

the spire

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July-August 2018

Exploring what it means to follow the way of Jesus Christ



Comings and Goings!

We share these messages from two members of our pastoral team: one arriving and one moving on...

From Pastor Anita Peebles:

Dear Seattle First Baptist Church family,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Love! Can you believe this time is here? As long as you have waited for your Associate Pastor to arrive, I have waited to be present with you. I have been holding you in my heart ever since I first met this congregation and I look forward to getting to know all of you and the stories you carry with you. I feel great joy as I anticipate the good work we will do together as we explore what it means to follow the way of Jesus Christ in these trying times. Whether it is sharing in a restorative worship experience, protesting injustices perpetrated by the powers that be, seeking healing and reconciliation as we do the hard and necessary work of interrogating and undoing our privilege as works-in-progress humans, or joining together for inclusive and hospitable fellowship, I am glad we are doing this journey together.

I look forward to collaborating with Rev. Dr. Tim and Rev. Dr. Patricia in the coming

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days as we celebrate fellowship in the summer weather and as we continue the good work of witnessing for justice alongside this congregation. Rev. Jennifer has been of the utmost help as she transitions out of the role of Interim Associate Pastor and helps acclimate me to the exciting goings-on of the Children, Family and Young Adult commission. Seattle will miss you, Jennifer, and we hold you and your family in the Light as you transition back to Midwest living!

Friends, it is good to be in Seattle. I am settling into my new home and learning my way around this remarkable city. Favorites so far are public transportation, Top Pot donuts, Kerry Park and Molly Moon's. Thank you for the greetings of welcome I have received from you already. I will see you soon!

In peace,
Rev. Anita

From Pastor Jennifer Ikoma-Motzko:

Thank you Seattle First Baptist Church for welcoming me as your interim Associate Pastor these past 10 months. Although I was charged with ministering to Children/Youth, Families and Young Adults; the truth is SFBC ministered to me and my family in countless ways. It's been an honor ministering alongside you and I'm grateful to have been part of a faith community that unapologetically embraces families in all shapes and sizes.

A special thanks to Rev. Dr. Tim Phillips and all the SFBC staff (including Rev. Dr. Ned Parker and Rev. Anita Peebles), my partners in crime (Patrick Green, Susan Blythe-Goodman and the CFYA commission), and the too many to be named volunteers who stepped up in various ways like leading Time with Children, teaching Sunday School, or outfitting our youth with spray cans and instructing them to spray the church building (true story!).

My "exuberance" (as many of you have put it) may no longer be physically present at the corner of Harvard & Seneca, but my source is: Jesus' expansive love. As you continue to explore what it means to follow the way of Jesus, I pray SFBC continues to fearlessly and humbly love all in Capitol Hill, Seattle and the world. As my family begins a new chapter in Minneapolis, I may miss Rachel and Ellen (Rachel's Ginger Beer & Ellen's yogurt) but it's the people of SFBC who will maintain a truly special place in my heart.

Grace and Peace,
Jennifer

Music in Transition

By Pastor Tim Phillips

Seattle First Baptist is very blessed to have the gifts of many faithful and talented musicians. We are grateful for the ministry of organist April Kuhr and send our blessings with her as she begins her new ministry at the United Church in Olympia. In the interim, we are blessed to have our Associate Organist, Jim Ginn, at the console. Choral Director, Ben Luedke, will return to us at the end of July after leading a choral program in the Midwest. During July guest directors Amy Boers and Scott Kovacs will lead Summer Choir.

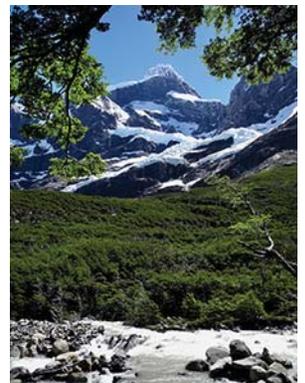
As you know, our music program has experienced significant personnel changes in recent years. Rather than immediately hiring a permanent organist/accompanist, we believe it is time to have a larger conversation about music ministry at Seattle First Baptist, and how we can make the best use of those gifts with which we have been blessed. We expect that larger conversation will take place early in September with the help of an outside consultant and will include as many voices in the congregation as possible.

