

THE SPIRE FALL 2023



THE NEWSLETTER OF SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH VOLUME 87, NO. 7

Dear church,

I didn't know women could be pastors until I was in college. That's when I met my first woman pastor, Rev. Mary Hammond, a co-pastor of Oberlin Community Church in Oberlin, Ohio. Seeing Mary lead, preach, teach, and care for the small-and-mighty congregation, as well as a number of college students, was a turning point in my life, as I realized that a vocation I had never considered could be open to someone like me. Then, when I moved to Nashville, Tennessee for a volunteer year that quickly became an MDiv from Vanderbilt, I began attending Glendale Baptist Church, which was led by two women co-pastors, Rev. Dr. Amy Mears and Rev. April Baker. Watching (and then getting to intern with) these two women pastors who had different personalities and complementary gifts was incredibly powerful for me. I learned that there is more than one way to be a pastor, that leadership does not have to be top-down—and that being a woman in the pulpit comes with its own set of challenges, in addition to general pastoral tasks and expectations of the role.

The society we live in is shaped by patriarchy, and that trickles (or even floods?) into the institution of the church, as well. Part of how patriarchy shows up in church is by assuming men (and particularly white men) to be the norm—the norm of what a pastor looks like, what leadership looks like, and what being “a faithful Christian” looks like, what scriptures we read in the Bible and what stories we tell from the pulpit. Women in ministry often face challenges to how they preach and teach and officiate and provide pastoral care simply because they might do those things differently from men (!) But really, ALL pastors do these tasks differently. Another message society sends women is that women must compete: for respect, for love, for jobs, for leadership, for positioning closest to the

center of power. And this shows up in the church, too (and of course, not just related to gender but related to race, class, ability, age, etc. as well). One gift of watching two women co-pastors work together was witnessing that they were different people with different identities and life experiences and gifts...and that neither one of them was “the REAL pastor” or “ACTUALLY in charge.” The co-pastor model, and particularly having women in these roles, resisted pitting one person against another.

In the 2018 study by Rev. Dr. Eileen Campbell-Reed entitled “State of Clergywomen in the U.S.: a statistical update,” it is shown that women make up only 13.1% of ordained clergy in the American Baptist Churches USA (the denomination to which this church belongs). Furthermore, women make up only 9.4% of pastors in ABCUSA. This is the almost the smallest percentage of women's ordination and women pastors in mainline churches (only the Wesleyan tradition is smaller, and only just). (Trust me, you want to check out this report—it is interesting...and sobering). (Another note: the report specifically examines racial demographics, and they note that the study of LGBTQIA+ people in ministry lacks longevity, but they are working on it!)

This church has been blessed with having multiple women on staff as clergy for many years. However, SFBC has never had a woman senior minister. And now, we will have two women co-pastors—and we are millennials, to boot! Even though we are a progressive congregation with a long history of supporting women in leadership, we must acknowledge that we are in a NEW time, and that there may be things to learn about how to speak, behave and respect these women in ministry.

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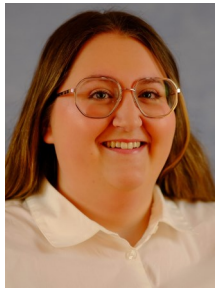
And, within our Evergreen region and the larger ABCUSA denomination, we are doing something DIFFERENT and BOLD by calling two millennial women to serve in collaborative ministry. On the day we called Pastor Leigh, I was overcome with emotion because I knew the gravity of what the congregation was doing—September 17 was a historic day.

As Pastor Leigh and I begin our ministry as co-pastors, we anticipate there will be a learning curve—with us AND with you! Flattening any hierarchical structure within an established institution is a big challenge—and though that may seem like a lot of fancy words all strung together, it will be real as we face questions like: “Who is REALLY in charge?” “who do I call when I need pastoral care?” “who should I let know I or a loved one is in the hospital?” “who will be available to officiate at weddings and funerals?” and many more. The answers to these questions are: both of us! But we know it’ll take some getting used to, so we want to hear from you! What questions do you have about the co-pastor model? What are your hopes? What are your worries? Let us know! We are all in this together as we seek to be faithful to the Way of Jesus the Christ in this community, in this time and in this place.

