

- September 9 - All Church Picnic**
- September 10 - Women's Fellowship**
- September 11 - Finance Board**
- September 13 - Music Committee & Deacons**
- September 18 - Outreach Board**
- September 22 - Sundaes, & Silent Auction**
- November 3 - ALL CHURCH TAG SALE**



9/11 Remembrance

First Baptist Church
581 Meriden Avenue
Southington, CT
06489-3901

An American Baptist Church
ABCUSA
Ministry Team - The Rev. Sharon R. Holt
The Rev. Peg Lewis
Director of Music - Les Marsh
Newsletter Editor - Sharon Kupiec

Church Office Hours - please call Pastor Sharon before coming to the church
Telephone: 860 628-8121
Fax: 860 628-6519
Email:
pastor.sharon@firstbaptistsouthington.org

Visit us on Facebook: First Baptist Church - Southington, CT
Visit our Website:
www.FirstBaptistSouthington.org

Sunday Worship at 10:00am
Sunday School Classes at 10:30am

The Pastor Ponders in Turbulent Times

¹⁴For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. ¹⁵He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. ¹⁷So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; ¹⁸for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, ²⁰built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²²in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

- Ephesians 2:14-22

[The text is excerpted from the scripture passage from Ephesians that I reflected upon on July 15, 2018. Having been led by the Holy Spirit to speak out about the current bitter divisions in our country and our world, I present here a modified and abbreviated presentation of that message.]

We have so many walls that separate us from one another and keep us from building upon Christ, the true cornerstone there are almost too many to list. We continue to build walls, physical and metaphorical, to keep others out of our sacred "places" and our hearts. With our words and our actions, we reinforce those walls. Why do we continue to build walls to keep others out? Have we slipped into complacency and self-satisfaction as "superior" people, the favored ones of God? Therefore, we are the only ones who deserve the protection of the walls we so laboriously build? Perhaps it is because we are frightened of all those unknown "others" out there? Have we conveniently forgotten that Christ is still here to smash down the walls of discrimination, whatever they are, wherever we have built them?

Let's reflect briefly on some of the walls that divide us from one another:

When I was in Israel last year, I saw firsthand the divisions our manmade walls have created there. As we traveled the length and breadth of the country, suddenly we would see a barbed wire fence running through the middle of the desert. What is it? It is the artificial barrier built to separate the Israelis and the Palestinians. Never mind that in almost every village and town Jews, Christians and Muslims have co-existed peacefully in community for generations. We dined in a Palestinian restaurant, shopped in Palestinian shops and talked with Palestinian people who long for a homeland. Why does American policy encourage the construction of more and bigger walls between people? We need to pray, work and cry out for peace and justice for all in the Middle East, and places of conflict around the globe. As Christians, why aren't we committed to working to build bridges of understanding instead?

The United States has banned entrance to asylum seekers from seven predominantly Muslim countries. It doesn't matter that many of these asylum seekers assisted our troops as spies and translators during recent conflicts in the Middle East. We fear that "they" will bring violence into our country. The sad truth is that not one school shooting or mass gun assault in the United States has been perpetrated by a Muslim immigrant, radical or otherwise. They have all been committed by Americans. So why do we build walls to keep seekers of freedom out when the real assailants are grown and groomed in our cities and towns?

In scripture, we are taught that we are to build bridges of understanding between diverse populations, but we can't even manage to get along with others who, though Christian, don't interpret the Bible the way we do. We are far more likely to pick up bricks and stones to build bigger, better walls than to come together to try to understand and integrate our differences.

The same is true of people who embrace liberal or conservative points of view. We can't even be civil in our dialogue anymore. Check out the news, or heaven forbid, Facebook or Twitter and you will see a stunning display of hateful rhetoric aimed at any who disagree with us. Look at our politicians who can't seem to utter a civil word about members

of the opposing party, let alone work together to build bridges for the common good. When we look at the racial, economic, social and generational walls we have built; we should drop to our knees and beg for forgiveness.

What walls have we built in our hearts? Have we built them with the express purpose of keeping others out? Do they keep us from sharing the Good News with others and welcoming them into our homes and worship spaces joyously as though to a family reunion? Do we withhold the Good News that through Jesus Christ the walls are torn down, that we now have access to God, the Father, by one spirit? That we can be and are citizens of one nation, one household?

Are there walls that keep us from accepting our rightful place in God's household? Are we afraid to commit for fear of what this new citizenship might require of us? Would we rather remain aliens, foreigners, separate from the new covenant in Christ? Jesus is the cornerstone upon which our faith, our hope, and our salvation are founded. That cornerstone can bear your weight, my weight, and the weight of all generations that have come and will come after us.

