

# GABRIEL'S HORN

First Congregational United Church of Christ

June 2019



What a delicious feeling it was, as a child, when the dismissal bell rang on the last day of school before summer vacation. More than two months beckoned without the annoyance of quizzes, tests and homework. It was time to play sports, swim, maybe go on vacation with the family, and just plain relax. There is no more promising time for the young child than the beginning of summer vacation.

Alas, for me and most of those reading this letter, the days of months-long summer vacations are long gone; for grownups work tends to be a year-round affair. Yet summer, especially in the muggy environment of the Washington area, is still a time of reduced pace, and I still love it. For me, nothing says "summer in DC" more than the image of sitting into

the evening, on a deck or patio or porch, or perhaps at an outdoor café, talking with family and friends. I have lived in the Washington area for more than 35 years, and this has been the dominant image of Washington in the summer for me throughout that time.

A few weeks ago, on May 19, I had a delightful precursor of summer when I attended an evening potluck for the First Church Choir, hosted by John and Carolyn Marsh. The occasion was the fifth anniversary of the start of service at First Church of John Horman, our gifted and devoted Director of Music. The weather was warm and a bit muggy; it surely felt like summer in Washington. There was a little music, provided by John on the piano and by Katie Koza on violin. And people just seemed to delight in being together! There were many conversations going simultaneously, on chairs and at tables spread over the deck and porch. And people seemed reluctant to leave when it was time for the evening to end.

In my brief time so far at First Church, I have been deeply impressed by the level of fellowship within the congregation. People seem genuinely grateful, every Sunday morning, to be together in the worship space, and to spend time talking, catching up with one another, during the coffee hour after the services. Maybe we could use the summer to find a few more opportunities for not only the choir, but the full congregation, to get together just for the sake of being together and socializing? This is a little difficult, given the relatively large geographic area over which we're all spread, but the event for the choir shows that it can work. I've already had some expressions of enthusiasm for this idea. Let's try to make one or two evenings, just for being together, happen over the course of the summer.

And by all means, may everyone's summer "slow-down" this year be a source of happiness and rejuvenation.

Blessings,

Mike

Dear Friends,

Jean Alexander's beloved husband and our dear friend, Bruce Hanson, passed away peacefully on **Thursday, May 16**. He had gotten quite sick just before Christmas. Jean is so grateful for the love and support offered by the Church these last few months. We are planning a memorial service for Bruce at First Church on **Saturday, June 15 at 11:00 AM**.

As some of you know, Bruce's roots in the UCC and First Church are deep. He served as an Associate Pastor in the early 1960s. In this capacity, he preached and led worship. He also helped form a Young Adults group, responsible for bringing amazing young adults like Jennie Hunt, Bob Crossley, and Peg Lorenz into the life of the church. Bruce was a Civil Rights Leader, serving the National Council of Churches and helping lead Freedom Summer in Mississippi, alongside Bob Moses.

We all have wonderful memories of Bruce. Our youth maybe remember when he and Peg shared what it was like to be at First Church during Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's March on Washington. Most of us know Bruce by his genuine smile, love of people, and gratitude for everything big and small.

We will continue to lead our lives boldly, kindly, and gently, inspired by Bruce's life, spirit and discipleship.

We will hold dear Jean in our prayers and hearts as she grieves during this time. We are grateful to be the church, a community that cares for one another, and knows that even after death, God continues to hold us, bless us, and love us.

In love and gratitude,

Rev. Mike and Rev. Sam

## Church Council

**Council met on May 7, 2019.** Mike Durst, Interim Minister, reported progress in understanding worship and getting used to how First Church operates. He thanked all for assistance. Sam McFerran, Minister of Faith Formation, reports that Faith Formation Sunday is June 2, and Pentecost June 9 is also Pride Sunday.

The **Called Pastor Search** Planning Group (Kim Darling, Lucille Dickinson, and Gail Sonnemann) reported that First Church representatives will meet with Conference Minister Freeman Palmer and Potomac Association Minister Marvin Silver on May 8 to offer advice and answer questions. The conference minister confirmed that First church can move forward with updating the church profile before the search committee is formed. The plan is to identify a Called Pastor Search Committee for approval at the fall congregational meeting.

