



Pastor's Reflection by Paul Simpson Duke

February 13, 2019

May I let you in on a little secret about preaching? Here it is: A big part of the preaching is done by *you*. More than you can possibly realize, you teach your pastors how to preach. True, Stacey and I did take seminary courses on preaching, and we both have written on the subject. I have taught courses in it, and Stacey's Doctor of Ministry degree was all about it. But the training we have received from you has been indispensable and profound—and it keeps right on going. The way you listen gives shape to the way we preach. It happens in quieter ways here than in some other traditions, in which worshipers shout out their affirmations and encouragements (*Amen! Preach it! Yass!*). I've heard it so little myself that if I did I might faint. But something akin to it does happen here, and in more ways than one.

It helps that in our life together you are willing to open yourselves to us. You let us into your lives, giving us access to your perspectives, your values and commitments, your griefs and struggles, your hope, your faith, your need. We know you to be people of deep thoughtfulness, strong convictions, great humor, honesty about what is difficult, real concern about the world, and seriousness about faith. *Who you are* has a strengthening, guiding influence as we prepare our preaching. It might surprise you to know that I see your faces as I am studying and thinking about a sermon, and writing it. It's not a conscious discipline on my part; your faces just rise to mind—different sets of faces week after week. The questions come to me: How would he/she hear this line, what might resonate with them, what objections/questions might they have, what will fall short, what will engage their questions, what will confirm and deepen their truest convictions and encourage their truest faithfulness to the gospel? And, in part, because of what I know of you, language emerges, connections get made. I may not get it right, but I have learned that your lives, your minds, and your commitments will often whisper good counsel on how to preach in this place.

Then, there is what happens during the preaching itself. Neither Stacey nor I have ever preached to a congregation as deeply and consistently attentive as you are. We see it in your faces, we feel it in your stillness. In every church, some unintended noisiness happens—coughs, babies crying, bathroom emergencies, passing sirens, cell phones, latecomers, etc. So be it, that's life, to be taken in stride. That said, there is an intensity in your listening silence that is a powerful thing to us. It is part of the way you worship, of course. You pray and hear scripture and sing like you mean it. Then, as we preach, it's as if something about you leans forward. You seem engaged, even expectant. Clearly you care. And there are cues in the responsiveness of your faces that tell us when something hits home. Something in you telegraphs that this is something you identify with, or believe in, or need to believe in. You *get* it! You signal your encouragement. Over time, little by little, you coach us towards the kind of expressiveness and applications of the gospel that might be most fruitful for you and for our community. Not least important, the kind of conversations you have with us later about what you have heard has an ongoing impact on the future of the preaching.

From the outside looking in, preaching looks like a monologue—a strange, dull, antiquated thing. But preaching in a healthy church is really a kind of conversation, a kind of dance. As time goes by (and this can be an advantage of a long pastorate), a congregation and its pastors teach each other and join each other in the proclamation of the Word. They show each other how it's done. The sermon becomes not just what the church needs to *hear*, but what the church is *saying*; the pastors aren't just speaking *to* you but *with* you and, in your behalf, to others. I think sometimes when visitors come in, they feel it. I know I do. It's the dynamic of a real community in Christ. It is the power of the Holy Spirit. It is mutual love. And your pastors, who thanks to you are still learning, are very, very thankful to have such partners as you in the vocation of preaching the good news.

Children's Christian Education

Children and Youth are an important part of our life together at First Baptist Church. All children are welcome in worship. If you are visiting and would like more information about our ministry with kids and youth, please connect with our Director of Children's Ministry, Xan Morgan (xan@fbca2.org) or our Youth Minister, Stacey Simpson Duke (staceyduke@gmail.com).

Here is our Sunday morning scoop for Kids:

Children are an integral part of our worshiping church family; children of all ages are welcome in worship. Staff and volunteers transition the kids during the morning. Our goal is to make it easy for parents to participate in "Second Hour," our adult class offerings.

Infant - 3-year-olds: room 307 on the 3rd floor

- 10:00 Worship with family, nursery available
- 10:30 Families may choose to have kids go to the nursery following Time as Children for a time of praying and storytelling in the nursery. Snack will be provided.
- 11:30 Children and nursery staff go to another play space (room 202 B) for Friendship Time.
- 12:30 Parents come to pick up kids in room 202B (Children's Ministry wing) after 2nd hour adult classes.