Therefore, we plan to hire an interim organist/accompanist for August through December. This interim plan will allow us the time we need to have the larger discussion. Please stay tuned (pun intended) and let our interim musicians know how grateful you are for them.

Summer Psalter

By Pastor Tim Phillips

Beginning Sunday, July 8, and for the next seven weeks, worship will focus on some of the psalms suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary. In addition to the standard translations of these, we will be listening to the adaptations by Barbara Gibson who intends to "bring together the wisdom embedded in these ancient prayers with what I know of poetry, social justice and peace movements, Christianity and Buddhism, and what I know of life after all my years on earth." We had hoped to bring Barbara back again (she spoke to us three years ago at a Wednesday gathering) but we learned that she passed away last year at age 86. Barbara was an interfaith spiritual director from Olympia and earned a Doctor of Ministry from Matthew Fox's University of Creation Spirituality. These psalms remain a tribute to



her work – which includes a celebration of and concern for the Earth. She writes in the introduction:

Earth has the power to bring us to our knees in awe, even to destroy us, whether by earthquake or storm, or in the inevitable end that death brings. But in the mystery of existence, we sense that all aspects of earth are sacred, somehow right and perfect, even in the middle of suffering. We also know that our planet and its inhabitants are in jeopardy due to human ignorance and greed.

Because Barbara's book is no longer in print, we will be providing a "Summer Psalter" with each of the psalms for the coming Sundays. Copies are available at the Welcome desk on Sunday mornings and in the office during the week. As you enjoy this summer, please take some time to meditate on gifts of this Earth, the beauty of life, and the call to show up for justice and love.

Racism: From Fear to Freedom

Wednesdays July 11, 18, 25 and August 1

6:30 p.m. Dinner provided – bring a side dish to pass

White supremacy and racism are at the core of our present reality and they require our deliberate attention and honest conversation. American Baptists – and our Evergreen Association in particular – have a history of these kinds of conversations. But now more than ever, for the sake of our life together in the world, we are being called to pick up these conversations again with renewed energy and commitment. Led by our Executive Minister, Rev. Doug Avilesbernal, we will engage these topics:

July 11: "I'm not racist," but we are. Much of our lives supports racism and we don't notice it.

July 18: How does racism affect us? We live with unplaced guilt.

July 25: What does Jesus say. A journey through the Gospels.

August 1: Tools and good practices.

Rev. Avilesbernal has done significant work on moving beyond tolerance to diversity. He comes to us from a multicultural congregation in Pennsylvania where he was a recognized advocate for immigrant rights. His experience and wisdom are "for such a time as this." Please join us!



Evergreen Executive Minister, Rev. Doug Avilesbernal, preached at SFBC earlier this year.

It's Picnic Season!



Help our Neighbors in Need

Wednesday, July 4 - from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We look forward to hosting over 400 of our housing-insecure neighbors on July 4 in the church parking lot. Outreach Commission planning is well underway. We hope to offer a shower truck staffed by Union Gospel Mission as well as haircuts, music and craft projects. Ways you might be involved: bring desserts, help to set up plates, napkins, chairs and tables before, converse with a guest during the meal, staff a station, and help to take down chairs after the meal. Call the church office to learn how you can help.

Celebrate Together

All Church Picnic, Sunday August 19 after worship

Each year we gather together in Harvard Street to play, share food, and socialize. A favorite feature for the kids is

always a Bouncy House, and lots of other kid-friendly activities will also be available. For adults there will be music, food, beverages, and a chance to catch up with old friends and make new ones. Save the date and do your best sun dance!

A Message from Jim Singletary, president of the congregation

Dear Members and Friends of SFBC,

For reasons both personal and practical, my husband, Jim Maynard, and I have decided that the time has come for us to return to our home in Massachusetts where we moved from in 2011. While we would have preferred to make this decision a little farther down the road, circumstances have forced our hand a bit, which means that I will not be able to fulfill my full term as president of the congregation.

