



THE
First Baptist Church
OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON D.C.

TWICE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | AUGUST 24, 2017



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6 FALL KICK-OFF SUNDAY

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Zena Aldridge

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Game 9/15 7pm
Tickets till 8/31

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Sun., Sept. 10

PLUS - SUN AM SERMON FROM PASTOR JULIE:
THE GOSPEL AND RACISM

5 LAST WEEK OF AUGUST FORUM: SITTING WITH THE TRAUMA OF RACISM

Sun., Aug. 27 9am - LeDayne Polaski

INCLUSION REPORT & DISCERNMENT PROCESS

Dear FBC Family:

For the past several years, we as a church have prayerfully considered the inclusion and involvement of persons who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). In 2016, the Diaconate appointed an Inclusion Team to more closely study this matter, particularly regarding how LGBT members might be fully involved in the church's traditional blessings of marriage and family. The congregation has exercised discernment in small-group discussions, examined Scripture, and studied the church's history and governing documents.



inclusion

The Inclusion Team, Diaconate and pastoral staff now ask that the congregation take the final step in expressing discernment in this matter. Attached is our report, including our recommendations. On Sunday, September 10, during the quarterly Congregational business meeting after the worship service, there will be time for questions and sharing feedback. Then, on Sunday, September 24, after the worship service, we will ask church members to express discernment by privately and anonymously marking one of three statements on a card, the text of which is below.

The Inclusion Team, Diaconate and Pastoral staff would like to thank the congregation for its discernment.

FBCDC Inclusion Team Report

2017

For decades, the congregation of The First Baptist Church of the City of Washington, D.C., has included active members--many of whom have served as lay leaders--who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). They have served Christ and our Church despite the absence of a formal Church policy about how fully they could be involved in the Church, including its traditional blessings of marriage and family. Their service in the silence of Church policy underscored their commitment to Christ and their faith.

FBCDC's governing documents make no distinctions among members, asking only that they profess faith in Jesus Christ and a willingness to follow Christ's example in the waters of baptism. In 2004, the Diaconate adopted – and the full congregation overwhelmingly affirmed – a policy explicitly stating that all are welcome in Christ's body and that the only criterion for membership at FBCDC is faith in Christ.

Since then, our congregation has felt a need to further clarify the role of LGBT people at FBCDC, including celebrating their marriages and families. In 2016, the Diaconate appointed an Inclusion Team to more closely study the issue and make recommendations to the Diaconate and the congregation.

After a process that involved both the team and the broader congregation examining Scripture to discern its wisdom on issues of human sexuality; studying the governing documents and history of the church; reviewing the experiences of similarly situated congregations around the United States; and sharing (in both small-group conversations and congregation-wide Bible studies) individual members' experiences around faith and sexuality, the Inclusion Team unanimously presents the following report:

- The confession of faith that has united us all is the same one that has united Christians in innumerable cultural and physical contexts throughout the millennia: The simple confession that “Jesus is Lord”;
- We are a people united in covenant to one another, with a mission to serve as an example of Christ’s boundless embrace and as an outpost of God’s Kingdom in the heart of our nation’s capital;
- The FBCDC congregation includes members who represent multiple views – all based in their personal interpretation of Scripture – of questions related to human sexuality and faith. Similarly, the congregation includes members who have multiple views of questions related to other secondary and tertiary differences of biblical interpretation (including differences over interpretations of the end times, theories of atonement, how best to bring about social justice, and innumerable other issues);
- FBCDC is home to many members who identify with, or who have loved ones who identify with, the LGBT community;
- The sentiment in the congregation is, based on our conversations in the small-group sessions, that every member should be eligible to experience the life of the congregation fully, including participating in all ordinances and activities of the Church’s life;
- Because FBCDC’s governing documents do not explicitly address – positively or negatively – the full inclusion of LGBT members in the life of the Church, it is not necessary to implement any change in our governance in order to clarify our values as a congregation.

Therefore, the Inclusion Team recommends that the Diaconate and congregation affirm:

- That The First Baptist Church of the City of Washington, D.C., welcomes people of every race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, physical and mental ability, national origin, economic station, and political ideology to full participation in the life of our community;
- That “full participation in the life of our community” includes all members, without exception, being fully eligible to participate in the ordinances, blessings, benefits and responsibilities of Church membership – including communion, baptism, marriage, ordination, parent/child dedications, and all offices and positions of leadership;
- That any individual member’s “full participation in the life of our community” does not bind any other individual member’s conscience on an issue about which they may differ, but rather requires honest commitment to life together in the community of Christ regardless of differences;
- And that we re-commit ourselves to conscious efforts to make all people feel Christ’s welcome in our congregation, including those with whom we disagree.

We recommend that the above statements interpreting and clarifying our existing governance be affirmed by the congregation.

