



ANNUAL REPORT

2020 – 2021

Let Freedom Ring Foundation

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



As we close the two previous fiscal years and enter 2022, we want to sincerely thank you for being there for us through one of the most difficult times in our history. In addition to the pandemic, there were months of political and social unrest with protests across the nation and around the world. You were there with us, and for us, through it all and helped us to keep moving forward. We remained focused and continued to work with the members of the First Baptist Church and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to collect artifacts that help tell the story of one of the most historically significant African American churches in the country.

An early breakfast meeting in March 2020 with the President of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation led us to investigate the church's first permanent location on South Nassau Street with early results that we could not have imagined. The discovery of more than 12,000 artifacts; at least 30 intact burials; and the original foundations of the 1818 and 1856 buildings on the site can only be described as unexpected and unimagined blessings for the church and the Greater Williamsburg community. This project has renewed our faith in being able to tell a more complete story of the enslaved and free African-Americans who lived, worked and worshiped here in the earliest days of our country.

The excavation conducted by the Colonial Williamsburg archaeologists, which began in September 2020, has all of America focused on what we now believe is one of the most historically significant projects in the country. It has proven to be an extremely busy time for our young Foundation. Through it all, we have realized an amazing benefit - this endeavor has served to bring our community together to acknowledge, understand, and explore our shared history.

We could not have done this without your generous support of our mission. Thank you again and please stay with us on this journey!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Connie M. Harshaw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Connie" and the last name "Harshaw" clearly legible.

Connie Matthews Harshaw
President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Foundation began in 2018 with fifteen (15) directors; eight (8) elected from the First Baptist Church and seven (7) directors from the community. In 2019, the Board expanded to include two (2) additional voting members, three (3) non-voting honorary members and an advisory panel. The current Board of Directors consists of nine (9) elected directors from the First Baptist Church and eight (8) directors appointed from the community, for a total of seventeen (17).

Officers

Connie Matthews Harshaw (*Elected*)
President

Ronald J. Monark (*Appointed*)
Vice President

Jeanne Zeidler (*Appointed*)
Secretary

Donald C. Hill (*Elected*)
Treasurer

Directors

Jody L. Allen, Ph.D. (*Appointed*)

Robert (Bobby) Braxton (*Elected*)

Nathaniel Brown (*Elected*)

Martine Charles (*Appointed*)

Rev. Julie Grace (*Elected*)

Rev. Juanita Graham (*Elected*)

Gianfranco Grande (*Appointed*)

Michael (Mike) Holtzman (*Appointed*)

Barbara Hamm Lee (*Appointed*)

Senator T. Montgomery (Monty) Mason, 1st District Virginia (*Appointed*)

George A. E. Sledd, Sr. (*Elected*)

William Turner (*Elected*)

Chynita Turner-Pryor (*Elected*)

Honorary Members

Amiah Brown

Xavier Jordan

Liz Montgomery

TO OUR SUPPORTERS

2020 Program Highlights

- Reached an agreement with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to initiate Phase I of an archaeology project to investigate the church's first permanent location on South Nassau Street in Colonial Williamsburg
- In partnership with William & Mary and Jamestown Rediscovery, Colonial Williamsburg's archaeologists scanned the South Nassau Street site using ground-penetrating radar to identify features, including the foundation of the 1856 church
- Formed the First Baptist Church Nassau Street Steering Committee, with more than 25 members of the church and community to engage in community archaeology, which allows access by the descendant community and active participation in decision-making related to the exploration and interpretation of the site
- Colonial Williamsburg broke ground and removed the foliage and a portion of a parking lot constructed in the late 20th century that covered part of the South Nassau Street site
- Hosted a prayer vigil at the groundbreaking for Phase I with the First Baptist Church, Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra and members of the community
- Worked with descendant community in understanding and communicating all of the work being done by the archaeologists on Phase I of site excavation
- Met with the archaeologists to understand and communicate the information on the number and types of artifacts found during Phase I

The project's initial goal was "to determine if any undisturbed archaeological deposits remain on the property that have the potential to help interpret the property's use by the Church." Phase I research, including the excavation, and partner and community engagement were funded entirely through donor support provided to the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.¹ There were over 12,000 individual artifacts including an inkwell, pottery fragments, glass bottles, architectural materials, and personal items found at the site.

