



(Hospital, In Home, Hale House, etc)

The **FIRST BAPTIST** **CHURCH OF** **BOSTON** **NEWSLETTER**

110 Commonwealth Ave.

Boston, Ma 02116

Phone: 617-267-3148

firstbaptistchurchofboston.org

Spring 2005

YEAR 2004 **A GOOD YEAR FOR FBC**

The period from January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004 marks my first full year in working with the people of the First Baptist Church of Boston, MA. My main priority during this first year has been familiarizing myself with the people of the congregation, learning the traditions and practices that have been handed down over the years and learning the leadership patterns that exist here. I have enjoyed working with the ministry leaders and the various committees of this great congregation (great in spirit, though not yet in numbers!). I am proud of the people of FBC and I would like to thank all of the ministry leaders, the Deacons and the Trustees for their dedication to Kingdom work. I have not shared the ministry with a more capable group than those on the boards and committees of this congregation. I consider it a privilege to work with people like Dr. Bruce Herrick, Dr. Henry Henderson, Dorothy Williams, Mel Jemmison, Don Thacker and Earl Norman who do their jobs so well. I would like to thank the prayer group for praying for me and my family and for all of the people here who have lifted us up in prayer. I would also like to mention the names of some people who work behind the scenes - people like Bill T., Percy Mathis, our Sunday School teachers and Gwen Jemmison. Remember that there are no un-noticed workers for the Kingdom in the eyes of God. Over the course of this past year, God has allowed me the following:

- Average Attendance - 50.63
- Counseling Sessions - 56
- Weddings - 8
- Sermons & Devotionals - 54
- Visitations - 43

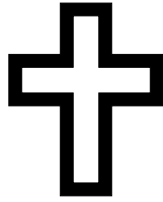
We have been blessed to see many, many, people come to Christ during Worship times. The AM Worship attendance average is a great source of encouragement for me as well. When my family and I came to FBC, we were told that the average attendance on Sundays during 2003 was anywhere between 5 and 25 people (depending on whom you ask). That being the case, this would indicate that our average attendance has at least doubled over the course of 2004

In 2005, I plan to begin a Mid-Week Bible Study. Several people have approached me about starting one (beginning with the ladies of L.I.F.T.) as we sense a growing desire here at FBC to learn more about God's Word.

The year 2005 is going to be a very exciting one for our church family. We will face challenges and see many joys. My prayer is that the Lord will bless us with growth in His Spirit and in our numbers.

Rev. Jay W. VanHorn
Pastor, First Baptist Church of Boston





faith. The church has no creedal test for membership. Its members, however, are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures, and in endeavoring to walk in the ways of the Lord.

OUR CHURCH COVENANT

WHO ARE WE, SINCE 1665?

It is often that visitors ask, well, what does this church believe? And the answer is clearly stated in our historic by-laws. While our by-laws may have been modified from time-to-time, our great vein of faith, practice and beliefs have not. At our Annual Meeting the membership and friends, for the first time in memory, recited who we are and what we believe. The Church Covenant is read on every Communion Sunday.

ARTICLE I NAME

This church is duly incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under the corporate name of The First Baptist Church of Boston.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The purpose of this Church shall be to proclaim and to demonstrate the Gospels of Jesus Christ, to carry out the teachings of the New Testament, to encourage the spiritual growth and mutual support of its members, and to provide a community of friendship *for all people*.

ARTICLE III STATEMENT OF FAITH

The church belongs to the tradition of American Baptist Churches in the USA, a tradition that has given large place of *private judgment* but has also included full appreciation of the historic doctrines of the Christian

As we trust we have been brought by Divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the influence of His spirit to give our selves up to Him, so do we now solemnly covenant with each other, as God shall enable us,

- to walk together in Christian love
- to exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other
- not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor omit the great duty of prayer, both for ourselves and for others
- to participate in each other's joys, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy
- to bear each other's burdens and sorrows
- to seek Divine aid to enable us to walk circumspectly and watchfully in the world
- to strive together for the support of a faithful evangelical ministry among us
- to contribute, according to our ability, to the financial support of the Church and to its benevolences
- and, through life, to seek to live to the glory of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

FBC Family Portrait

Donald Thacker was on holiday/mission for three weeks attending to and visiting family and friends in Florida, Maryland, North Carolina and West Virginia. **Henry Henderson** and **Donald** vacationed in Costa Rica for two days. **Sarah Zettek** is looking forward to spring and a chance to start working in her garden at The Fenway Victory Gardens, near the gardens of **Alan Andersen** and **Percy Mathis**. **Sarah** and **Deborah Porter** will be visiting the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's New England Spring Flower Show at the Bayside Expo Center in the middle of March. **Deborah** recently received news that her brother Russ and his wife Pauline in Seattle will be parents in October. **Megan Brown** is at home in Oklahoma visiting family and friends. **Megan** and **Linda VanHorn** are discussing some exciting ideas for upcoming **LIFT** meetings including a Spring fling when meetings resume after Easter. The **LIFT** meetings have been on hold as many members of FBC are attending the **Lenten Dinner and Lecture Series** at **Old South Church** every Wednesday night during Lent. **Pastor VanHorn** and his wife, **Linda**, will be flying their nine year old daughter, **Michaela**, back home to Pennsylvania to visit with her grandparents. Regular attendees at FBC, **Joseph and Inea**, will be returning to Joseph's home town in Germany to be married the early part of July.

