

GABRIEL'S HORN



First Congregational United Church of Christ

February 2019



Let's Power Up with Power-bles!

Preaching and Sharing Series: The Parables of Luke
February 3 through March 3

In January, we were reminded of the Wonder Twins! And I know you are as excited as I am about activating your Super Powers! That is why I am excited to announce a wonderful preaching and sharing series we will be having from February 3 through March 3! For these five weeks, First Church will be providing teachings and reflections upon Jesus' parables. We hope you can join us!

So what is a parable? A teaching tool for Jesus. An extended metaphor. An opportunity for us to use our imagination and go back in time, and ask the big questions. What does a mustard seed look like? How did the prodigal son travel so far and wide? Where did that lost sheep go? How did the sower respond when his field yielded no fruit?

And after "the big questions," let us come together and truly reflect upon how these stories speak to us. When have we felt lost? What made the difference in feeling "found"? When was our mustard seed moment? What is the greater message that God is conveying to us? As they invite us into the story of the ancient world with these "big questions," they also call us personally and as a community to reflect upon the meaning of each parable. They demand us to see the parallels between the story and our own lives.

So, it my hope that our work with the parables will be a time of growing, learning and sharing. Each week, I will email the congregation some notes and some questions to help us get ready for Sunday. We will also create tie-ins with Sunday School and the children's moments.

We are also delighted to welcome three wonderful preachers to help us "Power Up." Bryan Nurnberger of Simply Smiles, Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss, and our own Rev. Pojen Lee will be providing the message on three Sundays.

We also hope that on February 24 and on March 3 two or three members could share their own reflections instead of a traditional sermon. If you would like to share, please reach out to me at mcferran.sam@gmail.com or 202-294-5437. We also plan to have "mustard seed" sharing as part of the potluck on March 3 with real mustard seeds!

(see page 2 for preaching schedule)

Power up with Power-bles Preaching Schedule:

<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Parable</u>	<u>Preacher</u>
February 3	Luke 15:3-7	The Lost Sheep	Bryan Nurnberger of Simply Smiles
February 10	Luke 15:11-32	The Prodigal Son	Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss
February 17	Luke 8:4-15	The Sower	Rev. Pojen Lee
February 24	Luke 18: 9-14	Publican and the Pharisee	Community members
March 3	Luke 13:18-19	The Mustard Seed	Community member

In grace and gratitude,
Rev. Sam McFerran



First Church Welcomes Bryan Nurnberger of *Simply Smiles* Sunday, February 3

We are delighted to welcome Bryan Nurnberger on February 3. He will provide both our sermon as well as a nurture about the important work Simply Smiles is doing in South Dakota and Mexico. We are delighted that our youth will be with Simply Smiles in South Dakota this Summer.

Bryan Nurnberger is the president and founder of Simply Smiles -- a Connecticut-based not-for-profit organization with program locations in Oaxaca [Wah-ha-ka], Mexico and on the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation in South Dakota.

Simply Smiles provides bright futures for children, families, and communities. The organization partners with populations in need to alleviate suffering, instill hope, remove obstacles, and help indigenous peoples to chart their own course to self-determination and a brighter future. He is delighted that the youth of First Church will be joining Simply Smiles at the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation this June.

In 2002, Bryan was injured while working as a mountain climbing guide. Recuperating in Mexico, he found a struggling orphanage where he offered to volunteer. The children he encountered there, who were Zapotec, Mixtec, Mije, and Chinanteco Indians, inspired him to create Simply Smiles.

Bryan grew up in the Naugatuck, Connecticut, Congregational Church. Upon hearing his stories from the orphanage, the congregation sprang into action filling a used school bus with donations, and blessing Simply Smiles' first major initiative - a 3,000 mile bus trip adventure from Connecticut to Mexico. Today, more than 5,000 UCC members support the work of Simply Smiles - including through service trip opportunities recognized and endorsed by the UCC national office.

In 2012, elders on the Cheyenne River Reservation gave Bryan the Lakota name "*Cante Waste Wicasa*", meaning *Kind-Hearted Man*.

In 2017, The Dakota Association of 13 Lakota UCC churches voted unanimously to partner with Simply Smiles, offering the organization 8 acres of their Reservation land.

Bryan lives with his wife, Kristen, in Southport, CT and splits his time between the Simply Smiles headquarters there, the organization's international and domestic program locations, and traveling the country sharing the work of Simply Smiles. Welcome Bryan!



