

Summer 2022 CHIMES



A quarterly newsletter from Falls Church Presbyterian Church

FCPC youth in service in Falls Church, Nashville, Montreat

Below is a sneak peak into what our youth have been up to this summer. Stay tuned to hear more about their mission work and other adventures in the coming weeks!



Neil, Diane, and Elena at the 2022 Montreat Youth Conference



FCPC youth and adult leaders Scott Moore and Diane Maloney in Nashville, learning, serving, and reflecting theologically with City Service Mission (CSM)



FCPC and Providence Presbyterian youth join forces on Mission Monday to pack 100 school kits and 120 hygiene kits for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Prepping kits in advance allows PDA to respond when the need arises.

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Pastor's letter

Dear siblings in Christ,

When I wrote in the spring edition of Chimes, we had just gone back to in-person worship, and we were about to resume holding two different services. I spoke of relearning “old rhythms on Sunday mornings,” and I anticipated that the coming months would “bring a renewed sense of energy to our life as a congregation.”

It was great to see the most people in the sanctuary in over two years when we celebrated Easter, but attendance since then has been something of a disappointment. Summer has only accentuated these patterns, and there is a growing anxiety and discomfort with where we are. On the plus side, our financial giving has remained strong, so we seem not to have lost people. They simply aren't regularly attending worship in person.

If it's any comfort, we are far from alone on this. Rare is the congregation where attendance has returned to anything like pre-pandemic levels, and the question, “How do we get the people back?” is being asked all over the country.

To be sure, some are still Covid hesitant, and some find it convenient to watch worship via live stream. (I imagine it's nice to “go” to worship in your PJs with a cup of coffee.) But I doubt that these fully explain the low worship attendance numbers. I have a feeling that, at least in part, it is about habits.

It takes time for something to become a habit. Go online and you'll likely see statements about it taking 66 days to form a habit. That's likely an oversimplification as some habits are easier to develop than others. But suffice to say that the pandemic has provided an extended period of time for people to get out of the habit of getting up and heading to church on Sunday mornings. It has also provided lots of time to develop new and different Sunday morning routines.

Have you ever thought about the routines that are part of your life? If you're anything like me, some of them are helpful, some are benign, and some are unhelpful. I routinely eat junk food in the evening after supper, and I routinely read the newspaper in the morning. One of those habits is much more helpful than the other, although finding a better evening habit is maddeningly difficult. Faith is also made up of routines and habits. Disciples engage in disciplines and practices to support the life of faith.

When you consider your own routines and habits, where do they fall on that helpful to unhelpful continuum? What about your Sunday morning routines? Where does worship fit into those routines? And are you happy with your routines, or have you fallen into habits you wouldn't mind changing?



James Sledge, Pastor

Our routines are not necessarily solitary affairs. They may well affect others. If you're one of those who has gotten out of the worship habit, there are people at FCPC on Sunday mornings who miss you, who are hoping for a bit more community in the community of faith. Perhaps you miss some of them as well.

If so, or if you're just thinking you could use a new routine, summer might be a great time to try out a new habit or rediscover an old one. Commit to attending one of our worship services on a regular basis and stick with that for a while. You've had months and months to get out of the habit after all. And if you show up on Sunday morning, I can promise you one thing for certain. There will be people here who are delighted to see you.

Grace and peace in Christ,

Good morning, Church!

If you are a parent to a child under 30, chances are you've overheard, and maybe even had, conversations about gender identity and sexual orientation that you never imagined when your little one was just a gleam in your eye. When I was growing up many years ago, people categories came in twos: straight and gay; people who were happy with their bodies and people who wanted to be the opposite sex.

Now there is an ever-growing vocabulary around gender identity, sexual preference, and societal norms. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual/aromatic/agender, cisgender, bigender, gender fluid, demi-anything, pansexual, mono sexual, heterosexism, misgendering ... It's a lot to take in.

When my child realized that they are nonbinary, my husband and I had a steep learning curve. In addition to the usual parenting stuff – homework, extracurriculars, college applications – we had to reconcile the child we thought we knew with the child we actually have. Of course we loved our child and wanted to be supportive. But we also experienced loss. Remembering to use their chosen name and new pronouns took awhile to feel natural and be consistent. We worry about their safety in a new way. We wonder what other changes are waiting down the road.