ANNUAL MEETING PRODUCTIVE

The Annual Meeting was convened by Moderator Dorothy Williams, and a light luncheon was enjoyed by 21 members and friends in attendance. Following the hymn *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*, which was written out of this church by Oliver Holden in 1783, Deacon Melvin Jemison read the names from the Book of Remembrance.

A healthy, but, cautious budget was presented by Treasurer Dr. Henry P. Henderson for 2005 and was voted affirmative by the membership. Clerk Donald Thacker cast one ballot for the Nominating Committee slate with a few changes from the previous year. (See attached Boards and Committees).

Appointments were made to the Stillman Association, TABCOM Annual Gathering, and ABC Biennial. Earl A. Norman, Jr. was appointed as church Historian, and Louise Takvorian as Archivist.

Another highlight of the meeting was to bestow the title of Advisory Board to two long-term church members who have served the church faithfully: Dr. Bruce Herrick, Minister of Music for 30 years and William Triantafilu, a member for nearly 25 years. An appointment to the Advisory Board is the highest honor awarded at FBC Boston. Thanks to Rayford Glasgow for the design of the Certificates.

**The theme chosen by the Board of
Deacons for 2005 is:**

We Are One In The Spirit!

THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE
is open to the pages honoring

Maxwell C. Elliott beg 2/6
Wilbur T. Wyatt beginning 2/20
Constance C. Hanson beg 3/6
Edna C. Morse beginning 3/20
Louise Wyman beginning 4/3
John J. Bowles beginning 4/17

Happy Birthday!

March	
2 nd	Linda vanHorn
4 th	Bruce Herrick
15 th	Percy Mathis
23 rd	Laura Herrick
April	
23 rd	Sarah vanHorn
28 th	Donald Thacker

LENTEN DINNER AND LECTURE SERIES HELD

Wednesday Evenings at Old South Church

This year's theme is *Practicing Our Faith*. The February sessions will be led by Old South's Interim Assistant Minister, Kate Layzer. In March, the Rev. Dr. Stephanie Paulsell, Associate Dean for Ministry Studies at Harvard Divinity School, author of *Honoring the Body, Meditations on a Christian Practice* and ordained minister in the Disciples of Christ, will present a three-part series on *Reading as Spiritual Practice*. There will be a light supper at 6:15 pm and the lecture will commence at 7:00 pm. There is a suggested donation of \$5.00. Please contact Ann Herrick in the church office by 1:00 pm on the preceding Monday or use the sign-up sheet in Wayland Hall. All are welcome to this series and to the 5:30 pm Communion Service at Old South Church which precedes the supper and lecture.

Lecture Series Topics

February 16th

Life Is Not a Rehearsal (Or Is It?)

Some Background on Christian Spiritual Practice

February 23rd

Do Protestants DO That?

Contemporary Approaches to Spiritual Practice

March 2nd

Reading as Spiritual Practice

March 9th

Reading Stories

March 16th

Reading Spiritual Autobiographies



PALM SUNDAY BRUNCH, YUM!

Alright folks, mark your calendar for the all Church, *not-so-low-cholesterol* annual Palm Sunday Pot-Luck Brunch. This church tradition for eons is always a favorite show-stopper and we promise you that no one goes home hungry. Please call Ann in the church office or sign up in Wayland Hall for the number in your party and what 'vittles' you wish to bring. Please prepare your dish for at least twenty people. The Christian Education Board and young people will decorate the table and room festively. Please bring a friend or two and let your taste buds do the judging.

The Flowers in the Chancel are given by

- 2/6 Mildred Brandsema for her father
- 2/13 Henry Henderson & his sister for their mother
- 2/20 *Open*
- 2/27 Walter Norden for his mother
- 3/6 Gwen & Mel Jemmison for their brothers
- 3/13 *Open*
- 3/20 *Open*
- 3/27 *Open*
- 4/3 Sarah Lois & Richard Moses Elliott
- 4/10 Percy Mathis for her grandparents
- 4/17 Easter Sunday Lilies
- 4/24 Mary Chin for many loved ones

For the Glory of God

TRUSTEES WORK DAY AND NIGHT

Perhaps you may not notice the subtlety of the Board of Trustees. Since we purchased this building in 1882, it has been an ongoing project to keep our sacred building alive. Rain, snow, heat, cold or flooding do not stop the Trustees, but always keep them busy protecting the historic edifice as secure as possible. Besides monitoring finances, (along with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary), repairs, and general upkeep, Chairman Earl A. Norman, Jr., and the Board of Trustees do their best to be on top of matters in keeping you safe, comfortable, and solvent. Did you know that our insurance is \$12,000.00 a year? Did you know that our fuel costs are approximately \$5,000.00 a month this year during winter months? Do you know what our staffing costs are annually along with their benefits? We hope that you enjoy our ministry, church building, and Mrs. Gwen's coffee and brownies, and perhaps you can assist us as God may lead you in continuing to support this wonderful fellowship of believers in carrying out a successful evangelical/ecumenical Christian campaign since 1665.