Our plans are to leave as soon as we can close on our house, which will go up for sale at the end of June. Because my full attention will be required in preparing for this transition, I am going to resign my position effective July 1. As serving vice president, Harriet Platts will step in to fulfill the role of president for the remainder of my term, pending approval by the Nominations Committee and the Diaconate. Other details regarding this 'succession' will be worked out soon.



Jim Singletary (middle) and Jim Maynard greet a friend.

Serving as president of the congregation has been among the most rewarding experiences of my life. It hasn't always been easy, but has certainly been made easier by the wisdom and support of SFBC's very capable staff and lay leadership. While some might think of it as a thankless job, in my experience it has been anything but. My heart has been warmed by the many expressions of appreciation I have received during my tenure. We are indeed a very blessed congregation and Jim and I have certainly been blessed to be a part of it. As we join the SFBC diaspora, we will continue to follow the congregation's exploits from across the country, and of course we will carry our memories of our time here with us always.

Gratefully,
Jim Singletary

Summer Choral Opportunities

July is a great time to sing in a choir! Throughout the month Summer Choir will take part in our worship services. Everyone is invited to join the choir, even for a single Sunday. Just come to the sanctuary at 10 a.m. to rehearse the music for that day, then sing during the 11 a.m. worship service.

Ben Luedcke, our choir director, is currently on leave in the Midwest where he had a previous choral engagement. Therefore, we have two very capable guest conductors leading our Summer Choir in July. Many people already know and love Amy Boers, who served as an interim choir director for us last year. She will lead the choir on July 1 and 8. On July 15 and 22 we welcome Scott Kovacs. Scott is an accomplished conductor and arts manager who lives and works in Seattle. Several choir members have sung with Scott in the past and are looking forward to singing with him again. Ben will return and lead the choir on Sunday, July 29. That will be the last summer choir for this year.

In August the choir will go on its annual retreat: August 24 and 25 at Dumas Bay Retreat Center. The retreat is a time to reconnect with friends, get a first look at much of the music for the year, recharge your batteries, and have a wonderful time together. It is also a great time to join the choir and get to know the people and some of the music. This year choir retreat is at the beautiful Dumas Bay Retreat Center on the waterfront in Federal Way. If you are thinking you'd like to sing in the choir, this is a great way to get started. Costs are covered by the church. The retreat includes one overnight stay and meals.

If you are interested in attending the choir retreat please contact Judy in the church office by July 15. We hope to see you at Dumas Bay!

Improvisation Workshop offered by Creativity Connections

By Atit Marmer

Opportunity to experience your own creativity is knocking on your door when Creativity Connections offers a series of creativity workshops on July 1 and August 5 following worship. One of the August 5 workshops will be theater improvisation, offered by Atit Marmer. Before moving to Seattle, Atit performed as an Equity actor in Chicago and studied at Second City with the likes of Jim Belushi and Bill Murray.

Improvisation is creating on the spot with no script. Working with a partner or in a small group, you team with one

another to spontaneously create small scenes. The only structure is to for everyone involved to begin with identifying who each person is, where they are, and what they are doing. The rest is up to you. This framework offers you an opportunity to discover your own creative inner space and communicate your own life experience even as you collaborate with others to do the same. Although there are no rules, Atit will adhere to established guidelines to lead the process.

You need no acting experience. You just come with willingness to explore your inner and outer life, and to have a lot of fun while you're at it. If you are interested in this adventure – or in any of the other creative workshops offered during this time - please sign up at the Welcome Table or at the Front Desk. The group will meet in Fridell.

