

GABRIEL'S HORN



First Congregational United Church of Christ

October 2019

Three Amazing Concerts this Month!



The Thomas Circle Singers presents *Annelies*, October 19 at 5:00 pm. TCS' encore performance of James Whitbourn's choral setting of the Diary of Anne Frank commemorates the 75th anniversary of the diary and the 90th anniversary of Anne Frank's birth. James Whitbourn's dramatic music brings to life the harrowing events unfolding in Anne's life, all thoughtfully portrayed in Melanie Challenger's libretto. This special performance will be enhanced by a variety of media to help the audience see, hear, and feel this incredible story of ordinary people living during extraordinarily terrible times. \$20-25.

The Thirteen Offers a 50% Discount to First Churchers

The Thirteen Choir is offering First Church members the opportunity to purchase tickets to their four Saturday evenings concerts and to their Church of the Epiphany concert down the street at a 50% discount: *Tallis Through the Looking-Glass*, Saturday, October 26 at 7:30 pm, Church of the Epiphany. Join The Thirteen for an exploration of our most beloved English-language composers. Featuring Tallis' symphonic-in-scope *Gaude gloriosa Dei mater*, Britten's touching and powerful *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw's *Fly Away I*, selected repertoire from distinctly American Sacred Harp repertoire and more, this concert promises to be a display of virtuosity and artistry.

13TH THE THIRTEEN

Gay Men's Chorus Small Ensembles Extravaganza

The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington will perform their *Small Ensembles Extravaganza* here on October 26 at 5:00 pm (ASL interpreted) & 8:00 pm. All four of GMCW's ensembles (Potomac Fever, Rock Creek Singers, Seasons of Love, and 17th Street Dance) return to the stage for a showcase of music and dance featuring songs from the worlds of pop, Broadway, spirituals, and more. Songs include *Africa*, *Don't Stop Me Now*, *Jolene*, *Take On Me*, *Not Over You*, and *Imagine*. \$20-45.



Check the *Live! at 10th* & G Facebook page for more information: [facebook.com/liveat10thandG](https://www.facebook.com/liveat10thandG)

Volunteers Needed for Fall Meeting on November 2nd

We will be hosting the Potomac Association's Fall meeting on November 2nd. Volunteers are needed to be hosts and help put out breakfast and lunch. If you are able to help, please contact Nan McConnell at nancyfmccconnell@aol.com.

What Dreams Does God Have for First Church?

Join Us for Community, Conversation, and Dreaming at the Congregational Planning Retreat on October 27th

Please mark your calendar for the Congregational Planning Retreat on Sunday, October 27, 2019, from 10:30 to 3:00. We will begin with worship at our usual time, followed by small group and plenary sessions designed to help us plan our future. We will reflect upon what do we specifically love about First Church. What are deepest hopes for the future? What are opportunities to build upon? What about our past inspires us today? What from our past should we be willing to let go of? This time together will help us strengthen our church community and build a wonderful foundation as we prepare for the arrival of our new designated minister. Lunch and child care will be provided. For more information, contact Nan McConnell at nancyfmccconnell@aol.com or Karen Byrne at revkarenbyrne@gmail.com.



Sankofa Bird from Ghana

Council Capsule

Council Capsule for September 2019

Associate Minister Sam McFerran reported upcoming dates:

- Sept. 22: Celebrate Luis Murillo, beloved childcare worker who is leaving for graduate school in Germany
- Fall Bible study of Mark will be offered before church beginning September 15

Karen Byrne worked with staff to create a punch list to orient guest preachers, and will complete a second punch list to guide staff and volunteers on any Sunday. In addition to worship planning, Karen is providing pastoral care and coordinating Advent planning.

Kim Darling, chair of the Visioning Team, encourages all to respond to the email questionnaire about the future of First Church and to attend the energizing and fun congregational retreat on Sunday Oct. 27 in the sanctuary (10:30 - 3), including worship. The objective of these fall Visioning Team activities is to draft a five-year vision statement for the church based on the ideas generated by the congregation.

