

## Congregational Meeting Set for June 11th to Elect New Officers

Following worship on June 11th, the congregation will meet to elect its officers for the new program year according to the 2023 Bylaws that were passed by the congregation this spring.

*committee chairs, and affiliate representatives who will serve during the 2023-2024 church year. The committee chairs will be elected for three-year terms; the others will be elected for one-year terms.*

In submitting her report of the Nominations Committee Leslie Schultz wrote, "This has been an interesting and unique year for the Nominating Committee as a result of the new FBC bylaws voted on and accepted by the congregation in May, 2023. The list of positions we are responsible for recruiting has changed slightly as reflected below in the chart on page 6.

*The Nominations Committee would like to express their sincere thanks to all who have volunteered to fill positions and continue the work of doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God."*



*Georgeous white peonies from the garden of Barb Fry*

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*Also, the responsibility of recruiting committee members for all committees, with the exception of the pastoral relations committee, is now the responsibility of the chair for each committee. The following is a list of the members we have recruited for church council, officers,*

*Don't forget*  
~ ~ ~ ~  
**FBC Picnic**  
**Sunday June**  
**25, 11 am at**  
**Taughannock**  
**State Park**  
~ ~ ~ ~



**Intrepid FBC Marchers:** A handful of FBC folks put on their walking shoes to march June 1st in the annual Ithaca Festival parade. Tina Hilsdorf and Marlene Sack had met earlier in the week to create some of the posters which they carried in the parade.

*What does the Lord require of you?  
To do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.*  
**Micah 6:8**

## Maronite Catholics

The Maronite church was formed by Syriac Christians who developed their own hierarchy and traditions from the mid-fourth century and later. During the Islamic conquest, Maronites retreated to the mountains in Lebanon. Though cut off from communication with Rome for 500 years before the Crusades, and for long periods afterwards, Maronites regard themselves not as a church that was eventually "unified" with Rome, having previously been Orthodox, but rather as one that was always united theologically and spiritually with Rome, and which "confirmed" that union when contact was reestablished.

There are about 3.36 million Maronite Catholics worldwide, including about 1.5 million in Lebanon and 64,000 in Syria. The largest numbers outside of Lebanon are living in Argentina (720,000), Brazil (493,000), Mexico (156,000) and Australia (150,000).

Many of the ideals of the Maronite life were shaped by monastic traditions and the history of retreating to the mountains under threat. The namesake of the church, St. Maron (sometimes Maroun), was a hermit monk. Churches and holy sites in Lebanon are often located above towns, in hills and mountains. Other saints of the tradition, aside from the biblical saints—were all revered for their extreme monastic asceticism. Non-monastic Maronite priests can be married.

The long linkage to Rome introduced a number of Latin practices like the Rosary, and fostered a strong devotion to the Immaculate Conception. Since Vatican II, and particularly under Pope St. John Paul II, liturgical reforms have looked to recover important Maronite traditions that had been Latinized. The church is led, under the pope, by the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, who is headquartered in Lebanon.

Source:

<https://www.catholicsandcultures.org/eastern-catholic-churches/maronite-church>



Maronite monastery in Lebanon

## From Your Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds

Dear Friends,

*On the next page, I am sharing some photos from our trip to Lebanon to spend time with our daughter, Anna, and her husband, Maroun, and his family. We had a wonderful week there! Lebanon is beautiful and very complex historically, culturally, religiously, and geographically. I got to see the high school in Beirut where I attended 11th grade. For someone who grew up on the other side of the world, it was an amazing experience to be in a place I haven't been for 48 years! We tried to find the apartment building where we lived, but it seems to be gone. It was still a powerful experience to walk those streets again, and it brought back lots of memories. I was pleased how quickly I picked up on a few Arabic words that I had known back then.*

