



the Spire  
May 2021



seattle first baptist

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Submissions for the Spire are due  
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All submissions should be sent to  
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## 2021 Officers and Church Leaders

For more information please contact the church at  
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<b>Executive Committee</b>	<b>President:</b> Jim Ginn <b>VPr:</b> Megan Walker <b>Treasurer:</b> Bob Sittig <b>Secretary:</b> Dick Miller
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# From the Pastor's Desk

*By Pastor Anita Peebles*

My mom tells me that on my last day of kindergarten, I cried. Somehow in my 5-year-old heart, I knew life would never be the same as it was in Mrs. Pauquet's AM kindergarten class at Union Street Elementary. Hearing this story over and over throughout my life has moved this event from the realm of memory to that strange in-between place where I'm not sure what of the memory I have constructed from the retellings by my parents. But what I do know is original to that memory is the feeling of being on the edge of something new and different, in some way recognizing (or maybe mourning) that life will never be the same again, that I will never be the same again.



But then — growing was ahead for me. Learning about the world and about myself. Perhaps the time of transition was scary, the time of change was full of fear and sadness, but what was ahead was the opportunity to blossom in and becoming more of who God calls me to be in the world.

I think about this memory when I think about Jesus calling the disciples to “take up their crosses” and follow him. Sometimes we can wonder if the disciples really knew what they were getting into when they put down their nets and quills and money, when they left their families. I wonder if they had that “on the edge of something big” feeling, knowing that their lives would never be the same again. And yet — what was ahead of them was participating in a movement opposing the powers and principalities of this world and welcoming all people into the kin-dom of God.

Beloveds, we are on the edge of something big. As a church, we have turned our vision to the future, contemplating so many different questions and ideas as Long-Range Planning task forces do their work. But even as we are at the precipice of the something “bold, different and better,” we cannot forget to be present with each other right now.

And right now, we have mourning to do. People of color are continuing to be murdered by police all over this country. Despite the guilty verdicts in the case of George Floyd's murderer, we must remember that accountability is different from justice. Justice would be if George Floyd was still alive to raise his daughter. And as we continue in this pandemic, over half a million people mourn the loss of loved ones gone too soon due to COVID-19. Communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, and disproportionately work essential jobs that keep many on the front lines of confronting this illness. And, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) members of SFBC are underrepresented in leadership roles in this church community. That is something this whole community must commit to addressing and changing.

As a community of faith who follow the Way of Jesus, we are not perfect. We hurt each other. We act and speak thoughtlessly. Sometimes we even need to step away for a while to heal. But also, as a community of faith, we must act together to confront the harm we do to each other as well as the harm outside the walls of our church. We must commit to loving each other so well that we listen deeply and learn fully; reflect on our own complicity in systems of oppression; and center those who have been harmed and marginalized within our community as we commit to repairing harm. We are always on the precipice of loving each other better, and we must choose to go forward doing justice.

# 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](mailto:anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org) to talk about getting on the schedule.



## Celebrating Our Graduates!

### Sunday, May 23

Help us celebrate graduates in the SFBC community! From kindergarten to Ph. D, we want to celebrate your achievements! Email Pastor Anita at [anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org) to let her know who we should be celebrating on Sunday, May 23. Please send a short description of the graduate, their achievement, and a photo.

## Godly Play

Godly Play for Kids on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. will be on recess during the summer. May 30 will be the last Godly Play on Zoom.

## Youth Group

### Every Other Sunday, 5-6 p.m.

**May 2:** On Zoom

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87290341239>

Meeting ID: 872 9034 1239

**May 16:** at Kerry Park in Queen Anne

Join us for a little snack picnic.

Masks & Social Distancing must be observed!

## Young Adult Picnic at Volunteer Park

### Sunday, May 23, 3-4 p.m.

Masks and social distancing will be observed.

Bring your own food and beverage.

If it rains, we will postpone to June 6.

Young Adults (18-35ish) are all welcome.

(Dogs on leashes also welcome!)

## YOUNG ADULT PICNIC @ VOLUNTEER PARK

Sunday, May 23, 3-4 p.m.

Masks and social distancing will be observed.

Bring your own food and beverage.

If it rains, we will postpone to June 6.

Young Adults (18-35ish) are all welcome. (Dogs on leashes also welcome!)

