



The FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
in PHILADELPHIA

est. 1698

LECTIONARY SEPTEMBER 2016

SEPTEMBER 4

Jeremiah 18:1–11
Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18
Philemon 1–21
Luke 14:25–33

SEPTEMBER 11

Jeremiah 4:11–12, 22–28
Psalm 14
1 Timothy 1:12–17
Luke 15:1–10

SEPTEMBER 18

Jeremiah 8:18–9:1
Psalm 79:1–9
1 Timothy 2:1–7
Luke 16:1–13

SEPTEMBER 25

Jeremiah 32:1–3a, 6–15
Psalm 91:1–6, 14–16
1 Timothy 6:6–19
Luke 16:19–31

the Messenger

Welcome All!

Finally good weather! After two months of unusually hot and uncomfortable weather, September has brought much more temperate conditions much to all our relief, I'm sure. And just in time as we begin to gear up for the fall's activities here at church.

September will be a busy month. Our **Christian Education** program for children and youth gets under way again in the Cochran Room on the lower level at 9:45. This year we're working to coordinate our children's educational activities very closely with our early morning Celebration! service on Sundays so that both will reinforce the lessons being taught. Plus, we'll continue our monthly "Make a Joyful Noise" series for children using music to nurture a religious spirit in even the youngest among us. Our Lectionary Bible Study continues on Sunday mornings, with other occasional special programs later in the fall including a series on the Mormon Church. For those of you who've toured the new Mormon Temple here in Center City, this will be a good opportunity to learn more about this quite distinctive expression of the Christian faith. And our Spiritual Direction Group will meet bimonthly under the leadership of Rev. Barbara Chaapel in the Whitefield Room on the lower level.

The Deacons invite everyone to our annual Welcome Luncheon in Old Buttonwood Hall following the 11 AM worship service on September 18. All are welcome—new members, visitors, returning members, and friends. Lunch will include fried and roasted chicken and traditional accompaniments. No reservation is needed. Please join us!

In **Worship**, the much loved (and over the summer much missed) Chancel Choir will be back in place this Sunday enhancing our experience of worship at the 11 A.M. service. There is a very special program planned by *Concerts @ First* for September 25 when Johann Vexo, the organist at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, will be performing a concert dedicated to the memory of Helen McDermott, a long time member of First Church who died earlier this year. Andrew Senn, our Director of Music, has also planned numerous other special programs throughout the year as we celebrate his 10th anniversary here at First. Mark your calendars now for a Choral Evensong on Sunday, October 16, at 5 P.M., our annual Silent Movie (this year, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*) with organ accompaniment on Saturday evening, October 29, at 7 P.M., and on Sunday morning, October 30, when we'll hear J. S. Bach's Cantata 79, *Gott der Herr ist Sonn' und Schild*, in commemoration of Reformation Sunday.

It should be a great fall, and please join us for our annual **Welcome Luncheon** on Sunday, September 18, following the 11 A.M. service. Everyone is invited!

—Jesse Garner



September 2016 at a Glance

Tuesday, September 6

10:00 am Planned Giving Team

Wednesday, September 7

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Saturday, September 10

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

Sunday, September 11

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

9:45 am Christian Education

—Adults (Lounge)

—Children & Youth (Cochran Room)

9:45 am Spiritual Direction Group (Whitfield Room)

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

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

12:15 pm Young Adult Brunch

Monday, September 12

11:00 am Congregational Care Team

Tuesday, September 13

6:30 pm Finance Committee

Wednesday, September 14

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, September 15

5:30 pm Membership & Evangelism Committee

Saturday, September 17

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

9:00 am Habitat Volunteer Day

9:00 am Deacon's Meeting

2:00 pm First Church Families with Young Children Zoo Trip

Sunday, September 18

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

9:45 am Christian Education

—Adults (Lounge)

—Children & Youth (Cochran Room)

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Welcome Lunch (Old Buttonwood Hall)

