



Pastor's Reflection by Paul Simpson Duke

July 25, 2018

Seven months ago, the process of creating a new church photo directory began. Photos were taken of those who were able to come for an appointment, and pre-taken pictures were sent in by others. The company has now sent a draft copy of the new directory for our edits. It is something to see. We are a pretty good-looking group! And knowing the people in those pictures as I do, I am all the more pleased and thankful for what I see—a vibrant, healthy community of sharp, warm, loving, and committed people.

At the same time, as I look through those pages, I am swept with feelings of nostalgia and sadness because of so many who are no longer with us. I was prompted to look at the photo directory that was given to us on our arrival in Ann Arbor, seventeen and a half years ago. It was made in 1998. I was stunned by the differences in the two directories.

I should say at the outset that church photo directories never represent a congregation accurately. They always include people who never attend but who wish to be in their family's photo, or people who once were attached to the church but no longer really are, yet still want their photo made and included. On the other hand, some people who are active in the church do not appear in the directory because they missed the photo sessions and didn't send a picture in. Plus, all the directories are out of date by the time they are distributed, since deaths, departures, and new arrivals occur after the pictures are taken and before the directories are published.

That said, and assuming that the 1998 and 2018 directories are more or less equal in how representative they are, here are the differences: First, the new one has more people in it. The increase isn't huge, but given the fact that mainline churches everywhere are declining, I'm mighty grateful. Secondly, the demographics have changed, with a substantial shift from senior adults (though, happily, we still have lots!) to a higher percentage of middle-aged adults, younger adults, children, and teens. But most striking to me is this: the percentage of people in the 2018 directory who were also in the 1998 directory is surprisingly small, just 24%. Many, many people are no longer with us. Some have moved away, a few have dropped out, but mostly, a great many have died.

I am thrilled with the state of our church today, *and* I miss the many who now "stand on another shore, and in a greater light." I think of the Sunday morning faces in the sanctuary in earlier years of our ministry here, and I think of all the funerals, all the sad farewells. These were the faces of the church. Their commitment and character and witness defined the church. There are times when I look at the Sunday morning faces in the sanctuary now and think: Is this the same church? 76% of the people in the new directory were not here when the pastors arrived—and more new people are attending since the directory photos were taken. Is this the same church?

The answer is: No, it is not, and Yes, it absolutely is. Not only are many of our longtime members still with us and giving crucial leadership, service, witness, wisdom, support, prayers, and vital institutional memory, but the similar commitments of those who have gone on continue to bear good fruit among us. Their voices are still joined to our singing. Within the current church's light of witness, their light still shines. And the many who have joined in recent years, even in recent months, they have taken up the long-carried torch of this church's ongoing life. They have brought fresh commitment, energy, witness, wisdom, leadership, service, support, prayer, and love. They have done this with new vitalities, vision, and gratitude for what preceded and awaited them in partnership here. It is both a thrilling newness and a profound continuity. It is a living fellowship spanning decades and generations. It has been, and is, and will go on being a vibrant, living, and faithful church, with so many, many beautiful faces.

An Introduction and Invitation to Godly Play

We, the staff and Board of Christian Education, are excited to share with you news in Children's Ministry. Beginning this fall we will have a Godly Play classroom for our four year olds through 2nd graders. Godly Play is a Montessori Christian formation curriculum that follows the order of worship as it "transforms ordinary time and space into sacred time and space."

This Sunday, Xan Morgan, our Director of Children's Ministry will be modeling the formation approach as she preaches on The Feeding of the 5,000. She is eager to share the components of Godly Play as the spiritual disciplines learned are life-giving at any age. We hope you'll be able to join us in worship this Sunday. Please keep reading to learn more about Godly Play and how you can partner with us to make it all possible.

Godly Play uses a multi-sensory approach to telling Bible stories with three-dimensional materials. This imaginative method serves to support, challenge, empower, and guide children along on their spiritual journey. Children enter into the sacred stories of the people of God and into the stories of Jesus - the miracles, parables and teachings about the Kingdom of God.