Megan Klose, Associate Pastor



Perhaps your child is on a similar journey. Today's youth explore their sexual identities and genders much more than my husband and I ever did, and maybe more than you ever did. Many children will try identities on and find that they are not a good fit. And many find identities that feel like they have finally come home.

If this all sounds familiar, I invite you to join me in a support group for parents of LGBTQIA+ kids. It is founded on the assumption that we love our kids and want to support them, that we have our own stuff to deal with apart from their eyes, and that our faith is an integral part of our families' journeys. Email me at mkllose@fallschurchpresby.org for more information.

Retreat to Lost River this fall

Poets & Writers & Artists Retreat: October 14-16, 2022

Join us at the rustic Lost River Retreat Center nestled in the George Washington National Forest, just two hours from Falls Church. Led by FCPC members Anne Mugler and Myra Bridgforth, this experience promises to be a great opportunity to create and relax amongst artists and seekers of all types. There is plenty of both quiet and camaraderie—and you will be well fed! Contact Anne Mugler or Myra Bridgforth for details.

Silent Retreat: December 2-4, 2022. Escape for a quiet and peaceful weekend away. Contact Anne or Myra for more information.

High School Class of 2022

Jake Ayers



Jake Ayers, son of Margie and Kevin Ayers, graduated from Arlington Tech in June. Jake will attend University of Mary Washington in the fall. *Go, Eagles!*

Johna "Jojo" Morrissey-Schubring



Jojo Morrissey-Schubring, daughter of Rosie Schubring and John Morrissey, graduated from Justice High School in June. Jojo will be attending Pulley Career Center in the fall. *Congratulations, Jojo!*

William Ballow



William Ballow, son of Victoria Lippincott and Stacy Ballow, graduated from Meridian High School in June. William will attend University of Mary Washington in the fall. *Go, Eagles!*

Ciara Theisz



Ciara Theisz, daughter of Melissa Teates and Gordon Theisz, graduated from Meridian High School in June. Ciara is heading to James Madison University to study music industry and voice. *Go, Dukes!*



Class of 2022 Undergrads

James Englander



James Englander earned his bachelor's degree in robotics engineering and computer science from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in May. He began work as a robotics engineer with General Dynamics Mission Systems BlueFinn Robotics division in June.

Rachel Skomra



Rachel Skomra graduated in December 2021 from Virginia Tech with a Bachelor of Science in political science. She is currently working toward her master's degree in political science. Rachel hopes to work in the political sector, specifically with policy and legislation with a focus on K-12 educational reform.

Morgan Freeman



Morgan Freeman graduated from Point Park University, Pittsburgh, in December 2021, with a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and a minor in political science. In the fall, Morgan will attend University of Aberdeen in Aberdeen, Scotland, for a master's degree in person-centered counseling.

Delaney Theisz



Delaney Theisz graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in costume design. She plans to work with local and traveling theater companies.

Claire Hiscott



Claire Hiscott graduated from the College of William and Mary with a Bachelor of Science in finance. She will be working for Bank of America in Charlotte, North Carolina.



Congratulations, graduates!

Guest authors coming to FCPC

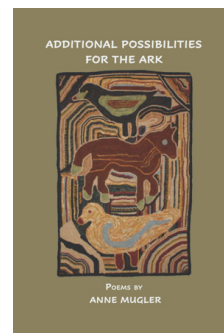
As part of session's abundance challenge, the Spiritual Growth Ministry Team has secured three guest authors to present their work to the public in the next year as part of FCPC's new Crooked Steeple Literary Festival. Admission is free and open to the community. Authors will have their books for sale at the event.

November 12, 2022

The first author is FCPC's own Anne Mugler, who will read from her debut book of poetry, *Additional Possibilities for the Ark*. Many of Anne's poems are paired with images of hooked rugs Anne has designed and made herself. Anne writes: "Art is made and offered to the world with hope that it begins a conversation between the artist and the observer. The artist flings her work out into the universe often not knowing what that conversation might be but with the faith that it exists." *Additional Possibilities for the Ark* is available in the FCPC library or from Amazon.com.

