



# First Churches Northampton

God is still speaking,  
**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



November 2013

## Pastor's Message

### IMPORTANT DATES

Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> All Saints' Sunday

Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> Church Fair...pg 7

Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving

### Birthdays

Gregory Wilson ☩ Nov 4<sup>th</sup>

Harriet Wilson ☩ Nov 9<sup>th</sup>

Marcia Kennick ☩ Nov 12<sup>th</sup>

James Williams-Murphy ☩ Nov 16<sup>th</sup>

Bea Fitts ☩ Nov 17<sup>th</sup> (103)

Christian Education...pg 3&4

New Member Bios... pg 5&6

Choir Loft...pg 8

*"You never change things by fighting existing reality. To change something, build a new reality that makes the existing reality obsolete."*

*R. Buckminster Fuller*

No wonder I get frustrated! It is easy for me to fight existing reality. This wisdom has kept me sane and allowed me to hope. Sometime in the midst of the government shutdown, this quote came to me from *Inward/Outward*, a daily devotional email from Church of the Savior in Washington, DC. It is my first reading every morning.

I have visited this church many times in travels to DC and I am always amazed at their clarity and courage to take on things that might seem impossible at first look. Church of the Savior is known for many of their imaginative mission projects, such as building an 18-bed hospital for the homeless in their neighborhood, renovating abandoned building to create affordable housing, a job training and placement program called "Jubilee Jobs" and creating a coffee house/bookstore on a busy street in Adams-Morgan. Over the last three decades they have played a major role as catalysts to transform their surrounding neighborhood in the midst of urban blight.

While I am amazed at their tangible brick and mortar accomplishments, it is the inward transformations that move me. Church of the Savior doesn't just focus on building makeovers, they aim for the heart. It is not just a church of activists, but also a community of prayer and reflective reading of scripture. In a world that often waters down the meaning of church membership to make it easy to join, they make it rigorous. Each year members must recommit to a practice of daily spiritual disciplines, being a part of a weekly mission group focused on prayer and justice, discussing their pledging to the church in the mission group, and taking an annual retreat.

This inward/outward focus has inspired me throughout my ministry. Often I find myself exhausted by fighting existing reality in the outer world. I can be very persistent about my



<http://inwardoutward.org/the-church-of-t1>

goals and what I think is right, but persistence can also be my undoing. The definition of insanity is that we keep doing the same things and expect different results. I do not believe real change happens by working harder. If I am off course, working harder just puts me further away from where I need to be. I need to first get centered on the inward reality, God working in me. I find the strength and new vision then work at the outward changes.  
-Pastor Todd

## FROM YOUR MODERATOR

Greetings, Church Family, This autumn has truly been one of our most beautiful in several years, a time of harvest, bounty & preparation. It reminds me of our First Churches community in recent past, as we've been learning, discerning and gathering up our thoughts & ideas on several important topics at hand. This year, we move forward from a time of housekeeping towards an open process of sharing & collective decision making. In that spirit, I encourage everyone to join us for a Tiffany Window Dialogue - on Saturday November 2nd, from 9:30-11:30am in Lyman Hall, Childcare available. To ensure adequate time for discussion during the meeting, please review in advance the information regarding our Tiffany window that was distributed at the annual meeting in September. There will be a summary version available prior to the meeting, for review as we gather. We look forward to as much participation as possible - see you there!



Our Church Fair is coming up fast, kudos to our steering committee and everyone who is playing a role in its success! As we look forward to this much-loved annual fundraiser - now with a focus on expanding our message outside our doors - I hope to see many of us there, and as many as possible with a friend we've invited! Lastly, I want to encourage your feedback on how we are doing honoring our pledge for open communication & sharing of information on the issues at hand, and how I am doing in my capacity as Moderator. I welcome your feedback and comment, and thank you for the opportunity to serve as First Churches Moderator.

Blessings,

Donna O'Meally

### Young @ Heart Benefit Concert for the Northampton Survival Center

November 2, 2013; 8pm; \$15.00 @ Academy of Music



A celebratory fundraiser for the Northampton Survival Center featuring the internationally-acclaimed *Young @ Heart Chorus*. Join us for a fun, festive event for all ages, with special guests the Dire Honeys and Whole Children's Joyful Chorus

Tickets available @ the Academy Box office or [www.academyofmusictheatre.com](http://www.academyofmusictheatre.com)



## Dorcas Society Lunch

The second autumn meeting of the Dorcas Society will take place Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at the Brewmaster's Tavern in Williamsburg. Lunch and the meeting will begin at 12:30pm

### From Your Christian Education Director

Greeting's families and members of First Churches! I am writing to you with the recent memory of my "Flu Sunday" very recently behind me. I am so blessed to work in a community that I know I can fall back on when I need them, who can take care of the kids when I am away.