I love you, and I love being your pastor,

—*Rev. Anita*

A Letter from Vanessa Perkinson



I remember so clearly the conversation with one of my closest seminary friends. I had just finished a year and half long stint at a church that began just months after I moved to Seattle. “I’m not sure where church fits into my life right now...or where I fit into the church”. I thought moving to a big city and finding a progressive church would dissolve all of my complicated relationships to church because in that context, the “real work” was being done. My time wouldn’t be spent trying to defend the the inclusion of BIPOC folks or trying to get people excited about radical reconciliation. After spending my whole life hearing “no” to almost everything outside of what had been

deemed acceptable (i.e. white, conservative, evangelical, and cis-heteronormative), I thought being somewhere totally different would secure a “yes.” How wrong I was! While there were good things gained from that experience, for a lot of reasons, I walked away feeling discouraged, confused, and drained. My friend, a faithful American Baptist minister, listened to me process my frustrations and then said, “if you still long to be in a worship space, I think you should check out an American Baptist church. I think you’d be surprised at how much your values align.” What could be the harm in just checking out a church? I could always choose to not go back. So, I went home, said a prayer for guidance, and took to Google to search for American Baptist churches near me. Seattle First Baptist was the first on the list and as any good student would, I went to the website to do my research. What I found was a church pastored by women and that looked like a community doing good work with an affirming and expansive theological foundation. I mapped my bus route and the first Sunday in June 2022, I walked into the stunning sanctuary of SFBC and experienced God in a way that was fresh and authentic. I saw children being included in the service, heard a choir of joyful noise that reflected joyful hearts, and heard a sermon by Pastor Anita that was quick to name the injustices in our world and quicker to convict us as a faith-filled community to take action in love. It took one service and one conversation with Anita for me to know that I had been led to this place. A few months later, at the Homecoming service, I made it official by being affirmed as a member at SFBC. I was home. I sensed deep down that this was a holy moment of God, the people of our church, and me coming together to say yes to one another.

I had no idea that a year later, there would be more opportunities to say yes to each other as I took on the role of Small Groups Ministry Coordinator and then became the first pastoral intern the church has ever had. I’ve done quite a few internships over the course of my education (and even in high school), so I’m no stranger to the rhythms of that kind of work. What was new to me was doing an internship at a church where I was also a member and already on staff. This all at once gave me an upper-hand and presented some interesting challenges. In one way, having been a part of the church for a year, I was familiar with many components of SFBC’s identity. The way we worship, our core values, our demographics, and so on. But, with familiarity also comes a slightly dulled lens. In other churches I’ve served, I had no prior knowledge or experience and therefore had no “skin in the

game.” So, I could make observations and recommendations with fresh eyes. However, while I was still new-ish to SFBC, I had enough experience here prior to my internship that some of the sharpness that comes with being brand new had already worn off.

In addition to these unique circumstances, I also had some real fears about serving in this internship. While I am so excited to be in a progressive worship space and I know that I bring experience and education, I’m also acutely aware of the context of much of my experience and education. As I’ve said, I come from a predominantly conservative background and even the churches I’ve worked in that are more progressive are still not quite as forward-thinking as SFBC. My theological education has been at institutions that are embedded in conservative Christian traditions and although this does not mean every class or professor has been right-leaning, it’s still engrained in the culture. Consequently, what passes as progressive or profound is often a no-brainer in more liberal faith contexts. Knowing that, I went into my internship a little nervous that when I preached or offered resources or my perspective, that it would not provide a new insight or be all that helpful to a congregation that is already doing good work and with a more liberal theological standing. But I was pleasantly surprised to hear feedback that what I was saying from the pulpit and doing behind the scenes was serving our community well. In fact, that may have been the biggest lesson from my internship: to use the voice God has given to me to speak the truth as I have come to understand it and to trust that when I am faithful to do that, an impact will be made in the lives of those I am serving.

I am so incredibly thankful that saying yes to my friend’s suggestion led to me saying yes to becoming a part of the SFBC family and that led to saying yes to this internship. I’m even more thankful for all of you for saying yes to me time after time over the last year and especially this summer. I owe a huge thank you to Pastor Anita, Cherry Johnson, and Theresa Pruitt for guiding me and walking alongside me this summer. I have a deep appreciation for those on the committee that approved my internship. And, to the entire community of Seattle First Baptist, THANK YOU! Thank you for embracing me, listening to me, giving me room to grow, for being my home, and for continuing to say yes to me as I say yes right back. Saying yes over and over to each other is the holy and loving work of God. It is a gift and one that I do not take for granted.

—Vanessa Perkinson



Movie Night

Disney and Pixar’s *Turning Red*. Friday, November 3 at 6:30pm. FREE. Snacks provided. Bring a cozy blanket and/or camp chair. All ages welcome!

Youth Group

Meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 6:30-8pm in the Youth Room at church. Dinner provided. All youth in grades 6-12 are welcome!



Join Us for a Kraken Game!

November 22, 7pm at Climate Pledge Arena. Pay SFBC what you can between \$30-55 per ticket. We have 15 tickets reserved, contact Pastor Anita to get on the list and if you need scholarship assistance.