After the children hear a story told using the three-dimensional pieces, the storyteller invites the children into a time of wondering. In the words of the authors, Sonja Stewart and Jerome Berryman, "Wondering together is a community's way of remaining open to the Holy Spirit, a way of meditating so the story becomes part of the group's life. As such, wondering shapes and deepens our knowledge of God and what God expects of us. This knowing is based on their experience of God, not on being told about God."

Following the time of wondering, kids are invited to respond personally. Children choose how they would like to respond either by working with and retelling the story from that day or another day or by working with art materials. "Art responses enable the children to express understandings and the artwork is a means of talking with God, a form of prayer. The purpose, of course, is that they meet God, love and respond to God, and experience what it means to hear scripture as remembrance, a way of reliving and abiding in the presence of God."

We invite you to be partners with us as we establish this Godly Play classroom. There are a variety of ways to be a part of this work:

- **Financially contribute toward the Godly Play start up costs** - The stories are told using 3-dimensional materials and are displayed on shelving units throughout the classroom. Please consider donating to help us make these one-time purchases, totalling \$2,978. Near the Information Counter we have a mural of loaves and fish on the wall; sections of the mural will be colored in as financial gifts are made. You can donate for a specific story (ie. \$48 for "The Feeding of the 5000" story pieces) or you can simply make a donation of your choosing. If you would like to donate electronically with a credit card, you may do so on our secure website. Go to www.fbca2.org, click "Give," then "Give online," and then click "Make a single payment." Please put "Godly Play" in the comments section.



- **Join the teaching team** - Are you interested in creating space and time for children (and you!) to meet with God? We are looking for six more teachers who will teach on a rotating schedule throughout the year. We will have two afternoon trainings in August to equip the team. Let Xan (xan@fbca2.org) know if you are interested!
- **Provide lunch for the Godly Play trainings** - Our team training will be split over two Sunday afternoons, August 19 and August 26. We will have a working lunch after worship as part of the training. Let Xan (xan@fbca2.org) know if you would like to help in this way.
- **Classroom Work Day** - On Thursday, August 16th we will have a work day in the classroom. We'll be putting shelves together, preparing stories and gathering art supplies. Please let Xan (xan@fbca2.org) know if you are available to help.

We are grateful to Graham Miles for making wooden trays to hold the stories and to Vania McAllister, Alicia Stevers, Julia Cooper, Hannah Bingham and Angie Ko for creating parable story pieces. And thank you for considering how you might partner with us as we begin this new Godly Play adventure.

With excitement,
Xan, Stacey, Paul and the Board of Christian Education



Children's Christian Education

Dear God...
During the summer months, our combined church school class will be journeying with Jesus using Archbishop Desmond Tutu's, "Children of God Storybook Bible." Bishop Tutu offers a prayer at the end of each Bible story. The kids will be making a visual representation of each prayer.



Join us outside following the service on August 12 and 26 for Lemonade on the Lawn. We'll have snacks, lemonade and yard games to play. Coffee and goodies will also be in the Fellowship Hall as usual.

FBC News & Happenings

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for the Chester and Violet Loucks scholarship, which will help me to continue in my public health studies at the University of Michigan. I hope to be able to use the skills I am developing to contribute to the mission of First Baptist Church and to serve others more fully. I am grateful to have such an inspiring, generous, and supportive church family. Thank you!

- Christina Alaniz

Art Fairs Thank you!

Much appreciation to the following volunteers! Thanks to their efforts \$2,445 was raised during Art Fairs week by renting our parking lot. This amount will be split between the Vespers and Youth Ministries. Thank you all!