February 10 Guest Preacher Amanda Hendler-Voss

On February 10 we are delighted to welcome Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss to provide us the message. Amanda is a seasoned leader in faith formation.

After serving as a founding Co-Pastor at Land of the Sky United Church of Christ in Asheville, NC for eight years, the Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss now spends her time writing, offering Spiritual Direction, and co-leading a clergy community of practice in the Potomac Association of the Central Atlantic Conference of the UCC. She lives, reads, gardens, and hikes in northern Virginia with her spouse,

Seth, and their two red-headed boys, Myles and Simon. She is also dear friend of our own, Rev. Susie Hayward. Welcome Amanda!

Art in Worship

By Meg Maguire

Who says you can't judge a book by its cover?

It is a snowy January day and we did not go to church. Instead, we have spent the day cleaning off desks and files in preparation for selling our house. One stack begged particular attention: the accumulated First Church Sunday bulletins I have kept for the past six years because the cover images are so beautiful, uplifting and provocative that I could not bear to throw them away.

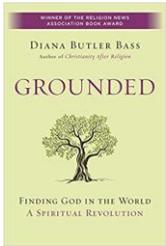


As I studied each image, I was moved by artistic depictions of our faith as experienced by different cultures and races: a delicate Japanese water color of the manger scene; a Middle Eastern Jesus leading a band of contemporary refugees with a child in his arms; a Black Jesus healing the sick; Chinese visions of the risen Christ; and inspiring scenes of baptism, flowing waters and nature that draw the eye towards the infinite. Other bulletins featured photographs: of our youth on their mission trip to West Virginia; children in Sunday School; a quote from Angela Davis; a Juneteenth celebration in 1900 in Austin, TX by six African Americans; women protesters; and periodically, our 150th logo: *Building a Just and Loving Community*.

The mundane act of relinquishing files to recycling became a meditation on our church's love, hope, and joy for each other, the wider world and the earth as we try to follow Our Brother Jesus.

So yes, you can judge First Church by its covers.

The first conversation will be focused on reflection of our identity, while the second will focus on hidden bias. Together, we hope to grow and learn so we can become a stronger community. If you have any questions, please feel reach out to Lynaya at lynaya.morris@gmail.com or Sam at mcferran.sam@gmail.com



Theology Reading Group February 5 at 6:30 PM

The Theology Reading Group will meet next on Tuesday, February 5, at 6:30 PM, to discuss Diana Butler Bass, Grounded: Finding God in the World. Phyllis Tickle described Grounded as “almost an anthem to the sacred unity of the physical and the spiritual in the formation of human faith and in the maturation of the human soul.” Everyone is welcome.

Social Action and Awareness Commission

Social Action Organizing Training: Organizing for the WIN Workshop

The Potomac Association Justice and Witness Committee is offering UCC clergy, members, and friends the opportunity to receive free social action organizing training. The training is being provided through Faith in Action's "Organizing for the 'WIN' Workshop" on Friday, February 8 (8:30 to 4:00) and Saturday, February 9 (8:30 to 3:00). The training will be at First Congregational UCC, 945 G Street, NW, Washington, DC - just a short walk from either Gallery Place or Metro Center Metro stops. Complimentary Continental Meals will also be provided. Come learn the basics and make an impact. Equip yourself, your community, or your organization, with the capacity, skills, and tools to advocate for Justice.

Register at: [HTTPS://ACTIONNETWORK.ORG/EVENTS/BUILDING-POWER-ORGANIZING-OR-THE-WIN](https://actionnetwork.org/events/building-power-organizing-or-the-win)

Care of Parish Commission

Coffee Hour Hosts

February 3	Jamey Moore	Gail Sonnemann	Amy Dugan	
February 10	Jean Alexander	Bruce Hanson	Faith Brightbill	Nan McConnell
February 17	Anisa Heming	Courtney McCaffrey	Tom McCaffrey	
February 24	Joey Meyer	Mike Zawada	Andrew Hamilton	

Please note that there will not be a potluck luncheon in February.



Church Directory Update

If your contact information (name, address, phone number, email) has changed recently, please send your updated information to the church office at churchoffice@firstuccdc.org. If you're new to the congregation (member or friend), please send us your contact information and a picture so we may include you in the directory. The directory is not published on the website or shared with anyone.