Save the Date!

Hanging of the Greens on Sunday November 26 after worship. All ages are welcome to come help decorate the church for Christmas.

The Romney Legacy Committee presents The Rev. Wilda C. Gafney, Ph.D. October 28-29



For the last two years, this congregation has centered our worship around *A Women’s Lectionary for the Whole Church*. This project of Dr. Wilda C. Gafney seeks to

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center womanist and feminist readings of the Bible, asking questions like, “What does it look like to tell the good news through the stories of women who are often on the margins of scripture and often set up to represent bad news? How would a lectionary centering women’s stories, chosen with womanist and feminist commitments in mind, frame the presentation of the scriptures for proclamation and teaching?” The lectionary texts, translated by Dr. Gafney, and the commentary she provides, have shaped our preaching and teaching since Advent 2021. It will be an honor to host and learn from Dr. Gafney.

Womanist biblical scholar, the Rev. Wil Gafney, Ph.D. is the Right Rev. Sam B. Hulsey Professor of Hebrew Bible at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas. She is the author of *A Women’s Lectionary for the Whole Church* and translator of its biblical selections; the first two volumes, Year A and W (a stand alone volume) were published in 2021. Volume B was published in July 2023 and C is underway, due in due in 2024. She is the author of *Womanist Midrash: A Reinroduction to Women of the Torah and of the Throne*, a commentary on Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah in the Wisdom series; *Daughters of Miriam: Women Prophets in Ancient Israel*; and co-editor of *The Peoples’ Bible* and *The Peoples’ Companion to the Bible*. She has completed the second volume of *Womanist Midrash* focusing on women in the Former Prophets expected 2024. She is an Episcopal priest canonically resident in the Diocese of Pennsylvania and licensed in the Diocese of Texas and, a former Army chaplain and congregational pastor in the AME Zion Church. A former member of the Dorshei Derekh Reconstructionist Minyan of the Germantown Jewish Center in Philadelphia, she has co-taught courses with and for the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Seminary in Wyncote, PA. She is a preacher, teacher, activist and amateur watercolorist. Learn more at <https://www.wilgafney.com/>.

Romney Weekend Events

Saturday, October 28 at 7pm: “Changing the Way We Hear Scripture: Writing A Lectionary While Womanist.” Book signing to follow. Please bring books if you already have them, or plan to buy copies of the *A Women’s Lectionary for the Whole Church: Year B* (\$35) or *Womanist Midrash* (\$25) at church. All are welcome!

Dr. Gafney will be preaching in worship on Sunday, October 29. She will be available to greet during coffee hour.

Next Generation Ministries needs YOUR help!

Do you care about the youngest worshippers among us? Do you want to make sure they have safe, clean, educational and compassionate environments to worship? Do you have one or two Sundays a month you could dedicate to make sure this church is welcoming to families with young children? If so, we need YOU!

Help Is Needed in These Areas:

Wiggle Room help: The Wiggle Room is a great space for those young ones (and not so young ones!) who find sitting quietly in a pew for an hour challenging. It is an important space for kids and their grown-ups, and neurodivergent friends, to be able to witness the service in a sound-proof space where they can move their bodies. We need someone to help keep it organized and well-stocked—if this could be you a couple Sundays a month, reach out and tell us!

Nursery (ages 0-preK): A nursery space is important for adults with babies and toddlers to have a safe and age-appropriate environment to spend time while they are at church. While we might not have babies in the nursery every week, we’d like to begin offering nursery again during Sunday worship. If you would be willing to sign up for one Sunday a month to watch the nursery (and if no one comes in, you can come to worship), please let us know!

Godly Play: We’d love to start offering this again either before or after church services. If you are interested in being a Godly Play leader, the church can help you get training.

To volunteer in any of these ways, contact Pastor Anita.

Join the SFBC Choir for the Evergreen Meeting

Everyone is invited to join in singing for the Evergreen Meeting whether you are a regular choir singer or not! Everyone is welcome to attend one or all of the singing opportunities October 11-13.

Wednesday, October 11: *No Rehearsal*

Thursday, October 12: Evergreen rehearsal, 7-8:30pm in the SFBC sanctuary

Friday, October 13: Evergreen rehearsal at 5:45pm in the SFBC sanctuary, Evergreen service at 7pm

Saturday October 14: Evergreen rehearsal at 5:45 in the SFBC sanctuary, Evergreen service at 7pm

Sunday, October 15: Rehearsal at 10am, service at 11am

Is It Well With Our Soul?