Excitement is brewing in the Children's Church, as the annual service project has begun. This year the children have chosen to collect warm clothing for people in our local community who could use an extra layer. A box for collection will be placed in the narthex.

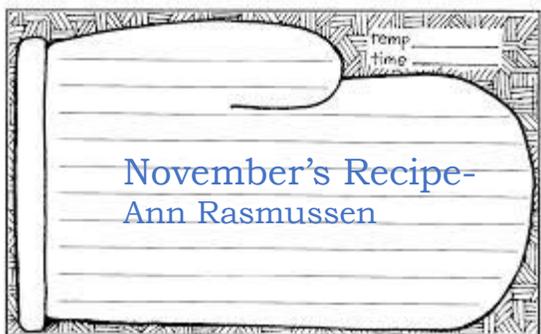
We, as a CE community, as also very lucky to have volunteers step forward who are willing and able to help with our classes. Without them, we would be unable to provide the quality Christian education programs that we strive to. Please consider joining us, as we are always in need of new people to assist us in the classrooms.



Finally, I am looking forward to the advent season, which will bring a pageant, hanging of the greens, and much joyous singing.

Shalom,

Eric



#### *Cajun Baked Shrimp*

1/2 cup olive oil  
2 Tbsp Cajun Spice  
2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

I clipped this recipe out of a cooking magazine over 20 years ago, and it's been one of my staples ever since, especially during the holidays. It's super-easy, works well with various sizes of shrimp, and is equally yummy served hot with an aromatic rice or crusty bread, room temperature as a party appetizer, or cold over salad. Adjust the amount of spice to taste - and feel free to invite us over!

2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley  
1 Tbsp honey  
1 Tbsp soy sauce  
2 Lbs. uncooked large or jumbo shrimp, deveined

Combine the first six ingredients, and pour into a 9x13 baking dish. Add shrimp, toss to coat & refrigerate 1-3 hours (the longer it marinates, the spicier it will be). (Continued..)  
Preheat oven to 450 degrees & bake, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes or until the shrimp are cooked through. Garnish with fresh parsley sprigs & lemon wedge.

## FROM YOUR CE BOARD

Greetings, First Churches! It is so gratifying to have our program season in full swing, with our Christian Education staff in place & hitting stride in both the Children's Church and the Rainbow Room - and to see our children learning & thriving in the community we're creating together! It's also gratifying to see the support we all have within the congregation, and we thank you for that. As we move forward, we will continue to need two volunteers each week, in order to provide a balanced child/teacher ratio & age-appropriate instruction, and to honor our Safe Church policies. We encourage you to attend an upcoming CE training meeting, and learn more about how to share your skills, talents & experiences one Sunday soon!



This past month, the Christian Education Board has been actively working with Christian Education Director Eric

Frary & CE Assistant Lisa Rizzo to create a full calendar of community outreach projects, field trips & fun events for our children

this year. Eric will be sharing the details soon - we look forward to seeing lots of you there.

Our first CE event this season was an Inter-Generational Game Night, in Lyman Hall on Saturday October 19th. About 20 of us gathered between 6-8pm for a fun evening of board games old & new, community, conversation, and snacks & pizza. Here's a few pictures from the evening. Join us for the next "Game Night" - in January 2014, this time a

4pm-6:00pm affair with pot luck supper. Be looking for more info soon, or speak with any CE Board or Staff member.



Our next CE Event will be during the Church Fair this month. CE Staff & Board will help the children host a craft table, with proceeds raised from the sale of their handmade crafts will fund a community outreach project - details to come in the days ahead.

Thanks as always, for your continued support & prayers,  
Your CE Board, Judy Sherman, Ann Rasmussen, Angie Montalvo Greene, Lora Wondolowski & Becky Lockwood

## FROM PEACE & JUSTICE

### How Might We Help the Poor and Hungry?

As thanksgiving and Christmas approach, our thoughts often turn to the less fortunate, people who are Poor and hungry, who do not share the blessings of prosperity in our society. In response we collect food or help out in a local feeding program so these disadvantaged people can have a decent meal or holiday gifts for their children.

These acts of individual charity offer important help, but do not address the causes of poverty in American society. Marcus Borg points out that God's compassion calls for systemic change in a country where the rich and powerful have such an overwhelming percent of total wealth and income. (The bottom 80% of Americans own only 7% of our nation's wealth, and the trend is worsening.) As Christians we should work to bring about a more just society, "distributive justice," a term Borg uses, here on earth.