Monday, September 19

6:30 pm Missions Committee

Tuesday, September 20

9:30 am WiseRetirees

Wednesday, September 21

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Thursday, September 22

5:30 pm Worship Committee

Saturday, September 24

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

9:00 am New Member Orientation

Sunday, September 25

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

9:45 am Christian Education

—Adults (Lounge)

—Children & Youth (Cochran Room)

9:45 am Spiritual Direction Group (Whitfield Room)

11:00 am Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm Fellowship (Old Buttonwood Hall)

4:00 pm *Concerts@First*

The Helen McDermott Memorial Concert

Johann Vexo, Organist

Tuesday, September 27

6:30 pm Nominating Committee

Wednesday, September 28

7:30 pm Young Adult Group

Make A Joyful Noise!

ON THE SECOND SUNDAY of each month, the young families (and whoever else wants to!) take time to *Make a Joyful Noise*. We break out jingle bells and egg shakers, and sing fun and silly songs, and more reflective songs, that teach us about the Bible and faith. If your inner child is looking for a chance to have some fun singing for God, join us at 9:50 AM on September 11!



First Church to seek Co-Pastor

In March 2016 the Personnel Committee of First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia was informed by the Rev. Jesse Garner of his plans to retire in the summer of 2018.

The traditional response to such an announcement would be for the Personnel Committee of Session, with the permission of Presbytery's Commission on Ministry (COM), to begin a search for an Interim Pastor in early 2018, who would serve the church during the process of finding a new pastor. This process, which would not have begun until the incumbent Pastor's departure, would include a Church Mission Study, which must be completed and approved by the COM prior to the election of a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) which would then begin its search for a new pastor. Following this process and timetable, a new pastor could conceivably be in place as early as the fall of 2019, but more likely at some point in early- to mid-2020.

In consultation with the Rev. Mr. Garner, the Personnel Committee undertook to consider this transition and how it might best be managed for the benefit of the congregation. An alternative that the Committee has explored is the election of a Co-Pastor, who would serve for a period of time with the Rev. Mr. Garner before he retires and who would then become the Pastor and Head of Staff upon Rev. Garner's retirement. The Personnel Committee recommended this alternative to the Session, and on July 7, 2016, the Session unanimously approved this course of action. On August 8 the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Philadelphia approved the request from the Session of First Church to establish the position of Co-Pastor.

The primary reason for taking this action is that the Session believes that the notable success and positive momentum that First Church is currently experiencing in membership growth and worship attendance can best be sustained and furthered by a smooth pastoral transition from one installed pastor to another without recourse to the traditional interim pastor model. In coming to this conclusion, the Session carefully reviewed the rationale for the wisdom of the interim pastor model and its applicability to our situation. Those reasons include the following:

- After a long pastorate the congregation needs a break before it will be ready for the arrival a new Pastor—a breathing space of sorts;

- A break of a year or more between called Pastors to give the congregation the opportunity to critically evaluate its witness and mission and begin to make such changes as it deems appropriate;
- A break of a year or more will help the new Pastor because memories of the predecessor will have begun to fade, and give the congregation time to grieve the loss of its former pastor.

In the Session's view none of these reasons, even if valid, diminishes our strong belief that the ministry, witness and dynamic work now underway at First can be better sustained by NOT being interrupted by a lengthy interim period. The Session believes that the Church Mission Study which must be completed to call a Co-Pastor would provide ample opportunity for an assessment of church ministry and mission, and fears that a lengthy interim would not be a helpful "breathing space" as much as a potentially harmful interruption of the progress currently underway.

The Session also recognizes that its recommendation may be challenged by those who believe it allows the current pastor to have undue influence in the choice of his successor. The Session rejects that argument. The role of the Rev. Mr. Garner in the selection of a Co-Pastor is limited to being an ex-officio member of the PNC. It is the PNC, with the guidance and direction of the COM that will have the full and complete responsibility for recommending an individual to fill the Co-Pastor position. In addition, the Committee strongly believes the advice and counsel of the Rev. Mr. Garner in the entire process can be of substantial benefit to the congregation.

