

the Spire

June 2021



seattle first baptist

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Submissions for the Spire are due
by the 20th of the month prior.
All submissions should be sent to
editor@seattlefirstbaptist.org

2021 Officers and Church Leaders

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contact@seattlefirstbaptist.org

Executive Committee	President: Jim Ginn VPr: Megan Walker Treasurer: Bob Sittig Secretary: Dick Miller
Church Home Operations	Rodhney Tull
Members at Large	Mike Zaugg, Metta Williams
Membership Engagement	Brent Marble
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Worship	Sterling Morris
Personnel	Theresa Pruett (Chair) Sara Tollefson, Peter Shafer Marsha Ullmer, Joyce Phillips
CFYA	Mary Jeffers
Stewardship	John Benner (Chair) Pat Kile, Rebecca Morris, Erik Zaugg
Music	Darla O'Brian
Outreach	Beth Reis

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From the Pastor's Desk

Coming Out as Antiracist

By Pastor Tim Phillips

"Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth ... Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'" (John 11.43-44)

Many years ago, I heard the story of the raising of Lazarus as a "coming out" story. It was my first American Baptist Concerned retreat (the predecessor organization of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists) and I met Rick Mixon, Barbara McNair, Kathryn Jans, Elizabeth Patrick, along with Craig Darling whom I already knew but made sure I got there. These are people who have remained important to me for over 35 years. I described that retreat as the "coming home" part of my "coming out" process. Here were ways of thinking about the world, honoring the truth of our lives, and understanding faith that felt freeing and empowering and gave me hope for a future.

You could draw a direct line from that retreat to my life with you at Seattle First Baptist. I stand on the shoulders of clergy who served this church as "out" Lesbian and Gay folk: Craig Darling, Catherine Fransson, and Paul Rauschenbusch. I am honored and blessed to serve today with the Rev. Dr. Patricia Hunter. And I will forever be grateful for the support you provided a young Rick Mixon, a ministerial intern from July 1971 to September 1972. Although Rick did not come out publicly until a year later, he says, "... [SFBC] was a comfortable enough environment generally that I felt I could explore [my gayness] for myself ... [and] I made my first real gay friends." That was early in the Gay Pride movement and Rick became one of the central figures in LGBTQ+ justice in our denominational and cultural life.

We can celebrate Pride this month as a congregation because people took risks to tell the truth about their lives in a way that shaped our life together.

But the story of Lazarus does not end with his "coming out." Jesus says, "Unbind him, and let him go." I have spent many painful hours with people who thought their coming out was the end of the story. All they had to do was tell their truth and "poof" life would be fantastic. It doesn't work that way. There is always more unbinding to do.

I have discovered that being an out gay man does not mean I am free from the white supremacist culture that bore and benefits me. I have more unbinding to experience. One of the things I learned at the retreat all those years ago was that the "isms" are all connected by a web of privilege and power. All those friends I met then have been working against racism ever since. And they have been working against the patriarchy that dismisses the lives and gifts of women as well. They taught me that "coming out" is only one step toward the "unbinding" that is promised for the life that walks out of a tomb.

We can be proud of our history to bring LGBTQ+ people home. We can be proud that, early on, this congregation was supporting and calling Lesbian and Gay folks into ministry. We have "come out" in many ways. But we still have some "unbinding" to do. I am grateful that we – all of us – can continue to do this work together.



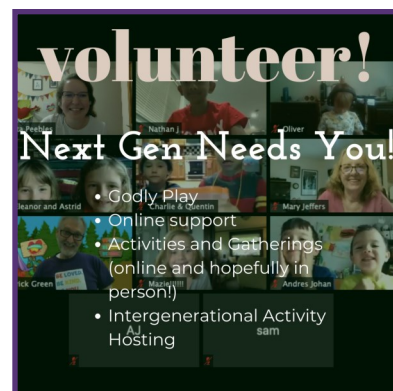
Learning Together

Next Generation Volunteers Needed!

