

# First Things

A Newsletter of the First Baptist Church of the City of Trenton

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[www.firstbaptisttrenton.org](http://www.firstbaptisttrenton.org)

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APRIL 2014

From the Reverend Elizabeth B. Congdon, Senior Pastor

## Resurrection

Resurrection is not the mere resuscitation of a corpse. It is always about something new being born. Because of this, we are always in the midst of resurrection if we just keep our feet moving and our heart open. May we be “born from above” (John 3:3) How well we recall the happiness of the past year, the hopes and dreams and expectations we dared to allow space in our minds. Now how sad we are to realize our failures. We have not lived up to our expectations. We have been inadequate to our call. The world is not at peace. Our relationships are not all mended. Many are wounded and in pain. The poor go hungry. The joy of past memories bring brief respite on the eve before Easter, resurrection Sunday. We easily grow weary and frustrated. We are fearful of what God asks us to do. Love God with all your heart, mind and soul and your neighbor as yourself. Love your enemy. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Stop worrying. Put God first. Be perfect. We need more than resuscitation. We need to be born from above! We need to be transformed. We need to lay our burden down and experience resurrection. Keep your feet moving and your heart open.

## Holy Week 2014

Be ready to process while waving Palms as was done that day in Jerusalem. Let's worship in new and exciting ways this Palm Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>.

Be there for a special service of worship on Maundy Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

Join as we walk the “Way of the Cross” beginning at 10:00 am at Sacred Heart. We walk with other Trenton churches as well.

On Resurrection Sunday (Easter) join us for the covered dish breakfast at 10:00 am, worship at 11:00, church photograph at 12:00 and then the Easter Egg hunt on Sunday April 20<sup>th</sup>. A special service of worship and praise are planned.

**Prayer Concern: Sunday March 23 Pastor Liz Congdon had a bad fall at her home. At this writing she will be undergoing surgery for partial broken hip and also has several other broken bones. Cards and notes will be most welcome and visits during her recovery as well. Please keep Pastor Liz and her family in your prayers at this time as I am sure they will be welcomed. Also keep an eye on our face book page for updates that become available. <https://www.facebook.com/FirstBaptistChurchTrentonNJ>**

## **The Fruit It Bears**

There was a tree that was able to endure a season's change  
It didn't matter what grueling weather or calamity came  
For even the fruit on this tree was able to hold on and sustain  
A sweet fruit of passion, once bitten affects one for the rest of their days

For this tree stood out from all other trees alike  
It was one that caught the attention of many on sight  
For even in darkness its fruit seem to give off an amazing Light  
One that can guide one when their days seem like nights

Now understand this tree doesn't bear an apple, mango, peach or pear  
This fruit is the One that many of us have become heirs  
For He hung on that tree for you and I because He cared  
Know that a tree is known by The Fruit It Bears

Written by Rev C Nadir Powell

To All FBCT family and friends,

You are invited to our Poetry in Motion function. Come out and support our youth from FBCT, Verses of the Soul group, Boys & Girls Club, and friends as they express themselves through the arts of poetry, music, and dance. I'm sure it will leave an everlasting impression on your hearts as they give their hearts to you through their God given talents and gifts. It will be a joyous time. The admission is free. The only cost is your precious time. Your presence will bless them greatly. The function will be at the First Baptist Church Trenton fellowship hall, 128 Centre St, Trenton, NJ 08611 Saturday, May 10, 2014 at 6:30pm. Please come out and support our youth.

Blessings to all,  
Rev C Nadir Powell  
Associate Pastor

## **April Sermons**

4/6	John 11:32	"If Only"	Pastor Liz
4/13	Matthew 21:1-11	"Save Us Now!"	Pastor Liz
4/20	Matthew 28:1-10	"Out of the Garden"	Pastor Liz
4/27	John 20:19-31	"Doubting"	Pastor Liz

## **Thank You from our Youth! From Christal Hla**

Trenton Youth, where everybody fits in, belong and we're all one big, happy family. And all of us have one message that we would like to say to our church. Thank you. I hope this essay would show how thankful we are for everything ya'll did.

