

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DURHAM

"Downtown by history and by choice"

FPC Bi-Weekly Newsletter

May 14 - 27, 2019

From the Pastor/Head of Staff:

Dear friends,

What a wonderful send-off you gave me on Sunday! I feel properly commissioned and fully supported for this sabbatical which will be filled with study, travel, prayer, reading, rest, and connecting with family. **Marilyn Hedgpeth's** beautiful words in worship brought me comfort and challenge for the weeks ahead. **John Weicher's** prayer with the children reminded me of the importance of rest and naps in the midst of a busy travel schedule. **Cris Rivera, Beth Stringfield,** and their amazing team put on quite the Mother's Day luncheon and **Cora Williamson** outdid herself with the Beach Berry Bunny Cake and her additional pastries! Wow! Thank you to all who made Sunday such a wonderful day filled with love and support.

I hope you also feel properly commissioned by Marilyn in worship for your summer study of Bryan Stevenson's book *Just Mercy* (see notes under Faith and Community Sunday School class) and journey to the International Civil Rights Museum in Greensboro (more info below). I pray we will all grow in faith, hope, and love as we study and learn together.

Saying goodbye is hard for me, even if it is just for this short term! I will be back in the blink of an eye, but I still know I will miss you! I even find myself in denial about not being around the office during the week and with you in worship on Sunday. I am already looking forward to coming back and I haven't even left yet! That just shows how much I love you! ☐

I will keep you all in my prayers while I am away and am grateful for your prayers as well. As I close, I share with you a poem by Jan Richardson, called "In the Leaving":

In the leaving,
in the letting go,
let there be this
to hold onto
at the last:

the enduring of love,
the persisting of hope,
the remembering of joy,

the offering of gratitude,
the receiving of grace,
the blessing of peace.[\[1\]](#)

May there be all this to support us until we meet again in August!

Grace and peace and much love,
Mindy

[\[1\]](#) Jan Richardson, *Circle of Grace*, (Orlando, FL: Wanton Gospeller Press, 2015), 166.

My Sabbatical Schedule:

- **May 19-28** - Israel/Palestine trip with NEXT Church (a PC(USA) grassroots organization)
- **June 8-25** - Montreat/Black Mountain/Cullowhee (for rest, reading, interviews, and research)

· **July 1-20** - South Africa/Zimbabwe

· **August 8-12** - Montgomery, AL (dates tentative)

All unspecified time will be spent in Durham visiting churches of color, reading, writing, researching, and meeting with scholars, colleagues, and those working in the area of racial reconciliation in Durham.

Joys/Concerns

Memorial Service: A Service of Witness to the Resurrection will be held for **Bob Velkey**, husband of **Mickey Velkey** and father of **Beth Brockman**, on **Saturday, May 18 at 11:00 a.m. at FPC**. The family will receive friends at a reception in Watts-Hill Hall following the service.

Sympathies: We extend sympathies to **Tom and Ellen Bacon** on the death of Tom's sister, **Jo Bacon Rist**, on May 1st in Naples, FL; and to **BJ and Parker Morton** on the death of BJ's sister, **Sue Morrow**, on May 11th in Charlotte.

Recently Added:

- **Caroline Rourk**, preparing for hip replacement surgery
- **Charlie Ramos**, great-nephew of Nora Tubbs Tisdale
- **Traveling mercies for Sam Miglarese** who will be traveling to Prague and Krakow this month.

Recovering at Home:

Margaret Mubanga

Joseph Ngumi

Franzi Rokoske (and her mother)

Carolyn and Jim Wolfe

Care Communities:

Brookdale Durham: **Julian Boswell, Becky Crockett**

Croasdaile Pavilion: **Bette Conroy, Bob Rankin**

Durham Regent: **John Kerr, Ann Prospero**

Pruitt Health at Carolina Point, Durham: **Helen Garrison**

The Forest at Duke: **Fran Bryant**

Family and Friends of the Congregation:

Fran Alwood, mother of Jennie Alwood

Ken Chambliss, father of Will Chambliss

Camilla Crampton, friend of Mal King

Heath Huberg, friend of Kathy Parkins

Roger Kalthoff, husband of Jane Williams

Patrick Kimiti, friend of Mercy Ndambiri-Curlett in Kenya

Don Smith, recovering from the explosion near Brightleaf Square

Wayne Thompson, colleague of Li-Chen Chin

Jim Vacca, father of Jamie Chambliss

Bob Warren, father of Dawn Carsey



New address for George Kafula and Margaret Mubanga:

205 Edgewood Dr

Henderson NC 27356



The Church office will be CLOSED Monday, May 27 in observance of the Memorial Day holiday. We wish everyone a safe memorial holiday weekend.

NOTES

Thanks to the wonderful team of folks that made the Mother's Day Lunch go so smoothly, including **Laurie, Cora, Matt, and Jack Williamson, Katy, Ruby, Dot, and Walt Barron, Kim, Gracie, and Jon Abels, Margaret and Miguel Rubiera, Andy Henry, and Aurelia Klinck**. Special shout out to **Tom Bloom** who helped get us set up to accept credit cards and to **Cora Williamson** of **Cobo's Cakes** for the amazing petit fours and Mindy's send-off cake. It was a special day for sure. - **Cris Rivera** and **Beth Stringfield**



Please welcome Vernon Cooper to the FPC staff!

Vernon has been hired to assist with administrative duties this summer while Mindy is on sabbatical. He will work in the church office on Mondays and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., providing assistance to **Valerie** and **Tom**. He will be paid from Mindy's sabbatical grant funds. When you see him, please welcome him.

Vernon will begin his final year at Duke Divinity School this fall, and he is a graduate of Furman University. He has been married to **Jennifer nee Carreras** for 12 years. Vernon's father and maternal grandfather were both PC(USA) pastors. When not contemplating theology or political philosophy, Vernon enjoys visiting museums, touring old buildings, and listening to jazz music. His role models include Miles Davis, Nina Simone, and Kurt Vonnegut.

SESSION BRIEFS

At its **April 29 Stated Meeting**, the Session members were excited to hear updates about two initiatives: A proposal to hire a staffing consultant and the work of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC). The Session passed three motions related to these two initiatives:

1. *From the **Personnel Committee**, a motion to engage the **Center for Progressive Renewal** as a staffing consultant.* The review of our current staffing and recommendations will be completed after Mindy's return from sabbatical
2. *From the **APNC**, a motion to approve and submit the **Ministry Information Form (MIF)** drafted by the committee.* After the MIF submission is completed, the committee can begin the search for a new Associate Pastor for Youth and Their Families.
3. *From an elder, a motion to extend **John Weicher's contract** under the same terms by three months.* This is to cover a possible gap between the end of his current contract and the hiring of a permanent Associate Pastor for Youth and Their Families.

In addition to these motions, the Session approved the formation of a subcommittee to manage the Worship and the Arts portion of the **Meyer**

Endowment, designated the source of funds to pay for the staffing consultation, and designated the account into which a former member's bequest be placed.

Respectfully submitted,
Christyn Klinck, Clerk of Session



NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS

Ordination and/or installation date will be Sunday, June 2, 2019 during worship. Those who have been previously ordained in the PC (USA) to the office to which you have been elected will only have to be installed. Others will be ordained and installed.

Your term officially starts June 2, even if you must be ordained/installed at a later make-up date.

Examination by the Session: May 20, 2019

6:30 dinner in the Fellowship Hall,
7:00-7:30 p.m. meet with the Session in the East Parlor.

First meeting: Monday, June 24. Deacons will meet at 6:00 p.m. in the East Parlor. Combined officer dinner is at 6:30 (\$8 donation will cover costs of the food, prepared by **Cris Rivera** and **Beth Stringfield**). The Session meets at 7:00 p.m. in the East Parlor.

