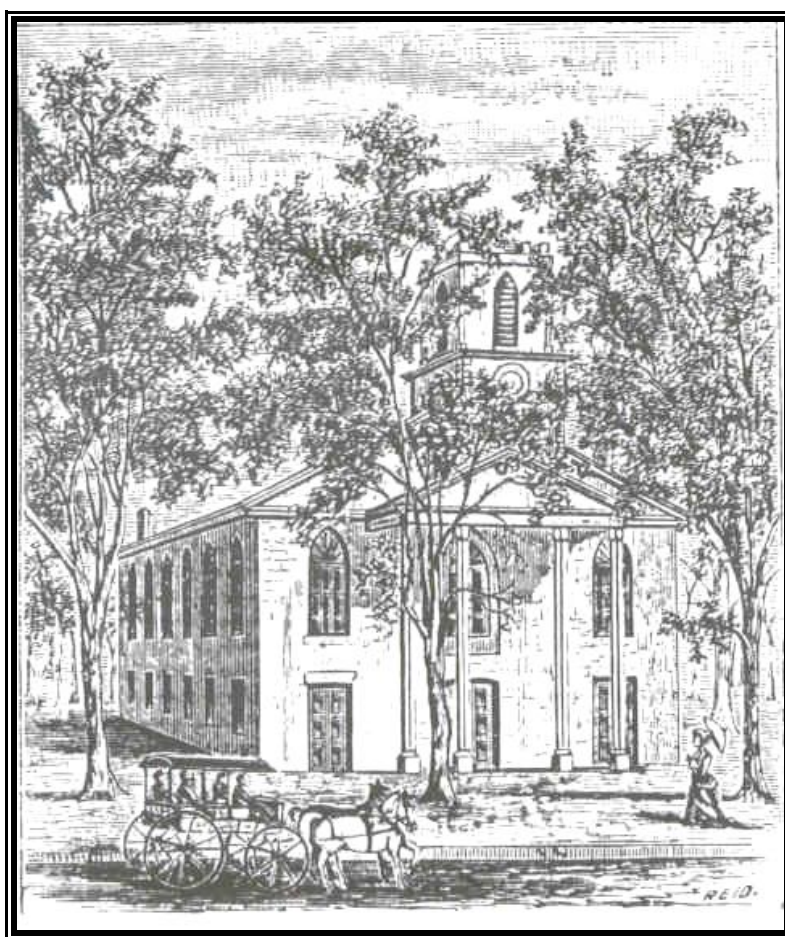


*First Baptist Church of Bristol
In Celebration of Two Hundred Years
Serving Christ and the Community
1811~2011*



*The Stone Chapel on the Common
250 High Street, Bristol, Rhode Island
Sunday, September 18, 2011*

Two Hundredth Anniversary Rededication Service

*First Baptist Church
Sunday, September 18, 2011*

Order of Worship

Ringing of the Bell

Organ Preludes:

Hymn Selections

Toccata in D Minor

F. X. Murschhauser

Processional Introit: To God Be the Glory

W. Doane

Welcome

The Rev. Nathaniel Manderson

**Hymn #43 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*

Sung during our 75th and 150th anniversary services

CORONATION

Greetings from American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island

The Rev. Nikita McCalister

Proclamation from The Town of Bristol

Choral Anthem: Let Everything

A. J. Thomas

Historical Perspective & Baptist Tradition in Rhode Island

Dr. J. Stanley Lemons

Children's Moment

The Rev. Nathaniel Manderson

Children's Anthem: I'll Be a Sunbeam

Sung during our 100th anniversary service

N. Talbot

Ceremony of Rededication

Congregation and Invited Guests

**Hymn: #572 Blessed Assurance*

Sung during our 150th anniversary service

ASSURANCE

Sermon: "Take the Fire - - not the Ashes"

The Rev. James C. Miller

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1-8

Choral Anthem: Love Unmeasured, Love of God

L. Larson

*Moment of Remembrance – *Followed by the Lord's Prayer*

The Rev. Nathaniel Manderson

**Reading of Church Covenant*

Congregation

**Hymn: #377 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus*

HYFRYDOL

**Benediction*

The Rev. Nathaniel Manderson

**Recessional: Lift High the Cross*

CRUCIFER

Organ Postlude: Toccata in G Major

D. Eliot

**The congregation is invited to stand*

An Invitation

*You are cordially invited to meet
our Ministers and Guests
at a reception
immediately following this service in
the Fellowship Hall downstairs.*

Anniversary Celebration and Rededication Ceremony

Rev. Nathaniel Manderson:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Unless the Lord builds the house, those who appear to build it labor in vain. This fellowship of believers was established two hundred years ago and duly dedicated at that time to the Lord's work. The witnesses of generations of believers testify that this house was built by the Lord. This afternoon we rededicate ourselves, and this house, to the Lord's continuing work

Deacon Betty Gilbert:

I was glad when they said to me: "Come let us go to the house of the Lord!" The Lord is in His Holy Temple; let all the earth keep silent before Him. Surely the Lord is in this place, for this is none other than the house of the Lord.