We were all refugees, people from another place. We all came from Asia, which was our home, where all our friends were and left them to come here, a new place, United States of America. We didn't know anything or anybody here. It was like we were on a whole new planet. New faces, a whole new environment and even new foods. But instead of worrying about all of that, we all had one goal. Find a church. Before we found out about this church, we used to worship at each other's houses. Each week, a new house, a new preacher preaching about how blessed we are for being able to come to the United States. After a week or so, somebody told us about a church right down the street. Well, that's how we found out about the First Baptist Church of Trenton. We all came to worship and after that, we kept on coming to every single service that they would have.

The First Baptist Church of Trenton was a very welcoming place. The people were very kind and welcomed us instantly. They were so nice that they even gave us our own place where we can worship in our own language. That's when we started our youth group. James Kang, a Korean pastor came to our church. He wanted to help us learn more about God. He started by having bible studies every Saturday at one of our youth's houses. But it wasn't very suitable because not all the youth lived near her, the youth's house. And back then, none of us really knew how to drive, except for the pastor so we didn't have lots of cars. Which meant we couldn't pick up all of the youth. So we decided to have all our studies at church. Every Saturday, we would learn something new like a new bible verse, a new story and many more. Not only that, we started learning new songs which we would sing the next day at church in service. That's when we started our youth choir and that lead us to our own section in church where we would sing for them, the worshipers. They enjoyed it a lot and would often come up to us asking where we had learn how to sing. It was a good feeling. After that, we not only sang in church, we helped with everything.

We helped clean the streets, plant some flowers around the church, and cooked food so we could bring it to church as a way of saying "thank you for helping us". As a reward, we were able to go places. For example, we went hiking twice, went to a Korean camp and were able to travel to different states. We went to Maryland, Virginia and New York, and Syracuse for the bible camps that they held. Not only that, we went to the park and held our church service there with barbeques on the side. So those are the some of the good things that came out for helping our church.

The First Baptist Church of Trenton is probably one of the nicest church I've ever been to. They raised money for us, so that we could go to Camp Lebanon, so that they could buy us things that we might need for our homes and a whole lot more. So the whole point of this essay is that we want to say thank you because the church is the structure of our youth group. Without them, we would have never been the people we are today. Because of our church, we were able to speak English fluently because they held an ESL program for us. We were able to get good grades because of them. Two of our youth already graduated because of the help the church gave us. So that is why we want to say thank you to The First Baptist Church of Trenton, which we are proud to call our church. Thank you to Ms. Mary Mild, for holding a Sunday-school for the little kids, thank you to Jeanne and Claire for playing the organ and piano for our congregation. Thank you to Mr. Nick for being there for the youth and for always buying us food whenever we're hungry. Thank you to Ms. Emily and Mr. Tyler for helping with ESL and Sunday-school. A huge thank you to Pastor James' family for helping our youth with everything. Same with Pastor Powell's family. And last but not least, a huge thank you to Pastor Liz for being there for us, for leading our congregation to a better place and for welcoming us into your church.

So in conclusion, we the youth of First Baptist Church of Trenton would like to say thank you for supporting us, for welcoming us into your church and helping us through everything. May God bless all ya'll kind-hearted people.

## **Chess for Kids Continues!**

Thanks to the Mrs. Kharmia Powell and the Christian Education Board, Chess for kids ages five to twelve are being planned for the following times: Sunday 4/6 3:00 -4:30pm, Sunday 4/13 3:00 -4:30pm, Sunday 5/18 3:00 -4:30pm, Saturday 5/31 4:30 -6:00pm, Saturday 6/7 4:30 -6:00pm, and Saturday 6/14 4:30-6:00pm. Do join in the fun!

## **FACEBOOK**

"Like" us on Facebook. Enjoy our Facebook page at [FirstBaptistTrentonNJ](https://www.facebook.com/FirstBaptistTrentonNJ)

## **Congratulations**

Congratulations to Precious Hla for being nominated for the prestigious National Leadership Forum 2014 Envision: Pathways to Discovery week at summer camp at Rider. Keep up the good work!

## **Trustees Corner**

April brings warmer weather and hopefully an end to snow removal and higher energy bills. We are grateful for the change of seasons and the new life that emerges all around us. You will notice that the work has begun in the Sunday school room where we are doing some refurbishing of the areas. A scaffold has been in place and the ceiling tiles are being replaced for a crisper and up to date look. Tiles had been damaged by roof leaks over the years and some were missing. The ceiling was last worked on some time in the 70's so it is past time for a reworking.