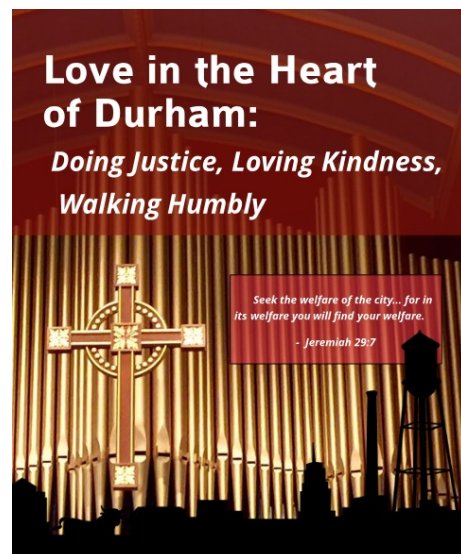
STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Mindy, George and I had a wonderful time this year at the Montreat Stewardship Renewal Conference, and were proud to share stories about our vibrant congregation and its intentional work in our rapidly changing downtown. We thank you again for your continued generosity through sustaining pledges, hours of volunteer time, reliable plate gifts and dedication to special offerings. We heard from Service and Mission that our **One Great Hour of Sharing** special offering was nearly \$5000, which will go towards Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program and Self Development of People. And on this Mother's Day, FPC supported the **Mother's Day Bailout** through SONG and the NC Bail Fund so mothers didn't have to spend that special day away from their families just because they couldn't afford bail.

This past weekend, we also celebrated Triangle college graduation weekend. First Presbyterian financially supports both Duke and North Carolina Central Campus Ministries (as well as having talented FPC members serving on their boards). We see how these partnerships with college campus ministries directly affect the state of our current Church, informing the next generation of faith leaders. As Rev. Sarah Hooker of UKirk Atlanta puts it, our gifts to campus ministry create the "good soil" from which "seeds of generosity" can flourish and growth of spirit can occur. **[Read more of her essay here.](#)**

Let us know what you'd like to hear about in this corner, what impact you'd like to know about, what stories you'd like to hear: **mcrisrivera@gmail.com** or **george.lynn.bernhardt@gmail.com**

-Cris Rivera and George Bernhardt, Stewardship Committee co-chairs



On Sunday mornings First Presbyterian Church (FPC) gives thanks for those God brings our way and wants to welcome all people with warmth and hospitality, regardless of their life circumstance. Occasionally, a visitor may ask for money or food. Members and friends want to help, but may not know what the right

response should be. Click [here](#) to read more.



The current series of Membership Inquiry Classes concludes on Sunday, May 19 (9:45 - 10:45 a.m. in the Wilson Parlor). If you have been visiting for some time or are actively searching for a church home, the class will address your questions and curiosity about First

Presbyterian Church. It is our hope that you will learn a few things about the history, ministry, and mission of FPC, and make some friends along the way. We do not require anyone to take these classes before joining; rather you are welcome to join at any time. Just let one of the pastors know, and we will make that happen. Sunday School and a nursery are available for your children while you are in class, or you may bring them with you. The teacher for this final session is **David Smith**.

Sunday, May 19

5th Sunday of Easter

9:45 a.m. Sunday School / Membership Inquiry Class

11:00 a.m. Worship

Marilyn Hedgpeth, preaching

Liturgist: **Amy Dillon**

Narthex Greeter: **Alice Raney**

After Worship Greeters: **TBD**

Ushers: Emily Wilkins, Dale Gaddis, Amy Dillon

Click [here](#) to sign up to usher.

Sunday, May 26

6th Sunday of Easter

9:45 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship

Sam Miglares, preaching

The **Hunger for Change offering** will be received during worship. Please give generously to help combat hunger in our community and around the world.

Liturgist: **Kathy Parkins**

Narthex Greeter: **Chris Williams**

After Worship Greeters: **TBD**

Ushers: John Mozart (head), **Christy Gudaitis** (flowers)

Click [here](#) to sign up to usher.

The **Prayer Shawl group** will meet briefly on **Sunday, May 26** after worship in the Wilson Parlor.

