old Bones

A Fortieth Birthday Celebration for Andrew Senn

Missa Solemnis in C

for Choir, Orchestra and Soloists

Joseph Senn (1810-1882)

The Choir and Orchestra of First Church

Sunday, November 11th at 7pm

Tickets \$10 in advance / \$15 at the door



PARISH CHOIR

Anyone interested in singing with the volunteer Parish Choir, should contact [Andrew Senn](mailto:andrew.senn@fpcphila.org) (andrew.senn@fpcphila.org), Organist and Director of Music. Rehearsals take place on the day of the service, before worship. The Parish Choir will be singing on the following dates:

2018	2019
October 7	February 17
November 25	March 17
December 23	May 26
	June 16
	(combined choirs)

Phil Steinberg, George Schneider
&
The First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia
invite you to join us for a reception to
celebrate the ministry of

Rev. Jesse Garner

Sunday, October 21st

4-6 pm

Germantown Cricket Club

411 West Manheim Street
Philadelphia, PA 19144

Please RSVP to office@fpcphila.org or 215-567-0532 by
October 14th.



Contributions towards a gift for Rev. Garner may be made by
check to The First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, with
"Jesse Garner" in the memo line.

Facilities Condition Assessment Update

In early 2017, in preparation for his retirement and the transition to new leadership, Reverend Garner made a request that will positively affect our church community for many years to come. This request was to engage a team of architects, engineers, a cost estimator and other consultants to develop a Building Facilities Condition Assessment Report.

Under the watchful eye of the Stewardship and Budget Committee of the Session, a team led by Atkin Olshin Schade Architects (the firm who led the 2013 renovations, masonry repairs, and the columbarium construction) has developed a living document that will inform capital planning and project priorities over the next 5, 10, 15, and 20 years.

You will be hearing more from the Facilities Condition Assessment (FCA) Committee in the near future, as the intent is to undertake some of the high priority projects in Spring 2019. Upcoming projects include work on the HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) system, roofing repairs, and additional masonry restoration. This is the first budget cycle where the Assessment Report is being discussed in conjunction with the operating budget. As such there will be a thorough discussion and explanation to the congregation of how these projects will be financed. These projects along with the financing are strategic and essential to the building and to the future growth of our congregation.

We as a church community should be very grateful to Reverend Garner for his foresight as he hands over the reins to Reverend Mullis. Stay tuned, and we apologize in advance for the construction dust.

—Elders Heather Coyne
and Phil McMunigal

Musicopia: Eight new pieces in eight weeks!

This year, the Musicopia Young String Players, the entry-level ensemble of the Musicopia String Orchestra (MSO) that rehearses every Tuesday evening at the First Presbyterian Church, is being challenged to learn one new piece per week for eight weeks. This "challenge" will culminate in a Tuesday evening performance at the church for the

students' families and church members (date TBD). In the meantime, be on the lookout for these young musicians rehearsing on Tuesday nights! To learn more about the Musicopia String Orchestra or to make a donation or place an ad in the Winter and Spring concert program books, please visit www.musicopia.net/mso.

New Sunday School Class for Children

We would like to invite young children and their families to join us for a new Sunday School Class at First Church every Sunday from 10-10:30 A.M. in the Cochran Room! We are basing our Sunday School on the philosophy and principles of Godly Play, a Montessori-based Sunday School that affirms that children already have thoughts, beliefs, and hopes about God and who God is, and that our task as adults and



educators is to provide space for them to explore and articulate that faith for themselves. We will be following a rotational model that will explore themes of prayer, song, story, mission, and sacrament, and we plan on having a lot of fun doing so together! Please contact Sarah Weisiger (sarah.weisiger@fpcphila.org) for more information!

Connecting with Other Faiths

In the September issue of the Messenger, we reported on the Visionary Women seminar series that we attended in the first half of the year. The series was sponsored by the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia. In the spirit of the visits and discussions we had with members of different faith traditions, we plan to feature selected holy days of other religious groups as they occur throughout the year. Watch for this column in future newsletters!

One of the major religious celebrations in October is the Hindu festival Navaratri, an annual reminder of the power of good over evil. The festival last nine days; on the tenth day Hindus celebrate Dasara (or Dusshera), which commemorates the defeat of the demon Ravana by Lord Rama. This year, Dasara falls on October 19.

In last spring's Visionary Women series we did not visit a Hindu religious community, and the tenets of the faith are not that well known to us. An initial exploration of various sources led us to understand that, although there are more than 900 million Hindus worldwide, there is a diversity of



PENN'S VILLAGE LAUNCHES TWO NEW SOCIAL GROUPS

Penn's Village, whose mission is to assist central Philadelphia residents "age in place" — stay in their own homes as long as they can, announces the launching of two new social groups for its members: **The Book Club** and **The Men's Group**.

