



# THE SPIRE

## SPRING 2025



### THE NEWSLETTER OF SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH VOLUME 89, NO. 4

Dear church family,

Well, it's here! My sabbatical begins on May 12 and runs through August 11. Sabbaticals are important to the health of both pastors and congregations. Pastoral work is emotionally taxing and complex work—it is also meaningful and enjoyable, but I can't pretend it's not hard. So, pastors need periods of rest and relaxation, time away to care for ourselves and our families. We need space to put our vocation to the side and focus on simply being human. I hope my sabbatical will provide space for me to reflect on the last seven years of ministry with SFBC and allow me time to explore my own relationship with the Sacred in a new way. At least, that's my plan for this time away! During this time, I will completely step away from my pastoral duties with SFBC. Pastor Leigh will be available for all pastoral care needs. Please be generous with your respect and affirmation for Pastor Leigh during this time when she will be carrying the full responsibility of pastoring this church.

And speaking of the church, sabbaticals can be important for congregations as well. As institutions, churches can easily become set in their ways, even progressive churches! SFBC has been doing ministry in and with Seattle for 156 years—there's a lot of tradition, history, memory, (and dare I say comfort with the status quo?) that we have to metabolize within our congregation as we continue discerning what it means for us to follow the Way of Jesus in our time and place. Sabbaticals can serve as a jolt to the system, an opportunity to experience life shared in community differently, an opening for playfulness and creativity, or even a reminder for the congregation itself to take time to rest and restore.

During my sabbatical I will be: visiting with family and friends in the Midwest; completing a walking pilgrim-

age in the Scottish borders; visiting the burgh of Peebles, Scotland, my surname's namesake; retreating at Iona Abbey and Ring Lake Ranch; and, of course, working on my ever-growing reading list—hopefully in a hammock near water.

I'll probably do some writing as well, but I'm hoping to evade the temptation to produce a particular amount of words or a manuscript. Sabbatical is about restoration toward wholeness (sabbath!) and does not compute in the language of our Western capitalist economy. Too often I fall into the trap of thinking that my productivity defines my worth, and that is pretty much counter to everything sabbatical is about. So I plan to embrace my humanity—beautiful and messy and challenging and silly and all-- by getting out of my normal routine, leaving my comfort zones, and exploring new places geographically and spiritually.

And I hope you can practice a sabbatical this summer in some way as well. You don't need to travel extensively or try a grand new activity or change everything about your life. Pick one day, even one hour, sometime during your week, where you do something that is just for you. Something that nurtures your soul, feeds your curiosity, expands your compassion for yourself and others. I wonder where God is leading your spirit towards wholeness? May finding out be an adventure this summer.

I am immensely grateful to Pastor Leigh, our administrator Darren, the rest of the staff, the Personnel committee and my "sabbatical team" who have been cheerleaders for me as I plan this time of restoration. I am so grateful to be on your team.

I love you, and I love being your pastor.

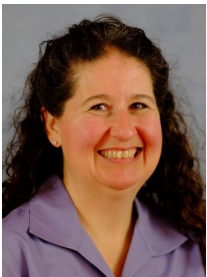
—*Rev. Anita*

## GRADUATE SUNDAY CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Graduate Sunday will be recognized on June 1! If you know someone in the SFBC family is graduating (from kindergarten through PhD!), please let the pastors know so that they can be included in our celebration. All graduates are invited to submit a photo and information about where they are graduating from and their plans going forward to the pastors via email.

## MEET YOUR COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES

*The Council of Ministries is SFBC's elected body that represents members and friends of the congregation in policy and decision-making matters. In the Easter issue of The Spire, we introduced you to three Council members whose terms began in 2025; Erin and Daryl (below) are the other members new this year. 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 a member or a pastor know.*



**Erin McGlenn** (she/her), Councilmember at large, started attending SFBC in 2021. She is a retired Coast Guard Commander and currently the building life safety manager at King County Metro. Raised in West Seattle, she graduated from the Naval War College. She's a certified Emergency Manager with the International Association of Emergency Managers and AVADE de-escalation instructor. A fiber artist, she loves to crochet, embroider, and hand spin on a spinning wheel. Her son and daughter live with their dad in Delaware.



