

THE SPIRE SUMMER 2023



THE NEWSLETTER OF SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH VOLUME 87, NO. 5

Dear SFBC family,

The days are getting longer, the nights are getting shorter, the sun is shining more regularly and the ice cream trucks can be heard throughout the neighborhoods. Summer is here, and I am so looking forward to what it brings!

June is Pride Month, when we celebrate and honor our LGBTQIA+ family, friends, neighbors and ancestors. This year, we are particularly aware of targeted political and legal attacks on the LGBTQIA+ community, and I urge you to keep informed about how you can be part of the solution. Perhaps you want to join our Youth Group who, with the help of the Romney Legacy Fund, donated to the Seattle LGTBQ+ Center (formerly Gay City). Or maybe you will be moved to support the Trevor Project, following the lead of our Sanctuary Choir who chose to give proceeds of the summer choir concert to that organization. Or maybe you will be intentional about the time spent with loved ones, especially LGBTQIA+ community, sharing stories, listening deeply and always looking for ways of breaking down barriers of shame and exclusion. However you show up with and for the LGBTQIA+ community this June and the rest of the year, please do not underestimate the power of showing up.

In June, I look forward to attending the Seattle Sounders FC and OL Reign double-header game; hosting another “Where in Seattle is Pastor Anita?” series in honor of my five years of ministry among you; supporting the hosting of an SFBC booth at the Capitol Hill Pridefest; attending the ABC Biennial and then the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America~Bautistas por la Paz conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico—wow! What a full month!

And then...

You may know that my partner Scotty and I are getting married in mid-July! We are excited for this next chapter in our life together. With the support of the Personnel Committee and the Church Council, I will be taking time off July 10-August 20. This will not only include time for our small, intimate wedding and honeymoon, but also time to visit elderly family members, and time for rest and relaxation following a full and challenging year and a half of being the main (and then only) full-time pastor. I deeply appreciate the support of the church staff and volunteers who will make this possible. Rest is not to be underestimated, and I look forward to caring for my mind, body, and spirit so that I will return restored and ready for ministry in the months ahead.

During the time I will be away, ordained people within the SFBC congregation as well as our Evergreen family will be available to provide worship leadership and pastoral care. If you need care or support, please contact the Church Office and they will direct you to the proper on-call pastoral care.

In worship from July 16 through August 20, we will be revisiting our SFBC Values, which can be found on the “About Us” section of our church website. Every few years we feature these values for a sermon series or a Faith Journeys series, and it’s time to do so again! Together we will reflect on how our understanding of our values informs our congregational life, evolutions in our thought over time, and the opportunities that our values and commitments provide as we look toward our future. Our wonderful Music Minister Ben and Organist Christian will be coordinating worship during the time I am away. If you wish to help in worship (reading, ushering, offering announcements, etc.), please contact the Office.

(continued on page 2)

Thank you for your support of my time off, your dedication to our congregation, and your willingness to participate with your heart, hands, minds and energy in the life of our community. I hope you find some space for rest and restoration throughout the summer months, and that you soak up some of the beautiful nature that we are so blessed to have so near.

I love you, and I love being your pastor.

—Rev. Anita

Graduation Sunday

Do you know a graduate we need to celebrate on June 18? We want to celebrate all ages and stages, from preschool graduation to getting a PhD! Contact Pastor Anita to make sure she has the name, school, degree and photo of your graduate to include in worship!



Anita and Scotty
August 27, 2023

Save the Date!

Reception after church on August 27th for the SFBC and Evergreen congregation to celebrate the marriage of Anita and Scotty

Lunch will be provided

Guests are encouraged to bring a potluck dessert to share!

There will be opportunities for congregants to contribute financial or creative gifts in celebration of Anita and Scotty

More details coming soon!

Summer Schedule Changes!



Many of the small groups are shifting their schedules a bit over the Summer months. To be sure you are “in the know,” we suggest that you peruse the Summer Schedule at the end of this newsletter and make note in your calendar of any changes to groups you attend.