Council approved the formation of a **Ministerial Advisory Group**, a voluntary group of clergy from the congregation both ordained and in discernment to act as a sounding board and resource for the Interim Minister and Minister of Faith Formation and the congregation. Moderator Nan McConnell will invite clergy to join the group, which will operate for one year, and after evaluation continue as needed.

**Budget:** Treasurer Nora Marsh's preliminary financial report through April showed revenue up \$5160 over last year at the same time. Council approved for vote by the congregation the budget adjustments recommended by the Finance Commission to balance the 2019 budget. Adjustments include decreased budget line items as recommended by commissions and staff, unexpected HVAC repair/software update expenses, increased pledges, and a request for \$2000 increase in rental income.

Sasha Bruce Youthwork has asked First Church to host a second weekly **Youth Drop-In Center** (YDIC) night. The Social Action and Awareness Commission examined feasibility and recommended that First Church is not ready to host a second night for the following reasons: 1) increased costs, as well as lost rental opportunity, 2) lack of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between First Church and Sasha Bruce Youthwork for operation of the center, and 3) staff transition this year. Council concurred, and decided to bring a request to the congregation to affirm the existing YDIC one night per week, and to revisit the idea of second night at a later date after concerns have been addressed.

Former First church associate minister Ron Hopson met with Council to share ideas about what a commitment to be a **Multiracial/Multicultural** church might look like at First Church. The following conclusions came out of discussion

- We, First Church, are a community on a journey in "conversion" mode
- Conversion is an ongoing process, not an end, and many points of entry are needed for the process
- We want to allow more perspectives into our community
- We have more to do and each one of us is crucial to the journey

The next Council Meeting is on June 4, 2019

UPDATES from the Spring Congregational Meeting, held on May 19, 2019.

- The Congregation approved 2019 budget adjustments brought by Council which will balance the 2019 budget.
- The Congregation voted to affirm the First Church social action program, the Youth Drop-In Center for youth at risk of homelessness held on Monday nights in the First Church narthex in collaboration with Sasha Bruce Youthwork.
- Mike Durst Interim Minister encouraged the congregation to think about holding potlucks with no agenda, in order to get closer as a community.

## Care of Parish Commission



### June Potluck Luncheon on June 2

Be sure to join us after worship on Sunday, June 2, for our monthly potluck luncheon. The theme this month is "foods from your childhood." All are welcome!

# Nominating Committee

## Please Consider Volunteering Time

The ministry of the church is carried out in large part through our volunteer time. Some of the commissions could still use more members or informal volunteers, especially for discrete projects. (All commissions probably would welcome more resources, but to highlight a couple: Worship has few active members to take care of their weekly tasks, and Social Action and Awareness has just three active members. Please let the commission chair or other contact know if you are interested/willing/able to become part of their pool of volunteers (or “friends”).

**Care of the Parish** - Susan Anderson, chair. [Ssba92@gmail.com](mailto:Ssba92@gmail.com). Care of Parish has four formal members (one fewer than in 2018) and two active friends who help on a regular basis. COP has a particularly heavy workload. They support fellowship times, monthly potlucks, and special and seasonal events. They also coordinate, with Rev. Mike Durst, pastoral care visits.

**Christian Education** - Mark Jensen, chair. [marquitosj@gmail.com](mailto:marquitosj@gmail.com). Christian Ed has six formal members and two friends. CE designs/develops Sunday School, intergenerational, and adult programming.

**Outreach and Membership** - Ann Bushmiller, chair. [abushmiller@yahoo.com](mailto:abushmiller@yahoo.com). Outreach and Membership especially needs friends to be greeters on a Sunday morning. If you can do it a few times through the year, please contact Garnell Yarbrough, [garnellyarbrough@gmail.com](mailto:garnellyarbrough@gmail.com).