Over the next two months there may be occasions when certain area or rooms, including the large Sunday school room area may not be accessible as foot traffic will be bad for the glue curing process after the new carpet is laid. During these times please be sure to read the signs we have up on doors and use alternative areas. This will be a short lived issue for each area being re-carpeted.

The board welcomes a new member this year as Carolyn Wood has jumped ship from the Diaconate board to the Trustees. We are glad to have a new member with a long history of membership and activity on boards that can bring her expertise and insights to our board.

## **Board of Christian Education Update**

This month Tyler Davis, the primary class teacher, and Eileen Kelty, a regular member of the adult class wrote a little about what is happening during Sunday school time.

Tyler's class is learning about following Jesus. They've been hearing stories from the Gospels about Jesus and his disciples and working on art projects. They're especially excited about spring because that means they get to do outdoor activities during Sunday school class.

Eileen's adult Sunday school class has had a variety of teachers since September. So far we have had Abby, Phil, Pastor Liz, Pastor Nadir, Emily Davis, and Tyler Davis. The name of the book we are currently studying is "Acts – Seeing God's Power in Action." There have been a lot of interesting group discussion questions and also personal reflection. For example; when have you been confused about God's intentions behind the events that he placed in your life? And who has God given you to meet specific needs in your life recently?

Take the time to write a note to express your gratitude to them.

The ESL and Tutoring on Saturdays is a busy place with 17 students and 8 teachers working very hard. The day starts at about 9 or 9:30, then after Mary and Eileen have the lunch ready they all enjoy lunch together. Around 12:00 there is Bible Study or Choir practice until 2:00. Good job students and teachers.

"Poetry in Motion" an evening celebrating the arts of poetry, dance, and songs will be on May 10th in Fellowship Hall from 6:30pm - 8:00pm. Come support and enjoy the many talents of the youth.

We will have a Palm Sunday celebration on April 13th and then a potluck Easter breakfast with the special egg hunt for the youngsters on April 20th. Bring your favorite breakfast treat for our 10:00 breakfast. Hope to see you all!!!

### **'NEWSY NOTES'**

Several birthdays were celebrated during the Second Hour program. We love our sweet treats at FBC. Happy Birthday!!!

Christal did a beautiful job on the keyboard accompanying the youth choir. They sound sooooooooooooo wonderful every week.

The youth are getting involved thinking of ways to support Precious in earning money for his week at Rider College this summer. You can help by buying cookies that will be for sale, attending a special luncheon or making a donation in the jar marked "PRECIOUS"

Nice to see Nathan, Andrew and their friend home from college on Sunday March 9th.

Keep your eye open for a fantastic First Baptist banner that will be on the fence in front of the church.

Now what do you suppose is going to happen in Fellowship Hall with that scaffolding. Keep your heads up and watch where you are walking.

***Trenton Youth Choir***



***Trenton Youth ESL Class***



## ***Baptist Bishop from the Republic of Georgia Receives the International Women of Courage Award***



*Note: It was my privilege to be with Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze while I was in the Republic of Georgia in 2013. She deserves recognition for her leadership and ministry. Pastor Liz*

*Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia was one of ten women leaders to receive the 2014 International Women of Courage Award. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Heather Higginbottom and First Lady Michelle Obama recognized these extraordinary women at a ceremony that took place on Tuesday, March 4, 2014.*

*The Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia is a longstanding partner of American Baptist International Ministries (IM). Rev. Charles Jones, IM area director for Africa, Europe and the Middle East, represented IM at the ceremony, which was held at the Harry S. Truman building in Washington, D.C.*

*He reports, "It was such a joyful privilege for me to attend the award ceremony in support of our friend, colleague and partner, Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze! Rusudan is indeed a woman of courage. We are proud of her and her ministry; and we are delighted that she has received this high recognition."*

