

the spire

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Exploring what it means to follow the way of Jesus Christ



Our Sanctuary was filled with beautiful sounds on Music Sunday. As a congregation, we are challenged to consider what else the word "sanctuary" might mean for us and our neighbors.

Sanctuary?

By Jim Segaar

Last month we introduced a new Affirmation of Values for Seattle First Baptist Church, and asked our readers to think about the values expressed, especially how we can implement them in our daily lives. That conversation continues at this writing. We seek to do more than simply affirm our values, we seek to live them.

Our world today is in desperate need of organizations and people willing to live values such as "We will respect all religions," "We will welcome the stranger," and "We will protect our environment." In the United States, we seem to be focused on insults instead of respect, fear vs. welcome, and exploitation over protection. Like the prophet Habakkuk, some cry out:

"How long, YHWH, am I to cry for help while you do not listen?
How long will I cry 'Oppression!' in your ear and you do not save?
Why do you make me look upon injustice?
Why do you countenance tyranny?
Outrage and violence – this is all I see!"

Reading the prophets and the latest news, it seems that some things haven't changed much since 605 BCE. But like the prophets, we are called to cry out against injustice and oppression. And beyond that, as followers of Jesus, we are called to action. Oppression is ended only when we overwhelm it with acceptance. It is up to us to bring forth a world of justice, free from tyranny. Our church has a history of reaching out to those whom society vilifies, and today we have another opportunity to do just that.

With incendiary talk of walls and immigration sweeps and travel bans and "old white guys first" filling the airwaves, churches are once again becoming places of Sanctuary. This goes beyond providing a safe, quiet place for parishioners to worship, and can extend to housing and protecting those unjustly accused and in danger. Today that can mean taking in undocumented immigrants who are in danger of being separated from their families and deported, often without due process. For example, First Baptist Church of Denver recently took in a woman until she could receive a fair hearing, where she was granted more time in the U.S.

Our church needs to decide what our role should be. The Church Council of Greater Seattle has taken a leading position on Sanctuary, and Jim Singletary, president of our congregation, has started a conversation about how we will help. In a church like ours, with a history like ours, a reasonable answer seems to be "we will help in any way we can given our resources and our congregation."

So what's next? This is not an issue to be decided by staff, or by the Diaconate. We believe the congregation needs to weigh in on this important issue. And we need to identify people who take the lead in whatever action we, the congregation, deem appropriate. Our leadership is committed to continuing this discussion. What do you think? What should our response be? What can you personally bring to this effort?

Stay tuned for a continuing discussion.

Pastoral Search Committee Progress

By Bob Sittig

I'm pleased to report to the congregation of Seattle First Baptist Church that the search committee assigned to recommend a candidate for the position of Associate Pastor for Women and Families is making significant progress. We had over twenty viable applicants for this post and your search committee has done a very thorough job of evaluating each one. We are very close to making a recommendation to you and anticipate being able to meet the following schedule:

By June 25 – A formal announcement will be made in the July Spire and subsequent bulletins of a congregational meeting scheduled after the worship service of July 9 during which the candidate will be presented and a vote will be taken.

July 9 - The candidate will be presented in the worship service and a vote of the congregation will be taken regarding calling this person.

It is always possible that unforeseen events can alter this schedule, however it is important that we have good representation of our congregation on July 9, so this probable schedule is presented to you so you can plan to attend on that date. It will be a very important and exciting day in the life of our church.

I appreciate the dedication and hard work of all the members of the search committee and I believe you will soon as well.

Thank You – What a Wonderful Goodbye – and I'm Still Here

By Vicky Thomas

It is Monday after Music Sunday as I write this, and my heart and ears are still full of the love that was sung and shown. The musicians gave their all and the congregation, as always, responded deeply to the music. Thank you.

This congregation's openness to all kinds of music has made my work at SFBC one of affirmation and spiritual creativity. One of a choir director's deepest fears is, when we take risks in our choice of music, that the congregation will not warm to it. I can honestly say in eleven years of weird, wacky and wonderful music, the choir has always been willing to take the musical leap of faith and the congregation has been there to catch them. This is a great gift to a choir director and a choir.