Rev. James Miller:

Let us pray: Almighty God, with great joy we come before you. We praise you for your wonderful works. On this day we particularly praise you for the vision you gave, all those years ago, to a group of dedicated Christians in Bristol in the gathering of this congregation. At that time they dedicated themselves to you, and today we rededicate this congregation for the continuing work of your church in Bristol. AMEN

Rev. Manderson:

Hear the word of Scripture from 1 Peter 2:4-10
We then are his people released from darkness into the light of Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to the nurture of each other.

Rev. Miller:

As people of God we are gathered here to rededicate this congregation to the glory of God and the service of all the people. Let us now join in the act of rededication.

To the glory of God the Father, Maker of heaven and earth; to the glory of the Son, the Savior of the world; and to the glory of the Holy Spirit, the Counselor of God's people, we rededicate this congregation and this house.

Deacon Christopher Goodrich:

For worship of Almighty God; for reading and preaching of God's Holy Word; for teaching and encouraging all who come searching, we rededicate this congregation.

For the pronouncement of Christian marriage and the strengthening of family life; for dedication to teaching and guiding our children, we rededicate this congregation.

For sharing of love and compassion; for glorious celebration of Communion around the table; for memorial services and giving comfort to those who mourn; for strengthening of all believers; and for leading those who may come not believing, we rededicate this congregation and this house.

Let us pray.

Rev. Manderson:

Almighty and Eternal God, who has promised to be in the midst of your people, be among us as we rededicate this congregation and this house. Grant that all worship and service offered here will be worthy of your great love and the words of meditation, preaching, and prayer be acceptable to you.

Deacon Lisa Gilbert:

Almighty God, grant faithfulness to the Holy Word as it is read and proclaimed among the people here; may it always be a light unto our path and a lamp upon our way.

Deacon Gail Feather:

Grant all whose eyes of faith are opened through the ministry of your word in this place, and who confess their faith by baptism, truly find newness of life by your Holy Spirit and become living members of the church.

Deacon Harold (Bud) Pedley:

Grant all who gather at our table to break bread and share in the cup of the Lord's Supper be brought to a living remembrance of Jesus Christ who is life eternal.

Rev. Manderson:

Grant all who come among our congregation, whether it is in joy or sorrow, in life or in death, in victory or defeat, in doubt or in faith, find here your grace faithfully ministered; and permit each one to know that in all things you do, work in and for all who believe.

PRAYER OF REDEDICATION - ALL CLERGY AND DEACONS

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now once again declare this congregation to the worship and service of Almighty God; to whom be all glory and majesty and power forever. AMEN

Then shall the congregation stand and say:

As a people of God we have joined this afternoon in this place to worship and praise Almighty God. Members and friends alike, we pledge to support His work with our prayers, our works, and our gifts. We then together rededicate ourselves to Almighty God. AMEN

This Commemorative Book is Dedicated to All Those Who Have Gone Before

The real history of any congregation of followers of Christ emerges from the lives of countless numbers of people who worship, work and share life with one another. The First Baptist Church of Bristol can reflect upon years of history filled with dedicated people who loved the church and our community of Bristol.

Times of revival and rebuilding have been punctuated by periods of struggle and conflict. But the spirit of God is present in people's lives and in the church. We share a vibrant tradition and anticipate a fruitful ministry for God in the First Baptist Church of Bristol.

