

THE FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH IN  
GERMANTOWN

SPECIAL DATES OF  
INTEREST:

•Sunday  
December 1  
Advent I  
Worship with  
Communion  
10:00 AM  
Bread and Cup  
4:00 PM

•Wednesday  
December 4  
Session  
7:00 PM

•Sunday  
December 8  
Advent II  
Messiah Concert  
3:00 PM  
Christmas Dinner  
5:15 PM

•Saturday  
December 14  
Christmas Festival  
11:00 AM

•Tuesday  
December 24  
Christmas Eve  
Nativity Concert  
10:30 PM  
Lessons & Carols  
11:00 PM

# W I N D O W S

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 11

DECEMBER 2013



## From The Pastor



Dear Friends,

Well known Presbyterian preacher and seminary professor Tom Long tells this story about a group in a church who made up the “Searchers Class.” They had been meeting for about ten years, since they were young adults. One Sunday during class, a member of the class blurted out “I’ll tell you what keeps me coming to this church!” That bold statement immediately got everyone’s attention. Dr. Long writes: “The sudden rush of interest made him hesitate, uncertain of his own thought, but he pushed on. ‘It’s strange, I know, but I get the feeling here, like nowhere else, that something is about to happen.’”

“... something is about to happen!” I get that feeling a lot, especially around The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown. God’s presence is evident in what happens in and through our church . . . and I just know “something is going to happen.” I mean that in a good way . . . for God is using our church in ministry that is meaningful and life changing for many individuals. Hopefully you are one of them.

“... something is about to happen!” That is how we are to feel as Christians who believe God is at work in their lives and in the world. We are to live expectantly . . . expecting God to put an opportunity or an experience or a person or a revelation in our lives that will change us forever . . . for the good.

“... something is about to happen!” That is what Advent is all about . . . waiting and watching and expecting God to enter our lives once again.

*But about that day or hour no one knows,  
neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*

*Beware, keep alert;  
for you do not know when the time will come.*

*Mark 13:32,33*

This Advent and Christmas season, wait and watch and expect to experience God anew. Come and be part of the worship services and other programs that will take place at First Church this month, and I think you will join me in believing that “something is about to happen!”

See you in church!

*Nancy*



### Challenge Offering

**October**  
supporting  
Presbyterian Peace  
Making  
raised \$ 459.00

### Community Outreach December

**Why Not Prosper**  
\$1,000.00

**Presby's  
Inspired Life**  
\$2,500.00



## December Challenge Offering The Christmas Joy Offering



The Christmas Joy Offering has been collected in Presbyterian churches for almost seventy years. Half of the monies collected in this offering are

used to support Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges. The other half is distributed by the Presbyterian Board of Pensions in its assis-

tance programs which help retired church workers and their spouses through difficult times. Please give generously to this important mission.



## Stewardship 2014

Have you made your pledge in support of the ministry and mission of First Church for 2014? Most of our pledges have been received but possibly yours is one of the ones still outstanding.

Please send or call in your pledge amount in the next week. Remember, we are all asked to consider moving closer to a tithe in our giving and increasing our current financial gifts to the church by 1% of our household income. We have all been richly blessed by God and we are to gratefully return a portion of what we have been given through our financial support of God's ministry being carried out by First Church.



## Bread and Cup December 1 4:00 - 6:00 PM

Come, share in the farewell celebration as this ministry ends its decade-long run with live music and some of the best of its headliners from throughout the years. You are invited to bring a dish, bring a friend, or just bring a desire to have a good time as we say goodbye to Bread and Cup and look forward to what God has in store.



**Super Typhoon Haiyan** left monumental devastation when it struck the central Philippines on November 8. The storm has been identified as one of the worst ever in recorded history. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is working in collaboration with our mission partner, the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), and other members of ACT Alliance to respond to this crisis. You can participate in the relief effort by making contributions to FPCG and indicating "Philippines" in the memo line.

