

Baptist Notes

A Publication of the First Baptist Church in Framingham
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From Your Temporary Shepherd



I was having trouble coming up with ideas for the May newsletter, and I wasn't sure why. But then last Sunday happened and it made more sense. I want to comment on the discussion time, as I thought it went well. There were 5 tables of 4-6 people each, and everyone seemed to be engaged with the process. Many thanks for those who were recorders and reporters, and thanks also to the 4 Search Committee members who were there to facilitate the discussions.

It's important to talk about the issues raised during the conversations, especially in times of transition, and I'm glad we got to have one event of this kind. I hope this was helpful to the Search Committee as they prepare to interview potential candidates. If there's enough interest, we can do it again, but I'll leave that to

you all. There are definitely more questions and issues to consider.

Also, many thanks to all who brought food and helped set up/clean up for the potluck. There was a good variety of yummy food.

I also want to remind you that this Sunday, May 4, we will have a special guest in the person of "Ann Hasseltine." She and her husband, Adoniram Judson, set sail from Salem on February 19, 1812, and served in Burma (Myanmar) for the remainder of their lives. Thus began Baptist mission work in foreign lands. The name Judson has been preserved in Judson Press, several schools, churches, and camps. (CYC has Camp Hasseltine for women and Camp Judson for men.) Rev. Melinda Parry will be with us as Ann Hasseltine, and I hope you will join us for worship, Communion, and the monthly potluck.

And ... as of next week, I will have been at FBC for one year! It's gone by fast, as everything does these days. It has been a joy to work with you all — you are a good church in a good location, and I am confident that God has someone special in mind for you. The biggest challenge here has been my deteriorating health in terms of my very arthritic hip. I have needed more and more assistance, and I am grateful for all the help you have given me. It's tough to be on the receiving end, for sure. But it is so much appreciated and needed. THANK YOU!!

Blessings for May — Mother's Day, Memorial Day, garden season, and Kentucky Derby!

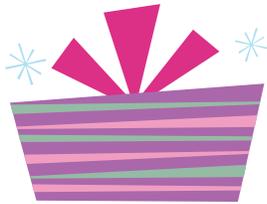
Pastor Jerrie

Rev. Jerrie Shepard Matney
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May 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 <i>7:00 pm Choir Practice</i>	2	3
4 <i>10:30 am Worship with "Ann Hasseltine" 11:30 am Potluck</i>	5	6 <i>7:00 pm Deacons</i>	7 <i>7:00 pm Bible Study</i>	8 <i>7:00 pm Choir Practice</i>	9	10
11 Mothers Day <i>10:30 am Worship World Mission Offering</i>	12	13 <i>7:00 pm Exec. Council</i>	14 <i>7:00 pm Bible Study</i>	15 <i>7:00 pm Choir Practice</i>	16	17
18 <i>10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Communications World Mission Offering</i>	19	20 <i>7:00 pm A&F</i>	21 <i>7:00 pm Bible Study</i>	22 <i>7:00 pm Choir Practice</i>	23	24
25 <i>10:30 am Worship World Mission Offering</i>	26 Memorial Day	27 <i>7:00 pm Deacons</i>	28 <i>7:00 pm Bible Study</i>	29 <i>7:00 pm Choir Practice</i>	30	31

Notes: AA meets Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday at noon in Reilly Hall.
Hope Bible Baptist Church rents space Sundays, 3–7 p.m.



May Birthdays

1 Christine Brown	11 Brian Halbert
1 Judith Richardson	13 Xavier Allen
4 Anne Cerutti	13 Gabriel Erguiza
4 John Moore	14 Jim Wakeman, Jr.
4 Evan Harris	15 Vinton Allen
6 Joan Reilly	18 Frances Carr
6 Chris Monaco	20 Kim Philipp
8 Francesca Cerutti-Harris	25 Adele Williams
10 Lorna Donovan-Mailhoit	28 Janie Harris

We are counting down to May 2026, when we will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the First Baptist Church in Framingham. As we do, you will see 200 facts about the church, in newsletters, bulletins, and possibly other places, starting in this issue of the newsletter. If you have facts to share, send them to firstbaptistframingham@gmail.com. Watch for them and learn!