*Commenting on the life and work of Bishop Rusudan, the State Department recognized that, "Despite being a minority of a minority – a woman working in a predominately male religious field, and a religious minority operating in a society dominated by one faith, Bishop Gotsiridze bravely advocates for gender equality and for the equal protection of all of Georgia's minorities. As a woman holding a position of church leadership, Bishop Gotsiridze occupies a unique and respected role, challenging the perception of the role of women in society. She contributes frequently to gender equality, efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, and other women's initiatives. With her church, Bishop Gotsiridze has spearheaded a number of initiatives to promote tolerance and equality in Georgia."*

*The 2014 International Women of Courage award ceremony marks the eighth annual presentation of the Secretary of State's International Woman of Courage Awards. The occasion coincides with the 103rd anniversary of International Women's Day, which is marked every year by recognizing women who have exemplified exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for human rights, women's equality and social progress, often at great personal risk. For more information on the award and the award recipients, go to:*

*<http://www.state.gov/s/gwi/programs/iwoc/2014/bio/index.html>*

Pray for Roberta Stephens, soon to complete 28 years of service as a missionary in Japan.



Roberta lives in Yokohama where she has a variety of ministries. She serves with the Japan Baptist Union Women in their ministries, and since she lives close to Kanto Gakuin, an American Baptist related educational consortium, she is engaged in a variety of other ministry opportunities. These include telling Bible stories to kindergarteners, leading Bible studies with their mothers, and speaking at chapel services at Kanto Gakuin University. She works with the Sigma Society on the university campus, helping them to prepare for volunteer work in Thailand. She also recruits volunteers from the U.S. to work in partner churches of the Japan Baptist Union. Her framework for all of these ministries is comprised of biblical literacy and personal evangelism.

Roberta's first assignment was to work with students at a mission school called Shokei Girls' School in the northeastern city of Sendai for 18 years. Her second assignment focused on working in small churches located in rural towns outside of Sendai. This led her into leadership of a small gathering of believers called Shichigahama Preaching Place. There, the numbers in Sunday worship gradually increased to the point where the group bought its own building and have hired a Japanese pastor. During this period of ten years, Roberta particularly enjoyed evangelism and discipleship through Bible study.

After many years of serving as an American Baptist missionary, Roberta will retire from missionary service in late July of this year.

She writes:

There are many things that I am involved in that do not make headlines. They include things like doing research of missionaries of the past for the Japan Baptist Union, helping with arrangements to move some missionaries' graves from one city to another, coordinating communication between International Ministries and Kanto Gakuin regarding a missionary associate who will follow me here at KG (whom I will introduce to you in another letter), making travel plans for Japanese delegates to the Global Partner Gathering at Green Lake....and arranging for a moving company for me!

I'll be returning to the USA on May 30th. Until I retire July 31st I hope to meet as many of you as I can. Those two months I'll be available to speak at your invitation and I can meet some of you at Green Lake in the summer. Until then, I'll be continuing to both sow and reap because of your continued undergirding to the end.

- Pray for me in these final months that I will maintain a strong message for each event I'm asked to speak at. "Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God" Isa. 41:10 NASB

**Pray for Carlos Bonilla and Mayra Giovanetti hosting a team of PEACEKEEPERS for ministry in Christ's name in Nicaragua.**

Carlos and Mayra are working with the Baptist Theological Seminary in Nicaragua, accompanying them in the program of informal theological education in the churches of the Baptist Convention of Nicaragua. They seek each day to show others God's love and mercy, as a reality.

They write: Who has never had a marital disagreement, or a family feud / sibling rivalry, or a work impasse? Have you ever been able to marvel at how God orchestrates His connections? We both have certainly had our share of challenges in life at home and at work. It is part of life... How we deal with those challenges is what makes the difference in a marriage, in a parent-child / sibling relationship, and in a work-peer relationship. Jesus is the Prince of Peace and promised to give us His peace. Why do we fail so often to maintain His peace?

This coming week, beginning February 21st, we will receive in Nicaragua a team of 6 from West Virginia to share the PEACEMAKERS workshops... Before we moved to Nicaragua, on our last stop in Puerto Rico, we learned of this Nicaraguan pastor who was serving in West Virginia. So we knew of Juan even before we actually met last February when he brought a team to San Marcos. Since, we have been emailing each other, praying for this coming week to come to pass. God has been faithful to bring this project to fruition...