As we prepare to begin in-person church activities this summer, Next Generation Ministries needs YOUR help! Some examples of roles we will need:

- **Time with Children hosts:** If you would like to share a story or activity in 3-5 minutes during worship, Pastor Anita is reestablishing the list of teens and grown-ups to call on. Pastor Anita will work with you to prepare. All you need to bring is your imagination and willingness to share with our kids!
- **Wiggle Room steward during worship:** Hang out with kids in the Wiggle Room, manage simple activities (quiet arts and crafts, provided for the room).
- **Godly Play** (will be 9:30-10:30 a.m. beginning in September)
 - Storytellers* will rotate. Training session planned for summer.
 - Shepherds*, for set-up/clean-up and welcoming. Begin in fall.

If you are interested any of these activities, please reach out to Pastor Anita at anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org to talk about getting on the schedule.



CFYA/Next Generation Picnic

Sunday, June 13, 1-3 p.m.
Volunteer Park

Children, youth, young adults, and families with kiddos welcome! Bring your own food and drinks, chairs and/or picnic blankets, and sunscreen. RSVP to Pastor Anita by June 12 at anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org

Godly Play

Godly Play for Kids on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. will be on recess during the summer. We will begin again in the fall.

Companion Ministries

As in-person worship begins again in July, so too will the Companion Ministry. Led by Dennis Raymond, this important ministry which began in 2007 provides companions to act as guides, provide information, and be social service advocates to guests who visit us on Sunday mornings.

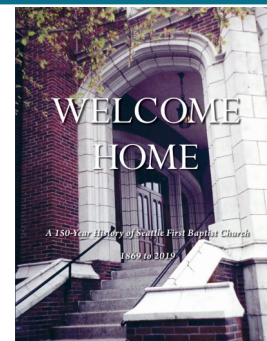
You may see them roaming the halls during Sunday service, looking for anyone who is lost in the SFBC labyrinth, meeting Brian Lew at the Hilltop/Fred Lind van, helping mobility-challenged people navigate the ramp from the elevator to the sanctuary and back, distributing prepared food items to those in need, and watching for medical emergencies in the sanctuary. Volunteers should be adults and be willing to complete companion training and/or CPR training. If you are interested contact Dennis Raymond through the church office: contact@seattlefirstbaptist.org

Our Life Together

Elliott Bay Books features *Welcome Home*

Saturday, June 19, 2 p.m.

Learn about the rich history of Seattle First Baptist Church, from its founding to the present day, in a presentation based on their book *Welcome Home: A 150-Year History of Seattle First Baptist Church, 1869 to 2019*. *Welcome Home* documents the compelling history of Seattle's First Baptist Church from pioneer days to the present. "Through an engaging narrative, first-hand accounts, timelines and photographs, this well-researched book reveals the significant role that the First Baptist Church has played in the religious, social, cultural, and political life in Seattle... Anyone interested in the history of Seattle will want to read this book." -Ann Ferguson, Curator of the Seattle Collection, Seattle Public Library.



Historian Diana James, Pat Kile and Dick Miller (all longtime congregation members) join us to talk about the historic building and the community created there. Tom Heuser, co-founder and president of the Capitol Hill Historical Society will also appear as part of the program. Elliott Bay has presented programs with Seattle First Baptist Church for many years, most notably with SFBC's "Seattle Spiritual Synthesis" speakers series. An historic peace church, Seattle First Baptist has been at the forefront of supporting, welcoming, including, and affirming LGBTQ+ community members and families since the 1960s. Copies of *Welcome Home* are available at the Elliott Bay Book Company or from Seattle First Baptist Church. Registration for this event is required. Please register through the Elliot Bay website:

<https://www.elliottbaybook.com/event/diana-james-pat-kile-dick-miller>

Congregation Takes Steps Toward Antiracism

By Dick Miller

Seattle First Baptist Church members attending a special business meeting on May 23 overwhelmingly approved amendments to the church's bylaws. The amendments designated that three new at-large positions on the Diaconate will be filled by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) members and nominated by the BIPOC members of the church. The basis for the amendments derives from the recommendation made by the Antiracism Task Force to change the church's all-white elected leadership for 2021 by adding three BIPOC members to the Diaconate. Amending the bylaws enables the church to immediately address the omission of elected members of color for the remainder of 2021. The Governance Task Force will propose a more comprehensive bylaws revision by the end of the year.