Executive Council News

Executive Council met via Zoom on April 8. Here are highlights of the meeting:

- One unit at Pleasant St. is being renovated and has been offered to Family Promise.
- The AED has been mounted in Jefferson Hall, and training will be finalized at the next A&F meeting.
- Treasurer will make a recommendation to A&F for online giving at the April 2025 meeting.
- Children's Day is set for June 15 (note: this is also Father's Day).
- The red bulletin board in the corner of Reilly Hall (formerly for Missions) will revert to a Sunday School bulletin board.
- We will take the World Mission offering in May. Kelly Rutherford will coordinate.
- Grant opportunities are available from the Framingham Rotary Club and the Framingham History Center. Possible uses for grant monies related to our 200th anniversary include refurbishing and placing a stained-glass window from the Park Street building and hiring an intern to help archive our historical items and create a searchable database.
- Reminder: All speakers in worship need to use a microphone and speak clearly and slowly.
- The Search Committee submitted our church profile to TABCOM. Rev. Ron Bouthillette and Rev. Loretta St. Louis (Stillman Area Resource Coordinator) will prescreen candidates.
- A committee for our 200th anniversary celebration (May 2026) includes Francesca Cerutti-Harris, Linda Devine, Naomi Stanley, and Tom Stefanini. More volunteers are still needed.

The next Executive Council meeting is Tuesday, May 13, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Members of Executive Council are Linda Devine, Kathie Zeman, Jay Reilly, Al Harrington, Francesca Cerutti-Harris, Naomi Stanley, Judy Llewellyn, Diane Halbert, and Pastor Jerrie.

FBC FACT 1: 1926 For the 100-year anniversary of the church, FBC member Bernice Eliza Comey wrote a Centennial Song called *Our Church Beautiful*.



Food Wagon for Mothers and Children in May

As a reminder ... Our food wagon is located at the front of the sanctuary and ready for your contributions. For the month of May, we will be collecting nonperishable, nonexpired products *specifically for mothers and children* as we celebrate Mother's Day. Francesca will take your donations to a local food pantry. Please be generous.

New, Easy Way to Support Our Church

We're excited to announce that the First Baptist Church in Framingham now accepts donations through Venmo! This simple and secure platform makes it easier than ever to support the administration and missions of the church. Venmo is a digital payment app that allows you to send donations quickly and securely using your smartphone — wherever you are.

Getting started is simple:

1. If you don't already have the Venmo app, download it from your device's app store.
2. Sign up for a free account using your email address or phone number.
3. Connect your account to your preferred payment method (bank account, debit card, or credit card).
4. Search for **First Baptist Church in Framingham** or **@FBCFramingham** and make your donation.

You may use Venmo to support our church building, missions, Memorial Fund, Scholarship Fund, Deacons Fund, or any other church-related purpose. Simply designate your donation in the "What's this for?" box in the app.

Please keep in mind that even though Venmo is an easy and convenient way to donate, the church is charged a fee equal to 1.9% plus 10 cents for each individual donation. For example, if you give \$10, the church receives \$9.71. For the church to receive \$10, your donation should be \$10.30.

In the near future, we will add a link on the church website that will allow anyone to donate to the church through Venmo. We also expect to add a QR code to the Sunday bulletin to give easy access to the app.

Rest assured that the First Baptist Church in Framingham will continue to accept your pledges and donations by cash or check just as we do now. That will not change. Thank you for your generosity and for being an integral part of our church family. Every gift, big or small, furthers our mission and makes a real difference.

If you have any questions about using Venmo, contact Ray Zeman, church treasurer.

FBC FACT 2: 1964 Cardinal Richard Cushing of Boston gave an address at First Baptist Church, marking the first time a Roman Catholic prelate had spoken in a Protestant church in Framingham.

World Mission Offering in May

In the month of May, we will be collecting for the World Mission Offering (WMO). Our 2025 goal is \$600.



