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'A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH' IS THE 2009 THEME

The Board of Deacons accepted a recommendation from our new pastor Rev. Dr. Stephen Butler Murray on the theme for 2009- "A New Heaven and A New Earth,"- which is a quote from the Book of Revelations. The theme was enthusiastically received by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in February.

It suggests that that the sun has set and a new and fruitful future for our church is dawning.

Several events may be noted: the church has hosted the historic Massachusetts Bible Society, which has called our Pastor to be on its Board of Directors; the Rev. Dr. J. Walter Sillen Lenten Lecture Series (in memory of our late Pastor, and in honor

of sisters the late Dr. Ruth Setterberg, and Miss Rose Setterberg); and soon, "One For All" program presented by our state denomination TABCOM, will take place in May. More events are planned.

ANNIE MAE EVERSON BECOMES YOUNGER AT 101

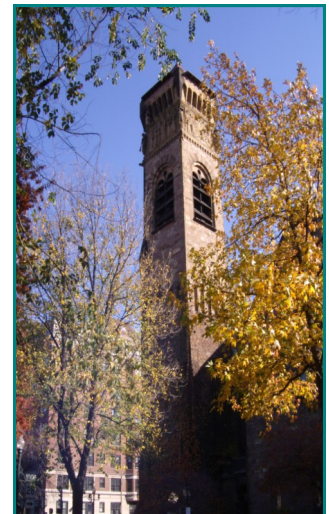
On Palm Sunday our younger sister 'Granny' celebrated another milestone. A very well attended brunch was given in her honor by her daughter Percy Mathis. Many folks roasted 'Granny', and special guests included our former pastor Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Milton P. (Helen) Ryder. The church looks forward to 102, and beyond, as she may be the most senior parishioner in our church's history!

350th

Is only six years away. On June 20, the church will celebrate its 344 years of ministry in the City of Boston. A modest reception will be given following the church service in Wayland Hall with desserts and refreshments. Soon a committee will be established to formulate ideas in achieving wonderful programs for 2015. For those of you who remember our 325th Anniversary, it was a time of great reflection and celebration about our magnificent past in this great city! The countdown begins on June 20, 2009.

Rev. Dr. Bruce Herrick, Retires

Our beloved Minister of Music, the Rev. Dr. Bruce Herrick, retired as of April 15, 2009. Bruce has been ill for a few years and found it necessary to relax and enjoy life. Dr. Herrick performed faithfully for this church for nearly 37 years providing quality music/musicians, and seldom took a vacation during his many years of service. The Board of Trustees accepted his resignation with quietude reflecting on his contributions inspiring many generations of churchgoers at First Baptist Boston. Bruce was a founder of the Friends Candlelight Service; was involved in many community artistic collaborations; was a former professor at Wheelock College; and served on many boards and committees at the church, and worked faithfully under the pastorates of Sillen, Ryder, Van Horn and Murray. (longevity) -Board of Trustees, Earl A. Norman, Jr.





Earl A. Norman, Jr. Elected President ! (rear right), (ncluded in

this photo op is: the Search Committee, Mel Jemmison, Henry Henderson, Deborah Porter, Stephen Butler Murray, Dorothy Williams, Percy Mathis, and Don Thacker.)

Our very own son of First Baptist Boston was elected President of the Boston Baptist Social Union in April. The BBSU is a prestigious and ancient men's organization based on the fellowship of Baptist laymen. Many years ago the men of our church were approached by the late Al Dean to become members. Since then, Henry Henderson, Melvin Jemmison, Earl A. Norman, Jr., and Donald Thacker have joined the BBSU. The BBSU always has an excellent program and a sumptuous meal. We welcome all gentlemen who wish to be a wonderful part of these celebrations and we ask that you contact

-The BBSU Group FBC Boston

ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER

This is the first edition of *The Trumpeter*, and please forgive us if we missed you, a particular story, or any errors. It is a new program and we're just learning the music and trying to make the Trumpeter sound off in our community of faith. The beginning issues will be quarterly and will increase as the needs requires. Saving paper and postage is a plus for our budget. We're going green and we welcome you in all endeavors of this sacred church!



Welcome New Members!

Ten individuals were voted into our membership at the Annual Meeting:

Duco Celidor

Francis Graham

Destra Hermogene

Frederick Kitonga

**Rev. Dr. Stephen
Butler Murray**

Cynthia D. Murray

Rev. John Odams

Marilyn Root

Rose Setterberg

Dr. Mel Simms

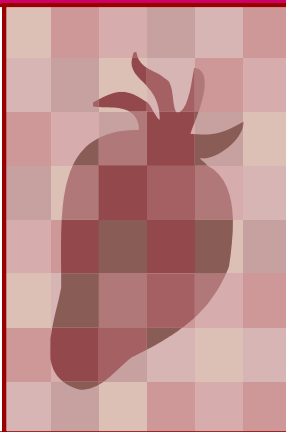
Many of these people have been active for sometime, but, decided it was time to call FBC Boston home.