The specific bylaw amendments are:

- Article IX (Diaconate), Section 1 (Members): The amendment increases the number of the Diaconate's at-large members from two to five.
- Article XII (Nominations and Elections): Paragraph C has been added to read, "Nomination of at-large members: Two at-large members will be nominated in accordance with paragraph b above. The remaining three at-large members will be nominated by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) members of the congregation. These three members will self-identify as BIPOC."

Questions about the amendment or the special meeting can be directed to

president@seattlefirstbaptist.org

Our Life Together

BPFNA- Bautistas por la Paz

40 Days of Peace and Virtual International Summer Conference

July 20 - August 28

All are welcome to join for the activities of 40 Days of Peace from July 20-August 28. From kids' times to youth meetings to adult workshops to auctions and concerts, the 40 Days of Peace will be a time of gathering for people all across North America and beyond. The 40 Days of Peace culminates in the International Virtual Conference on August 28 at 2PM PDT. Come learn with us as we seek to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God beyond barriers.

Learn more here: <https://www.bpfna.org/conference-conferencial>

Register here: <https://www.bpfna.org/register-main>

Contact Pastor Anita for more information.

Elliott Bay Books features *United States of Grace* with Lenny Duncan & Tim Phillips Wednesday, June 23, 6 p.m.

Lenny Duncan is the author of *Dear Church*, the Pastor of Jubilee Collective in Vancouver, WA, and is active in various other religious and social good works. Join Rev. Duncan and Pastor Tim Phillips as they discuss Duncan's newest book, *United States of Grace: A Memoir of Homelessness, Addiction, Incarceration, and Hope*.

"Lenny Duncan weaves together history and memoir in a book rooted in journeys across the beautiful and bruising landscape of the United States, where the pointed stare of a Black mama at the Greyhound station and a voice whispering sobriety at a Grateful Dead show become ciphers of ordinary grace. In this astounding book that is both fierce and generous, jagged and hopeful, Duncan makes space for the thorny topography of addiction, freedom, sexuality, despair, and race, refusing to flatten the path for our comfort. Instead, he invites us to walk with him, to see what he sees, to inhabit the adventure and heartbreak of a Black life in a country built for Black destruction. A book written with tenderness and joy, *United States of Grace* points us toward prophetic signposts of what is possible for America, if we have the courage to imagine it together."

--Melissa Florer-Bixler.

"Lenny Duncan's tale of escape from the miserable lot that life dealt him is reminiscent of Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land* – powerful and beautifully told – but with a twist: Duncan's triumph comes through an encounter with redemption. I can hardly imagine a more profound story of salvation... This is the work of a truly gifted writer."

--Tom Gjelten.

This event is hosted by Elliot Bay Books and attendees must register through the Elliot Bay Website: <https://www.elliottbaybook.com/event/lenny-duncan-tim-phillips>



Our Life Together

Long-Range Planning Update

By Jim Segaar

Our task forces continue their work as we move into the summer.

Small Group Ministry

The task force submitted a set of draft recommendations to the Executive Committee. These were reviewed and discussed at the EC's May 13 meeting. Soon, the full congregation will be invited to review, and suggest changes to, the small group ministry recommendations.