Transformative Actions for Individual, Communal,
and Societal Wellness

2023 Evergreen Annual Meeting

October 12-14, Seattle First Baptist Church
1111 Harvard Ave., Seattle WA 98122

Schedule

Thu., Oct. 12

6pm—Ministers' Council Gathering

Fri., Oct. 13

10:30am—Registration

11:45am—Lunch

1pm—Welcome Plenary

1:45pm—4:45pm—Workshops and
Intercultural Conversations

5pm—Dinner



7pm—Worship—
Keynote Speaker:
Jennifer Hawks, Associate
General Counsel for
the Baptist Joint Com-
mittee on Religious Lib-
erty

Sat., Oct. 14

8:30am—Breakfast

9:15am—Noon—Business Session including
Caucus Breakouts

12:15pm—1:15pm—Lunch

1:30pm—4:45pm—Workshops

5pm—Dinner

7pm—Worship—

Keynote Speaker: Rev.
Dr. Susan Hernandez,
Pastor at Primera Iglesia
Bautista de Santa Barba-
ra



Workshops, Conversations & Leaders

Intercultural Conversations—Rev. Doug

Avilesbernal & Evergreen Intercultural Team

What is the Pneuma Initiative?—Rev. Sam

Kim, Rev. Jason Mack, Leslie Piacitelli

Tending the Fray: Arts Based Community

Care for Psycho/Social and Spiritual Support

and Wellbeing—Rev. Mylinda Baits

Following Their Lead: Mental Health and

Support for Our Youth —Rev. Anita Peebles

Hotel Information: See opposite

side. We have a discount rate with the Silver

Cloud Hotel Broadway which is just a couple

blocks from Seattle First Baptist Church!

Registration

Fees

\$40 for In Person Attend-
ance (includes meals)

\$20 for Online Attend-
ance (online track in-
cludes all workshops, plenaries, business
meetings, and worship services)

To register, scan or click code for
online OR call Paul at 253-859-2226



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 this continuing series, we introduce you to 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.



Corey Clemons (*he/him*), member-at-large, was baptized into membership in SFBC in April 2022. He is employed at Seattle Children's Research Institute, working on immunotherapy clinical trials for pediatric patients. He enjoys all things HGTV, karaoke with friends, "skookies" (skillet cookies), fire pits, and Fall/Halloween. He serves on

the Property Development Committee and looks forward to helping usher SFBC into a bright and fruitful future.



Council member-at-large **Sue Ross** (*she/her*) joined SFBC in 1981, marrying husband Brian here the following year; their son Christopher was dedicated in the church in 1993 (and recently helped make Brian and Sue first-time grandparents!). A former president of the congregation, Sue has served in many other roles, including as Faith Community Nurse. Retired from nursing at UWMC in 2020, Sue currently volunteers as a nurse with the Public Health Reserve Corps, and with medical students at UW's health fairs and clinics. Sue makes quilts for preemie babies through the Quilter's Anonymous Guild, and loves animals, especially horses.

Evergreen Meeting Volunteers Needed!

SFBC is honored to host our Evergreen Association family in our Annual Meeting on October 12-14! We need volunteers to make sure we provide the best hospitality to our sibling churches from all over the West, so if you can volunteer, please email Pastor Anita with dates/times you are available. Thank you!

AND make sure to register to attend the gathering! It will be a joyous, educational and life-giving celebration of our Evergreen Community. Visit <https://ea-abc.org/annual-meeting-2023> to register soon!

Sign-Up for Flower Donations

Do you enjoy seeing beautiful flowers on the Communion table on Sunday mornings? Would you like to honor someone on their birthday or remember a loved one? The Worship, Arts and Hospitality Committee invites you to donate flowers on a Sunday of your choice by signing up on a sheet at the Welcome table in the Fellowship Hall or you can contact the Front Office to sign-up or ask questions.

Thank you in advance for your generosity in making our sanctuary more beautiful and welcoming on Sunday mornings.



Roem de la Cruz (*he/him*) is a member-at-large on the Council. His family, along with brothers Daryl and Danny and their families, have been attending SFBC since the Rod Romney and David Kile years. Roem and his wife Jackie have two grown kids, Jessica (25) and Benjamin (22). In their spare

time, they love to travel. In May 2022, the entire de la Cruz clan—minus Daryl and their mom—took a trip to Europe;

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this past February, Roem and family took another trip, this time to Thailand and Singapore (*see photo*). He looks forward to getting to know SFBC members better and helping to discern SFBC's future.

Feeding the Hungry

Did you know that SFBC donates the cooking facilities for the People's Breakfast? The People's Breakfast cooks and serves 60-75 meals Sunday morning at University Heights Center to all who want them, no questions asked. Community members are free to eat with one another at their tables or take it to go. Feeding the unfed, meeting the needs that go unmet, is the foundation upon which we build political power. We believe that housing, food, and water is a human right. To get involved, call or text JJ Bartlett at 360-319-2009, or show up to the SFBC kitchen at 8:30 on Sunday mornings. They have plenty of work to go around for all skill levels.

