

THE SPIRE

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

2023



THE NEWSLETTER OF SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

VOLUME 87, NO. 8

Hey y'all,

Wow—what a whirlwind the last six weeks have been! My time as co-pastor began with the Evergreen Association Annual Gathering. I got to meet and fellowship with so many wonderful colleagues from across the Evergreen region. We then had the honor of welcoming Dr. Wil Gafney to SFBC as our Romney Lecturer. She gave a great lecture and an amazing sermon (admittedly, this was a bit of a fan-girl event for me as I have read and admired Dr. Gafney's work for years). Pastor Anita and I went on a retreat together to get to know each other, and discuss our hopes and dreams as we all begin a new phase of life being church together. The last six weeks have flown by, and I am so thankful to be here and be your pastor. The last several weeks have been jam-packed, and there is still more to look forward to as the Advent season begins.

Our Advent theme this year is How Does a Weary World Rejoice?, and it's not hard to guess why. Weariness abounds in our world. We look around and we see violence, oppression, war, hunger, a rapidly changing climate, poverty—in all honesty, I could fill up the rest of this article with all of the bad things that are happening all around us. But, there are also so many good things that are happening too. The challenge of life in general, but specifically for all of us in this Advent season, is how to hold both. How do we rejoice in the midst of the weariness?

I officiated a wedding fairly early on in COVID. The couple had postponed their wedding date, and had to adapt and change significant aspects of their wedding. I had a few Zoom meetings with them to plan the ceremony, and it was clear that they were feeling a bit weary. We all were weary during the height of the pandemic as plans continuously changed and we kept our distance from those we love most. But even in the

midst of all of it, there were moments of joy, beauty, hope, and love. The wedding between that couple was one of those moments for me. I saw the love and joy between them as they finally were able to get married. During my homily, I shared the poem, "Don't Hesitate" from Mary Oliver:

If you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy, don't hesitate. Give in to it. There are plenty of lives and whole towns destroyed or about to be. We are not wise, and not very often kind. And much can never be redeemed. Still, life has some possibility left. Perhaps this is its way of fighting back, that sometimes something happens better than all the riches or power in the world. It could be anything, but very likely you notice it in the instant when love begins. Anyway, that's often the case. Anyway, whatever it is, don't be afraid of its plenty. Joy is not made to be a crumb.

This poem is what it is to hold both the weariness and the joy, the good and the bad, the ugly and the beautiful.

Friends, you more than likely will feel weary in this season of Advent. You may already feel weary now. Though this may be the case, if you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy, don't hesitate. Give in to it.

Peace,

—Rev. Leigh

All are welcome to the
Installation of our co-pastors!
Sunday, January 7 at 2pm in the Sanctuary



During this service, there will be a section specifically to install Rev. Leigh Curl-Dove as a pastor of this church. Rev. Heather Mustain will bring the charge to Rev. Leigh.

Then Rev. Leigh and Rev. Anita will be officially installed as co-pastors, and the adoption of the co-pastor model will be ritualized. Rev. Joy Martinez-Marshall will bring the charge to the co-pastors.

Guest Preachers

Rev. Heather Mustain is Associate Pastor at Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, TX. She leads Wilshire's missions and advocacy work, engaging congregants in missions experiences locally and globally, and equipping the church to be advocates on issues of justice. Heather is a graduate of Baylor University, where she earned a master of social work degree and a master of divinity degree from George W. Truett Theological Seminary. She earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Rev. Joy Martinez-Marshall serves as the pastor of First Baptist Church of Lincoln, NE and as the Interim Associate Region Minister to Mission Development for the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska. Joy grew up in The Colony, TX. Now, she calls Nebraska home after moving from Waco, TX where she served as a Student Life Minister. She holds a B.A. in Religion from Baylor University and a M.Div. from George W. Truett Theological Seminary. As pastor, Joy helps lead K Street Lunch, a sack lunch ministry in partnership with FBCL's sibling congregations, other nonprofits, and a local retirement community. Joy serves as the Vice President of the Faith Coalition of Lancaster County and on the Board of Directors of Baptist Women In Ministry.