We recognize that there are significant financial implications to this recommendation, which would result in paying two Pastors for an extended period, keeping the rest of the staff in place. It would likely result in a one time budget expense in 2018 of \$70,000 - \$90,000. Again, the Session believes this one time expenditure is worth keeping the work of the Church going and moving forward.

The next step in the process is the formation of a Mission Study Committee. The Session authorized the creation of this Committee on August 30. Once its work is complete, approved by the Session and the Commission on Ministry, a Pastor Nominating Committee will be elected by the members of First Church.

—Allan Schimmel

Back to Christian Education!

First Presbyterian Church's Christian Education Committee has been working to provide the church with many opportunities for study throughout the school year!

We now have two regular Bible Studies taking place with the Lectionary Bible Study led by the Rev. Jesse Garner on Sunday mornings at 9:45 AM and the Men's Bible Study led by the Rev. Drew Harrison on Saturday mornings at 9:00 AM! We have weekly gatherings of our Young Adult Group on Wednesday evenings, when they study both Bible and faith-related topics. We are also working on coordinating a Women's Bible Study; stay tuned for more information!

Sunday School will begin on Sunday, September 11. We'll be using the *Feasting on the Word* multi-age curriculum (1st grade–6th grade). Teaching this year are Karen Buzan, Emily Roan, and Becky Yep. We're so thankful for these folks from the congregation who are willing to lead our children along their faith journeys!

In addition, we have special programs throughout the year such as Will Harris' *Constitutional Thinking* and our *Social Justice* series. Other possibilities include:

- our *Understanding Faith* series which will be looking into the Mormon Tradition
- our *Teaching Members* series, where teaching professionals from our congregation share their work and passion
- our *Lenten Wednesday* series, which will feature a book of Jonathan Edwards
- a continuation of the conversations we began last year concerning Atul Gawande's book *Being Mortal*
- a look at the life and work of Bono

Here's looking forward to a great CE year!!

—Jeffrey Halili, Chair of Christian Education

Water Month at the Celebration Service

What do you do when it's hot outside? Celebrate stories of water in the Bible! August was water month at the Celebration service, as we explored various stories of water in the Bible. We made a storm as we talked about Jesus calming the waters when the disciples' boat was caught in a storm. We talked about baptism, and wrote our confessions on coffee filters that we put into water where they were washed away. We crossed the Jordan River with the Israelites into the Promised Land, and set up a stone monument to remind us to share the stories of how God has been at work in our lives. Finally, we explored the poetry of creation by covering the floor with paper, and drawing out the different days.

Intrigued as to what this looks like? Come join us Sundays at 9!

—Megan LeCluyse



"Crossing the Jordan River" at the Celebration! Service.

First Church Families with Young Children!

This summer, First Church Families have gotten together a few times for fun, fellowship, and singing our faith. Every second Sunday of the month, we gather for *Make a Joyful Noise* to share our faith with our children through music. We sing songs both silly and sacred, and play with a variety of instruments as we sing.

First Church Families also had a great time with our Bagel Bar Brunch on August 28th. We had a great turnout, lots to eat, and a wonderful time talking about how our little ones are growing right before our eyes!

As Fall comes, we're planning outside activities to savor the cool weather that (we hope!) is coming our way. On Saturday, September 17, we're going to the Philadelphia Zoo! For more information or to be added to the Families with Young Children list, contact [Drew Harrison](#), and join the [First Presbyterian Church Families with Young Children](#) Facebook group.

Men's Bible Study

Though it is fairly new, Men's Bible Study has become a wonderful space for friendship and spiritual growth. It has outgrown its previous meeting space at the Plenty Café, and has moved to the upstairs Café at DiBruno Brothers at 1730 Chestnut. Every Saturday at 8:00 AM, men of all ages gather together to be challenged by the word of God and offer support and encouragement to each other in their daily lives. They are currently studying the Gospel of John, and welcome anyone who would like to join them for Bible Study.

