

First Unitarian Church 2018 Summer of Faith Preaching Series



Layout & Design by Linda Goodwin-Parkinson



Summer of Faith 2018 Theme What is Faith?

What exactly is this faith business anyway? Do we have to believe in a laundry list of miracles to be a person of faith, that Jesus walked on water, changed water into wine, raised Lazarus from the dead, rose from the dead himself? To be faithful do we have to blindly accept that Moses parted the sea, that manna fell from heaven, that the universe was made in seven days. If we doubt these things, do we lack faith? Can atheists be faithful?

Perhaps faith is more than just an ecclesiastical, supermarket checkout line, magazine article, “Ten Things You Have to Believe to Go to Heaven!” Perhaps faith includes doubt. Maybe doubt and reason are tools that lead us to a deeper, more meaningful faith.

Could it be that faith is the final realization that the universe is bigger than we ever imagined? Maybe to have faith all we need do, is commit ourselves to the highest and best within us and follow it wherever it leads.

Guest Preachers for 2018

- June 17: **Rev. Carlton Smith**
UUA
- June 24: **Rev. Dorothy Sanders Wells**
Rector, St. George’s Episcopal Church, Germantown
- July 1: **Rev. Tom Momberg**
Retired Episcopal Priest
- July 8: **Rev. Sandra Summers**
Associate Minister, Lindenwood Christian Church, Memphis
- July 15: **Rev. Beth Lefever**
Neshoba Unitarian Universalist Church, Cordova
- July 22: **Andy Branham, Esquire**
Attorney, Thinker, Philanthropist, Memphis
- July 29: **Sara B. Dorrien-Christians**
Coordinator of Outreach Ministries, Idlewild Presbyterian Church,
Memphis
- August 5: **Rev. Eric (Rick) Greenwood**
Retired after 26 years as Rector of St. David's Church, Nashville
- August 12: **Dr. Lisa Jennings**
Scholar, Scientist, Thinker, Philanthropist, Memphis

Our Guest Preachers



Rev. Carlton Elliott Smith

Congregational Life Staff, UUA Southern Region
June 17, 2018

Rev. Carlton Elliott Smith joined the UUA Southern Region's Congregational Life Staff in August 2013. In that capacity, he is most often called upon to support congregations as they negotiate with ministers, enter transition periods, and learn about Compassionate Communication and dynamics of institutional change. From July 2015 to December 2017, Carlton was deeply involved in establishing a long-term presence for the Movement for Black Lives within our UUA. Ordained in 1995, he has served congregations of various sizes in Metro New York, Greater Boston, Northern Virginia and Oakland, California. He lives in Holly Springs, Mississippi.



Rev. Dorothy Sanders Wells

Rector, St. George's Episcopal Church, Germantown
June 24, 2018

A native of Mobile, Alabama, The Rev. Dorothy Sanders Wells came to Memphis when she began her undergraduate studies at Rhodes College, and she has made Memphis her home since that time. She is a candidate for the Doctor of Ministry degree from Candler School of Theology at Emory University. A practicing attorney in Memphis for nearly 18 years before her ordination as a priest, Dorothy loves the Memphis area and enjoys being involved in numerous community organizations. She and her husband, Herb, are the parents of two daughters, Alexis and Meredith. She enjoys reading, cooking and travel, and is frequently spotted around East Memphis walking or running with her adorable canine companion, Hollister.



Rev. Tom Momberg

Retired Episcopal Priest

July 1, 2018

Ordained in Chicago, Illinois, the Rev. Thomas A. "Tom" Momberg keeps celebrating the gift of more than thirty years as an Episcopal priest. While officially retired from full-time paid ministry, he now offers his gifts, skills, passion, and experience in several part-time endeavors, including Thistle and Bee Enterprises, a social justice ministry which helps survivors of human trafficking, and local juvenile justice reform in Shelby County. Before his *refirement*, Tom served as parish priest or as chaplain in seven states and completed residencies with the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation and the Center for Courage and Renewal. He loves music so expect a song from him when he preaches! Tom is blessed to be married to the Rev. Eyleen Farmer. They enjoy living together after a long, unintended season of distance marriage, as well as traveling and spending as much time as possible with six grandchildren.



Rev. Sandra Summers

Associate Pastor, Lindenwood Christian Church, Memphis

July 8, 2018

The Rev. Sandra Summers currently serves Lindenwood Christian Church in Memphis as an Associate Pastor. She is an alumna of Andover Newton Theological School, Clemson University, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Needless to say, Rev. Sandra loves learning! Her driving question is ministry is, "What does getting faith development right from the beginning look like?" To that end, Rev. Sandra's ministry is deeply rooted in faith formation and advocacy for the youngest in our communities.