Last year, we **embraced the legacy** of International Ministries (IM) by sharing stories, vintage photos, and videos of some of our most iconic missionaries and office happenings. This year, we are shifting our focus to ways we can **continue the mission** together. We will be collecting with special envelopes the last three weeks of May. You also may send your donation to FBC. Please include WMO on your check.

Join us as we help support IM:

- Minister
- Share the gospel
- Disciple
- Plant churches
- Train leaders
- Partner with national churches

The Board of Missions thanks you in advance for being part of this important mission.

FBC FACT 3: 1762 The Framingham Baptist Society was formed to support part-time preaching.

Easter at First Baptist Church

We had a joyous celebration of Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday. Many thanks to all who joined in the sunrise service and breakfast, morning worship, youth presentation, Easter egg hunt, and photo on the front steps. The weather was perfect, and the church looked beautiful, inside and out.



Overview of Service of Worship and Conversation

On Sunday, April 27, the congregation gathered in Reilly Hall for a time of conversation instead of a typical worship service. After sharing joys and concerns, hearing the scripture, praying, and singing a hymn, groups of people at five tables answered four questions to help us get to know ourselves better as we search for a new pastor. Below are the questions and a summary of the responses.

1. What makes First Baptist different/unique from other congregations that potential pastors may be considering? Or is it?

We have a close-knit family atmosphere and a diversity of people and backgrounds. We are inclusive, we welcome new people and ideas, and we do not have a history of deep conflicts. A mission-oriented church, we help the local community through our rental property, with a commitment to housing and involvement with local homelessness, battered women, prison inmates, and Family Promise. Mission engagement also has included trips of exploration and discovery in other communities and countries.

2. If you were interviewing pastoral candidates, what question(s) would you ask them?

What ideas do you have to grow the church?

Will you be active in the community the denomination (TABCOM, etc.)?

What's the most important thing you will do to equip our members for ministry?

How do you discuss distinctions between Christianity and Christian nationalism?

What is your top priority?

What is your main reason for coming here?

Can you sing and dance, and do you have a sense of humor? (Thinking of the talent show!)

3. A few weeks ago, Pastor Jerrie preached on the parables of the patches and wine skins (Mark 2:18-22). One of the issues it raised was what objects/traditions/rituals does a church consider sacred/unchangeable, and what can be adjusted, changed, or even dropped. What would be your examples of each, as relevant to First Baptist?

Sacred/unchangeable

We want to continue celebrations of Christian holidays (Christmas, Easter) and traditions such as baptism, profession of faith, monthly communion, potluck lunches, and fellowship. Our quality music ministry is important, as are our deep history and our Baptist connections and affiliations. We must continue to offer services on Zoom, move toward younger generations, and embrace technology (e.g., Venmo).

Adjusted/changed/dropped

Some areas in which we would be willing to adjust are having more fellowship with other churches, holding a Good Friday service, and increasing variety in types of music (classic, gospel, praise, contemporary, modern, etc.).

4. A group of pastors was asked what they wished they had asked in their interviews with the church but hadn't. One was the question, to the church, "What will you NOT do in order to grow?" How would you answer that question?

We would not drastically change ourselves or compromise our morals just to grow. We are unwilling to combine with another church, close the building, or be poor stewards of the church's resources. Conducting door-to-door evangelism is not our style, and we will not get into politics (we will honor the separation of church and state) or compromise the Gospel.