The team will be sharing a two-day workshop, led by Jack, in three different regions. They will also provide child/youth care as well as health check-ups to attendees. We know the Lord had already envisioned and orchestrated this connection out of love for His people in Nicaragua. We are blessed to be a bridge between PEACEMAKERS/Juan, through the Seminary, to bless the people in our country. We are counting on your prayers for those who will share/translate and those who will attend each workshop and the places we'll visit. May these peacemaking tools be a blessing as we go and are reconciled...

“[If] your brother has something against you... go and be reconciled.” (Matthew 5:23-24)



Meet the Bonilla Family... / Conoce la Familia Bonilla.....THANKS



## **Pray for Larry and Rebecca Stanton, appointed to serve as International Ministries missionaries in Liberia, West Africa.**



Becky and Larry are appointed to serve at Ricks Institute, a K-12 school in Liberia, West Africa in partnership with the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention. Larry will serve as Maintenance Supervisor, overseeing the upkeep of the buildings and grounds of the campus serving 625 students and 135 staff. Becky will serve as an English teacher in the elementary division, and will conduct weekly Bible studies on the campus. They recently were commissioned as missionaries.

They write:

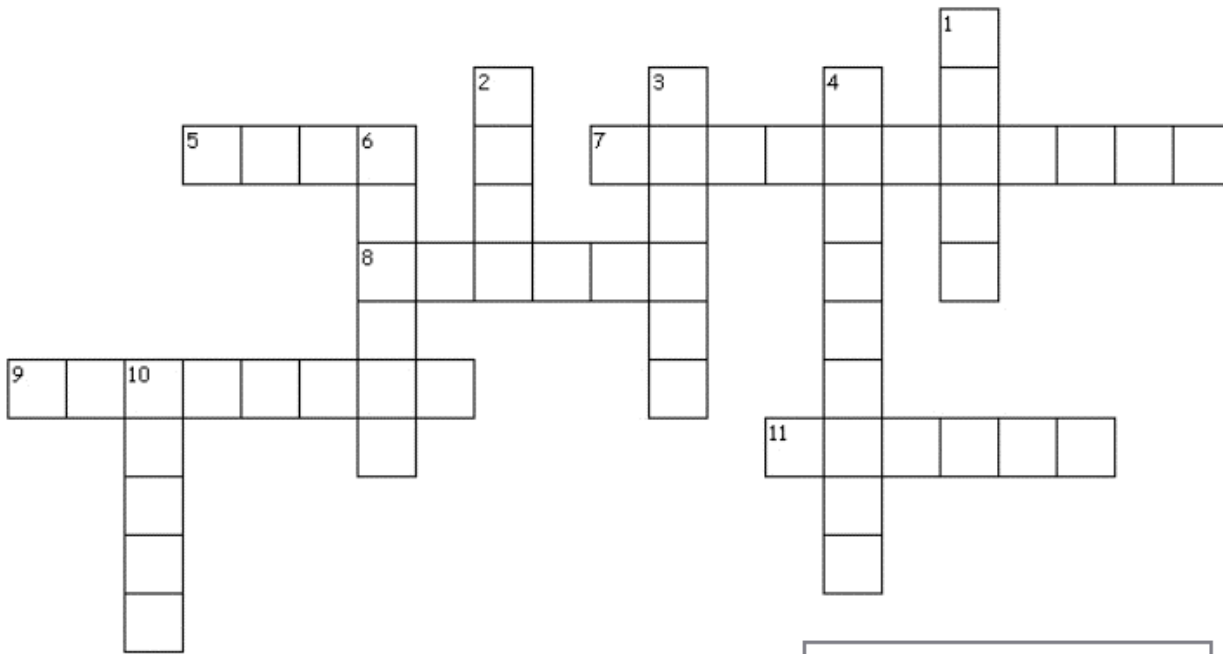
We were so blessed by our commissioning. This event is like the wedding vows of missionary life: we stood before our church, family, friends and partners and, led by IM Board President Reg Mills, we reaffirmed our faith in Jesus Christ and our willingness to serve him in Liberia, to worship with our national partners there, to pursue our spiritual growth and nourishment while on the field, and to fulfill the duties that IM has asked us to do.