ADVENT 2023 at SFBC

**11/26 Decorating for Christmas
(12:15-1:30pm) Tasks and activities
for all ages. Lunch provided.**

12/3 ADVENT I Worship at 11am

**12/9 Celebration of Light and Joy:
a neighborhood event!**

12/10 ADVENT II Worship at 11am

12/17 ADVENT III Worship at 11am

**12/22 Longest Night Service
at 6:30pm**

12/24 ADVENT IV Worship at 11am

**12/24 CHRISTMAS EVE
Candlelight Worship at 6pm**

**12/31 CHRISTMAS SUNDAY:
a service of Lessons and Carols**

**1/7/24 EPIPHANY SUNDAY
Worship at 11am**



CELEBRATION OF LIGHT AND JOY

**OPEN HOUSE
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2023
5:00-7:00PM**



**CHRISTMAS CAROL SING-ALONG
WITH CHOIR AND BRASS**



SANTA CLAUS



SNOW



COOKIES AND HOT COCOA

**SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
1111 HARVARD AVENUE
SEATTLE, WA**

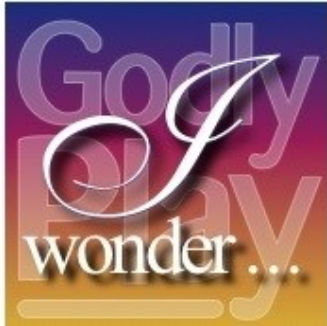
Celebration of Light and Joy

The Celebration of Light and Joy hosted by Seattle First Baptist Church is back once again on Saturday, December 9th and you won't want to miss this newest tradition. Join us on the corner of Harvard & Seneca anytime between 5:00-7:00pm and take in all the holiday cheer: Santa, Christmas lights, warm beverages, a carol sing-along with choir and brass, and more. It may even snow! Come and admire the beautiful decorations, sing carols of the season, check out kids' activities or just hang out and have fun. In addition to our congregation, many of last year's attendees live in the neighborhood; this Christmas celebration is one of the many ways we reach out and give back to the community, so please come and meet your neighbors! This is not a worship service but it is a time for fellowship, community, and joy as we celebrate the season. Seattle First Baptist Church celebrates and affirms all of our BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ ministers, staff, members, friends, and neighbors. All are welcome to join us as we share the light and joy!

Youth Group

Wednesday, December 13 6:30-8pm
in the Youth Room

Dress up for Christmas, bring a Christmas treat or craft to share, and get ready to play some Reindeer Games!



Are You Free at 9:30 December Sunday Mornings? New Small Group for Advent

The signature phrase in Godly Play lessons is “I WONDER.” What do you wonder this Advent season? About yourself? Our church? The state of our world? About messages from angels? About younger people and what they are thinking? About elders and what they’ve seen?

If Time With Children is often your favorite part of the worship service, you will love Intergenerational Godly Play. When generations come together, something profound happens. Come listen to the stories. Come talk about them. Come be creative (if you wish). Come spend Sunday mornings in the presence of these beloveds. All ages welcome. (And there’s food!)

Intergenerational Godly Play All Sundays in Advent December 3, 10, 17, & 24 9:30-10:30am in the Parlor Continental Breakfast Served



Holiday Virtual Open Houses

Alone for the holidays? Or trying to avoid or boycott them? Apprehensive about a family gathering? Or maybe deep in the celebration but just wanting to wish a Happy Thanksgiving or Merry Christmas to your church friends? Join Cherry Johnson for a few minutes or the whole hour for a virtual holiday open house. On Zoom from 11am to noon on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Your SFBC family eagerly awaits your visit! No preparation required.