—Drew Harrison

CONCERTS@FIRST

This season of *Concerts@First* promises to be an exciting one! It will be opened on September 25th at 4:00 PM, with The Helen McDermott Memorial Concert, an organ recital by acclaimed French organist, **Johann Vexo**. Mr Vexo's impressive biography is below. We will once again offer a silent film at Halloween (Saturday, Oct. 29th); *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* will be shown on a giant screen while Andrew Senn improvises a sound track on the organ. On February 26th at 3:00 PM, we will welcome Kara Huber, a remarkable and talented young pianist. Her program for us will be a "dry-run" as she prepares for her Carnegie Hall debut.

Finally, there will be two Sunday worship services featuring Bach cantatas with the Chancel Choir and Orchestra—October 30th (Reformation Sunday) and March 26th (Fourth Sunday of Lent).

We hope to see you at all of these wonderful musical events. Remember, you can always make a tax-deductible contribution to Concerts@First which will help ensure the ongoing production of these stellar offerings!

—Andrew Senn

JOHANN VEXO was born in 1978 in the northeastern French city of Nancy—a city close to the borders of Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany. Surrounded and influenced by the rich musical and cultural heritage of this part of Europe, Johann's training and performance career developed rapidly and at age 25 he was appointed Organiste de Choeur (Choir Organist) at the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris. Soon thereafter he was also appointed Organist of the Cavaillé-Coll organ of the Cathedral in Nancy, Professor of Organ at the Angers Conservatory, and the European Music Summer Academy in Nancy.

Johann Vexo began his organ studies with Christophe Mantoux and also studied early music and harpsichord at the Strasbourg Conservatory, where he was awarded Premier Prix in organ. He continued his studies at the Paris Conservatory where his teachers included Michel Bouvard and Olivier Latry for organ and Thierry Escaich and Philippe Lefebvre for improvisation. He earned Premier Prix in both organ and basso continuo and additional prizes in harmony and counterpoint.

He has performed extensively throughout Europe, the United States, Canada and Russia including perform-



ances at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Houston, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington D.C., the Wanamaker Grand Court Organ in Philadelphia, and Notre Dame Basilica in Montréal. Recitals during the 2015–16 season took him to

Perm and Ekaterinburg (Russia), Dallas, TX and Helena, MT (U.S.), Charleroi (Belgium), Truro (Britain), Lunéville, Nancy, and Albi (France), Alessandria (Italy), and Bern (Switzerland). His September–October 2016 U.S. tour will find him in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington D.C. He has been featured as a solo artist at the international music festivals held in Austria (St. Florian, Vienna), Belgium (Antwerp, Gent), Portugal (Porto), Germany (Düsseldorf, Ulm), Russia (Moscow) and Canada (Montréal, Québec), as well as with various European orchestras and musical ensembles.

Known for his generous, supportive, and captivating teaching style, Mr. Vexo has taught master classes at Rice University, the Curtis Institute of Music, and Westminster Choir College.

Johann Vexo has made recordings of French classical and German romantic music on historic French organs. His most recent recording of the works of Liszt, Franck, Vierne, Duruflé, and Escaich, performed on the great organ of Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, was released on the JAV label in 2010.

Johann Vexo is represented exclusively by Phillip Truckenbrod Concert Artists, LLC.

Random Acts of Dining: Fall Edition

With more than 70 people making up 10 groups who shared dinners throughout Philadelphia in homes and restaurants, we can officially declare summer's Random Acts of Dining a success! Everyone who was involved enjoyed getting to meet new people and learning new things about old friends.

We'll be starting another round of [Random Acts of Dining](#) for this fall. If you enjoyed sharing a meal with friends new and old, or you are sad that you missed out on the action over the summer, sign-up cards will be in the pew

and a form available online at the beginning of September so that you can join. If you sign up, you'll be randomly assigned a group of 6-8 people to meet for dinner between now and the end of November. Groups can arrange to meet at a restaurant or in someone's home. Don't worry if you can't host or aren't a great cook, the emphasis is on having fun and getting to know people in the church.

If you are willing to host a group in your home or coordinate a meal together at a restaurant, please indicate it on the form.

Columbarium Project Approved by the Session

The Session at its August 30, 2016 meeting approved the construction of a columbarium in the space now occupied by the library. Plans and recommendations for the columbarium project have been under consideration by the Planned Giving Team since 2013.