**Social Action and Awareness** – Priscilla Waters, chair. [Priscilla.waters3@gmail.com](mailto:Priscilla.waters3@gmail.com). As in 2018, SAAC has just three active members (two fewer than 2018). They recommend priorities for the church’s advocacy and involvement in social justice concerns, and promote the Second Sunday offerings.

**Worship** – Nick McConnell, chair. [nicholasmcconnell@msn.com](mailto:nicholasmcconnell@msn.com). At present, Worship has just five active members. They recruit volunteers for ushers through a regular email entitled “First Church Ushers Invite.” In addition, they would especially appreciate volunteers to participate in worship-planning discussions, by video or conference calling if that would work; and to help set up the sanctuary on a Sunday morning, including for communion once a month.

**Finance** – Polly Gordon, chair. [pandigordon@comcast.net](mailto:pandigordon@comcast.net). At present, Finance has just three members (one fewer than 2018) plus the Treasurer as an ex officio member. They monitor actual-to-budget comparisons, recommend necessary adjustments, and manages the annual budget development process and pledge campaign.

**Facilities** – Anisa Heming, chair. [anisaheming@gmail.com](mailto:anisaheming@gmail.com). Facilities has just four members, one fewer than in 2018. They develop and implement policies on the use of the church facilities, and help serve as sound, light, and/or media tech.

Thanks so much for your help.

Lucille Dickinson for the Nominating Committee  
[lucilledickinson@aol.com](mailto:lucilledickinson@aol.com)

### How is Music Chosen for a Worship Service?

It is not uncommon for congregation members to ask the question, "How do you decide what music to include in a worship service?" Now that I have passed the 5-year mark at First Church, I feel comfortable sharing some of the decision-making that goes into Sunday morning's music. It is my hope that the following explanation will prove interesting to congregation members and perhaps provide a basis for future discussions in regards to the musical content of our worship services. How I make musical choices isn't "rocket science," but there are aspects in the selection process which members might find interesting. Generally, I follow four rules of worship planning which are widely used by church musicians today.

Essential to selecting effective music is knowing what lectionary scripture(s), worship themes or sermon foci guide Sunday's worship. On a normal Sunday (Sundays other than major religious holidays or special Sundays set aside for special occasions) the Common Lectionary offers a set of 3-4 scriptural passages from which themes can be derived. The overall purpose of music in worship is to "enhance the Word." This is accomplished through opening and closing organ voluntaries, anthems, hymns and responses. I carefully read the selected scriptures and any commentaries I can find on them. As I read, I jot down major theological concepts to assist me as I search for music that matches and complements.

The first step is the easiest. What follows is more difficult. For anthems I am limited to what I have on hand in the church's anthem collection. Each year I add to that collection, keeping in mind the past year's insufficiencies and the need to cover a variety of genres and musical styles. Anthems are catalogued by voice part requirements (SATB), scriptural connection, seasonal and overall themes. Some very smart people who preceded me in my position made sure that anthems were carefully entered into a computer data base. Before computers music directors had to rely on card catalogues and their memories to keep track of anthem collections. I am very grateful for a well-organized database.

I select anthems with an understanding that it takes an average of 3-5 weeks to adequately prepare one. Volunteer choirs contain two basic groups of people -- those who are there every week and those who aren't. I need both groups, but this means that I have to rehearse in a creatively redundant fashion. A month of rehearsals (taking into account illnesses, emergencies, and blizzards) will usually yield a beautiful product to share with the congregation.

Periodically I send out "Attendance Intention" surveys so that I know who will be available to sing each week. This gives me the following week by week information:

- the overall size of the choir
- the number of sopranos, altos, tenors and basses I have available
- the makeup of each section (leaders and followers)
- consistency of attendance over a series of rehearsals

To successfully sing an anthem on any particular Sunday I must know if it's feasible -- considering the forces I have on hand, the music available in the files, and the number of rehearsals required to prepare the music. One aspect of this which is often overlooked is the comfort level of the choir itself as it relates to the difficulty of the music. The choir comes to church to worship just like the rest of the congregation. If they are uptight or overly anxious in regards to what they are singing, they can lose the opportunity to participate

as worshippers. I remind myself regularly that our choir is an important part of the "corporate body" and they deserve to have a spiritual experience on Sunday too.