The cross is the symbol of all the walls demolished by Jesus Christ. It is the cornerstone of a new dwelling place. Accept your place as a resident. Welcome all who would take up residence in this great household of God because "you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God,²⁰ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²²in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God." We are all brothers and sisters, heirs to the Kingdom of God. Christ came to smash through the walls. He is the cornerstone of our new home. It is a home founded on love and acceptance, not hate and rejection. It is time to break down the walls and put our faith where it belongs; on Christ, the cornerstone.

In Christ,

Pastor Sharon





From the EDITOR

I am very happy to put the Steeple Signal to bed each

month, but.....

- a) I have an outdated computer,
- b) I cannot open PDF's or zip files, c) or any new google programs

.....So having said that, please send MS docs or update my computer; better yet, for me, purchase me a new computer ☺

Thank you for understanding



During the week of May 29th we served 350 meals to In-house clients, seniors and shut-ins. This was done

with the help of James Steele, Marvin Choquette, Darlene Steele, Shirley Mason, Barbara McKay and Gene Hilton. Thank you for all of your help.

Gene Hilton



Congratulations to Brody Neilson, one of our church members, on his stellar performances in the 2018 Special Olympics State Games! Brody competed in three events held at Southern Connecticut State University June 8-10. He swam the breast stroke on the United Medley Relay 4 x 25 team, which won gold! He also swam for the Unified Freestyle Relay 4 x 25 team – another gold! And in the Individual 50 meter Freestyle, Brody won silver. ***You are amazing!***



Our Maya singing

Jesus Loves Me

CHURCH



Don't forget the All Church Picnic on September 9th! Enjoy snacks after worship while the grill masters work their magic.

Please bring your favorite side dish (baked beans, gardens salad, potato salads, etc.) to go with the dogs and burgers that will be provided. Dessert will be provided, however, feel free to bring something sweet to share if you must.

Take part in whichever activity is offered, depending on the weather. This is a great time to bond and share laughs with your church family!

Hope to see you there!!!

New church website launches!

First Baptist Church of Southington has a new website: <http://firstbaptistsouthington.org/>

It includes information about us and the American Baptist Church, Pastor Sharon's blog, photos, events, audio of the weekly worship services and music, the monthly calendar and Steeple Signal, and more!

We thank Napcon Communications for designing and launching the website; Rusty Kimball, photographer, who took the headshots; and the anonymous donor who paid for it. Visit it and share your thoughts and ideas with Pastor Sharon or Robin Michel.

Also, if you are on Facebook, thank you for visiting our page "First Baptist Church - Southington, CT". There is an older Facebook page with a similar name but we are trying to get that removed. Remember the "real" page has a hyphen.

See you online!

Nancy Shaw receives award from Church Women United

Long-time church member, Nancy Shaw, was honored by Church Women United and First Baptist Church for her dedication and volunteerism over many decades. During the May Friendship Day event at Manor Inn, about 10 local women were recognized for their exemplary church work. Nancy's family members, including children



Thomas, Edward and Melanie and their spouses, as well as many First Baptist Church women attended to celebrate her.

Nancy and her husband Al joined First Baptist more than 40 years ago. Even before they officially became members, Nancy joined the choir, singing soprano and being a featured soloist. Since that time, she has served in nearly every role on every board, including Trustees and Constitution Revision Committee. She was church clerk, chairwoman of the Deacons for eight years as well as chairwoman of the Music Committee. Presently she is the chief financial officer and has served as treasurer – also on the Finance Committee and Investment Committee - for 15 years.

In addition to raising her children and enjoying 60 years of marriage to Al before his passing in November 2015, she was a career secretary working at a prestigious law firm in Hartford. Nancy and Al both demonstrated their faith and love for the Lord through their steadfast volunteerism.

Congratulations, Nancy!



Aiden Thomas Blanco, son of Tina (Orlando) and Alexander Blanco, was dedicated during the July 15 worship service. The family traveled from Ohio for the ceremony. Aiden is the great-grandson of Judy Orlando, a long-time member of our church who passed away several years ago. Congratulations!



Dress Ministry 2018

Thanks to the Lamys, we continued our dress ministry with dozens of girls' dresses sewed with love. They will be donated to two locations. We dedicated the dresses on June 24 during worship. "Loving God, we dedicate these dresses as an offering to you and the precious children who will receive them. We are truly grateful for all the hands that have made this ministry possible - from the people that prepared the fabric to those who created the beautiful dresses stitch by stitch. Open our eyes and our hearts to those who struggle so hard each day just to survive. It is our hope that these gifts will make the girls smile whenever they wear them."



