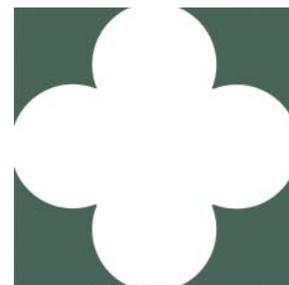


the spire

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Exploring what it means to follow the way of Jesus Christ



seattle first baptist



Acknowledging the Complexity in a Holy Time: A Guide to Holy Week

By Pastor Anita Peebles

During Advent, we use a special name for to talk about Jesus: "Emmanuel," which means, as Scripture reminds us, "God-with-us." This is especially powerful at the "New Year" for the church, when we wait expectantly for the Christ child to come into our midst, for the Incarnation of the Holy One to be fulfilled among us humans, part of the "good" creation.

As we move through Lent into Holy Week, this notion of "God-with-us" gets more complicated. We might have questions such as, "If God was with Jesus, why did Jesus die on the cross?" and, "What kind of God would let their beloved child be killed?" Even lifelong Christians ask this question from time to time: "Did Jesus really die and then come to life again?"

Friends, it is good to ask questions. It is a blessing to wonder. It is a gift to doubt. "God-with-us" doesn't stop during Lent. Emmanuel does not disappear from the story of Holy Week.

This year, as we approach Holy Week, I invite you to immerse yourself in the stories of Jesus' last week. I invite you to allow yourself to encounter these stories again for the first time.

If you have children or youth in your life, invite them into Holy Week with you.

Often children (and sometimes adults) go from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, from a victorious celebratory parade to a joyful resurrection, without learning about the depth of humanity that is revealed in the interim. How can we celebrate resurrection if we don't acknowledge the suffering and pain and fear of Holy Friday?

It is an irresponsible and simply therapeutic belief system if we don't contemplate the call of God on our lives in a world where Jesus was crucified, a world where state violence is real, and where imperialism is bent on silencing oppositional voices.

Here are some guidelines for accompanying those young in age and young in faith through Holy Week this year:

- DO encounter the stories of Holy Week and the church traditions and rituals through new eyes, as in the eyes of a child.
- DO ask questions! And accept questions from others, particularly the youngest ones among us. If you know the answer to a question, or know how to find out, great! But sometimes we don't know answers to big questions, and that's OK. This is a time when you can explore with your child, and we can explore together as a church community.
- DON'T sanitize or moralize the story. The story of Jesus' crucifixion is an injustice and we, like generations of Christ confessors before us, need to grieve it. Allow space for sad talk. Holy Week is sad, scary, dangerous, violent and traumatic. Explore the emotions of Holy Week with children in your life, as well as for yourself. Enter the stories with empathy and curiosity about emotions.
- DO express what you are feeling (and help children express how they feel) by engaging in artistic expressions.
- DON'T label "Jews" the "bad guys," even if the Bible translation you are using does. This is not good stewardship of interfaith relations and gives in to historic oppression and persecution of Jewish people. Instead use words like "religious leaders" or "priests and scribes," acknowledging and describing how people in power can sometimes make dangerous and destructive decisions.
- DON'T center the narrative that God's plan was for Jesus' death to be necessary.
- DO center God's continual presence with Jesus throughout his whole life, even through his death and resurrection.
- DO talk about death. Maybe you've experienced a recent loss in the life of your family. Emphasize that death is the end of life but it is not the end of relationship. Love continues beyond death.

Holy Week is an opportunity to engage the Holy with children in your life, as well as together as a community of faith. As you go about the end of Lent and enter into Holy Week, "put on your observation goggles" and look for the presence of God-with-us in your life. This year, Creativity Connections has compiled a short devotional booklet to be used during Holy Week. This booklet will be available starting April 7. As you traverse this uncertain time in the Christian calendar, be attentive to your needs and the needs of vulnerable people around you. When the Good News seems hard to find during Holy Week, remember that God's love never fails, never leaves, never gives up on us, never ends.

...and then, Easter! Here is our schedule for Holy Week and Easter morning.

- 8:30 a.m. Early Easter service with the Evergreen Association - Chapel of St. Ignatius on the campus of Seattle University
- 9 a.m. Easter Brunch begins. Food will be served until 10:30 a.m. - Fellowship Hall
- 9:15-9:30 Children's Choir rehearsal in Sanctuary
- 10 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt begins
- 11 a.m. Worship with a joint message from Pastors Tim Phillips and Anita Peebles

Friends, let us go forward in this sacred time attentive to our community and to the God who calls our names to have abundant life.