Other Creativity Connections workshops that day are:

- Photography with Bob Sittig in the Parlor
- Drawing with Lupe Carlos in Peacemakers

Tending the Habitat of the Heart: A Contemplative Practice Series

led by Rev. Harriet Platts

- *Do you feel drawn to slow down the pace of your life?*
- *Is there desire to cultivate or deepen a prayer/meditation practice?*
- *Do you hold curiosity about expanding your relationship with God as Source of Life, to go deeper in your spiritual life?*
- *Have you ever wondered what living a more contemplative lifestyle might look like for you...and HOW?*



Harriet will be guiding a half-day retreat on Saturday, September 8, followed by 6 Wednesday afternoon sessions, creating a place for practice and exploration of different prayer forms including gentle movement, sound/song, praying with sacred texts, images, and silence. She will also include weekly themes to promote your personal reflection about what living a contemplative life might look like. Harriet will draw from her ongoing spiritual practice in connection with the natural world including writings/poetry that nurture curiosity, wonder, and desire for living in right-relationship with creation.

Participation in the whole series is strongly recommended.

Half-Day Retreat, Saturday, September 8, from 10 a.m. -2:30 p.m., in Parlor at Seattle First Baptist.

Group Series Meetings will meet Wednesdays, from 4-6 p.m., September 12, and 19, and October 10, 17, 24, 31.

Stay tuned for more registration details. If you have questions or interest in signing up now, contact Harriet. Her contact information is available in the Membership Directory on the website or from the church office.

News from Friendship Circle

Friendship Circle will meet next on Tuesday, Sep. 11, in Fridell

by Shirley Wilkinson and Imogene Williams

Thanks to you Friendship Circle was able to take donations totaling between \$300 and \$400 to Elizabeth Gregory House. All of the items are things they need but the woman accepting the donations spoke about the \$5 Starbucks cards. She said that these cards mean that the women can go to a Starbucks and enjoy a coffee or tea drink just like anybody else!! (You can't use food stamps at Starbucks.) The residents at Elizabeth Gregory House thank you very much!

Friendship Circle had a very eventful meeting on June 12. We rolled bandages to send to Congo and some took bandages home to roll. After dinner we had a wonderful program brought by Shirley Wilkinson from her residence, Covenant Shores on Mercer Island. There is a group of ten ladies there called the World Relief Group and two of them came to talk to us. Each one has responsibility for a refugee family in our area. The families live very far to the south where rents are affordable, which means a lot of driving for the ladies but they never let them down. It was inspiring. As well, we signed a letter to the Tukwila mayor and city council asking that they not force out their immigrant families, as they plan to do.

Announcing a New Men's Group at SFBC

by Dick Johnson

A group of us are excited to announce the formation of a Men's Group at Seattle First Baptist Church. Our first meeting will be at church Sunday, July 22 after the service in the Peacemakers Room.

The planning group included Don Phillips, Rod Shutt, Darren Hochstedler, and myself. I helped start just such a group

three years ago at the condo where I live, and 7-12 of us have met regularly ever since.

The purpose of a group is to help us get to know one another better. We found as the trust level increased, the sharing became more personal, and we bonded at a deeper level. Different members usually suggest a topic for each session which helps keep us focused.

The new Men's Group is open to all, so just show up after church July 22. You would be most welcome.

Last Call for the Senior Retreat

July 11 – 13, Rainbow Lodge

A few spots are still available for the Senior Adult Retreat on July 11-13! The retreat will be at Rainbow Lodge in North Bend from Wednesday evening, July 11, through late morning Friday, July 13. Cherry Johnson will be providing leadership, and any questions can be directed to her. Registration forms are available at the Welcome Table in Fellowship Hall. Please turn them in to the Church Office. Cost is \$175 per person, with some scholarships available. Don't hesitate, get registered now!

Become a Companion Minister

The Sunday Companion Ministry at Seattle First Baptist Church is losing two valued volunteers. Kent Besaw is moving to Portland, Oregon, and Jim Maynard is moving to Massachusetts.

We seek one or two volunteers to join this dedicated program, with volunteers assigned to rotating Sundays during the morning service hour.

Contact Dennis Raymond for more details, if interested. His contact information is available in the Membership Directory on the website or from the church office.

An Opportunity to Help in Uganda

by Samara Hoag and Susan Austin

The congregation recently gave a gift of \$200 via Outreach Commission to a remote school in Uganda. Member Susan Austin has visited the school and Outreach made a previous gift. Please read the following report of issues the school faces written by Susan. If you are interested in supporting this project please contact Susan Austin or members of Outreach.