Construction is scheduled to begin soon after January 1, 2017. Lisa Dustin, of the firm of Atkin Olshin Schade Architects, is the architect. Lisa also was the architect for the 2011-2013 First Church renovations. The fabricator of the columbarium niches is Eikhoff Columbaria, Inc. of Crookston, Minnesota. It is one of the preeminent columbarium fabricators in the United States.

The columbarium will contain 135 niches (each sized 8" x 8" x 16") for cremated remains. Each niche will accommodate up to two urns. The faceplate of each niche will contain the inscribed names, birth and death dates of those persons inurned in the niche. Also included in the columbarium space will be a standing desk with a book that will contain the obituaries and photographs of the persons whose remains are contained in the columbarium.

The Session also approved the creation of a columbarium committee, currently comprised of Herbert Valentine, Philip Steinberg, Heather Coyne, Patricia Quigg, Joann Bailey, Patti Sassoli, Sheila Ferguson, and William Leonard. Information about the columbarium policies, regulations, reservations, and fees will be forthcoming from the committee later this year.

—William L. Leonard



Preliminary rendering of the First Presbyterian Church Columbarium

Young Adult Group

The young adult group is always a wonderfully changing group! There is an ebb and flow of people in their 20s and 30s into and out of the city, especially prevalent in the summer months, where we welcome many people who are taking new jobs in the city or starting graduate studies in the area. We are missing the people who took opportunities that drew them to cities far from Philadelphia. While we miss the young adults who are moving on, we are also excited to welcome newcomers!



This summer, we are focusing our planned group events around fellowship. Each month, we've held a movie night, game night, a night out at a bar or restaurant, and an outdoor hang-out. Attendance has been anywhere from 4–10 people for these weeknight hangouts, and we've really grown closer together. Young adults and other members have opened up their homes for game nights and movie nights, providing a relaxing atmosphere.

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.

—Emily Roan

Upcoming Young Adult Events

- Join us for Theology on Tap Wednesday, September 7 at Grace Tavern (2229 Grays Ferry Avenue) at 7:30. We will write letters to active and retired military personnel and have a night of scruples discussion.
- Join us after the 11 o'clock service Sunday, September 11 for our monthly brunch at The Irish Pub.

MEMBER NEWS

Births

HENRY PASQUALE DALYAI, born June 29, to **Rick & Catherine Dalyai**. (The Dalyai family has moved to Greenville, NC where Rick is practicing medicine.)

CADE JAMES TREZZA, son of **Brittan Hallar & Justin Trezza**, was born on June 24.

ARCHER DANIEL SCHERNECKE, son of **Lauren & Greg Scherneck**, was born on June 22.

Baptisms

GWENDOLYN GRACE and **WILLIAM PETER MELLEY**, twins born to **Rebecca Santoro Melley & Peter Melley**, were baptized on July 17.

Deaths

DR. WILMA L. HESTON died on June 20th and was buried June 22nd at the Woodlands Cemetery near the University of Pennsylvania campus.

New Members

KATHERINE CROCKETT comes to us from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and is a recent graduate from the University of Pennsylvania. She is now living in Center City and working at HUP as a research coordinator in Cardiology and is very excited about her research. She is very active in Young Adult Fellowship and has recently discovered a love of water ice.

JULIA BUTZ is a recent graduate of Georgetown and is now working in Bala Cynwyd in financial consulting. She was a collegiate rower, but has recently taken up squash. She loves the welcoming community and history of First Church, and enjoys kickboxing, reading the New York Times style section, and catching up with family and friends.

CLEIRACH PARTIN grew up in Chambersburg and Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, and is a Senior Pathology Secretary at HUP as well as a Children's Literature Specialist. She is a great conversation partner on issues of faith and life, and loves the sermons, music, and warm welcome at First Presbyterian Church.