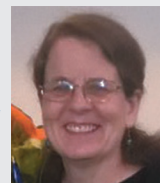
*Lebanon has been through so much since I left there in 1974 – a 15 year civil war, on-going political problems and now major economic difficulties. Inflation is awful and many Lebanese are struggling to survive. And yet, they remain wonderfully warm, friendly people. We were so blessed to be with Maroun's family. We also had very meaningful worship experiences in the Maronite Catholic Church in Byblos and the one in their hometown of Andaket, far in the north very close to the Syrian border.*

*From there we flew to Italy and had 2 amazing days in Assisi. It was so much more than we expected – truly a pilgrimage place of so much beauty and spiritual energy. It's not just about St. Francis and St. Clare; it's about all the loving, spiritual people who have come there for 800 years and continue to come today! Hard to put into words! Bill and I have a dream that we would love to return there with some of you someday! Let me know if you'd like to hear more!*

*Here at First Baptist, I am grateful for all that has happened this spring! Janice Nigro on board as our new Office Manager, our Bylaws revised, a full slate of leaders ready to be elected for the coming year, a great Women's Retreat, and several "newcomers" in our midst who want to learn more about ways to be involved. And, a new opportunity for mission opening up with the DSS Family Treatment Visitation program finally getting ready to launch using our space as their first site.*

*Let's move into this summer with open minds and hearts, ready to respond to the Spirit of God at work among us!*

*Love and blessings to each of you,  
Debbie*



Rev. Debbie Bennett Reynolds



Painting from Pastor Debbie's office that she spoke about during her Pentecost sermon.



FBC south entrance - Photo by Janice Nigro

# Visit to Lebanon

Photos from Debbie Bennett & Bill Reynolds's April trip to Lebanon



Debbie and Bill at the Mediterranean



Famous Cedars of Lebanon



Debbie and Anna in front of the high school in Beirut where Debbie spent 11th grade



Hiking in the Mountains



Ancient port of Byblos (Jbeil) in Lebanon



Delicious dinner with Maroun's family



Flat-top Cedar they encountered hiking



Beautiful Lebanon



1st century church of Jean Marc, Byblos



Lebanese hills and mountains



Anna and her husband Maroun

Photos by Alice Grow



### Mamadou Graduates from Cornell



Mamadou Bah

On May 28th, the Phelan, Assane and Diallo families celebrated with Mamadou Mouctar Bah his graduation from the Dyson School of Business and Management at Cornell University with a B.S. degree in Applied Economics and Management.

### Regi Carpenter Completes Clinical Pastoral Education Course

On Sunday, May 7th, Regi Carpenter joined seven other classmates in the FBC Community Room to receive a Certificate of Completion of one credit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) from Crossroads of Caring, Inc., an organization founded in the early 2000s for community and congregation based CPE.

Regi was supported by First Baptist Church and Cayuga Medical Center as she underwent the program. She is now employed as a part-time chaplain at Arnot Medical Center in Elmira,



Regina Carpenter

### Virtuoso Violinist Rolfe Sokol Performs



On Mothers' Day, May 14th, FBC congregants were held spellbound as they listened to virtuoso violinist Rolfe Sokol, accompanied by Christopher Morgan Loy on the piano, perform *Andante from Sonata #1* by Bach as the prelude, *Chanson Triste* by Tchaikovsky's for special music, *Ave Maria* by Bach/Gounod for the offertory and the *Allegro from Sonata IV* by Handel as the postlude.



**CDs of Christopher Morgan Loy:** Christopher Morgan Loy has generously donated 20 of his newly released CD of music that he has composed to First Baptist to be sold to benefit the Pastor's Fund.



**Transpose Perform at First Baptist:** Under the direction of Jennifer Lawrence Birnbaum, the newly renamed and reorganized chorus Transpose: Ithaca Queer Singers Alliance performed during worship on Sunday, May 7th. The chorus practices Tuesday evenings at First Baptist.

## Letter from Kenya

Dear First Baptist Church Family,

I hope this email finds you in good health and high spirits. I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for your unwavering support towards my siblings, Peter and Mary, and to share some exciting updates regarding their education.

