

The Trumpeter Summer 2010

The First Baptist Church of Boston

www.firstbaptistchurchofboston.org



Rev. Dr. Stephen Butler Murray, Senior Pastor

Charles W. Raines, Music Director/Organist
Pastor Clarence McGregor, Sexton

Ann Herrick, Secretary
Donald G. Thacker, Newsletter



Summertime in New England

PASTOR'S POINT-Dear friends and members of the First Baptist Church of Boston,

As the warm air begins to bathe us here in New England, I am aware that some of us are contemplating a time of vacation. As I write this letter, I am beginning mine. I want to encourage you to do so, to take time off, to go away for a break. Oftentimes, when we get away from the environments that are familiar, when we talk with people that we do not know, when we take on activities that we normally would not try, we can feel a great uplifting within ourselves. We have challenged ourselves to be more than we usually are. For a time, we live a life less ordinary.

Oftentimes, I find vacations to be exhausting. I come home from a week away thinking that I need another week off to recover from the vacation before returning to work. But those activities that exhausted me are always good because they have stretched me beyond the confines of who I normally am, what I routinely do. They have required me to know and experience more of the world than that to which I am accustomed. And that means that my own barriers have been broken down, that my understanding of the world has expanded beyond the constructed limits of what is familiar and trustworthy to me. Sometimes reaching that goal has been adventurous, a kinder word for dangerous, but ultimately worthwhile in the end.

I realize that I am someone that preaches both caution and boldness, and that may be confusing. Allow me to explain. I believe it is important to be cautious because when we are, life has less of a chance of swallowing us whole. Circumstances do not get out of control, the predators out there do not find us to be easy victims, the core of who we are remains safe despite the turmoil that might surround us at a moment's notice. At the same time, if we are not bold at least some of the time, circumstances might be so in control as to be dull, the predators might find us to be easy prey because we are ignorant of the wider world, and the core of who we are might not have built up enough fortitude to withstand the winds of change that can rise up at any time. Time and again, we must temper caution with boldness, and boldness with caution. Held together, in unison and harmony, they are an awesome combination in helping us realize ourselves most completely in this world where beauty and danger both reside.

This life that requires both caution and boldness is what allows a church not only to survive, but to thrive into its' 345th year, a life that has gone on in Boston since 1665. What a remarkable period of time for this congregation of seekers and believers to have met together in Boston! Think on the longevity of this worshipping community. There was not yet a United States of America when this church was founded. This church was instrumental in the founding of such historical educational institutions as Brown University and the Andover Newton Theological School, as well as creating a missionary society now known as TABCOM, The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts. This church has offered prophetic testimony to the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, two World Wars, as well as those of Korea, Vietnam, the first Gulf War, and the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. This is a church that has witnessed, that has weathered, that has taught, that-

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Dorothy Williams, Moderator

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Dorothy Williams





REPORT FROM TABCOM ANNUAL GATHERING

The 2010 Annual Gathering of the American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts was held on May 7 and 8 in Pittsfield. There has been, over the past few years, an effort to decrease the "business" portions of the event while increasing opportunities for fellowship and enrichment. This was quite true this year, as it seemed that the business sessions were brief (with a notable action of accepting the report on TABCOM reorganization, initiated by our own Samuel Stillman Association.) The Fellowship opportunities were enjoyable, seeing old friends and making new ones at meals and the evening Coffee House. Enriching were the Worship, workshops and, especially, the reports of how well Grotonwood and Oceanwood are doing these days. While brief, especially considering the distances travelled to Pittsfield, it was a great time to an American Baptist in Massachusetts. Personally, it was exciting to be Delegate for the first time in years (Thanks to First Baptist/Boston!) While no date or location has been announced for the 2011 Annual Gathering, I have heard that it is expected to be "in the Route 128 area", so hopefully more First Baptist/Boston folks can participate.