Rev. Frederick Gilbert, Pastor Emeritus, First Baptist Church, Bristol, Rhode Island

A GENERAL HISTORY OF THE BAPTIST DENOMINATION IN AMERICA, AND OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD by David Benedict London, 1813

Bristol. -- This town is five miles south of Warren, and is next in size, and in point of commercial importance, to Providence and Newport. It was, until 1741, claimed by Massachusetts, and, being a shire town, its gaol was the frequent receptacle of Baptists, Quakers, and others, who were so heretical as not to pay their parish taxes. From this, and other causes, the Baptists gained but little influence here, until long after the Pedobaptists had acquired a permanent standing. But the principles of believers' baptism have at length forced their way through the barriers of antiquated errors, and a church has been formed, which bids fair to flourish and prevail. It arose in the following manner: In 1780, Mrs. Hopedill Munro, the wife of Hezekiah Munro, was led to embrace the Baptist sentiments, and was the first person in the town from time immemorial, who submitted to baptism in the Apostolical mode. [Stratagems of this kind were very frequent in these times.] A few months after was baptized the wife of Mr. Daniel Lefavour, who died about fifteen years ago, with a well grounded hope of immortality. On her death bed, she left a solemn injunction on her husband, to give unconditionally seven hundred dollars for the support of the ministry in Bristol, whenever there should arise a church of the same faith and order with the one at Warren under the care of Mr. Baker. This sum her husband bequeathed in his Will, dated May, 1797, and entrusted to the Warren church, and has now increased to near fifteen hundred dollars. The next person baptized in this place was Mrs. Hannah Martin, who is still living. Thus slowly progressed the Baptist interest in Bristol, until 1801, when Dr. Thomas Nelson, whose name has been mentioned in the account of the second church in Middleborough, settled in the place in the practice of his profession. By his means Baptist preachers were procured to visit the town, among whom were Elders Simeon Coombs and Joseph Cornell, whose labors were greatly blessed. And in 1811, a church was formed, which at first consisted of only 23 members, but has since increased to 56.

This church has been supplied a year since its constitution by Mr. James M. Winchell, a native of North-Eastown, New-York, who lately finished his education at Providence. Since the history of the first church in Boston was sent to press, Mr. Winchell has gone to visit that people, with whom there is a prospect of his settling. And very lately Mr. Barnabas Bates, of Barnstable, has accepted a call to settle with this church. They meet now in a commodious hall, called the Tabernacle, in Dr. Nelson's house, which he has fitted up for the purpose, but are making exertions to erect a house for worship, and it is sincerely hoped that the neighbouring churches will lend them their aid. Mrs. Munro, first mentioned, has lately given them a deed of an estate valued at a thousand dollars. This, with their other funds, amount to two thousand seven hundred dollars.

A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN BRISTOL, Rhode Island

Note: the following, *in italics*, are hand written excerpts recorded in First Baptist Church's "old church books."

Dr. Nelson was greatly grieved that in a town of the importance of Bristol, there were no male Baptist members except himself, and but few sisters. He greatly missed the society of brethren of like faith, and so great was his loyalty to his own denomination that he determined to leave Bristol. He set sail in a packet for New York, Dec. 3, 1807. A great storm however arose and the packet was driven upon the rocks and wrecked. Dr. Nelson and a boy were the only survivors. He considered himself a Jonah in that he had run away from duty. He returned to Bristol and through his efforts, Elders Simeon Coombs and Joseph Cornell, Baptist preachers, were procured to visit the town. Their labors were signally blessed.

On Wednesday, May 22, 1811, seven men and thirteen women, members of Baptist Churches of various places, now making their home in Bristol, met at the home of Dr. Thomas Nelson to consider establishing a Baptist Church. "The Throne of Grace was addressed by Elder Reed, after which Elder Joseph Cornell made a short, but pathetic discourse on the expediency of forming a church on the primitive plan, and of the importance of the setting up of the worship of God, for the furtherance of His blessed cause in the Town of Bristol."

The question was then put to the brethren and sisters present, who unanimously expressed a desire, that the church might be formed and likewise requested the privilege of becoming members. The following is a list of brethren and sisters thus inclined vis: Thomas Nelson, Lemuel W. Briggs, Royal Thresher, William Luther, Silvenus Leonard, Daniel Anderson, and William Slocum. Sisters Nella West, Priscilla Shaw, Lidia Clark, Sally Waldron, Elizabeth Thresher, Elizabeth Slocum, Mary Hammond, Phoebe Lincoln, Deborah Luther, Nancy Paull, Francis Rathburn, Lidia French, and Mehetable Clark.

August 22, 1811, The First Baptist Church of Bristol was constituted with the assistance of a Baptist Council consisting of the Pastors and delegates from the First and Second Baptist Churches of Providence and the Warren, Tiverton and Middleboro Baptist Churches. By a unanimous vote of the Council, the twenty three members, seven men and sixteen women were given Fellowship as a Church of Christ.