First and foremost, I am thrilled to inform you that Peter and Mary had resumed their second term at school on September 9, 2023, with great enthusiasm and determination. Your sponsorship has played a vital role in their academic journey, empowering them to pursue their dreams and excel in their studies.

Additionally, I am delighted to share that Peter recently completed their cycle 1 exams with exceptional results. Peter has maintained a remarkable position 8 within their stream and overall position 88 out of 608 students. Peter achieved a mean grade of A-, reflecting his strong academic ability and commitment to excellence.

I cannot express how grateful we are for your continuous support, which has made such remarkable achievements possible for both Peter and Mary, your belief in their potential and the financial assistance you provide have truly made a significant impact on their educational journey.

If there are any specific updates or information you would like to receive about Peter and Mary's academic progress or any other aspect of their lives, please do not hesitate to let me know. Your interest and involvement are greatly appreciated.

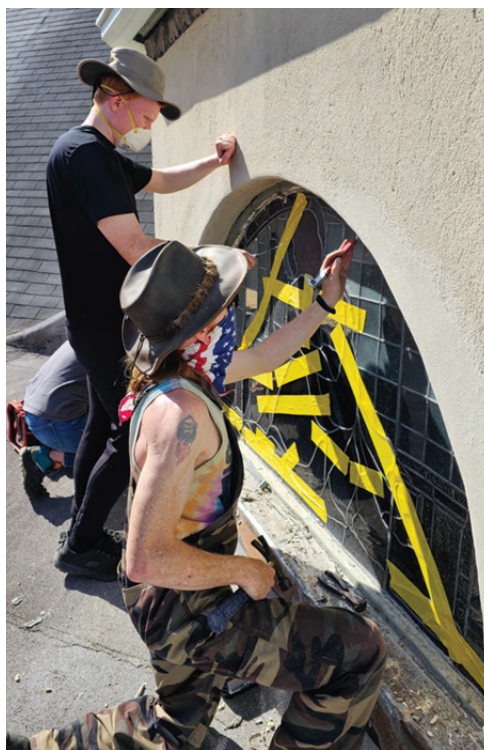
Attached is Peters' cycle 1 report

May you continue to be blessed abundantly for your kindness and support.

Warmest regards  
Mirindo Rolex



## St. Cecilia Window Removed for Restoration



St Cecilia window removal for restoration: Stain glass restorer carefully removed FBC's St Cecilia window to be restored at their workshop over the coming months. The pieces of glass on the window were so loose that they had to be taped before removing the window. Judy Kennison again secured a grant from the Historic Preservation group to pay for about half the cost of the restoration.

## Changes Made with 2023 Bylaws

The 2023 Bylaws passed by the FBC congregation on May 7, 2023 moves the governance of First Baptist from a dual chamber (Cabinet and Trustees) to a one chamber system with one Church Council whose members serve as the Trustees of the church. The new Bylaws state:

"The Church Council serves as the principal visioning and administrative body of the Church. With maximum transparency, the Council initiates plans and makes decisions on all Church business not requiring Congregational approval. In the event of a capital emergency, the Church Council may approve an expenditure beyond 5% of the Annual Budget to protect the Church building and grounds and other physical assets.

The Church Council is composed of twelve (12) Trustees of the Church who are the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, Chairpersons of the seven (7) Council Committees, and member at large. Each position on the Council has one vote. If a position is shared by two individuals, only one of the two is a Trustee. The Pastor is ex-officio member, without a vote. The Moderator convenes, facilitates, and chairs the Church Council."

