

# THE IDLEWILD

Welcome to Our Community of Faith!

# CHIMES

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CONGREGATION AND FRIENDS OF IDLEWILD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN MEMPHIS • FALL 2020



## From Lament into Hope

by Geoff Calkins

It has been a testing, heart-rending, emotional time in the history of Idlewild Presbyterian Church. In response, the church dedicated the four Sundays in September to the theme “From Lament into Hope.” Chimes asked Rev. Anne H.K. Apple about how the series came to be — and how it might help us move toward hope in our own lives and in the life of the church.

### **Q: Where did the theme — from lament to hope — come from?**

A: The General Assembly had a similar theme this year. That’s where it came from, originally.

### **Q: OK, but what was the idea behind it?**

A: What I’ve learned — that I don’t really think people at Idlewild are fully aware of — is that Idlewild has the legacy of a church that is on the cutting edge of social justice work, particularly with racial reconciliation. I don’t think we understand how strong that image is. Outside, we are really viewed as, “Wow, look what they are doing.” And I say that with outright humility, not pride, and with confidence. People are very aware that we don’t have a head of staff yet, and that we have been engaged in a search that remains open. When Pastor Steve died, we were just inundated with people from the denomination saying and asking, “Idlewild is an important congregation. What can we do to help the church?” It was overwhelming, the amount of support.

### **Q: So the worship team decided to take folks up on it? And asked four ministers from beyond Idlewild to preach?**

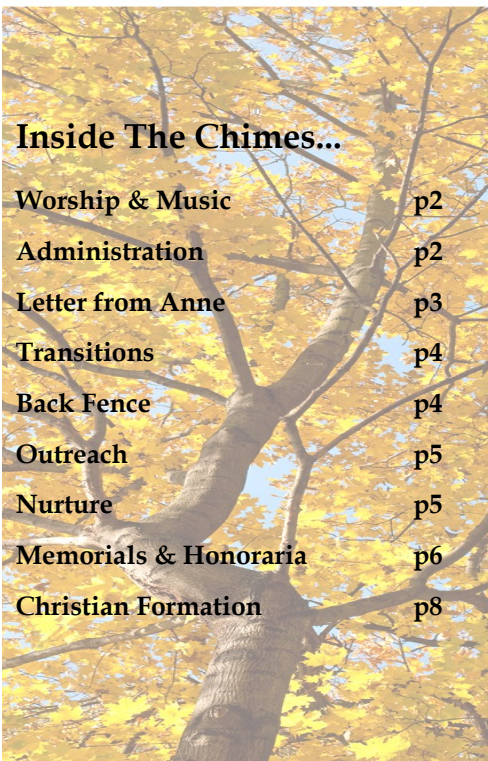
A: Steve had relationships that were deep and wide. Those folks reached out and together, working with Reverend Dr. Kim Long, I said, “I think we need worship that helps us to lament the where of where we are, and also that looks forward in hope. Could you help us secure preachers for September and work with our worship team in shaping liturgy.” We had Rev. Dr. Barbara Lundblad (from Union Theological Seminary) the first Sunday, then Rev. Dr. Brian Blount (president of Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond), and then Rev. Dr. Ted Wardlaw (president of the Austin Theological Presbyterian Seminary) and then, the last Sunday, it will be Rev. Dr. Laura S. Mendenhall (past president of the Columbia Theological Seminary).

### **Q: But in addition to that, you decided to reshape the liturgy, right?**

A: Intuitively I knew we needed worship to be disruptive. With the Spirit’s help, I trusted that we needed a certain nudge towards wakefulness; a gentle shake to remind us that the Lord is near even in the face of great loss. Liturgy means the work of the people, and the whole of worship shapes us as Christ’s broken body. We’re used to hearing words, words, words. Sound therapy is a real thing - so we invited a therapist to record several Calls to Lament using gongs and singing bowls. Gary Beard asked if he might invite a violinist the first week. Instrumentalists began that call into lament for us as a congregation. *(continued on page 2)*

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**Q: Among the changes, the confession has been moved to after the sermon. Is that also to be disrupting?**

A: Yes. When we hear these great preachers preaching, they reveal a vision of Christ to us. We confess following the sermon because we realize that the Christ they are preaching about is not who we are. We fall short of that glory. So we confess the truth of how it is with our lives, individually and together. And the truth is - we are broken. Some more than others - and the pandemic, the death, really brings that brokenness near. In confessing and hearing the assurance that God will guard us in Christ Jesus, even and especially in our brokenness, we see anew the depth of that glory, and the infinite quality of God's love.