The Cesar Alaniz and Janice Stumpf Family, Noelle and Shelley Alton, Kat Becker, Allen and Paula Burton, Jill Damon, Mary Davis, Stacey, Rob, and Charlie Duke, Kathleen Ford, Ingrid Ford, Shannon, John, and Eleanor Floyd, Beth Foster, Ron and Kate Gregg, The Halliday Family, Cindy Harrison, Mary Margaret Hatt, Carolyn Hillebrand, The Kerschbaum Family, Kathy Mortensen, Jackie Syder Powdhar and Brandon Powdhar, Cynthia and Andrew Redinger, Robert and Nancy Rhodes (2 shifts), Julie Smith, Pete Stover (2 shifts).

We are saddened to report the passing of Ola Jeanne McCollough

Ola Jeanne "OJ" McCollough, of Byron, Minnesota, went to be with her heavenly Father on Saturday June 23, 2018. She was born April 12, 1941 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She was the daughter of Roy and Virleah Purchase, who preceded her in death. She was united in marriage to Daniel F. McCollough on September 15, 1962 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. They were married for 56 wonderful years.

OJ graduated from Ann Arbor high school in 1959. She was a full-time homemaker after the birth of her first son Kevin, who came into the world on their one-year anniversary. Kevin was later joined by his younger brother Darrin. OJ delighted in attending all of their many school and sporting activities, no matter how far of a drive. She later worked part time at their school in Saline, Michigan, where they made their home. She served as a member of the Parent Teacher Association at all of the boys' schools, was the popcorn lady at their middle school and carnival chairman at their grade school.



After the boys were grown, Dan and OJ moved to Dexter, Michigan, where OJ owned and operated OJ's First Class Kennels. She loved raising and showing Boston Terriers, and served as the President of the Boston Terrier Club of America and also the President of the Detroit Boston Terrier Club. She was a lifetime member of both clubs.

OJ was a 3rd generation and lifelong member of the First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she was active with church suppers and rummage sales, and taught Sunday school.

A gifted singer, OJ toured ten countries with the Michigan Chorale. She performed in numerous musicals and theatre productions in the Saline Civic Theater, and most recently served in the choir at Byron United Methodist Church in Byron, Minnesota, after moving to Byron in 2016 to be near her sons and their families.

OJ is survived by her husband Daniel; her sons and their spouses, Kevin (Cynthia) McCollough of Byron, MN and Darrin (Naomi) McCollough of Stewartville, MN; six beloved grandchildren, Brian and Shannon McCollough of Byron, MN and Philip, Daniel, Alea and Joseph McCollough of Stewartville; and her two Boston Terriers, Odetta and Tinker Bell.

Memorial donations may be made to the First Baptist Church Purchase Flower Fund.

We are saddened to report the passing of Jerry Suits

Jeraldine (Jerry) Marta Feiner Suits transitioned peacefully surrounded by her family and caregivers. Jerry was born on September 4th, 1931, in Ann Arbor, to Flossie Bell Polk Feiner and Carl M. Feiner. She graduated from Ann Arbor High School in 1949, where she met the love of her life, Jim Suits. They met in 1948 and Jim took her flying in an airplane on their first date.



She loved sports and lettered in volleyball. She continued with her education, attending Kalamazoo College, and the University of Michigan, earning her Master Degree in Early Childhood Development. She worked for many years and retired from the lab preschool at the University of Michigan Psychiatric Hospital. She loved UM football and basketball and regularly attended games. She taught Sunday school at the First Baptist Church for many years, as well as a member of several Bible Study groups. She loved dogs. Jerry survived ovarian cancer back in 1988, and volunteered driving patients to cancer treatment for many years afterward. She also volunteered at the Vespers Program for the homeless at her church.

