

FIRST CHURCHES NORTHAMPTON

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 8
Gathering Sunday
Breakfast and
Registration @ 9:00 AM

September 22
Annual Meeting

November 23
Church Fair



Change is constant. So is God.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

As September begins I am realizing all the projects I had pushed to the summer will not get done. I do this every year, magically thinking there is an unlimited timeframe in the July sun! Jeanne and I did accomplish our biggest project, moving to our new home on Village Hill. We are getting settled and look forward to an Open House, though we must now delay because Jeanne broke her right shoulder in a biking accident last Wednesday. She is recovering well, but can't do much for a few weeks.

This summer has been a very busy summer for hiring new staff. **Ernest Bosque** has been our new sexton since July, and is making a big impact with his building knowledge after 28 years as a custodian at Northampton High School. He has played a big role in completing the work for our classrooms and Rainbow room for Church School to begin.

Speaking of Church School, I am pleased to announce that we have **hired Lisa Rizzo** this week as a classroom instructor for our second classroom this Fall. The congregation voted this new position at the Spring budget meeting so we would have a staff person for both classes. This way we only need two weekly volunteers to our classes, and to fulfill our "Safe Churches" practices

It has been challenging to be without a Church Administrator for five weeks, since Andrea Marion took a new position with a nonprofit in Chicopee. Our Administrator is responsible for daily operations such as producing the bulletin and newsletter, paying bills and tracking finances, ordering supplies, and especially handling the many requests for building usage.

So today I am also announcing the hiring of **Vanessa Keillor** as our new Church Administrator. Vanessa has worked in both customer service and banking positions, giving her the broad skills we need. She will begin training next week and jump into the busy Fall Season.

While I have a long list of undone projects, here is what we have completed this summer. The fallen gutters have been replaced on the Chapel and new snow guards are on the way. All the approvals are in place for our new high efficiency gas furnace and work is scheduled to begin on September 23. We have been taking bids for sanctuary lighting which should be changed this Fall for a brighter lit and more energy efficient worship space. And as we have completed renovating our classrooms, we have also tagged a great deal of stuff that we no longer need to be carted away. All this work clears the way for doing Christ's mission together!

Peace to all,

Pastor Todd

Church School Page

Children's Breakfast - This Sunday, September 9th, Lyman Hall 9am

Bring your kids & enjoy a light breakfast with the Christian Education team! We'll share information on our Rainbow Room, Sunday School and Youth Group, while the kids eat or enjoy time at the craft table.

- Learn about our new online curriculum, *Whole People of God*
- Hear details on new children's activities, field trips & events
- Meet the team of CE Educators & Caregivers
- Sign up your children, our programs start that day!

For more information or to volunteer your time, needed children's items, or a food contribution for this Breakfast please contact Ann Rasmussen, ajabu@charter.net or 413-527-6931.

Greetings from Your CE Board

We hope everyone had a fun & memorable summer, seems like the Children's Service was just a short while ago! Your CE Board has been active over the summer:

- We hosted a small but lots of fun Children's Picnic, with burgers, swimming & snow cones.
- We continued to chip away at tasks in the Children's Rooms - which are now ready for kids, starting this Sunday!
- We've replaced / re-stocked the Children's Bags for the Sanctuary, to help occupy our youngest worshippers if they are attending service with their families
- And we conducted a search for CE Assistant, and look forward to welcoming Lisa Rizzo on Sunday September 22nd (see separate article in this *Messenger* for more information or contact Eric Frary, CE Director, ce@firstchurches.org).

Later this month, we'll bring you details on several new children's events for this season - including Game Night, and winter & spring field trips. In the meantime, if you have any questions, suggestions or would like to volunteer your time & talent, please feel free to reach out to any CE Board member:

Ann Rasmussen, Judy Sherman, Angie Montalvo-Greene, Becky Lockwood, Lora Wondolowski

The Children's Rooms Are Ready!

We are very pleased to report that all three of the children's rooms have been readied for use starting this Sunday! Each week, we will now have the ability to lead two separate age-based Sunday School groups, in two different rooms - which also enables growth in the program. While there are still some final touch-up tasks to finish, both the Sunday School and Youth rooms are now refurbished floor-to-ceiling and are substantially brighter & fresher, safe & much more energy-efficient. The CE team is so thankful to everyone who helped make these improvements possible! Be looking for even more enhancements this season including reorganization & painting in the hallway, & Rainbow Room bathroom. Feel free to come down & take a look, and say *hi!* to our team of Caregivers and Educators:

Eric Frary, CE Director
Lisa Rizzo, CE Assistant

Bernadette Marion, Rainbow Room
Kimberly Parente, Rainbow Room

Welcome Lisa Rizzo, CE Assistant!

On Sunday September 22nd, please join the CE team in welcoming Lisa Rizzo, First Churches CE Assistant. Lisa comes to us with significant experience in the areas of early childhood classrooms, drama, music and theatre. We are very thankful to have her on-board and look forward to a creative, energetic year of children's programs. Working with Eric Frary, Lisa will lead lessons & activities for our younger Sunday School children. All children's curriculum will continue to follow the Liturgical calendar, to encourage family discussion. Activities will include community involvement projects, field trips and kid-created events.

Greetings families of First Churches, old and especially new!