The three hymns for each Sunday are chosen from over 16 different hymnals, representing different denominations and worship styles. We only own two sanctuary collections in quantity -- The New Century Hymnal and The African American Heritage Hymnal. We maintain a paid licensing contract that enables us to use the hymns from hymnals we don't own. When you have time, flip to the back of the hymnal and notice that one of the indices is called the "Scriptural Index." This lists hymns according to what Biblical scriptures they illuminate. It is invaluable in locating and determining hymn possibilities. I keep an ongoing list of hymns we sing each week to ensure that we don't repeat the same ones and there is variety of styles.

There are new hymns written every day, and they can be found on websites like *The Hymn Society of America* or the *Board of Discipleship Hymn Website* or *Hymnary.org*. If a tragedy occurs anywhere in the world, there are hymn text writers who "put pen to paper" immediately. Not all of these new contemporary hymns are high-quality, so I do my best to determine quality. There is literally a smorgasbord of hymns from which to choose each week -- varying in style from traditional to Hispanic (with guitar and percussion), African American gospel and spiritual, global worship songs, and the list goes on.

In selecting hymns, I must keep in mind that hymns are classified as "congregational song" and not rehearsed ahead of time. If the hymn is unfamiliar, the congregation must learn the text and tune as they sing. This takes a positive approach with a brief introduction and encouragement beforehand. My goal is to enable active, meaningful participation. If I don't think a hymn will communicate its message, I don't choose it. Some hymns have wonderful texts and impossibly difficult tunes. Some hymns have simple tunes wedded to texts which are impossible to fit to the melodic line. It's tricky business navigating the waters of good hymnody. Matching familiar tunes with new texts sometimes is the way to go.

My opening voluntary, closing voluntary and offertory are usually organ or instrumental. Occasionally we have a vocal soloist for one or more of these musical selections. Whether organ, vocal or instrumental, if I can I "cross-match" themes or focal points in the service. When I first see what a worship service looks like on paper in rough draft form, I look for connective tissue. Do the musical sections of the service progress toward the sermon and then accent it afterwards as we head to the benediction? Are there a variety of moods represented? How many musical styles are represented in the service? Are we sticking with one style or are we looking for ways to address the wide diversity of our congregation?

It's not easy musically reflecting diversity in a worship service. I've learned over the years that it's better to connect with the "cloud of witnesses" and other worshipping communities than to make assumptions about what people of different backgrounds find spiritually satisfying. The President of Howard University, after speaking in one of our services, told me how moved he was by the choir's singing of Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" (choir, violin and cello). That didn't surprise me because the choir and instrumentalists had done an incredible job singing it. I think the worldwide worshipping community needs Bach, Mozart, Mark Hayes, Jester Hairston, and Pablo de Sosa. My goal is to over time (4-6 weeks) include as many varying styles and genres as possible. I once asked Pastor Fowler if he could tell by my musical choices what my favorite musical style and musical time period were, and he said "No." That's the way it should be.

So... there it is! There are four basic tenets which I follow to put together a worship folder:

1. The scriptural or sermon theme for the day
2. The music I have on hand to use
3. The makeup of the choir -- size and voice parts
4. The time it takes to rehearse and prepare music (considering its difficulty level)

There is one more consideration I'd like you to keep in mind as we explore the music of worship. I'm here every week. The choir and I cover a large amount of music in a 3-4 month stretch of creating music for worship. More than once someone has remarked to me that they wished we'd sing more music from a specifically different tradition. I quietly ask, "Were you here last week?" To help the congregation see the wider expanse of styles covered in a 4 to 6-week time period I plan to include an overview of worship music in the Horn. Periodically it will also appear in the church newsletter.

If you would like a nurture which explores some or all of the aspects of music planning, I've covered in this article, please speak to either me or Rev. Sam McFerran. I'd be more than happy to delve further into the subject. We don't need to agree — and I suspect a healthy nurture would reveal that, but we can always learn from each other. It's important to keep communication channels open so that voices with questions and/or suggestions can be heard. Let's continue this dialogue.