Thank you so much for marking my retirement with such a wonderful send-off luncheon. The food and fellowship was soul-filling, the words of the speakers and the personal conversations were humbling, and the gifts were so generous. I am having to hold myself back from running to West Seattle nursery today, because



President Jim Singletary presented a gift from the congregation to Vicky Thomas on Music Sunday to celebrate her 11 years of service with SFBC.

your gift of plants will come into better use later this summer when we dig up an oil tank from the front yard.

Having a big send-off on Music Sunday made sense.....but we have so much more musical fun to have before I actually retire on July 23.

Summer choir runs June 11 – July 23 at 10:00 a.m., except for July 2. We learn a piece that morning to sing in worship. All are welcome.

July 2 the choir joins New Beginnings to form the core of an interracial gospel choir for the Saturday worship at the Portland American Baptist Biennial. I am so pleased that during one of my last times with the choir we will be singing for social justice. Back here at SFBC, an amazing counter tenor, Mikah Meyer, will be the musical guest.

And on July 9 we plan to have an ALL COME BAND/CHOIR (any instrument, any ability) for the introduction of our new pastor to the congregation.

So, I look forward to seeing you all again in the next two months as we continue to worship and play in the musical fields of the Lord. With gratefulness in my heart, Vicky

Celebrate Father's Day with Michael Stern and Tim Phillips



This photo of Michael Stern and family was taken at Seattle First Baptist in 2015.

Local songwriter and recording artist Michael Stern will join Pastor Tim Phillips to lead worship on Sunday, June 18, in a special Father's Day worship service.

Michael Stern is a songwriter and recording artist known to many of us here at First Baptist. For more than three decades he has composed and led original music for groups like the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Baptist Peace Fellowship, Open & Affirming Baptists, as well as interdenominational worship services & retreats. His songs draw inspiration from diverse literary, historical, spiritual and personal influences and range from thought-provoking to humorous, and from romantic to spiritual.

Michael's performances and presentations utilize a wide array of songs for all ages, stories and community-building experiences focused on nurturing compassion, peace, justice, hope and healing;

all while generating group participation and discussion. His music evokes feeling of passion, joy and wonder at the beauty of creation and human diversity.

Michael is also a Family Nurse Practitioner and research clinician who has focused much of his career on vaccine preventable diseases. As a songwriter and inspirational speaker, he incorporates a wealth of perspective from his experience in the healing arts, parenting and teaching into his music and creative presentations. Read more or listen to samples of his music at www.mikesongs.net

Pastor Tim had this to say. "It is Mike's own life commitment to love and justice that most commends his music. You will laugh. You will be moved. But don't expect to get too comfortable. You will also be challenged and, I expect, changed."

Mikah Meyer to Sing and Speak at SFBC

A world-renowned countertenor singer, and self-described "pastor's kid" will be our special guest during worship at 11 a.m. on Sunday, July 2. Mikah Meyer will sing and share his story during the service.

Meyer recently left a position at the Washington National Cathedral to embark on a road trip to visit every U.S. National Park – all 417 of them – and become the youngest person to do so. The trip is his way of honoring his father, a Lutheran minister, who died of cancer before taking his own "trip of a lifetime."

In addition to being a professional singer and an adventurer, Meyer is the founder of "Queer For Christ" - the world's largest Young Adult LGBT Christian organization. He has spoken and sung for LGBT-affirming Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian, UCC, Methodist, and Catholic churches, and is thrilled to visit our Baptist church.

More about Mikah and his adventure is available on his website: <http://www.tbcmikah.com>



This photo of Mikah Meyer is from his blog.

A Thank You to SFBC

By Rachel Gross

Dear SFBC,

It is with a truly heavy heart that I must say farewell to you all. I began teaching Sunday School here with Sarah a year and a half ago, and I had no idea what an amazing community I was stepping into. Now a combination of opportunities and wanderlust have finally gotten the better of me, and I am leaving Seattle this summer to spend a month in Alaska doing quality control for seafood companies, after which I will move to Corvallis, Oregon where I have friends and job opportunities in the service industry.