Jerry is survived by her husband, James R. Suits. They recently celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary. Survivors also include daughters Lynn Suits Lamkin (David), Kathy Suits Keeping, (Alan), son Charles M. Suits, (Betsy), grandchildren, Martin McDonald, (Gina), Karl Suits, David Suits, (Marcha), John Suits, (Ellen), Scott Siler, Sarah Suits Obenauf (John), and Daniel Siler. Great-Grandchildren include Keira McDonald, R.J. Suits, Jimmy Suits, and Emma Suits. Special thank-you to her caregivers, Debra and Diana, and the Memory Lane Staff. Everywhere we went people would say "I just love your mother!" She will be missed. A Memorial service was held Sunday, July 15, 2018 at 1:00 P.M. at the First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor with Rev. Paul Duke officiating. Donations may be made to the Vespers Program at the First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor, 517 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor, MI. 48104. A private burial service was held at Forest Hill Cemetery. To leave a memory, to sign her guestbook, or for directions please visit www.rbfhsaline.com.

Habitat for Humanity - Good News Houses 2018

Our last workday is Friday Aug 3. The Good News Houses for 2018 are to be the renovations of two 1950's ranch houses in Ypsilanti. The houses are at 679 and 830 Calder. We will also need lunches on those dates. Please contact Scott Diels at 734-649-2787(Cell) or hscottdiels@att.net if you are able to participate.

Poverty Simulation Volunteers Needed

ICPJ has a Poverty Simulation scheduled for the morning Saturday, August 11 and is in need of volunteers to help run the simulation. You would need to block off 8:30 am - noon. If you are able to volunteer and have a preference for a roll, please let them know.

ICPJ is trying to have volunteers sign themselves up at the link below. When you sign up you can put your preference in the comment section. If you would rather call the ICPJ office, please feel free. Thank you for considering!

Signup Genius for Volunteer Sign up for August 11 Poverty Simulation
http://tiny.cc/povsimvol8_11_18

Follow us on Facebook! If you aren't already a fan of FBCA2 on Facebook, come on over and "Like" our page: [facebook.com/fbca2](https://www.facebook.com/fbca2). We post regular updates there about what's going on around here, along with the occasional devotional thought. You can post on our wall as well. If you are already a fan, did you know that you can easily share certain FBCA2 posts with your own Facebook friends? Events and links that can be shared will have a "Share" button (in addition to the usual "Like" and "Comment" buttons). Click "share" and the event or link will show up on your own Facebook page for all your friends to see. It's a great way to get the word out about special happenings at our church.



August 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 H4H Workday	4
5 10:00 Worship	6	7 1:00 Mission Action 5:30 Vespers	8 7:30 ChristCare	9	10	11
12 10:00 Worship 11:15 Lemonade on the Lawn	13 5:00 Christian Education	14 1:30 ChristCare 5:30 Vespers	15 *newsletter*	16	17	18
19 10:00 Worship	20	21 5:30 Vespers	22	23	24	25 2:00 Mothering Justice
26 10:00 Worship 11:15 Lemonade on the Lawn	27	28 5:30 Vespers	29	30	31	

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The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors

Next
Newsletter
Deadline:
Sunday, August 12

The Board of Care and Community and your congregation want to be available to help in life's difficulties and transitions, but we can only do that if we know your are experiencing them. We can offer visits, help with food, transportation and possibly other needs. If you or your family lets the church office know, we will contact you by your preferred method to see how we can help.

FBC e-Connection and Newsletter Email Distribution

From time to time, we hear from folks that they didn't get word of various events. Here is a quick summary of how to get your email added to one or both of the distribution lists...

The church office sends out two communications electronically:

- **FBC e-Connections** are sent out with important news about immediate happenings at the church and the concerns of church members, such as prayer requests, birth and death announcements.
- **FBC Newsletter** for distribution of the twice-monthly church newsletter for those who want to receive it electronically (it helps save on paper and postage, besides arriving at your computer on date of publication!)

If you aren't currently subscribed to either list and wish to be, please email the church office at office@fbca2.org and we will send out an invitation to subscribe to either or both lists. When you get the email invitation, click on the link to finish the subscription process. ***In order to prevent complaints about spam, the distribution program doesn't allow us to simply add an email address to the list.***