Councilmember at large **Daryl de la Cruz** (he/him) joined SFBC in 1983. As Design Project Manager (architect) for Starbucks Coffee, he designed and developed Starbucks stores from 1992 to 2008, particularly during the organization's aggressive growth years in the '90s. Currently working with a small consulting firm supporting engineering firms with infrastructure projects, Daryl enjoys creative endeavors, music, and trying hard to get back into bike riding.

## THRIVING CONGREGATIONS AWAB LEARNING COMMUNITY: GOD CALLS OUR CHURCH TO TRIVE!



In November 2024, Pastor Leigh Curl-Dove, Jacob Maez, Sue Ross and Kira Walmsley kicked off a six-month learning community with three other Northwest AWAB congregations. Since then, the SFBC cohort has enjoyed monthly meetings to explore each of the five traits of thriving congregations, as defined by the program.

These traits are outlined by the program, however, our cohort has defined what we believe these traits mean for SFBC:

- **Rooted Relationships** are when we mutually see, hear, know, and love one another for our authentic, true selves.
- **Compelling Clarity** is the “gut” feeling, a calm knowing. It is being grounded in our “why.”
- **Faithful Agility** is being ready to joyfully pivot to whatever challenge or opportunity is presented, while still centering our goal, our calling, our “why.”
- **Holy Tenacity** is persistently following God's call. It is what is needed to withstand challenges, and to follow through on compelling clarity.
- **Dynamic Collaboration** is actively participating in an interconnected network of care, where we mutually support and are supported.

These five traits combined lead to a thriving church community. In our meetings we often reflect on how the single trait we are exploring is interdependent with the other traits.

Digging into these traits is designed to get us thinking about our church's strengths, assets, opportunities, and unique calling as a church. In early May, the last stage of the cohort will design what the program calls the “Faithful Experiment.” This could be a program, activity, new tradition, service, social group, or anything else that will equip us to better answer SFBC's call. We are so excited to share more with everyone as we continue with this learning.



SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST SANCTUARY CHOIR  
BEN LUEDCKE, DIRECTOR

# hope lingers here

songs of faith, peace, and change

featuring the Seattle First Baptist Sanctuary Choir,  
bass, violin, and percussion

## A CONCERT TO BENEFIT THE LAVENDER RIGHTS PROJECT

a Seattle-based non-profit providing  
Black trans advocacy and legal services

**SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2025 AT 1:00PM**  
**FREE ADMISSION**



**SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**1111 HARVARD AVENUE, SEATTLE, WA**  
[seattlefirstbaptist.org](http://seattlefirstbaptist.org)



**SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST  
SANCTUARY CHOIR PRESENTS  
“HOPE LINGERS HERE”**

Songs of faith, peace, and change

**Sunday, June 1st at 1:00pm**

A free concert featuring choir, bass, violin, and percussion. An all-church lunch precedes the concert at noon.

Donations to benefit the Lavender Rights Project, a Seattle-based non-profit providing Black trans advocacy and legal services.

**HANDS-ON CARING FOR THE EARTH  
EAST DUWAMISH WATERSHED  
SATURDAY, MAY 17**

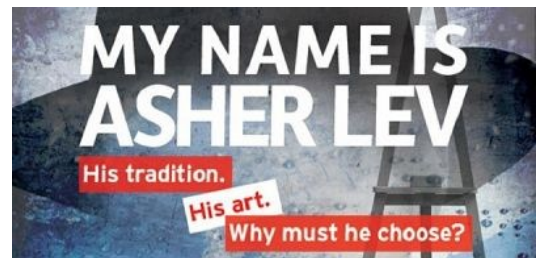
Come outside and care for the earth! Join our Interfaith Climate Action group of all ages in a volunteer forest restoration project sponsored by Green Seattle Partnership. It's on Saturday, May 17, from 10am to noon. Use this link to register and get details: <https://seattlegreencitypartnerships.org/event/40695/>