David Greer of the Finance Commission reported on budget status for Nora Marsh, Treasurer. As of August 31, 2019, income is 73% of that budgeted, and expenses are at 67%. Nora Marsh, Byron Adams and John Marsh (Facilities Commission) will complete a review of LPC billing and current requests for repair and replacement work which are higher than anticipated in the First Church 2019 budget.

Nora Marsh, Treasurer with the Finance Commission, will provide training to all commissions on how to prepare detailed 2020 budget requests based on program plans. They will also possibly schedule a nurture for the whole congregation on the budget, opportunities and challenges. Ron Hopson will preach on stewardship on October 13.

Council received many positive comments on the summer book read of The Energy Bus, and Dwight Davis' follow-up sermon and nurture discussion. Council recommends holding another summer book and has asked Dwight to lead a discussion on Feedback at the October Council meeting.

Council approved opening the Youth Drop In Center for a second night weekly on Wednesdays to begin in October 2019. John Smeltzer presented and Council approved a draft addendum to the First Church Memorandum of Understanding with Sasha Bruce Youthwork which covers the second night of operation. A \$20,000 payment from Sasha Bruce will cover First Church additional expenses for the second night. New volunteers from First Church have signed up for training, but we can definitely use more. A minimum of one First Church volunteer is needed each night. Nan McConnell has offered this volunteer opportunity to Westmoreland Congregational Church, and other churches will be contacted.

Council received a bylaws proposal from Kim Darling to change the composition of the Church Council to 5 officers and 5 at-large members, the latter instead of commission representatives. Council will discuss, rework as needed, and vote on the proposal prior to the fall congregational meeting November 20. Benefits are: at-large members serve council as their one responsibility; the nominating committee chooses at-large members based on Council's needs; the nominating committee is able to help council be more representative of the congregation; and formal communication between commissions and council (and staff) must become routine.

First Church delegates to the Central Atlantic Conference Annual Meeting, Oct 4-5, 2019, are Pojen Lee, J.D. Okorie-Dunn, Priscilla Waters, and Lucille Dickinson.

The Church Annual Meeting date has been set for January 26, 2020.

The next Council meeting is on October 1, 2019.

Submitted by Gail Sonnemann, Clerk

Notes from the Special Congregational Meeting

The Congregation approved unanimously two recommendations from Council in the special meeting called to order by Nan McConnell, moderator, after worship on September 15, 2018.

1. Approved: The slate for the Designated Minister Selection Committee (David Greer, chair, Katherine Antos, Alyx Cheng, Dwight Davis, Hannah Long-Higgins, Meg Maguire, Grandon Purnell, and C.J. Thayer).
2. Approved: A three-month agreement with the Rev. Karen Byrne to serve as Minister and to preach on three specific dates, assist with worship planning, worship leadership, and advent planning; help with pastoral care; and help plan the all-church retreat on October 27.

Meg Maguire announced that essays written to commemorate the church's 150th anniversary in 2015 are available for purchase, at \$20/copy. She asked people to let her know if they want to purchase a copy.

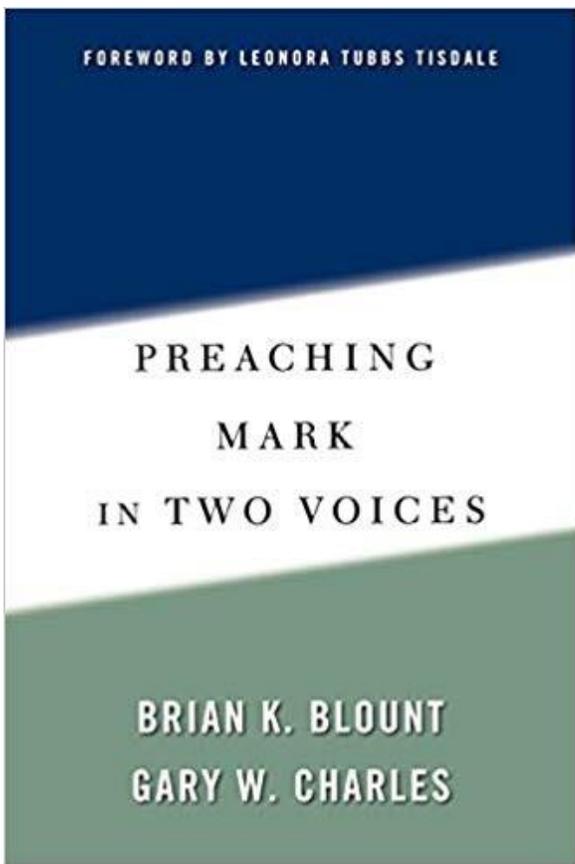
Submitted by Lucille Dickinson for Gail Sonnemann