DEACON'S PRAYER LIST

*PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER...*Walter Norden, Stanley Wright, Mary Hallisey & family, Stacy Kuphal, Charlene Moulaison, Danielle Bernard, Larry Strong, Evelyn Pypes, the pastor and the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain, Dave Shaw, Donna Shaw, Betty Perkins & family, Rev. Chester L. Smith, Melvin Jemmison, Percy Mathis, Stacey Anderson, Deborah Anderson, Robin McGregor, Robert Glasgow, the Wyatt family, Mai Woo, Laurajean Rood, Dorothy Williams' family, Deborah Porter, Liz Simon, Fadie Coleman, Raine Moulaison, Tara Walls, Lemy Stinson, Kenneth Manley, Rick Poor, June Stephan, Doug & Nicole Reilly, peace in the Middle East, an end to the civil wars in Africa and Asia, the national economy, our church, local, national and world leaders and all of the victims of the Asian Tsunami.

MISSIONS 2004

Over the course of 2004, the Board of Missions has collected a total of \$ 3717. That money has been dispersed as follows: America For Christ: \$ 152.00; One Great Hour Of Sharing: \$ 366.00; World Fellowship Offering: \$258.00; Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering: \$147.00, for a Grand Total of \$923.00. Money collected and dispersed to TABCOM for their missions work totaled \$1397.00. This year, a number of pressing needs were presented to the Board. So, instead of distributing the remainder to local charities as is our tradition, the remaining \$1397 was distributed to designated people and organizations this past year as these needs arose. (For more information on actual disbursement amounts, please see our Annual Report.)

Two recent tragedies still weigh on our hearts. The earthquake and resulting tsunamis in Southeast Asia have prompted many of us to give what we can to the restoration efforts. The American Baptist Churches of the USA (ABC-USA), our national denomination has set up a special fund within their One Great Hour of Sharing Offering to aid in the relief efforts, and we have dedicated several Sundays in January to the collection of these funds. If you have missed any of these offerings, or would wish to give more to this offering, please visit the One Great Hour of Sharing web page at <http://www.abcoghs.org/>. Locally, The First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain suffered a devastating fire on January 18th, and is collecting funds for the restoration of their historic church building. Throughout the month of February, envelopes will be placed in the Sunday bulletins to allow members of the congregation to give to the Restoration Fund of our sister church. For more information on the fire and the rebuilding efforts, please visit The First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain's website at <http://www.firstbaptistjp.org/>.

The Board of Missions would like to thank all of you for your loving and prayerful support of all of our Missions efforts throughout the past year and hope for your continued support as we endeavor to support the efforts of those who would share Christ's love with the world.

In Christ,
Deborah K. Porter, Chairman
Board of Missions



AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING

Dear Friends,

My mailbox daily includes appeals for charitable gifts. Sometimes it is easy to toss away some of these letters. Other times, my heart wants to stretch too far for my checkbook to keep pace. As Christians we want to share in gratitude for what God has given to us. But how do we decide how much and to whom we should give?

The America for Christ Offering gives American Baptists a unique opportunity to respond to the fact that the United States is the third largest mission field in the world.

Last year, the America for Christ Offering helped...

Laurie, a leader at the youth gathering, realize she is called to a life career in the ministry.

Levun, a Native American woman on a Hopi reservation, bear the persecution of relatives who mock her Christianity.

Mary, a single mother living in subsidized housing and existing on food stamps and child support, receive her GED and computer classes.

Eh Taw Dwe, a Karen husband and father who was beaten by Burmese troops, resettle his family in America.

Cathie, a volunteer with a calling, become a lay pastor of a new church plant.

America for Christ gifts provide critical financial support for the myriad of programs, people and resources that respond to the physical and spiritual needs of the searching and lonely and forgotten in our country. Our gifts are vital to the existence and growth of leadership for home missionaries, youth leaders, church school educators, lay ministers and pastors.

When we give to the America for Christ Offering, we can be sure that our gifts will be used for American Baptist mission in the United States and Puerto Rico and your region-perhaps in our own neighborhood.

I urge you to join me in giving generously to the America for Christ Offering this year. Christ showed us that we can make a difference by reaching out to our neighbors. Together, let us Share Christ with America.

Seeking to walk with kindness and love,
The Board of Missions

PS: Please use the enclosed envelope for your gift and bring it to the church when we dedicate our gifts during the month of March.