You'll Wish You Had...Don't Forget to Register!



Registration for the Women's Retreat is open until October 12th. Don't miss out! We are going to spend some time learning the spiritual discipline of companioning. But it's not all serious! We are going to knit and crochet (lessons available), do puzzles, eat great food, hang out with nature and by the fireplaces, do crafty things, sing our hearts out, form new relationships and strengthen old ones, be silly, and simply relax with one another. Absolutely everything is optional. If you've never been to one of our annual women's retreats, you're in for a treat! If you've never been to Rainbow Lodge, it is lovely. A large open meeting room with windows on three sides overlooks beautiful forested land and Mt Si. The leaves will be Autumn-gorgeous at this time of year. All the rooms have wonderful views and comfortable beds. The first floor of the lodge is fully accessible and that's where everything happens. Don't miss out! Click below to register today. If you do not have access to the internet, phone the church office and leave your name and phone number; Cherry Johnson will call and register

you over the phone. And do not let the cost keep you away. If it is beyond your reach, you can confidentially choose the Pay-What-You-Can option when you register. For questions, email retreats@seattlefirstbaptist.org.

Women's Retreat

October 20-22, 2023

Rainbow Lodge, North Bend

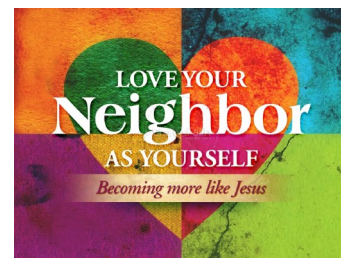
\$250 for a Shared Room; \$300 for a Private Room

OR Pay-What-You-Can if the cost is beyond your means

[Click Here to Register](#)

Love Your Neighbor?

Here Are Ways to Put Those Words Into Action



SFBC has a robust **Outreach Program**. Beth Reis does an amazing job organizing all this, but she needs the hands and feet (and cars) of the rest of us too! This is what "following the way of Jesus" is all about.

1) Every Sunday SFBC donates cookies to the WHEEL Women's Shelter right down the street from us. **We need more people to bake or shop for cookies, and people to drive the cookies to the shelter after church on rotating Sundays.**

2) On **Saturday, December 2nd** there's an **Outreach Work Party** from 11:30am-2:30pm in the Fellowship Hall and **you are needed**—to sort, bag, and distribute clothing and personal care items for our unhoused neighbors, which will be donated to several of our partner organizations who serve those in need on a daily basis. Put it on your calendar. Be there. Good company. Good work. All ages welcome! Come by yourself. Come as a family. Bring your friends!

We also need people to **thrift store shop** for used clothing and other items (Outreach gives you the money), people to **bake** cookies or brownies, and people to **drive** the packed-up goods and goodies to the various organizational recipients after the work party (same day or during the following week).

If you love your neighbor and want to help with any of these things, contact

outreach@seattlefirstbaptist.org.

Alternatively, you can fill out a form at the Welcome Table next Sunday morning!

Outreach Work Party
Saturday, December 2, 11:30am-2:30pm
Fellowship Hall

New Small Groups Starting This Fall

Several new groups are starting this Fall. Thank you to those members of the congregation who came up with these ideas and volunteered to lead the groups. All groups are open. We hope you will try at least one of the new ones over the next couple of months.



Back to the Future

In this group we will explore the importance of sacred spaces in our lives, look at what “church” has meant to us, what functions church has provided in our lives and how that impacts what we think about the future of SFBC, and what the future of “The Church” as an institution might be. Join us!

Sunday Mornings in October (except 10/22)
9:30-10:30am in the Parlor
Continental Breakfast Served
Leaders: Members of the Congregational Engagement Committee



Building Lasting Bridges

Starts Thursday, October 5th, 6-7pm on Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88383861898>

Starting Thursday, October 5th (and then every other Thursday through December), Building Lasting Bridges will meet on Zoom from 6-7pm. Led by Sandra Jones and Martha Hopley, and utilizing the book Building Lasting Bridges by Kathryn Chow-Wong, Lucia Ann McSpaden and Dale M. Witherspoon, this group will help participants explore their personal culture(s) and the larger circles of culture that surround

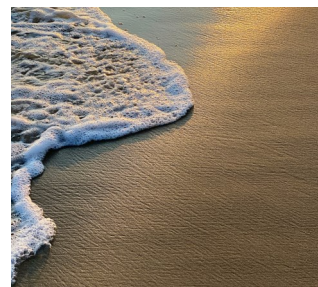
and include them. They will learn about practicing cultural humility and intercultural respect as we all seek to follow the call of Jesus to ensure that all are welcome. The book is available for purchase online and at the Welcome Table during Coffee Hour (\$17.75 or pay-what-you-can...exact cash, check or credit card).



