

Words of Faith

THE NEWSLETTER OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Winter 2017

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CHS Christmas Choir Concert

Abraham Sullivan

Under the skillful direction of the new CHS choir director, Melissa McMillan, the annual CHC Christmas concert went marvelously well. Having smoothed out their mistakes at a practice performance for Heritage Christian School, finally figured out the choreography for “Jingle Bells,” and spent a good bit of time in practice in the sanctuary, the choir was well prepared.

The choir sang many beautiful songs, several particularly well, according to popular opinion. “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” arranged by Mrs. McMillan, featured the beautiful cello of Nöelle Roberts, and was a fitting vehicle for the emotional cry of Israel for her long-awaited Savior. “Go, Tell It On the Mountain” was a boisterous piece, full of rhythm and joy in a gospel-style, with percussion. Several excellent soloists took their turns singing the different verses. “O Come, All Ye Faithful” featured Abenego Sullivan on the trumpet, and the congregation joining in song. Another fun piece was “Jingle Bells,” which featured amusing movements as the choir explored how the popular song might have sounded in different musical periods.

The Jazz Band also performed, the last performance for director Heather Hayes before the new director, J.D. Dorland, takes over this spring.

Some excitement was added on Friday night by the fainting of one of the choir members. Groups of students gathered in the narthex during the impromptu intermission to pray. Wyatt McMillan observed that, like everything in God’s plan, there was a good side to the event: it was a powerful witness to our school’s belief in the power of prayer, particularly potent as that night was the open house for prospective students.

All in all, the performances were a success. One parent who attended both nights called the concert “almost magical.” Many people expressed admiration, some even requesting CDs for purchase. The choir plans to record some of their songs for a CD later in the spring. We thank God for our new choir teacher and the joy of music He has given us.

“People I Have Known”

Installment No. 8: William D. McColley

Rob Rayburn

Bill McColley is known to some veterans of the congregation of Faith Presbyterian Church as Dawn Darby’s father. And a few will remember the man. I certainly did not know Bill as well as Dawn, but I knew him longer than she did! Bill grew up in Tacoma and his family were stalwarts at Faith (and its predecessor congregation); indeed his father Harry was for many years an elder (though he was in heaven before I had a chance to meet him) and his sister Mary Helen was the church’s treasurer when I arrived in Tacoma in 1978. After a stint in the army, Bill came to St. Louis to study at Covenant College and then Covenant Theological Seminary, and for a year he lived with three classmates in a large bedroom in the basement of the Rayburn home on the campus. I was just a boy and I have only a boy’s memories of Bill from those days, but I do remember him. After all, my brother’s and my bedroom was just down the hall from Bill’s and we shared the same bathroom. Bruce Fiol, a PCA minister and longtime missionary in India, but then one of Bill’s roommates, once told me that Bill, several years older than the other guys and zealous for morning devotions, even on cold winter mornings demanded that the other three fellows get out of bed to read their Bibles and say their prayers!

It was at Covenant that Bill met Jessie Schum, Dawn’s mother. After seminary, Bill began work with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship on the campus of Washington University in St. Louis. Bill was a thinker; college ministry appealed to him in part for that reason. After six years with IVCF, he was sent by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod – the denomination of the College and Seminary and of Faith, Tacoma in those years – to plant a church in Calgary, Alberta. Though now living and working in Canada, Tacoma retained a place in Bill’s heart. He returned most summers for vacation with his family, with *Frisko Freeze* usually the first stop as they drove into town. His family home had been just a few blocks from the famous hamburger stand. For several weeks each year we would enjoy having the McColley family with us for Sunday worship.