In October 1812, an Act of Incorporation was granted the First Baptist Church in the Town of Bristol. By this act, the members for the time, both male and female, were constituted a body politic for the purpose of securing the property already belonging to the church, and to enable them to manage the same together with what may be given or granted to the church in the future.

For the next three years, the church held meetings for worship on the Lord's Days in a hall fitted up for the purpose in the house of Dr. Thomas Nelson, 82 State Street, and called the Tabernacle.

On October 31, 1812, Brother James N. Winchell, a licentiate from the Baptist Church of Northeast, New York commenced his labours with the church in the Tabernacle. On June 23, 1813, he was ordained to the gospel ministry through the courtesy of Bishop Griswold, the religious services for the occasion were performed in the Episcopal Church. On July 15, 1813, it was unanimously voted to engage Brother Winchell to continue as pastor for one year, from October 27, 1813, being the expiration of his present engagement.

August 29, 1813 Lord's Day, After the afternoon sermon the fellowship retired to the waterside in the market place (foot of State Street) and after some observations with regard to the candidate and mode of baptism, Elder Winchell went down into the water and baptised the two candidates. This was the first time he ever administered this ordinance.

1812 February, the town of Bristol granted First Baptist Church the privilege of erecting a meeting house on the front of the public square, between the Brick School House and the Academy. Funds for the building were raised by subscription and means of a lottery, at that time the common fund raising method.

1814 May, Rev. Barnabas Bates was called to succeed Rev. Winchel. Dr. Nelson did not live to see the completion of the "Stone Chapel", he died a few weeks after the departure of Rev. Winchell to the First Baptist Church in Boston.

On November 23 the meeting house was finished and dedicated. It was known as the Baptist Stone Chapel. The building, with a gable roof, is supported by post and beam and held together with wooden pegs. The building is 45 by 65 feet. The center door opened to a flight of stairs to the "audience room" and the north and south doors opened into the vestry and lecture room. The Chapel cost was \$7,695.08.

On December 1 it was voted that Bro. Jeremiah Munroe have charge of the gallery to keep the boys still, and Brothers Tomson and Thresher have charge of the entries below to keep the doors shut and the boys inside.

1816 The first Sunday school in the town was established at Rev. Bates' suggestion. The Congregational Church and Baptists established Sunday schools at the same time.

1818 Summer, Rev. Bates began to preach different doctrines from those held by Baptists. This divided the church into two rival factions. The Bates party met in the Stone Chapel, which held the church silver, while services of the Baptists were held in the Brick School House, the Academy, and private homes. It was not until 1825 that the chapel again came into the possession of its rightful owners. Rev. Bates moved to Boston and worked for the post office, becoming known as the "Father of Cheap Postage in the United States."

1822 A bell cast by George H. Holbrook of Medway, Massachusetts was purchased from the Josiah Gooding estate to call people to their meeting at the church. In 1997 a new bell cradle was installed to replace the original, which was in use for over one hundred seventy five years. On August 22, 2011, the bell was rung for one hour in celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of First Baptist Church.

1838 It was voted to give Robert H. Bullock and George Pierce the use of the vestry with firewood and lamp for one night a week, gratis, for the purpose of a singing school.

1844 Rev. James Sykes was called as pastor of First Baptist Church; he was influential in establishing the first high school in Bristol.

1861 On August 22 Rev. Horace Hubbard delivered a fiftieth anniversary historical discourse; this document is located in church archives.

1869 A pipe organ was purchased from Samuel S. Hamill at a cost of \$1,100.

Our church spire was blown off in the "Great September Gale" and crashed through the roof. A tower was built in its place.

1875 On July 22 the first music committee was appointed. *They shall have care of the musical instruments, and shall provide a leader of music, an organist, and a person to blow the organ and to certify to the correctness of all debts contracted by the committee.*

1882 The meeting house underwent extensive renovations due to structural damage from the "Great September Gale." Gothic compound windows with frosted Victorian glass were installed and two of the three original doors were removed from the facade to accommodate a single entrance. The project was completed in 1883. Rev. Henry Crocker was pastor.

John Brown Herreshoff donated funds for the baptistery. Prior to the installation baptisms took place in Bristol Harbor at the end of State Street. The baptistery was renovated in 1958; and again in 1972 in memory of Sarah Lucas Herreshoff.