The Nyanga Primary School is located in the mountainous area of Mbale in the eastern part of Uganda close to Kenya and Mt Elgon. There are few roads in the area so the children walk on small paths through the hills to get to the school which starts promptly at 8 a.m. The school is situated on a large piece of land with trees and a playground.

There is a stream coming down from the upper mountains that serves as a water source for the school. It is their only source of water, and when the farmers up stream block the stream to water their crops, the school has no water. I saw this happen when I was there. Even neighborhood children, sent by their mothers with buckets to gather water from the stream, had to return home with empty buckets.



Students at Nyanga Primary School in Uganda stand in line for water.

At present time 176 children attend the school. They range from preschool which is age 4 to seventh grade. The school provides one meal a day to each child. Small children get a porridge they drink from cups. The upper grades get Posho (cornmeal) and beans. They have no lunch room so they sit outside to eat. If it is raining they stand under the overhang of the roofs to stay dry and eat their lunch. This meal is essential to these children, as parents struggle to provide food for their children.

My time at the school was a great opportunity to visit the classrooms and show them a large blow up globe that I had brought. They had not seen a round representation of the earth before. They were most interested in the location on the globe of where President Obama lived at that time in Washington DC.

I was given a picture printer to bring with me to Uganda. I used it to print pictures of each child as a gift for them. Many children had not seen their own likeness before as they do not have mirrors or a shiny surface in their homes.

In addition to bringing books, wall charts, teaching manuals, and classroom supplies, I insisted on packing soccer balls.

There were enough balls for each grade level to have one. The upper grade boys quickly worked a deal with the girls, so they could play their own game and the girls could play a more gentle game separate from the boys. The nursery children got bubbles. They were amazed and delighted to see bubbles blowing around their playground. The teachers scheduled a long recess the day the soccer balls and bubbles came out!

I was impressed with the willingness for the teachers to teach with only a blackboard and a piece of chalk. The school principals have dreams to grow the school and even have children stay there during the school week.

Now the big challenge for the school is to always have clean water and food for the children. This means adding a water retention system to collect rain water and store it. The stream that has been their source of water is now being encroached on by many people needing water. This is threatening the purity of the water and endangering the children's health. This is a major concern for the school at this time.

I do not have plans to return to the school in the near future. I remember both my visits there as a delightful time. I hear the children ask about me and remember the experiences we shared.

Summer Reading

by Pastor Tim Phillips

There are two things I love about summer: camping at Beckler River and reading through that pile of books I have been collecting over the year. I don't always get through them in the six days by the river, but it is a joyful challenge.

As you are thinking about your summer reading, I wanted to offer some suggestions. We have a section in our church library of books by our own authors. Relatively recent additions to that shelf are Jim Segaar's *Bent On The Crest* (a good read especially for summer) and former pastor Stephen Jones' *Breaking Free ... from our Cultural Obsessions!* which is definitely timely. If you are looking for mystery and a deep look into human struggle, we have two highly-acclaimed books by Rebecca Morris: *If I Can't Have You* about Susan Powell's disappearance and the murder of her children and *Ted and Ann* about Ted Bundy. Rebecca is a great researcher and story-teller.

To the river this year, I'm taking Yaa Gyasi's, *Homegoing*, one of the Seattle Reads books for this year given to me by Sara Tollefson and, with the Climate Change Action group, I'm taking Joanna Macy's, *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in without Going Crazy*. Timely, indeed. I'm also taking Jared Gulian's, *An Olive Grove at the Edge of the World: How two American city boys built a new life in New Zealand*. That should scratch that escapist itch I'll probably be having about then.

I know this congregation does a lot of reading and so I hope you will peruse our church library, support our in-house authors, and share good reads with one another. Happy summer reading!

A Note from Patricia Doheny

Dear Seattle First Baptist prayer community:

I am so grateful for your support during my illness. I have been touched each time a card came with your heart-felt wishes. I have come to know it takes a kind community holding me, as you have done, to help me find the courage to go on. Thank you!