Then learn how PDA is responding to the urgent needs by visiting [presbyterianmission.org/ministries/pda](http://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/pda)

## Christmas Festival Play Rehearsal Schedule

Christmas Festival rehearsal will continue to take place on both December 6 and 13 from 6:30-8:30 PM as we ready ourselves for our annual celebration of the birth of our Lord! Adults who are willing to help with meal prep, costumes, and scenery, please feel free to talk to Christian or Sheila Heyer-Rivera or David Daugherty and join us for rehearsal times so we can find meaningful work for you to help make this annual play a success when it is presented at the Christmas Festival on December 14.

## Staff Christmas Gift

Christmas is a time when we can show our appreciation to our staff for all they do during the year as they serve our congregation and community. Most of us have experienced the "extra" each of these staff members put into their job. Staff Appreciation Christmas Gifts will be given to Kevin, Eileen, David, Christian, Heidi, Jesse, Whaley and Illya (JR) just prior to the holiday.

You can share in these appreciation gifts by sending your contribution (checks made out to The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown) to the Personnel Committee, The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown, 35 West Chelton Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144. There will also be opportunities to make a contribution during the Sunday coffee hours.

## 2014 Calendars

Heidi Mercado-Littles has designed 2014 calendars featuring original photographs of Greater Germantown with inspiring scripture passages adapted from I Corinthians 13. Calendars will be available for \$15 as a fund raiser for the Deacons. You can see a sample calendar and place an order with Heidi during coffee hour or call her at 215-967-1503. Orders will be taken until December 8, 2013.

# Messiah Concert and Christmas Dinner



**Sunday, December 8, 2013**

**3:00 PM**

Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra  
with

The Germantown Oratorio Choir

Gary White, conductor

David C. Daugherty, chorus master

## **Handel's *Messiah***

Laurice Kinnel, soprano

Jessica Lowe, mezzo-soprano

Stuart Jasper, tenor

Jonathan Sills, bass

A free will offering will be taken to help support the concert

## *Christmas Dinner*

Tickets are now on sale for The Annual Christmas Dinner following the concert. The Congregational Development and Fellowship Committee invites you to join us for this wonderful event. Adult menu options: chicken, beef or vegetarian for \$12.00. Children's menu for ages 2-11: Chicken Nuggets, Macaroni & Cheese and Broccoli for \$5.00. See any Congregational Development and Fellowship Committee member for tickets during coffee hour, or call the church office at 215-843-8811.

*Join Us for Our Annual*  
***Christmas Festival***  
*The First Presbyterian Church*  
*In Germantown*

**Saturday, December 14, 2013**

**11:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

*Featuring*

*Lite Supper and Refreshments*

*Gingerbread House Building*

*Arts & Crafts for all ages*

*Children's Christmas Musical*

***"Angels, Lambs, Ladybugs & Fireflies"***

*Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long*

*A Live Nativity*



*A free-will offering will be taken to help support the festival  
Canned goods will be collected to support the food pantry of the Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry*

**35 West Cheltenham Avenue ■ Philadelphia, PA 19144 ■ 215-843-8811**

# Mary Benjamin in the News



Had you picked up a copy of the November 13, 2012, issue of the *Colonial News* as Jim Thompson did, you would have seen a radiant photograph in color accompanying an article about Mary Benjamin, a devoted member of our church since 1972. Sitting at her desk and surrounded by books, Mary is looking at her copy of the old *Stage Door Canteen Rule Book for Junior Hostesses*.

Written by M. English of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Media News Service, the article describes in detail Mary's involvement, beginning in the mid-1940s, with the Stage Door Canteens, "the social centers begun by the American Theatre Wing to entertain and feed enlisted men and non-commissioned officers during World War II. By being trained as a hostess for the Canteens, Mary became one of "the most gracious girls in

the world" whose privilege it was to be on duty seven and half hours "to take the loneliness out of war for the men in the armed forces of our country."