## Highlights of May 8th Cabinet Meeting

- Treasurer David Caughey reported that the budget surplus at month's end was \$76,070.54, which remains unusually large, even for this time of year, thanks to the many members and friends who already have paid much, of all, of their 2023 Pledges; the total contribution to the ABC-USA Retired Ministers and Missionaries is \$1,079.90; a donation of \$10,000.00 to the Building Fund was made by an anonymous donor to help pay for the additional costs of exterior stone repair approved by the congregation.
- Pastor Debbie reported that she and Bill had a wonderful tip to Lebanon to meet their daughter Anna, their son-in-law Maroun and his parents, and then to visit Assisi, home of St Francis, in Italy.
- There was considerable discussion about the status of replacing the heating system, possibly with heat pump, (see article on bottom right).
- Bequest Allocation: Margie Latham reported that the *ad hoc* committee continues to make progress on the bequest allocation resolution, but they are not ready to present a proposal.

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**Jack of all trades:** Bill Fry, current Trustees convener and future Resource Committee Chair changes a light bulb in the sanctuary with help from below.

Photo: Barb Fry

## Slate of Nominations for 2023-24 Offices

Submitted by the Nominations Committee: Leslie Schultz, Meg Gillard, Susan Eymann

| CHURCH COUNCIL – 12 TRUSTEES                  | NOMINEE                                 | TERM LENGTH |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>COUNCIL CHURCH OFFICERS</b>                |                                         |             |
| Moderator                                     | Margie Latham                           | 1 Year      |
| Vice Moderator                                | Andrea Mooney                           | 1 Year      |
| Clerk                                         | Susan Eymann                            | 1 Year      |
| Treasurer                                     | Brian Baker                             | 3 Years     |
| <b>COUNCIL COMMITTEE CHAIRS</b>               |                                         |             |
| Ecological Justice Committee                  | Josie Zanfordino                        | 3 years     |
| Education Committee                           | Leslie Schultz                          | 1 Year      |
| Hospitality and Nurture Committee             | Anne Farrell                            | 2 Years     |
| Resource Committee                            | Bill Fry                                | 2 Years     |
| Service and Social Justice Committee          | Bill Abeles                             | 3 Years     |
| Welcome and Outreach Committee                | Steve Farrell                           | 2 Years     |
| Worship, Music, and Spiritual Life Committee  | Amy Doyle                               | 2 Years     |
| <b>COUNCIL MEMBER-AT-LARGE</b>                |                                         |             |
| Member-at-Large                               | Meg Gillard                             | 3 Years     |
| <b>NON-COUNCIL CHURCH OFFICERS</b>            |                                         |             |
| Assistant Treasurer                           | Bill Fry                                | 3 Years     |
| Financial Secretary                           | Marlene Sack                            | 3 Years     |
| Assistant Financial Secretary                 | Elizabeth Pia-Miller                    | 3 Years     |
| <b>OTHER COMMITTEES AND POSITIONS</b>         |                                         |             |
| Nominating Committee                          |                                         |             |
| There are 4 unfilled seats on this committee. | Andrea Mooney, Chair                    | 1 Year      |
| <b>Pastoral Relations Committee</b>           |                                         |             |
| Class of 2024                                 | Barbara Fry                             | 1 Year      |
|                                               | Mark Lawrence                           | Continuing  |
|                                               | Amanda Ufford                           | Continuing  |
| Class of 2025                                 | Bill Abeles                             | 2 Years     |
|                                               | Judy Kennison, Chair                    | Continuing  |
|                                               | Carolyn Young                           | Continuing  |
| Class of 2026                                 | Lil Barron                              | 3 Years     |
|                                               | Barb Pease                              | 3 Years     |
| <b>AFFILIATE REPRESENTATIVES/DELEGATES</b>    |                                         |             |
| ABC of the Rochester Genesee Region           | Anne & Steve Farrell; Rich & Lil Barron | 1 Year      |
| Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists | Shella Chace                            | 1 Year      |
| Area Congregations Together                   | Shella Chace                            | 1 Year      |
| Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America     | Leslie Schultz                          | 1 Year      |

## Heating First Baptist

From the Annual Trustees Report by Bill Fry

The FBC boiler is beyond its expected (guaranteed?) lifetime and the congregation has approved expenditure to replace it.