Welcome to a new year of exploring, growing, and learning in your children's program. We are very excited to roll out a new curriculum that will better serve our kids, and introduce our newest teacher, Lisa Rizzo. Together, working in tandem with the whole congregation, we will be providing an exciting, progressive Christian education that will meet the needs of the varied ages in our congregation, Our newly renovated spaces in the church will help us as well.

Thank you for trusting us with the important job of teaching your children; we will do our best to ensure they are supported, loved, and able to grow.

Shalom,
Eric Frary, Christian Education Director

SAVE THE DATE! FIRST CHURCHES' FAIR SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 9:30- 3:00

It's not too early to start thinking: "FAIR!". There are volunteer opportunities for everyone! We will need help with the church's famous apple pies; working on set-up and clean-up; serving on the luncheon committee; assisting with the various tables and much more. If you have been at the church for awhile it is a fun opportunity to connect/reconnect with new and old friends. If you are new to the church, it is great chance to meet new folks and participate in the social life of the church.

At this time, we are actively seeking volunteers for the following:

Chairs/co-chairs for:

- Raffle table
- Serving morning coffee and donuts
- Christmas table
- Preparing/serving the luncheon
- Clean- up committee
- Set-up committee

If you are interested in these opportunities or in helping out in general, please contact someone on the Church Fair Steering Committee:

- Barbara Parsons @ 584-4944
- Peg Whitham @ 586-2531 or pncwhitham@comcast.net
- Ginny Wahl @ vwahl5512@charter.net or 527-5512
- Celeste Ortega @ 1-413-275-7137 or ortega11@verizon.net

A successful fair is vital as it is the church's major fund raiser each year. Your help is needed to make this year's fair bigger and better than ever!

From Your Moderator

Warm Greetings to all! I hope everyone had a wonderful Summer, it's hard to believe September is already here, and Autumn isn't far behind. I am looking forward to an exciting year at First Churches, starting with our Annual Meeting on Sunday September 22nd (immediately following service). We'll be voting on the 2013/2014 slate of Committee members & Chairs, as well as considering several important decisions for our future. All church members are enthusiastically encouraged to attend the meeting (childcare will be available).

My focus and priority during the second year of my term as Moderator continues to be "*communication*". I pledge to continue to be available & open, and encourage you to reach out to me with any questions, comments or concerns... every voice within our community is treasured and it's important we all feel *heard*. Through God's grace, our love for one another and the new skills we developed during last season's listening sessions with Margaret Keyser, we truly have the resources we need to discern our future & move forward - together. I look forward to this year, and the potential of the work we can accomplish.

Blessings,
Donna M. O'Meally
First Churches Moderator
donnaomeally@gmail.com
(413) 584-9392

September Dates

- September 8** - Gathering Sunday and the Start of Sunday School
Breakfast and Registration @ 9:00 AM
- September 11** - Missions Committee @ 6:30 PM
- September 9** - Peace and Justice Committee @ 7:00 PM
- September 18** - Church Council @ 7:00 PM
- September 22** - Annual Meeting Sunday after church

Prayer Requests

Sue Massey is recovering from surgery to remove her lung.

Janice Francis's Father died this week in Antigua.

Todd Emrick's Father died from a heart attack in Florida

Kathy Felton's mother is recovering from breast cancer and surgery

Charlotte Carpenter

Janet Dahlberg

Bill Rice

Vivian Eastman

Your Church's Missions in Action!

Spotlight on:

Cathedral in the Night

At 5 pm every Sunday night, a worship service is held on the sidewalk in front of our church. A hot meal is served afterwards, with wrapped sandwiches and hard boiled eggs available "to go" for the following day. Many people who are homeless or down on their luck count on this food.

The Board of Missions committed our congregation to preparing and serving dinner 4 times this year. All of the folks listed below pitched in by preparing food, purchasing supplies, taxiing hot food to the church for cooks, providing music for worship, contributing money, setting up for the meal, serving the meal, washing dishes, and cleaning up.

Thank you for your Generous Support!

Mary Ramos
Rosa Ramos
Doryne Pederzani-
Dinneen
Claudine Wega
Janice Francis
Andre Barnes
George Naughton
Cindy Naughton
Stacey Martin
Zachary Martin
Merrilyn Holcomb
Sandy Hoover
Sue Norton
Alison Bent
April Bent
Harriet Wilson

Lisa Thwing
Marti Catuogno
Dana Pasquale
Heather Williams
Steven Williams
Marcia Kennick
Pauline Bassett
Lan Katz
Connie Baugh
Carolyn Benson
Angie Montalvo-Greene
Ginny Wahl
Lora Wondolowski
Ann Rasmussen
Marge Magner
Priscilla Pike
Sheila Lyford

Bette Barto
Barbara Parsons
Dori McCracken
Sandie Pirrello
Eric Frary
Sue Stone
Peggy Anderson
Marion Van Arsdell
Anna Murphy
Wendy Williams
Carol Murphy
Lise Gray
Judy Sherman
Ned Judd
Carol Judd

Help Needed To Cook & Serve on Oct. 20th!

Please contact:

Carol Judd @ 584-9641 or cmcc55@gmail.com

Judy Sherman @ 533-5655 or jhs12@comcast.net