¹This project has garnered nearly \$3 million in support, including \$2.5 million from the Lilly Endowment Inc., \$250,000 from the Ford Foundation, \$100,000 from the Richard S. Reynolds Foundation and \$100,000 from the Two Friends of History, as well as numerous gifts from other generous donors to the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

2021 Program Highlights

- Phase II - the second phase of excavation project began in January 2021
- The Foundation and First Baptist Church descendants were featured as “Change Makers” on the NBC Today Show during Black History Month.
- Featured on Colonial Williamsburg’s first monthly virtual conversation series, *US: Past, Present, Future* which explores the intersection of current events, our shared history and the enduring promises of America for discussion on the MEANING OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION.
- Partnered with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and the City of Williamsburg to dedicate the Gowan Pamphlet Historical Marker at the intersection of Nassau and Scotland Streets, a symbolic representation of the place where the church’s past and present connect
- Hosted the first of several meetings with the descendant community to develop a plan of action for artifacts and more than 30 intact burial sites that were discovered by the archaeologists in Phase II
- Met with the History Ministry of First Baptist Church and the Institute of Human Biology at William & Mary to inspect human remains found at the Nassau Street site
- Met with the descendants to discuss how to memorialize the ancestors and/or burial ground
- Partnered with Colonial Williamsburg and William & Mary to produce the 2021 Black History program on the Bray School Initiative. Accepted seat on the Bray School Advisory Council
- Participated in the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation’s 2021 Black History Program
- Worked with Colonial Williamsburg, William & Mary, and members of the First Baptist Church descendants to record their oral histories
- Served on the planning committee for the annual Juneteenth Celebration, which featured “Honor and Reflection,” a contemplative multimedia installation at the church’s excavation site on Nassau Street
- Completed the NOVA PBS taping of “Buried History: The First Baptist Church” that aired on WHRO-TV
- Partnered with Real People Educating Others (RPEO) and the 757 Giveback Committee to support their “Back to School” event

- Awarded scholarships awards to Ashley L. Bostic of Yorktown and General Maximus XO of Williamsburg
- Volunteered to work with a team of descendants to identify photographs in the Albert Durant Photography Collection at the John D. Rockefeller Library
- Completed 95% of the work on the LFR Artifacts Database
- Partnered with the Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra and Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to present the Historic First Baptist Church 245th Anniversary Celebration on the lawn of the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg
- Completed production and premiered “History Half Told is UnTold” at the Hennage Theater of the Art Museums of Williamsburg
- WHRO TV aired “History Half Told is UnTold”
- Held private screening of “History Half Told is UnTold” for HBCU-GO.TV; Bruton Parish; St. Martin’s Episcopal Church; and Two Rivers Country Club
- Received competitive matching grant in the amount of \$100K from the National Fund for Sacred Places to support Phase I Capital Improvements for First Baptist Church
- Held Fall Gala - the Foundation’s first fundraiser with more than 460 donors and guests, featuring celebrities Danny Glover and Jennifer Holliday
- Applied for \$50K “Telling the Full History Preservation Fund Grant” from the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Launched Phase I of the First Baptist Church’s Capital Improvements Project with church trustees and Stemmann and Pease Architectural Firm

Financial Highlights

The Board voted to suspend all fundraising activities for the year 2020 due to the pandemic and maintained operations with existing and carryover funds from 2019. We opened 2021 with a fundraising goal of \$100K to provide direct support to the First Baptist Church for planned capital improvements and applied for a matching grant funded by the Home for Sacred Places. There were 300 letters of interest submitted with only 30 invited to apply. The Foundation, one of only 15 invitees, received notice of award on October 20, 2021. In addition to the Foundation, other National Fund participants for the 2021-22 program year were:

- Amana Church Society (Middle Amana, IA)
- Arch Street United Methodist Church (Philadelphia, PA)
- Calvary United Methodist Church (Philadelphia, PA)
- First Christian Church (Columbus, IN)

- First Indian Presbyterian Church (Kamiah, ID)
- First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh, PA)
- Grace Episcopal Church (Newton Corner, MA)
- Mount Zion UMC (Washington DC)
- Sacred Heart Parish (El Paso, TX)
- St. Stephen United Methodist Church (Mesquite, TX)
- St. Ann & the Holy Trinity Church (Brooklyn, NY)
- St. John's Lafayette Square (Washington, DC)
- Tabernacle Baptist Church (Beaufort, SC)
- Washington National Cathedral (Washington, DC)

A second grant application for \$50K was submitted for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Telling the Full History Preservation Fund. The application period closed on December 15, 2021 with an expected award date in March 2022. The Foundation will continue applying for grants to support major capital improvement projects, to develop educational programs for the community, and to redesign and update 19th, 20th, and 21st century exhibits at the church.

The Foundation received more than \$33K in cash and in-kind donations from its community partners to fund the October premier of "History Half Told is UnTold" and the 245th anniversary celebration of the Historic First Baptist Church. A record level of support and funding for the Fall Gala was provided by individuals, philanthropists, and corporations. There were more than 460 attendees with an estimated \$125K in donations. We are happy to report that we exceeded our fundraising goals for 2021.

Our mission is to collect, protect, and preserve the building, objects, landscapes and artifacts of the Historic First Baptist Church organized in 1776 and to work with our partners in the community to educate and share African American history in Williamsburg.