### Early Heat Pump Estimates

The Trustees had previously worked with Cabezas Engineering on a design, but during that process, Mr Cabezas suggested (March 2022) that heat pumps might be affordable (\$150,000 to \$180,000 in a project that could be done in three phases). Heat pumps could also cool the building in the summer. Therefore, the Trustees worked to obtain estimates for heat pumps. Three companies said that they would provide estimates, but only two have done so. However, the first estimate (early December 2022) was over \$200,000 for only the first phase (community room, office, library/lounge, nursery, kitchen, upstairs), so the Trustees concluded

that installing heat pumps was not economically feasible and they again began getting estimates for boiler replacement. Those estimates are still coming in.

### NYSEG Incentive Program

In the meantime, discussions with LaMorte Electric (a second company) took an interesting turn because LaMorte Electric was in contact with Bloc Power consulting company who alerted us on 25 April 2023 to an incentive program with NYSEG for installing heat pumps. The incentive will pay about two-thirds of the cost – which brings the cost to within the initial range that Cabezas Engineering suggested. The enrollment period ended on 30 April 2023, so the Trustees had to work quickly. At the time of this writing (16 May 2023) we are still in process.

"Simply Be" FBC 2023 Women's Retreat *Photos by Judy Kennison*



*Biz Pia-Miller and Marian Coger doing Qigong with Tina*



*Enneagram with Debbie Bennett Reynolds*



*Peggy Fry Keating and Bette Ritrona*



*Arts & Crafts: Alice Grow and Bill Abeles*



*Gathered Together*



*Passing the elements during communion*



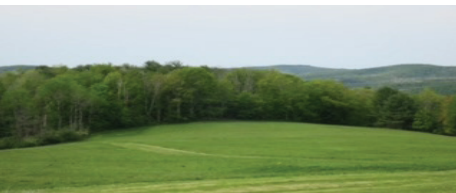
*Arts & Crafts: Linda Caughey, Amanda Ufford and Marlene Sack*



*Andrea Mooney reading in the purple room*



*Alice Grow and Tina Hilsdorf*



*Vista from Light on the Hill*



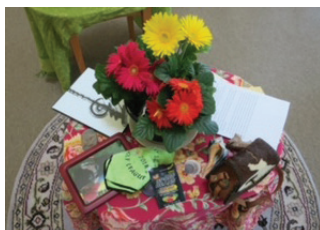
*Bliss*



*Qigong by Linda Nicholson*



*Relaxation: Edie Reagan and Barb Fry*



*Altar*



Please keep in your prayers:

- *Kris and Danny Scott & Zeta Pederson*
- *Dan Goodman*
- *Suzanne Kilgore*
- *John Gross*
- *Alice Damp*
- *Kendrick Kemp*
- *Ron Drummond*
- *Marge Hansel*
- *The Phelan family*
- *Anthony Halman & family*

As we learn to have compassion for ourselves, the circle of compassion for others – what and whom we can work with, and how – becomes wider.

PEMA CHÖDRÖN

Gratitude for the gift of life is the primary wellspring of all religions, the hallmark of the mystic, the source of all true art.

JOANNA MACY

The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction.

RACHEL CARSON



### The Visitor - June 2023

Editor/publisher: Susan Eymann  
Proofers: Tony Lister, Shella Chace  
Contributors: Debbie Bennett Reynolds, Leslie Schultz  
Photos: Tony Lister, Judy Kennison, David Caughey, Debbie Bennett Reynolds, Alice Grow, Janice Nigro, Barb Fry



**Pentecost Communion Table**

## How We Are Involved (updated April, 2023)

### First Baptist Staff

Pastor: Rev. Debbie Bennett Reynolds  
Office Manager: Janice Nigro  
Organist: Christopher Morgan Loy  
Choir Director: Belinda Adams  
Youth and Children's Ministries Coordinator: Laura Ward  
Nursery Caregiver: Carol Fleming  
Sunday School Aide: Sarah Zipfel  
Custodian: David Hopkins  
Native Garden Specialist: Sarah Zipfel