John Horman, Director of Music

### A Musical Overview of the Past Month

Easter II	April 28, 2019
Music Selection:	"Easter" (From Five Mystical Songs) -- Vaughan Williams
Hymns:	"Joy Dawned Again on Easter Morn" – 241 <i>New Century Hymnal</i> "When It Seemed Like Love Was Dying" ( <i>Time Now to Gather</i> ) "Day of Arising" -- 252 <i>Glory to God</i>
Easter III	May 5, 2019
Anthem:	"But Thanks Be to God" (from Messiah) -- Handel
Hymns:	"God, Who Called Us" ( <i>A Faith That Lets Us Sing</i> ) "Will You Come and Follow Me" -- 726 <i>Glory to God</i> (Iona Tradition) "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" -- 282 <i>New Century Hymnal</i>
Easter IV	May 12, 2019
Anthem:	"Ain't a That Good News" – Rollo Dilworth "Improvisation on 'Simple Gifts'" – Katie Koza (violin)
Hymns:	"God Is Here" -- 70 <i>New Century Hymnal</i> "For the Beauty of the Earth" -- 28 <i>New Century Hymnal</i> "Lord, Make Me More Holy" -- 75 <i>New Century Hymnal</i>
Easter V	May 19, 2019
Anthem:	"Grant Us Thy Peace" -- Mendelssohn
Hymns:	"Praise Ye the Lord" -- 633 <i>Glory to God</i> "Uns Mandamiento" -- 389 <i>New Century Hymnal</i> "Love Divine All Love Excelling" -- 366 <i>Glory to God</i>



## An Opportunity to Try Singing in the First Church Choir

As we approach the summer months, the "normal" choir season ends at First Church. After Memorial Day we suspend Thursday night choir rehearsals until September... *BUT* we don't stop singing on Sundays for worship. The anthems we sing during June and July are usually simpler so that we can rehearse them on Sunday mornings and still do a great job singing for worship.

This is an ideal time for members of the congregation who have been contemplating the possibility of singing with the choir and have been "on the fence" to give it a try and see what happens. If you fall into that category, please take the plunge and jump into singing in the Summer Choir. I could now list all the physical, mental and spiritual advantages to singing in a choir but most of you have heard it all before. However, singing is definitely a therapeutic activity, and there is documentation to prove it.

I want you to know that I will do anything I can to help you find your voice and add it to the ensemble. I've always enjoyed coaching new singers, so don't hesitate to ask for assistance. The choir at First Church is no scarier than any other church group (which isn't scary at all), but I realize that to join a new group can be a daunting experience. We especially need low voices, but any voice range will be welcomed into the fold. Come, give it a try. Once you jump in the pool, you will find that the water is just fine. Hope to see you on Sunday mornings in June and July for the Summer Singers.

## Facilities Commission

The Facilities Commission continued its regular duties of reviewing building maintenance and repair needs and expenses with Byron Adams, our building manager. Each month, we also review outside requests that have come in to use the church space and make sure we have a schedule in place for sound board duty at Sunday service. We are still in desperate need for more volunteers for the sound board and are trying to schedule training with new volunteers. We will be rolling out education and new signage for the church's recycling program over the summer.

## Social Action and Awareness Commission



### June Second Sunday Offering on June 9

By Dale Ostrander, Board of Trustees, Shaw Community Center

Our congregation's Second Sunday Offering in June is for the Shaw Community Center, a mission of the UCC's Potomac Association social justice ministry located in the historic, but rapidly gentrifying Shaw area of DC.

This ministry was created in 1991 to provide educational and social service programs for low income residents of all ages in this area. Programs include afterschool tutoring, computer and social skills, summer camps, mentoring, college prep and scholarships, as well as opportunities to celebrate the community's heritage and empower its residents. The Shaw Community Ministry was more recently renamed the Shaw Community Center to reaffirm its non-sectarian commitment and sense of history in the community.