Bill’s pastorate in Calgary was well established when I arrived in the Presbytery. In fact, what was then Glenmore Reformed Presbyterian Church was far and away the healthiest church and the most encouraging story in our small and scattered presbytery. It numbered, by that time, only some hundred souls, but what was unusual was that half of the church had been converted through the evangelistic testimony of the other half! With so many new believers and such an outward face to the community, Glenmore was a congregation that sizzled with spiritual vitality. But it is at this point that Bill’s story took a strange turn. Glenmore continued to grow, it was as healthy a church as you will ever find, it had an unusually able group of elders, and it had sufficient financial resources to make it possible, even small as the congregation still was, to consider embarking on plans to build a sanctuary of their own in a rapidly growing development on the outskirts of Calgary. Bill, however, had hopes of eventually returning to the United States and realized that if he were to do so, he would have to make the move before the building project was underway. So he chose that time to leave Glenmore and take the vacant pulpit of our Bellewood Presbyterian Church in Bellevue. Glenmore, alas, would never be the same. A subsequent ministry was controversial and created division, the church lost many members, and, to make a long and painful story short, the remnant of the Glenmore congregation was eventually united with another of our congregations in Calgary. That united congregation never showed anything like the promise Glenmore once had.

Once again, in a few years his ministry in Bellevue was bearing rich fruit. The congregation had doubled in size, it was beginning to have an impact in the community (Bill had landed a column in an eastside newspaper), and the sky seemed the limit. But opposition from some of the old-timers in the church – long more Bible Church than Reformed and Presbyterian in its orientation – began to surface, as often happens when folk see the congregation they knew, the worship service they knew, and the pulpit they knew being transformed into something

else. Most of the original churches in our presbytery passed through similar turbulent waters over the years as new, younger ministers began to peel away the layers of their fundamentalist past. I remember vividly a meeting in the basement of the Bellewood Church in which I and others plead with Bill to stand firm and stay the course, even if it meant that the church would split. His ministry, I thought, held too much promise to risk its coming to an end. But Bill was unconvinced. The thought of a church split was, as it ought to have been, repugnant to him and, again to make a longer story short, he returned to Calgary to take up the pastorate of the church that still contained the remnant of his original Glenmore congregation.

It was there on the 5th of March 1990, just shy of his 54th birthday, that Bill suffered a massive heart attack while on a morning jog. He died two days later. What impressed me, a young minister, so much about Bill was that I always found his conversation so intellectually and spiritually stimulating. I'm not sure I ever had a conversation with Bill in which I didn't learn something valuable. Whether we talked about books he had read or was reading, about his observations of church life and the ministry, his appreciation of the ministry of others, or something else, he was a fund of valuable and interesting knowledge. Some of my favorite books were books that Bill McColley first recommended to me. I write this in appreciation of a man who was a friend and mentor to me and whose support was a great gift in the early years of my pastorate.

But I also cannot think of Bill without thinking of the opaque providence that directed his life. His ministry, both at Glenmore and at Bellewood, held promise of such great things that never came to pass. An innocent decision to return to his home country proved to be the end of Glenmore, and his decision not to be the cause of a division in the Bellewood congregation was, alas, to consign that church to years of difficulty and decline and, finally, to its death a few years ago. When he returned to the remnant of his first Calgary ministry, once again, spiritual momentum began to build. Two years

into this chapter of his ministry encouraging signs were everywhere to be seen – new people arriving, a new esprit de corps in the congregation – but Bill's death brought all of that to a halt. For the third time, a promising beginning came to nothing. I have often thought about this in the years that have passed since Bill's death. It is easy for me now to think that it was a great mistake for him to have left Glenmore when he did. But no one could have known that at the time. It is easy for me to wish that he had remained at Bellewood; indeed I wished that very much at the time. But no one can fault his reason for not doing so. A minister is surely to be saluted for an unwillingness to be party to division in a congregation. But, at the same time, it is also difficult to avoid the conclusion that had Bill remained in either place, great things would have been accomplished for the kingdom of God. The impenetrable mystery of God's ways! Such are the questions that divine providence poses. Who of us can ever answer the question: why?