Operating Highlights

There were several operating challenges in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. All Board meetings were held virtually. There were more than 25 interviews conducted on the important work being done to uncover history at the Nassau Street site. Local, national and international press and media outlets completed interviews via Zoom, MStTeams or telephone. The skills gap for all of the Directors was addressed with training in software applications that contributed

to the efficiency of virtual meetings. In-person tours at the church were cancelled. The Let Freedom Ring Foundation website had to be expanded in order to meet the public's demand for information on the Foundation.

All production activities for the NBC Today Show and NOVA PBS were conducted outside in the parking lot of the church or at the excavation site. The Gowan Pamphlet Historical Marker dedication, originally scheduled for February, was postponed until April due to weather and to ensure strict adherence to Virginia Department of Health and Center for Disease Control guidelines for social distancing. With limited access to the church building, the plans for a scanning event to collect and inspect artifacts was postponed until 2022.

In spite of the challenges, the Board accomplished many of our program goals and initiatives for both years and elected two new Directors. This could not have been done without the hard work of each of the directors and support from our community partners.

The Way Forward

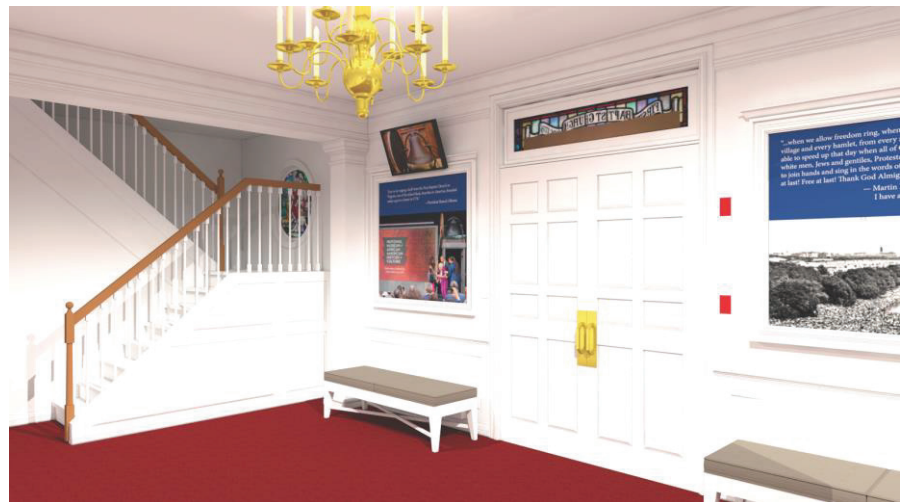
In 2022, the Foundation plans to continue its work with partners to collect, document, preserve and present a more complete story of the African American experience in Williamsburg. With funding provided by the Home for Sacred Places grant, we will work with the architects and trustees of the church to make urgent, and long overdue, repairs to the Scotland Street church building.

If approved for the 'Telling the Full History Preservation Fund Grant,' we will work with First Baptist Church's History Ministry and a team of designers, architects and historians to complete and install re-designed contemporary displays and exhibition spaces in order to share the church's history and to improve the visitor experience. The Foundation plans to use several previously-submitted renderings to update the plans for improving the space. Once the designs are chosen, a preliminary budget proposal will be prepared and presented to the congregation for a vote. The financial support provided by the Foundation will be included in the budget proposal. If the congregation votes to proceed, detailed architectural drawings will be completed with graphics and images. The designs will be circulated for competitive pricing and a contractor selected in order to complete the project by 2023.

The following renderings were provided to the Foundation in 2019, but fundraising for the project was halted due to COVID. The work is scheduled to resume in 2022 with a targeted completion date of December 2023.



A view of re-designed entryway that is ADA accessible



A re-imagined vestibule with digital displays of history and information for tours



Artist rendering of re-designed vestibule of First Baptist Church



Museum quality exhibit featuring contemporary photos and Nassau Street artifacts



Artist rendering of re-designed vestibule of First Baptist Church – Shoebox View



Improved meeting space with enhanced audio-visual capability for church and community groups

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Although the Foundation suspended fundraising in 2020, all program goals and initiatives for the year were met. We stabilized the Foundation's increased demand for administrative support and voted to promote the Administrative Assistant to the position of Executive Director, increasing the fee amount and number of part-time hours worked. We updated both the Let Freedom Ring and First Baptist Church websites with funding provided by a private donor. We acquired all of the data and content of the 2016 Let Freedom Ring Challenge public service announcements, which will be incorporated in program design in 2023, at no cost to the Foundation.