Thanksgiving Day Virtual Open House November 23rd



Christmas Day Virtual Open House December 25th



11am to Noon (or any part thereof)

On Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83946453160>



Gratitude and Climate Justice
Concerned about climate justice?



Interfaith Climate Action meets on Sunday, November 26th (and the 4th Sunday of each month unless otherwise advertised), from 6:30 to 8pm on Zoom, and all are invited. At this session, we will talk about the people, organizations, and experiences we are grateful for that have influenced us in our climate work. We will also discuss a 3-page excerpt “Individual Action, Social Transformation” from Greta Thunberg’s *The Climate Book*. Let team lead Lynn Gaertner-Johnston know if you would like a copy of the excerpt or email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org.

Interfaith Climate Action
Sunday, November 26th 6:30-8pm

On Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83474603114>

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 them; they are here to represent your interests! If you’re interested in serving on the Council in the future, please let them know.



Heather Dodge (*she/her*) has a busy life. She works full time for Curtis, a company that provides equipment to Fire- and Law-Enforcement professionals. She started attending SFBC in 2002 after a long “church that feels right” search. Heather and her partner, Jill Yates, were married at SFBC twice: once in 2003, and again in 2013; they have two grown daughters and three grand-girls. Among many other activities, she volunteers to teach CPR and First Aid classes for the Red Cross, has a Girl Scout troop with ten fifth- to seventh-graders, and rides her bike for Bike MS every September.



SFBC Outreach Work Party
Saturday, December 2nd
11:30am-2pm in the Fellowship Hall

There is still time to purchase a gift for our neighbors experiencing homelessness. See SFBC’s Amazon wish list here: <https://a.co/7YtbHAD>

For more information about this event and to volunteer, contact Beth Reis at outreach@seattlefirstbaptist.org.



Seattle Jazz Vespers presents

**Jake Bergevin Quintet
for the Holiday Season**

**December 3, 2023 at 6pm
Doors open at 5:30pm**

Jake Bergevin, trumpet and vocals; Milo Petersen, guitar; Dan Kramlich, piano; Michael Glynn, bass; Matt Jorgensen, drums



Singer/trumpeter/bandleader and educator Jake Bergevin has recorded two albums as leader and has been a featured artist with diverse groups such as the Tacoma Symphony, the Spokane Jazz Orchestra, Seattle Women's Jazz Orchestra, and many more.

He leads his own groups including the Javatown Swing Orchestra and the Jake Bergevin Quintet and can also be heard playing with many other notable northwest bands and musicians.

His first recording as a leader, *My Name is Jake*, is a combination of sensitive jazz vocals and romping party/dance music. Conceived as a partial tribute to his heroes Frank Sinatra and Ray Charles, Jake puts his own stamp on some classic tunes and demonstrates his crooning, blues shouting, scat-singing, and trumpet solo skills in fine fashion.



**The Byrd Ensemble with Seattle Girls Choir
Lessons and Carols
Saturday, December 2 at 5pm
Seattle First Baptist Church**

The Byrd Ensemble and Allegra and Cantamus from the Seattle Girls Choir, under the direction of Sarra Sharif Doyle present Lessons and Carols, a performance based on A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. popularized by the King's College Chapel since 1918. The program consists of nine readings, each followed by a traditional carol performed by the choir and another sung by the audience.

General Admission \$25

Seniors (65+) and Students \$20

Tickets can be purchased at byrdensemble.com



**Night of Wonder
Seattle University Choirs Holiday Concert
Friday, December 1 at 8pm
Seattle First Baptist Church**

The Seattle University Chamber Singers, University Treble Chorale, and University Singers, with Choral Directors Leann Conley-Holcom and Anjali Chudasama, Pianist in Residence Susan Bloomfield, and guest instrumentalists, will perform a variety of pieces celebrating the season. **Tickets are \$10, general admission and \$5, SU community and under 18.** You can also join the concert virtually via livestream. Buy tickets online here: seattleu.edu/artsci



A Celtic Winter:
Music from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales
Seattle Pro Musica
Saturday, December 16 at 3pm
Seattle First Baptist Church

Ring in the winter holidays with the joyous sounds of Celtic choral music! Your spirits will rise as we fill our gorgeous concert halls with lush harmonies from Ireland, Wales, and Scotland. Rousing carols, soothing lullabies, soaring spaces, and a candlelight procession. What better way to celebrate the season?