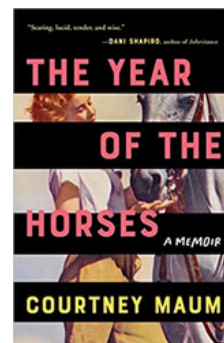


Anne Mugler



February 25, 2023

Next, emerging author Courtney Maum will read from her memoir, *The Year of the Horses*, which was published in May by Tin House Books. Maum is the author of the novels *Costalegre*; *Touch*; and *I Am Having So Much Fun Here Without You*; and a guide for writers, *Before and After the Book Deal*. Her writing and essays have been widely published in such outlets as The New York Times; O, the Oprah Magazine; Interview Magazine; and Modern Loss.



April 15, 2023

The third and final author of the season is an international award winner who will read from her very new, very dark political comedy. More details will be coming soon.



Crooked Steeple Literary Festival

guest authors coming to FCPC!

November 12, 2022

February 25, 2023

April 15, 2023

Saturdays, 2-4 pm

Staffing changes

Andrew Jonas departs

In May 2022 we said goodbye to Andrew Jonas who helped lead us in worship over the past four years. Andrew joined us in 2018 as pianist for our 8:30 a.m. worship service. He also sang in the chancel choir until the pandemic hit and we closed to in-person worship. Throughout the pandemic, Andrew was indispensable in leading us in song (along with David Schoonover and others), putting together the virtual choir pieces, and later assisting Diane Maloney with audio/video production for online worship. *Many thanks to Andrew for his dedication to the music program at FCPC!*



Andrew Jonas

Facilities Manager John Loyd to depart

Longtime FCPC member John Loyd joined the FCPC staff in 2018 as facilities manager and IT support. While serving in this part-time position, John also consulted for the Town of Chevy Chase, Maryland. Recently the Town offered John a full-time position, so he will be leaving his facilities manager role in the next few months. John has graciously offered to continue working for FCPC at a reduced number to oversee major projects that are in the works, as well as help us navigate the transition to a new facilities manager. *Many thanks to John for his continued support and dedication to the church!*



John Loyd

Wendy Hellmann hired as 8:30 a.m. pianist

Wendy Hellmann joined us as pianist at the 8:30 a.m. service on July 3. An at-times substitute organist and accompanist for weddings and funerals, Wendy's talents are well known and highly regarded. A native of Fairfax, Wendy began taking piano lessons when she was four years old and was introduced to the organ at age 16. In 2010, Wendy moved to Glasgow, UK, where she studied both piano and double bass, receiving a Bachelor of Music Performance with Honours of the First Class. In 2017, she won a year-long fellowship performing with the London-based chamber orchestra, Southbank Sinfonia. *Welcome, Wendy! We are glad to have you on board!*



Wendy Hellmann

Media Producer search update

We are happy to announce the search for a media producer to help with audio/video production on Sunday mornings has led us to a well-qualified candidate. This candidate will begin Aug. 21 and will be introduced in the Friday egram soon.

Director of Music search update

After reviewing dozens of resumes, interviewing numerous candidates, and conducting several auditions, the Director of Music Search Committee is in the final phase of its work to engage a new Director of Music in time for the start of the 2022-2023 program year in September. Watch the announcements for more information. Many thanks to Tom-Erik Bowen, Theresa Brown, Anne Kusterbeck, Elaine Porter, Gwenda Wilson, and James Sledge for their help with this process, and especially to Marnie Sarver for chairing the committee.

Mark your calendar!



FCPC Welcome Home Sunday

September 11, 2022

More information coming soon!



Community Back to School Bash

Saturday, September 17, 2-4 PM

Hosted by Community Building and Mercy Ministry Teams

Community Building will provide a moon bounce and other inflatables and activities. Mercy will provide free school supplies. Admission is free and open to the community. Food will be available for purchase. If you wish to contribute school supplies, pick an item from the giving tree at the Activities Center or sign up online [here](#).



Do you have a story or photos to share in our next issue of Chimes Online?
Send to chimes@fallschurchpresby.org. Deadline for the fall 2022 issue is August 31.

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