From the Associate Pastor:

The Culmination of the Easter Season: Pentecost

As the Easter season progresses, the Sunday readings increasingly focus on the promise of the Spirit of the risen Jesus, poured out in the midst of the community of believers. We approach Pentecost with the realization that it is not a totally separate festival; rather, it is the culmination of all that we celebrate throughout the Easter season. In our encounter with the Risen One, we have an experience of new life, transforming all who discover his presence in their lives.

In John's farewell discourse, Jesus tells us that he will ask the Father to send us the Spirit of truth. He promises also to come back himself, and to do so as life-giver. These words, these promises, are not just empty rhetoric. They touch us in the most vital areas of our every day life. For those with faith, what is at issue here is no less than the continuing experience of Jesus in our lives, an experience which sustains and nourishes our every action. When Jesus says "I will not leave you orphaned," he speaks words that we cling to in times of crisis and pain as well as in times of the ups and downs of routine. To live in his presence, knowingly and lovingly, is to be a person of faith. To remain oblivious to that presence is a concern for sure if we wish to be faithful disciples.

All of this comes down to some very mundane and prosaic issues: how aware are we of the Lord when we go about our daily tasks, at home, in the office, on the construction site, in our social lives? To what extent are we open to the Spirit's guidance, the Spirit's transforming power, as we live our everyday ordinary lives? How we answer these questions determines not only our level of faith, but the extent to which Easter and the Risen One are cause for celebration as we gather together on these Easter Sundays.

Sam Miglares

SUNDAY SCHOOL and other study opportunities

Children's Sunday School (grades 3-6)

Post Easter, we are continuing the rotation model of Sunday School, which allows our 3rd – 6th graders opportunities to experience the foundational stories from the Old Testament about the prophets, exile and return, through drama, art, games, LEGOS, music, cooking, gardening, etc. This is great fun for the students and for the teaching teams! The class meets in **room 201** of the Education Building at 9:45. (Bring friends and join us!)

Summer Sunday School Plans for Children and Youth

Yes – we will continue to provide Christian nurture and instruction for our youngest members from 9:45 – 10:45 a.m. during the summer, even though we may be a little more laid-back in the way we offer each class. This summer, **beginning June 9**, we will begin a series based on great new children's literature with a theological twist to how we interpret each book. Some of the books to be featured include: *Who's My Neighbor?*, by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso; *Chickens Build a Wall*, by Jean-Francois Dumont; *Three Bears in a Boat*, by David Soman; and *Wangari's Trees of Peace*, by Jeanette Winter. At the end of the summer, these books will be added to our FPC Children's Collection located upstairs in the Education Building. Each week we'll read, discuss, do a craft, have a snack, and play. We love having youth helping out with the younger children over the summer. Sign-ups to lead the user-friendly classes are coming soon.

Adult "Faith & Community" -

We will be wrapping up the school year the way that we started: with *Love Letters of Faith*. For the four Sundays in May we will share epistles and stories from Flannery O'Connor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (from prison), and poet Mary Oliver, who recently died in January. On May 12, **Mac McCorkle** presented a class on the battle of "ownership" of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's legacy that many progressives are now waging with evangelicals. **Robert Brawley** will follow up on **May 19** with observations from his experience of Bonhoeffer and his letter. The class meets at 9:45 in **Watts-Hill Hall**, and all are welcome.

Over the summer, the Faith and Community class will be reading and discussing together Bryan Stevenson's book, *Just Mercy*, as part of Mindy's sabbatical on "Breaking Down the Dividing Walls: Truth-telling, Reparations, and Racial Equity." **Beginning on June 9**, class discussions will be led by pastors and members of the Racial Equity Team. The study will conclude with a panel discussion that will include panelists from the community with knowledge of and experience with mass incarceration and the redemptive potential of justice and mercy. *Just Mercy* (35 copies ordered) will be available for free for those wishing to read along and participate in the class.

Adult Lectionary Class -

The Lectionary class will not meet on Sunday, May 19. Feel free to attend another class that is of interest to you.