For All the Saints

Sunday Mornings in November 9:30-10:30am
In the Parlor
Continental Breakfast Served

From the Day of the Dead to Eastern Orthodox iconography to praying of the Kaddish...all faiths and all cultures have some way of honoring the saints—those who have gone before. While we cannot cover all of this in a month, we’re going to give it our best. Starting with All Saints Sunday and continuing throughout the month of November, we will be looking at saints from many perspectives...our ancestors, our faith and justice mentors, classic and modern day saints, music and images of the saints, saints among the living, sainthood across cultures. This will involve some presentation but also personal exploration and group discussion. All that and coffee too! Hope to see you there. This group will be led by Cherry Johnson.



Exploring Contemplation

Monthly on the Second Sunday 6:30-7:30pm
Starts November 12th on Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87508105511>

Last Spring Jim Segaar taught a six-week class called Exploring Contemplation. It was very well-received, and those in the class expressed a desire to continue meeting. Starting in November, Jim will hold a monthly group on Sunday evenings to continue exploration

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of different types of contemplative practices—supporting those who have regular practices already and teaching/encouraging those who want to do so. Jim will open the Zoom room 15 minutes early each session so that any newcomers can receive an orientation. Types of meditation used will include songs, silence, guided meditation and more.

**Do Your Part for Climate Justice This Fall
Interfaith Climate Action—First Hill
Offers Us Many Opportunities**



**You Say Good-Bye; I Say Hello
Change in Leadership—Interfaith Climate Action**

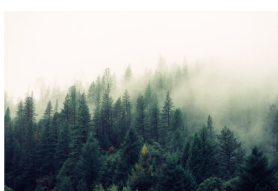


Keith Ervin



Lynn Gaertner-Johnston

A huge round of applause and deep expressions of gratitude for the dedicated and prophetic leadership of the Interfaith Climate Action—First Hill group by Keith Ervin over the past eight years! He is now passing the baton to Lynn Gaertner-Johnston as of October 1st. Thank you Lynn! And we know this is not really good-bye...only some extra time for you to be engaging in good trouble, Keith!

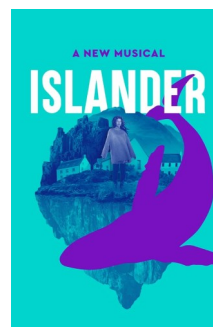


**Are You Called to Save the Earth?
Come to Our Retreat on Climate Action!
Thursday, October 19th
10am-3pm, Potluck Lunch**

Interfaith Climate Action—First Hill, a collaboration between Seattle First Baptist Church and Bet Alef Meditative Synagogue, invites everyone concerned about the climate emergency to our Fall retreat, where we will enjoy fellowship and set our agenda for the

coming year. We will have a potluck lunch. Retreat location: Bet Alef Meditative Synagogue Living Room, 806 N. 64th St. (near the Center for Spiritual Living at Green Lake).

The mission of Interfaith Climate Action—First Hill is to help members of the two congregations learn about the causes and effects of human-caused climate change, and to work in concert with other groups to maintain a livable climate. We sponsor educational events, support climate-friendly legislation and policy, and oppose actions that would increase global warming. Contact keithervin@msn.com or 206-371-3834 for more information.

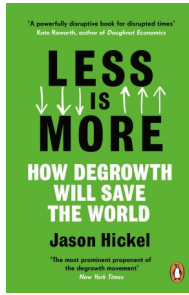


**Theater-Goers for Climate Justice!
Islander at the Seattle Rep
Sunday, October 29 at 5:30pm
Food and Discussion Following**

Join members of Interfaith Climate Action-First Hill at the October 29 (5:30pm) performance of *Islander* at the Seattle Rep. The two-actor musical is described by one reviewer as “‘Free Willy’ meets ‘Brigadoon.’” Or, as the Seattle Rep explains:

Myth and reality collide when the tide washes a mysterious stranger onto the shore of Eilidh’s lonely island, changing her life forever. Join us for a musical showcase of epic storytelling, intimately staged with a contemporary Scottish folk-inspired score. Two actors embody a host of characters while weaving, building, and layering their voices using live looping technology. This internationally acclaimed hit will create an expansive, ethereal soundscape for the ears and imagination as Seattle Rep kicks off the North American Tour.