# Worship Together

Honoring Indigenous Spirituality  
and Undoing Christian Supremacy  
with Kaitlin Curtice

May 1, 7pm      May 2, 11am

Kaitlin Curtice will give our first Romney Lecture of 2021 about Christian hegemony and honoring indigenous spirituality, reflecting on her book *Native* (published in 2020).

Ms. Curtice joins us for a lecture on Saturday, May 1 at 7 p.m., including a Q&A, and then will be our featured guest preacher on Sunday, May 2.

Artwork by  
Chief Lady Bird of Rama First Nation  
Toronto, ON

## Kaitlin Curtice - Romney Legacy Speaker Reflections and Discussion, May 1 and May 2, 2021

Kaitlin Curtice is an indigenous Christian author and speaker. As an enrolled member of the Potawatomi Nation and someone who has grown up in the Christian faith, Ms. Curtice writes on the intersection of Indigenous spirituality, faith in everyday life, and the church.

Ms. Curtice travels the country speaking on faith and justice within the church as it relates to Indigenous peoples. In May 2020, she published her second book: *NATIVE: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God*. During her time with us, Ms. Curtice will be reflecting on her own work, Christian hegemony, and the honoring of Indigenous spirituality.

Kaitlin Curtice has contributed to OnBeing, Religion News Service, USA Today and Sojourners, and she was interviewed by the New Yorker on colonization within Christian missions. In 2018 she was featured in a documentary with CBS called "Race, Religion and Resistance," speaking on the dangers of colonized Christianity.

We are pleased to sponsor Ms. Curtice for two SFBC community events:

**Saturday, May 1, 7:00 p.m. - Lecture and Discussion with Ms. Curtice**

[Please check the church calendar for how to register for this lecture and discussion.](#)

**Sunday, May 2, 11:00 a.m. - Ms. Curtice will be our guest preacher for worship**

### **From Ben Luedcke, Minister of Music**

Sunday, June 6th is "**Music Sunday**," and our music staff is putting together a special service focused on this great gift. The "universal language," music is also a bit of a universal \*spiritual\* language, one that can lead us to new spiritual truths and open our mind and heart to the spirit. Music has such a diverse and rich history as the great uniter of voice and cause, as truth-tellers fight for justice, raise awareness, and create communities of faith and cause. Join us as we explore faith, prayer, justice, and community as we not only hear some great music from our organist, David Horton, Music Minister, Ben Luedcke, and our faithful choir, but we will also collaborate for some fun surprises.

# Our Life Together

## Volunteer & Donation Opportunities

### Food Bank: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays

A new food bank sponsored by Byrd Barr Place is opening blocks from SFBC across from the 1st Covenant Church. It's open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. They need volunteer "Food Bank (Home) Delivery Assistants" and donations. More info: <https://byrdbarrplace.org/>

### Pandemic Health Bags: Saturdays, May 15, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. & June 19, 1-3 p.m.

Join us Saturday, May 15 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. and/or Saturday, June 19 from 1-3 p.m. to help with assembling Pandemic Health Bags to distribute to various shelters and tent cities throughout our area. We are currently looking for volunteers to help with assembly and to help with delivery afterwards. Covid safety protocols will be followed. To volunteer for one or more of those dates, email Kelsey at [Outreach@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:Outreach@seattlefirstbaptist.org).

## Wednesday Community Programming

### Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/543978086> | Meeting ID: 543 978 086

Join SFBC community members and leadership for a time of prayer and a brief program:

### May 5: Hymn Sing hosted by Minister of Music Ben Luedcke

### May 12: Talent Night

We know you are a talented bunch of folks, so let's share with each other! All are welcome to participate! Acts must be 5 minutes or less. All acts must be free of racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism and be welcoming of all people. Please sign up with Pastor Anita before May 11!

### May 19: Game Night

It's been a while since we've had a game night—so let's play together! Featuring trivia, charades and good ole fashion bingo. All are welcome!

### May 26: Craft Night with Patrick

Join Patrick on Zoom for a craft night! He will send any directions needed in the This Week email as we get closer to the date.



## Tell Me More... A Mini-Retreat for Women Ages 10+ Saturday, May 15, 2-4:30 p.m.

The entire purpose of this retreat is to build deeper community connections by listening to one another's stories and telling our own. Cherry Johnson will provide prompts that will help you think of the stories you want to tell, and you will be moved and entertained and challenged by the stories you hear.