Thank you to all who attended or livestreamed SFBC Choir's June 4 concert, "A Place at the Table."

We raised over \$1,000 in support of The Trevor Project, the nation's largest crisis intervention non-profit serving LGBTQ youth.

SFBC Annual Women's Retreat
Spiritual Companions

Save the Date

October 20-22, 2023

Rainbow Lodge, North Bend

**Oil In My Lamp
An SFBC Retreat for Seniors
Rainbow Lodge, North Bend
July 12-14, 2023**



Oil lamps may be a thing of the past (*so many things are!*). But our lives are a little like them. When there's enough fuel, we light up the world. When we are depleted we fade, we falter, we begin to doubt our worth. One way to re-fuel is to retreat. Get away. Gaze at a mountain, get to know a tree, a brook, some fish, a garden. Have a great conversation. Sit on the deck and soak up the sun or revel in the shade. Listen to the birds. Sing. Play. Take a nap. Hang out around the fire. Do some crafting. Go for a hike. *Live in the awareness of the sacred for a while!* Gradually, your light will become brighter.

Maybe you're not sure if you qualify as a "senior." Well... if you're asking the question, you probably do. And if you are old enough to get the senior discount at IHOP or willing to get the reduced-price ticket for seniors to an arts or sporting event... then you fit the bill, and we'd love to have you!

Rainbow Lodge is a beautiful place. The rooms have twin beds and a sink. A shared bathroom with showers is just down the hall. The views are spectacular. So are the smells and sounds of the forested environment around you! Family style meals are served. There will be some programming and a whole lot of time to just "be" in nature, and in community. There will be plenty of opportunities for personal and spiritual growth, as well as laughter and comradery. Retreats are a great way to make new friends and strengthen long-term relationships.

Click the link below to be taken to the church website Retreats page for registration and payment.

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

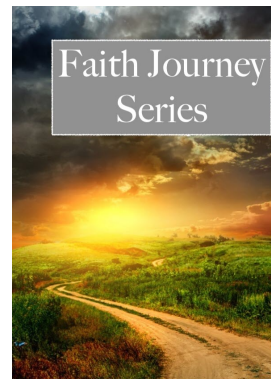
Register by June 16 to avoid a late fee
Single Room: \$280 (\$300 after June 16)

Shared Room Per Person: \$230
(\$250 after June 16)

Pay What You Can Option available
if the cost is prohibitive

<https://www.seattlefirstbaptist.org/retreats/retreat-registration/>

**Faith Journey Series
Sunday Mornings 9:30-10:30am
June 4 - July 30
In the Parlor
Continental Breakfast Served**



Every Sunday morning in July and August we will be hearing from a different member of the congregation as they share the story of their life and how faith has played a part in that. Those who have agreed to be a part of this tradition this year range in age from their 20s to their 90s. They have long histories at SFBC, are new to SFBC, and chose to leave SFBC behind. They hail from the Northeast, the South, the Southwest, the Midwest, Seattle and beyond. They are clergy and lay-people, BIPOC and White-identified, gay and straight, male, female and non-binary. Every single story is unique and a gift to those of us who come to bear witness. This is the way beloved community is built and strengthened—witnessing one another's stories. Drawing the Circle Wide as it says in that wonderful song the choir sings.

So, do what you need to do to get to the church by 9:30am every Sunday through July 30th. There will be food, so you can get by without having breakfast first. Parking should be easier at that hour. If you plan to sing in the Summer choir, come for the first half hour, and then leave for rehearsal.

Faith Journey Schedule of Presenters

- June 4 Julio Gutierrez**
- June 11 Renna Pierce**
- June 18 David Delgado**
- June 25 Brooke Rolston**
- July 2 Joanne Hjort**
- July 9 Roy Ostergren**
- July 16 Charlotte & Jim Erickson**
- July 23 Spencer Van Koevering**
- July 30 Emma de la Cruz**

Thank You Small Group Leaders!