**Q: What is your hope with this series?**

A: My greatest hope is that we don't armor ourselves against the losses that we've had. We have had so many losses. Steve's death, and the brutal truth of it. The unexpected nature of Faye's death. But it's also the pandemic, which has caused us to do all of life and church differently. That, too, has been an immeasurable loss. It's almost incomprehensible, the amount of loss that we are processing. And I am convinced we must process the loss as fully as possible, and together in community. The pain and grief that we don't process well, we tend to project on others in unhealthy ways. We want to be the healthiest people we can be for doing the work of ministry with Christ for such a time as this.

**Q: So where is the hope?**

A: The hope is in Christ's transformational work. I see it every day in this baptismal body of Christ. I see it when we willingly look inward and reexamine who we must be as a congregation. I see it in vulnerable and open expressions of grief. I have seen it during the pandemic, as we distribute food in the parking lot. Truly, Geoff, the hope is when we let go of ourselves enough to trust that God is going to lead us where we are going with the gracious work of the Holy Spirit. We might resist and feel the tension of it all - and yet, with God, and in prayer, we can do hard things. We are doing hard things - and that matters. When we see God's grace spilling out in ways we have never seen before, there are cavernous pools of kindness, justice and love in which we might wade - that's the hope.

## House & Properties When No One Is in the House

by Josh Lawhead

The Idlewild campus may have been closed beginning in mid-March, but behind the scenes, things kept moving. Rickey Horton, one of our custodians, took on the project of polishing all the wood in the 1928 building. You could smell the lemon Pledge and the TK Young and sanctuary doors have never looked so good! Danny Thomas, another custodian, took on the task of organizing the Flower Room. Now everything has a place and we know where that place is! Verna Yarbrough, Director of Custodial Services, polished each pew in the sanctuary. You should see how they gleam!

The House and Properties Committee used restricted funds to tackle a few projects on its to-do list. A new wall was built in the Early Enrichment Center to separate two classrooms, making both spaces more user friendly.

In addition, the Head of Staff's office has been "refreshed." Jesse Yarbrough, Maintenance Technician, has patched all the holes and repainted the office, resulting in a brighter, cleaner feel. Lisa Mallory donated some lovely furniture, while other office furniture has been cleaned and repaired. The office has a new feel and is ready for our new Head of Staff when God calls that person here!

Just as the days began to warm this Spring, the condenser in the chiller in the 1928 building stopped working. As we worked to bring staff back on-site in late June, it was quite warm. Working with HVAC consultants, the House & Properties Committee used restricted funds to replace the condenser. Work was expected to take four to six weeks but was completed quickly and the 1928 building is cool once again!

The planned renovations and updates to the Chapel have been delayed due to the pandemic, but work will commence soon.

Finally, our custodial staff has implemented new COVID safety cleaning procedures. Restrooms in use are limited, but those that are open are cleaned every hour. All high-touch surfaces are sanitized on a regular basis. As we navigate life in a pandemic, we are grateful for the additional attention to detail from this team to keep safe all who enter Idlewild.





# What Does It Mean to be Open?

There is a Methodist church in my neighborhood. When I return home from work, I am reminded by their sign, "The building is closed but the church is open." That reminder does us well for the living of these days. And, who could have EVER imagined that we, the church collective, would still find the need for this message in September, October....?

Idlewild is open.

I have heard it said that our teenagers wonder, "Are we living in a dystopian world?" Their generation bears witness to great suffering and injustice as they were born into a post 9/11 world. Instead of fire drills, they know active shooter drills. Instead of slumber parties full of giggles, they know overnight protests with refrains of "No justice. No peace."

Those close to the Greatest Generation have expressed different concerns, "Forget those memorial service plans on which we worked. A simple graveside will be enough and a visit at a sacred distance." Their generation knows this modicum of life's truth, sometimes it is the small things that make the biggest difference. Instead of worship services full of hymnody and poetic prayers, they trust it is enough to be commended to God beside broken dirt, and with a few friends.