(adapted from my Master of Divinity thesis entitled "Suffer the Little Children to Come Unto Me: Non-Traumatizing Alternatives to Atonement Theology for Early Christian Education," 2018)



THIS PERSON ROCKS

Are you graduating this year, or know someone in our church community who is? Please let Pastor Anita know about any graduates from kindergarten through PhD so we can celebrate their accomplishments this spring!

What's up with Children, Youth, Families and Young Adults (CFYA) at SFBC?

Beloved church community,

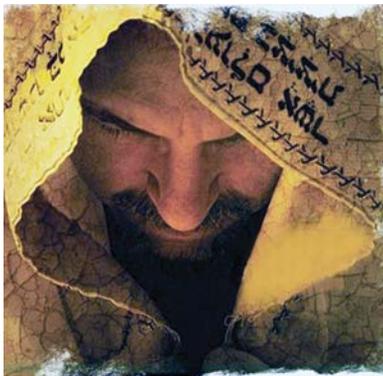
Thank you for joining the Children, Youth, Families and Young Adults Commission (CFYA) for our Next Generation Visioning Sessions in late February. This process was a result of conversations among the CFYA Commission over time, as well as part of Pastor Anita's process of getting to know this community and our convictions about Christian education. We were all humbled and grateful to receive more than 60 handouts with feedback and welcome more than 40 people to our conversation sessions on February 20 and 24 to help us assess and dream about our programming for young folks in this church. On Saturday, March 2, the CFYA Commission met to review and synthesize the information we gathered, with leadership from Megan Walker. The Commission was thoughtful, gracious and ambitious as we collectively planned for the future of the next generations in this congregation. As we discern how to move forward in shaping caring, creative, engaging and enriching spaces for the youngest members of our community, we invite you to support us by continuing to make space for young worshippers and praying with us. Jesus encouraged the disciples to have faith like a child, to be curious, creative, exploratory and just. We invite you to have this faith as well! Thank you for dreaming with us!



Welcome to a new section that will be in the Spire every month! During the CFYA Visioning Process in late February and early March, it became clear that access to resources for children, youth and families is important for this church. For that reason, Pastor Anita and the CFYA Commission will be sharing a column each month describing the ministries available for various age groups. And, it is important for EVERYONE in this church community to know what resources are available for our younger age groups so we can live into our mission statement to "know no circles of exclusion." For example, do you know if we have extra diapers available for babies? Or do you know where children's music practices? Or what the Family Fellowship Breakfast is and where it meets? If you don't, we hope that you will dedicate yourselves to learning this information so that you can welcome all people, especially the youngest, who come to SFBC!

Contemplative Mini-Retreat

April 13, 8:30 a.m. to noon



As we continue through Lent and approach Holy Week, it is a good time to ponder the story of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, literally praying for his life while friends he asked to stay awake with him dozed off nearby. Consider whether this might be the right time for you to participate in a three-hour time of "centering" or contemplative prayer — of discovering the Sacred within the Silence.

We will arrive at St. Mary on the Lake in Bellevue at 8:40 a.m. for a 20-minute orientation by Sr. Kathleen Pruitt, CSJP, who has been teaching Centering Prayer and Zen Meditation for many years. She will steal your heart with her first "Welcome." She will then lead us (and others, some of whom come to this event every month) in three hours of silent prayer and meditation. Not to worry — you will not be required to sit still in one chair for three hours straight. This prayer time is divided up into shorter segments — some sitting, some moving around (as desired), some outdoors on their beautiful grounds overlooking the lake, as weather permits. Perhaps you've been intrigued by the idea of a silent retreat but have never gone to one. Now might just be the time to try it!

Registration is free. Sign up at the Welcome Table, Church Office, or by emailing [Retreats@seattlefirstbaptist.org]. Car-pooling from Seattle will be arranged as needed. See Cherry Johnson with any questions or apprehensions.

2019 Retreat Dates

Mini Contemplative Retreat — April 13

Senior Retreat — July 10-12

One-Day Intergenerational Retreat — September 7

Women's Retreat — October 25-27

Hearing the call?

