

2 Corinthians 4:5-12 **Putting Second First: Living Treasures**

November 1, 2015

Second Presbyterian Church, Baltimore

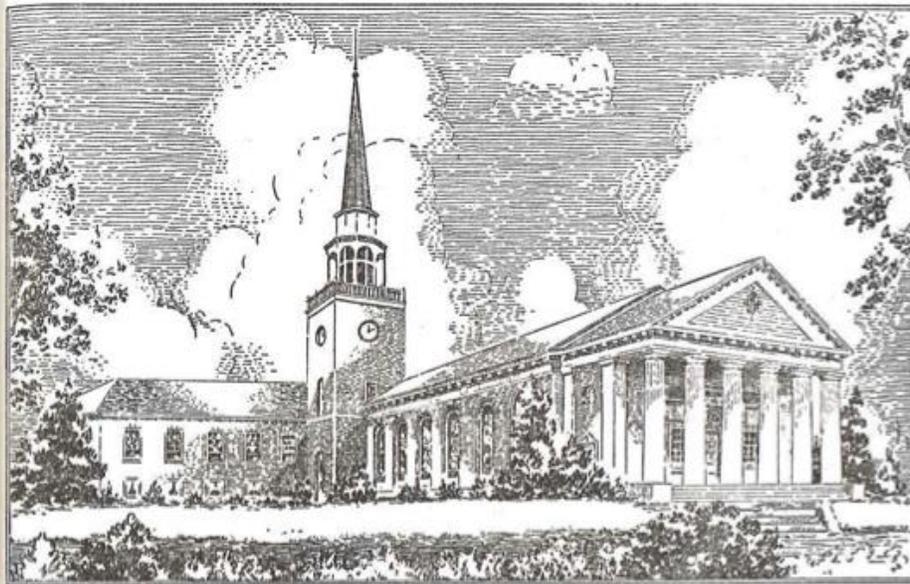
The Rev. Dr. Tom Blair

## The Second Presbyterian Church

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

ORGANIZED 1803

November 1, A.D. 2015, 11 AM



ST. PAUL STREET AT CHARLCOTE AND STRATFORD ROADS

A PRAYER AT ALL SAINTS' TIDE

As we are surrounded, O God, by the lives of thy faithful people, help us to catch a vision of the things they saw, and keep us loyal to the One they knew and loved, that quietly but surely our light may be added to theirs, and our sanctity of life may answer the need of the world.

Dr. Theodore P. Ferris in  
*Book of Prayer for Everyman*

**The Second Presbyterian Church of Baltimore**

4200 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21218

Tel: 410.467.4210; Fax: 410.467.4287

[office@secondpresby.org](mailto:office@secondpresby.org)

[secondpresby.org](http://secondpresby.org)

# Church Directory

## Ministers

PAUL CHRISTOPHER WARREN, TH.D.  
The Manse, 4201 Charlcote Road, 18, BE. 5-4672

LEONARD A. DAHL, B.D.  
6601 Loch Hill Road, 12, 828-6263

Director of Christian Education  
MRS. WINSTON P. GWATHMEY  
4404 Wickford Road, 10, TU. 9-7736

## Church Secretaries

MRS. CONLYN W. REGISTER  
MRS. GORDON W. WOODEN

## Custodian

WILLIAM R. BAILEY, JR.

Church House open  
Monday through Friday, 9:00-5:00  
Saturday, 8:00-12:00  
HO. 7-4210

## SECOND CHURCH IN OTHER FIELDS

THE REV. RAY C. DOWNS  
328/1 Phya Thai Rd., Bangkok, Thailand

MRS. HENRY W. MACK  
1648 Taft Ave., Manila, Philippine Is.

## THE SESSION

Paul C. Warren, *Moderator*  
Harry E. Silverwood, *Clerk*

### 1966

Clifford C. Bruck  
Robert B. Chapman, III  
Victor A. McKusick, M.D.  
W. Griffin Morrel  
James H. Riefler, Jr.  
Arthur L. Roberts, Jr.  
Edward S. Stafford, M.D.  
August F. Stone

### 1967

George F. Binder  
Charles N. Davidson, M.D.  
Louis K. Kaiser  
George W. Keen  
John T. Kerr  
C. Telfair Leimbach, Jr.  
Robert N. Schmidt  
Earl R. Uhlig

### 1968

Paul E. Anderson  
Wendell H. Baker  
Donald T. Frey, D.D.S.  
Thomas J. Foster, Jr.  
Paul T. Hughes  
Charles N. Hunt  
Kenneth C. Miller  
George J. Phillips, D.D.S.