It's Barbecue Time!

Each year the Evergreen Association Black Caucus sponsors a Barbeque, Bake Sale, and Auction Fundraiser. This year the event will be on Saturday, July 21 at Cedar River Trail Park, 600 Nishiwaki Lane, Renton. Food will be served from 12 noon to 2 p.m. The auction begins at 1:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$20.

Meal choices include brisket, chicken, ribs, or a combination of all there. Sides include potato salad, baked beans, green salad, corn on the cob, a slice of cake, and water. Soda pop is available for \$1.

Call the SFBC church office for information on getting tickets.

Sarah Burkhart Wins SJV Young Jazz Artist Scholarship

By Janet Balcom Whitlock, SJV co-chair

We are pleased to announce that the 2018 Young Jazz Artist Scholarship awarded by Seattle Jazz Vespers, with support from the SFBC Music Commission, was awarded at our June concert to Sarah Burkhart. Having just graduated Cum Laude in Jazz from Cornish College of the Arts, with a concentration in vocal performance and composition, Sarah was also the 2015 and 2016 winner of the Downbeat award for Best Pop/Blues Soloist in the University Division. After serving our Sanctuary Choir as a choral intern for the past two years, she has returned home to Eugene, Oregon, where she

will perform this summer in the Oregon Festival of American Music, and teach a songwriters workshop at The Wow Hall and a Jazz Vocals class at The Jazz Station. She also hopes to record an album soon, and we wish Sarah all the best!

July/August Calendar of Events

This issue of the Spire covers July and August. The next edition of the Spire will be for September 2018. Watch for periodic *This Week* emails to learn about any new activities or developments.

Sunday, July 1

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Faith Journeys with Linda Zaugg - Parlor
- 10 a.m. Summer Choir rehearsal - all are invited to rehearse and sing in service.
- 11 a.m. Worship and Communion with Rev. Dr. Zina Jacque preaching
Following Worship - Lunch to celebrate Pastor Jennifer Ikoma-Motzko's time with us. Jennifer and family are moving to Minnesota, so be sure to come and wish them bon voyage!
Following Lunch - Creativity Connections offers three classes:
 - o Writing for the Moment with Janet Hasselblad in the Parlor
 - o Linoleum Block Printing with Doug Beasley in Peacemakers
 - o Painting with Dick Johnson in Fridell

July 2 - 7 Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America Summer Conference (Peace Camp) at Keuka College, Keuka Park, NY

Wednesday, July 4 Independence Day

Annual "Feed the Neighborhood" Picnic - parking lot
Office Closed

Summer Psalms series begins - runs through Sep. 2

We will use Barbara Gibson's Psalms for Troubled Times, which are earth-centered adaptations of the Psalms.

Sunday, July 8 Pastor Anita Peebles' first Sunday with us!

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Learning - Faith Journeys with Patricia Doheny - Parlor
- 10 a.m. Summer Choir rehearsal - all are invited to rehearse and sing in service.
- 11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching on Psalm 123

Wednesday, July 11 - Friday, July 13

Senior Adult Retreat - Rainbow Lodge, North Bend

Wednesday, July 11

Racism: From Fear to Freedom. This series will be led by Doug Avilesbernal, executive minister of the Evergreen Association

- o 6:30 p.m. Dinner provided
- o 7 p.m. Program - *I'm Not Racist, But We Are*

Sunday, July 15

- Note: Adult Learning is on break until Homecoming Sunday, Sep. 9
- 10 a.m. Summer Choir rehearsal - all are invited to rehearse and sing in service.
- 11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching on Psalm 24
After worship - Lunch in honor of Judy Scott's 10-year anniversary of working in the office at SFBC.