Rain or shine, we will meet across from 8631 39th Avenue S., where you can park on the street. Or you can take the light rail to Rainier Beach, then walk about a half mile. Navigate using the address 4005 S. Trenton Street. It will take you to the lower trail entrance, and then you can take the trail uphill to the meeting spot. Tools will be provided, but plan to wear long sleeves and long pants to avoid scrapes and stings. Working in the woods, watching the creation heal itself, will be healing for us too. We will celebrate Shabbat with the blessing in English and Hebrew. Contact Interfaith Climate Action small group with any questions.

**BIT OF A THESPIAN, ARE YOU?  
COME TO PLAY READING CIRCLE**

We are a diverse group of folks who love theater and get together on Zoom once a month (1st Saturdays from 3-5pm) to read plays together. We generally take 2 sessions to complete a play and have a little time to discuss it. We shuffle the parts multiple times each session so that everyone gets to read a number of roles. ALL voices welcome and no theatrical experience necessary!

This Spring (May 3rd and June 7th) we are reading *My Name Is Asher Lev*—a play adapted by Aaron Posner from the novel of the same title by Chaim Potok. It is



the story of a Hasidic Jewish boy/young man who is passionate about art, though his paintings cause quite a stir both in his family and his community of faith. As a result, he struggles with his identity—both personal and religious.

The Zoom link (below) is also on the church calendar. We'd love to have you. Pick up a script at the Welcome Table in Fellowship Hall. For more information (or if you need a script mailed to you) email [smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org).

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85424372570>



**OPTIMISM HOUR**

We had a lively group of eight people at our April 9 gathering (see photo). Our next Optimism Hour will be May 14, after which we will begin our summer break. We start up again in September. We will then resume meeting the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 at Stoup Brewing.

**MEETING JESUS AT THE MOVIES  
SUNDAY MORNINGS, 9:30-10:45AM  
IN THE PARLOR**







This Spring we continue the bible study/discussion/movie-viewing group based on the hit TV series *The Chosen*. Upcoming themes include a few parables, the miracle of the fish, the calling of Simon, Andrew, James and John, the imprisonment of John the Baptist, the miracle at the wedding in Cana, and other familiar stories as well as some imaginative backstories and fill-in-the-blank tales to pique our interest and stretch our thinking. In addition, we explore the geography, politics, relational, theological and socioeconomic challenges of first century CE Galilee. It's OK to "drop in" on a session or to come to the party late. You can catch up on what you've missed by streaming sessions at home (available for free at <https://byutv.org/the-chosen>), or you can borrow SFBC's copy of the DVDs (see Cherry Johnson). Questions? Email [smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org).



**SEATTLE UNIVERSITY CHOIRS  
"BEAUTY IS LIFE"  
FRIDAY, MAY 16 AT 7:30PM  
SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

Tickets available here: <https://events.seattleu.edu/event/seattle-university-choirs-present-beauty-is-life#>

Join the Seattle University Choirs (University Treble Chorale, Chamber Singers, and University Singers), Director Dr. Leann Conley-Holcom and Pianist-in-Residence Susan Bloomfield, for an evening of song honoring memory and the natural world. As is tradition at their final concert of the season, graduating singers will be celebrated at this performance as well.

Tickets \$10 General Admission  
\$5 SU Community and 18 and under

The Seattle University Choirs present

# BEAUTY IS LIFE

Dr. Leann Conley-Holcom, Director of Choral Activities  
Susan Bloomfield, Pianist in Residence

**7:30pm | Friday May 16, 2025**  
Seattle First Baptist Church  
1111 Harvard Avenue

\$5 SU Community & under 18  
\$10 General Admission

**ARTS** arts@seattleu.edu  
206-296-2244

**SU SEATTLE UNIVERSITY**

**SEATTLE CHORAL COMPANY  
"ASIAN VOICES"  
SATURDAY, JUNE 7 AT 8:00PM  
SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

Tickets available here: <https://www.seattlechoralcompany.org/shop/purchase-tickets/>

Seattle Choral Company's season finale celebrates the rich tapestry of choral music being crafted by contemporary Asian composers. These beloved and beautiful pieces from China, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, and Japan were carefully curated by Artistic Director Freddie Coleman.