## THE DEACONS

### The Ministers

#### 1967

Donald M. Brant  
George W. Black, Jr.  
Robert E. Carpenter, *Treasurer*  
Joseph F. Davis  
Arthur L. Harryman  
Mrs. Eugene L. Jones  
Mrs. Edward G. Kirkner  
R. Graydon Page  
Woodrow B. Reedy  
Harry E. Silverwood, Jr.  
William R. Smith, *Vice-Moderator*  
Mrs. C. Stanton Thomas

#### 1968

George E. Best  
Viggo A. Blaes  
Kenneth W. Blakeslee  
Norman M. Boudier, Jr.  
Robert L. Cavanaugh, M.D.  
Malcolm A. Dutterer, Jr.  
Charles T. Ensor  
Mrs. Frank L. Iber  
Thomas R. O'Rourke, Jr., M.D.  
Robert T. Singleton, M.D.  
Miss E. Lucinda Streaker  
Mrs. Alexander S. Townes

#### 1966

Morgan M. Buchner, Jr.  
Mrs. Carson M. Cornbrooks  
Miss Dorothy M. Croswell, *Secretary*  
Charles A. Dunning, Ph.D.  
Thomas R. Hendrix, M.D.  
Mrs. Paul T. Hughes  
R. Samuel Jett, Jr., *Moderator*  
Frank E. Nesbitt  
George J. Phillips, Jr., D.D.S.  
Samuel J. Sprol, Ph.D.  
E. Thomas W. Stahl  
Raymond W. Tillman

## THE TRUSTEES

#### 1967

C. Shelton Baker  
Roscoe G. Berlinghof  
Donald E. Bowman, *Vice-President*  
Charles S. Smith  
Paul C. Warren, *Ex-Officio*

#### 1968

Charles A. Dunning, Ph.D.  
Vandervoort Rand  
Norman S. Starkey  
Gerald S. Wise

George T. Bertsch  
Herbert E. Neumann, *President*  
Rindell B. Stoll, *Secretary*  
Stewart Warnken

## OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Church School ..... *General Superintendent*, John T. Kerr  
Church Treasurer ..... Winston P. Gwathmey  
Treasurer of Session's Fund ..... George F. Binder  
Church School Treasurer ..... C. Stanton Thomas  
Youth Budget Financial Secretary ..... Mrs. David A. Williams  
Chapter of Presbyterian Men ..... *President*, Donald E. Bowman  
Women's Association ..... *President*, Mrs. Williford Gragg  
Head Usher ..... Donald T. Frey, D.D.S.

## CHURCH CALENDAR (September through June)

### SUNDAYS:

Church School—Senior Class	9:45 A. M.	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Thursday, 8:00 P. M.
Adult Bible Class	9:45 A. M.	Session
Junior Choir	9:45 A. M.	Deacons
Church School—Lower Grades	11:00 A. M.	Trustees
Morning Worship	11:00 A. M.	Women's Association, 2nd Tuesday, 11:15 A. M.
Junior High Westminster Fellowship	6:00 P. M.	Chapter of Presbyterian Men
Senior Westminster Fellowship	6:00 P. M.	Couples Club
Young Adult Group	7:30 P. M.	

## Second Presbyterian Church is a Stephen Ministry Church

The Rev. Dr. Thomas W. Blair, Pastor · The Rev. Jennifer DiFrancesco, Associate Pastor  
Amy Carlson, Director of Christian Formation & Congregational Life  
Joyce C. Zimmerman, Pastoral Assistant · Philip Olsen, Music Director  
Hsiao-Ying Lin, Associate Director of Music · Beau Lochte, Handbell Director  
Julie Evans, Communications Coordinator · Linda Venable-Ward, Office Administrator  
Caroline Mapp, Bookkeeper · Rob Brown, Facilities Manager

*Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart.*

*For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.*

*For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

*But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.*

\*

It's All Saints Sunday, a day when we remember those who have gone before us, saints in heaven, saints on earth and saints yet to come, the great company of those who will be gathered at the heavenly banquet in God's good time. We remember their goodness, their devotion, their love; the gifts they shared, the legacies they left behind. And even more than remember, in countless ways we benefit from those who have gone before us. If we can do as well, ourselves, as those who have gone before us, then those who follow us will be that much better off. This, in part, is what the phrase 'Putting Second First' means for us today.

Our bulletin cover this morning comes from the past, from October 31, 1965, fifty years ago- the day when the cornerstone for the chapel was dedicated. Although the image on the front, the main sanctuary looks very much the same as today, on the back page we have included the back page of that same bulletin from 1965. Church officers names are listed; elders, deacons, trustees and staff. For some of you- some family names will jump out: McCusick, Kerr, Leimbach, Frey, Brant, Jett, Silverwood, Singleton, Stoll, and more. For others of you, these names are unfamiliar- lives unknown, gifts, memories, and legacies yet to be learned.