4-year-olds - 2nd grade: room 202A

- 10:00 Worship with families
- 10:30 Godly Play Church School (room 202A)
- 11:30 Snack (room 202B)
- 11:45 Grace Notes Choir (room 202A)
- 12:00 Friendship Time staffed by Kate and Coley (room 202B)
- 12:30 Parents pick up kids after 2nd hour adult classes (room 202B)

3rd - 5th Grade: Room 201B

- 10:00 It's "Stay for Second Sunday" so 3rd-5th graders will worship with their families for the whole service. (Church School is after Time as Children on 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays.)
- 11:00 Fellowship Time with families
- 11:30 Friendship Time with Xan
- 12:00 Children's Choir with Shin-Ae (music room)
- 12:30 Parents pick up kids in the choir room after 2nd hour adult classes.

Youth (6th-12th grade)

- 10:00 Worship (Sanctuary)
- 11:00 Fellowship Time
- 11:30 Church School (Room 107)



Opportunities for Kids to Serve

We are committed to providing opportunities for the kids of FBC to make a difference in our local community and in the world.



AMOS Toothpaste and Toothbrush Drive: In early March, a group of FBC folks will be spending a week volunteering with our mission partners, AMOS Health and Hope in Nicaragua. One of their projects is to visit local schools to talk about dental hygiene. Each child will be given a toothbrush and toothpaste. **We only need 18 tubes of toothpaste to reach our goal off 100 tubes of toothpaste and 100 toothbrushes.** A collection basket will be in the hallway near the bulletin board where we are tracking our progress! Questions? Email Xan (xan@fbca2.org).

Adult Christian Education

We continue our Sunday morning Christian Education series, "For All the Saints," starts. Each Sunday, members of our church family are offering presentations on some of the people whose lives have been inspirations and models for them. Some of our speakers are sharing about great figures from Christian history or from our own congregational history. Others are talking about people they have personally known whose impact on them was transforming. This is a great opportunity not only to learn about some remarkably inspiring and influential people, but also to become better acquainted with many in our own church family as they speak of the people and events that have helped give shape to their own lives and faith. Please join us for as many Sundays as you can.

Other Adult Education Opportunities:

Wednesday Bible Study meets at 1:30pm in the Lounge. Paul Simpson Duke is leading a study of the Gospel of John.

Small Groups: We have continuing small groups centered on study, sharing, prayer, worship and mission meeting at various times. See Stacey or Paul for information on how to join an existing group or form a new group.

College/University Students: The Gathering is for undergraduates and graduate students. This semester, we gather every Sunday evening during the school year, 5:00p-7:00pm, in the Campus Center, for a free, home-cooked meal, friendship, and spiritual growth. If you would like to receive our weekly e-newsletter, sign up here: <https://bit.ly/2NOFYGa>.

FBC News & Happenings

Shared Suppers

Let's eat, and talk, and enjoy one another's company with no agenda, no decisions to make beyond whether or not to have seconds...

Keep an eye out for the next Shared Suppers dates. The Board of Care and Community is sponsoring an opportunity for our FBC Family to gather and get to know one another better. What better way to do that than around a family table?

We gather in smallish groups (6-8ish) in homes for Shared Suppers. They are potluck style and happen on the 2nd weekend, every other month, i.e. November, January, etc. The groups will be different every time so folks can interact with those they may not know so well.

If you haven't already signed up and are interested in being on the list of participants, sign up at the Information Counter or contact Mary Davis (madrad@umich.edu). Being on the list only indicates interest, not a commitment to come. You will be contacted for availability about two weeks before each supper. Of course everyone won't be able to come every time. Children are welcome to participate, or we can help arrange child care. Shared transportation can also be arranged.



Pony and the Groundcover News in the News!

Check out this article, "[Being poor is expensive: Goundcover vendors share insights from streets of Ann Arbor](#)" with quotes from our own, Pony Bush. Groundcover News exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty. Pony has been worshipping at First Baptist for over a year. If you would like to purchase a Groundcover News, which is a \$2 monthly publication, you can find Pony outside before or after worship.

The 2019 Flower Calendar

The signup calendar is now posted on the downstairs bulletin board near the Lounge door. The flowers are placed on the chancel for each service and your dedication goes in the bulletin. The flowers are yours to take after the Sunday morning service. The cost is \$30, payable by cash, check, or online. (See instructions next to the signup calendar.) Please sign up early to secure your date(s).