The Small Groups Ministry has been going strong for nine months now. We want to pause to say **Thank You** to all the Group Leaders who given of their time, talents and hospitality to make this possible. On Saturday, September 9th, the night before Homecoming Sunday, we will have a big, Fun Happy First Birthday bash for this ministry which has changed the face of our church. This will be for anyone who has led a group, participated in a group, or may participate in a group in the future...in other words you (and your whole family). Put it in your calendar!

And, for your leadership, **Thank You** (*in no particular order*) to Dick Johnson, Joan Benner, Joanne Hjort, Norah Walker, Anita Peebles, Jenifer Chin, Beth Reis, Susan Blythe-Goodman, Kelsey Waldon, Susan Dohrmann, David Delgado, Nimi Jeldi, Karen Carlos, Keith Ervin, Cindy Ervin, Linda Zaugg, Marsha Ulmer, Steve Smith, Theresa Pruett, CJ Hendrickson, John Davidson, Gerald Seminatore, Marv Kvamme, Muriel Jones-Cashdollar, Jim Segaar, Lupe Carlos III, Sue Ross, Dick Miller, Martha Hopler, Wendy Van Koevering, Janet Hasselblad, Daryl de la Cruz, Cherry Johnson, Jacob Maez and Vanessa Perkinson!

Save the Date
Small Groups Ministry
1st Birthday Celebration
September 9, 2023 in the evening
Dinner Provided

Summer Choir

Summer Choir meets every Sunday in June and July. All are welcome! Choir membership is not necessary! This is a great time to come sing with us with no commitment, no weekly rehearsals, and no dress code: just show up at 10am in the sanctuary and we will learn the anthem for that morning.

Choir Retreat

On **Sunday, August 20th** after the morning service, the choir will gather for some singing to preview music for the fall. We will then head over to Volunteer Park for an afternoon picnic with pizza, wine, and reconnecting! If you are considering joining the choir, this is a great time for fun and fellowship as we look forward to kicking off the new program year.

Questions: email Music Minister Ben Luedcke at Ben@seattlefirstbaptist.org.

New Groups on the Horizon!



The Small Groups Ministry is always open to new ideas for groups. If *you* have ideas, please email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org. We would be especially thrilled if you are willing to lead or co-lead the group you are suggesting. There is space in the Summer schedule for more groups. For instance, there have been people who have asked for a Book Study of some kind (theology, social justice, antiracism, etc). If you feel called to lead such a group, we would be more than happy to help you with all the details. Or, maybe you feel called to host an intergenerational or family meetup in different parks once a month over the Summer. Picnics. Walks. Swims. That kind of thing. Let us know! Or maybe you want to start a knitting/crocheting group or a group that goes to movies or the theater together. *Whatever* your interest, think about what a group might look like and let us know.

Contemplative Practices: The six-week Exploring Contemplation Group which ended in mid-May decided they wanted something ongoing, so in the Fall there will be a monthly Contemplative Practices group of some kind. Thank you, Jim Segaar and other members of the group!

Parents of Adult Children Living with Mental Illness: On June 14th, the first meeting of this new group will be held. The regular schedule will be determined at that meeting. If the title describes *you*, email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org or call the church office to sign up. Someone will then contact you with

the address of the home where the June 14 meeting is happening.

Young Adults Group: On July 25, this new group will provide opportunities for younger adults (*under 40*) to find and stay connected with one another, to support one another and to have fun together.

Read the weekly e-newsletter, *This Week*, which comes out on Thursdays to keep up with the details of these and other new groups as they form.

Get to Know Your Council Members

The Council of Ministries is SFBC's elected body that represents members and friends of the congregation in policy and decision-making matters. In each of the next several issues of The Spire, we'll introduce you to two members of the Council. Please share questions, concerns, and insights about church governance with these individuals; they are here to represent your interests! If you're interested in serving on the Council in the future, please let them know.