## SAAC May Report

The SAAC met via email to:

1. Updated the August Second Sunday recipient to the Congregational Library and Archives;
2. Began outlining Drop-In Center (DIC) memorandum of agreement (MOU);
3. Two members of the Anti-Racism Task Force attended training.
4. The Anti-Racism Task Force began another series of “White Privilege” conversations;
5. The Sanctuary Task Force successfully hosted the “Music Without Borders” concert, presenting El Salvadoran musician Lilo Gonzalez. Money was raised for the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Sanctuary DMV organization;
6. Members of the Housing for All Task Force attended a Washington Interfaith Network (WIN) meeting about holding developers accountable to affordable housing standards.

### Making Circles of Welcome Out of Gatherings of Strangers at the Downtown Drop-In Center (DIC) for Homeless Youth



*Beloved, teach us to open our shuttered hearts  
and our portioned and boarded up spirits  
with bold generosity and with courageous hospitality.  
Estranged and alienated so often and from so much,  
sustain us in making circles of welcome out of gatherings of strangers.  
Around the table of wonder, meet us in abundance,  
drawing out our stories  
and showing us how to weave together community with steadfast love.  
(part of a prayer by Rev. Naomi King, and posted on The Wonderment.  
<http://thewonderment.typepad.com/>)*

A group of dedicated First Church volunteers, is partnering with the non-profits Sasha Bruce Youthwork and Stand-up for Kids to “make circles of welcome out of gatherings of strangers” at the First Church Drop-In Center for homeless DC youth. Every Monday night from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, First Church provides a safe haven for youth to relax, eat, socialize, and eventually connect with Sasha Bruce’s supportive services.

Sasha Bruce overcomes many challenges connecting youth with supportive services by using a technique described by Dr. Natasha Slesnick in an article titled "The Best Way to Help Homeless Youth is Hardly Ever Used." Dr. Slesnick, of The Ohio State University, writes that "teens without homes, many of whom have suffered at the hands of those entrusted with providing them care and kindness, often refuse to seek warmth and nourishment in shelters. She continues that "many kids won't go to shelters because they're hiding on the street. They're avoiding the service system because they've been abused and betrayed by everyone who is supposed to love them." Dr. Slesnick proved in a 2016 study that "Drop-In Centers- safe havens with fewer rules and no older adults-could open doors to jobs, sobriety and housing that is safe and secure."

As the following comments show, volunteers really enjoy their work:

*I find the Drop-In Center to be a place where people from all walks of life come, meet, exchange each other's views. This itself is another way to develop a stronger community.*

*The Drop-In Center is a place of connection. There are conversations going on everywhere, usually over pizza. My (Sasha Bruce) co-workers and I usually set up a board game (often Scrabble) and use the game to initiate conversations. The atmosphere is always humming and I leave feeling excited about what's going on in this space.*

*My initial involvement in the Drop-In Center was strictly as the "Cookie Lady." I came one night shortly after the church started working with Sasha Bruce, and was dismayed to see they were eating store bought cookies, and decided that baking and bringing cookies would be my way to show the young people that First Church cared about them. A year ago I began coming a couple of Mondays a month. It has been so satisfying to serve these young homeless people, who are anonymous when they are on the street. I try to learn their names and know what kind of pizza they prefer. When they come to First Church on Mondays, I am able to say, "Hi John," how are you tonight?" or "Willie, the cookies in the red container have nuts, so make sure you eat the other ones."*

*It is inspiring to see so many different groups of people- youth, Sasha Bruce Staff, Stand-Up for Kids volunteers, and members of the First Church congregation come together for the shared purpose of honoring each other's humanity and creating a space that is fun and warm for all. Whether it's watching a movie, playing a board game, goofing off with friends or connecting with services, there's something for everyone here. Having a space that is specifically designed for the purpose of connecting and having fun with each person there is so energizing, and I feel very grateful to be part of this community.*

There's room for you to help at the DIC. Please consider coming on Monday nights or donating snacks or toiletries. Please contact Janneke Ratcliffe at [Janneke1018@gmail.com](mailto:Janneke1018@gmail.com) for more information about helping to support downtown DC youth.