I am at a loss for words to adequately express what a beautiful experience I've had being a part of the SFBC community. I am not someone to whom a sense of community comes easily, as I usually feel like the outsider in a group setting. Over the past couple of years I have been surprised again and again by the genuinely welcoming spirit of this place and its people. Again and again my cautious guarded nature has been charmed and disarmed by the all-pervasive atmosphere of inclusivity and acceptance here.

Not only have I never been treated like an outsider here, I haven't even been able to fall back into the habit of feeling like one! I found true acceptance here. That means a lot. I also found inspiration here. Witnessing the spirit of activism and generosity exhibited in this church has encouraged me to challenge myself to live in ways that are closer to my ideals.

It is heart-warming to see people care about the world around them and act from that place of caring. It has bolstered my spirit and helped me believe in the essential goodness of humanity, at a time when that belief doesn't always come easily. For that and everything else, I thank you.

It has been an honor to be a part of this church and its community. I will never forget.



Rachel Gross and others on Palm Sunday.

Summer for Children, Families and Young Adults

By Patrick Green

What's happening for families and young adults this summer?

Glad you asked! The CFYA commission has been busy making plans to ensure that summer at SFBC works for everyone. We have created a brochure to be handed out to families and young adults by the ushers and greeters at worship services and that will be available at the welcome desk and the office. We want to let folks know that while the Sunday School, Children's Music Program and Family Fellowship Hour are taking the summer off there will still be lots of great things happening.

The nursery will still be available on Sundays and during other special programs. The Worship Adventure Book for kids, with coloring and activities that go along with the service, will be available every Sunday. The Wiggle-Room (Brawley room) will be transformed for the summer with a craft table and rotating crafts so there will always be something new to keep little hands busy. The Time With Children will happen each Sunday, providing a special message for kids and an opportunity for them to get involved in our worship service. The Young Adult group is planning picnics and will continue to have their Bible study on the fourth Sunday.

And, of course, the All-Church Picnic will be happening on August 20, just look for the bouncy house, face painting and great food.

Summer is a great time at SFBC and we look forward to seeing you here!



Celebrating Pride in 2017

By Patrick Green

At Seattle First Baptist we celebrate that our diversity makes us stronger. This month we will continue our tradition of participating in Seattle Pride. Those marching will depart from the SFBC worship service after the choir anthem is sung and march as a group to join Diverse Harmony. DH is the nation's first queer-straight alliance youth chorus and they meet in our choir room for rehearsal so it is fitting that we join with them to show that we believe that love is love is love is love.



We also will be represented at Pride by people who wear special Seattle First Baptist pride T-shirts. We began offering these T-shirts to people going to Pride two years ago, and are continuing that this year. In this way people from the church have more freedom to engage with members of the crowd, while still representing SFBC. If you have a shirt from previous years, please wear it. If you need one, please contact Patrick Green with your size by Monday, June 5.

Be sure to join us for worship on Sunday, June 25. The service will be our own celebration of Pride, and will be over in time for people to attend the parade and festival.

Have Fun This Fourth!

By Sami Hoag and Paul Roby, co-chairs, Commission on Outreach

This 4th of July, Seattle First Baptist Church will serve delicious summer food to 400+ of our un-housed neighbors, thanks to a seven year-long partnership between our congregation, Companis, and the Mitchell Family. There are opportunities to bring salads and desserts, to help set up, and take down the tables and chairs, and to help prepare and serve food. A special opportunity is to just come and eat at the event, as a loving presence. You may share food and caring attention, with people who often feel invisible, people who feel that nobody cares for them at all.

Last year's fun-filled event featured haircuts, social service referrals, hygiene kits, and clothing, as well as a music and dance party. It is a moving and fun time, so please join us in this celebration of fellowship with neighbors who might otherwise go hungry, as many social service agencies close for the holiday. Contact the Church Office, or anyone on the Outreach Commission, to learn about the many ways to participate!

Moving Toward the Light - Senior Adult Retreat

Rainbow Lodge - July 11-13, 2017

Register Now for the Senior Retreat.

Just as our bodies need regular exercise and our cells need nutritious food, a spiritual practice can nourish our inner lives. This year's retreat will present a variety of spiritual practices within the Christian tradition for you to experience.

