

The Tall Spire

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018

Waging Peace as We Wait for the Prince of Peace



When it seems like humanity knows only how to wage war between nations and neighbors, may this Advent Season be a powerful reminder of how our God is waging peace in our world! The birth of Christ demonstrates God's loving rescue for and presence with humanity. He offers a way out of the endless cycles of violence and systemic oppression. God is showing us an alternative way to live from the cultural elevation of the rat race, competitive, market-driven economy as well as the self-elevating narcissism evident in our celebrity worship. Jesus came to the world as a defenseless, vulnerable infant from an insignificant outpost at the edges of the mighty Roman Empire. This Prince of Peace came to wage peace upon our war-mongering, vindictive, merciless world in which "might makes right". Advent is a "call to arms" to the arms of embracing peace.

This season (which spans the four weeks preceding Christmas) we celebrate is called *Advent*. This word comes from the Latin *adventus*, which literally means "coming". Jesus is coming and therefore we wait. We wait with great expectations, joy, and hope. We wait, like the Israelite people waited for God's rescue to come before the birth of the

Messiah. God is a God of rescue:

- *Rescuing Adam and Eve from the garden and demonstrating mercy in the face of sin.*
- *Rescuing Cain from vindictive revenge upon the killing of his brother and being preserved with a mark.*
- *Rescuing humanity and creation from the flood through Noah's trust in God.*
- *Rescuing the chaos loosed upon the world at the height of human arrogance in the Tower of Babel through the communal Covenant with Abraham.*
- *And then, in the midst of a five hundred year exilic existence ushered in by the destruction of Jerusalem and Temple in 587 BCE, God rescues his homeless people through the Person of Jesus of Nazareth.*

So we wait for the coming of our Lord, but this waiting is not a passive endeavor. It is an active struggle in which we are invited to participate in the emerging Kingdom of God on Earth, actively feeding the hungry and empathizing with those who grieve. Actively forgiving and seeking forgiveness with both neighbor and self. Being active in the fight for peace may not be *glamorous*, but it is *glorious* in that it reveals God's work in the

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Sunday Worship @ 10:30am

Misión Bautista Worship @ 12:30pm

Adult Forum @ 9:30am

Church Office Hours
Monday – Thursday 9am to 2:30pm
Friday 9am to 1pm

Rev. Tim Dalton, Senior Pastor
Matthew Perez, Minister of Music

Lucia Gold, Office Manager

George McCullough
Maintenance Supervisor

Affiliated with American Baptist
Churches of Metropolitan NY
The American Baptist Churches USA
www.abc-usa.org

LOOK FOR THE TALL SPIRE
at Bryant Avenue and North Street
adjacent to White Plains High School

world! This is a fitting role for us to play in the world, since Christ's birth represents a new day in human history. The old ways of brokenness and sin have begun to experience the divine process of redemption. The Kingdom of God is already here, but not yet complete. So our mandate is clear: to wage peace as we wait for the Prince of Peace. Join me in this effort this Advent Season.

Waging and waiting for Peace, Pastor Tim

Psalm 29:11

*The Lord will give strength to His people;
The Lord will bless His people with peace.*

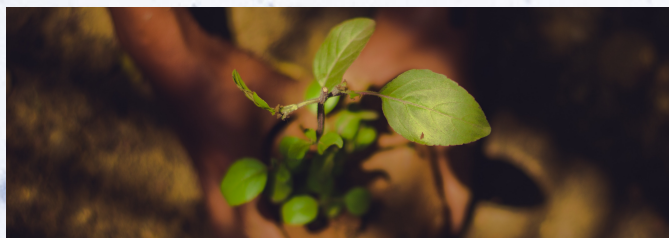


Margaret's Garden

With help from our friends at Misión Bautista, Margaret's Garden and the other garden and orchard plots have been cleared and put to bed for the winter. On the advice of our urban food forest specialist, Doug Candia, we grew comfrey plants this year and harvested the leaves to till into Margaret's garden as a nitrogen-rich, natural fertilizer that hopefully will improve our yields of produce next year. Our new orchard, planted in April, has been growing and within a couple of years should be yielding harvests of apples, plums, paw paws, and elderberries.

In addition to these plants one easy-growing and two cold-hardy varieties of peaches have been ordered that will be planted in the orchard later this Fall. I think tending the orchard is much like our effort to share the Gospel message, in that, although we may not see an immediate harvest we live in the hope that the seeds we have planted will yield their fruit in due time. Thanks again to all who helped in the gardens this summer and for your generous contributions for produce that enabled us to raise over \$400 for the Center of Hope-Haiti.

Carl Hamby, Gardener-in-Chief



Actively Choosing Peace

The Holiday Season is upon us! It is a glorious and cherished time for many. However, along with the flurry of festive activities that this time of year provides, often I find myself overwhelmed with all of the demands on my time, my pocketbook, and my sanity throughout the Holiday Season. As wonderful as it is to celebrate the Advent of Christ, this time of year can also make me feel more exhausted than exhilarated.



I feel that this can be an opportunity to practice an active mindset of trust and peace in God. Psalm 61:2 says, "When my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I." This is not a passive instruction. I must choose to follow God's leading toward tranquility - into His peace "that surpasses all understanding" (Phil 4:7). Throughout my Holiday Season, when I find myself feeling stressed, I will return to the verse above and actively choose to focus on the true meaning of what this time of year signifies: the gift of God's everlasting love and peace to us - to dwell personally with us. O Come, Emmanuel.

Happy Holidays to All!

Kate Wiswell, Lead Vocalist

Children's Church

Ministering to the children at First Baptist has been a wonderful blessing for me! At the end of the summer, we briefly talked about what love is (1 Corinthians 13) and who that love is (Jesus). By doing so, they understand why we study the Bible and who we are looking for in the Bible. Then I resumed the storytelling from Genesis, discussing Abraham's journey and God's promise to him. Carl agreed with me that following the Biblical order for lessons is the most appropriate method for their age. I have been excited to share how faithful the Lord was to Abraham always despite him being an imperfect man. We will continuously explore Abraham's genealogy in the Old Testament, as well as practical lessons that our children may apply in their lives. Stephanie who rents the third floor of Wilson House has thankfully volunteered to supervise little children, Jordan and Lucas. Please keep our church's children – Evie, Isaac, Mike, Jordan, and Lucas – in your prayers that they meet Jesus and learn to rely on Him.

Katelyn Perez, Youth and Children Intern



Blessing of the Animals

Our annual Blessing of the Animals service, in partnership with the Humane Society of Westchester, was a blast! Many community members came out with their beloved pets, each of whom received a special blessing from Pastor Tim.



Trunk or Treat!

Our annual Trunk or Treat had to be moved indoors due to poor weather, but that didn't stop us from having a BLAST with our friends and family from all around White Plains! We hope to see everyone again next year!

Upcoming Events

Thanksgiving Potluck

Sunday, November 18th – 11:45am
Fellowship in Wilson House
after Worship Service

Christmas Tree Lighting

Saturday, December 1st – 6:00pm
Congregational Singing in
front of the Sanctuary

Parsonage Open House

Sunday, December 9th – 11:45am
Fellowship at the Parsonage
after Worship Service

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 16th – 11:00am
Joint Service with Misión Bautista
and Fellowship Luncheon

Christmas Eve Service

Monday, December 24th – 7:00pm
Candlelight Service in the Sanctuary
followed by Christmas Tea Time