If you’d like to attend, go to the Rep for tickets (\$52 to \$64, \$46 for seniors, \$16 for students, plus a \$7 single-ticket fee). Some of us have bought tickets for the first row of the balcony, but pick your own seat. If you need help with the cost of a ticket, contact smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org; we’ll make sure you can attend. Please let Keith Ervin know if you’re coming (keithervin@msn.org), so we care sure to connect after the show for a discussion over food and drink.



Join This Important Discussion!

If we're paying attention to what's happening around us, we know that our planet is in trouble. As global temperatures have reached alarming levels, hurricanes and floods have become more lethal, droughts have driven farmers off the land, and, once again, we've seen wildfires destroying whole communities.

We don't have to keep racing toward the abyss. But if we are to rebuild a sustainable world, economic anthropologist Jason Hickel argues, we must do more than embrace a switch to renewable energy. We must abandon a model of endless growth, which forces us to use increasing amounts of planet-killing fossil fuels.

Interfaith Climate Action—First Hill invites you to read Hickel's "powerfully disruptive book" and join us for an online discussion on Monday, October 30th from 7 to 8:30 pm on Zoom. You don't have to read the book first, but we've put the word out early so you could have time to borrow or buy a copy and read it. Some are available at the Welcome Table in Fellowship Hall for \$20 or pay-what-you-can (credit, exact cash or check).

Susan Blythe-Goodman will lead the discussion. If you have questions (or need help obtaining the book and can't get to the church), email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org.

Less is More Book Discussion
Monday, October 30th, 7-8:30pm on Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9831359120>

Schedule Changes



For the months of October and November, Friendship Circle is trying out a new schedule. Meetings will be hybrid (both in-person in the Peacemakers Room at church and on Zoom) from 12:45-2pm on the second Sunday of the month.

Friendship Circle
October 8 and November 12
Peacemakers Room or on Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88288815847>

The BIPOC Group has taken the months of September and October off, but reconvenes in November. See you there!

BIPOC Group
Resumes November 26th 12:30-1:30pm
In Fridell or on Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82868987493>

Interfaith Climate Action—First Hill
Will not have a 4th Sunday meeting in October
Due to Retreat, Theater Event,
and Book Discussion

For the month of October only, Optimism Hour is meeting on the first Wednesday instead of the second. 5:30-6:30pm at the Stoup Brewing Co on the corner of Broadway and Union.

Optimism Hour
October 4 and November 8, 5:30-6:30pm
Stoup Brewing Co

Reproductive Justice & Faith Group
Only two sessions left!
October 15 and November 19
In Fridell Lounge or on Zoom
<https://washington.zoom.us/j/98270878634>



When Dr. Jennifer Chin, Beth Reis and Susan Blythe-Goodman came forward to lead a group focused on Reproductive Justice & Faith in the wake of the Roe v Wade rollback decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, they said it would be for one year. That year has come and gone, and now there are just two sessions remaining. This has been an amazing learning experience for all who have participated—focusing on racism in reproductive rights, justice for poor parents and their infants in pre- and post-natal care, and the role of faith both in denying and claiming justice for those whose rights to reproductive healthcare are being denied in many parts of this country. Here's what is happening during the remaining two sessions:

On October 15th Dr. Jennifer Chin has invited a woman who works with an organization that provides

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safe reproductive healthcare to women for whom it has been denied. The founders feel deeply called to this work because of their faith.

Then on November 19th, the final session, Beth Reis reports we will discuss the film *Birthing Justice*. Here is the link to the film in case you have not yet had a chance to view it.

<https://www.pbs.org/video/birthing-justice-pxaxav/>

Thank you to Jennifer, Beth and Susan for a great group!



SMALL GROUPS SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

All groups are open to new members. The Small Groups Ministry is possible because of your ideas for groups and your willingness to take your turn leading a group (training & support provided). Groups can be for the purpose of spiritual development, study, social justice action, support, socializing/fun, or any combination thereof. If you have ideas for new groups you would like to see, and/or if you are willing to lead a small group, please email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org. Your participation in any form is greatly valued!

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Back to the Future—New in October! Sunday mornings in October (no session on Oct. 22) 9:30-10:30am in the Parlor. (*A chance to look more broadly at the concept and reality of church/Church and sacred spaces—by looking backward, around & forward.*) See separate article. Continental breakfast served.

For all the Saints—New in November! Sunday mornings in November 9:30-10:30am in the Parlor. (*A look at the saints in our own lives, those from SFBC, classic and modern saints, and living saints.*) See separate article. Continental breakfast served.