We welcome them into our spiritual realm, and to others who have also expressed an interest in joining FBC. Please see the pastor or Deacon Melvin Jemmison following morning worship for details. Again, welcome new members.

-Board of Deacons

Strawberry Festival on Mother's Day

Many years ago our former hospitality hostess, Mrs. Gwendolyn Jemmison began the 'Strawberry Festival', which was always a huge success. This year we will begin a new tradition and hold it on Mother's Day. Please see Percy-Mathis if you are able to assist in this simple celebration. This event will honor all mothers and daughters. Please sign up in Wayland Hall.



The Board of Missions

has many charitable responsibilities. First there are 4 specific offering during the year that include:

March- America for Christ;

June- One Great Hour of Sharing;

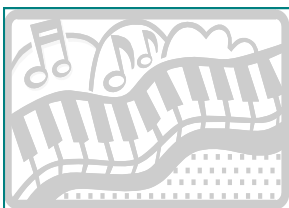
October- World Mission Offering; and in

December -Retired Minister and Missionaries offering.

The board also contributes during the year to TABCOM missions, and a year's end designates funds to specific charitable organizations.

It is asked that you give generously to these worthwhile causes and make a difference in the life of one or many.

Missions Board- Deborah Porter



MUSIC

The Choir will end in late May and will resume in September. A special thanks to the choir, guest organists, and the music committee members for their efforts this past year in providing fine music during a transitional time. Soloists will serve during the summer season. Please keep the church in your prayers and we will begin our search for an interim organist, and a new Minister of Music.

-Sarah Zettek

Women's Ministries

Continues to focus on our late winter/spring clothing drive. Also, we are supporting any efforts to eliminate human trafficking for exploitation purposes or for any other reason. If you are interested in assisting our causes, which included many more, please contact This committee is the former Woman's Society which was chaired by many years by the late Mrs. Beatrice Wyatt.

Sarah Zettek.

PRAYER LIST

Stinger Family, David Mokena, Cheryl Harris Family, Vosler Family, Santos Family, Deborah Porter, Roessler Family, Kim and Remy Moulaison, Mel Jemmison Family, Marianne Norman, Christine Chin, Bruce Herrick, Deborah Degenhart, Dorothy Williams Family, Wyatt Family, Liz Simon, Fadie Coleman, Sarah Zettek Family. Louise Takvorian, Edward Davis Family, Fayne Family, Balls Family, Travis Kennedy, Sue Fletcher, Floyd Donald, Karla Johnson, Charles Zettek, Tara Wall, Kenneth Manley, Lemy Stinson, Bill T., FBC Jamaica Plain, our local, state, national, and world leaders. Victims of all natural disasters. Human trafficking victims. Please forward any names for the prayer list to the Board of Deacons. -Deacons Chairman, Melvin Jemmison

Pastor's Point *Rev. Dr. Stephen Butler Murray*



When one accepts the call to serve as the 29th Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Boston, one steps into the riverbed of time. This is one of the oldest churches of America, rightfully proud of its heritage, housed within one of the most beautiful and architecturally significant sanctuaries known to the citizens of Boston. We, the members of this church, are the beneficiaries of what those before us have handed down, the inheritors of a tradition of ministry that has impacted not only our neighbors, but our nation. When one steps into the riverbed of time you look at the ripples that are caused by your entry, the way that the water shapes its direction around the contours of your leg. The question for any new pastor of an historic church, and the congregation that calls that pastor, is this: "What will be our legacy?" What will we do to make our mark upon the meaning of the First Baptist Church of Boston when those ahead look back upon our time of stewardship and service here? What witness can we offer such that we not only survive, but thrive, such that we not only care for those within our walls, but those outside as well? What will be our legacy?