## Young Adults

### Young Adults at First Church: Sunday, June 2

Young Adults (in theory this means 20- and 30-somethings, but we welcome all!) are invited to join for a pizza party/potluck on Sunday, June 2 at 5:00 PM at Laura Johnson's apartment. We hope you can make it! Please reach out to Laura Johnson ([johnson.laurad@gmail.com](mailto:johnson.laurad@gmail.com)) or Brendan Taylor ([brendan.k.taylor@gmail.com](mailto:brendan.k.taylor@gmail.com)) for details and if you'd like to join our email list and Facebook group!

## Faith Formation



### Faith Formation Sunday – June 2

Please join us for Faith Formation Sunday where the children and youth will be sharing what it means for them to live out their faith in words, action, and song! It truly has been another extraordinary year of Faith Formation for our children and youth! From fun in Sunday School to a great pageant to leadership in church, the children and youth create a strong community where they dive into head first what it means to live out our faith!

This service both provides the children and youth to share what they've learned, but also provides them with an opportunity to thank the church for their love and support. We could not do this without our faithful and amazing teachers and childcare workers. We hope you can make this wonderful service!



### Pentecost and Pride Sunday – June 9

On June 9 we will have a wonderful service of spirit, joy and love as we celebrate Pentecost and Pride. Ever since First Church was one of the first Open and Affirming Congregations in the UCC, we have committed ourselves to be a place of welcome, nourishment, and renewal for everyone, but especially our LGBT brothers and sisters.



We will be graced by the amazing **Rock Creek Singers**, members of the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, who will join us. They truly are amazing! Also, our very own **Rev. Diana Gomez De Molina** will be providing us with the message. At the end, we will surround the community table, affirming our commitment that God's love extends to everyone! We hope you can make it!



### Youth Trip Heads to South Dakota: June 22-June 29

The youth group is very excited to head to the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota for service, new friendships, and community building this June. Through our partnership with Simply Smiles, we will help run a summer camp for youth between the ages of 4-17, as well as assist with various construction projects. We are grateful for our youth Aoife, Breanna, Lily, Mai, Marlyse, Patrick, and Raine for signing up for this adventure during their busy summers! They have been working hard raising money for the trip, reading about Native American history, and going on a great kick-off event to the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian

We are also so fortunate to have four incredible adult leaders. Joining Sam will be Troy Bent from the Church, as well as Sam's cousin Courtney from New Zealand, and his friend, Alan, from Colorado who is a real-life rocket scientist!

We could not have even dreamed of this trip without the financial support and prayers of the congregation to make this trip possible!

# Live!

at 10<sup>th</sup> & G

Coming up...

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



Heritage Signature Chorale presents *Synergy!* June 15 at 6:00 pm. Join Heritage for their 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Concert. 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. \$28.

Check out a few highlights of the 2019/20 season:



New Orchestra of Washington is a one-of-a-kind ensemble. As a small chamber orchestra with flexible instrumentation, NOW elevates every member to his or her highest potential. NOW's programming is neither strictly classical nor purely academic. Each program is conceived to be attractive, inspirational and memorable. September 14, February 15, & May 30.



The Capital Hearings® have been entertaining audiences large and small since 2010. The group's wide-ranging repertoire of classical favorites, vocal jazz, and contemporary arrangements has established it as Washington, D.C.'s most versatile a cappella ensemble. September 28.