Calendar

Sunday, February 3

- 9:15 am Bible Workbench
- 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*
- 10:15 am Child Care provided, *Ed. Suite*
- 10:30 am Sunday School, *Ed. Suite*
- 10:30 am Morning Worship, *Sanctuary*
Bryan Nurnberger preaching
- 11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*
- 12:00 pm Adult Nurture, *Comm. Hall*

Monday, February 4

- 6:00 pm Downtown Drop-In Center
for Homeless Youth
- 6:30 pm Sanctuary Task Force, *Comm. Hall*

Tuesday, February 5

- 6:30 pm Theology Reading Group,
Living Room

Wednesday, February 6

- 12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

Thursday, February 7

- 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

Friday, February 8

- 8:30 am Social Action Training, *Comm. Hall*

Saturday, February 9

- 8:30 am Social Action Training, *Comm. Hall*

Sunday, February 10

- 9:15 am Bible Workbench
- 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*
- 10:15 am Child Care provided, *Ed. Suite*
- 10:30 am Sunday School, *Ed. Suite*
- 10:30 am Morning Worship, *Sanctuary*
Amanda Hendler-Voss preaching
- 11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*
- 12:00 pm Adult Nurture: Musical Improvisation,
Community Hall
- 1:00 pm Young Adults Meet-up

Monday, February 11

- 6:00 pm Downtown Drop-In Center
for Homeless Youth

Tuesday, February 12

- 6:30 pm Church Council,
Community Hall

Wednesday, February 13

- 12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

Thursday, February 14

- 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

Sunday, February 17

- 9:15 am Bible Workbench
- 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*
- 10:15 am Child Care provided, *Ed. Suite*
- 10:30 am Sunday School, *Ed. Suite*
- 10:30 am Morning Worship, *Sanctuary*
Pojen Lee preaching
- 11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*

Tuesday, February 19

- Church Office Closed
(President's Day observed)

Wednesday, February 20

- 12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

Thursday, February 21

- 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

Sunday, February 24

- 9:15 am Bible Workbench
- 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*
- 10:15 am Child Care provided, *Ed. Suite*
- 10:30 am Sunday School, *Ed. Suite*
- 10:30 am Morning Worship, *Sanctuary*
- 11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*

Monday, February 25

- 6:00 pm Downtown Drop-In Center
for Homeless Youth

Tuesday, February 26

- Church Office Closed

Wednesday, February 27

- 12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

Thursday, February 28

- 6:30 pm Outreach & Membership, *Chapel*
- 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

Live!

Coming up...

at 10th & G

Check the Live! at 10th & G Facebook page for more information:
<https://www.facebook.com/liveat10thandg/>



Washington Bach Consort presents *Virtuosity and Innovation*, February 2 at 7:00 pm. Madrigals originated in Italy and were in some ways the pop music of their day. Composers, including Monteverdi, wrote these animated and often daring compositions for two to eight voices, drawing from secular subject matter and texts. Thanks to traveling musicians, madrigals, with their dramatic word-painting and verve, spread throughout Europe. [\\$10-35.](#)

13 | THE THIRTEEN

The Thirteen presents *a word too small: love*, February 9 at 7:30 pm. Inspired by the art song tradition, The Thirteen sings music of the heart in this intimate concert featuring eight soloists and piano. Join The Thirteen for an evening of works by Johannes Brahms, Samuel Barber, Daniel Elder and more. \$15-30.



4D Productions presents *Stories and Songs*, February 23 at 7:30 pm. Standup comic Zoran Kesic is a TV presenter and talk-show host. He has worked on talk/sketch shows Fajront Republika (The Closing-Time Republic) and 24 minuta sa Zoranom Kesićem (24 minutes with Zoran Kesić). \$45.



Heritage Signature Chorale presents *Women's Works 2*, March 16 at 7:30 pm. Songs of African-American Women Composers. The Heritage Signature Chorale is committed to preserving, at the highest possible level, the performance tradition of African-American choral music, especially the Negro Spiritual; to elevating the African-American singer and composer in all musical genres; and to bringing a unique interpretation of classical music from America, Europe and other regions of the world. \$25.



Morehouse College Glee Club, March 22 at noon. Presented by the D.C. Library. The Glee Club was founded in 1911 and is the official choral group of Morehouse College. It has a long tradition of significant public appearances. Free.



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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Minister of Faith Formation – Rev. Sam McFerran
Director of Music – Mr. John Horman
Building Manager – Mr. Byron Adams
Administrative Assistant – Ms. Cindy Dobbs
Members in Discernment – Dwight Davis, Lynaya Morris
Nursery & Childcare Staff – Luis Murillo, Timur Murillo, Ziyah Holman, Mia Young

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