At the time, Mary was Mary Berlin, a 1939 graduate of Lansdowne High School. She had a degree in interior design from Beaver College (now Arcadia University) and was working in decorating in the Gimbels Department Store on Market Street. She would go from her day job to the Canteen which was downstairs from the main floor in the Academy of Music. As Mary explained to her interviewer, "You just talked with the boys, mingled...waited for someone to ask you to dance. There was always music—for some reason I remember the Andrew Sisters' 'Rum and Cola' being played—and entertainment...all types, but it varied. There were refreshments, although the hostesses were not allowed to eat. The food was for the boys...although we were allowed to have a drink. Nothing alcoholic. There wasn't any allowed."

In the picture accompanying the news article, Mary is wearing a patterned blue sweater, something she could not have done as a Canteen hostess, for one of the 23 rules in the guidebook was "Do not wear sweaters. They aren't very festive, and this is a party. Look your prettiest." The young women were also discouraged from wearing a "tailored suit," the coat for which would not "be pretty bunched under an apron."

Another "rule" was that hostesses could not arrive or leave with a service man nor meet him anywhere near the Canteen. Mary, however, was corresponding with a "service man" she "mail-met" through his cousin who was also working at Gimbels. Kenneth Benjamin was an army flight surgeon stationed in England and France, and the doctor and the Canteen lady wrote each other for a year-and-a-half before meeting in person. When Dr. Benjamin returned to the States for a 30-day furlough in 1945, he invited Mary to dinner in a restaurant downstairs from Caldwell's, the swank jewelry store on Chestnut Street. As she recalls, "I remember I ordered a whole lobster. What was I thinking...I was really pushing it. But we got along great. He had a good personality, and 10 days later, we got engaged. I mean, what girl could turn down a beautiful diamond ring?"

They were married on April 13, 1946, and eventually moved to East Falls where they reared a family consisting of two sons, Dennis and Keith, and a daughter, Trish. Later were two grandsons, Aidan and Ryan. In 2003, Mary and her husband moved to Masonic Village in Lafayette Hill. Dr. Benjamin died almost ten years ago.

Long a member of the FPCG choir and active in many of the organizations of the church, the former junior hostess during the Second World War continues in a book club and keeps a healthy interest in the productions of the Stagecrafters in Chestnut Hill where she used to perform. When fellow Masonic Village resident cast his "Stage Door Canteen" variety show at the retirement community in January, the most natural person to take part was none other than a real Canteen girl—Mary Benjamin. "My voice certainly isn't what it used to be, but that was a lot of fun," she said.

—adapted by Sam Whyte



# ADVENT-CHRISTMAS DEVOTIONAL

Building on the foundation of over thirty years of original Christmas plays and advent meditations and a well-received Lenten Devotional Guide, Don Carlin has written a new Advent/Christmas Devotional. The resource, sponsored by the Christian Education Committee, has a scripture passage, reflection, and prayer for every day from December 1 through January 6. It provides new insights on the familiar stories with the intent of comforting, challenging and blessing you this season. Pick up your copy from the literature table.



## *Christmas Eve at First Church*



*Tuesday, December 24*

*Nativity Concert*

*10:30 pm*



*Candlelight Service of Lessons  
and Carols*



*11:00 pm*

## Disciples Basketball

Our church's basketball program is in full swing. Game schedules for both our U18 team as well as the new addition of a U14 team will be advertised in upcoming worship bulletin announcements as soon as they are made available by the league directors. Please show your support of the relationships that are being developed between our church and the young people in our community who participate by planning to attend games when you're able.



## Youth Group Shopping for Thanksgiving Baskets

Each of our youth groups (elementary, middle, and senior high) had an opportunity on different Saturdays in November to assemble a combined total of 6 Thanksgiving baskets for The Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry. Each youth group learned about this annual opportunity to express gratitude through GACM, contributed their own funds, split into teams and shopped at different grocery stores in the area to create meals for families in our community. Thank you to all the youth and their families who gave their time and resources in order to bless others in this season of giving thanks. Judging by the effort and energy of each age group, it was clear that it was indeed a blessing to us as we gave to this wonderful ministry. Finally, a special thank you to all the GACM staff and volunteers who helped distribute all the baskets.