At the time that I write you this letter, I have completed my first eight months as your pastor, and I have been invited to share with you some of the work that I have done to establish myself here at the church and in the ecclesiastical, religious, and theological communities of Boston. Certainly, we have seen an upsurge in adult education, a mission which has been facilitated by my becoming a member of the Board of Trustees of the Massachusetts Bible Society, a 200-year old ecumenical organization dedicated to evangelism and education on scriptural matters. When the MBS moved from their urban offices at the Congregationalist Library on Beacon Hill out to the suburban Newton Centre campus of Andover Newton Theological School, MBS lost an important foothold and presence in our fair city. With the blessing of our Trustees, we offered the MBS to be active partners, providing a space where their educational activities might take place, while also bolstering our educational opportunities. The first fruits of that partnership was the 2008 Advent Series in December, in which we welcomed as many as fourteen guests on Monday mornings throughout Advent to participate in a program that I led on the narratives of Jesus' birth as depicted in the Bible and the history of Christian art and architecture. We have finished a Lenten Series in the tradition of our former pastor the Rev. Dr. J. Walter Sillen on the importance of spirituality in the Christian life.

We have become more active participants in the ecumenical and interfaith life of Boston's Back Bay, and the pastors, priests, ministers, and rabbis of our neighboring congregations have become fast friends and welcomed our presence in the ongoing dialogue of faiths, Christian and Jewish predominantly, in our neighborhood. A sign of this renewed sense of our proper place in the pantheon of churches and synagogues in our area was the tremendous turnout of clergy for my installation service in October 2008, a beautiful event for which I am both humbled and proud of how we represented ourselves. We may be small in numbers right now, but we are the standard bearers of a proud and ancient tradition in this city! It was my pleasure to introduce some of my mentors to this congregation, as some of the participants in the installation included the Rev. Dr. Frederick J. Streets, longtime university chaplain of Yale University and now chaired professor of pastoral theology at Yeshiva University's Wuzweiler School of Social Work in New York City, and the Rev. Dr. Claudia Highbaugh, Dean of Religious and Spiritual Life at Connecticut College after a long tenure as the chaplain of Harvard Divinity School. The Rev. Dr. Nancy Taylor, Senior Minister of Old South Church, represented the neighboring clergy in our service, and it was a delight to welcome back our very own Rev. Dr. Milton P. Ryder, who honorably served as the 27th pastor of this congregation for 19 years. To be sure, the hospitality and banquet which we all shared after the service was tremendous, as was my appreciation for the outstanding efforts our choir and musical program for the event.

We welcomed ten new members to our church this February, of which I am most happy to be one. I am pleased to say that in addition to the outstanding service of so many of our members within the Baptist communities of the Boston area, that I can report my election to serve as Vice-Moderator of the Samuel Stillman Association, which came mere days before our very own Earl A. Norman, Jr.'s installation as the next President of the Boston Baptist Social Union. It is good to know that we continue to represent our church's witness to the larger Baptist world with such vigor and honor, and I am so pleased to serve within that longstanding tradition of our church. I should also report that I am working to expand our visibility among the student population of our neighboring colleges, universities, and conservatories. I can report that Boston University has welcomed the idea of our spearheading a new campus ministry for their Baptist students, and that I have had outstanding conversations with the heads of religious life at MIT, Harvard, Suffolk, Northeastern, and Simmons as well. We have seen students from each of those schools attend services, often with their parents who have come to visit, and I am glad that we continue to attract foreign students studying through Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary as active members of our congregation as well. It was my pleasure to represent us at the installation of the new President of Gordon Conwell, and to report that I have had preliminary talks with the President of Andover Newton Theological School indicating that they would be interested in partnering with us to establish a base by which their students could learn more about the dynamics of urban ministry. We shall see how those ideas unfold in the months ahead.

I am happy to report that this past Fall, I helped to found a new academic journal, serving as the Managing Editor of *The Journal of Inter-Religious Dialogue*, and I just accepted an invitation to join a group of thirty clergy and religious scholars to visit the Virginia Theological Seminary, where we will train to become the vanguard of dialogue in this country between Christians and Muslims. As some of you may know, I am working on a book which examines the challenges of Christian faith amid the promises of religious pluralism, so the invitation to join this group at the Episcopal Church's foremost seminary is an unexpected and most welcome honor. Our place at the table of religious dialogue in this country is a direct link to our church defending "soul liberty," an important element of the theological contribution of this church to Baptists and indeed all religious folk throughout this country.

We have much work ahead of us as we look to establish new programs that will attract families in our neighborhood to come and worship and fellowship with us here, to become a beacon for artists who seek sanctuary within the church and its concerns, to covenant with our neighbors so that we might better serve the poor and indigent of Boston Proper and beyond. These plans will continue to be knit anew in the months ahead, weaving a tapestry of what we do together which stretches not only from our proud past, but deeply into our abundant future. We are the First Baptist Church of Boston, and we are charged to do God's work here, now, and forever more. Our mission is upon us. Our answer is upon our lips. What will be our legacy? **Amen.**