Refresh Your Soul at Oceanwood

AGENDA			
<u>Friday, May 16</u>			
Arrive 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM for fellowship and refreshments.			
<u>Saturday, May 17</u>			
7:30 AM	Devotions	12:30 PM	Work
8:00 AM	Breakfast	3:30 PM	Free Time
8:30 AM	Work	5:00 PM	Dinner
Noon	Lunch	6:00 PM	Campfire, Devotions, Fellowship
<u>Sunday, May 18</u>			
8:00 AM	Breakfast & Worship	9:30 AM	Clean Room & Depart
8:45 AM	Worship		

REGISTRATION FORM	
Name(s): _____	(Use a separate piece of paper if needed.)
Telephone: _____	
Email: _____	
Skills: _____	
Food Allergies: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to attend the entire work weekend. (The cost for Oceanwood to prepare four meals per person is \$60.00. Two nights' lodging is waived as a "thank you" for your service.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to attend Saturday only from 8:30am to 3:30pm. I would like lunch (\$15.00).
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to attend Saturday only from 8:30am to 3:30 pm but will not have lunch.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have enclosed a check made out to Oceanwood in the amount of \$_____.
Mail the registration form to John Mulloy, 27 Ox Road, Billerica, MA 01821 with your check made payable to Oceanwood for your meal(s).	

Family Promise Metrowest Walk to End Homelessness

You can still register for the Walk to End Homelessness, Sunday, **May 4**. More than a walk, it is a chance to build community, support families facing housing insecurity, and have fun.

We'll kick things off at noon with:

- Hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, KONA Ice, Munchkins, coffee & water
- Live music courtesy of School of Rock Natick
- Face painting, bouncy house, chair massages



At 1:15, gather for a short program before beginning a 2.3-mile walk. You'll walk alongside friends, families, neighbors — and toward a future when no family has to worry about where they'll sleep at night. Food and activities are FREE thanks to sponsors and partners. Register today: \$35 for adults and \$20 for youth (18 & under). Online registration closes Thursday, **May 1**, at midnight. You can register the day of the Walk, but why wait?

[Register to Walk Today!](#)

Have questions? Contact Shannon at shannon@familypromisemetrowest.org.

TABCOM Annual Gathering at Grotonwood

This year's TABCOM Annual Gathering (TAG2025) May 2-3 will focus on *The Authentic Church in Challenging Times*, inspired by the powerful words of **Hebrews 10:23-25**:

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Given the current climate of uncertainty and the challenges we all face, now more than ever, we are called to stand together in faith, unity, and encouragement. As the body of Christ, we are strengthened by one another and by the unwavering faithfulness of our God.

We will explore what it means to be **an authentic church** — people of bold faith, resilient love, and unwavering commitment to the Gospel, even in the face of difficulty. Come and be renewed. Come and be encouraged. Come and be reminded that we are stronger together.

For more information, visit the [TABCOM Annual Gathering page](#).

City of Framingham Updates

City Information Phone Line and Email Support

The City of Framingham announced the rebranding and expansion of its City Information Line, 508-532-5411, known as Framingham 4-1-1. It has been a trusted and essential source of information for residents since its launch in 2020.

In addition to its phone service, the City is now introducing a dedicated email address, 411@framinghamMA.gov, to provide more convenient access to information for residents across all neighborhoods. An email sent to this address will go to the Library, the Citizen Participation Officer, and the Public Information Officer.

“We’re proud to continue partnering with the Framingham Public Library to ensure all residents have easy access to the information they need — delivered by knowledgeable, caring professionals,” said Mayor Charlie Sisitsky. “As we move forward with the expanded and rebranded Framingham 4-1-1, we’re excited to build on this strong foundation and continue making it even easier for residents to get the answers and support they need.”

Fully staffed by the expert librarians at Framingham Public Library (FPL), the Information Line has offered consistent, human-centered support when residents have needed it most.

Survey for New Community Center

The City of Framingham is in the process of turning the former Marian High School into a city-wide community center. The four-story building, with 100,000 square feet of space, includes key amenities such as a basketball court and a theater, making it an ideal location for a variety of community activities and services for residents of all ages and abilities.

The Mayor’s Community Center Advisory Committee launched a survey to gather feedback from residents on their vision for this center. The survey is available online at <https://www.framinghamma.gov/FormCenter/Boards-Committees-Commissions-39/Framingham-Community-Center-Survey-158> and will remain open through Labor Day weekend. Make your voice heard by responding as soon as you can!

FBC FACT 4: 1825 The cornerstone for the church building was laid with Masonic rites.

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