## A Hallows' Eve to Remember

A special thank you to the Hood Family for hosting our church's Halloween party this year. Over forty church members and friends of the church were present to share in the festivities. With a pizza dinner, the great hot cider, Halloween themed music and over twenty kids in costumes trick-or-treating throughout the West Duval neighborhood, the evening was full of fun for all who attended.



## The Second Annual Yard Sale

The Congregational Development and Fellowship Committee (CDFC) sponsored this year's Yard Sale held Saturday, October 19, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Weather-wise we could not have asked for a more perfect October day! The yard sale was held in the church's large parking lot reminiscent of the school yards in some big cities. This year twelve vendors participated, a significant increase from last year, and members and friends of First Church again generously donated their spent treasures to be sold on six church tables. The CDFC also sold grilled hot dogs, chips, and water. The Committee thanks everyone who helped with this event—from those who donated items, helped to price, sort, or set items out on the tables; those who sold or bought items and those folks who prayed the event would be successful. A big thanks to you, whatever your role!

In all, approximately \$650 was made from items sold from the church tables along with the \$15 space fee charged to this year's vendors. The amount collected from the vendors went to the budget of the CDFC and the balance to the church's general budget.

Special thanks to JR, the sexton on duty for the day, for his untiring willingness to help with any and all requests made of him and doing so, so pleasantly.

Overall the event was truly one of fellowship for First Church, the vendors, and the community of customers that shopped with us. The Congregational Development and Fellowship Committee is looking forward to the third annual yard sale in 2014.



**Whosoever  
Gospel  
Mission**

Sharing God's Love Since 1892



## **Whosoever Gospel Mission Celebrated 121st Anniversary**

The Whosoever Gospel Mission celebrated its 121<sup>st</sup> anniversary with about two-hundred and ninety guests at a banquet on Saturday, November 2 at Williamson Banquet Center in Horsham, Pennsylvania. It was truly a memorable evening. As always, the food was delicious, and the fellowship around the tables was great! The testimony shared by Reverend Amir Burnette, a Mission graduate, was remarkable when he recounted how God used the Mission to totally change and redirect his life. Darryl Watts, a current resident, spoke from his heart when he shared that for him the Mission is a safe and compassionate haven in which he can heal and recuperate from two hip replacements. And to make the banquet one for the history books, Scrappy the Dog (one of the men's favorite chapel speakers) made a surprise appearance and talked about all of the practical ways that the Mission helps homeless men find peace in Christ, overcome addictions, sharpen their vocational, educational, social and life skills, secure meaningful employment and move into safe, affordable independent permanent housing. Scrappy emphasized that God's love in Christ is at the center of all that the Mission does. First Church members Don Carlin, Joe Luebe, Wayne Swift, Jim Thompson, Lee Vaughn, Ted and Rosie Walkenhorst, and Anne Williams enjoyed the evening. Hopefully others First Church members will be able to attend next year.



## **Happy Birthday December**

- |    |                          |    |                            |
|----|--------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| 2  | <i>Sandra Maxwell</i>    | 14 | <i>Victoria Solomon</i>    |
| 4  | <i>Alfred Knup</i>       | 17 | <i>Christopher Scott</i>   |
|    | <i>Virginia Mechling</i> | 18 | <i>Eugene Gardenhire</i>   |
| 6  | <i>Susan Farrington</i>  |    | <i>Michael Sekpe</i>       |
| 11 | <i>Winnie Fahs</i>       | 20 | <i>Mary Lavin</i>          |
|    | <i>Chris Leube</i>       | 23 | <i>Contina Lundy</i>       |
| 12 | <i>Kirstin Hill</i>      | 27 | <i>Betty King</i>          |
| 13 | <i>Ingrid Harris</i>     | 28 | <i>Joshua Overton</i>      |
|    | <i>Flossie Smith</i>     |    | <i>Bernetta Washington</i> |



## Life Stories II Collective Biographies

Last month, the column's focus was picture book biographies. This month's column is all about collective biographies. Collective biographies are abbreviated thematic collections of life stories. For example, the subjects can be connected through their achievements/deeds or through their positions in life. These short biographies are just enough to entice readers to search for longer biographies of their favorite athlete, musician, or princess. Although the titles span grades 3-8, readers of all ages should enjoy reading about fearless cow girls, young patriots, and naughty pirates.