The Adult Education Commission is preparing for the ever-popular "Faith Journey" series in June and July, every Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. We are looking for individuals of any age who would be willing to take this on and share your personal story in whatever fashion you wish. We provide you with a series of questions to help guide your planning. If going it alone feels too daunting, one of us would be happy to "interview" you. If you feel called to do this, please talk with Martha Hopler or Cherry Johnson, or email [cherryj26@comcast.net].

Adult Education Offerings in April

Celebrate the Spirit and the Earth as we go deeper in faith at these adult Christian education opportunities.

On April 7 in the Parlor, we continue our Communion Sunday programming of Witnessing Our Faith and Living Our Values. Keith and Cindy Ervin, longtime SFBC members and activists in Interfaith Climate Action—First Hill, will share what led them to begin living more simply and to become activists in the climate justice movement. This presentation about their spiritual journey will include an opportunity for attendees to reflect on their own spirits in a time of global suffering and peril.

On April 14 and 28, Bible Study takes place in the Parlor. On April 14, Pastor Anita Peebles will lead a study and discussion of "Creation Care and Nature Metaphors in John's Gospel." On April 28, Pastor Tim Phillips will continue that theme. Also on April 14 and 28 in Fridell Hall, long-time SFBC member John Malcomson will lead our Contemplative Practice. John is a member of Thich Nhat Hanh's Order of Interbeing and a recent graduate of the Upaya Zen Center's Buddhist chaplaincy program. He was the founder of Lotus and Lily Buddhist-Christian study and practice group, which met at SFBC for many years. John will lead us in breath meditation, working with our sacred breath or "ruach." He calls this approach "Embodied meditation connecting our bodies with our minds through our breath."

There will be no adult education on April 21, as we share Easter morning breakfast.

Announcing the Name Tag Initiative

The Membership & Engagement Commission is pleased to announce the Name Tag Initiative. We hear over and over how hard it is to remember to bring your name tag to church. Some have even said they have no idea where theirs is.

To make this easier, we will have a cart with alphabetized containers at the Seneca door each Sunday where you can store your name tag to pick up and return after the service. The cart will be kept in a secured place during the week and made available only on Sunday mornings.

By wearing a name tag, we make our welcome clear. This is especially helpful for those of us for whom remembering names is not our finest skill.

We have made Judy in the SFBC Office aware that she may be receiving requests for additional name tags in case yours is one of those missing.

Let's all make an effort to use this new system so it becomes natural part of entering the building on Sunday mornings.



Come Join Us for Burrito Rolls

Seattle First Baptist Church's monthly Burrito Rolls are one way we can help. Every month we create healthy, delicious burritos here at SFBC. The burritos are distributed to tent cities, tiny house villages, Operation NightWatch and given by Companion volunteers to hungry visitors who come to the church. Want to help? Set aside some time Friday 4/12 to prep ingredients or Saturday 4/13 to roll burritos. Or perhaps you would like to take some completed burritos to an encampment or a tiny house village near you. Contact BurritoRoll1@gmail.com if you are interested or just need more information. A wonderful way to expand our love into our community.

Joyful! Noise presents: "I Feel the Earth Move"

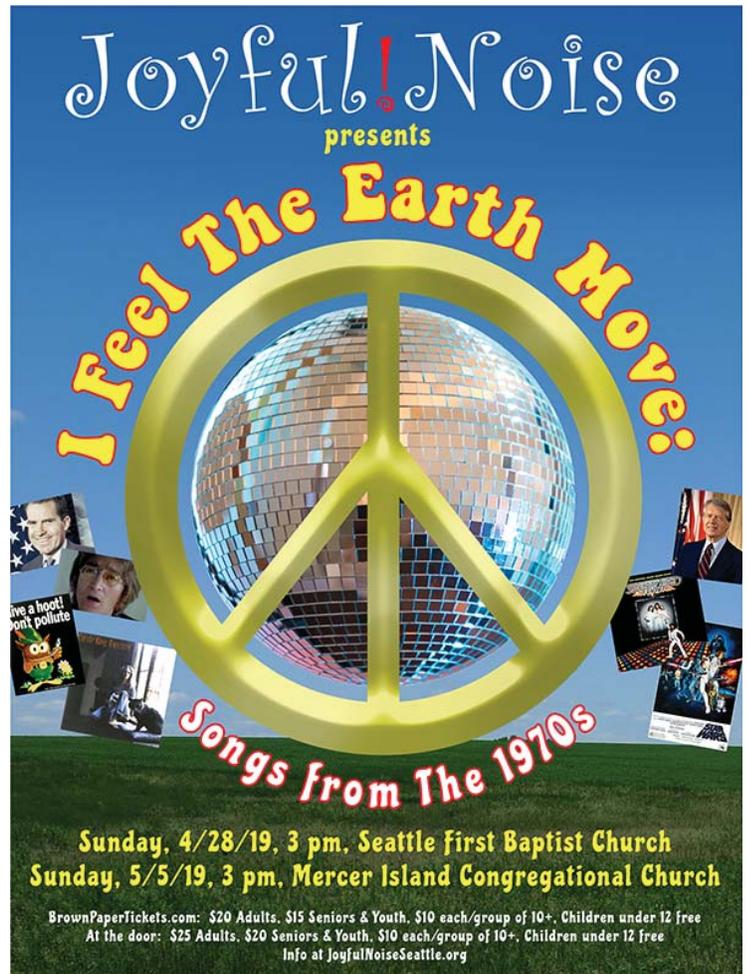
Dig out your old bell bottoms, slip on your platform shoes and get in the mood to rock out on the best tunes of the '70s. You'll be taking that "Midnight Train to Georgia," famously sung by Gladys Knight and the Pips, and grooving to "You're the One that I Want" from the musical Grease. And how could we have a '70s concert without an ABBA medley? We can't. We will also sing hits from Elton John, Carole King, the Eagles, The Carpenters, Barry Manilow, and Fleetwood Mac.

