

2019 Summer Speaker Series

Idlewild Presbyterian Church

Sunday Mornings, 9:40-10:40 — May 26 through August 11.
Featuring speakers from throughout the community and important topics.

May 26: Refugee Empowerment Program (REP)

The Refugee Empowerment Program is a ministry of the Memphis Leadership Foundation, whose mission is to address the needs and concerns of refugees and immigrants in Memphis by offering

high-quality programs and services that encourage, educate, and equip individuals, families, and the local community. REP walks alongside newcomers as they build new lives and work to achieve their personal and professional goals. REP is a recipient of an Idlewild Community Support grant.

Cam Echols-Blackmon, Executive Director, created Refugee Empowerment Program in 2007, which now encourages and equips over 400 refugees and immigrants building new lives in Memphis.

Polly van der Bijl has been REP'S Adult Education Coordinator for three years. She leads REP's efforts to empower refugee and immigrant adults through language acquisition, cultural acclimation, digital literacy development, and citizenship preparation.

June 2: Making the Art for the new Book of Common Worship

Martha Kelly will talk about the process of creating block prints, mostly landscapes, for the new *Book of Common Worship*. She will also walk through a selection of Scriptures showing all of creation, not just people, participating in salvation history and show the relevance of these images to our traditions and book of worship.

Martha Kelly, painter, printmaker, illustrator, has exhibited work in galleries around the Southeast since 1999. Her illustration project for the new *Book of Common Worship* for the Presbyterian Church (USA), was published in April 2018 by Westminster John Knox Press.

June 9: MICAHA Update

The Memphis Interfaith Coalition for Action and Hope (MICAHA), continues to grow, with citizens representing 50+ congregations/organizations working on three different task forces: Education, Economic Equity, and Immigration & Intercultural Equity.

At this Adult Forum, Idlewild liaisons *Lucy Townsend*, *Ben Clark*, and *Melissa Peeler* will present the platforms of their respective task forces and take questions. Come, see what MICAHA is doing.

June 16: Tennesseans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty

Come learn about the death penalty, particularly in Tennessee, and look at issues regarding cost, deterrence, innocence, fairness, and the unique response of people of faith.

The Reverend Amy Howe is a retired pastor who served at both Woodland and Evergreen. She is a member of the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry.

June 23: Prayer Beads

Join tap-dancing French goats, the Holy Spirit on a Harley, Gangster Disciples, Lady Godiva, and Memphian Suzanne Henley in exploring the rich, 4,000 year history of prayer beads and their increasing use by Presbyterians and other Protestant denominations.

Suzanne Henley, former community college English instructor, college development director and hospice volunteer director, works with fused glass, designs jewelry, tables, prayer beads, and renovates early 20th century houses. Her book *Bead by Bead: The Ancient Way of Praying Made New* was published by Paraclete Press in March 2018.

June 30: The Virgin Mary in Art

Mary is one of the most enigmatic figures in the Bible. As the mother of Jesus Christ she is central to his narrative, yet the Bible barely mentions her. Art give us not only a window into Mary's life, but also shows us how Christians and non-Christians alike have fully embraced her as the Mother of Christ. Art history also provides a fascinating look at how Mary's stature in the Christian church has grown significantly over time.

Dr. Jonathan M. Jones is the Anne and Glenn A. Crosby Chair of Christian Ethics, chair of the Department of History and Social Studies, teaches U.S. and European history and AP Art History, at Memphis University School.

July 7: As the Harsh Winter in Yanji Yields an Apple-Pear Tree

This forum will give a glimpse of the cross-cultural, incarnational ministry in Asia through which conversations around what God is doing, who he is working through, for North Korea as well as other parts of the body of Christ will also take place.

Hannah Jones, a member of the Presbytery of the Mid-South, served as an associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, TN for over four years. In February 2017, commissioned by the Presbytery as their Mission Partner in Asia, Hannah has served as a cross-cultural worker near the North Korean border. Now she is serving in one of the major metropolitan cities in China.

July 14: The Slippery Slope: The Legal and Theological Implications of Court Cases About Religious Freedom

Beginning in the 1950s, the federal court system decided a series of cases that ended Jim Crow discrimination in the South. The laws were found to strip private citizens of their inalienable rights, namely the right to speak, the right to an education, and, perhaps most importantly, the right to vote. Decades later, as new plaintiffs won cases before the court that legalized gay marriage, a movement was sparked from primarily conservative Christian groups to defend the religious liberties of private citizens.

Perhaps most famous is the case of the Colorado baker who refused to provide a cake to a gay couple for their wedding reception. Since then, several other cases are pending before the court that seek to further clarify the rights of religious people who refuse to provide services due to "religious objections."

The *Honorable Sheryl H. Lipman* sits on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee.

Dr. Peter R. Gathje is Professor of Christian Ethics, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Academic Dean, Memphis Theological Seminary.

July 21: The Emotional Truth in the Psalms

The full range of human emotions are expressed in the Psalms: anger, agony, despair, trust and hope. The Psalms are our intimate conversation with God. Rabbi Micah Greenstein will share what he views as the major themes in the Psalms and how this unique Biblical book can steady and enrich our lives.

Micah Greenstein is Senior Rabbi at Temple Israel, where he has served for almost three decades, sustaining its position as the largest synagogue in Tennessee.

July 28: St. Jude Proton Therapy

In 2015, St. Jude became the first pediatric-only proton therapy unit. William Myers will discuss why it is an important treatment modality and how St. Jude uses it to give children world class cancer treatment right in our backyard.

William Myers is a clinical medical physicist supporting the Radiation Oncology Department at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. He is currently a deacon and choir member.

August 4: The Battle for Bonhoeffer

Theologian in Residence Stephen Haynes offers an incisive and clarifying perspective into the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book, *The Battle for Bonhoeffer: Debating Discipleship in the Age of Trump*. (Eerdman's Publishing, September 2018).

Dr. Haynes presents an analysis that treats the November 2016 election of Donald Trump and the "Bonhoeffer moment" announced by evangelicals in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's 2015 decision to legalize same-sex marriage. Haynes redeems Bonhoeffer, who has become a clay puppet in modern American politics.

Dr. Stephen Haynes is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Rhodes College.

August 11: Why Christians Should Work to End Mass Incarceration

The skyrocketing number of Americans sent to prison in recent decades has had a devastating effect in minority communities, wrecking families and impacting all of us. This class will review the historic roots of mass incarceration—including slavery and Jim Crow laws—and current efforts at reform.

David Bell is a federal public defender and a founder of Idlewild's free legal clinic. *Dolores Bell* and *Jim Cole*, who taught a recent Wednesday Morning Studies Group session on unequal justice, will assist.