**Happy Reading!**  
**Deborah Thompson**



# Children's Book Spot



- Adler, David A. *Heroes for Civil Rights*.  
Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth. Holiday House, 2007.
- Adler, David A. *Heroes of the Revolution*.  
Illustrated by Donald A. Smith. Holiday House, 2002.
- Armstrong, Carole. *Women of the Bible*. Simon & Schuster, 1998.
- Gherman, Beverly. *First Mothers*. (Short biographies about the mothers of the presidents) Illustrated by Julie Downing. Clarion, 2012.
- Greenfield, Eloise. *How They Got Over: African Americans and the Call of the Sea*. Illustrated by Jan Spivey Gilchrist. Amistad, 2003.
- Hansen, Joyce. *African Princess: The Royal Lives of Africa's Royal Women*.  
Illustrated by Laurie McGraw. Scholastic, 2003.
- Harness, Cheryl. *Rabble Rousers: 20 Women Who Made a Difference*.  
Dutton, 2003.
- Hoose, Phillip M. *We Were There, Too! Young People in US History*.  
FSG, 2001.
- Krull, Kathleen. *Lives of the Athletes: Thrills, Spills (And What the Neighbor Thought)*. Illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt. Harcourt, 1997.
- Krull, Kathleen. *Lives of the Pirates: Swashbucklers, Scoundrels (Neighbors Beware!)*. Illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt. Harcourt Houghton Mifflin, 2010.
- Krull, Kathleen. *Lives of the Scientists: Experiments, Explosions (and What the Neighbors Thought)*. Illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt. Harcourt Houghton Mifflin, 2013.
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Hand in Hand: Ten Black Men Who Changed America*.  
Illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Hyperion, 2012.
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Let it Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters*.  
Illustrations by Stephen Alcorn. Harcourt, 2002.
- Rappaport, Doreen. *Beyond Courage: The Untold Story of Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust*. Candlewick, 2012.
- Sanders, Nancy I. *America's Black Founders: Revolutionary Heroes & Early Leaders*. Chicago Review Press, 2010.
- Winter, Jonah. *Wild Women of the Wild West*.  
Illustrated by Susan Guevara. Holiday House, 2011.