Every single one of us is a library unto ourselves -- full of stories waiting to be told. What better time than now? We will come together around our virtual Zoom campfire. No preparation required. FREE (though donations to the SFBC Retreat Scholarship Fund are always welcome). Bring your own snacks.

YOU MUST REGISTER IN ADVANCE BY EMAILING [retreats@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:retreats@seattlefirstbaptist.org) or contacting Cherry Johnson. Once registered you will receive the Zoom link.

# Our Life Together

## Updates from the Long Range Planning Forum

By Jim Segaar

About 50 people attended an Open Forum focused on work of the six task forces on Sunday, April 18. Each task force gave a summary of their work thus far, and time was allowed for comments and questions. The discussion was lively and substantive. Following are some highlights from the forum.

**Small Group Ministries:** The task force has drafted a set of recommendations and have sent them to the Executive Committee for initial comments. A discussion open to the congregation will be scheduled after the Executive Committee review.

**Governance:** The group has researched how other churches have “right-sized” their governance and plans to propose dividing the material in our current bylaws into three documents: Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Policies and Procedures. In these documents they are focusing on using language that is more inclusive and explicitly committed to diversity.

**Senior Ministries:** The task force sent out about 100 surveys to “senior” members of our congregation, of which 47 were returned. Anyone who did not receive a survey and wants to fill one out should send an email to [planning@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:planning@seattlefirstbaptist.org). Respondents were enthusiastic about past senior events, but don’t see themselves as a separate group from the church at large. It was suggested that there not be a separate “senior ministry,” but that it be incorporated into all ministries.

**Pastoral Transition:** The team began their task by interviewing 12 current and past members of the SFBC staff. They identified the following as desired skills of a new pastor: cross-cultural competence, ability to delegate, strong preaching, pastoral care, and communication skills with the ability to handle conflict. A discussion about whether SFBC is ready to call a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) lead pastor brought up many important and justice-related questions. The aftermath of that conversation, particularly regarding the congregation’s antiracism work, continues to be discussed by the task force and SFBC leadership.

**Antiracism:** The task force began by creating a trusting environment with each other, and shared their experiences relating to micro-aggressions and other forms of racism at SFBC. Antiracism work needs to take place in each individual’s life, and everyone needs to commit to the ongoing work. Following January’s Annual Meeting, the task force called for recognition that all elected leaders are white. They are working with the Executive Committee on a solution for this. Pastor Patricia Hunter is now a member of the Executive Committee.

**Facilities:** The group is considering three major alternatives regarding our facilities: Stay Put with minor renovations; Redevelop at our current location; Sell and move. They plan to gather cost estimates, assemble potential ideas for each option and facilitate conversations within the congregation for consideration and to make a decision. They have interviewed a number of people in our church, as well as organizations who share our current facility. Common issues have been raised: parking, limited transportation options, access to and inside the facility, carbon footprint, and declining membership. They talked to three other churches in the area who have recently gone through this process. Next steps include engaging an engineering firm to provide a more accurate estimate on seismic retrofit and obtaining a real estate appraisal of our current facility and land.

## Save the Dates for Camp Burton this Summer!



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. So save the dates, and get ready for some summer fun! Camp Burton offers a year-round multi-purpose site for individuals and organizations, within a naturally beautiful setting. It was established in 1909 by the American Baptist Churches, as a place for people to gather in fellowship. You will find that Camp Burton offers rates competitive with other retreat facilities in the Puget Sound area.

**July 24-29: Grade School (Gr 2-5)** - Faith Adventure Camp, Camp Burton

**July 17-22: Middle School (Gr 6-8)** - Faith Adventure Camp, Cascade Meadows

**August 1-8: High School (Gr 9-12)** - Teens Redeemed Adventure Camp, Includes camping/backpacking, plus “extreme element” like rafting, climbing, etc.

**August 1-6: All Ages Family Camp** - Family Camp, Camp Burton

Contact Pastor Anita at [anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org) or Patrick Green with questions or for information about scholarships.

## COVID-19 & SFBC

We continue to monitor the situation in our region in order to ensure the safety and health of our community. We will be continuing services and gatherings online and our office will remain closed to the public for now. There will continue to be very limited staff on-site every weekday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. You may always reach the staff through their individual e-mails or [contact@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:contact@seattlefirstbaptist.org).