Jessie & Bill McColley

Handel's *Messiah* Enriches Advent and Holy Week Worship

by Ron Bechtel, Organist and Director of Music

Celebrations call for festive music, especially for the highest events of the Christian calendar. For decades the Adult Choir of Faith Presbyterian Church under Florence Rayburn's direction has been enriching the church's worship with collections of anthems appropriate for Advent on Christmas Eve and for Holy Week on Good Friday. The choral music drawn from the wide, centuries-old repertoire composed around Christ-centered themes, has added beauty, solemnity, and richness, season after season.

Recent Oratorios at Faith Presbyterian Church

In recent years our church's collaboration with the Alliance of Christian Musicians has made possible the presentation of larger choral works at FPC, especially the two beloved masterworks: *Messiah* by Georg Friedrich Handel (1685 – 1759), and *Elijah* by Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847).

The full-length *Elijah* was presented in April 2016 under Florence Rayburn's direction. ACM offers a two-DVD video set of the entire *Elijah* performance that featured FPC soloists Daniel Roberts as Elijah and Heidi Bone, as well as Courtney Rayburn Dey and Ross Hauck. It includes accompaniment by Evangeline Wykoff, organ, Maddie Lee, piano, and Anna Hastings, piano, as well as FPC's David Forman, viola, and other local string players. Click www.acmusicians.org or send an email to info@acmusicians.org to obtain a copy of this video.

Under ACM's auspices, *Messiah* began to be an Advent staple at FPC in December 2013 when a 40-voice choir of FPC singers and other musicians from area churches presented Part One to an overflow crowd. Then came the singing of the remainder of *Messiah* (Parts Two and Three) at Easter 2014, followed by repeat performances of Part One in December 2014, 2015, and 2016. The presentation of this masterwork, so replete with scripture and biblical allusion, has added beauty and strength to Advent celebrations, both for the FPC family and the wider Puget Sound community.

Intention to Involve Our Own Skilled Musicians

In keeping with FPC and ACM's intention to give

opportunity for well-skilled musicians to present their music in public venues, the performance of *Messiah* (and *Elijah*) has featured both vocalists and instrumentalists from our own church family to sing or play the complex musical scores: Sharalyn Bechtel, Heidi Bone, Courtney Dey, Margaret Eby, David Forman, Maddie Lee, Dia Murphy, and Daniel Roberts, Nicolas Roberts, Noelle Roberts, and Evangeline Wykoff.

Next *Messiah* at FPC is April 9

The next *Messiah* performance is on Palm Sunday, April 9, at FPC, during the usual Evening Worship hour. A 40-voice ACM Festival Choir under Ron Bechtel's direction will present *Messiah* (Parts Two and Three). FPC's *Choristers* (Melissa McMillan, director) and other treble voices from Pilgrim Bible Church (Sonia King, director) will participate in the celestial sounds of one chorus, "Lift Up Your Heads."

Soloists will include FPC's Margaret Eby, alto, Dia Murphy, soprano, and Daniel Roberts, bass; and Ross Hauck, director of music of our sister congregation in Issaquah, returns to sing the tenor solos. Maddie Lee will provide the primary piano accompaniment in collaboration with a string ensemble led by Cherlyn Johnson, violin. Other ensemble players will include two of FPC's youth musicians, David Forman, viola, and Nicolas Roberts, cello. Also in the ensemble are Sarah Burwell, violin, and Anna Hastings, continuo.

The event will feature a prelude of music appropriate to the season by a trio of musicians from Brinnon, Washington, Rebecca Small, soprano, and daughters Sharon and Tirzah Small.

Messiah Has Three Parts

Listeners to *Messiah* find it helpful to understand that this timeless oratorio, rooted in Holy Scripture, is divided into three parts. Part One predicts coming of Messiah to redeem mankind from sin and its effects (thus it stands alone as a Christmas presentation). Part Two portrays the accomplishment of Messiah's redemptive work and ultimate triumph, concluding with the glorious "Hallelujah" chorus. (Last December and in the April 2017 presentation of *Messiah*, the congregation joins the choir to sing this chorus.) Part Three praises Messiah's victorious reign as King and Savior.