In 2021 we resumed fundraising and worked with our partners to develop and present programs for Black History Month and Juneteenth. We partnered with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; William and Mary; the City of Williamsburg; and several community organizations to design and present an annual Juneteenth celebration. The total income for 2021 increased from \$120K in 2020 to \$378K in 2021, an increase of \$258K. Board contributions increased from \$15K in 2020 to \$113K in 2021, an increase of \$98K. Corporate, business and individual contributions increased from \$104K in 2020 to \$159K in 2021, an increase of \$55K. There were no grants awarded in 2020. In 2021 the Foundation was awarded the Home for Sacred Places grant in the amount of \$105K² and a small grant from Fidelity in the amount of \$1K.

In 2020 Board contributions were used to fund the administrative support and basic operating costs. All unfunded program initiatives were suspended in 2020, with the exception of costs to complete the Foundation's mini-documentary, "History Half Told is UnTold." The final costs were shared with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and the film was delivered in August 2021.

Total expenses increased from \$99K in 2020 to \$246K in 2021. The \$147K increase was due to funding required for the final phase of filming in 2021 and expenses for the 2021 Fall Gala. We closed both years with a positive balance and will resume an aggressive fundraising campaign in 2022.

² Note: Grant awarded Oct 20 2021, funds scheduled for disbursement during 2022.

	Actual 2020	Actual 2021
Income		
Board Member Contributions	\$ 15,195.40	\$112,934.88
Corporate, Business and Individual Donations	\$104,471.80	\$158,714.86
Grants	-	\$106,000.00
Total Income	\$120,087.82	\$377,751.41
Expenses		
Insurance	\$ 1,085.00	\$ 1,081.00
Administrative Support	\$ 11,751.50	\$ 23,577.00
General Operating Expenses	\$ 2,225.53	\$ 23,121.00
Donations to FBC	-	\$ 33,414.86
Awards and Scholarships	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,030.89
Marketing/Development Contract Services	\$ 81,100.00	\$159,934.20
Printing	\$ 195.00	\$ 2,539.87
Total Expenses	\$ 99,357.03	\$245,698.82

In December 2021, the Foundation submitted the following applications letters of interest (LOI) and will continue to explore opportunities for both Federal and state grants:

Name of Grant	Amount Request
National Trust for Historic Preservation - African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund Grant	\$150,000.00

OUR DONORS



Alexis Swann, President of Towne Bank of the Virginia Peninsula/Williamsburg area presents donation to Let Freedom Ring Foundation at the First Baptist Church

\$ 50,000 and above

- National Fund for Sacred Places
- Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

\$ 5,000 - \$49,999

- LFR Board of Directors
- Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra*
- MARC Global Communications*
- Two Friends of History
- Connie Matthews Harshaw
- J. Michael Harshaw
- Barbara Hamm Lee*
- Senator Mamie E. Locke

\$ 500 - \$ 4,999

- Jaime Alemán, Former Ambassador of the Republic of Panama to the United States
- Jody Allen, Ph.D.
- Martha McCartney and Carl Aschman
- Gilbert and Polly Bartlett
- R. Wesley and Betty Batten
- Lawrence and Francina Bell
- Bellwether Strategies, Inc.
- Hazel and Bobby Braxton
- Clifton and Karen Ness Brigham
- Nathaniel and Betty Brown
- Edith and Floyd Bundy
- Olger Dewey Burch, III
- Sandy Carter
- City of Williamsburg
- Compass Wealth Strategies
- Opelene Davis
- Rev. Dr. Reginald F. and Myrlene Davis
- John Dunn and Sharon Wood-Dunn
- Rex M. Ellis, Ed.D*
- Barry and Doris Fortney
- Rodney and Valeria Brett Gardner
- Rev. Julie Grace
- Granger Leadership Practice, LLC
- Gregory and Chae Haile
- Sharing Info, LLC
- Nathan and Laura Hill
- Michael Holtzman
- Kathy and Bruce Hornsby
- Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation
- KRJ Consulting, LLC
- Le Cercle Charmant
- Cynthia Mabry-King
- Senator Monty Mason
- Ron and Deb Monark
- Carolyn Levern Morgan
- Fidelity Charitable
- S. Wood Wilson Associates
- George and Ernestine Sledd
- Carl and Martha Tack
- Towne Bank
- William Turner
- Chynita Turner-Pryor
- Village Bank
- Whiting's Funeral Home
- Williamsburg Landing
- Williamsburg Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
- Alfred and Diane Woods
- Jeanne Zeidler