Join the Sunday Morning Welcoming Team!

No meetings - just come and serve! Our Welcoming Team is one of our most important ministries. On Sunday mornings, volunteers stand in key places in the building to show hospitality to all who come for worship. Sign up online - Sign-up is online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0d44afa928ab9-sunday> - it's fast and easy! Sign up on your own, with a friend, with a spouse, or with your whole family. Sign up once or multiple times. Serving on our Welcoming Team is a great way to plug in to ministry at First Baptist and get to know others in our community. Questions? Contact Sam Laidlaw at laidlawsam7@gmail.com.

Rotating Shelter Volunteers

FBCA2 will host the Delonis Center Rotating Shelter seven nights in March beginning Monday, March 18 through Sunday, March 24. Two volunteers serve each night as hosts arriving at 7:30pm and serving overnight until 7:00am the next day. (The volunteers work shifts; so, you get some sleep.) Currently we have four slots left: one slot for Thursday the 21st, two slots for Saturday the 23rd, and one slot for Sunday the 24th. For questions and/or sign up please contact Pete Stover (petestover@me.com or at 816-830-1041).



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.

UMS Presents Benjamin Britten's "War Requiem"

UMS Choral Union

Ann Arbor Youth Chorale (which includes two from FBC, Alexandra DaSilva and Helena Kremer)

Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra

Scott Hanoian, conductor

Tatiana Pavlovskaya, soprano

Anthony Dean Griffey, tenor

Stephen Powell, baritone

Saturday, February 16 at 8 pm

Hill Auditorium



Tickets can be purchased at

https://tickets.ums.org/single/SYOS.aspx?p=4112&utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=UMS+Presents+Benjamin+Britten+s+War+Requiem+%282%2F16%29&utm_campaign=1819BenjaminBrittensWarRequiem

Benjamin Britten was commissioned to write his War Requiem for the re-consecration of Britain's Coventry Cathedral, which was destroyed by a Nazi bomb raid in 1940. The lifelong pacifist with deeply humanitarian beliefs had been thinking about writing a work that addressed the bloodshed and sorrow of war for many years, and this work provided his most powerful demonstration of its horror, devastation, and futility.

Dedicated to four of Britten's friends who were killed during World War II, the War Requiem mixes the Latin words of the Mass for the Dead with the poetry of Wilfred Owen, who was killed in action just one week before World War I ended. The work, which has never been performed on a UMS concert, requires huge forces, including large orchestra and chorus, two organs, a chamber orchestra that accompanies the soloists, and a boys' choir.

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.***

Share the Amor, Amor, Amor...



This March, our team will journey down to Nicaragua to work alongside AMOS Health and Hope staff and community health workers in the community of Nejapa.

AMOS envisions a world where there is peace, justice, health, and hope for all people. They use a community-based participatory approach to empower and support local leaders in mobilizing around the health and well-being of their communities.

While other organizations have left Nicaragua in the midst of the ongoing humanitarian crisis there, AMOS is working harder than ever to continue sharing health and hope with the most vulnerable people.

When we participate in activities at AMOS, we often share “*Amor, Amor, Amor*,” “love” in Spanish, a reminder of the love God calls us to accept, embrace, and wholeheartedly share with our neighbors.

Will you help us share love with our neighbors in Nicaragua?



Help us share health and hope with kids in the Nejapa community through Vacation Bible School activities and dental hygiene education at local preschools.

Help us share comfort with patients at the Samaritan Clinic through remodeling the waiting room, ensuring AMOS can continue to provide quality consultations to the people they serve.

Help us share joy with AMOS' Early Childhood Development support group through working with young parents to help them create sensory boards and safe play spaces for their babies.

Help us share encouragement with the youth in AMOS' Youth Empowerment Group through helping them host a Nutrition Fair for the Nejapa community.

And help us share love with the AMOS staff and community health workers as they continue to serve vulnerable people during this time of great need.

Having fewer mission teams travel to Nicaragua has led to significant gaps in funding for AMOS. Sharing love with our neighbors in Nicaragua is more important than ever before.

We have a goal of raising \$5,000, but would love to raise more to support AMOS during this difficult time. Please share love with our neighbors in Nicaragua by supporting our trip today!