The Book Club's first event is Monday, November 12, at 12 noon, at Positano Coast, 212 Walnut Street. The pay-your-own-way casual lunch will be followed by discussion of the book, *Red Notice: A True Story of High Finances, Murder, and One Man's Fight for Justice*, by Bill Browder. *Red Notice* is a real-life political thriller about an American financier (Browder) in the Wild East of Russia, the murder of his principled young tax attorney (Magnitsky), and his dangerous mission to expose the Kremlin's corruption. The Book Club plans to meet every two months at various local restaurants. Guests are welcome for a \$5 fee. Call 215-925-7333 to register, or email info@pennsvillage.org.

The Men's Group has been meeting since the spring of 2018 and comprises 11 men who meet every two weeks to discuss issues and concerns of the day. Originally based on articles in the *Sunday Inquirer* in order to jump-start discussion, topics are now free-flowing and range from supporting the concept of open primaries to mini-concerts by some of their musician members. Right now membership is closed; however, if there is additional interest, a second group may be formed. If you are interested, call 215-925-7333 or email info@pennsvillage.org. Tell them you are interested in joining the Men's Group, and someone will get back to you.

customs and beliefs. Nevertheless, there are some commonalities, notably belief in the existence of an eternal soul, reverence for a supreme power that gives order and meaning to all of creation, and the triumph of good over evil. Like Christians, Hindus believe that humans have a responsibility for righteous action and a life of service.

Stay tuned!

—Carol Cook and Diane Rogers

Member News

New Members

On Sunday, September 30, at the 11:00 AM worship service, some of the folks who became members of



First Church since September 2017 were introduced. Over the past year, we have received 17 new members.

Baptisms

BENJAMIN LEE FRIEDMAN, son of **Dave Friedman** and **Courtney Russ-Friedman** was baptized on Sunday, September 16th at the 11:00 AM worship service. Benjamin was baptized by the Rev. Jesse Garner and the Rev. Dr. Baron Mullis.



fpcQ at OutFest

First Church's LGBTQ+ fellowship, fpcQ, will represent the church at a table at this year's OutFest on Sunday, October 7. OutFest is a celebration of National Coming Out day and is held in Philadelphia's "gayborhood" each autumn. The church

has had a presence at the festival for several years and the table has been staffed by members of the Membership & Evangelism committee, clergy, and members of the church's fpcQ fellowship.

Information about the ministry of First

Presbyterian Church is available, and the primary objective is to support the queer community and share the love of Christ. We want people to know that there is a place of love, growth, and acceptance for ALL of God's people. Please join us on Sunday afternoon to share this good news. For more information contact Larry Slagle or email fpcq@fpcphila.org.

—Larry Slagle



Young Adult News

We are excited to see new, and returning, faces as school gets back in session and invite all young adults to join us this fall! We have now returned to our weekly Wednesday night programming and recently had the joy of joining the Christian Association at the University of Pennsylvania for Wednesday dinner. We had a great time talking with Jesse on the Wednesday evening that he led; and we finally had good enough weather to go out for a hike. In October, we will continue our faith discussion using the *Feasting on the Word* curriculum on Wednesday night and will have



fellowship while enjoying Fall, pumpkin carving and visiting a local orchard. 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, or if you would like to host the Young Adults for dinner or an activity, contact:

youngadults@fpcphila.org.

—Annie LeCluyse

Caring Stitches

For those of you who love to knit, crochet, quilt, weave or sew, consider joining an interfaith group of needle crafters held at Trinity Memorial Church on the last Tuesday of every month from 5-7 PM. Creations are donated to people living in nursing homes, hospices, shelters or on the streets. Bring your own supplies for creating prayer shawls, scarves, hats, gloves, quilts or other items of your choice. Come and join us at Caring Stitches, Trinity Memorial Church, Craft Room, 2212 Spruce St., Philadelphia. For more information, contact Cindy Elliott at caeesq@aol.com.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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



PLANNED GIVING
Planting Seeds for the Future

**Become a member
of the
Buttonwood Circle!**

www.fpcphila.org/planned-giving/

Volunteers Needed to Prepare Meals for Wintershelter

First Church has volunteered for many years to prepare and serve food during the winter months for Wintershelter, a shelter for 20 men at Trinity Memorial Church (22nd & Spruce Streets). Presently they are in great need of volunteers to prepare and deliver meals to the shelter. Cooks can be flexible when they make the food, and deliver it labeled for the night it is to be served. Casseroles or hearty soup accompanied by fresh fruit is a typical meal. The shelter provides the rest. If you are interested, please contact Wintershelter Volunteer Coordinator Terry Newirth Hirshorn (tnewirth@haverford.edu).



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join our [fellowship group](#).

Please submit all information for the November issue of The Messenger to communications@fpcphila.org by **Monday, October 22nd**.

The First Presbyterian Church IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Church Staff

The Rev. Jesse B. Garner, Minister
The Rev. Dr. Baron Mullis, Minister
The Rev. Megan LeClyuse, Celebration Team Leader
Mr. Andrew Senn, Director of Music & Organist
Ms. Sue Riemann, Church Administrator
The Rev. Jerry K. Foote, Director of Congregational Care
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Mrs. Patti Sassoli, Director of Communications
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The Rev. Barbara A. Chaapel, Parish Associate
The Rev. Kenneth Ross, Parish Associate
The Rev. Herbert D. Valentine, Parish Associate

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