At Idlewild our doors are "open." The Session has prioritized sustaining the ministries which meet Idlewild's mission, "to pursue, personify and practice as Presbyterians, the good news of reconciliation and salvation in Christ through worship, formation, nurture and outreach."

- ◆ We joyfully welcomed Sara Dorrien Christians as an installed Associate Pastor with her father, Reverend Dr. Gary Dorrien preaching virtually, an installation commission in-person in the sanctuary, a virtual charge and the laying on hands with red threads of connection.
- ◆ We worship weekly by Livestream and in October will be able to have up to 20 members in-person (pre-registering and following safety protocols.)
- ◆ We are formed and transformed by *Looking Inward* and considering our racial identity and by completing our immigration discernment, *No Longer Strangers*.
- ◆ Our 501(c)3, CAFE, offers early enrichment and therapeutic assistance to children and families.
- ◆ A virtual learning academy in partnership with the local YMCA supports students and families in a remote learning environment.
- ◆ Our parking lot buzzes with weekly activity with the Mid-South Food Bank.
- ◆ Prayer shawls are picked up and delivered to those most vulnerable and in need of the closeness of God.

Thanks be to God for all the saints on earth who make these ministries possible.

The church is open, and yes, even our collective hearts are open to the intimacy of the fragility of what it means to be fully human. Flesh and blood, heart and soul, finite beings. As a church, we have had to bear witness in virtual worship to the good news of reconciliation and salvation in Christ following the deaths of pastor Steve Montgomery and kitchen sage Faye Smith-Redditt.

Recently I had the opportunity to hear Idlewild Senior, Jessica Joshi, give her senior speech at St. Mary's school. Jessica quoted a Mary Oliver poem, in which the poet asks, "Listen. Are you breathing just a little, and calling it life?"

In the open church, a pandemic in a presidential election year can leave us short of breath and long on judgment; close to rage and far from hope. And that's what the devil wanted standing with Christ by his side, "If you are the Son of God, ..." My prayer for Idlewild is that we will stand with Paul, knowing and trusting in the openness of the church. That with a collective deep breath we know the importance of our lives together in Christ. Might we hear Paul's voice to those in Philippi, and make our confident witness with his:

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*



*A letter to the congregation  
from Anne H.K. Apple*

*Anne*

## Transitions in Our Church Family

### Baptized in Faith Charly Joann Nanney Bo Troy Nanny

children of Julie & David Nanney

### Losses in the Church

#### Anne S. Caldwell

August 27, 1929 – July 4, 2020

#### Henry Judson Hassell

July 10, 1945 – July 4, 2020

#### Sue Reid Williams

May 19, 1924 – July 16, 2020

#### Jeanne McCarley Good

January 8, 1929 – July 30, 2020

#### Stephen Richey Montgomery

August 21, 1951 – July 31, 2020

#### Jane Peete Osborne

January 10, 1922 – August 9, 2020

#### Faye Smith-Redditt

September 27, 1956 – September 1, 2020

### Births

#### Caroline Grace McLeod

daughter of Katie & Scott McLeod

#### Anne Waller Zanca

daughter of Elizabeth & Peter Zanca

### New Members

Calvin Robertson Bridgforth  
Reid Alexander Chauhan  
Brian Whitaker Faughnan  
Annabelle Marie Flanders  
Philip Boyd Gillespie  
John Ellis Haddad  
Braden Hezekiah Haynes  
Andrew McNeely Hobson  
Lauren Abigail Hobson  
Andrew Milnor Jones  
Lillian Ann Karnes  
Wilson Alan LeMay  
Charly Joann Nanney  
Anna Douglas Piper  
David Louis Simpson V  
Thomas Graham Springer  
James Andrew Taylor, Jr.  
Clark Gaines Thomas  
Webb Wallace Thomas  
Edward James Wilson