- 1883 On July 26 Chief Engineer Spencer Rounds requested the use of First Baptist's bell for fire alarms; the request was granted.
- 1889 On November 24 the church held a rededication ceremony on seventy fifth anniversary of its house of worship. Rev. Amos Robinson was pastor.
- 1911 September, *A most important event in the history of the church was the burning of the mortgage which took place at the Sunday evening service, in connection with the one hundredth anniversary of the church. Deacon George U. Arnold, chairman of the Centennial Committee, produced the document and Pastor Rev. Alfred S. Stowell applied the match, and the paper was consumed on the pulpit, in the presence of a large congregation.*
- 1919 The church purchased a Brennan & Gleason tracker pipe organ from Calvary Baptist Church in Providence, Rhode Island.
- 1921 A Portuguese Christian Mission used the sanctuary for worship and bible classes on Sunday afternoons.

Released Time Bible Study classes were instituted. They were held once a week in the church for primary, junior high, and high school children. Rev. Francis Enslin was pastor.
- 1939 A railing was installed in front of the chancel. It was procured by Rev. Arthur Burdon from the Methodist Church after their beautiful meeting house had been destroyed in the 1938 hurricane. It was put in place by Deacon Conklin.
- 1952 It was voted by the church to sponsor a Boy Scout Troop and Cub Pack, both of which had the privilege of using the vestry. Both Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops continue to meet in the church today.
- 1954 First Baptist Church built *Chapel by the Sea* at Colt State Park. The East Bay Protestant community was invited to participate in Sunday evening services.
- 1955 Our meeting house was renovated with indirect lighting in the sanctuary and a wrought iron fence was erected around the property.
- 1961 On August 27 the congregation celebrated its one hundred fiftieth anniversary with Rev. Walter Swanson as pastor.
- 1963 The congregation built a parsonage on Harborview Avenue which was subsequently taken over by the State of Rhode Island, moved in 1967 to make an additional roadway for Colt State Park, and used as housing for park employees.
- 1967 The congregation built a parsonage on Sunnyside Avenue which is still in use today.
- 1981 Rev. Frederick (Fred) Gilbert became our forty fourth pastor. He had the longest tenure (twenty years) in the history of the church and retired from many years of dedicated service in 2001.
- 1983 A revival of the Portuguese Christian Mission re-established worship on Wednesday and Sunday evenings.
- 1985 January, Rev. Fred Gilbert, along with First Congregational, St. Michael's, St. Mary's, Mount Carmel, and St. Elizabeth Churches, formed ECHO (Ecumenical Community Help and Outreach) in an effort to make local resources more easily available to the community.
- 1994 Stained glass window borders were installed in the sanctuary, and the kitchen renovated.
- 2000 The Brennan & Gleason tracker pipe organ, over one hundred years old, was rebuilt.

- 2006 On June 18 Pastor Nathaniel Manderson was called to First Baptist Church, his first senior ministry.
- On November 5 Rev. Fred Gilbert was installed as our first pastor emeritus, the first such honor in the church.
- 2008 On August 24 Pastor Manderson was ordained in Christian ministry, the first ordination to take place in the church in living memory.
- 2011 On May 22 the congregation celebrated the decision, two hundred years ago, of twenty three members of Baptist Churches of various places to form a Baptist Church in Bristol.

On July 4 sixteen members and friends of First Baptist Church marched in Bristol's famous Independence Day Parade, wearing matching tee shirts, carrying a banner declaring the two hundredth anniversary , and were greeted warmly throughout the parade route.

On August 22 members and friends of First Baptist Church gathered to celebrate the congregation's two hundredth anniversary with an informal service with one hour of bell ringing followed by a potluck supper and service with hymns, moments of remembrance, and words from Scripture.

On September 10 we hosted an organ concert by nationally renowned concertizer Donald Dame; it was very well attended.

On September 18 First Baptist Church formally celebrated its two hundredth anniversary with a service of rededication led by Pastor Nathaniel Manderson with special guest speakers The Rev. James C. Miller and J. Stanley Lemons; local churches, clergy, Bristol town government, and the public were in attendance.

The Christian Church was instituted to carry on and complete the work of its Founder and Master, Jesus Christ. Its work is simply and solely to honor God and to advance the interests of mankind both in temporal and spiritual things. Its duty is to prepare men for this life and the life to come. In the spirit of the Master it is unselfishly to devote itself to this noble and inspiring mission. With how much of good is one hundred years of such a life freighted! Who can measure the helpful and elevating influences exerted! Let us hope that this church has done its full share of good.