Presenters will include Cherry Johnson, Bill Malcolmson, Harriet Platts, Steve Smith, and Mariah Kay who will do a "Sweet Suite of Chi-Based Meditation Practices."

Cost is \$175 per person – shared or private room. Your check reserves your space. Scholarships available. Contact the church office to register – 206-325-6051. Please note that the retreat is Tuesday - Thursday this year, rather than Wednesday - Friday as in past years.



To get you in the mood for the retreat, Steve Smith shares this quote from Thomas Keating: *Intimacy with God: an introduction to centering prayer*:

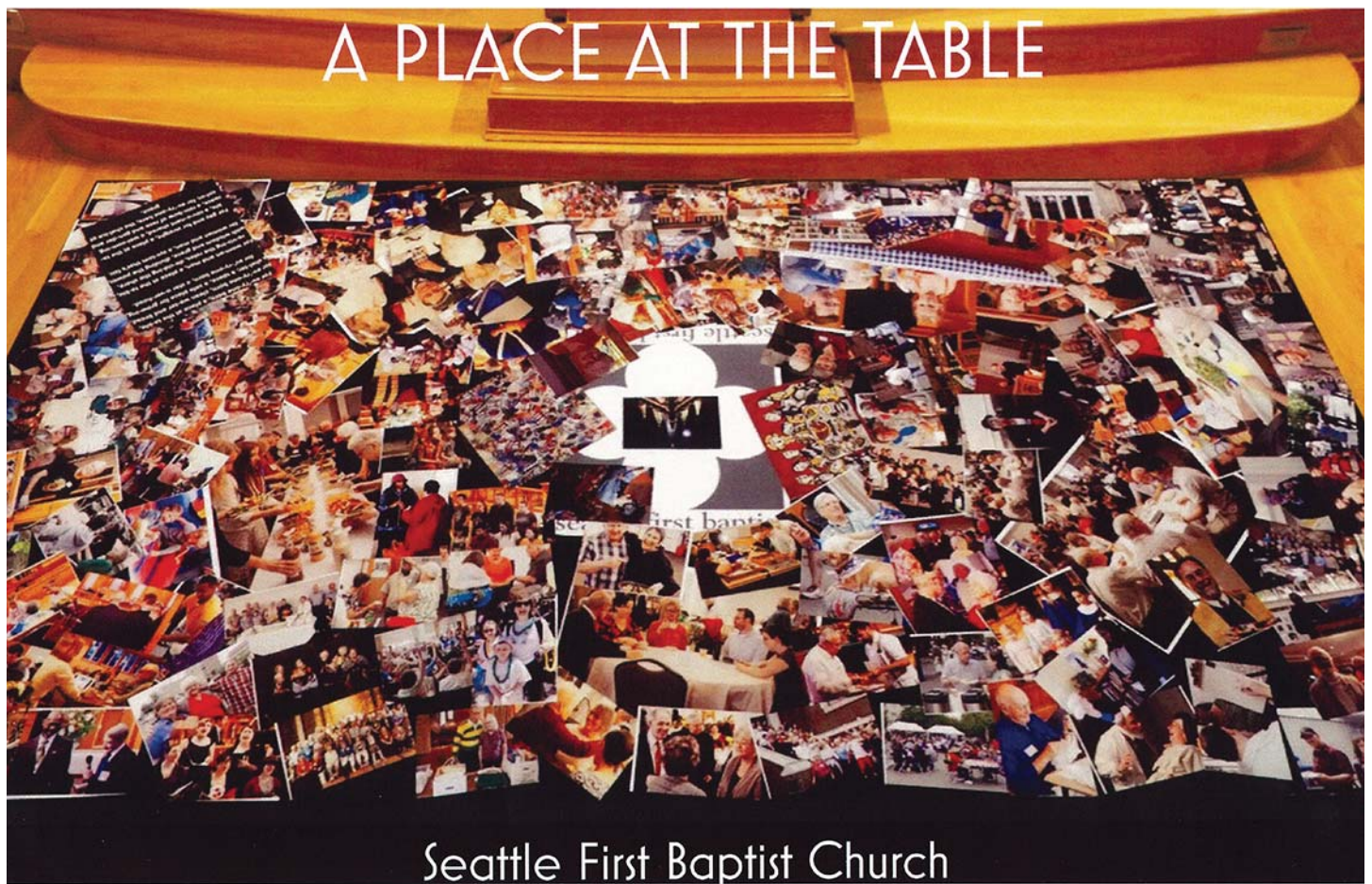
"How can we miss God if God is totally present? That is the problem. All spiritual exercises are designed to reduce the monumental illusion that God is absent. Not so. We just think so. Since the way we think is the way we usually act, we live as if God were absent. Whatever we can do to contribute to the dissolution of that confusion furthers our spiritual journey."