Joyful! Noise's 48-voice choir includes SFBC community members David Bloom, Belle Chenault, John Chenault, Wendy Cohen, Carla Granat, Patrick Green, Ken Klettke, Atit Marmer, Phil Mortenson, Darla O'Brian, Nancy Roberts-Brown, Steven Smith, and Kimberly Thiesen.

The concert takes place at Seattle First Baptist's sanctuary on Sunday, April 28, at 3 p.m. Parking on the street and in the lot just west of the church is free on Sunday.

You can enjoy the concert twice by attending our performance at Mercer Island Congregational Church on Sunday, May 5 at 3 p.m. Bring your friends!

Tickets are available from Joyful! Noise members, Brown Paper Tickets or at the door. For more information visit [www.joyfulnoiseseattle.org/concerts].



A Place at the Table Continues in May



The next Place at the Table Dinners are on May 4. These are pot luck dinners in various homes around town. You can host or be a guest. These dinners are great ways to get to know people and feel more part of our community.

The February Place at the Table Dinners involved 50 people in 6 different homes. Each gathering got rave reviews.

The hosts can sign up after services in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, April 7 and 14. Signups for guests will follow on Sunday April 21 and April 28. We hope to get hosts in as many geographic areas as possible. Our goal is to find a place at the table for anyone who wants to participate. How about a dinner on the East Side this time?

If you have any questions, call Joan Benner at 206-462-9166 (Co-Chair of the Membership and Engagement Commission).

The Prayerful Practice of Listening to Music

By Aaron Burkhalter

Throughout Lent, we are sharing the different ways that we experience our faith and spirituality. I have one that I'd like to share that has helped me bridge the my intellectual understandings and prayer: listening to music — not performing, just listening.

Years ago I started to explore what I really believed, and at some point I landed with a list of things that I believed for sure. Ultimately, this was a list of philosophical and scientific ideas I liked but that spoke very little about spiritual practice or even prayer.

I was never comfortable with prayer or a lot of the words we associate with prayer. Even the act of requesting something of God just felt strange, selfish and untrue. Just those raw and honest words spoken in prayers sent my mind racing

through questions and getting myself into philosophical debates in my head.

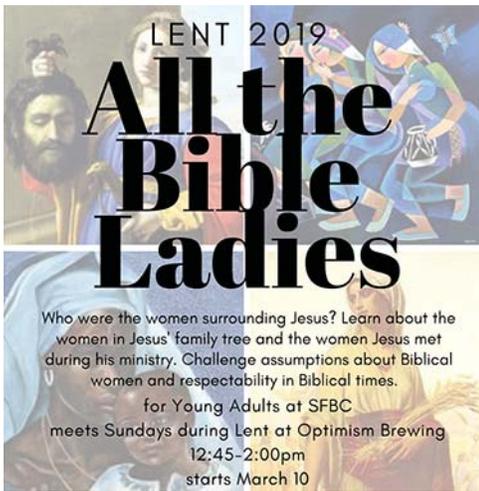
But then one day I put on an album by Mavis Staples, and she sang "You're not alone. I'm with you. I'm lonely too." And my heart soared. And she sang "Some Holy Ghost keeps me hangin' on."