# December 2013



<b>1 Sunday</b>	<b>Advent I</b>	<b>11 Wednesday</b>	<b>21 Saturday</b>
8:45 am	Chancel Choir	4:00 pm	8:15 am
9:40 am	Power of Prayer- Westside Room	6:30 pm	10:00 am
10:00a m	Worship Service	6:30 pm	<b>22 Sunday</b>
11:10 am	Children's Choir	6:30 pm	<b>Advent IV</b>
11:30 am	Confirmation Class	6:30 pm	8:45 am
11:30 am	Sunday School	6:30 pm	9:40 am
11:30 am	Adult Bible Study	9:00 am	10:00a m
11:30 am	Chancel Choir	6:25 pm	11:10 am
12:30 pm	Gospel Choir	7:45 pm	11:30 am
12:45 pm	Basketball	<b>12 Thursday</b>	11:30 am
4:00 pm	Bread and Cup	9:00 am	11:30 am
<b>2 Monday</b>		9:00 am	11:30 am
<b>3 Tuesday</b>		6:25 pm	12:30 pm
9:30 am	Classic Towns	7:45 pm	12:45 pm
6:00 pm	Line Dancing	<b>13 Friday</b>	
7:00 pm	Messiah Choir Rehearsal	2:30 pm	
<b>4 Wednesday</b>		6:30 pm	
4:00 pm	Keystone State Boychoir	<b>14 Saturday</b>	
6:30 pm	Basketball	11:00 am	
7:00 pm	Session	Deadline—January edition of WINDOWS	
<b>5 Thursday</b>		<b>15 Sunday</b>	
6:20 pm	Gospel Choir	8:45 am	<b>Advent III</b>
7:45 pm	Voices in Bronze	9:40 am	Chancel Choir
<b>6 Friday</b>		10:00a m	Power of Prayer- Westside Room
2:30 pm	Drop-in-Center	11:10 am	Worship Service
6:30 pm	Christmas Play Rehearsal	11:10 am	Children's Choir
<b>7 Saturday</b>		11:30 am	Confirmation Class
9:00 am	Messiah Dress Rehearsal	11:30 am	Sunday School
9:30 am	Congregational Develop- ment Committee	11:30 am	Adult Bible Study
10:00 am	Open Gym	11:30 am	Chancel Choir
<b>8 Sunday</b>	<b>Advent II</b>	12:30 pm	Gospel Choir
8:45 am	Chancel Choir	12:45 pm	Basketball
9:05 am	Gospel Choir	<b>16 Monday</b>	
9:40 am	Power of Prayer- Westside Room	6:30 pm	PRISM
10:00a m	Worship Service	<b>17 Tuesday</b>	
11:10 am	Children's Choir	2:00 pm	Children's Choice Christmas Banquet
11:30 am	Confirmation Class	6:00 pm	Line Dancing
11:30 am	Sunday School	7:00 pm	Chancel Choir
11:30 am	Adult Bible Study	<b>18 Wednesday</b>	
12:45 pm	Basketball	4:00 pm	Keystone State Boychoir
3:00 pm	Concert—Messiah	6:30 pm	Basketball
5:15 pm	Christmas Dinner	7:00 pm	Property Committee
<b>9 Monday</b>		<b>19 Thursday</b>	
<b>10 Tuesday</b>		6:20 pm	Gospel Choir
6:00 pm	Line Dancing	6:00 pm	Administration and Finance Committee
		7:45 pm	Voices in Bronze
		<b>20 Friday</b>	
		7:30 am	Miquon School Holiday Concert
		8:00 am	Germantown Special Services District
		2:30 pm	Drop-in-Center
			<b>23 Monday</b>
			<b>24 Tuesday</b>
			<b>Christmas Eve</b>
			10:30 pm
			11:00 pm
			Nativity Concert Worship-Lessons & Carols
			<b>25 Wednesday</b>
			<b>Christmas Day</b>
			Church Closed
			<b>26 Thursday</b>
			Church Closed
			<b>27 Friday</b>
			3:30 pm
			Drop-in-Center
			<b>28 Saturday</b>
			8:15 am
			9:00 am
			10:00 am
			Keystone State Boychoir Reader's Choice Open Gym
			<b>29 Sunday</b>
			8:45 am
			9:40 am
			Chancel Choir Power of Prayer- Westside Room
			10:00a m
			Worship Service
			11:10 am
			Children's Choir
			11:30 am
			Confirmation Class
			11:30 am
			Sunday School
			11:30 am
			Adult Bible Study
			11:30 am
			Chancel Choir
			12:30 pm
			Gospel Choir
			12:45 pm
			Basketball
			<b>30 Monday</b>
			<b>31 Tuesday</b>
			<b>New Year's Eve</b>
			Church Closed
			<b>January 2014</b>
			<b>1 Wednesday</b>
			<b>New Year's Day</b>
			Church Closed



# Christmas Memorials



The poinsettias in the sanctuary during the Christmas season are in memory and honor of our loved ones. As is our custom, these flowers will be delivered after Christmas to the sick and shut-in of our congregation. Please contact Brent Haddix during office hours if you would like your family members' or friends' names included in the worship bulletin.

The cost is \$15 per line.

Listings will be accepted until Tuesday, December 17.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

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