Up to \$ 499

- Mark J. and Lynn D. Lyons
- Virginia African American Cultural Center
- Brandon and Shanail Allen
- Altmeyer Funeral Home
- Nathaniel and Diane Alvis
- Lestine Anderson
- John and Lorraine Anderson
- Nicole Angarella
- RoseLee Armistead
- Vincent Ashby
- Andre Ashe
- Carl and Delores Bagby
- David and Ann Barr
- Kerry Jane Baumann
- Pamela Baynard
- Rev. Charles Bell
- Ilona Birenbaum
- Brenda Black
- Helen Bowman
- Denise and Jerome Bridges
- Kathy Briggs
- Juanita Britton
- Ingrid Brown
- Isaac Brown
- Anna Brown
- William A. and Jacqueline F. Brown, Sr.
- Isabel Ware Burch
- Melody Burrell
- Dr. Aaron Butler
- Debra Butler
- Gene and Bernice Byrd
- Janice Canaday
- Thomas and TJ Cardwell
- Adrienne Carter
- Randolph Conner
- Alvene Conyers
- Judge Cressondra (Sandy) Conyers
- Elaine Crump
- Joan Crump
- Van and Tim Crump
- Marcia Dadds
- Bonnie Newman Davis
- Barry Doswell
- Brenda Fields
- First Baptist Church
- Joyce and Antonia Garner
- Audrey Gardner
- Jacquelyn Gardner
- Thomas and Cynthia Gillman
- Joann Gora and Eugene Budd
- Rev. Juanita Graham
- Greater Williamsburg Women's Association
- Patricia Griffith
- Jennifer Hailey
- Katina Harrold
- Barbara Harris
- Meghan Hatchett
- Donald and Davidlena Myers Hill
- Ethell Hill
- Laura Hill
- Greteta Holliday
- Robert Holmes
- Dave Holtgrieve
- Hazel Hopkins
- Min. Willie Mae Howard
- Benjamin Hundley
- Supervisor Jim Icenhour
- Iron-Bound Gym
- KD Jackson
- Melvin Jackson
- Alethea James
- Harris James
- Dr. Joyce Jarrett-Alewynse
- JF Global Enterprises, LLC
- Charlotte Johnson
- Elizabeth Johnson
- Navia Johnson
- Jennifer and Timothy Jones
- Christine Jordan
- K&J Mechanical, LLC
- Angelia Kane
- Martha Katz-Hyman
- Jean Kearney
- Dinnis and Cynthia King
- John D. and Linda Matthews King
- Nancy Kirkland
- Jon and Jan Krapfl
- Lynn Kuder
- Carol Jean and Paul Landry
- James and Debra Lee
- Maureen Elgersman Lee

- Thressa Lee
- Carolyn Lemon
- Ida Lewis
- Steven A. Lightfoot
- Anne Macon
- Carla and Samuel Malone
- Yancey McIntyre
- Dianne and William Mercer
- Liz and Al Montgomery
- Donald Moore
- Carolyn Moultrie
- Travis and Dawn Morris
- John and Teressa Murphy
- Walter Murray
- Teresa J. Myers
- New York Deli & Pizza
- Elizabeth Nicholson-Payton
- Oak Grove Baptist Church
- Nydia Ocasio-Gouraige and Richard Gallagher
- Melvin Palmer
- Deborah Parham
- Ann Parker
- Melvin A. Parker
- James M. Patterson
- Meredith M. and A. Joe Poole
- The Prescription Shoppe
- Charles W. Preston
- Cleo Preston
- Steve A. Prince
- Kym Rice
- Earlene Robinson
- Elizabeth Robinson
- Vernon T. and June M. Ross
- Debra and Dennis Ruffin
- Trish and Rick Ruscak
- Sterling Russell
- HB and Marian Shearin
- Rev. Dr. Thomas and Madeline Shields
- Sincere One DBA Pancake House
- Karen Schell
- Sheila Smalls
- Norbert F. Smith
- Ms. Shirley Smith
- Carlton Stockton
- James and Delores Stokes
- E. Roland Stubblefield
- Alexis Swann

- Cheryl Thacker
- Angela Tomlin
- Milton Trimblett
- Audrey Turner
- Regina Turner-Holmes
- Tony Turner
- Janice and Johnnie Underwood
- Lisa Vernon
- Virginia Walker
- Elizabeth Wallace
- Christopher Watkins
- Montgomery and Linda Watson
- Dennis and Catherine White
- James and Marie White
- John and Diane Williams
- Steve and Dionne Williams
- Edward and Cynthia Willner
- Clarence and Sue Wilson
- Marion Worrell

Note: **In Kind*

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO WAY THAT WE
COULD HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THE WORK
THAT WE HAVE OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS
WITHOUT YOU! THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR
YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT.

Looking Back at 2020



Prayer Vigil - Phase I of Nassau Street Archaeological Dig
Jeraldine Herbison, Composer; Rev. Reginald F. Davis, Pastor, First Baptist Church; Ronald Monark, President Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra; Rev. James Ingram, Colonial Williamsburg Gowan Pamphlet interpreter; Connie Matthews Harshaw, President, Let Freedom Ring Foundation; Rev. Chris Epperson, Bruton Parish Episcopal Church; Alvy Powell, Celebrity Baritone; and Cliff Fleet, President & CEO of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Also shown, Reginald Fox, Conductor and Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra String Ensemble.