Care of Parish Commission

Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour in the Narthex is our Extravagant Welcome for ALL who enter our doors! We strive to grow our care for each other and ourselves through the kind of relationships that we understand Jesus meant for us to have in a covenantal community. The usual tradition at First Church DC is for people to volunteer for coffee hour twice per year. If you have any questions about signing up for coffee hour, please contact Care of Parish members Moira Jones or Susan Anderson.

Faith Formation



Bible Study: How Our Lives Shape Our Understanding of Mark

When we are young, we are told that no two snowflakes are the same. It's a simple fact but awe-inspiring to ponder... How, in each snowstorm, can billions of snowflakes have their own unique molecular structures? How can they each have their unique journey of forming in the clouds, falling through the sky, and landing — maybe on a tree branch, a sidewalk, the fur of a dog, or even a tongue?

The same can be said for us. Each of us is unique. We all come from different backgrounds, and had different influences that helped form who we are today. We bring our uniqueness to how we encounter God, the church community, and even how we understand the Bible.

In addition to the Gospel of Mark, we will be reading Preaching Mark in Two Voices by Rev. Dr. Brian K Blount and Rev. Gary Charles. In this enlightening book, Rev. Blount and Rev. Charles share how their own experiences growing up in America — one white, one black — not only informed their understanding of the Gospel, but also encouraged them to

construct their sermons towards the social, economic and cultural context of their congregation and the world.

Please contact Sam McFerran if you would like a copy of the book. We hope you can join us for some of these biweekly sessions, Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m.

Outreach and Membership

Inquirer's Gathering: Sunday, October 6th

Following Worship at 12:00 p.m. in the Chapel

Getting to Know You... Getting to Know Us...

Please join us for a wonderful time of fellowship where you can learn more about the First Church community and the United Church of Christ. Whether it is your first Sunday or you have been with us for a while, we welcome you for conversation, sharing, and fun. Please contact Ann Bushmiller at abushmiller@yahoo.com or Rev. Sam McFerran at mcferran.sam@gmail.com with any questions.



Worship Commission

The Worship Commission has been expanded to include Peter Byrne – a great addition. We have met regularly with Church Staff – Rev. Sam McFerran and John Horman, and now also Rev. Karen Byrne (who is providing much needed interim coverage for many worship related functions, a great relief for all concerned) – to assure ongoing effective worship while we remain in a time of transition. The Commission is looking to build the fall season's worship around the All-Church Strategy Conclave (some think of it as a "Retreat" but it's much more than that – this is an all-hands brainstorm on what we can do and be over the next few years to realize our potential as a blessed community witnessing to our faith). We are also seeking to reinforce the Fall Fiscal Festival (some call it Stewardship Campaign) messaging to assure we have the ongoing resources to continue our witness at 10th & G. We have a strong lineup for preaching in our pulpit through year-end and are also beginning planning for an Advent theme and nurture series built on the gospel lectionary scriptures for the season.

WORSHIP COMMISSION HAS A SPECIAL PLEA: Are there those (either individuals or small groups) who would consider picking a Sunday (or maybe even a group of Sundays) to commit to dressing the Sanctuary in a special way, something beyond our current tablecloth, candles, and small flower arrangement? The purpose would be to highlight a season (Fall is beautiful, Thanksgiving and Advent are approaching), an event (All Saints Day), or just because it would be fun for people to have an "aha" moment as they enter for worship.