May 26: We read stories in the Bible about God's direct involvement with people: God spoke clearly in visions and dreams, God opened hearts to listen to a message, God healed, God blessed. Is God still involved with us today? Do we still perceive God's actions? Join us for discussion at 9:45 in the East Parlor.

Adult Journeys & Scratch -

Journeys and Scratch will discuss the discussion of Phillip Roth's short story – *Conversion of the Jews*. This [link](#) provides a copy of the story. The class will also discuss topics for the upcoming Sunday School year. Join us at 9:45 in **room 205** of the Education Building.

Women's Spiritual Formation - Susan Dunlap leads this class for women in the **basement parlor** at 9:45. This class is a great support system of sharing and prayer for women.

The Thoughtful Christian - This class will not meet again until the fall. Stay tuned.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, DURHAM

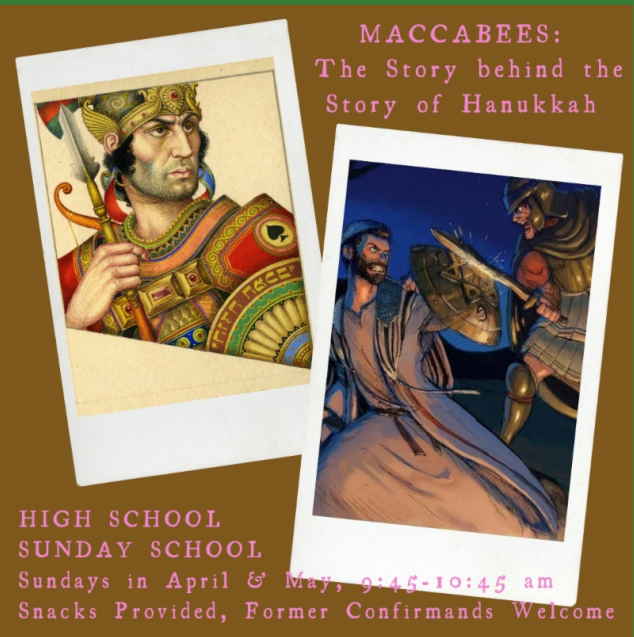
Calling all 6th, 7th & 8th Graders...



Middle School Sunday School is starting!
 Teachers: Lucie & Wayne House, Lenore Champion & Kim Abels
 Sundays this spring - April 7-June 2
 In the Youth Room, 9:45-10:45 am



MACCABEES:
 The Story behind the Story of Hanukkah



HIGH SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL
 Sundays in April & May, 9:45-10:45 am
 Snacks Provided, Former Confirmants Welcome



Calling all 2019 graduates!

FPC will recognize graduates again this year with a special bulletin insert in **Sunday, June 2**. If you or someone in your family or household is graduating from **college or high school** this spring, help us share the good news. Please submit your graduate's information to **Valerie McMillian** in the church

office by email: v.mcmillian@firstpres-durham.org or leave the details in Valerie's mailbox at the church. **The deadline for graduate information is May 24.**

FIRST FRIENDS AND FAMILIES

May Potluck (adults only)

Saturday, May 18

Jancy Johnstone's home on the lake
4730 Old Lake Trail, Hillsborough

Let's gather at 6:00 p.m. We will eat at 6:30. Please check the EVITE for **updated directions** to the home and details about what you need to bring. Contact Valerie in the church office to be added to the EVITE email list.

The next **Parents' Night Out** will take place **this Sunday, May 19**, from 4:45 – 6:15



p.m. Children will get to meet “the robot” and the brains behind it, **Sigfried Fullenkamp**. And we will eat a light dinner and play outside if the weather is good. Parents will slip away down the street for some burgers, refreshments and fellowship together. Let **Marilyn Hedgpeth** know if you are able to join us.

Coming this summer . . .