Rev. John Odams

TRUSTEES

After several months of delays, damage from unparalleled storm after storm, trying several contractors, the southside roof of the sanctuary is getting much needed repairs protecting the interior, especially the organ area. We resorted to our original roof specialists and work has begun.

Work has also begun on new fencing under our tower, 110 basement entrance and the alley entrance.

-Earl A. Norman, Jr.

MUSIC COMMITTEE NEWS

The First Baptist Church Choir ended for the year on May 23rd and will return on September 12. We look forward to summer soloists while the choir is on vacation. We thank the congregation and pastor for all their support and Charles Raines, our choir director and organist over the past year. We look forward to another year of singing for the praise of God. -Sarah Zettek

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

The Women's Ministries is continuing its successful clothing drive and we are currently accepting clothing for women, men and children. Clothing donations may be brought to the church and will be taken to a local area clothing store. We welcome other ideas for local, national, and international mission ministries and we thank the congregation and pastor for their support of this vital ministry of the church.

PRAYER LIST

Alan Andersen, Deborah Porter, Christine Chin, Deborah Degenhart, Marianne Norman, Louise Takvorian, William Triantafilu, Isaura Delgado, Dorothy Williams family, Sarah Zettek family. Richard Dunshee family, Angelina Dentiste, Thelma Sears, Ann Foreman, Velma DuPont family, Frovis Rover, Utzinger family, David Mokoema, Vosler family, Edward Davis family, Fayne family, Balls family, Travis Kennedy, Floyd Donald, Karla Johnson, Tara Wall, Terris Reddick Charles Zettek. Earthquakes in Japan, Chile, Haiti, our national economy, peace in the Middle East, civil wars in Asia and Africa. Our church, local, state, national and world leaders.

MEMORIAL CHANCEL FLOWERS

If you have signed up for memorial flowers we ask that you remit the amount of \$75.00 c/o Financial Secretary Dorothy Williams at least one-month before your scheduled altar display remembering your loved ones.

If the amount is not received in advance the church cannot honor purchasing fresh floral arrangements. Thank you!



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING 2010

Dear Friends,

In his final moments with his disciples, Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" "Yes," Peter replies. Then feed my lambs, "the Good Shepherd tells him. "Tend my sheep. "Three times, Jesus passionately repeats his instruction, pressing his followers: If you love me, take care of the people I love. Live your love for me by actively tending these for whom I have sacrificed everything. (John 21:15-19).

Soon, you'll have an opportunity to offer your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing, empowering our American Baptist ministries of disaster relief and refugee aid, meeting basic needs in Christ's name throughout the world, and sharing resources that allow people to improve their own lives and communities. Soon, each of us will decide how to respond to Jesus' question, "Do you love me?"

The members of the family of God—from those we know to distant sisters, brothers, and cousins in parts of the world we may never visit—are God's flock, the sheep of God's pasture (Ezekiel 34:31). Yet, God's flock is often forcefully scattered, as people are chased from their homes and livelihoods by brutal expressions of war, as communities and futures are shattered by natural disasters, as societies and countries are ground down by unrelenting hunger, disease, and poverty.

Jesus calls us to tend to his sheep caught in these situations of evil and nature run amok. And with love and energy, the Church responds! Through One Great Hour of Sharing

- Disaster victims quickly receive shelter, food, water, and medical supplies
- Local communities develop secure sources of food and clean water
- Minds and bodies grow stronger with new schools and medical clinics
- Refugees receive housing and long-term help to construct new lives

In these challenging times, we often wonder how much we can afford to sacrifice to help feed Jesus' beloved sheep, when our needs remain pressing. Perhaps only our prayerful conscience can answer that. But remember the feeding of the 5,000: when Jesus asked the disciples to feed the crowd, the disciples despaired (Mark 6:34-44). The five loaves and two fish seemed insignificant compared to massive need. Yet when each gave sacrificially from what they had, through God's blessing, their gifts turned into a miracle of compassion for all.

Heed Jesus' call to feed his sheep with a generous, even sacrificial, gift to One Great Hour of Sharing. Sharing your resources will change lives—including your own.