Rev. Beth Lefever

Neshoba Unitarian Universalist Church, Cordova
July 15, 2018

Rev. Beth Lefever was a sociology major at Indiana University South Bend and received a M.Div. degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago. She completed field work in Kalamazoo, Michigan and Muncie, Indiana. She served the Berrien UU Fellowship in St. Joseph, Michigan for four years as their halftime religious leader, and was doing poetry workshops for county jail inmates in her hometown of Elkhart, Indiana, before accepting the call to Neshoba UU Church. Beth

has been with Neshoba UU Church for six years.



Andy Branham, Esquire

Attorney, Memphis
July 22, 2018

Andy is an honors graduate of the University of Memphis School of Law and Rhodes College. Upon graduation from law school, he served as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Robert M. McRae, United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee. Andy is licensed to practice law in Tennessee. He is Member and Immediate Past Chair of the Tennessee Bar Association Attorney Well Being Committee, Member and Past Chair of the Tennessee Bar Association Access to Justice Committee,

Board Member and Past President of Memphis Area Legal Services, former Board Member of the Memphis Community Legal Center, Member and past Chair of the Memphis Bar Association Access to Justice Committee, is a Fellow with the Memphis and Shelby County Bar Foundation and the Tennessee Bar Foundation and a Master Member of the Leo Bearman Sr. Inns of Court. Andy works extensively with lawyers concerning balance of life issues and is a volunteer and Commissioner for the Tennessee Lawyers Assistance Program. He is a pretty good member of the Church of the River and married to Pam Branham who is a great member of the church. They have a cat named Jimmi and are dedicated Midtown Memphis residents.



Sara B. Dorrien-Christians

(shown here with daughter, Ilsa)
Coordinator of Outreach Ministries at
Idlewild Presbyterian Church, Memphis
July 29, 2018

Rev. Sara B. Dorrien-Christians serves as Coordinator of Outreach Ministries at Idlewild Presbyterian Church in Memphis, TN. Before she and her husband, Will Christians, moved to Memphis in January 2017 (for Will to take a call as pastor of Shady Grove Presbyterian), she served as pastor to Pine Island Church in Kalamazoo, MI. Sara earned her college degree in Comparative Religion and Sociology from Western Michigan University before completing her Master of Divinity at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA. A believer in the church's calling to serve the community and wider world, Sara has engaged in outreach ministries from the local to the national level of her denomination. As a new Memphian, she is excited about the birth of MICAH. Aside from ministry, Sara enjoys running, singing, reading, and taking long walks with her dog, Dietrich.



Rev. Eric (Rick) Greenwood

Retired after 26 years as Rector of St. David's Church, Nashville
August 5, 2018

The Rev. Eric S. Greenwood, Jr. ("Rick") is a native Memphian, having graduated from White Station High School. He then went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts from Louisiana State University and a Master of Divinity from the General Theological Seminary in New York. He was ordained in the Episcopal Church in 1973 and has served congregations across Tennessee and Virginia. He retired in 2014 after 26 years as rector of St. David's Church, Nashville. He and his wife, the former Sharon McCormack, have been married 46 years and have two sons and three grandchildren. Travel and spending time with the "grands" take up the lion's share of his time.



Dr. Lisa Jennings

Scholar, Scientist, Teacher, Entrepreneur, Memphis

August 12, 2018

Lisa Jennings has been a member at First Unitarian for more than 30 years and served in various leadership roles including President of the Board and Chairperson of the Ministerial Search Committee. She is an entrepreneur and founder of two biotechnology companies, CirQuest Labs and Ariste Medical. As an academic, she has authored over 115 articles, several book chapters and reviews, and 150 abstracts. Lisa has been active in worship and liturgy over the years and taken seminary classes at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago, IL. She is married to

Past President and current Board member, David Jennings.



The Covenant of the Church of the River affirms:

The purpose of this church shall be to promote the high ideals of a rational, progressive, and exalting religion, in the love of God and service to humanity, and to hold regular church services in this community. To this end, all activities of the church shall be conducted without distinction related to race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, or previous religious affiliations; and the right of private judgment and the sacredness of individual conviction shall be recognized in all things. To join our church is to walk with other members of the congregation in the spirit of our covenant.

About our Church

The Church of the River is a community of families and individuals who provide the bridge from the ancient past to the future in the long line of people who have given themselves to the life of the spirit. We are a progressive, liberal church. Rooted in the Christian and Jewish traditions, Unitarian churches such as ours have no creed or dogma to which members must agree. We welcome anyone to visit our church, and we celebrate the diversity of our community.

We seek to...

- Raise up those things that are precious and beautiful
- Hold up those things which are to be treasured and desired, to hold them up for reverence
- Support and sustain one another no matter what befalls us through all the ages and stages of life

For additional information, visit our website at <http://churchoftheriver.org>