But the fact remains that without their gifts, their contributions made and the work they did, the present that we live in today would not be the same. Their lives made a difference. Their time, talents and treasures were put to good use in helping to build this Christian fellowship, this church that we enjoy today.

Today is a day when we take time to look back with thanks at those who have gone before us, and how it is that our lives can make a real difference for others. Sometimes it just takes someone else's example to get us started.

There are different ways for us to get the message. A new friend of mine recently told me how his life was changed by someone else's example. He attended a funeral of a friend of his parents (the dearly departed was in his mid-70's, with lots of life lived, and, potentially, lots left ahead of him.) My friend was impressed, amazed at what this man had accomplished in his life. Somewhere midway through his career he had made a change in life, he had shifted his priorities... it wasn't that he went off to become a monk, or that he changed jobs, but it was somehow through his church that he found the message and the connections that he didn't know he had been looking for, for a very long time. His outlook began to change, and so did his lifestyle. It wasn't that all his problems went away, but he was able to put them in better perspective in working outside his comfort zone with others. This man became involved in the outreach ministries of the church, in a steady, weekly practice of bringing extra food for the baskets at the doors, helping out with ongoing projects that came up in the community, getting to know some of the

specific needs he could address with the resources he had. It wasn't overtly dramatic and you wouldn't have known the change in him unless you knew him pretty well.

But those who did know him saw the difference, and it affected them as well. He never pointed to himself as a hero, just a servant, doing what he could do to help others. And this is what the eulogy for him was all about; a person, who through charitable work, an open heart and generous giving, made a difference. That's how he was remembered.

Well, this story affected my friend so much that he himself decided to change *his* life, to dedicate a significant portion of time and energy toward charitable work, helping a small corner of this world to be a better place- to make a difference, and thus in the end, to be remembered for more than just and bringing in a paycheck and doing his job.

Life doesn't go on forever for any of us, and the sooner we get headed in the right direction, the better.

It wasn't a bolt of lightning that stuck and changed this man (whose name I don't even know); it wasn't a 'Damascus Road' experience like what happened to the Apostle Paul, with Jesus' heavenly voice booming down from heaven, turning his life around. Rather, in using Paul's words for us today, it was a much more fundamental recognition of the treasure that we have in these 'clay jars' we live in – our mortal, vulnerable and temporary bodies, that we can somehow recognize that the gifts we have to share are intended to reach out beyond our own needs to the needs of others, for today and tomorrow.

The subject that Paul addressed in his second letter to young Christians in Corinth was his own experience as a servant. He made it clear to these friends that he believed that the source of his ability to articulate the gospel was not found in himself. The credit goes to God and to God alone. "We have this treasure, in earthen vessels, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us."

For the apostle Paul, the recognition of his own mortal weakness was always an opportunity for God to work through him.

That God was always able to accomplish through him more than he ever thought possible gave him hope and courage to try more than he ever would have on his own. That he wasn't the one responsible for coming up with great ideas to serve was for Paul a relief. All he had to do was what was asked. It wasn't always easy, by a long shot, but it was in the carrying out of the mission that he was rewarded. He didn't need to reach the goal line to know of his success. Every deed counted. It is the same for us.

The 'living treasures' that we recognize in others who came before us or whose current lives we admire are made of the same stuff as us; flesh and bones, clay and spirit. The key is just one thing, which we can all possess, if we really want. That one thing is willingness. Our lives are already treasures given us by God. Of that we can be totally sure. We have more gifts to share than we are aware, and God has more ways for us to use them than we can imagine.

Today we gather as saints in waiting, servants of God, looking for what God has in store for us. Each of us comes with a question; about this week to come, about our health, our work, our hopes, our dreams; what the next day might bring; its challenges and its opportunities.

Right now, our hands are empty. Right now- we wait with open hearts for God's word to us, for a need we can fill, a gift we can share, a person we can help,... somehow.

This is the day when we remember the gifts given to us, whatever they may be, that turned our lives around. It's important to take a few moments today to remember those gone before you and those special gifts they shared. And it's even more important, then,

to follow in step to help make someone else's tomorrow better than their life is today.

Today we open our lives to what God has in store for us all. And the way we do that is to open our hands, and our lives, and place it all in God's hands. It's a transaction in process, nowhere better enacted than at this table.

Today, in the gift of the Lord's Supper, with open hands we'll receive the gift God has in store for us.

With faith, we'll be given our answer; just what we need, and more, and it will come in how we are all incredibly loved by God, and equipped, more than we know, to serve as saints of God, called by the grace of Jesus Christ, who gives us all we ever need, and more. Thanks be to God. Amen.