Join us at Seattle First Baptist Church or Bastyr University Chapel for the return of this beloved tradition. As a special treat, audience members at the Seattle First Baptist performance will be welcomed with a short program from the Advanced Ensemble of the Northwest Boychoir.

Featuring works by Judith Weir, James MacMillan, Tarik O'Regan, Paul Mealor, and more, with texts in Welsh, Gaelic, and English.

Tickets \$30-\$40
available at seattlepromusica.org



Carmina Angelorum:
Songs of the Angels
Seattle Girls Choir
Tuesday, December 19 at 7:30pm
Seattle First Baptist Church

Seattle Girls Choir invites you to an elegant and captivating concert celebrating the holiday season. Listen as Seattle Girls Choir expertly performs Benjamin Britten's stunning choral masterpiece, "A Ceremony of Carols", for harp and treble voices. You'll also be treated to some familiar (and perhaps some not as familiar) carols that are sure to provide space for reflection and hope as we make our way through the longest nights of the winter.

Featuring Prime Voci of Seattle Girls Choir conducted by Sarra Sharif Doyle, Juliet Stratton on harp, and Susanna Valleau on piano.

General admission \$20
Seniors \$10
Students 18 and Under \$5
Tickets available at seattlegirlschoir.org



Joyful! Noise

presents our final concert

"...and to all a
good night"

Sunday, December 17th 3 p.m.

Monday, December 18th 7:30 p.m.

Seattle First Baptist Church, 1111 Harvard Ave.

Admission free



Joyful! Noise is presenting our final concert this holiday season.

As always, there will be group singing, some beloved songs from our past, plus thrilling new songs.

We will showcase music by Jason Robert Brown, Philippe Rombi, and Barry Manilow, and include favorites like a mash-up of “Mary Had a Baby” and “Joyful, Joyful.”

And best of all – it is our gift to you, and FREE to all.

Thank you, SFBC, for all the love and support you’ve shown us for the last 14 years.

Come join us for our final concert this holiday season, and help us make it a magical farewell!

Sunday, December 17 at 3pm and Monday, December 18 at 7:30pm,
both in the historic sanctuary of Seattle First Baptist Church.

SMALL GROUPS SCHEDULE THROUGH THE END OF THE YEAR



**Advent Evening of Prayer:
A Weary World Rejoices**

**Tuesday, December 5
7-8pm at Seattle First Baptist**

**Co-Sponsored by Ignatian Spirituality Center
and Seattle First Baptist Church**

**Presenters Rev. Leigh Curl-Dove
and Fr. Trung Pham, SJ**

Amidst the busyness of the winter and holiday season, let us gather as one community to ground ourselves in the story and gifts of Advent. Join the Ignatian Spirituality Center and Seattle First Baptist for the annual Advent Evening of Prayer—a contemplative evening of ecumenical prayer, poetry, art, music, reflection, and silence.

Our world is weary—we navigate a world fraught with challenges, personal and collective traumas, climate change, hostile political debates, illness and loss, and the list goes on. But the season of Advent teaches us that amid such toil and challenge, we can rejoice! For all the beauty, holiness, and delight is in our waiting for the Light in the Darkness. We are a people of faith who long for hope, peace, love, and joy. Presenters Rev. Leigh Curl-Dove and Fr. Trung Pham, SJ will lead us in an evening to gather and bless us and our stories, our hopes and longings, and to share the gifts that are offered to us through the Advent season.

This service will also be livestreamed.

Free parking will be available at the small surface lot on the corner of Spring and Boylston streets. The lot entrance is directly to the south/west of the church buildings across Spring street.