### Elected Leaders

Moderator: Margie Latham  
Vice Moderator: Andrea Mooney  
Membership Clerk: Tina Hilsdorf  
Recording Clerks: Rich Barron/Susan Eymann

Treasurer: David Caughey  
Assistant Treasurer: Bill Fry  
Financial Secretary: Marlene Sack

### Board of Trustees

Bill Fry, chair (2024); Baruch Whitehead, (2023); Bill Phelan (2023); Josie Zanfordino, secretary (2023); Elizabeth Pia-Miller (2024); Steve Hilsdorf (2024); Kris Scott (2025); Marlene Sack (2025); Carolyn Young (2025); David Caughey, (ex officio)

### Trustees' Subgroups

**Finance & Endowment**  
David Caughey, chair; Bill Fry; Marlene Sack; Curt Ufford; Janet Hansel

**Interior Decoration:** Barbara Fry; Julie Dean; Tina Hilsdorf; Bill Abeles; Anne Farrell; Andrea Staffeld; Susan Eymann

**Church Archivist:** Linda Caughey

### Affiliate Organizations

Two Delegates each for **Rochester Genesee Region & ABC-USA** Rich and Lil

Barron, co-chairs; Anne & Steve Farrell.

**AWAB:** Shella Chace

**Baptist Peace Fellowship:** Meg Gillard,

**Cornell Campus Ministry:** Linda Nicholson; Anne Farrell; Brian Baker

**Kitchen Cupboard:** Amanda Ufford; Sue Hemsath

**Tompkins County Workers Center:** Bill Abeles

**Sanctuary Alliance:** Bill Abeles; Bill Fry; Leslie Schultz

### Pastoral Relations

Tony Lister; Regi Carpenter (2023); Mark Lawrence (2024); Amanda Ufford (2024); Judy Kennison (2025)

### Nominating Committee

Leslie Schultz; Meg Gillard; Tina Hilsdorf; Susan Eymann

### Personnel Committee

Bruce Chandler (2023); Lou Carlucci (2024); Judy Kennison (2024)

### Constitution/By-Law Committee

Bill Fry; Susan Eymann; Anne Farrell; Judy Kennison; Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds

### Ministry Teams

#### Worship & Spiritual Life:

Barbara Fry, Amy Chaffee, co-chairs; Biz Pia-Miller; Tony Lister; Kris Scott; Edie Reagan; Alice Grow; Regi Carpenter; Debbie Allen

#### Worship/Spiritual Life Subgroups

**Flower Committee:** Barbara Fry; Tina Hilsdorf; Andrea Staffeld, Carrie Stern

**Labyrinth:** Kris Scott

**Sound/Audio Ministry:** David Caughey; Curt Ufford; Bill Fry; Bill Phelan; Leslie Schultz

### Education Children's and Youth:

Leslie Schultz, chair; Carol Fleming.  
**Christian Ed Teachers:** Baruch Whitehead; Sarah Zipfel; Meg Gillard

### Christian Concern

Baruch Whitehead, chair; Bill Phelan; Bill Abeles; Amanda Ufford, Marge Hansel, and others

### Christian Concern Subgroups

**Circle of Care:** Coordinators: Linda Caughey, chair; Amanda Ufford; Sue Hemsath

### Hospitality Ministry:

Anne Farrell, chair; Shella Chace; Meg Gillard; Tina Hilsdorf; Adrienne McNair; Andrea Staffeld; Steve Farrell; Bay Ward/Aittama; Alice Grow

**Communications Ministry:** Shella Chace (convener); David Caughey; Mark Lawrence; Craig Riecke; Susan Eymann; Amy Bean Stowell; Lisa Kilgore

### Green Team

Louise Mudrak (convener); and others

### Ad Hoc Reopening Committee

Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds; David Caughey; Amy Bean Stowell; Barbara Pease; Barbara Fry