

Jim Hill to Bring His Art and Message to First Christian Church Marietta

Jim Hill, who invented the method and medium of his art, will bring his art and message to First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on Sunday, January 16, 2022. Both the art show and the sermon are open to the public, says the Rev. Dr. Wilma Zalabak, Senior Minister.

As a talented boy in an impoverished family, Hill had no access to paints except when he was in high school. So, after graduating from high school, he invented his own way of putting color on canvas with paper. His uncle Wilburn, the one who created the ship logo for the Mayflower moving truck, told him, "Create your own paint." He found magazines in dumpsters and cut tiny pieces of color from the pictures and graphics he found in them. Then he painstakingly glued those tiny pieces of color onto his canvas until something meaningful came to life on the page.

Hill's uncle Norman also told him, "Draw what you see." Now he says, "I have to tell the truth, because that's why God put me here." He paints American history, the kind of American history that Jim Hill has lived, seen, and walked. Themes of his work include poverty, slavery, and religion. Some people want to hide the pain of his work, but the tears were real for him and brought forth his art. Some people call it Black history, but Hill's aim is to show hope in the history, such that we really can find our way out of hate by nurturing and respecting each other's self-esteem.

"As an artist I had no choice," says Jim Hill. "I had to dedicate my life to making a difference for poor folks, and I felt the only way that I could do that was from the gift that God had given me, and that was my art." Hill's other endeavors bear out his theme of hope. He has taught and mentored many youths as a teacher in the New York City public schools. He served in

kitchens and shelters, and his big dream is to build the “Jim Hill House” for people experiencing homelessness.

Pastor Wilma Zalabak says that First Christian Church invites Mr. Jim Hill to its pulpit on January 16, 2022, for two reasons. The first is that the church’s dedication for years, to helping to alleviate food insecurity in our local area through running a Food Pantry, seems akin to Mr. Hill’s dedication to helping against homelessness. The second reason is that a good portion of this church’s attenders are artists, gifted by God and expecting to use their gifts to give back to the community. Zalabak affirms the arts in the community by saying, “Our God creates, and so do we.”

Last year’s art show included many paintings by Laura Gladson. This year the church expects glass art, music compositions, crafts, and perhaps some metal work, a much wider variety of art. The invitation is to all creatives to choose this venue to visually display their art.

“Kids in the hood used to call me ‘Church Boy,’” says Jim Hill. His mother practiced African Christianity and nightly “stormed heaven” in her prayer closet for her nine children “All I can do is praise God,” says Hill. “It was God who brought me through all of this.” He says, “I have never worked a day in my life. When God calls, it’s not work.”

Mr. Jim Hill was listed in Who’s Who in America as an Outstanding Educator and was cited in newspapers and on television for his contributions and service for the homeless and underprivileged. Other awards and accolades have come from the United Nations (Humanitarian of the Year), Weeksville Art Contest (first place), and Omega Psi Phi fraternity (for dedication to education and career opportunities for youth). Jim Hill has also published a book showcasing his works, entitled, *Historical Blues: 100 Artworks, 100 Inspired Stories*. “God has given me a gift,” says Jim Hill. “The purpose is to give back its proceeds to the less fortunate.”

On January 16, 2022, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., in conjunction with Mr. Hill's message at 11 a.m., First Christian Church will host its Second Annual Art Show to which artists can apply for display of their own visual art. Set-up will be on Saturday, January 15. Application can be made through Sherrill Gammon, Sherrill3448@bellsouth.net, or text 678-640-6876.

"Remember to apply early," says Zalabak.

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is located at 569 Frasier St, Marietta GA 30060, on the Cobb Linc line, two blocks north of the Cobb County Civic Center. More information can be found at the website, fccmarietta.org, or by calling 770 428 3125.