- 3 Kim Neilson, Stefan Paneczko
- 8 Christine Corey
- 9 Lynn Saucier
- 11 Dillon Spain
- 14 Marge Steinnagel
- 18 Ben Lamy, Pricilla Landry
- 19 Karen Austin
- 22 JoAnn Myska
- 25 Aaron James Urso
- 28 George Graikoski, Ken Corrigan



- 14 Eric & Heidi Tata
- 18 Phillip & Andrea Dixon
- 20 David & Linda Mikosz



The Women's Fellowship at their last meeting voted to alternate churches. The September meeting will meet at First Baptist Church on September 10th at noon. Please bring a sandwich or salad for yourself; beverage and dessert will be provided. Our guest speaker at 1:15PM will be Janet Mellon, Community Services Director. Our Hostesses for September are Elaine Ledda and Darlene Steele.

Please join us and bring a friend



News from your Board of Outreach:

- We collected back to school items for **Winifred House** again this year. We appreciate your support for these young women in transition who need our support and continued prayers.

- September is **World Mission** month. Watch for donation envelopes in the pews in early September.



Restock the SHELVES

- Our thanks to everyone for your continued support for those in need in our community. Compassion Sunday has been just one of the many ways First Baptist has assisted. We have been helping to *stock the shelves* with items of need. For September, we are asking for **cleaning and personal hygiene** supplies to be donated.



Personal Products Collection

Cleaning Products



TAG SALE TIME IS UPON US ONCE AGAIN!!

This year's tag sale is slated for Saturday, November 3rd. While you have your fall house cleaning underway, don't forget to fill boxes that can be donated to the tag sale.

A few reminders:

- Please check that your items are clean and only gently used.
- **As in the past, we are not accepting televisions, computers or printers**
- Drop off will be from

Monday, October 29 - Thursday, November 1:

This gives time to organize and price items during the week with a *last day push* on Friday to check and recheck that each item is priced and ready to go for Saturday morning.

- **VOLUNTEERS** are needed to make this a successful event - throughout the week as well as the day of the event. You might follow last year's suggestion of volunteering on the week night your board would generally meet. Not a board member? Come anytime. Just come on down.

Watch for more details in the October newsletter - in the meantime, please mark your calendar and plan on volunteering your time to help with this major all church fundraiser.

Questions? Please feel free to ask Joyce Olore or Dot Amundsen.

Save Your Items for Our Tag Sale



OUR APPLE FRITTER & SUNDAE

AND SILENT AUCTION IS BACK !!!

The sweet smell of fresh apple fritters along with ice cream sundaes will fill the air on **Saturday, September 22**, in our church hall. That's right ... our Fritter, Sundae and Silent Auction will soon be here!!

Bring family and friends for an evening of fun and sweet treats. The silent auction will have a wonderful array of items, gift cards and theme baskets, so mark your calendar to stop by between 6pm to 7:30pm. Gluten-free, sugar-free and dairy free options too.

On **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th**, tickets will be available for only \$5 for a sundae with toppings of your choice or a half dozen fresh apple fritters. That day you may also become a "special sponsor" by donating towards the sundaes toppings and fritter ingredients.

Donation of new auction items is always appreciated. If you are able to volunteer to help or have any questions, feel free to see or contact Linda Lamy 860 878 5310 or lindalamy8@gmail.com.

As always, **THANK YOU** for your support of this event to benefit the church's general fund and mission opportunities!!!



Apple Fritters & Sundaes





Our long time member, Shirley Mason, would like to share the academic accomplishments of her two granddaughters, Victoria & Olivia Jones. They are the daughters of Cindy Lou Mason & Chris Jones.

Tori is starting her 3rd year at Connecticut Children's Medical Center as a Registered Nurse after graduating from UMASS with her Bachelor's in Nursing. She works on the Hematology and Oncology Unit and recently was certified to give chemotherapy. She also just passed her national credentialing exam and is a Certified Pediatric Nurse. She enjoys being a cheerleader, educator and advocate for her patients.

Liv graduated from UMASS in May 2018 with a double major in Political Science and Journalism from the Commonwealth Honors College. She is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, oldest academic honor society and Pi Sigma Alpha, national political science honor society. She is interviewing for positions to be a paralegal and studying for LSATs with the goal of going to law school in 2 years.

SEPTEMBER 2018 CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2) 10:00 AM Worship Communion Sunday	3)	4) 7:00pm Boy Scouts	5)	6) 6:00pm TBI	7) 9:15am Prayer Group	8)
9) 10:00AM Worship Celebration Sunday 	10) 12:00 Women's Fellowship	11) 7:00pm Boy Scouts 8:00 Finance	12) 8:00 pm AA	13) 6:00pm TBI 6:30pm Music Com 7:15PM Deacons	14) 9:15am Prayer Group	15)
16) 10:00AM Worship	17)	18) CBH 7:00pm Boy Scouts	19) 7:00pm Outreach	20) 6:00pm TBI	21) 9:15am Prayer Group	22) 
23) 10:00am Worship	24)	25) 7:00pm Boy Scouts	26)	27) 6:00pm TBI	28) 9:15am Prayer Group	29)
30) 10:00am Worship Compassion Sunday						