GINI ISAACSON and her husband Franklin are recent transplants from New Jersey. They are delighted to be in Philadelphia because of its many amenities, including convenient access to grandchildren. Gini has lived all over the country, and loves to read, knit, walk, and spend time with friends. Gini and Franklin have loved the warm welcome they received at First Church since they first visited last Christmas Eve.

Transitions

Our Sexton, **EDISON GUZMAN** earned his degree as a Physical Therapy Assistant from Philadelphia Technical Institute. He will be sitting for boards in early October. Eddie has been in this program for two years while working at First Church and Optimal Fitness. His mother and father, sister and niece attended the graduation with his partner and other friends. Congratulations, Eddie!



New members Katherine Crockett, Julia Butz, Cleirach Partin, and Gini Isaacson.



Eddie Guzman

Dancing Classrooms “Philly” (DCP) —Judging Stars of the Future!

Recently I had lunch with Denise Kinney, Executive Director of Musicopia and Dancing Classrooms (DCP). Our discussion centered on the strong relationship between Musicopia and the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. As our discussion was coming to a close, Ms. Kinney queried me, “Do you know anything about the Dancing Classrooms program?” In a strange way I did, but did not realize it until she explained that it is a dancing program instituted for children in the 5th grade. Well, to my surprise I had just received a video of my 10-year-old grandson one week earlier, dancing on stage (with a girl!) in this very program in New York!

Denise then asked if I would judge the Dancing Classrooms Philly semi-final to be held in a local school. Not knowing what I was getting myself into, I said “yes.” After many emails, the date and school were announced and the guideline and scoring sheet sent and reviewed. Then I spent a sleepless



night wondering if I was up to the task!

The semi-final program was held at Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School in NE Philly on May 17th. On arrival I was met at the door by Juliette Hyson, Director of Individual Giving, who escorted me to the ballroom (gym) and tried to calm my apprehension. There I met Kate Rast, Artistic and

Education Director, who was the emcee and an incredible package of energy. With introductions and instruction complete, I turned my attention to a ballroom resplendent with color—sashes, and shirts and hair bows in hues



of reds, oranges, blues, and greens, all worn by the 5th grade dancers. The morning was filled with Tango, Swing, Rumba, Fox Trot, and Merengue. The children’s faces were serious, but reflected pure joy as they swung their hips, their posture erect, moving to the music. The task of judging was hard, but seeing the children competing and earning their medals was a totally worthwhile and delightful experience.

Thank you Kate, Juliette, and Denise for what you do in providing a positive social experience for the children of Philly. To all the parents in the stands and the dance teachers with their classes, you are truly dedicated, supportive, and remarkable. To all children who competed, “thank you” for making a day in my life both meaningful and memorable! To all at First Presbyterian, please consider supporting these wonderful, positive programs. These are the links for [Dancing Classrooms Philly](http://dancingclassroomsphilly.org) (dancingclassroomsphilly.org) and [Musicopia](http://musicopia.net) (musicopia.net) websites.

—Bob Gross



Early Fall 2016 Programs

Penn’s Village programs move into high gear in September and October:

- September 9 at 10:45 AM: Tour of the new Mormon Temple
- September 15 at 1:00 PM: Tour of the Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts
- September 22 at 1:00 PM: Get your flu shot and better understand Medicare Prescription Plans
- October 6 from 10:00 AM–noon: Tour of Philadelphia’s Wholesale Food Market
- October 12: Tour the Philadelphia Zoo (details to be announced)
- October 18: The Presidential Election with Neil Oxman (details to be announced)

For further information about individual programs, see www.pennsvillage.org. To register for any of the programs: info@pennsvillage.org or call 215-925-7333.

Check out Penn’s Village on Facebook too for interesting information on how neighbors help neighbors thrive, connect and engage (www.facebook.com/pennsvillage).

Save the Date! UPCA Celebration!

On October 29, the Christian Association at the University of Pennsylvania is hosting a dinner to celebrate it’s 125th anniversary! Look for more details in next month’s newsletter, or go to www.upennca.org.

