



# The Tall Spire

MARCH/APRIL 2018

## LAMENT: THE BEGINNING OF LASTING HOPE

*(drawn from Jeremiah 2:7-13)*

When Jeremiah was called to speak to the devastated people of Israel, he had “something like a burning fire shut up in [his] bones.” He had a prophecy too explosive to tamp down and a God who prevailed alongside him against his fear. But when his warnings of judgement landed him in chains, Jeremiah’s faith was tested and he responded with lament. Jeremiah even speaks of God overpowering him, as if his opponent is the Lord! Once Jeremiah expresses his grief and anger over what has happened to his country, he is freed from its grip upon his soul and is able to remember that God is warrior at his side who will not allow the enemy to prevail!

I believe the Church in America has lost the ability to lament. Prosperity gospel vendors quip, “count it all joy,” as if our troubles are mere illusions. Just “name it and claim it” and the blessings will roll in as if lament is an evidence of failure and sinful shame. Scripture contains many voices of people crying out to God in their despair and anger with God; and there is much to lament in our world. Theological factions wage “culture wars” against one another defying God’s call

for unity. I join Jeremiah as he painfully writes, “I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.”

I, too, am weary of gun violence in our schools, our houses of worship, our night clubs, our concerts, in our streets and homes. I want to cry out, “Why, O God, is it deemed acceptable for people to own fully automatic assault rifles?” I am saddened by the “lock-down drills” my children have to practice over and over. I want to angrily denounce our political leaders who allow very little restrictions around gun ownership or universal background checks. I am weary of the country we are becoming: a land where violence toward our children is an acceptable cost of protecting a “right.” How did we get here? How can we enact common sense gun laws that the majority of Americans and gun owners already agree with?

In the life of faith, we are given permission to lament, crying out at injustice, to scream “Why God!” God is big enough for our questions and our laments. God knows of our pressing need to get it out and yet many of us

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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*

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The American Baptist Churches USA  
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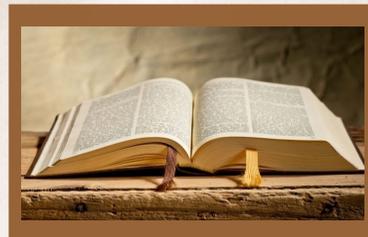
LOOK FOR THE TALL SPIRE  
at Bryant Avenue and North Street  
adjacent to White Plains High School

are afraid. We fear that we have somehow failed in being faithful. But we have not. We are being honest. And God wants an open and honest relationship with you more than anything! It is in this act of honest surrendering to God that we discover new hopes, God's enduring presence, heartfelt praise and meaningful prayer. Did you know that there are over 40 Psalms crying out to God and all but one turn to hope (Psalm 88). God turns our sorrow into redemptive possibilities!

In the midst of so much struggle and sadness in the world, the Church has an opportunity to speak

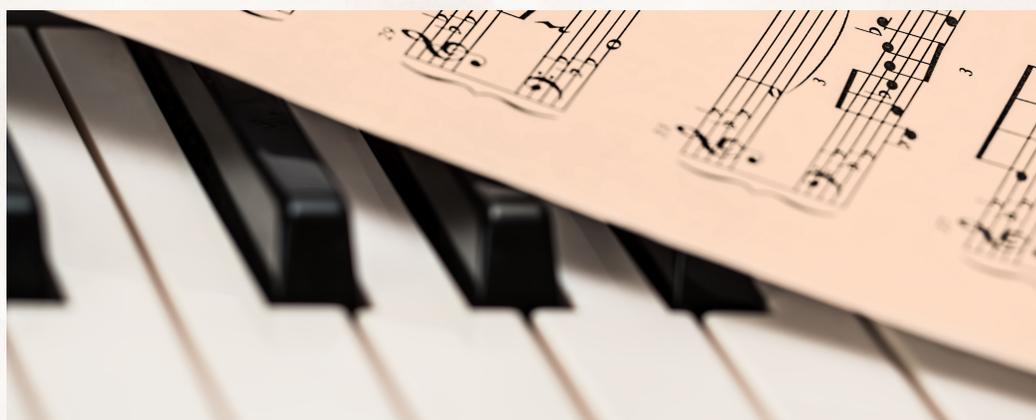
biblically and faithfully without ignoring reality, and we must start within. I must start within. If we fail (if I fail) to do this, the world will not see the hope that the gospel can bring to such a time as this. Indeed, this "time" is dark. Yet, despite the darkness of gun violence in our nation, we can and we must raise our prophetic voices and our actions to bring about reforms to our gun laws now. Is it possible? Indeed, it is: "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." (Lamentations 3:24)

*Pastor Tim*



## Challenge Verses

Every Monday, we are posting on Facebook a new challenge verse for the week. One in which we hope you will take to heart, internalize, be inspired by, live out, and perhaps memorize. Be on the lookout for our weekly challenge verses! What is God challenging in you?