We are hopeful with the continued rollout of the vaccine, but also encourage you to follow our state’s directives to continue masking and social distancing. If you would like someone to reach out, please don’t hesitate to contact us at the email above.

# From the Executive Committee

**Dear Congregation of Seattle First Baptist Church,**

Jesus' teachings in Matthew 5 tell us that before we offer our worship to God, we must repair harm done between siblings in Christ. Today, we as leaders in this community need to acknowledge some painful truths. Last Sunday at the Long Range Planning Update Meeting held following worship, racist ideas, words and actions were shared and left unchallenged by us as leaders. People of color in our church family were deeply hurt, particularly Pastor Patricia whose leadership and pastoral presence were rendered invisible. We know that this is the latest in a long line of incidents in our community where actions by white members of our congregation have caused people of color significant pain. *We are sorry.*

As white people, we recognize that we have continued to prioritize our comfort over the safety of people of color. This is racist behavior. That choice does not reflect our professed mission, values, or beliefs as a church, and does not reflect who we want to be as human beings. *We are sorry.*

We know that in order to have different outcomes we need to grow and change on many levels. These are our immediate next steps, based on recommendations from the Anti-Racism Task Force:

- In coordination and collaboration with the Anti-Racism Task Force, we will be hiring an outside antiracism consultant to work with the Executive Committee and Diaconate. This consultant will support us in identifying racism entrenched in our church system, recommend actions to dismantle white supremacy at SFBC, and work to build anti-racist practices into our structures and processes. As last Sunday's incident has again revealed, the white leaders in this community need help. We commit to compensating an outside professional to support this work, rather than relying on the unpaid labor of people of color within our community.
- We are calling a Congregational Meeting on Sunday May 23rd at 12:30pm. This meeting will be held using the Zoom platform. The purpose of this meeting is to amend the bylaws to create 3 additional Diaconate member-at-large positions to be filled by people of color who are nominated by people of color in the congregation. These positions will continue until a more complete overhaul of the bylaws based on the work of the Governance Task Force is approved. We expect that their proposals will include mechanisms to ensure that in the future the Diaconate represents the racial diversity of our congregation as well as other dimensions of diversity.
- Anti-racism requires individual and communal work, education, and commitment. To build our individual capacities to be anti-racist leaders in this congregation, members of the diaconate will engage in a book study of the book "Me and White Supremacy" by Layka F. Saad.

White supremacy has been a bedrock of US American culture for over 400 years, and it will not be dismantled in this church by a book study. This is deep, ongoing, difficult, powerful, healing work that takes time, focus, resources, and commitment. People of color within this community have repeatedly called us as white siblings into this work, giving us much more grace than is due. This firm commitment and concrete action are long overdue. Fully engaging in the lifelong work to become antiracist and dismantle white supremacy is part of the calling for white people as followers of Jesus Christ. With the help of the Holy, *we can--we must--we will--do*

*better.* You can watch the video of the message here: <https://vimeo.com/541103618>

Sincerely,

*Rev. Anita Peebles, Associate Pastor*

*Bob Sittig, Treasurer*

*Darren Hochstedler, Church Administrator*

*Jim Ginn, President*

*Megan Walker, Vice-President*

*Richard Miller, Secretary*

*Rev. Dr. Tim Phillips, Lead Pastor*

*Pray*

**Holy God,  
We praise you for the  
springtime. Help us  
show up to help each  
other and speak words  
of love to each other.  
Thank you for being  
with us always. Amen.**

# May at a Glance



## Regular Gatherings

### Sundays:

10:30 a.m. - Godly Play (our last Godly Play before summer recess is May 30)

11 a.m. - Sunday Worship Service

12 p.m. - Coffee Hour

### Tuesdays:

12 p.m. - Prayer and Reflection with Pastor Patricia

### Wednesdays:

6:30 p.m. - Community Gathering

7:30 p.m. - Music Programming

### Thursdays:

12 p.m. - Bible Study with Pastor Tim

**Zoom links and details can be found at our online calendar:**

<https://www.seattlefirstbaptist.org/calendar>

*spirituality at home*

May

- How is God showing up this Spring?
- Where are you finding beauty?
- What do you want to learn this Spring?