

First Baptist Church • White Plains NY

# The Tall Spire

WINTER 2017

## Putting Families First: Food, Faith & the Future

A Ministry of First Baptist Church of White Plains—Pilot Feeding and Community Building Program

**G**reetings. 2017 promises to be an ambitious year in the life of our congregation. The following is our plan to begin a pilot food cooperative called “Putting Families First: Food, Faith, & the Future.” Please pray for this effort. If you are interested in donating your time or resources, we welcome you to join us on this journey of faith together.

—Pastor Tim

**VISION.** A community in which families and individuals thrive, and hunger is non-existent.

**MISSION.** Improve conditions for families with food security concerns in White Plains and the surrounding area.

**STRATEGY.** Establish a pilot community of 10-15 families and partner with them, non-profit stakeholders, and volunteer supporters in creating food security, building community, and providing a platform for personal development while affirming dignity.

**BENEFITS.** Engagement, self-sufficiency, addresses hunger, eliminates isolation, builds community, is sustainable.

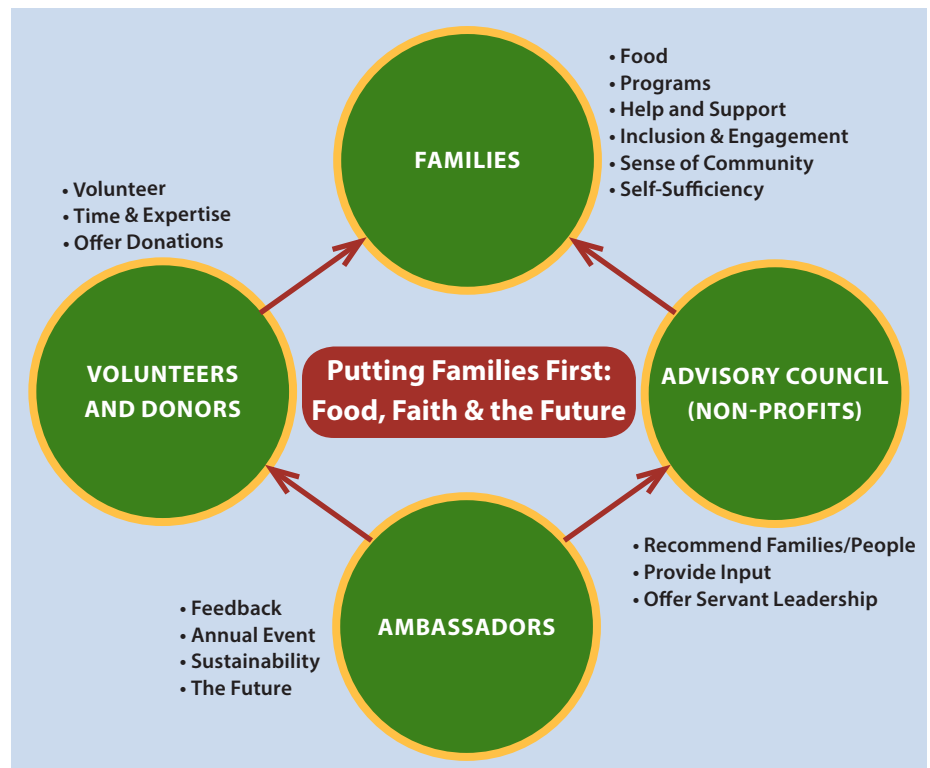
### HOW IT WORKS

► After obtaining contact information of appropriate applicants from our

non-profit stakeholders, we will conduct informational sessions with these families to introduce them to the program. Putting Families First (PFF) will provide a unique alternative to many traditional food-centered ministries.