With amor, amor, amor,

The 2019 Nejapa Mission Team: Allen Burton, Carolyn Grapentine, Cesar Alaniz, Chris Grapentine, Dan Barry, Kay Wilson, Marissa Alaniz, Mary Davis, Pete Stover, Scott Diels, Stacey Simpson Duke, and Xan Morgan

Please make checks payable to First Baptist Church with “AMOS Trip” in the memo line.
If you prefer to donate online by credit card, please visit our fundraising page here:
<https://www.crowdrise.com/o/en/campaign/amos-health-and-hope-nejapa-nicaragua?>



AMOS Fundraising Update

Our goal is to raise \$5,000 to make our work with AMOS possible; to date we have raised \$2,520. You are invited to partner with our delegation through prayer, a financial contribution towards the project costs, and/or donate toothpaste (need only 18 more tubes). Checks can be made out to First Baptist Church with "AMOS donation" in the memo line or you can [donate online](#). Members of our delegation will be standing near the fundraising bulletin boards to answer questions and receive donations. Questions? Contact Xan Morgan (xan@fbca2.org) or Pastor Stacey Simpson Duke (staceyduke@gmail.com).

The MacGregor-Stitt Circle next meets at 1:00pm on Thursday, February 21, in the Lounge. The program is *Courage for the Difficult Tasks* by Charles Stanley, led by Sandra Deline.

Sing-a-long at Hillside Terrace

The Beecher-Brewer and MacGregor-Stitt Circles will meet at 2pm on Tuesday, March 19, at Hillside Terrace for their annual gathering with the residents at Hillside Terrace.

Peace in Our Land: Toward a World Without Violence 15-20 July 2019 • Unibautista • Cali, Colombia

We invite you to join us for the 2019 Global Baptist Peace Conference in Cali, Colombia! The conference is open to everyone and anyone interested in peacemaking and will also serve as the 2019 Summer Conference for BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz. During our time together, we will build on the important work of Baptists engaged in peacemaking processes around the globe and equip those engaged in ecumenical and interfaith peacebuilding around the world. The 2019 theme, Peace in Our Land: Toward a World Without Violence, will provide an overarching guide for the week. With Colombia as the location, we will especially recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of the Colombian Peace Accord, and attendees will be able to learn from the successes and setbacks of this peace process. Past global conferences have sparked a considerable amount of grassroots peace work, strengthened ecumenical and interfaith peacebuilding on a global level, and led to the creation of several regional peace networks. We can't wait to see what Cali will bring!

Visit www.globalbaptistpeace2019.org to learn more, register, and apply for scholarships.

January Was a Brutal Month - A Warming Center Update (Excerpt)

166 people at the warming center one day, January averages steadily above 100.

Our numbers at the day shelter skyrocket from 50-70 to over 100. Lots of new people, unaccustomed to being in community struggle with the ideas of holding one another accountable and how to contribute to keeping things running smoothly. With a move to down town locations folks can easily walk over and tend to bounce in and out throughout out the day. Coming in to warm up, grab a bite to eat and a hot drink then head back out to run errands, sell GroundCover, apply for jobs etc. It is great for many, the down side being that those with a substance use disorder have an easier time slipping out to engage with their drug of choice before coming back. For "staff" and volunteers this means keeping a delicate balance of not kicking people out who are able to be behaviorally appropriate, but watching closely for those "on the edge" situations. It's exhausting.

It also saves lives.

Homelessness can be exhausting, and traumatic. Not only do many people become homeless as a result (or at least associated with) trauma, but the experience itself is traumatic. Trauma can leave us feeling exhausted. Not to mention that it is hard to get a good night's sleep outside in a tent, or huddled under the overhang of the church, or stairwell of a parking structure. For those in the night time warming shelter mats on a cafeteria floor are lifesaving, but rarely proved the comfort needed for a deep sleep, especially considering how closely to you others are sleeping. Being woken early and sent off to the next spot you are allowed to temporarily be. No chance for a day or two to sleep in, or that "mental health day" where you hang out in PJs and read or watch TV. While it seems so much of the world extolls the virtues of self-care (which is NOT a bad thing) those things that many of us associate with simple self-care (a day off, a hot bath, a late AM spent curled up in comfort with a favorite book...) are out of reach to many living without housing. Or when our houseless friends find ways to eek out a bit of this self-care we judge them as lazy or assume that it is unneeded and undeserved.