Presenter Mariah Kay offers these words:

Meditation in Motion

Our bodies can lead us to our inner wisdom. Let's experiment and experience its leadership. We'll do some simple tai chi as well as progressive relaxation and other meditative techniques. Expect to feel good!

For Everyone Born, a Place at the Table



Your stewardship commission wants to take a moment to just say thank you. Thank you for your pledges for 2017. Thank you for your commitment to the ministries that we all share. Thank you for claiming YOUR place at the table. SFBC would not be the same without you. While we have great things planned for this fall's campaign, for now on behalf of the Pastors, Staff and Diaconate, let us just say...THANK YOU!

Student Preaching Scholarship Announced

By Margaret Norton-Arnold



Karyn Frazier

The Romney Legacy Fund Committee is pleased to award this year's Student Preaching Scholarship to Karyn Frazier. Here is some information about Karyn, and we all look forward to hearing her preach at SFBC in the very near future – stay tuned for that date!

From Karen:

Although I raised four remarkable children in UW Husky territory, I graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in secondary education and completed graduate work at UCLA to learn better strategies to support English Language Learners. After many years of teaching and providing literacy support for parents and teachers in area school districts, I was also invited to pour my passion into creating children's sermons, faith education programs, and intergenerational worship services. I've been privileged to serve in lay ministry in education, leading retreats and service projects, and to spend time as Moderator of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ.

What a holy winding journey this has been with my Still Speaking God—a journey that eventually brought me to Fautleroy Church, United Church of Christ, to serve in its dynamic, life-long learning ministry for all ages. When I'm not at church, I enjoy time with my two grandchildren, Henry and Eleanor, and have been known to go on an occasional grand adventure just to keep leaning on my faith boundaries--like a bit skydiving, climbing Mt. Rainer, and my current closer-to-the-ground challenge: pursuing an M.Div. at Seattle University's School of Theology and Ministry.

Calling All Young Adult Women

By Shirley Wilkinson

An open invitation to all young adult women: A gathering of young adult women in the North Puget Sound Area will be held in our church parlor on Sunday, June 11 at 1 p.m. Lunch will be served. The purpose is to get acquainted and hear your stories. This is a pilot gathering and plans are to do the same thing in the three other areas. Please RSVP to Shirley Wilkinson (contact information available from the church office) by June 4. We hope to see you there.

Disaster Preparedness Packets

By Jean Mattson

Several of Seattle First members attended a 'disaster preparedness meeting' on May 13 at Mt. Baker Presbyterian Church. It was a part of a state-wide program to inform people about the predicted mega-quake; to empower and to motivate them to action. The presenters impressed us with their urgency emphasizing that it's NOT IF, ITS WHEN!

Copies of the Preparedness Brochure have been ordered and will be available at the Information Table on May 22. We urge you to take one. Thank you!

An Invitation

David Weasley, who recently joined SFBC, invites us to attend his installation as the Pastor for Youth, Young Adults & Mission at First Congregational Church of Bellingham, Saturday, July 8 at 4 pm. It's also Pride Weekend in Bellingham, so consider coming for the entire celebratory weekend, including the after-worship parade on Sunday!

Rev. David Weasley grew up in a small-town United Methodist Church in Western New York, and experienced a call to ministry both there and during his years of schooling at Oberlin College and the Chicago Theological Seminary. An ordained American Baptist pastor, he serves on the board of the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists, the national LGBTQ Baptist organizing group. David lives with his relentlessly creative partner, Rachael, and their intermittently-cuddly cat, Rutabaga Hermione. He is a church nerd with experience in about a half dozen mainline denominations and beyond, and he brings a background in spiritual direction, storytelling, and community organizing to ministry. Ask him about his Dungeons & Dragons character.