## The Sounds of Easter

Since the close of the Christmas season, Pastor Tim and I have been working on some very exciting plans for Easter Sunday. Indeed, I can hardly wait until we experience the results together! Our worship that morning will be amplified by a professional string ensemble, a chorus of talented vocalists, and an experienced trumpeter. What a joy it will be to praise the name of Jesus in the midst of God's people!

As we approach this service, we will reflect on the depth of Christ's sacrifice through Lenten hymns and a Maundy Thursday service with our friends from Misión

Bautista. Looking ahead, I'm excited about adding more and more new songs to our lineup for the purpose of diversifying the worship experience offered to members and guests alike. Our lead singer, Kate Wiswell, has been instrumental in introducing a number of fresh tunes and beautiful solos to the FBC congregation, so be sure to thank her for her diligent efforts!

In closing, I am so happy to be here and am looking forward to a wonderful spring season as your friend and servant in Christ.

*Matt Perez, Minister of Music* 🎵

## Vacation Bible School

First Baptist Church of White Plains and Misión Bautista will be sponsoring a joint Vacation Bible School this year from June 25-29. It will include children in grades 1-6 and run from 9am to 1pm each day. Children can be dropped off as early as 8am and picked up between 1 and 3pm. The theme for this year's VBS is "Shipwrecked: Rescued by Jesus". The program consists of a professionally developed Bible School curriculum that will have rotating stations of activities and instruction for all age groups. More details to come!

## Children's Corner

There are a number of spring activities planned for our children, but what I'm most thrilled to do with them in the following weeks are two projects: Building a model of Noah's Ark and painting the Ten Commandments. I will be connecting each story with the character of Jesus throughout the curriculum so the kids are better able to see that He has always worked in people's lives with love both in the Old and New Testament eras.

Moreover, I will be supporting our upcoming VBS program from planning to implementation. I have started organizing the curriculum materials and will have them ready in advance. I sincerely appreciate the Board for supporting this ministry! First Baptist Church and its children are in my prayers, that God would bless them and use this program to help them know Jesus.

*Katelyn Perez, Youth and Children Intern*



# Margaret's Garden

We have expanded gardening options this year. In mid-May we will be planting Margaret's Garden with the usual staples of tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, corn, squash, and zucchini that will be sold to support the Center of Hope-Haiti mission. In addition we will begin laying out and planting an orchard in the area that was formerly covered by a brush pile to the south of Margaret's Garden.

We are developing a list of various fruit trees and plants with the help of orchard specialist Doug Candia. All who have interest can help start the orchard with a \$30 donation per plant. The new garden area that was opened up last year will be divided up into individual plots and assigned to members of the Food and Families network who can use them to grow produce to support their families.

Finally, Lucia Gold has generously offered to buy hives and beekeeping equipment so that we can keep bees on the property to serve as pollinators for our gardens and orchard. She has located a beekeeping group in Bedford Hills who will assign a mentor to work with us as we enter the fascinating realm of beekeeping.

No doubt there will be challenges ahead as we undertake this expansion of gardening opportunities but I am excited about the potential benefits and rewards we may reap. Anyone who wants to help out in these endeavors please don't hesitate to contact me.

*Carl Hamby, Gardener-in-Chief*



## Easter Egg Hunt!

Come join us on Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> for an Egg-Stuffing Party in preparation for the 6th Annual Easter Egg Hunt which will be held at noon on Sunday, April 1st. The fun begins at 6:30pm in Wilson House with pizza and refreshments provided along with prizes given out for the most proficient Egg-stuffing teams.

We are always in need of volunteers for the Easter Egg Hunt who are willing to greet and direct people to the correct egg hunt areas, hand out flyers, and help man refreshment stands, so please contact Carl Hamby or the church office if you like to help out in this way. Thank you!



## Upcoming Events

**Friday, March 23rd @ 6:30PM**

- Easter Egg Stuffing Party!

**Thursday, March 29th @ 6:30PM**

- Maundy Thursday Service  
(in Wilson House)
- Pot-Luck Meal and Service  
with Misión Bautista Hispánica de  
Westchester and Trinity  
Lutheran Church

**Friday, March 30th @12:00PM**

- City Wide Good Friday Service  
Hosted by Church in the Highlands

**Sunday, April 1st Easter Sunday**

- 6:30AM Sunrise Service
- 7:15AM Breakfast
- 10:30AM Worship
- 12:00PM Community  
Easter Egg Hunt

**Join us! Easter Sunday**