Experience the universal language of music that connects us globally, as we bring the vibrant voices of Asia to your ears.





**SEATTLE JAZZ VESPERS  
SUSAN PASCAL QUINTET  
SUNDAY, JUNE 1 AT 6:00PM  
SFBC SANCTUARY**

**Susan Pascal**—vibraphone;  
**Bill Anschell**—piano; **Brian Monroney**—guitar;  
**Chris Symer**—bass; **Mark Ivester**—drums

Seattle Jazz Vespers is proud to welcome back the Susan Pascal Quintet.



Seattle jazz vibraphonist Susan Pascal has played four tours of Singapore and concerts, workshops and clinics across the United States. Her Pacific Northwest appearances include the Earshot Jazz Festival and Centrum Jazz Port Townsend, and as a special guest artist with the Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra, the Seattle Baroque Orchestra, and Seattle's Gypsy jazz group, Pearl Django.

Pascal's eclectic musical interests are reflected in her own projects. Susan Pascal's SOUL SAUCE quintet is a tribute to Latin jazz icon Cal Tjader, and her new BRAZIL PROJECT band features the rich rhythmic and melodic traditions of Brazil. Her straight-ahead jazz group, the Susan Pascal Quartet has been nominated twice for Best Acoustic Group by Seattle's Earshot Jazz.

Pascal is heard on motion picture soundtracks including "The Wedding Planner," "Office Space," "Eulogy," and "Mirror, Mirror" and is a guest artist on recordings by vocalist Greta Matassa, "All This and Heaven Too," "And to All a Good Night," and "The Smiling Hour"; the Vern Sielert's Dektet recording, "From There to Here"; slide guitarist Orville Johnson's "Slide and Joy"; and many others.

During the interlude, we will be awarding the Shirley Cline Memorial "Young Jazz Artist" scholarship.

This will be our last concert of our 2024-2025 season. Our 24th season begins again on October 5, 2025 at 6:00pm.

**CELEBRATION OF LIFE FOR  
LYLE BJORK  
SUNDAY, MAY 18 AT 1:00PM**

Rev. Craig Darling, presiding  
Jeff Orr, organist

Reception to follow

**DEATH NOTICE  
RUTH GRAY FOSSETT**

Ruth Gray Fossett died on April 6, 2025 after a brief treatment in the hospital following a serious heart attack. A memorial for her will be held on May 10th at 1pm at Auburn First United Methodist Church 100 N Street SE Auburn WA.

**DEATH NOTICE  
HUSBAND OF FORMER MEMBER  
DIANA WRIGHT HASS**



Ivan Hass, died April 25, 2025 of neuroendocrine cancer presumably caused by exposure to agent orange in the Vietnam war. The VA accepted responsibility and paid for all his medical bills.

Ivan was married to a former SFBC member, Diana Hass who died in October 2013. Ivan recently moved to a hospice facility in Claremont, CA to be closer to his sister, a retired nurse. His sister and niece were with him the day he died.

The picture is Ivan in his home workshop. Ivan loved industrial arts and woodworking. A blanket chest he made for Diana was once featured on the cover of *Woodworking Magazine*.

**NEW CHURCH MEMBERS**

Joined April 20, 2025

**Kira Walmsley  
Kurt Layman**

Baptized April 20, 2025

**Kurt Layman**



## SMALL GROUPS MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR SPRING 2025



All groups are open to new members unless otherwise stated below. Drop in to see if a group is a good fit for you! For more information on any of these groups, see the [church calendar](#) or email [smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org). The schedule below is accurate to the best of our knowledge at the time of publication.

### **SUNDAYS**

**Friendship Circle** 2nd Sundays, 12:45-1:45pm, in person in the Peacemaker's Room and online at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88288815847>. Women meeting together for fellowship and spiritual support with a focus on missions.