Antiracism

The task force met with BIPOC members of SFBC on April 25. Rev. Jennifer Ikoma-Motzko attended the meeting as a consultant and may help the task force further. Most of the time was spent talking about the racist rhetoric in the Pastoral Transition report at the last LRP forum with the congregation. SFBC leadership's lack of response to the rhetoric has eroded trust among BIPOC at the church. A second meeting with BIPOC members is planned. Task force member Karen Carlos is hosting time for white people to talk about racism and white supremacy on Mondays from 7-8 p.m.

Facilities

Danny de la Cruz and Arthur Thomas joined the task force. The group took an extensive tour of our facilities with Patrick Green. They also interviewed Cherry Johnson about her vision for our facilities. Daryl de la Cruz is seeking information from the city about the First Hill Urban Village. Next steps include working on seismic issues with a contractor or architect. Three main building scenarios are being considered: Remodel/Retrofit; Partial Redevelopment; Full Redevelopment. Two scenarios seem to be off the table: Sell and Move; Stand Pat.

Governance

The task force discussed the articles of incorporation of SFBC signed in 1908. They continue to review, understand, and propose updates for the Bylaws. The group has been discussing how the Governance Task Force integrates the work of the Antiracism Task Force. The group all agrees that defining the governance structure and the by-laws to support antiracism is both necessary and not easy. They identified three areas to focus on in the coming weeks:

- 1) Ensure we have appropriate policy statements that clearly state that discrimination is prohibited,
- 2) update behavioral norms to reflect this stance and
- 3) review the nominating process to ensure the hiring criteria is established to meet our leadership diversity objectives. Angie Buysse resigned from the task force.

Senior Ministry

Ten more surveys were sent out to people who requested them. The group is "putting meat on the bare bones" of their proposal.

Pastoral Transition

The task force is regrouping with the help of additional facilitation. Dave Roberts resigned as facilitator and will not continue on the task force.

Program Office

We completed a new draft of our proposed Key Ministries document.

See the church website: <https://www.seattlefirstbaptist.org/long-range-planning.html>

Updated Dates for Camp Burton – Summer 2021



Camp Burton is planning on hosting summer camps once again this year as long as WA successfully enters Phase 3, and SFBC is excited to be a part of the magic that they create on Vashon. **Please note the updated dates!****

****July 17-24: High School (Gr 9-12)** - Teens Redeemed Adventure Camp, Includes camping/backpacking, plus “extreme element” like rafting, climbing, etc.

****August 8-13: Grade School (Gr 2-5)** - Faith Adventure Camp, Camp Burton

****August 8-13: Middle School (Gr 6-8)** - Faith Adventure Camp, Cascade Meadows

August 1-7: All Ages Family Camp - Family Camp, Camp Burton

Contact Pastor Anita at anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org or Patrick Green for info about scholarships.

Summer Programming

- ◆ Tuesday Prayer with Pastor Patricia: Weekly at 12:00 p.m.
- ◆ Regular weekly Wednesday night programming (at both 6:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.) will be on hiatus for the summer.
- ◆ Thursday Bible Study with Pastor Tim: Weekly at 12:00 p.m.
- ◆ Friday Happy Hours are every other week: June 11 and June 25 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- ◆ Godly Play will not meet on Sundays during June, July, and August.
- ◆ Youth Group will meet at times TBD during the summer.
- ◆ Young Adults will meet at times TBD during the summer.

Monday, June 7, 7 p.m. - Brave Space Forum

Sunday, June 13, 1 p.m. - CFYA/Next Gen Picnic

Thursday, June 17, 7 p.m. - Diaconate Meeting

Saturday, June 19, 1 p.m. - Pandemic Health Bag Assembly

Saturday, June 19, 2 p.m. - SFBC *Welcome Home* Book Event with Elliott Bay Books

Sunday, June 20 - Father's Day

Wednesday, June 23, 6 p.m. - *United States of Grace* with Lenny Duncan & Tim Phillips

Sunday, June 27 - Pride Sunday