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS

BIPOC Group—Resumes in November (*A time of support and community-building for all who identify as Black, Indigenous or other Person of Color.*) 4th Sunday of November (Nov. 26) at 12:30pm in Fridell or on Zoom. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82868987493>

Gay Men's Group 3rd Sunday of each month (Oct. 15 & Nov. 19) 12:30-1:30 in the Parlor (*A time of fellowship and co-support for all who identify as gay men.*)

Reproductive Justice and Faith 3rd Sunday (Oct. 15 & Nov. 19) 12:30-2pm 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.*) This group ends in November. <https://washington.zoom.us/j/98270878634>

Friendship Circle 2nd Sunday of each month (Oct. 8 & Nov. 12) from 12:45-2pm in the Peacemaker Room and on Zoom (*Women coming together for fellowship, spiritual support and a focus on justice.*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88288815847>



W*A*N*T*E*D!

The Small Groups Ministry is looking for the following. If you are feeling called to one of these, please contact Vanessa Perkinson by emailing smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org to start the conversation.

Wanted: 1-2 People to Lead An Intergenerational Baking Group



The purpose of this group would be to bake cookies for the Outreach Program to provide to neighbors in need. You and your leader-partner would gather the ingredients (and could have help paying for them). The publicity would be handled by Small Groups Ministry. You could meet once a quarter and freeze enough cookies to last until the next session. You could use the church kitchen.

Wanted: 1-2 People to be the Organizers For Place at the Table Dinners



You and your partner would organize these potluck meals in members' homes that happen three times a year. In the six weeks prior to each dinner, you would ensure that sign-up for hosting and then sign-up for attending take place during Coffee Hour. You would then communicate necessary information to hosts. You would have the thanks of a grateful congregation, who love these dinners!

SUNDAY EVENINGS

Exploring Contemplation—New in November!

2nd Sunday (Initial meeting Nov. 12) 6:30-7:30pm on Zoom. See separate article. (*Monthly gathering of all interested in contemplation. Variety of practices and styles. Leader is on screen 15 minutes prior to start time to orient newcomers.*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87508105511>

Interfaith Climate Action Typically meets on 4th Sunday from 6:30-8pm on Zoom, but no 4th Sunday meeting in October due other related events that month. (*For those who wish to collaborate with others to learn more/ do more about the climate emergency.*) See separate article. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9831359120>

MONDAYS

Brave Space 1st & 3rd Mondays of the month (Oct. 2 & 16, Nov. 5 & 19), 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>

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>

Legacies 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month (Oct. 3 & 17, Nov. 6 & 20), 1:30-3pm on Zoom. (*A group for sharing the stories of our lives. A different prompt is used each time.*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86065659153>

Grief Support Group 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month (Oct. 3 & 17, Nov. 6 & 20), 6:30-7:30pm on Zoom. (*A peer support group for those in any stage of grief.*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82797976361>

Young Adults Group 4th Tuesday of the month 7-8:30pm (Oct. 24 & Nov. 27) Different location each time depending on activity. (*Where SFBC young adults ages 21-40 meet to connect with one another and have fun.*) For more info email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org or monitor the *This Week* Thursday e-newsletter for up-to-date information.

WEDNESDAYS

Optimism Hour Typically on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, but in October will be on 1st Wed (Oct. 4 & Nov. 8) 5:30-6:30pm at Stoup Brewing on Broadway and Union just east of the church. (*A time for fun and socializing at a nearby bar before choir rehearsal. Choir*

members, the choir-curious and anyone else welcome! Non-alcoholic beverages are available. No food served. Can bring your own.)

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>

Building Lasting Bridges—New Group in October! Every other Thursday 6-7pm on Zoom starting October 5th. See separate article. (*Exploration of personal culture, cultural humility and intercultural respect and understanding. Utilizes the book Building Lasting Bridges by Choy-Wong, McSpadden & Witherspoon.*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88383861898>

SATURDAYS

Men's Group Weekly 10am on Zoom (*Where SFBC men come together to get better acquainted and support one another.*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81095038488?pwd=RlpydDZ0cERLVFhtcEFPSWZSIQzUT09>

Women's Conversations 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 11:30am-12:30pm on Zoom (*A place to make connections with other women across generations.*) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82388737061>

Play Reading Circle 1st Saturday of the month, 3-5pm on Zoom (Oct. 7 & Nov. 4) 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>

GROUPS WITH IRREGULAR SCHEDULES

Parents of Adult Children Living with Mental Illness Meets monthly on a weeknight 7-8:30pm in the home of a member. For further details, email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org and read the weekly *This Week* electronic newsletter.

Place at the Table These popular events typically happen three times annually in members' homes. (*Potluck dinners for the purpose of community building and developing relationships in smaller settings. Sign-ups for hosting and then for participating happen after Sunday worship in the month preceding the dinner.*) We are currently seeking a new organizer for this group. See separate article.

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Sunday service at 11am in-person and online

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