If this is something you would be interested in doing, and perhaps showcasing the artistically creative talents you have been quietly hiding from us, please send me an email (nmccconnell@jackscamp.com) and we will get this underway. Worship Commission will coordinate with volunteers so that the Sanctuary dressing can be matched with the service planned for any particular Sunday and will be available to assist with the basics of the Sanctuary set-up. Go for it!

Submitted by Nick McConnell

Powerful Preaching in October

First Church is thrilled to welcome Ron Hopson and Freeman Palmer to be with us and deliver the message in October. They are both dear friends, amazing ministers, and true servant leaders in the United Church of Christ.

October 13th, Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson



Ron is a beloved member of First Church. He has previously served as an Associate Minister for First Church, and more recently as Designated Minister of People's Congregational Church. In addition, Ron is the Associate Professor of Psychology and Divinity at Howard University. He holds a joint appointment in the department of Psychology and in the School of Divinity, where he currently serves as Interim Academic Dean. Dr. Hopson has presented his professional work and conducted workshops in the U.S. as well as in Europe and Africa.

October 20th, Rev. Freeman Palmer

Freeman is the Conference Minister for the Central Atlantic Conference. The Central Atlantic Conference includes 167 United Church of Christ congregations in the Mid-Atlantic region, covering New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and parts of Virginia and West Virginia. It includes 40,000 local church members and approximately 400 ordained ministers.



Freeman began this call in February 2019 after serving nine years as Associate Conference Minister, Congregational Development, for the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ. Freeman currently holds ministerial standing in the Metropolitan Association of that conference, ordained in 2004 to his call as Associate Minister at Middle Collegiate Church in Manhattan, where he served for five years.

Originally from Washington DC, Freeman is a second career minister, attending Seminary after a fifteen-year career with CBS Inc. After graduating from Georgetown Day High School in Washington, Freeman's educational background includes a BA in Economics from Swarthmore College, an MBA in Finance from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and a M.Div. with honors from New York Theological Seminary, where he served as Comptroller while a student and received an award from the faculty for excellence in theological studies.

Musical Month in Review

September 1, 2019

Musical Selections: "Solfeggio" Carl P.E. Bach
"A Tale of Distant Lands" (from *Scenes from Childhood*) Robert Schumann
"Sing a New Song" Michael Haydn
"Ave Verum" W.A. Mozart

Hymns: "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" NCH 42
"Let Us Break Bread Together" NCH 330
"For the Fruit of All Creation" NCH 425

Guest Artists: Anna Resch, pianist; Polly Gordon, soprano; Judith Gray, alto; Justin Antos, tenor; Randy Jones, baritone

September 8, 2019

Anthem: "Awake My Heart and Sing" Jane Marshall

Hymns: "Gather Us In" 401 Glory to God
"Like a Tree Beside the Waters" NCH 313
"I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me" Traditional African American Spiritual

September 15, 2019

Anthem: "Hear My Prayer" Moses Hogan

Hymns: "Jesus Shall Reign" NCH 300
"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me" NCH 490
"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" NCH 304

Participating: The First Church Choir — Dennis Turner, conducting

September 22, 2019

Anthems: "Precious Lord, Take My Hand" arr. by Joyce Merman
"Ode to Liberty" Text by Ron Yoder

Hymns: "God of Grace and God of Glory" NCH 436
"O Jesus, I Have Promised" NCH 493
"For the Healing of the Nation" NCH 576

September 29, 2019

Anthem: "Christ Has Broken Down the Wall" Mark Miller

Hymns: "God of Every Generation" Mary Nelson Keithahn & John Horman
"How Like a Gentle Spirit" NCH 443
"Help Us Accept Each Other" NCH 388

Social Action & Awareness Commission

Keep ICE Out of DC Jails

Please contact your At-Large and Ward DC Councilmembers to demand action before another DC resident is turned over to ICE. (This link will take you to a page with contact information and call scripts: <http://sanctuarydmv.org/contact-dc-councilmembers/>)

The DC Jail gives ICE a heads up when immigrants with detainers are being released so ICE can detain them. The DC Jail also grants ICE agents special access inside the DC Jail to detain immigrants before they're released. Since 2016, the DC Jail has transferred 43 individuals to ICE from *inside* the jail and helped ICE detain many others *directly outside* the jail

The DC Jail's cooperation with ICE is completely voluntary. It's not required by DC law or federal law. Under Mayor Bowser and Department of Corrections Director Quincy Booth, DC is actively choosing to put immigrants in harm's way.