-In Christ,

Alyssa Aldape, Zena Aldridge, Kate Campbell, Paul Clark, Chelsea Clarke, Rod Coates, Mel Doxie, Sadye Doxie, Doug Duvall, Charlie Fuller, Mike Henson, Rob Marus, Steve Nectcott, Allen Norfleet, Ellen Parkhurst, Julie Pennington-Russell, Wilma Prince, Erik Smith, Rose Smith, Dinh Tran, Kathy Whatley

FBCDC Diaconate, Inclusion Team and Pastoral Staff

TEXT OF THE DISCERNMENT CARD TO BE USED BY CHURCH MEMBERS ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

FBCDC Inclusion Statement

2017

The First Baptist Church of the City of Washington, DC, welcomes people of every race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, physical and mental ability, national origin, economic station, and political ideology to full participation in the life of our community;

“Full participation in the life of our community” includes all members, without exception, being fully eligible to participate in the ordinances, blessings, benefits and responsibilities of church membership—including communion, baptism, marriage, ordination, parent/child dedications, and all offices and positions of leadership;

Any individual member’s “full participation in the life of our community” does not bind any other individual member’s conscience on an issue about which they may differ, but rather requires honest commitment to life together in the community of Christ regardless of differences.

We re-commit ourselves to conscious efforts to make all people feel Christ’s welcome in our congregation, including those with whom we disagree.

_____ I believe that the above statements accurately reflect God’s leading in our church at this time.

_____ I believe that the above statements *do not* accurately reflect God’s leading in our church at this time, but am willing to remain a part of this body, if they are affirmed by the congregation.

_____ I believe that the above statements *do not* accurately reflect God’s leading in our church at this time.

AUGUST FORUM

FAITH &

ACTION

Sundays in August • 9:30-10:30 • Breakfast starting at 9:00 • Fellowship Hall

This year during the month of August, we have examined some of the most complex global issues of our day through the lens of Scripture and asked together, "How does my faith in Christ direct my actions?"

AUGUST 27

Sitting With the Trauma of Racism

Rev. LeDayne Polaski, Executive Director,

Bautistas Por La Paz (Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America)

"I came to an interest in trauma through my interest in conflict transformation. Unaddressed traumatic experiences underlie much of the painful conflict we experience. As I have delved further into antiracism work, I have become convinced that White America's unwillingness to acknowledge and address trauma is at the heart of the US's seeming inability to move forward on issues of race and racism. In this session we'll explore why and how we might sit with our trauma and that of others long enough to be transformed and changed."

LeDayne became BPFNA's Executive Director in 2015, having served the organization in a variety of roles since 1998. A life-long Carolinian, she is a graduate of Furman University in Greenville, where her commitment to issues of peace and justice began. She received an M.Div. in 1993 from the Divinity School at Duke University in Durham, NC, and was ordained in Durham at Watts Street Baptist Church. LeDayne and her husband, Tom, a professor of mathematics at Winthrop University, are active members of Park Road Baptist Church in Charlotte.



fall KICK OFF SUNDAY

SEPTEMBER 17 9:30am

Dear Friends,

I am very excited to let you all know that the Faith Formation Team (formerly known as the Christian Education Committee) is putting together a Fall Kick Off Sunday on September 17, 2017 to highlight all of our Sunday Bible Study offerings for both children and adults at FBC.

We are planning to hold the event on Sunday morning, from 9:30-10:30am in the FBC Fellowship Hall. A complimentary breakfast will be provided by Chef Laval starting at 9:30am, and the Fall Kick Off program will begin that morning at 10:00AM.



The Faith Formation Team would like to invite all of our church community to attend this fun, intergenerational program and learn more about the different Sunday Bible Study Groups that we have to offer at FBC for children, youth, and adults. We will also recognize children who are being promoted to new classes and honoring our fantastic teachers who have served over the last year.

This is going to be lots of fun, and we hope to see all of you there!

Lucy Plovnick

Lucy Plovnick
Chair, FBC Faith Formation Team





HOSPITALITY IN WACO: BY BRAD LIVINGSTONE

As the new First Family of Baylor University, we are attempting to worship with as many Baptist Churches as possible in the Waco area to show our support to the pastors and their congregations. Having recently moved to Waco, we typically experience a mix of excitement and nervousness when visiting unfamiliar churches in the area. One Sunday morning, we decided to visit Toliver Chapel Baptist Church,



a predominantly African-American church led by Rev. Dr. Jimmy Hunter and located in the heart of the city of Waco. Any sense of nervousness quickly disappeared when we were met at the church doors with sincere smiles and welcomes. Arriving a few minutes before the beginning of worship, members of Toliver made their way over to us, introducing



themselves and welcoming us to their church and to our new town.

Needless to say, Linda and I were incredibly impressed with the friendliness of the congregation and how warmly we were received among the church membership.

Over the decades we have visited many churches in many different places and though many have been friendly and inviting, none rival the warm welcome we received from Rev. Dr. Jimmy Hunter and the members of Toliver Chapel Baptist Church.



District of Columbia Baptist Convention

SAVE THE DATE: DCBC ANNUAL GATHERING OCT 26-28, 2017

Plan to attend the 141st Annual Gathering in Silver Spring, Maryland. Worship, workshops, exhibitors and more. Info at: dcbaptist.org/annual-gathering-2017



WELCOME OUR NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT!