The First Churches Peace and Justice Committee is offering an opportunity to help bring real change in the lives of the poor. We will have petitions to put on the ballot for 2014 a raise in the

state minimum Wage from \$8.00 to \$10.50 and require employers to provide their workers five days of sick leave a year. There is also a petition asking the state to provide more jobs in place of spending two billion dollars to build new prisons. One cannot support a family on \$8.00 an hour. Walmart, the nation's largest private employer, does not pay most of their employees much above the minimum wage. As a consequence, the federal government spends \$1.2 billion to help feed the families of Walmart employees. Yet the four Walmart heirs have as much wealth as 125 million Americans.

Help bring more justice to our society. Please sign these petitions in Lyman Hall and help circulate in the community. Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

## NEW MEMBER BIOS

### Heidi Rademacher



Heidi Rademacher grew up outside of Syracuse, NY and graduated from Rhodes College in TN. She spent the academic year following graduation in France teaching English to French middle school and high school students. In 2009 she received an MA in French Language, Literature, and Culture from Syracuse University. Heidi now works as a Grant Coordinator at Holyoke Community College. Her interests include knitting, weaving, and running. She has run a few 5Ks and will run her first 10K in November.

### Stacey Martin

I was fortunate enough to come to First Churches as a 12 year old girl with my grandmother, Lois Plumb. From 12 to about 23 I enjoyed attending the Church. The Church brought fellowship and comfort to my family. I left the area for a couple of years living in Portland, Maine for two and working at Maine Medical.



I moved back to this area and found employment at the VA Medical Center in nursing services. I also met my husband, Michael Martin there. We were married in 2011 and Noah Henry Martin soon came along in September 2011. I am also a stepmom to Erica Martin (21) and Zach Martin (12).

I longed to go back to the Church and give my children a sense of God and Fellowship and being a part of a community. I'm so happy to be a part of the First Churches again.

### Jenna Sellers

Jenna Sellers was born and raised in Philadelphia, PA. She was a member at North Congregational Church in North Amherst, MA until that church closed several years ago. She was born into the Church of the Brethren and was baptized into the Mennonite Church as a young teen. She attended Quaker schools in Philadelphia and found Christian community with the Baptist Student Union at Yale. She first encountered the UCC at South Church in Middletown, CT where she lived for several years. Jenna is a social worker who currently works at The Care Center, a GED to college preparatory school for teen mothers in Holyoke. She loves gardening, doughnuts, reading, the ocean, cooking, and cats.



### Patti Richmond

Patti Richmond was born and raised in Norwalk, CT. She comes from a large Italian Catholic family. Patti left the Catholic Church while in high school, and started attending an Evangelical Free Church. She first located to Western Mass when attending

Springfield College. Patti taught Physical Education in Texas and Seoul Korea. She then received her master's degree in School Counseling and returned to her international school in Korea as a short term missionary and school counselor. She also did missions work at a Christian Community called His Mansion in New Hampshire. Patti has been actively involved in a several different churches, the last one being North Amherst UCC church which closed. She is currently a school counselor at Hampshire Regional High School in Westhampton, MA and is married to Jenna Sellers. Patti loves golf, tennis, outdoor activities, traveling and spending time with friends and family.

## Gabe Kushin

Gabriel Kushin lives in Southampton with his wife, Jenya and their three sons (Daniel, 11; Jonathan, 9; and Michael, 5). Since becoming a Christian when he was nineteen years old, Gabe has been involved in several evangelical churches. Over time his theological and social views led him toward progressive Christianity. He and his family have been attending First Churches since April. Gabe is very excited to be part of this church. Gabe works full-time for the Massachusetts Air National Guard, and he studies part-time at Yale Divinity School. He's planning to become a part-time military chaplain, and he hopes to pursue a PhD in either Philosophy or Religious Studies.



Gabe enjoys learning and thinking and discussing ideas with others. In addition to current political events, some of his enduring interests include "white privilege" and racial injustice in the U.S., the morality of war, human rights theory, theology, and the intersection of religion and politics. He's almost equally passionate about rooting for his favorite sports teams.

## Elaine Wert



Although Elaine has lived in the Northampton area for a little over 35 years, she grew up in West Springfield; her street not being too far from the main gate of the Big E. For the kids in the neighborhood, the Big E (during the off-season) was just another playground. After she graduated from West Springfield High School, Elaine attended nursing school in Hartford, CT., got married and had her son Brian. She ended up being a single mom, but that was great for Brian and Elaine. It strengthened the bond between them and love just grew and grew. Elaine lived for 32 years in Meadowbrook Apts in Florence, eventually moving to Westhampton to be a companion and helper for her friend's grandmother. She lived in the house for 3 years before moving to Michael's House in January 2013.