If I heard these words in a spoken prayer, I'd get spiritually itchy and start squirming as I try to understand them. But if Mavis Staples sings them, the music takes a fast track into my heart and offers a comfort that all of the philosophical ponderings in the world cannot.

I realized that musicians have been singing prayers to me that I was too uncomfortable to speak myself. When I was young, Kiss sang "God gave rock and roll to you." Johnny Cash sings, "Jesus, oh Jesus, I don't wanna die alone." James Taylor sings "Hard times, hard times, come again no more." Bob Dylan sings "May God bless and keep you always." The act of just listening to music and letting prayers wash over me that I could barely speak myself, this makes me feel closer to God — however strangely I've come to define that word.

Leonard Cohen managed to describe this perfectly in one of the last songs he recorded in his life: "There is no God in Heaven, And there is no Hell below, So says the great professor, Of all there is to know, But I've had the invitation, That a sinner can't refuse, And it's almost like salvation, It's almost like the blues."

All the Bible Ladies: Lent Young Adult Bible Study

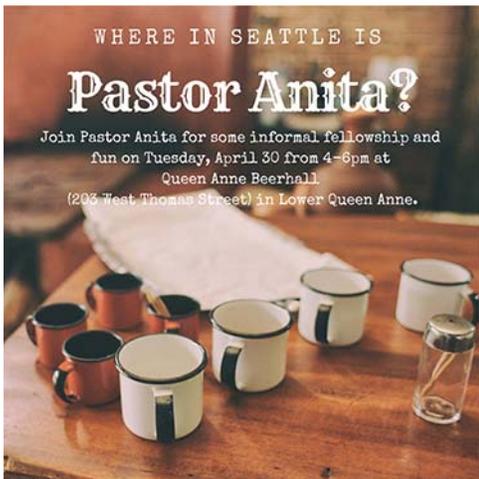


LENT 2019
All the Bible Ladies

Who were the women surrounding Jesus? Learn about the women in Jesus' family tree and the women Jesus met during his ministry. Challenge assumptions about Biblical women and respectability in Biblical times.

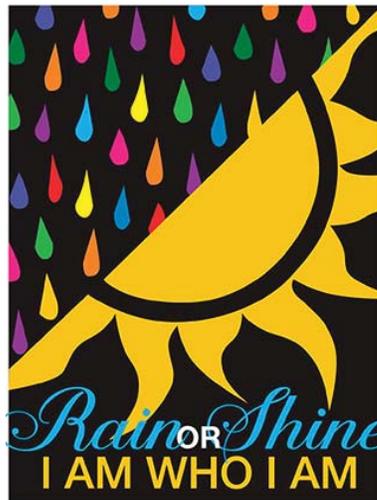
for Young Adults at SFBC
meets Sundays during Lent at Optimism Brewing
12:45-2:00pm
starts March 10

Young Adults (the under 40 crowd) are invited to join Pastor Anita for a weekly Bible study throughout Lent. Sundays from 12:45 to 2 p.m., young adults will gather at Optimism Brewing (1158 Broadway) to explore the role of women in Jesus' genealogy and ministry. Snacks will be provided and participants are welcome to bring their own lunches. Alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages are available for purchase, and food is also available for purchase from food trucks parked at Optimism starting at 2 p.m. on Sundays. Contact anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org for more information.



WHERE IN SEATTLE IS
Pastor Anita?

Join Pastor Anita for some informal fellowship and fun on Tuesday, April 30 from 4-6pm at Queen Anne Beerhall (206 West Thomas Street) in Lower Queen Anne.



Rain OR Shine
I AM WHO I AM

the Spring
Concert

*Diverse
Harmony*

the Nation's First
LGBTQ Youth Choir

AND

Spectrum

the Choir's Young Adult
A cappella Ensemble



ONE NIGHT ONLY:
Saturday, April 27

7:30 pm

Seattle First Baptist Church

Get Your Tickets Today!