The Spire this Summer

Please note that we plan to publish a combined issue of the Spire for July and August. The deadline for this combined issue is June 20. Send submissions to editor@seattlefirstbaptist.org.

We will resume monthly publication with the September edition (deadline of August 20).

Seattle Jazz Vespers Presents: The Jovino Santos Neto Quinteto June 4 at 6:00 p.m.

Join us Sunday, June 4 at 6:00 p.m. for our last concert of our 2016-2017 season. During the interlude, we will also be awarding our "Young Jazz Artist" scholarship.

Three-time Latin Grammy nominee Jovino Santos Neto, a master pianist, composer and arranger, is among the top Brazilian musicians working today. Currently based in Seattle, Washington, he has throughout his career been closely affiliated with the Brazilian master Hermeto Pascoal. Jovino Santos Neto: piano, flute and melodica; Ben Thomas: vibraphone and Bandoneon; Chuck Deardorf: bass; Mark Ivester: drums; and Jeff Busch: percussion.

June Calendar of Events

- Sunday, June 4 Pentecost
 - 9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Godly Play with Patrick Green - Parlor
 - 10:15 a.m. Family Fellowship Hour in Youth Lounge, 3rd Floor
 - 11 a.m. Worship and Communion with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching on Act 2.1-12 - *Speaking a different language*
 - Following Worship - Senior Adult Lunch - Peggy Newson and Jan Anderson present about *Ten Days That Have Changed My Thinking About Racism* - Fridell
 - 6 p.m. Seattle Jazz Vespers Presents: Jovino Santos Neto Quinteto - Sanctuario

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- Sunday, June 11 Trinity Sunday
9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Faith Journeys - Parlor
10 a.m. Summer Choir Rehearsal - all are invited to rehearse and sing with the choir today
10:15 a.m. Family Fellowship Hour in Youth Lounge, 3rd Floor
11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching 2nd Corinthians 13.11-13
- *Trinity: God as Community*
- Wednesday, June 14
7 p.m. Evergreen Mass Gospel Choir rehearsal, directed by Rev. Sam Townsend.
At Seattle First Baptist in the Sanctuary. Parking is free in the lot by the church.
- Thursday, June 15
7 p.m. Diaconate meets in the Parlor
- Sunday, June 18 Father's Day
9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Faith Journeys - Parlor
10 a.m. Summer Choir Rehearsal - all are invited to rehearse and sing with the choir today
11 a.m. Worship with music and message by Mike Stern and Pastor Tim Phillips
- Wednesday, June 21
6:30 p.m. *A showing of Being Mortal* - the PBS Frontline documentary produced based on
Atul Gawande's bestselling book of the same title.
- Saturday, June 24
11:30 a.m. - Evergreen Mass Gospel Choir rehearsal, directed by Rev. Sam Townsend.
1:30 p.m. At New Beginnings Christian Fellowship in Kent.
- Sunday, June 25 Pride Sunday
9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Faith Journeys - Parlor
10 a.m. Summer Choir Rehearsal - all are invited to rehearse and sing with the choir today
11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching on Matthew 10.34-39 - *Jesus' Family Values*
Note: SFBC T-shirts are available for people wishing to march in or attend the
Pride Parade. They must be pre-ordered by June 5. Contact Patrick Green. People
may go to the parade from worship. A contingent will leave worship early to
walk in the parade with Diverse Harmony.
- Friday, June 30 - ABC-USA 2017 Biennial Mission Summit at Portland, OR. Visit their website for
Sunday, July 2 more information: <http://americanbaptists2017.weebly.com>. Our Sanctuary Choir
is singing in a mass Gospel Choir on Saturday, July 1. Pastors and delegates from
our church will attend.

Online Extras

We had a wonderful time during Music Sunday on May 21. Much of the service is available on our website:

<http://www.seattlefirstbaptist.org/music-sunday-may-21.html>