Habitat Saturday Service in West Philly with First Presbyterian Church

There was no communal hymn sing or Bible study, but we did install a set of kitchen cabinets, three fire detectors, paint a basement and a front porch and spruce up a



Megan LeCluyse

backyard together in West Philly on Saturday, June 4th. Our four-person volunteer team was fearlessly led by Bob Gross, and consisted of Rev. Megan LeCluyse, regular attendee Laura Flippin, and newcomer to Philadelphia, Steve Roberts. We worked on two different homes about a block apart and worked with four members of the Habitat for Humanity staff.

This was my first time serving with Habitat and I thoroughly enjoyed spending the morning carrying supplies, using power tools (after being instructed on how to properly use them), painting and serving the community. The house in which we did the majority of our work was home to a four-generation family. We spoke with the great-grandmother and met her 9-month old great-grandson "Fussy." While I had never



Laura Flippin

installed a fire detector before and was quite intimidated by setting one off, I felt a deep sense of accomplishment upon successfully installing three. Those detectors will keep all four generations safe from smoke, carbon monoxide, and fire; I would have never been able to install them on my own, but Bob and Craig Lee, Habitat for Humanity Construction Supervisor, showed me how to do it and ensured that the alarms were installed properly. As a team,

we helped protect the house and its residents.

We also worked together to remove a fallen tree branch that was entangled in an array of electrical wires and cables.



Steve Roberts

Good thing we had Steve Roberts, a retired electrician, with us! The team assessed the problem and the potential risks, and worked to cut and remove the rather large branch from the overhead power wires and then the backyard.

As a first-time volunteer, I very much appreciated how friendly and how helpful everyone there was. I also enjoyed hearing some of the many stories Bob had to share about the Habitat staff and seeing the amazing relationship he has cultivated with them over time. It was fun to get to know and work with the other volunteers and the Habitat staff. I can now install a fire detector, jump a little less while testing them, and have no regrets about waking up early on a Saturday to serve with First Church.

—Laura Flippin

iROCK4IRAQ! A benefit concert for Iraqi Christians fleeing ISIS

On September 17, St. Martin's Church in Radnor, PA will host the second annual benefit concert to raise awareness and funds for Christians living in Erbil, Kurdistan in the north of Iraq. The concert includes diverse music from five popular Philadelphia bands, delicious food, cold beverages, very cool tee-shirts, sunshine (God willing!), fellowship and fun. And all to express love and support to the Body of Christ in Iraq!

Tickets are \$20 (\$25 at the door), \$10 for students, and free for children 12 and under. To purchase tickets or for more information, please visit our website

(standwithiraqichristians.org), our [Facebook page](#), or contact St. Martin's Church (610-688-4830; admin@stmartinsradnor.org).

Many thanks and see you there!!!

—Pastor Chris Bishop, Rector,
St. Martin's Episcopal Church

Note: Pastor Bishop screened a documentary he produced of conditions in Iraq for members and friends of First Presbyterian in June, and our Missions committee is supporting this effort. We hope all who are able will lend their support as well.

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

Rev. Jesse B. Garner, Minister

Rev. Megan LeClyuse, Celebration Team Leader

**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

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MEMBERSHIP & EVANGELISM • Larry Slagle, Chair

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Suellen Smith, Jim Wilson

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Allan Schimmel, George Schneider

Class of 2019

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Philip McMunigal, Emily Roan, Patricia Sassoli

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Cathy Lever, Jean Witmer

Class of 2019

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Anita McLarin, Evelyn Schwartz

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Cade Massey, Jon Rogers

Class of 2018

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Christensen,

Leila Vaughan, John Witmer

Class of 2019

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

THE MESSENGER

Patti Sassoli, Executive Editor

Owen Robbins, Design Director

Please submit all information for the
October issue of The Messenger to
communications@fpcphila.org by
Monday, September 26th.

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 Rapscher 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. Check the bulletin for announcements. Contact Beverly Cowart (missions@fpcphila.com).



Stand With Iraqi Christians presents

iROCK4IRAQ!

A benefit concert for Iraqi Christians fleeing ISIS

Saturday, September 17, from 4-7 PM

St. Martin's Church in Radnor, PA

(see article on page 9)



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