Elaine is an only child and so was Brian; but her apartment was constantly filled with his friends—all sleeping over every weekend from a Friday night to Sunday night. She never knew how many of his buddies would be crashing at her place. All of his close friends became Elaine's "sons" and she was their "mom". Brian eventually married one of his classmates and has a wonderful marriage for a little over 9 years!! In November 2005 Elaine's dad passed away and in March 2006, her son passed away quite unexpectedly- Brian was only 36. Her dear daughter-in-law moved to Florida after his passing to be with her dad, stepmom and brother. Elaine's strong faith, belief and wonderful bereavement group led by a Christian counselor helped her greatly.

Elaine is a big sports "nut". She loves football (the Patriots and the Giants and the "fighting Irish"/Notre Dame), baseball (the Red Sox of course), NASCAR racing (all of the Hendricks drivers), boxing and MMA (UFC)!!!! She also follows college basketball and never leaves the TV when "March Madness" begins.

As an aside, Stacey (Mascowski) Martin is not Elaine's daughter, but she thinks of her as her daughter and to her Elaine is a "second mom". Elaine has known Stacey, her big brother Jake (who was one of Brian's best friends), her mom, her dad and her grandmother Lois for a long time. Elaine is so looking forward to becoming a full-fledged member of First Churches. Everyone here is so nice and welcoming. Elaine is Home!!!!



## UPDATE!

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23,  
9:30- 3:00**

**Sign-up for fair volunteers:** We will have sign-up sheets in Lyman Hall at coffee hour **Sunday 11/3**. If you haven't already committed to help at the fair, this will be your chance! We have just a few weeks to go to get the fair organized. Please support the Christmas Fair Steering Committee by offering to lend a hand, even an hour or two can be a big help. If you are interested, but can't be in church, please contact anyone on the Church Fair Steering Committee as soon as possible.

**Raffle:** This is an opportunity to support this vital part of the fair if you aren't actually able to help on fair day itself.

***People are needed to sell tickets on Saturday 11/9 and 11/16 for two hours, preferably 11-1pm, but those times can be flexible.*** These dates are rapidly approaching! And, if anyone would consider taking the responsibility to arrange this effort, it would be much appreciated.

We are also asking folks to take some tickets with them to sell to friends/family/co-workers.

**Please consider taking some time to help us with these tasks!** If you are interested, stop by the sign-up table or contact someone on the Steering Committee.

**Flyers:** Flyers that advertise the fair will be available soon. We will need volunteers to distribute these at businesses around town, perhaps at work, etc. If you can help with this, please stop by the sign-up table on November 3 or contact someone on the Steering Committee

**Remember: A successful fair is vital to the church as it is our biggest fund raiser of the year!**

### All-Church Discussion: Stewardship of the Tiffany Windows November 2<sup>nd</sup>



Several people asked for a one page fact sheet consolidating information about the Tiffany Window that was shared at the Annual Meeting. This sheet is attached and is important reading (See page 9) before our All-Church dialog next Saturday, November 2 from 9:30 to 11:30 AM. I am looking forward to our continued conversation. We have learned a great deal and nearing a time to vote in January. Your voice and insight matters!

Coffee and child care are available. Please email so we can plan appropriately for child care.

## FROM THE CHOIR LOFT

As I have been thinking about All Saint's Day, which we will celebrate on Sunday, November 3, the faces and names of many departed family and friends have been passing through my mind. One person I have been recalling very fondly is Dot Swain, a beloved friend and mentor who left us nearly three years ago.

Dot was one of the duo known to us as "Bea and Dot." She was a long-term member of the bell choir and a great supporter of our music programs. She served as an officer and committee member in the church and was instrumental in bringing our two churches together. Dot had a long career in Northampton as the coordinator for religious education in the city schools and then went on to teach sixth grade in Chesterfield for several years.

Dot was a talented artist and a published writer with at least one book to her credit. She also wrote vignettes and musings about life which she contributed to the *Gazette* and shared with friends. I was the lucky recipient of many of her stories and notes—beginning with our days together at First Baptist and continuing until nearly the end of her life.