GREAT BIG CHURCH FAMILY FESTIVAL

Sunday evenings from 5:30 – 7:30, June 9th, July 7th, August 4th

FPC will host the June event; Trinity Avenue Presbyterian, July; and Mt. Bethel Presbyterian, August. **GBCFF this year will be geared towards service projects that we can do together as a family, young and old.** So, if your youth needs summer service hours, they can acquire those by helping prepare for the evening and participating in the event (perhaps 3 hours of service per event). We will eat dinner together, as is our custom, and we’ll share a Bible story and sing some songs. But most of the time we will be working on an array of service projects, like: preparing hurricane kits; making and packing lunches for Urban Ministries and Open Table; making blessing bags; gathering supplies for our Armed Forces; packing backpacks with school supplies; etc. The \$10/\$30 cost covers dinner, plus supplies for the projects. **On FPC’s night to host, we will have 25 guests joining us from the Light House Raleigh Muslim community joining us in service. During these days of sectarian violence, this is a great time to practice and model neighbor love as we serve together.** I know well that you will greet them warmly and weave them into the activities of the evening with great hospitality.

So, please mark these dates on your calendars, and plan to join us for dinner and service at this summer’s GBCFF. Stay tuned for registration information, which will be on-line. - **Marilyn Hedgpeth**

**New Monthly Social Event:
Winesdays at the Co-op!**

A few FPC fellowshippers have been gathering at the Durham Co-op Market for their regular wine tasting events at the kind invitation of **Cris Rivera**. We've been having so much fun hanging out together that we want to make it a monthly "thing," open to any and all! **Join us in sharing wine and breaking bread in a more casual setting on the third Wednesday of the month!**

- Cost is \$3 for wine tasting and then we each usually pitch in on an assortment of bread, cheese and other light dinner snacks to share.
- We usually eat outside which is lovely, weather permitting.
- Email or text **Laurie Williamson** if you have interest in joining us:

laurie@laurieandmatt.com, 919-724-1682



Save these dates . . .

Saturday, June 1, 2019

"REMEMBRANCE" Concert

3:00 p.m. in the sanctuary of FPC
The joint choirs of St. Philip's Episcopal and First Presbyterian churches will present a Spring Concert featuring the Fauré Requiem, one of the most beautiful and beloved

works in the choral repertoire. The concert, accompanied by orchestra and organ, will also include anthems by John Rutter. **The concert is free and open to the public** and is made possible by a gift from the **Horst and Ruth Mary Meyer Fund for Music and Gardens**. Please invite your friends.

Saturday, June 22 at 6:00 p.m.

Primetimers and SCRATCH (Young adults group) will meet together for a potluck meal at the home of **Marcia Lorimer**. More details forthcoming. Watch for the EVITE.

Saturday, August 3, 2019

Day Trip Tour of the International Civil Rights Museum in Greensboro NC

FPC members are invited to take this sabbatical-related journey by AMTRAK train from Durham to Greensboro and back on **Saturday, August 3**. The trip will include a light lunch. **You must reserve a seat by June 20th and pay a small reservation fee. Signups will begin soon.** Additional details forthcoming.

COMMUNITY INVITATIONS

HELP FOR THOSE WHO MOURN:

Are you hurting? Growing thru Grief offers year-round support for those who have lost a loved one. Here is the schedule of speakers for the next few weeks:

May 14 Betsy Barton, "The Five Invitations: Thoughts on Living Fully"

May 21 Amy Onstead will open the small group conversations

May 28 Nell Noonam will guide us in "Summoning Memories"

June 11 Marge Satinsky will lead us with "Healing Yoga"

June 25 Evelyn Reed's topic is "Control Issues in Grief and Life"

Growing thru Grief is a free, open, confidential program sponsored by a coalition of area religious and civic organizations to provide support and comfort to those who mourn. Meetings are held on Tuesdays (except for holidays) at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1200 W. Cornwallis. We gather at 4:00 p.m. for registration, coffee, and cookies; the meeting starts at 4:30 and ends by 6:00 p.m. On weeks without a formal speaker, one of our facilitators will start the group conversations.