### Weddings

#### Elizabeth Shows and Reuben Hull

July 11, 2020

#### Halle Priester and Danny Gross

August 22, 2020

#### Haylee Reed and Eric Taylor

September 12, 2020

### IDLEWILD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)



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www.idlewildchurch.org

Office 901-726-4681 | Fax 725-4535

Recreation 725-4165 | CAFE 746-9450

### MINISTERIAL & PROGRAM STAFF

Contact information is at

www.idlewildchurch.org/who\_staff.html

Anne H.K. Apple

Executive Associate Pastor and Acting Head of Staff

Sara Dorrien-Christians

Associate Pastor

Corinne Nienhuis

Parish Assistant

Stephen R. Haynes

Theologian in Residence

Barry Oliver

Director of Music Ministry

Jacob Pierce

Director of Re:Creation & Creative Play

Shari Gross

Coordinator of Nurture Unit

Jeanne Marie Cummings

Interim Director of Youth Ministry

Elizabeth H. Doolin

Director of Young Adult Ministry

Marjorie Reynolds

Director of Children's Ministry

Jenni Brooks

Transitional Director of Operations & Communications

### IDLEWILDCHURCH.ORG

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Member News & Resources

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Idlewild Presbyterian Church

The Mission of Idlewild Presbyterian Church is to pursue, personify, and practice as Presbyterians the good news of reconciliation and salvation in Christ through worship, formation, nurture, and outreach.

The Idlewild Chimes is a publication of Idlewild Presbyterian Church (USA), 1750 Union Ave., Memphis TN 38104. Newsletters and bulletins are at www.idlewildchurch.org. Editor: Jenni Brooks, jbrooks@idlewildchurch.org.

**M.M. Jack Gordon**, father of McClain Gordon, died on April 9, 2020.

**Tom Dumas**, brother-in-law of Charles Key (Barbara), died June 24, 2020.

**Bart Williams**, the father of Molly Logan, died on August 13, 2020.

**Jody Barklage**, sister of Barbara Key (Charles), died August 15, 2020.

**Betty Sue Cole**, mother of Keith Cole, died August 15, 2020.

**Michael Harrison**, husband of Laurie Harrison and son-in-law of Barbara and Jimmy Powell, died on August 22, 2020.

**Bill "Doc" Terrell**, step-father of Laura Russell, died on August 22, 2020.

**Alta Howard**, mother of Nancy Howard and grandmother of Lauren Albonetti, died on September 6, 2020.

We congratulate **Apryl Potter** on being named as one of Memphis Business Journal's "Top 40 Under 40."

**Jenny Robertson** was named SVP of Integrated Marketing and Communications for FedEx.

**Tate William Pickens** was born on June 26, 2020. He is the son of William & Emily Pickens, and the grandson of John Pickens.

**Clare Austin Wedemeyer** was born Tuesday, July 14. Big sisters, Caroline and Reese. Grandparents are Jeff and Nancy Thompson.



## McMerton Garden Copes with Covid

by Jim Levernier

Because the pandemic prevented our working side by side with Binghampton youth as in the past, we found a way to engage the kids and put some cash in their pockets before school started. They were invited to create an expression of their garden experience with a cash award for their effort. Enthusiasm for the project was great! Adult volunteer hearts were warmed by their appreciation of the garden program and gratitude for the prize money. Following are small bits from their submittals.

*My first summer at the garden I was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. I kept coming back until I was 16. I've learned team work, hard work, and patience.* **Godanse**

*I came from Africa when I was 3. The garden helped me connect a little bit with my heritage...to plant something and grow it and eat it.* **Enoch**

*I loved the field trip each year: Botanic Garden, soccer game, zoo.* **Jeannelcia**

*The garden helps the community by making it look beautiful. That's our way to show love.* **Juli**

*I was so excited because that was the first time to work for my own money. I'm really thankful for this program.* **Elise**

*One of the best things is that I could have an open conversation with adults and liked when they asked me about life before America.* **Natasha**

*I pray that McMerton Garden goes on forever so other kids can have the same experience we did.* **Joe**

*We learned how to grow a garden, how to work for money and save some, and how to work together.* **Romy**

*The best part is seeing the fruits and vegetables grow. Last summer was fun and I will love to come again.* **Tresor**