► Under our model, similar to a food co-op, each family we serve becomes a member of a community that meets every two weeks (26 times per year) at an agreed upon day and time in the

church sanctuary. Eventually, the plan is that the meeting will be convened by the members themselves (although at the beginning, Pastor Tim and volunteers from our congregation will be more involved). Because of the consistency and sense of ownership the model offers, this will not only provide food security for those in need, but will be a place where relationships are formed, dignity is affirmed, and community is strengthened. *(continued on page 4)*



## Praise and Worship

**IT'S ALREADY THAT TIME AGAIN**—the beginning of a new year—and I'm happy to say that this spring season will be packed with a variety of new songs, hymns, and choral works for the edification of the congregants at First Baptist Church of White Plains.

Aside from continuing on the path of shaping a multigenerational worship experience for current members and newcomers, my plans involve working with FBC's new staff member, Kate Wiswell. I'm excited to have her on board, and glad that she has made the transition from working with us on a monthly basis to being a dedicated member of the worship team.

Kate and I will be introducing new music, revitalizing a sense of spirituality during worship services, and meeting with Pastor Tim so the two of us can be better equipped to express the church's vision. We will also continue to be joined by both Alex España (guitarist/vocalist) and Angel Lau (percussionist)



PHOTO © ALICE LONGWORTH

**Kate Wiswell, center, performing with a choir during a Sunday service. Now a staff member, Kate and Worship Minister Matt Perez are working together to introduce new music throughout 2017.**

as we steadily march toward Easter.

Like last year, Easter will be an exciting event filled with glorious and uplifting music for the singular purpose of honoring the precious name of Jesus. And as always, I look forward to taking this journey with you as we

prepare to share the good news of the gospel message with our friends and neighbors. ■

*Matthew Perez*  
Worship Minister

Mark your calendar: Annual Community Easter Egg Hunt, April 16

## First Baptist Welcomes Lucia Gold

**LUCIA GOLD** is excited to have joined the staff at First Baptist as Office Manager in early December. She was born in Bloomington, Illinois and attended Illinois Wesleyan University, graduating with a BS in Education and also studied at Illinois State University where she worked on a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology.

For over twenty years she was a Key Account Sales Manager for Triboro Quilt Manufacturing in White Plains.

Returning to the 'old neighborhood' in a different capacity, she will bring to First Baptist her office and management skills, as well as her experience at

Woodlawn Heights Presbyterian Church in the Bronx, where she served for several years as board President.

Currently residing in Mamaroneck she will be close by. Lucia is enjoying her role at First Baptist and finds it wonderful to be in an environment where people work together, and she can feel useful. Lucia is putting her computer and organizational skills to good use by assisting pastor Tim and Pat Ehresmann, as well as all the members of the Church.

She extends a greeting to the congregation and encourages everyone to stop by the office and say "hello." ■



**Lucia Gold**

## A New Face to Our Community: New Church Signage

AS MANY MEMBERS are aware, there have been discussions over the years about updating and improving the visibility of our sign at the corner of Bryant Avenue and North Street.

The Christian Education committee has taken on the responsibility for designing new signage and has presented the following design concept to the Church Board for consideration.

The design reflects the architecture of the church and will have a white background with dark red trim and carved lettering for a strong visual impact.

The size will be approximately 4'x6', which is twice as large in area as the current sign, and will be sited as close to the corner property lines as possible for maximum visibility from

the intersection. It will be mounted on white posts and stand about 4' above the ground with eyebolts supplied to hang banners for special events.

The sign will display the church names, pastors, and website URLs. It will be illuminated at night by a photosensor controlled spotlight mounted on the ground in front of, and shining up onto, the sign.



New signs at the Bryant Avenue and North Street driveway entrances will display other information such as the service times for each congregation.

They will be about 3'x4' in size, similar in design to the new corner sign, and made so that they can be overlaid with temporary posters highlighting special events we wish to advertise.

With these changes we hope to present the face of a dynamic congregation at work in our community. ■

*Carl Hamby*

*Christian Education Committee*

**This signage design concept reflects the architecture of the church. It will be a approximately 4'x6'.**

## A Year of Change in Wilson House

**HEADLINING THE CHANGES**, and certainly the most visible, are the new Viking stainless steel ranges in the kitchen, placed side by side. Together they equal the capacity of the old cast iron range, which was original to Wilson House but no longer usable. The new stoves were put to good use at the Christmas day brunch.