<http://www.thecapitalhearings.com/>



The Thomas Circle Singers is a chamber choral ensemble with a dual mission: to perform diverse choral works for the enjoyment of audiences in the Washington, D.C. area and to raise awareness and funds for organizations that address the pressing needs of the city's underserved citizens. October 19. <https://www.thomascirclesingers.org/>



Washington Bach Consort presents *The Chamber Series* — concerts of smaller-scale works in intimate and welcoming spaces perfectly matched to the repertoire. November 8, December 6, February 28, & April 3. <https://bachconsort.org/chamber-series/>



The Thirteen *Through the Looking-Glass*, a continuation of their commitment to life-affirming performances, music-making at its finest, and their determination that the music must be relevant to the society in which we live. November 16, December 21, March 7, & May 2. <https://www.thethirteenchoir.org/concerts>

## June Calendar

### Sunday, June 2

- 8:45 am White Privilege Discussion Group,  
*Community Hall*
- 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*  
Faith Formation Sunday
- 11:30 am Potluck Luncheon, *Comm. Hall*
- 12:00 pm Finance Commission, *Living Room*

### Monday, June 3

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

### Tuesday, June 4

- 6:30 pm Church Council, *Comm. Hall*

### Wednesday, June 5

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

### Thursday, June 6

- 6:00 pm Worship Comm., *Chapel*

### Sunday, June 9

- 8:45 am White Privilege Discussion Group,  
*Community Hall*
- 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*  
Pentecost/Pride Sunday
- 11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*
- 12:00 pm Care of Parish Comm., *Living Room*

### Monday, June 10

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

### Wednesday, June 12

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

### Saturday, June 15

- 11:00 am Bruce Hanson Memorial Service,  
*Sanctuary*
- 6:00 pm Heritage Signature Chorale Concert,  
*Sanctuary*

### Sunday, June 16

- 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*  
Rev. Michael Durst preaching
- 11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*

### Monday, June 17

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

### Wednesday, June 19

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

### Sunday, June 23

- 8:45 am White Privilege Discussion Group,  
*Community Hall*
- 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*  
Rev. Michael Durst preaching
- 11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*

### Monday, June 24

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

### Wednesday, June 26

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

### Thursday, June 27

- 6:30 pm Facilities Comm., *Chapel*

### Sunday, June 30

- 8:45 am White Privilege Discussion Group,  
*Community Hall*
- 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*  
Rev. Michael Durst preaching
- 11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*
- 12:00 pm Finance Comm., *Living Room*



To the members of the United Church of Christ,

The changing landscapes of church and denominational life in the 21st century impact many aspects of congregations, including ways that congregations are formed, reformed, and live in covenant with one another. Consequently, our Manual on Church – the volume that has previously articulated the formation and function of a local church – needs intentional discernment and engagement, building off of and expanding the draft that was last examined in 2004.

We are seeking individuals represented by diverse facets of people and positions in the United Church of Christ with a sense of call and enthusiasm to this work of studying UCC understandings of ecclesiology (theological understanding of the nature and structure of church); function of the local church, and of listening for God's guidance and movement, and of blessing the denomination with an insightful resource for local churches of today and of tomorrow.

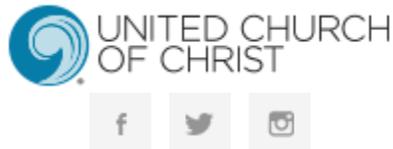
The Manual on Church is and will be a multi-year denomination-wide conversation led by a working group. **Members of the working group will be asked to make a four-year commitment to this project, including an estimated 5 – 7 in-person gathering across those four years.**

All members of the United Church of Christ including but not limited to: lay people, clergy, church planters, conference staff, affiliated ministries, and beyond are welcome to submit nominations, including self-nominations. The following information is necessary for each nomination:

- Name and contact information (email, phone number, mailing address)
- Brief overview of United Church of Christ experience
- Skills and perspectives that nominee would bring to the working group
- Two names of references for the nominee, with contact information

Nominations are open now through **July 1, 2019.**

[To apply online, please visit ucc.org/MOC](http://ucc.org/MOC)



United Church of Christ · 700 Prospect Ave, Cleveland, OH 44115, United States  
This email was sent to [mdurst2220@gmail.com](mailto:mdurst2220@gmail.com). To stop receiving emails, [click here](#).

Copyright © 2019 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Ministers – Friends & Members of the Church  
Interim Minister – Rev. Michael C. Durst  
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

945 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001  
Phone: 202.628.4317 • Fax: 202.347.4911  
[www.firstuccdc.org](http://www.firstuccdc.org)