Rev. Alfred S. Stowell on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of First Baptist Church,
September 1911



*Friends and members of First Baptist Church on
Easter Sunday, April 24, 2011*

Former, and present, pastors of First Baptist Church

...and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard: and how shall they hear without a preacher: And how shall they preach, except they be sent: as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10:14-15 KJV

Dr. Thomas Nelson, Founder
Rev. Stephen S. Nelson
Rev. Simeon Coombs



Rev. James M. Winchell

Rev. Barnabas Bates
Rev. John Newton Brown
Rev. Arthur Ross
Rev. Enoch E. Chase
Rev. Ferando Bestor
Rev. Zalmon Tobey
Rev. William Brown
Rev. Edward Freeman
Rev. James Sykes
Rev. John F. Bigelow
Rev. Joseph M. Graves
Rev. J.N. Hobert
Rev. B. Cook
Rev. Benjamin Carto
Rev. Nathan A. Reed
Rev. Horace G. Hubbard
Rev. Edward T. Hunt
Rev. John Blain



Rev. Joseph J. Peck

Rev. Howard Malcolm Jones
Rev. Henry Crocker
Rev. L. G. Barrett
Rev. Amos Robinson
Rev. S. D. Moxley
Rev. Henry D. Bently
Pastor Charles F. Fields
Rev. Alfred Stowell

Pastor Arthur D. Mathewson



Rev. O. H. Wallace

Pastor Irving Gumb
Rev. Francis R. Enslin
Rev. Harold Buker
Pastor Mark Strickland
Rev. Arthur Jennings
Rev. C. J. Yoemans
Rev. Arthur Burdon
Rev. George Smith



Rev. Walter Swanson



Rev. Robert Stetson

Rev. Chapman



Rev. Alan Bujno

Rev. Richard Matthews
Rev. Janet Aquavella



Rev. Edward Cuthbert



Rev. Frederick Gilbert



Rev. Shirley Fortin



Rev. Jason Genest



Rev. Jeffrey Brooke-Stewart



Rev. Glenn Ramsey



Rev. Nathaniel
Manderson

Anniversary Ministers and Special Guest Speakers

The Reverend Nathaniel Manderson was born in Plainfield, New Jersey and raised in Ipswich, Massachusetts; he is a 1999 graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, with a degree in Humanities and Social Sciences, and received his Masters of Divinity from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston, Massachusetts in 2003. Pastor Nate began his first senior ministry at Bristol's First Baptist Church in 2006 and was ordained to Christian Ministry in 2008; he travels with Partners In Development, a mission organization centered in Ipswich, Massachusetts, helping the poorest of the poor in Haiti. Pastor Nate and his wife Melissa have two daughters, Thea and Tessa.

The Reverend James C. Miller was reared and educated in the Appalachian hills of West Virginia; he received his Master of Divinity in 1963 from Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, New York and was ordained to Christian Ministry in 1963. He is the parent of a son and daughter, and has four grandchildren. Mr. Miller has served as minister and senior minister of several churches in the north east, and is currently serving as the ninth pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Providence, RI. He retired as the 35th minister of The First Baptist Church in America serving from 2000 to 2005. From 1991 to 2000, Mr. Miller was the Executive Minister of The Rhode Island State Council of Churches. He has received numerous awards, honorary citations, and honorary degrees, among them The Walter Cronkite Faith & Freedom Award for courageous work in behalf of civility, tolerance, diversity and cooperation in advancing public dialogue and action on controversial and divisive issues. Mr. Miller is a frequent speaker at churches, synagogues, service clubs, and community forums.

J. Stanley Lemons is Emeritus Professor of History at Rhode Island College. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Missouri in 1967. Before coming to Rhode Island, Dr. Lemons taught at Ohio State University. His interest in American social and cultural history has led him to studies and publications in such subjects as women's history, black history, popular culture and reform movements. Though a native of the Midwest, Dr. Lemons has developed a deep and growing interest in Rhode Island and its history. He has worked on several historical projects in cooperation with The Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence Preservation Society, and Providence Public Library. In 2003 the American Association for State and Local History recognized Dr. Lemons with an Award of Merit for "Lifelong Commitment to Rhode Island History."

The Reverend Nikita McCalister is Operations Manager of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island

Those Who Bring Us Music Today

Organist/Choir Director, Terry Taylor

Piano Accompanist, Eva Voss

Violinist, Wei Li

Choir: Ruth Balzano, Daniel George, Betsy Kennedy, Francis Luther, Donna Perrotta, Patricia Sanford, Betty L. Usher, Jennifer Walsh, Glenn Zienowicz