Please [sign up to canvass with us](#) on Saturday, Oct. 5 or Sunday Oct. 6 to gather community support for ending the DC Jail's unjust policy.

We are working in coalition with groups such as United We Dream, Sanctuary DMV, and Many Languages One Voice to ensure that DC lives up to its promise of being a sanctuary for our immigrant neighbors.

For signup links and more information, please contact Susan Saudek: saudeksusan@gmail.com

Walk & 5K to End HIV: Saturday, October 26th

The Walk & 5K to End HIV is what we do as an Open & Affirming Church. This walk and run is an inspirational all-ages event, so bring your kids & pets. On Saturday, October 26, 2019 we will meet in the narthex at 8:15 and leave at 8:55 for the step-off at Freedom Plaza at 9:15. We will be joined by our sibling UCC churches.



The Walk benefits Whitman-Walker Health, which has been a sanctuary for all and a place where everyone is treated with dignity, respect and love in the fight against HIV. Whitman-Walker Health has been fighting stigma and saving lives since the beginning and they need your help. 40 years later, HIV remains at an epidemic level in the District.

For more information and to register and/or pledge support, go to www.walktoendhiv.org Look for our team: **1st Steppers UCC DC**. (note spelling) We would love to have you join us, but you can also support our team or an individual walker. Call or text Jamey Moore at 202-491-7164 for more information.

October Second Sunday Offering: Neighbors in Need

The October Second Sunday Offering will be contributed to Neighbors in Need (NIN), a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. NIN supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

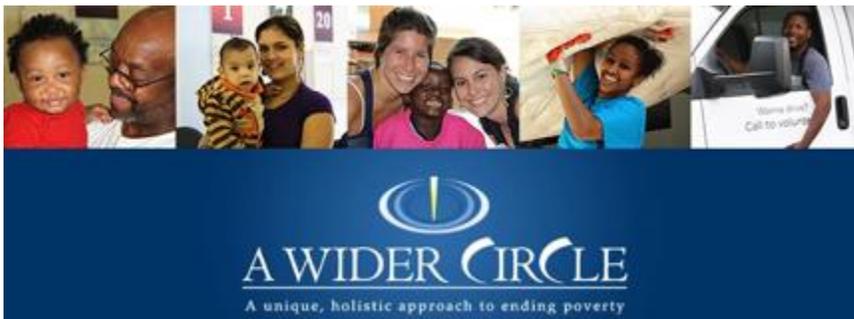
One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants.



Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities.

Upcoming Service Opportunity: Saturday, November 16th

Please help make a difference by volunteering with **A Wider Circle** on Saturday, November 16th, from 2:00 – 3:30 PM. Ages 6 and older are welcome to volunteer. (Children 12 and under need an accompanying adult.) Please contact Rev. Sam McFerran if you would like to volunteer. AWC's location is at 9159 Brookville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910.