Descendants Visit Nassau Street Excavation Site
James Jordan, Descendant; Liz Montgomery, Chair of FBC History Ministry; Deshondra Dandridge, Archaeology Team; Connie Matthews Harshaw, LFR President and Christine Jordan, Descendant.

Community Participation,
Community Involvement,
Community Commitment



First Baptist Church Nassau Street Steering Committee Meeting

Jack Gary, Director of Archaeology, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation updates the members of the Steering Committee and the Descendant Community on Phase I Plan.

Looking Back at 2021



First Baptist Church featured on the NBC Today Show

Craig Melvin interviewed Jack Gary, Archaeologist; Rev. Julie Grace, Descendant; and Connie Matthews Harshaw, LFR President during Black History Month 2021.



Washington Post Feature Article

Michael Ruane reports on the old coin and pile of pins found at the site, which prove significant in telling the story of African American life in Colonial Williamsburg.

1818 Brick Foundation Discovered

The Colonial Williamsburg Archaeologists announced the discovery of more than 30 intact burial sites and the foundation of the original place of worship at the Nassau Street site.





Completing the Story
 “History Half Told is UnTold” filming was completed with interviews of the Jesse Cole family relatives, Anne Geddy Cross and Vernon Geddy III by Barbara Hamm Lee.

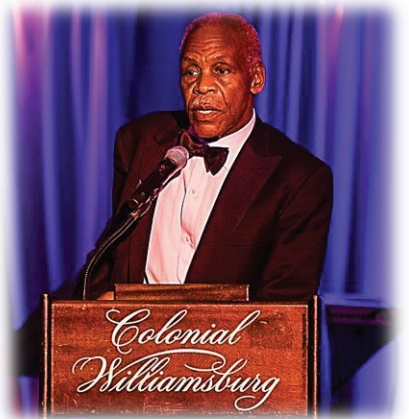
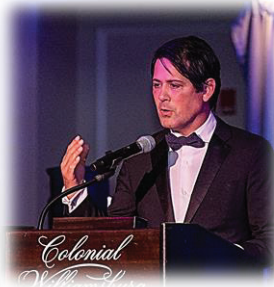
History Half Told is UnTold Premiers

The 59-minute mini-documentary premiered at the Hennage Theatre at the Art Museums of Williamsburg to sold-out audiences and received rave reviews. Several private screenings were held for members of the local faith community, HBCU-GO TV and other community partners.

The film was also shown on WHRO-TV, a Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) member television station licensed to both Hampton and Norfolk, Virginia, United States.

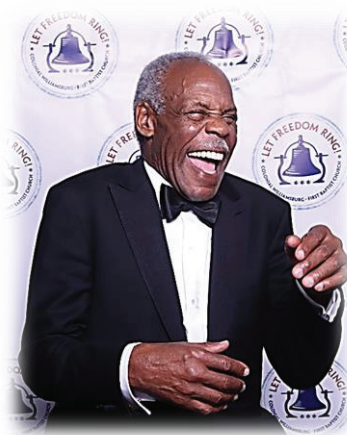


2021 Fall Gala



The Let Freedom Ring Foundation was honored to welcome more than 460 Guests to its first annual Fall Gala in November 2021.

A Very Successful "Friendraising and Fundraising" Event



Articles and Appearances

Date	Title	Author	Category
Nov 8, 2021	First Baptist Church descendants meet with experts, discuss future of historic burials found at dig site	Em Holter	Article
Nov 1, 2021	The Prayer Link	Wendy Griffith	Appearance
Oct 22, 2021	One of the First Black Churches in America Uncovered, but Why Was It Buried in the First Place?	Wendy Griffith	Appearance
Oct 8, 2021	Colonial-Era Black Church Discovered in VA	Najahe Sherman	Appearance
Oct 8, 2021	Historic Discovery: Scientists uncover remains of one of US oldest Black churches in Williamsburg	Eugene Daniel	Appearance
Oct 8, 2021	Church History Unearthed	Kara Dixon	Appearance
Oct 7, 2021	An old coin and a pile of pins	Michael E Ruane	Article
Oct 7, 2021	Historic discovery	Em Holder	Article
Oct 7, 2021	The remnants of one of the nation's oldest Black churches have just been found	Ben Finley	Article
Oct 5, 2021	Historic First Baptist Church announces month long 245th anniversary celebration	Em Holter	Article
Aug 1, 2021	WHRO Buried History: First Baptist Church	Lisa Godley	Appearance
Jul 21, 2021	21 Burial sites and possible 18th-century building found at Colonial Williamsburg site	Kara Dixon	Appearance
Jul 21, 2021	Colonial Williamsburg archaeologists uncover 21 graves at historic Black church site	WVEC TV	Appearance
Jul 16, 2021	21 grave shafts discovered at First Baptist Church archaeology site in Colonial Williamsburg	Abigail Adcox	Article
Jul 16, 2021	Archaeologists find more graves at lost Williamsburg African American cemetery	Michael E Ruane	Article
Jun 19, 2021	Historic African-American church hosts series of events to honor first official Juneteenth	Julio Avila	Appearance