Music Fills the Air at Faith Presbyterian Church

Unless otherwise noted, all events are open to the public without admission fee

Date (2017)	Event
Saturday, April 1	*Young Church Musicians Scholarship Recitals Annual day of recitals and award ceremonies in which Christian youth (ages 8-19) compete for cash awards to further their music education. <u>Adjudicators: Yelena Balabanova, Cherlyn Johnson</u>
Sunday, April 9, 6:00 p.m.	*Handel's <i>Easter Messiah</i> ACM Festival Choir and children from FPC and Pilgrim Bible Church; vocal soloists, Margaret Eby, Ross Hauck, Dia Murphy, and Daniel Roberts; Maddie Lee, piano; Anna Hastings, continuo; David Forman, viola, Nicolas Roberts, cello, Cherlyn Johnson and Sarah Burwell, violins. <u>Ron Bechtel, conductor</u>
Friday, April 14, 7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Service Music by the FPC Adult Choir, Florence Rayburn, Director
Friday, June 9 7:00 p.m.	*Community HymnSing (byoInstrument)
Tuesday, June 20, 7:00 p.m.	*Samuel Rotman Piano Concert World-class concert artist with a unique Christian testimony (samrotman.com). Freewill offering.
Tuesday, July 11, 7:00 p.m.	*Midsummer Classics Concert
Monday – Friday July 17-21 9:30–11:30 a.m. Concert: Friday, 7:00 p.m.	*Summer Singing Camp For children. Includes Friday evening concert. Melissa McMillan, Director; Sonia King, Assistant Director Registration required
Tuesday, September 12, 7:15 p.m.	*Rehearsals begin for “Reformation 500” choir
November 3-5	*“Reformation 500” celebration “The Reformation’s Musical Impact” Keynote: Professor Chuck King, Trinity University <u>Hymn Festival with ACM Festival Choir</u>

*Presented in collaboration with the Alliance of Christian Musicians. See acmusicians.org for more information.