Megan Walker (*she/her*) sits on the Council as the church's Vice President. She has worked in various roles in Federal Way Public Schools for 17 years, currently as a mentor for new teachers. You will find her most Sundays sitting in the pews with spouse Aaron and children Comet and Norah. Outside of work and church, Megan loves gardening and making things (mostly with fabric and yarn). Descending from a long line of American Baptists, she found SFBC a natural fit, and it has been her church home since 2014.



Originally from the Bronx, Councilmember-at-large **David Delgado** (*he/him*) left home young and experienced housing instability from age 13 to his early twenties while traveling the East Coast, moving to the West Coast about 25 years ago. At 27, his experiences inspired him to go to school to become a social worker, eventually earning a masters degree in social work; he's worked with the unhoused community for 25 years now. His current hobbies are Brazilian jiu-jitsu, "bonsai-ing" trees, and chess. David has been happily married to Susan Blythe-Goodman since 2018, but actually found the church independently from her in 2012.

President's Prattle Church Updates from Mike Zaugg

I follow the Richard Rohr blog and want to quote what he says about change: "We will normally do anything to keep the old thing from falling apart, yet this is when we need patience and guidance, and the freedom to let go instead of tightening our controls and certitudes."

Change is the only real constant. Change seems to be what is coming at SFBC like a mad train heading in our direction. But these changes provide us with very positive opportunities.

In the coming few months we will choose and welcome a new minister, a co-pastor for our beloved but beleaguered Anita. What terrific news! Embrace the change.

Our Antiracism Committee is guiding us in a very positive direction. On Saturday, May 13th, in a graduation address at Howard University, a historically Black university in Wash D.C., President Biden singled out white supremacy "as the most dangerous terrorist threat to our homeland." We certainly do not think of ourselves as white supremacists, but we do have work to do. Under the direction of our Evergreen executive minister, Doug Avilesbernal, Megan Walker and the committee will be forming a trained First Aid and Wound Care team to formulate reconciliation policies and procedures. These will help us move along the path of social justice, sacred ally ship and anti-racism work, both individually and as a church. Embrace the change.

Thirdly, a new Development Committee has been formed, with two subcommittees, Congregational and Community Engagement and Finance, Legal and Regulatory. The Development Committee is now meeting every two weeks with developer Strada and advisor Meriwether to narrow in on proposals for possible development. The Strada leadership team is visiting us again in early June to further their exploration and to report on the progress of their due diligence period. Again, in the next few months, we will know a great deal more about development possibilities. You will soon receive a mailing of answers to 10 Frequently Asked Questions, based on issues raised at our congregational forums and ideas gleaned from the Talking Wall in Fellowship Hall. Embrace the change.

SMALL GROUPS SCHEDULE for SUMMER

This season offers many opportunities to engage spiritually and interpersonally in small group settings. All of our groups and their meeting times are listed below. Note that some groups are taking a break for part of the summer as listed below. All groups are open to new members. If you have ideas for other groups you would like to see happen, or you are willing to lead a small group, please email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org or call the church office (206-325-6051).

SUNDAYS

Faith Journey Series 9:30-10:30am in the Parlor every Sunday in June & July. Ends July 30. Continental breakfast served. (*See separate article*)

BIPOC Group (*A safe space for those who identify as Black, Indigenous and other Persons of Color to get to know and support one another*) Taking the Summer off; resuming in the Fall.

Gay Men's Group 3rd Sunday of each month 12:30-1:30pm in the Parlor (*For all men who identify as gay*) No changes to Summer schedule.

Reproductive Justice and Faith 3rd Sunday of each month 1:30-3pm in Fridell and on Zoom (*Learn about justice issues related to reproductive freedom, and how this all relates to faith; learn about actions you can take*) <https://washington.zoom.us/j/98270878634> Taking the month of August off. This group ends in November.

Friendship Circle 2nd Sunday of each month from 2-3pm on Zoom, (*Women coming together for fellowship, spiritual support and a focus on justice*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88288815847> If any changes are to be made to Summer schedule, this will be determined at June meeting.