Apr 25, 2021	Historic highway marker dedication honors local preacher and icon	Colonial Williamsburg, Nancy Sheppard	Appearance, Article
Apr 1, 2021	The Search to Recover a Storied Black Church	Braden Phillips	Article
Mar 24, 2021	'First Baptist has always been a beacon in the community'	Alex Perry	Article
Mar 11, 2021	Local Voices - Tide Radio	Andy Harris	Radio
Feb 24, 2021	Human remains found at archaeological dig of historic Black church	Michael E Ruane	Article
Feb 24, 2021	Human bone fragment identified at First Baptist Church archaeological dig site in Colonial Williamsburg	Alex Perry	Article
Feb 22, 2021	Colonial Williamsburg First Baptist Church Archaeology Project	Colonial Williamsburg	Appearance
Feb 22, 2021	Possible human bones discovered during historic Colonial Williamsburg dig	Philip Townsend	Appearance
Feb 15, 2021	NBC Today Show	Craig Melvin	Appearance
Feb 12, 2021	For the Common Good with Juanita Farrow	Juanita S Farrow	Appearance
Feb 5, 2021	Colonial Williamsburg archaeological project hopes to tell story of historic Black church	Kara Dixon	Appearance
Feb 3, 2021	The Sound of a Bell and the Whisper of History	Gianfranco Grande	Article
Feb 3, 2021	WTKR-TV3 - Public Service Announcement - Black History Month 2021	Barbara Ciara	Appearance
Jan 25, 2021	Voices of freedom continue to speak from Colonial Williamsburg church	Jeff Brumley	Article
Jan 23, 2021	Archaeologists proceed with second phase of CW's excavation of historic First Baptist Church	Alex Perry	Article
Jan 22, 2021	CW Presents US: Past, Present, Future - Freedom of Religion	Stacy Hernandez	Appearance
Jan 14, 2021	Nearly \$3 million to Colonial Williamsburg to support phase 2 research, interpretation at First Baptist Church	WAVY Web Staff	Article
Dec 21, 2020	Unearthing the Faithful Foundations of a Historic Black Church	Daniel Silliman	Article

Dec 19, 2020	Commission Votes to Remove Parking Spaces at Site of Church Dig	David Macaulay	Article
Dec 7, 2020	Burial Remains Uncovered at First Baptist Church Site in Colonial Williamsburg	Alex Perry	Article
Nov 26, 2020	The Quest to Unearth One of America's Oldest Black Churches	Angela Watercutter	Article
Nov 25, 2020	Graves Found at Site of Historic Black Church	Kwame Opam	Article
Nov 23, 2020	Here are the key findings so far in the excavation of the historic First Baptist Church of Williamsburg site	Annie Gallo	Article
Nov 23, 2020	Graves Found at Site of Historic Virginia Black Church	Michael E Ruane	Article
Nov 23, 2020	Evidence of Burials to be Identified and Will Help Learn Local Church's History	Julio Avila	Appearance
Nov 20, 2020	W&M Students learn from Black-led community organizations as interns	Jennifer L. Williams	Article
Nov 16, 2020	WVEC Interviews Harshaw and Gary	Philip Townsend	Appearance
Nov 16, 2020	Archaeologists in Colonial Williamsburg uncover more findings at First Baptist Church site as Phase 1 of the dig ends	Alex Perry	Article
Oct 15, 2020	One of America's First Black Churches is Being Excavated in Virginia	Isaac Schultz	Article
Oct 2, 2020	First Baptist foundations uncovered	Alex Perry	Article
Sep 27, 2020	Archaeologists dig to uncover one of America's first Black churches in Colonial Williamsburg	Jewel Wicker	Article
Sep 27, 2020	September 7 2020 Prayer Vigil	Colonial Williamsburg	Appearance
Sep 23, 2020	Because of them we can (BOTWC) Article	BOTWC Staff	Article
Sep 17, 2020	Beneath a Virginia parking lot rest the bones of an old Black church and, perhaps, its worshipers.	Michael E Ruane	Article
Sep 8, 2020	Colonial Williamsburg starts dig at site of historic Black church	Kara Dixon	Article
Sep 6, 2020	Vigil to be held by FBC church members	Julio Avila	Article

Aug 30, 2020	Excavation to Start Soon on Land Where African American Church Once Stood	Julio Avila	Appearance
Aug 27, 2020	Archaeologists Plan to Excavate Historic Church Site in Virginia	ARCHAEOLOGY Publication	Article
Aug 25, 2020	Archaeology project explores site of First Baptist Church's buildings dating back to the 19th century	Abigail Adcox	Article