October Calendar

Tuesday, October 1

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

Wednesday, October 2

10:00 am Marlene Ross Service at Arlington

12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

Thursday, October 3

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

Sunday, October 6

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. Sam McFerran preaching

11:30 am Potluck Luncheon, *Comm. Hall*

Monday, October 7

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

6:30 pm Sanctuary Task Force,
Community Hall

Wednesday, October 9

12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

Thursday, October 10

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

Friday, October 11

7:00 pm Worship Night at The Table,
Sanctuary

Sunday, October 13

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. Ron Hopson preaching

11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*

12:00 pm Care of Parish Comm., *Chapel*

Wednesday, October 16

12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

Thursday, October 17

8:00 am Parker Lecture & Awards Breakfast,
Sanctuary

Sunday, October 20

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*

Freeman Palmer preaching

11:30 am Coffee & Fellowship, *Narthex*

Monday, October 21

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

Wednesday, October 23

12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

Thursday, October 24

6:30 pm Facilities Comm., *Chapel*

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

Saturday, October 26

8:00 am AIDS Walk Kick-off, *Narthex*

Sunday, October 27

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. Karen Byrne preaching

Congregational Retreat until 3:00 pm

Monday, October 28

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

Wednesday, October 30

12:15 pm Break Away Meditation, *Chapel*

Thursday, October 31

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*



Protect LGBTQ Civil Rights: Protest at SCOTUS on October 8th!

Nobody should be fired because they're under the LGBTQIA umbrella.

Until recently, being free from workplace discrimination due to sexual orientation or gender identity was considered a civil right in the United States under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights

Act. But on Tuesday, October 8th, the Supreme Court of the United States will hear oral arguments in three cases to determine whether this is still true. The Court will ultimately decide whether the definition of "sex" in Title VII includes sexual orientation and gender identity – despite numerous legal precedents supporting that it does.

What could this mean? Well, the court could find that it's legal under federal law to discriminate against and even fire someone for their sexual orientation or gender identity. If that happens, people could be at risk if they're LGBTQ, look or act "too" masculine if not "a man," too feminine if not "a woman" or not binary enough in the opinion of your employer, and, sadly, much more.

Housing Works is responding to this threat to our rights by organizing a national action with a civil disobedience component at the United States Supreme Court in DC on October 8th. The action is to call attention to this attempt to legalize discrimination against our communities, particularly trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming folks; to shine a light on the importance of the courts in the defense of our civil rights; and to send a message that we will not stand idly by while our freedom to be free from stigma, bigotry and discrimination while we're on the job is up for debate.

Housing Works is sponsoring buses from NYC to DC and coordinating national mobilization. Allies include NYTAG, Center for Popular Democracy, ACT UP Philadelphia, VOCAL-NY, Harlem United, GMHC, Rise and Resist, and more. Sign up here: <http://bit.ly/108demo>

37th Annual Parker Lecture Thursday, October 17th (8-10 a.m.)

The Parker Lecture is the only event of its kind in the United States to examine telecommunications in the digital age from an ethical perspective. The 37th Annual Parker Lecture and Awards Breakfast will be held on Thursday, October 17th, 2019 at 8:00 am. (Go to <http://uccmediajustice.org> for more information and the link to buy tickets.)

2019 Everett C. Parker Lecture and Awards Breakfast Honorees:

- Rev. Julian De Shazier, senior pastor of University Church in Chicago, will deliver this year's Parker Lecture
- Cayden Mak, executive director of 18 Million Rising, will receive the Everett C. Parker Award
- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) of the World Association of Christian Communication (WACC) will receive the Donald H. McGannon Award

Since its founding in 1959, the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ (OC, Inc.) has been a leading force in the struggle to ensure that women, persons of color and low-income persons have equal access to ownership, production, employment, and decision making in media. OC, Inc.'s work grows

out of the United Church of Christ's historic commitment to civil rights, and our belief that social justice cannot be achieved without a media system that reflects our diverse histories and struggles. OC, Inc. promotes justice in media through legal challenges, policy advocacy, grassroots organizing, and public education.

Worship Night at The Table Church on October 11th

doors & hospitality: 7 PM / worship: 7:30 PM

All are welcome for a special ecumenical evening of worship with The Table's Downtown Parish at 945 G St. Whether you are new to church, new to The Table, or call another church in DC your home, we are excited to come together under one roof to worship our God and have praise ring out from our city. Go to [tablechurchdc](#) on Facebook to learn more, RSVP, and invite others.



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Ministers – Friends & Members of the Church
Associate Minister – Rev. Sam McFerran
Minister – Rev. Karen Byrne
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 – Timur Murillo, Ziyah Holman, Jordann Edwards, Patrick LaGamma

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