And yet there is time for compassion. Several of the guests at the shelter gave away their own coats, sweatshirts, hats, and boots to others in the homeless community who might need it more. For example, one of our guests received a brand-new pair of nice snow boots from our friends at St. Mary's. He looked around and saw another guest wearing tennis shoes and handed the new boots over. "What I really need is work boots," he explained, "and at least I have these for the snow" (pointing down to the old, worn down snow boots on his feet.) Or the man who handed over his winter coat to another guest explaining "I have at least a couple of warm sweatshirts I can layer. "

A go-fund me account set up by a dear friend raised around \$2,500 in about 48 hours and was spent on hotel rooms for 16 individuals including 2 babies plus 2 dogs. These are folks who for their own reasons (PTSD, general anxiety, not wanting to leave pets etc.) could not access the support available to them at Delonis.

The warming center has moved to our February hosts: First Congregational and First Baptist who welcome us with open arms and full tables. Again, reminding me that while the well of need is great, the well of love and support can be equally deep.

And so I wrap up this email exhausted, but with a heart bursting with gratitude for a community I am proud to be a part of.

Thanks to all of you for all your gifts of time, talent and treasure. Thanks for loving!

With hard-nosed hope and fierce love,
Sheri

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.



REFUGEE FOSTER CARE

A home beyond borders.



Could You Give a Home to a Refugee Youth?

Youth from all over the world are separated from their families while fleeing violence, war, and persecution. They come from Eritrea, Somalia, Honduras, Guatemala, Afghanistan, and many other countries. Now, they are in need of local foster families in Michigan that can provide a home, love, and support while they pursue a new future in the United States. Foster care is challenging work, but you can feel good knowing you are changing the life of a youth far from home.

Foster parents will receive:

- Support from Samaritas staff and connections with foster parent support networks
- A daily financial stipend to help with the cost of fostering
- A clothing allowance
- Interpretation services for appointments
- Counseling services for the youth
- Legal Assistance



Interested in Learning More?

Contact Kayla Park @ 517-321-7663 or RFCinfo@samaritas.org for more information or for our upcoming orientation dates.

First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor
Coffee Break Concert Series, 2018-2019 ④
Celebrating Its 8th Year

Meditation I

Music and Poetry

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth...

from *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost

March 14, 2019

Thursday at 12:15 PM

Poems by Thomas Moore, E.E.Cummings, Lecote de Lisle, Jane Kenyon, Jung-Ju Seo and Mary Oliver; **Music** by Dudley Buck, Franz Liszt, Henri Duparc, Robert Schumann and Bill Evans; **Performers** Heather Entrekin, Ling-Ju Lai, Yongmin Kim, Shin-Ae Chun



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR

First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor
517 E. Washington St, Ann Arbor, MI48104
734-663-9376 / www.fbca2.org

March 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 AMOS Trip
3 10:00 Worship 11:30 2nd Hour 5:00 Gathering	4	5 5:30 Vespers	6 1:30 Bible Study 7:00 Ash Wed. Service	7 7:30 Choir	8	9
AMOS Mission Trip						
10 10:00 Worship 11:30 2nd Hour 5:00 Gathering	11	12 5:30 Vespers	13 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 Christian Ed 7:00 Executive Council	14 12:15 Coffee Break 7:30 Choir	15	16
17 10:00 Worship 11:30 Arts & Crafts 5:00 Gathering	18 5:30 Outreach 7:00 Racial Just. Book Grp.	19 2:00 Sing-a-Long At Hillside 5:30 Vespers	20 1:30 Bible Study	21 7:30 Choir	22	23
Rotating Shelter						
24 10:00 Worship 11:30 2nd Hour 5:00 Gathering Rotating Shelter	25	26 5:30 Vespers	27 1:30 Bible Study	28 7:30 Choir	29	30
31 10:00 Worship 11:30 2nd Hour 5:00 Gathering						



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The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors

Next
Newsletter
Deadline:
Sunday, March 10

Ash Wednesday Service

As we enter the season of Lent, we reflect on our penitence and our mortality. Please join us on Wednesday, March 6, at 7:00pm, in the sanctuary, for a simple, somber service of prayer and ashes. Optional childcare will be provided for infants and toddlers.

Adult Lenten Church School Series: *Plenty Good Room*

Drawing on the rich resources of African-American spirituals, this study will offer opportunities for participants to deepen their experience of God through Scripture, reflection, and music. Starting on March 10, join us for Second Hour classes 11:30-12:30 in the Memorial Lounge.