Interfaith Climate Action 4th Sunday of the month, 6:30-8pm on Zoom (*For those who wish to learn more/ do more about the climate emergency*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9831359120> No changes to Summer schedule.

MONDAYS

Brave Space 1st & 3rd Mondays of the month, 6-7pm on Zoom. (*For white-identified folks who wish to continue their learning about racism, the systems that support it, and skills for addressing it*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81180960514>

No meeting on July 3rd. Taking August off. No meeting on September 4th.

TUESDAYS

Prayer Group Weekly on Tuesdays 12-12:30pm on Zoom (*A brief time for reflection, prayer and sacred community in the middle of the day*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86776242649> Taking the month of August off.

Legacies 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 1:30-3pm on Zoom (*A group where the stories of our lives are shared. A different prompt is used each time.*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86065659153> Taking the months of July & August off.

Grief Support Group 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 6:30-7:30pm on Zoom. (*See separate article*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82797976361> No meeting on July 4th.

Young Adult Group *New* 4th Tuesdays 7-8:30pm (*Where adults under 40 connect and have fun*) Starts in July. Follow the *This Week* e-newsletter for details.

WEDNESDAYS

Optimism Hour Not meeting over the Summer; resumes in September.

THURSDAYS

Bible Study 12-1pm weekly on Zoom (*An exploration of the coming Sunday's scripture; provocative discussions; progressive commentary*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86761779225> Taking the month of August off.

SATURDAYS

Men's Group Weekly 10am on Zoom (*Where SFBC men from the church come to know one another*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81095038488?pwd=RlpydDZ0cERLVFhtcEFPSWmzSIQzUT09> No changes to schedule during the Summer.

Women's Conversations 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 11:30-12:30 on Zoom. (*Where women of the church strengthen friendships across generations*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82388737061> Taking July & August off.

Play Reading Circle 1st Saturday of the month, 3-5pm on Zoom (*Full-length plays read over two sessions; follow the This Week e-newsletter or contact smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org to find out what is being read. Scripts are available for check-out at the Welcome Table.*)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85424372570> In July, meeting 7/8 instead of 7/1. Taking September off.

Place at the Table Dinners held in members' homes 3 times annually. Next dinner is in the Fall.

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2023 COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES

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President: Mike Zaugg

Vice President: Megan Walker

Treasurer: Inola de la Cruz

Secretary: Eric Watness

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

David Delgado

Corey Clemons

Bob Sittig

David Young

Nirmala Jeldi

Roem de la Cruz

Sue Ross

For more information please contact the church at contact@seattlefirstbaptist.org

Sunday service at 11am in-person and online

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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.

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The Spire is published monthly by Seattle First Baptist Church, 1111 Harvard Ave, Seattle, WA 98122

Email Delivery: To subscribe for email delivery or our weekly newsletter, register online at www.seattlefirstbaptist.org

Our Mission Statement

We are a community of faith united in exploring what it means to follow the way of Jesus Christ, to be a people of God, and to love and care for our neighbors. As a church we will know no circles of exclusion, no bridges we will not cross, and no loyalties above those that we owe to God.

SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
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SEATTLE, WA 98122-4261



TRANSGENDER RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS



LOCATION:
ALL PILGRIMS CHRISTIAN CHURCH
500 Broadway East
Seattle, WA 98102

THEME:
“Advocacy for Gender Identity and Expression”

PRAYS WELL WITH OTHERS

Sat. June 24th, 2PM

INTERFAITH LGBTQ+ PRIDE SERVICE

Every year during Seattle LGBTQ+ Pride, people of many faiths come together to celebrate diversity. This year, we will have presenters from Pagan, Hindu, New Thought, Jewish, Christian, and more traditions. We will also be blessed by singing groups. You are welcome just as you are! FREE admission. For more information, call 206-325-2421 or email pastor@mccseattle.org