This is a donation-based program. Please donate as much or little as you are able.



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

For All the Saints (Ends November 26th) Sunday mornings in November from 9:30-10:30 in the Parlor. (On 11/26 the topic will be “Things That Go Bump in the Night”) Continental breakfast served.

Intergenerational Godly Play Sundays (December 3, 10, 17, & 24) in the Parlor from 9:30-10:30am. Join Pastor Anita and others in re-discovering the Advent stories through the thoroughly engaging Godly Play method. Followed by wondering, fellowship and creativity. All ages encouraged to participate. Find the child in yourself and join in! Continental breakfast served. See separate article.

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS

Gay Men’s Group December 17th (3rd Sundays) 12:30-1:30pm in the Parlor. (A time of fellowship and co-support for all who identify as gay men.)

Friendship Circle 2nd Sunday of each month (December 10th) from 12:45-2pm in the Peacemakers Room and on Zoom. (Women coming together for fellowship, spiritual support and a focus on missions.)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88288815847>

SUNDAY EVENINGS

Exploring Contemplation December 10th (2nd Sunday of each month) 6:30-7:30pm on Zoom. Monthly gathering of all interested in contemplation. Music, meditation. Newcomers to meditation welcome. Leader is on screen 15 minutes prior to start time to orient newcomers or answer questions. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87508105511>

Interfaith Climate Action Meets on 4th Sundays (November 26th; no meeting in December) from 6:30-8pm on Zoom. *(A group 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/83474603114>

MONDAYS

Brave Space 1st & 3rd Mondays of the month (December 4 & 18, 6-7pm on Zoom). *(For white-identified persons 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 (December 5 & 19), 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 (December 5 & 19), 6:30-7:30pm on Zoom. *(A peer support group for those in any stage of grief.)* <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82797976361>

Parents of Adult Children Living with Mental Illness Meets on the third Tuesday of the month (December 19th) 7-8:30pm in the home of a member. For further details or to obtain the address for the meeting, email smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org.

Young Adults Group 4th Tuesday of the month 7-8:30pm. *(A group where SFBC young adults ages 21-40 meet to connect with one another and have fun.)* November 28th will be a Friendsgiving Potluck at the church in Fridell. Jacob is bringing turkey, mashed potatoes and rolls. Please bring a salad, a side dish or dessert. December date and activity to be determined. Please watch for more information in *This Week*.

WEDNESDAYS

Optimism Hour Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. December 13th 5:30-6:30pm at Stoup Brewing on the corner of 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, but you can bring your own.)*

THURSDAYS

Bible Study 12-1pm weekly on Zoom. No sessions on November 23rd or December 28th. *(An exploration of the coming Sunday's scripture; provocative discussions; progressive commentary.)* <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86761779225>

Building Lasting Bridges Every other Thursday 6-7:30pm on Zoom. November 30, and final session December 14th. *(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=RlpydDZ0cERLVFhtcEFPSWmzSlQzUT09>

Women's Conversations 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 11:30am-12:30pm on Zoom. (November 25th, December 9th & 23rd.) *(A place to make connections with other women across generations.)* <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82388737061>

Play Reading Circle 1st Saturday of the month (December 2nd), 3-5pm on Zoom. Full-length plays read over two sessions; In December we will be reading the second act of *Radium Girls*. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85424372570>

GROUPS WITH IRREGULAR SCHEDULES

Holiday Virtual Open Houses Thanksgiving Day & Christmas Day 11am to Noon on Zoom. (See separate article.) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83946453160>

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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.

2023 COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES

OFFICERS

Congregation President: Mike Zaugg

Vice President: Megan Walker

Secretary: Eric Watness

Treasurer: Inola de la Cruz

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Corey Clemons

Roem de la Cruz

David Delgado

Heather Dodge

Sue Ross

Bob Sittig

David Young

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

Sunday service at 11am in-person and online

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