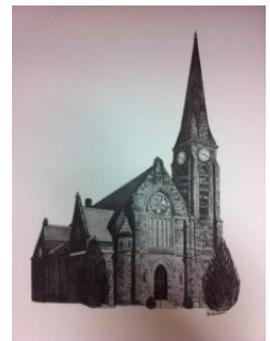
Dot was a warm, generous, loving soul. She was active in the church until the day she died, participating in a board meeting the night before her death. Dot was someone whom all of us thought of and loved as a saint among us. She was understanding and forgiving of all of our short-comings, but did not always treat herself with such compassion—as became clear to me when I read the letter she sent me on November 23, 2008—which she must have written in apology for missing a few notes in our Thanksgiving bell anthem. I had put it aside and found it again recently as I was going through papers in my desk. I don't think Dot intended it to be a private communication since she titled it "Notes for my eulogy..." I have decided to share it in the spirit of love and gratitude for the friendship of an amazing woman.

*A Perfectionist at heart, I have found it hard to handle all the blunders, mistakes and general ineptness which have dogged and colored my life.*

*From my first piano recital—when at eight years old—I flubbed "Lightly Row," through a sour high note when playing "Taps" on Memorial Day, errors in driving judgment, typing, copy-editing, and flubs with handbells, I have painfully faced up to personal deficiencies...*

*No wonder my favorite hymn is "Just As I Am, Thou wilt receive..." all verses, of course. How comforting, too, are the words found in the Book of Jude, Chapter 24 (RSV)— "Now to him who is able to keep you from falling (!!)" and to present you without blemish (!!)" before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."*

*Perfection at last!!! Your contrite bell-ringer, Dot*



*Drawing by Dot Swain*

We remember you with love, Dot

## Stewardship of the Tiffany Window Fact Sheet

### Baseline Offer on the Window from a Chicago Museum

There is an existing offer for the window by a NY State company specializing in church artifacts and silver. They showed interest in the Tiffany, particularly since landscape Tiffanies are less available. Most obvious choice offer from Chicago museum: a year ago with an estimate offer of \$750,000, minus replacement window and expenses in refurbishing 150,000; removing the window and moving it to Chicago, and to replace will come to **Net: Approx.: \$ 525,000 – \$550,000**. There still is a definite interest in this window on behalf of the buyer. This is a baseline offer and we would look for other competitive bids if we decide to sell the window.

### Restoration Costs of Stained Glass

Tiffany Window	\$80,000 - \$85,000
Priority I Repair Windows*	\$255,475
All Sanctuary Stained Glass*	\$470,000

\*These numbers include the Tiffany window in the total.

These are quoted from Stained Glass Resources, Inc. Details on each window are in the Annual Meeting handout.

### Current Loan Status

Principle as of September 2013	\$749,410.32
Yearly Payments	\$51, 672.60

\*This 30-year loan for renovations to the sanctuary is locked in at 5% interest for 10 years.

### Endowment Impact Evaluation

Value of Endowment (9/22/2013)	\$2,102,788
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Mark Teed, our Financial Advisor, created a hypothetical report based on the following assumptions: 5% Growth and Income on invests, current budget, yearly mortgage payments taken from endowment.

Conclusion: Without changes, the endowment value would go to *\$0 in 18 years*. Since some funds are restricted and the principle can't be spent, the functional number of years would be less. For example, if \$500,000 is restricted, the limit would be hit in about *12 years*.

### Insuring the Window

Currently the window is insured for the standard replacement cost for a stained glass window if it were damaged, which would be much less than the actual artistic value. Full insurance coverage would cost nearly \$3000 more annually. The church is currently insured at \$3.9 million replacement value, but may be worth as much as \$9 million since items like the organ are also more value than standard replacements.

# NOVEMBER 2013

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2
					7:00 Choir Practice	9:30-11:30 All Church Dialogue re: Tiffany Window
<b>3</b>	4	5	6	7	8	9
10:00 Worship & Sunday school Christian Ed Meeting 5:00 Cathedral in the Night <b>All Saints' Sunday</b>	5:30 Peace and Justice	12:00 Peace Vigil	7:00 Deacons	12:30 Finance	7:00 Choir Practice (In Sanctuary)	
<b>10</b>	11	12	13	14	15	16
10:00 Worship & Sunday school 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil	7:00 Missions 6:30 Trustees		7:00 Choir Practice	
<b>17</b>	18	19	20	21	22	23
10:00 Worship & Sunday school 4:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil	<b>Deadline for December Messenger Submissions</b> 7:00 Council	Fair Prep	Fair Prep No Choir	9:30-3pm <b>Church Fair</b>
<b>24</b>	25	26	27	28	29	30
10:00 Worship & Sunday school 4:00 Cathedral in the Night	4pm Investment Committee	12:00 Peace Vigil		<b>Thanksgiving</b>	No Choir	