**Interfaith Climate Action** 2nd Sundays, 6:30-8:00pm. Meets online at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83474603114>. Interfaith Climate Action is for those who wish to learn more/do more about the climate emergency. All are welcome!

### **TUESDAYS**

**Prayer and Reflection** Every Tuesday, 12:00-12:30pm. A brief time for reflection, prayer, and sacred community in the middle of your day. Meets online at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86776242649>.

**Young Adults Bible Study** Every Tuesday at 6:00pm. A relaxed, self-directed Bible study group for young adults and anyone looking to dive into Scripture after working hours. We create our own lessons and share the teaching. To learn more visit <https://bit.ly/SFBCyaBS>.

**Young Adults Group** 4th Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm. SFBC's Young Adults Group (ages 21-40ish) meets outside of church for various social events and activities, offering something for everyone. You'll find us in the sanctuary every Sunday, seated on the left side near the front. We meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month (excluding holidays or special occasions), although this can change depending on each month's activity. Watch the weekly newsletter or church calendar for details.

### **WEDNESDAYS**

**Optimism Hour** Wednesday, May 14, 5:30-6:30pm. A time for gathering in a relaxed atmosphere, having fun and getting to know one another better. Held at Stoup Brewery, just east of the church on the corner of Broadway and Union. This will be the last meeting of the program year before our summer break.

### **FRIDAYS**

**Exploring Contemplation** 1st & 3rd Fridays, 11:00am-12:00pm on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87508105511>. Twice-monthly gathering of all interested in contemplation. Variety of practices—song, silence, guided meditation. Newcomers to meditation welcome. Leader is on screen 15 minutes prior to start time to orient newcomers or answer questions.

### **SATURDAYS**

**Play Reading Circle** 1st Saturdays, 3:00-5:00pm. Meets online at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85424372570>. Gather with other theater-lovers to read plays together. Obtain scripts in advance from the Welcome Table at worship, or contact [smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:smallgroups@seattlefirstbaptist.org) or the church office (206) 325-6051 to have one mailed to you.

Seattle First Baptist Church  
1111 Harvard Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98122-4261

#### STAFF

**Rev. Anita Peebles** *Pastor*

[Anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:Anita@seattlefirstbaptist.org)

**Rev. Leigh Curl-Dove** *Pastor*

[Leigh@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:Leigh@seattlefirstbaptist.org)

**Darren Hochstedler** *Church Administrator*

[Darren@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:Darren@seattlefirstbaptist.org)

**Christina Sunstone** *Office Manager*

*& Small Group Ministries Coordinator*

[Christina@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:Christina@seattlefirstbaptist.org)

**Ben Luedcke** *Minister of Music*

[Ben@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:Ben@seattlefirstbaptist.org)

**Christian Broughton** *Organist*

*& Communications Manager*

[Christian@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:Christian@seattlefirstbaptist.org)

**Dick Steele** *Facilities Manager*

[Dick@seattlefirstbaptist.org](mailto:Dick@seattlefirstbaptist.org)

**Chase McAdams** *Caretaker*

**Stephenie Simmons** *Chef*

**Absinthe Zimmerman** *Sound & Video Technician*

#### 2025 COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES

Sue Ross, *President*

David Greenhow, *Vice President*

Bob Sittig, *Secretary*

Roger Garratt, *Treasurer*

Daryl de la Cruz

Erin McGlenn

Joanne Wright

David Young

Sunday service at 11:00am in-person and online

**Seattle First Baptist Church**

**1111 Harvard Ave, Seattle WA 98112**

(206) 325-6051

[seattlefirstbaptist.org](http://seattlefirstbaptist.org)

[facebook.com/SeattleFirstBaptist/](https://facebook.com/SeattleFirstBaptist/)

[instagram.com/seattlefirstbaptist/](https://instagram.com/seattlefirstbaptist/)

[YouTube.com/SeattleFirstBaptistChurch/](https://YouTube.com/SeattleFirstBaptistChurch/)

**© 2025 Seattle First Baptist Church**

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