DSA Theatre Troupe 5765 presents

PETER AND THE STARCATCHER

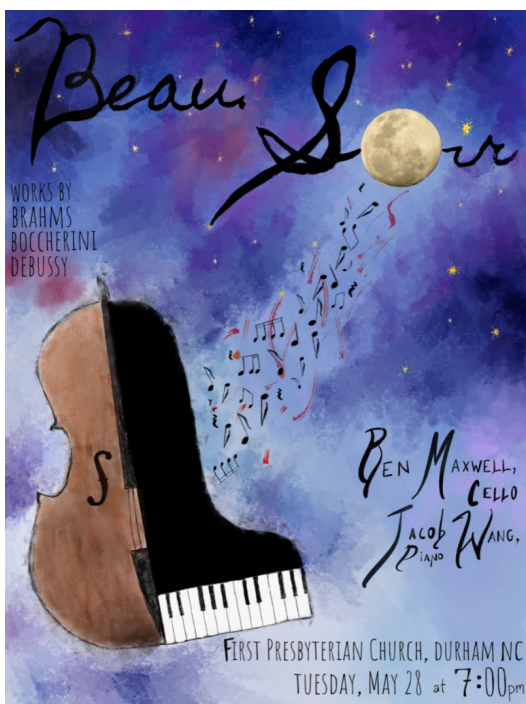
by Rick Elice Music and lyrics by Wayne Barker

May 15, 16, 17 and 18 at 7:30

May 18 at 3:00

\$12 online at www.seatyourself.biz/dsa or \$15 at the door

Sam Henry's last Durham School of the Arts High School play, "**Peter and the Starcatcher**," is coming **May 15-18**. Sam plays a bearded nanny who is "Tight in the lips, loose in the hips, and good on a ship!" It should be fun! You can get tickets to the shows [here](#).



CONCERT/RECITAL PLANNED

First Presbyterian member and cellist, **Ben Maxwell**, and pianist, **Jacob Wang**, are high school friends from UNC School of the Arts who have both continued to study music in college. They love playing together when they are home in NC and are excited to perform their first duo recital **at First Presbyterian on Tuesday, May 28 at 7:00 p.m.** They will play both the Boccherini and Brahms e minor cello sonatas along with some short but sweet favorites including Debussy's "Beau Soir", Dvořák's "Silent Woods" and Schubert's "Nacht und Träume." It will be the Tuesday evening after Memorial Day and everyone is invited to join us for this beautiful evening concert.

Training available in Spiritual Formation

The Listening Place Spiritual Center in Durham offers a 2-year program for the formation of spiritual directors. We are now taking applications for a new cohort that will begin in the fall of 2019. We work especially hard to ensure we have a diverse group of students from multiple denominations and faith traditions. Classes meet ten hours per month (one Saturday, one Monday) for ten months each year. The program, which is ecumenical and rooted in Ignatian spirituality, is for those who are seeking to deepen their own spiritual experience. A certificate is awarded upon the successful completion of the program.

Application deadline is May 31, 2019. For more information contact **Mary Grace McCoy**, Director, at 919-417-6279 or email:

listeningplacespiritualcenter@gmail.com.

The Listening Place Spiritual Center

1703 Chapel Hill Road

Durham, NC 27707

919-307-9068

An invitation from the Muslim Community

The **Divan Center** is a non-profit organization in Cary that seeks to bring together different communities in order to promote compassion, cooperation, partnership, and community service through interfaith activities.

- **Come break bread with members of the Muslim community during Ramadan.**
- **Come enjoy a Turkish meal and share a spiritual, interfaith atmosphere.**

DATES: Tuesdays, May 14, May 21 or May 28

Dinner will start with a short welcoming at 8:00 p.m. and Iftar Dinner (Fast Breaking) at 8:15 p.m.

LOCATION: The Divan Center located at 1391 SE Maynard Road, Cary (Next door to the Cary DMV)

RSVP: Participation is free but please RSVP through this [link](#) to get a head count for each gathering.

The next church newsletter will be issued on Tuesday, May 28.

Please submit your articles to Valerie in the church office by Sunday, May 26.

[May 2019 Birthdays](#)

[Online Church Calendar](#)



[Visit our website](#)