I am thrilled to announce that Zena Aldridge, FBC choir member and a member of the Diaconate, is our new Administrative Assistant and will begin her duties on Tuesday, September 5. Zena has taken early retirement from the EPA, and brings a wealth of knowledge regarding office systems and computer programs to her new position. It's also a plus that she is familiar with FBC and knows the members. Please welcome Zena in her new role at FBC! -- D'O Dillard



ORDINARY TIME

Ordinary Time will be at a church member's home this Thursday!

Things to bring: YOBB and/or \$5, an appetite, and yourself. Contact Pastor Alyssa for address details.

COMMUNION
& POTLUCK ON THE 2ND
SUNDAY OF SEPTEMBER: 9/10

QUARTERLY CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: SEPT. 10

Reports and recommendations from these teams & committees:

- **Inclusion** (*presentation & discussion of proposed Inclusion Statement*)
- **Faith Formation** (*plans for this fall*)
- **Personnel** (*update on proposed position for part-time children's minister*)
- **Stewardship** (*vote on the 2017-18 Spending Plan*)
- **Facilities** (*several current issues*)



PROPOSED SPENDING PLAN FOR 2017-18

Many thanks to all who worked on the proposed Spending Plan for 2017-18. On September 10, at the conclusion of the potluck, the congregation will be asked to approve this plan for the coming year. Read the letter from Stewardship Committee chairperson, Rochelle Howard, [here \(https://goo.gl/fcRNR9\)](https://goo.gl/fcRNR9). Paper copies of the proposed Spending Plan will be available starting this Sunday in the Narthex and welcome area outside D'O Dillard's office on the 2nd floor.



Pastor Alyssa with Author Brian McLaren at the The Convergence Leadership Project in NYC.



SUMMER OF FUN: NATS GAME DATE CHANGE! SEP 15 7PM PURCHASE DEADLINE AUG 31

ESPN is broadcasting the Nationals' game on Sunday, September 17, so game time has changed to 8:00 pm. Our tickets have been changed to Friday, September 15th at 7:05pm. As of publication date, we only have THREE tickets remaining for our annual outing to see the Nats take on the Dodgers. Tickets are \$32 each and must be purchased by August 31. Questions? Contact D'O Dillard at ddillard@firstbaptistdc.org.



TWO UPCOMING BENEFIT CONCERTS FEATURING FBC'S DEBBI MILLER

Lyric Soprano (and FBC Chancel Choir member) Debbi Miller will perform in two benefit events in September. In both concerts Debbi will sing in Italian, French, German, Spanish, English, Norwegian, Czech, Korean, and African dialect, and Tagalog!

Saturday, Sept. 23 @ 7pm at DACOR Bacon House

1801 F Street NW, Washington. Tickets: \$75

Benefitting AAFSW (Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide). Dessert reception following. RSVP by Friday, September 15, to office@aafsw.org and send a check made out to AAFSW for \$75.00 per person to: AAFSW Reservations, 4001 North Ninth Street, Suite #214, Arlington, VA 22203.

Saturday, September 30 @ 7:30pm at Falls Church Episcopal Church

115 E Fairfax St, Falls Church, VA. Tickets: \$40.

Benefitting P. E. O., an international philanthropic organization dedicated to helping women achieve their goals for higher education. Wine & light appetizers starting at 7:00. Cash or check only, please; checks payable to Chapter G, P.E.O. Mail checks to Rebecca Barnes, 5164 Brawner Pl., Alexandria, VA. Tickets also available at the door; seating is first come, first served.



CONGRATULATIONS FOR TEN YEARS OF SERVICE

Our security/concierge staff member Lynwood Coles, celebrated 10 years of service at FBC on August 20. We appreciate you, Lynwood!

EVENTS

Sunday, August 27

9:00am: August Forum Breakfast
(Fellowship Hall)

9:30am: August Forum: Faith & Action with
LeDayne Polaski

Adults and Youth (Fellowship Hall)

9:30am: Sunday School for Children

10:30am: Chancel Choir Rehearsal
(Rm 312)

11am: Worship (Sanctuary)

2pm: Worship in Spanish (Dawson Room)

DEACONS ON-CALL: WEEK OF AUGUST 27:



Sadye Doxie

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 3:



Doug Duvall

The on-call deacon is your lay contact for prayer concerns during their week of service.

FBC PRAYER & CARE

Sympathy

- To **Steve Netcott and Diane Willimack** in the death of Steve's aunt, Gladys Brightman, 92, on Aug. 23 in WA state
- To the family of **Adeline Rosemary Sunday Allen**, 96, who died on July 8 in Dobson, NC
- To **Ed Fry** and daughters Susan, Anne, Mary and Karen and their families, in the passing of **Mary Lou Fry** on August 9

Recently Added

- **Jim & Mary Lou Sutton:** (Jim was hospitalized earlier this week)
- **Anna Gooch:** hospitalized at GW following surgery on Aug. 18
- **Kirk Pinckney** (Kevin's brother): recovering from surgery on Aug. 19

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