Deborah Porter

The Board of Missions



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORTS—Heather Cook

The Board of Christian Education has been active in the effort of reintroducing the First Baptist Church of Boston to its neighbors. Easter Sunday's Service and Egg Hunt was very successful and shared by many new faces, of which, the Boston Globe photographer who documented and published our success. Inquiries regarding Sunday School classes have encouraged future plans of renovation to the Upper Room (Sunday School), revising a curriculum, staffing, and outreach for enrollment. Currently, Cynthia Murray hosts a childcare/Arts & Crafts hour during worship in the downstairs school area—that our children greatly enjoy. Cynthia also co-hosted the Easter Egg hunt. Lastly, Heather Cook was nominated and accepted the



**MESSAGE
FROM THE
MODERATOR**

Dear Members and Friends in Christ,
Since I last corresponded with you, we have continued on with our goals to open our doors to more people in our community and thus encourage church growth and participation.

An outstanding highlight and an example of opening our doors to the community was an Easter Egg Hunt. This event was spearheaded by Heather Cook and Cynthia Murray, (both new church members and on the Board of Christian Education). They are also parents of young children. The turn out on Easter Sunday morning was tremendous with parents and children. The church experienced a day of fellowship and fun as we hosted a reception after church services for our guests. Thank you, Heather and Cynthia and the Board of Christian Education. Thanks also to the Hospitality Committee for the reception.

No less outstanding was the Palm Sunday Brunch with the church family providing many of the delicious dishes. These dishes are supplemented by a few catered items for the congregation to enjoy as we linger over brunch and become better acquainted with each other. During these times of fellowship as we share food we share opportunities to witness with the Christian family. The church family was invited by a neighboring church to attend the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Public Garden. Mayor Thomas Menino was the guest speaker. He thanked us for our civic contributions to maintain green spaces in our community. We thank Dr. Melvin Simms (new member) for attending the event with me.

I CONTINUE TO MEET WITH ALL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES TO SHARE AND ENCOURAGE THEM IN THEIR ACTIVITIES. Last but not least, I encourage you to be a faithful witness and faithful financial witness for our beloved church.

I ALSO INVITE AND ENCOURAGE YOUR PRAYERS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

Most Sincerely,
Dorothy Williams, Moderator

(Pastor's Point Continued from page one)

-has comforted, that has proclaimed a life of Christian fellowship to its neighbors for a good, long time. This legacy is something to be celebrated, indeed.

However, friends, our longevity also should give us pause. We should stop and think what it is that the First Baptist Church means to Boston, to the Samuel Stillman Association of which we are constituent member, to our small slice of history. Many other churches have come and gone in this time, and yet our church has borne the commitments and codes of this city, of our faithful witness, of our way of living and worshipping in this world. This church is an institution of merit in this community, and established common ground where people may gather for fellowship and faith, where they can count on resplendent music and thoughtful service.

Our longevity is a mantle and a yoke, a burden and a joy. The First Baptist Church of Boston stands for something, and while that identity may have shifted and changed throughout time, this church nonetheless stands as something good. Our responsibility in this time of celebration is not to look back upon our last 345 years, but to look forward to our centuries ahead. Our responsibility is to ask the difficult questions of how it is that this church best will serve its members, its community, its city, its world. This will require vision and imagination, courage and commitment. This will demand that we recognize that in an age of shrinking congregations, the declining significance of churches to an increasingly secular society, and a deepening emphasis upon international politics rather than local concerns, First Baptist Church of Boston must still be a leader in its ministry, in its music, in its appeals for justice, in its proclamation of its purpose. This will require your time, your talents, your gifts, and your endurance. We, the members of this congregation, are the beginning of this church's next several centuries of good work. May the foundation we build for the next generations be as impressive as our predecessor's was for us, we who celebrate the fulfillment of their dreams and investment in this beloved church.

Peace in Christ,
The Reverend Stephen Butler Murray
Senior Pastor