In the coming year we will accelerate our efforts to collect and stabilize the church's artifacts. The inventory and database will be completed and shared on the Foundation's website. We will lead the descendant community in working with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to continue uncovering history and guide their participation in community archaeology activities, making sure that they continue

to have access to the site and serve as decision-makers on matters relating to the intact burials found on Nassau Street. With approval of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Telling the Full History Preservation Fund grant, work will begin immediately to examine options for



the redesign of the existing display and exhibition spaces at the church on Scotland Street, focusing on the contemporary history. Working with a team of professional designers, architects and historians, options will be presented to the church that will improve the visitor experience, beginning with a first phase in 2022. Working with the Earl Gregg Swem Library at William and Mary, we will complete the research and

develop written and historically accurate narratives for the display cases. A design team will use those ideas to create exhibits. When a final design is approved, exhibit cases with correct lighting and temperature controls will be constructed and wired with technology to give the individual a museum quality tour experience. A plan for the artifacts that are currently displayed at the Historic First Baptist Church in several locations in the church building will be developed by a professional team of historians and curators. These artifacts consist of furniture, documents, photos, record books, and Bibles. Many of these were brought from the 1856 Nassau Street brick church and excavation site, and will be digitized and shared with national and international audiences on the church and Foundation's websites.

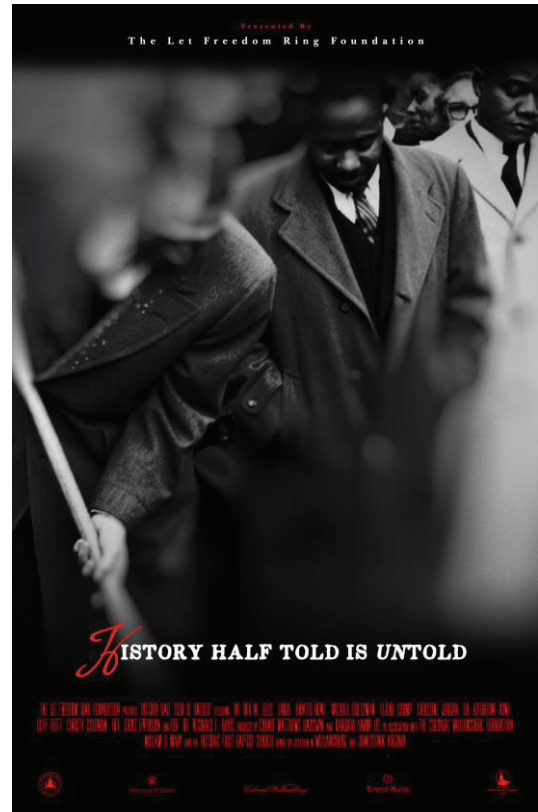
Looking Forward 2022

We will work with community and faith organizations to sponsor and present educational programs. We will share the Foundation's mini-documentary, "History Half Told is UnTold" with historians, researchers, educators and other members of the local school systems within the Greater Williamsburg area.

In 2022 our efforts will focus on programs designed to build interest and excitement in the youth segment of our communities. History must come alive for them and we have accepted the responsibility to work with our partners at the Village Initiative, Coming to the Table and William and Mary to produce and present opportunities to get them engaged as early as age 10.

Our interest and research on historic Black churches has provided us with opportunities to connect with other local and national churches to discover our shared history. We have initiated contact with several churches within, and outside of, the Greater Williamsburg area and will work with them to research and document the stories that, in many cases, intersect those of the Historic First Baptist Church.

Our work with the First Baptist Church trustees and Stemmann and Pease Architects of Williamsburg on Phase I of the Capital Improvements Plan for the church will continue with major repairs to the 1956 building beginning in the second quarter of 2022. The targeted completion date for all Phase I repairs funded by the Home for Sacred Places grant is March 2023.



GRATITUDE REPORT

Thank you for two of the strongest years, in terms of individual and corporate contributions. After 20 long months and still facing the effects of an historic pandemic, there is so much to be grateful for, but we know there is also more work to be done. We are a community united behind a common cause - to unfold our shared history and light our path forward.

As you consider organizations to support this year, please consider us. We would be so grateful if you continue your generous support for the important work that we are doing to tell a more complete story.

You may send your gift directly to us using the enclosed form and return envelope or, if you prefer, you may use our online donation website: <http://firstbaptistchurch1776.org/foundation-home/donate/>.

Please join the Let Freedom Ring Foundation as we continue to make history!
Your gift will make a meaningful difference as we continue to advance our mission.
We hope that we can count on your valued support at this time.

The Let Freedom Ring Foundation is a tax deductible 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with tax identification number 83-1053673