Last year's McMerton Garden field trip

Outreach

## Join Us for NoGoMe

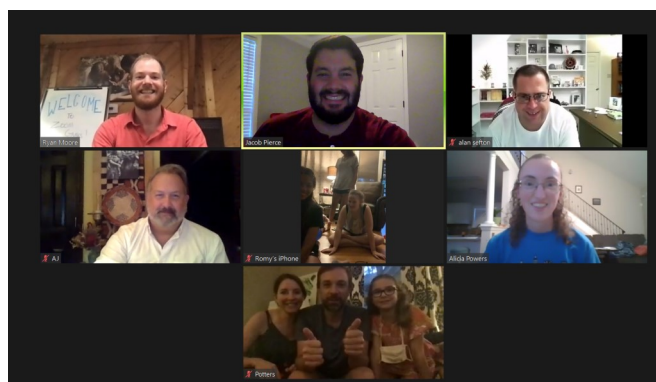
by Jason Potter

This fall, since the pandemic is preventing Idlewild from making its annual retreat to NaCoMe, the Nurture Leadership Team has planned a series of events cleverly called "NoGoMe" in an effort to provide a virtual setting for fellowship and fun among Idlewild members of all ages. Last weekend, my family participated in the first NoGoMe event, a family game night hosted by NaCoMe's own Ryan Moore.

Given how much we enjoyed our first visit to NaCoMe last fall, truthfully, our expectations were pretty low, but we were excited to support the effort and logged into the Zoom meeting with an open mind. Then a funny thing happened - Apryl, Blythe, and I all had an absolute blast. For the next hour, Ryan had us and our Idlewild friends who joined running around our houses, answering funny questions, and enjoying each others' fellowship - both our family we share a house with and our church family on the screen with us. In a time where connection is so hard to come by, it was an incredibly fulfilling experience we were grateful to have together.

If you missed the first NoGoMe event, fear not - there are other opportunities for fun and virtual fellowship for the whole Idlewild family. The next event is Saturday, September 26th when the Nurture Leadership Team host a NoGoMe Tailgate party (socially distanced & masked) in the church parking lot. That will be followed by an old NaCoMe favorite on October 2nd when Will Presley and Jeanne Marie Cummings host a "NoGoMe Virtual Dance Party" via Zoom that's sure to be a lot of fun.

For more info visit the Re:Creation & Nurture web page ([www.idlewildchurch.org/recreation](http://www.idlewildchurch.org/recreation)) and watch This Week at Idlewild for links to join.



NoGoMe Game Night fun!

Nurture



## MEMORIALS

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Carl & Pan Awsumb  
Sally & Ed Beasley  
Terry & Carol Bishop  
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David & Kim Bridgforth  
Lucie Bridgforth  
Rob & Alison Bridgforth  
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Jim Cole  
Katie & Keith Cole  
Minna & Alan Glenn  
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Literacy Midsouth  
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David Robinson  
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*This list reflects gifts received through September 2, 2020.*



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## Looking Inward, Moving Forward

by Charles Key

At the beginning of the summer, our nation was faced with another string of killings of unarmed Black Americans at the hands of police officers and vigilantes. Breonna Taylor. George Floyd. Ahmaud Arbery. Communities across the country pulsed with pain and protest, and communities of faith had decisions to make. How would they respond? Would they lead? Idlewild put a Black Lives Matter sign in our front yard, with the understanding that the action would need to be followed by serious self-reflection and a commitment to learn more.

This fall's "Looking Inward, Moving Forward: An Anti-Racism Journey" is a beginning. It is a study that begins with a question: *"How is my racial identity shaped and reshaped by the history I have learned and the circumstances I have encountered in my life?"*

From there it moves into conversation with our racial identity, and finally, how we are called to act as Christians shaped by repentance and the freedom to love our neighbors as ourselves. What does that look like at Idlewild?

"Looking inward" is key. It is easy to cast blame elsewhere, but much harder to look at ourselves and the communities and societies that shape us — recognizing the biases and structural patterns that can and often do manifest in deadly ways, and finding ourselves in the story of race.

This is a journey for everyone at Idlewild. It is a conversation between the head and the heart, and it engages different learning styles and starting points. Ultimately, it is not about consuming more information; it's about being formed as disciples of Jesus Christ who eagerly and faithfully follow in his way of righteousness and peace.

Christian Formation