News Bits

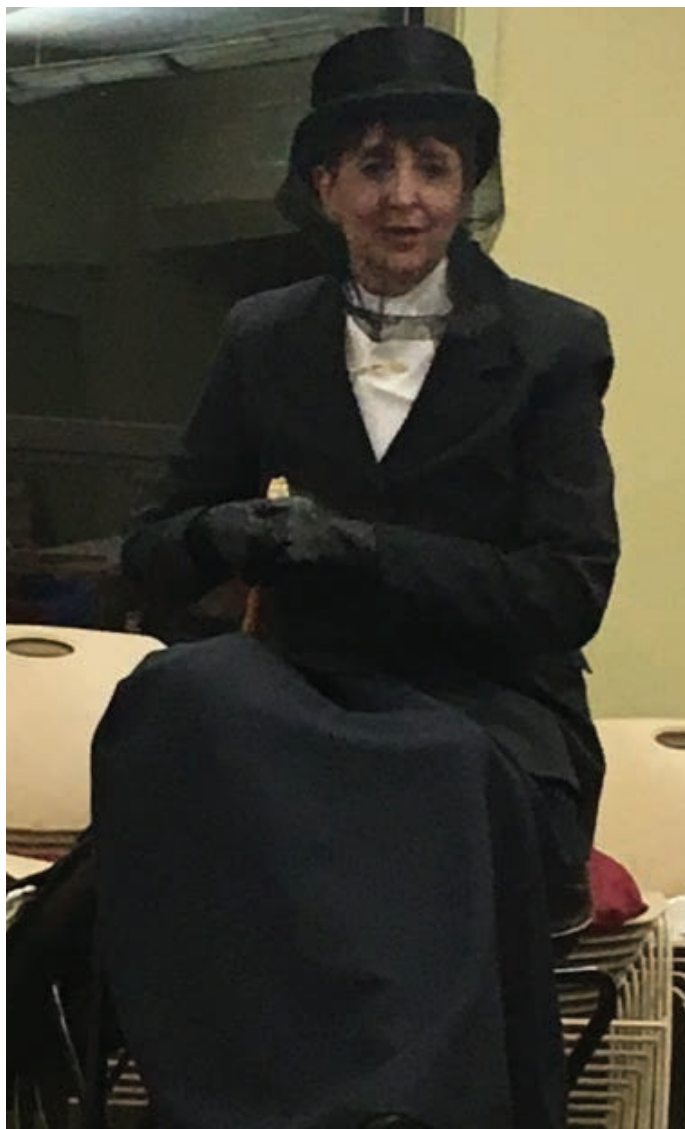
Snow Retreat

By Calvin DeGraaf

Every winter, Faith Presbyterian Church hosts Snow Retreat for high schoolers from various PCA churches around the region. This year's retreat took place on January 27-29 and was hosted by our very own Pastor Steven Nicoletti. The goal of the retreat was to let the students have fun playing in the snow, as well as giving time away from the normal worries of life, and to look at our relationship with the Lord. We arrived at Tall Timbers Ranch, near Leavenworth, on Friday afternoon. We had some time on our own before dinner, so some students played in the deep snow. After we had eaten a good meal, we attended the evening chapel, where we sang, and listened to the speaker, Pastor Chris Bechtel. He focused our minds on the retreat's main message--how Christ lives in us, explaining to us what that really meant, and how we should be applying that truth in our lives.

Saturday began with a hearty breakfast provided by the Tall Timbers staff and then a morning chapel. Following this, we all chose from a wide range of activities; cross country skiing, and snowshoeing among them. A trip to Leavenworth was also available for those interested. Most of the day was spent however we wanted--Tall Timbers' main lodge had several activities available, including a pool table, a ping pong table, board games, and books. The evening included chapel, and trivia night, which included many challenging--and sometimes goofy questions--provided by Pastor Nicoletti. The night ended with a small campfire talk by chaperone Caleb Gutierrez before lights out. Sunday morning was slow, with a brunch, packing up, and driving home. We arrived back at FPC tired and exhausted.

For many, including myself, this retreat was a time to take a step back from my busy life, and re-focus on God. To think about what all that God has done for me really means, and how I should be applying that in my life. When I got back, though, I was physically exhausted from the long nights and the activities at camp, I was spiritually renewed and ready to face the challenges that would come as I re-entered my daily life.



Margaret Eby doing her best to revive the lost art of riding side saddle.



The McDivitts, Weigleys, Simpsons, McMillans, and Chious enjoying the Couples' retreat.

Calendar

Covenant High School Play

March 23 - March 24 @ 7:30 PM

FPC Sanctuary

Palm Sunday

Handel's Messiah, Parts II and III, presented by
The ACM Festival Choir

April 9 @ 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM; Doors to sanctuary
open at 5:30 PM. Prelude begins at 5:40 PM

Good Friday Service & Men's Night of Prayer

April 14 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

FPC Sanctuary

Easter

April 16

Women in the Church Spring Tea and Fashion Show

April 22 @ 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

FPC, DeSoto Hall

Covenant High School Spring Concert & Art Show

May 12 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

FPC

Covenant High School Commencement

May 26 @ 7 PM

First Presbyterian Church

Sam Rotman Piano Concert

June 20 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

FPC Sanctuary

For more details about these events, please visit
<http://www.faithtacoma.org/events>

Member Changes

Additions

Michael Barry, reaffirmation, 12/11

Mary Moseley, reaffirmation, 1/8

Sean Wynne, reaffirmation, 1/15

Jeff & Heidi Bone with Campbell & Gemma,
transfer from Covenant Presbyterian Church,
Issaquah WA 1/29,
with Campbell Bone, child profession 1/29

Joe Burke, transfer from Valley Presbyterian Church,
North Hills CA 2/5

Patrick & Shelly Lopez transfer from Christ Our
Redeemer Church, Excelsior Springs MO 2/12,
with Abigail, Belle, and Bear Lopez,
child professions 2/12

Death

Verna Pappuleas, 1/26