Wednesday, July 18

Racism: From Fear to Freedom. This series will be led by Doug Avilesbernal, executive minister of the Evergreen Association

- o 6:30 p.m. Dinner provided
- o 7 p.m. Program - *How Does It Affect Us?*

Thursday, July 19

- 7 p.m. Diaconate - Parlor

Sunday, July 22

- 10 a.m. Summer Choir rehearsal - all are invited to rehearse and sing in service.
- 11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching on Psalm 23
Following Worship - a new Men's Group is being formed - Peacemakers

Wednesday, July 25

- Racism: From Fear to Freedom. This series will be led by Doug Avilesbernal, executive minister of the Evergreen Association
 - o 6:30 p.m. Dinner provided
 - o 7 p.m. Program - What Does Jesus Say?

Sunday, July 29

- 10 a.m. Summer Choir rehearsal - all are invited to rehearse and sing in service. Last summer choir this year.
- 11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Anita Peebles preaching on Psalm 14

Wednesday, Aug. 1

- Racism: From Fear to Freedom. This series will be led by Doug Avilesbernal, executive minister of the Evergreen Association
 - o 6:30 p.m. Dinner provided
 - o 7 p.m. Program - Tools and Good Practices

Sunday, Aug. 5

- 11 a.m. Worship and Communion with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching on Psalm 51
Following Worship - Creativity Connections offers three classes:
 - o Photography with Bob Sittig in the Parlor
 - o Theater Improv with Atit Marmer in Fridell
 - o Drawing with Lupe Carlos in Peacemakers

Sunday, Aug. 12

- 11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Tim Phillips preaching on Psalm 130

Thursday, Aug. 16

- 7 p.m. Diaconate - Parlor

Sunday, Aug. 19

- 11 a.m. Worship with Theologian in Residence Patricia Hunter preaching on Psalm 34.1-14
After Worship - All Church Picnic - Harvard Ave.

Friday, Aug. 24 - Saturday, Aug. 25

- Choir Retreat at Dumas Bay

Sunday, Aug. 26

- 11 a.m. Worship with Pastor Anita Peebles preaching on Psalm 84

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BAKING THE CAKE

A Poem for Pride Sunday

Jacob liked to stay in the tent
With the women;
Deborah to ride into battle
With the men;
David sang love songs to Jonathan;
Naomi pledged her life to Ruth;
John was beloved of Jesus,
And God baked the cake.

And yet,
When I was eleven and dreaming
About living out every moment of my life
With the preacher's daughter,
I knew better than to expect
A cake, a party,
Or even a kind word
For such heresy.
I learned early when to keep my yearnings
To myself.

One summer at Burton Baptist Assembly
I fell madly in love with my counselor
(A girl only a few years my senior).
I serenaded her
Loudly,
Professing my adoration.
She tried to hide,
Then cajoled,
Finally rudely commanded me to stop.
No cake.
Only humiliation.

At fifteen, when gender was making no sense to me,
I knew no one –
No one –
With whom I could have that conversation.
When my high school health teacher
Berated me in front of the class
For dressing in white shirts, ties and blazers,

I knew only to laugh
So that I would not cry.
Thankfully, the church organist
Taught me to make a perfect boiled frosting that year,
So I started to bake my own
Cakes.

I came out at twenty-four
Which was mostly a positive thing.
I had long since learned who my friends were.
But three years later
(After I had left the church)
I encountered a young woman
Who was suicidal at the thought of coming out herself.
She had been a youth at a church I attended years
earlier.
"You don't know what they say about you!"
She told me, shuddering.
I had some idea.
I wish I had baked her a cake.

There are those who think the struggle is over –
Marriage equality being the end
Of the long haul.
But I know better.
As long as there are those who cannot reconcile
God
With love in all its forms
There will be no dessert.

Jacob liked to stay in the tent
With the women;
Deborah to ride into battle
With the men.
David sang love songs to Jonathan;
Naomi pledged her life to Ruth.
John was beloved of Jesus,
And God baked the cake.

Cherry Johnson 6/11/2018

Online Extras

We have two new features on our website:

An online Directory – click the button near the bottom of the Home Page:
<http://www.seattlefirstbaptist.org>

A Community Calendar – lists events not sponsored by SFBC that may be of interest to you:
<http://www.seattlefirstbaptist.org/community-calendar.html>