ADULTS—\$25⁰⁰
YOUTH (UNDER 22) —\$5⁰⁰



Tickets available online via Brown Paper Tickets or at the door:
<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4200714>

April Calendar of Events

Wednesday, April 3

- 6 p.m. Community Dinner - Fellowship Hall
- 6:45 p.m. Y'all Come Music
- 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, April 7 Lent 5

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Parlor
- 10:15 a.m. Family Fellowship Breakfast in Youth Lounge, 3rd Floor
- 11 a.m. Worship and Communion with Pastor Anita Peebles preaching on John 12.1-8
- 12:45 p.m. Young Adult Bible Study: All the Bible Ladies — Optimism Brewing (1158 Broadway)
- 6 p.m. Seattle Jazz Vespers - Dmitri Matheny Quartet - Sanctuary

Wednesday, April 10

- 6 p.m. Community Dinner - Fellowship Hall
- 6:45 p.m. Youth Group Meeting - Youth Lounge
- 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, April 14 Palm Sunday

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Parlor and Fridell
- 10:15 a.m. Family Fellowship Breakfast in Youth Lounge, 3rd Floor
- 11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching on Luke 22

Wednesday, April 17

- 6 p.m. Community Dinner with Communion around the tables - Fellowship Hall
- 6:45 p.m. Youth Group Meeting - Youth Lounge
- 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, April 18

- 7 p.m. Diaconate - Parlor

Friday, April 19 Good Friday

- 7 p.m. Good Friday service

Sunday, April 21 Easter Sunday

- 8:30 a.m. Early Easter service with the Evergreen Association - Chapel of St. Ignatius on the campus of Seattle University
- 9 a.m. Easter Brunch begins. Food will be served until 10:30 a.m. - Fellowship Hall
- 9:30 a.m. Activities for children and families begin
- 10 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt begins
- 11 a.m. Worship with a joint message from Pastors Tim Phillips and Anita Peebles, and Theologian in Residence Patricia Hunter reflecting on the characters of the Easter story

Wednesday, April 24

- 6 p.m. Community Dinner - Fellowship Hall
- 6:45 p.m. Youth Group Meeting - Youth Lounge
- 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, April 28

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Parlor and Fridell
- 10:15 a.m. Family Fellowship Breakfast in Youth Lounge, 3rd Floor
- 11 a.m. Worship with Dr. Patricia Hunter preaching on John 20.19-31

Tuesday, April 30

- 4 - 6 p.m. Where in Seattle is Pastor Anita? Queen Anne Beer Hall, 203 West Thomas Street in Seattle

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American Baptist Women's Ministries Report

Conference time is almost here! It is going to be in Yakima (closer and cheaper) and our Bible Study Leader is our own national executive director, Gina Jacob-Strains. The Bible Study Leader is a young "global servant," Katrina Williams, hailing from Everett and next going to serve in Thailand. As if this isn't enough, the theme is "Feel Beloved Community: Sing, Play, Be Bold with Joy." There will be time to play and meet old and new friends.

This exciting weekend will be held May 3-5. If you have attended previously I know you are already trying to work this in your schedule. If you haven't yet discovered this great weekend, I hope you decide to come and we will help you with your costs.

But hurry — registrations need to be in by April 20. Registration forms are available from Catherine Fales, Shirley Wilkinson, or at the Welcome Table.

Seattle Jazz Vespers — The Dmitri Matheny Quartet

Sunday April 7 at 6 p.m.

Dmitri Matheny – Flugelhorn; **Milo Petersen** – Guitar; **Phil Sparks** – Bass; **Mark Ivester** - Drums

"Dmitri Matheny is a jazz treasure. The lyrical Matheny has impressive chops, but it's his warmth and soulfulness that win you over."—All Music Guide

Acclaimed for his warm tone, soaring lyricism and masterful technique, American flugelhornist DMITRI MATHENY has been lauded as "one of the most emotionally expressive improvisers of his generation" (International Review of Music.) An honors graduate of the Berklee College of Music, Dmitri Matheny vaulted onto the jazz scene in the 1990s as the protégé of jazz legend Art Farmer. Since then he has garnered critical acclaim and a loyal international following, touring extensively throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, traveling to 19 countries. With over 100 recordings to his credit, Dmitri Matheny has released 11 albums as a leader. His latest is *Jazz Noir*, a fresh spin on crime jazz, film noir movie themes and timeless classics. The San Francisco Chronicle calls Matheny "one of the jazz world's most talented horn players."



Online Extras

We had some great worship services in March. Every week we publish portions of the service, including the sermon and music, on our website: <http://www.seattlefirstbaptist.org/last-sunday.html>

We also keep an archive of past sermons, as well as some music. This page has recent services, and our archive goes back several years: <http://www.seattlefirstbaptist.org/jan---april-2019.html>