Security cameras were also installed to provide monitoring of Wilson House systems and for the safety of its residents, church staff, and visitors, especially at night.

A new telephone system with capacity for current and future needs has replaced our old unit. The new system can be monitored outside of regular office hours to ensure that no messages, especially pastoral or emergency, are missed.

These upgrades were made possible by a substantial donation from the



Eugene M. Mohr memorial fund, and contributions toward the stoves from generous members and friends. Major electrical upgrades were completed and paid for out of our regular budget. ■

*Jeff Clark*

*Property Team*



**Among the equipment upgrades in Wilson House during the last year were two new ranges and new security and telephone systems.**

(PFF, continued from page 1)

► Participants arrive at their appointed hour, check in, set up the room, pitch in to sort the food, or simply visit with others in the group. A meeting is then held which the members will eventually control. The food will be distributed into one of three family sizes. Families (defined as living together in one household) of 1-2 people will get a certain amount, families of 3-5 will get a certain portion more, and families of 6 and above will get the largest portion.

► The meetings typically include a gathering time, community announcements, discussion of food preferences that are purchased, and at times, speakers or whatever the group decides that they need. Examples of such needs could be things like cooking classes, light body movement or yoga instruction, financial literacy discussion, immigration rights discussion, tax help, etc. Then boxes are distributed and members leave until they gather again in two weeks. If someone from the group does not arrive, their food is not saved, but is simply redistributed among those who attended the meeting as the members see suitable.

► Food will be obtained through purchasing from local food banks, grocery stores, donations from stores, and congregation/volunteers. The money for the food is paid as a budgetary priority of the congregation and grants.



► A cost of \$3.00 per meeting, per member family as a programming fee will be provided by donors, and non-profit stakeholders who commit to sponsoring a family for a year (cost \$78.00). These funds are never used for food. They may be used for programming needs or for a special need that the PFF members vote to determine. As the program grows, grants and additional funds from donors will be solicited in order to expand the programmatic side of PFF.

**STRUCTURE.** We envision four important stakeholder groups to this unique model.

**1. Members.** Those individuals and families in need who can benefit from and commit to this program. Members will be asked to sign a non-binding letter of principled commitment to the program.

**2. Volunteers and Donors.** There are 6 people ready, willing, and able to volunteer now to support this pilot program. Their main role is to foster relationships with the PFF members, provide logistical support for transferring food, and as generous sponsors and advocates for the program in getting monetary and food donations.

**3. Advisory Council.** Each organization that partners with PFF by referring families in need will have a seat at our Advisory Council, which we foresee meeting 2-3 times a year to review the program and seek input for improvements. Council members can sponsor families by paying a program fee for their participation.

**4. Ambassadors.** A longer range goal is to include members who have gone through the program in an advisory and volunteer role as ambassadors. These are the “members” who have “graduated” and provide support, encouragement, and a “testimony” as to how they got through their difficult time. This will be open to people who have needed assistance in the past from any food assistance programs. We will establish an annual breakfast with these folks to remain connected and engaged in the program. ■

**First Baptist Church  
of White Plains**

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Founded in 1871 and rooted in such historic Baptist principles as the freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and religious tolerance, First Baptist Church seeks to serve faithfully, and think critically, following the courageous and compassionate example of Jesus Christ.



Sunday Worship at 10:30am

Misión Bautista Hispana  
de Westchester  
Worship at 12:30pm

Adult Education at 9:30am

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



Rev. Tim Dalton  
Senior Minister

Matthew Perez  
Worship Minister

Joshalyn Estrada  
Minister of Youth and Families

Alice Longworth  
Communications Coordinator

Lucia Gold  
Office Manager

Katherine Wiswell  
Lead Singer

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