This is a daunting task! But we told over and over last night that we are capable **ONLY** with God's help. And in a beautiful, formal yet personal ceremony, our pastors, friends and family vowed to come along side us, to help us fulfill this calling. It was so lovely.

Thank you for making this **BIG** day possible for us: your prayers, support, encouragement, love and faith helped us come to this joyous milestone in our journey with IM. If not for you and your dedicated, consistent support and the Spirit's power we would not be where we are right now.

- Pray for Larry and Rebecca as they continue preparation to serve Christ in Liberia. American Baptist International Ministries (IM) was organized in 1814 as the first Baptist international mission agency in America. It began its pioneer mission work in Burma and today works in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas serving more than 1,800 long-term and short-term missionaries. Its central mission is to help people come to Christ, grow in their relationship with God, and change their worlds through the power of the Spirit. It works with respected partners in over 70 countries in ministries that meet human need.  
1.800.222.3872 [www.internationalministries.org](http://www.internationalministries.org) P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482

# Easter Crossword



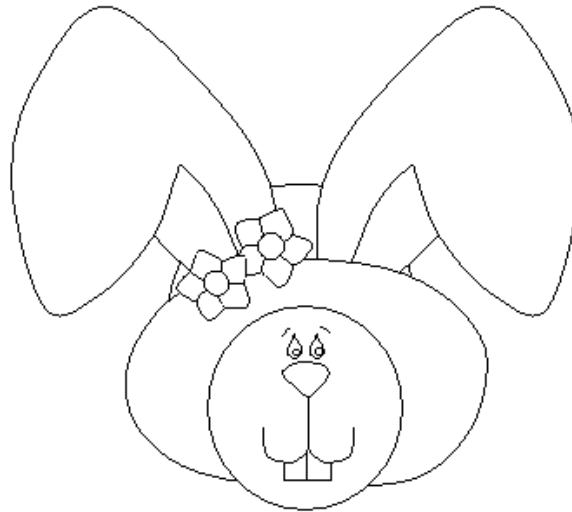
**Word List:**  
 basket, chick, chocolate,  
 crack, duckling, eggs, lamb,  
 marshmallow, pastel, rabbit,  
 spring

**Across**

- 5. Which came first? The chickens or the \_\_\_\_\_?
- 7. ooey, gooey goodness
- 8. Animal that brings treats and eats carrots.
- 9. baby duck
- 11. Container for collecting eggs at Easter.

**Down**

- 1. If you drop an Easter egg, it will \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2. baby sheep
- 3. Pale, light colors.
- 4. Tasty, decadent treat.
- 6. Easter's season
- 10. baby chicken



**Monthly puzzle.** Please be sure to bring this completed puzzle to Carolyn Wood on March 16th to claim your gift.

## April 2014 Calendar

### Sundays

9:00 Karen and Karenni Worship

9:00 Children's Worship

10:00 Sunday School for all ages

11:00 Worship

11:15 2nd Hour

12:15 Fellowship

12:30

4/6 Communion, CEB

4/6 3:00 – 4:30 Chess for Kids

4/13 Palm Sunday

4/13 Outreach Ministry Team

3:00 – 4:30

4/13 Chess for Kids

4/17 Maundy Thursday Service

6:30 pm

4/18 Good Friday Walk the Way of the Cross

10:00 am starting at Sacred Heart.

4/20 Easter

10:00 am Covered Dish Breakfast

12:00 Church family photo

12:15 Easter Egg Hunt

12:15 Fellowship

2:00 Hamilton Grove Chapel Service

4/27 Deacons

**Mondays Tuesdays and Wednesdays South Trenton Soup Kitchen (STSK)**

**First and third Wed. 7:00 Poetry Group**

**Thursdays 6:30 Choir Practice**

**Saturdays 9-12 ESL & Tutoring, 12-2 Bible Study and youth choir practice**

Chess club has new dates:

Sundays 4/6 – 4/13 – 5/18 3:00 – 4:40 PM

Saturdays 5/31 – 6/7 – 6/14 4:30 – 6:00 PM

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*Newsletter information and articles due no later than April 15<sup>th</sup>*

If anyone is wishing to submit a human interest article, poem, short work of prose please be sure to have it on the pastor's desk by the date above.

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

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Trenton, NJ 08611