Volume 31, Number 11 November 2026

THE TIDINGS

Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Too Good to Hold: Building on Our Faith, Foundation, and Formation

As we continue our 2026 stewardship season, **"Too Good to Hold,"** we are reminded that stewardship is about so much more than financial giving. It is about recognizing the gifts God has placed among us and discerning how we might share those gifts with one another and the wider community. Recently, members of Admiral gathered for a time of reflection, conversation, and dreaming together. Building upon the congregational survey conducted a few years ago, we explored four important areas of our church's life: **Faith, Foundation, Formation, and Beyond Our Walls.**

Using sticky notes, conversations, and a little creative voting, we named what we love about Admiral, what strengthens our community, what we hope to learn, and how we might share our gifts more intentionally. Some beautiful themes emerged! Members celebrated our worship, music, preaching, relationships, and commitment to justice. There was excitement around deepening our spiritual formation, strengthening congregational care, building relationships with Black-led and other community organizations, and expanding our presence in West Seattle through music, service, and community gatherings.

We also spent time naming our individual gifts, from teaching and music to hospitality, leadership, organizing, and simply being present for one another. What a reminder that **every one of us has something meaningful to offer!** Perhaps most importantly, this gathering wasn't about adding more work to already busy lives. It was about asking how we can be more intentional with the resources, relationships, and gifts we already have. Our next step will be to bring these ideas into conversation with Church Council, identifying a few meaningful priorities that can guide our ministry in the coming year. As we imagine our future home, deepen our relationships, and continue living into our calling as an Open and Affirming congregation committed to justice and love, one thing is becoming increasingly clear: **God is doing something beautiful among us, and it is simply too good to hold!**

"Moving Forward Together"

Thank you to everyone who participated, shared ideas, and continues to help build the future of Admiral UCC. The best of who we are is not meant to stay within our walls. It is meant to bless the world around us.

Admiral Stewardship Committee



Office Manager's Office Hours are Tues.-Thurs, 2:00 - 4:00. Closed Monday and Friday.You can reach the Admiral Church office at 206.932.2928. The fastest way to contact us is via email at admiralchurchoffice@gmail.com

Pastor's Office Hours are Mondays 10:00 - 2:00 and Wednesdays 10:00 - 12:00 Make an appointment or just stop by. Additionally, individual Zoom sessions are available by appointment. Please call (206)471-1597 or email him at jermell.witherspoon@gmail.com to arrange a time and location.



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WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS TO ADMIRAL CHURCH



On November 1st, All Saints Day, Admiral Church welcomed three new members - Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Gordon, Michael Gordon and Rev. Jermell Witherspoon. It was a joyous occasion and one which we hope to see in increasing numbers in the future!

"Moving Forward Together"

PASTOR JERMELL'S INSTALLATION NOVEMBER 1, 2026

AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!

I'm writing this before the actual installation service on All Saints Sunday, so I hope this all goes off without a hitch. Ha.

The recommended practice in the United Church of Christ is for a new pastor to be formally installed somewhere between three and 12 months after they begin to serve a new congregation. We didn't have an installation for Pastor Andrew because Admiral Church was his first call, so he had an ordination service instead. In fact, none of us can remember exactly when we last installed a new pastor… Well, now we have!

The Council chose All Saints Day for the occasion because of its significance in the Christian tradition. A lot of planning went into this, hopefully all went well. Invited dignitaries from the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ included Acting Conference Minister Rev Dr Lorraine Ceniceros and Chair of the Westside Division of the PNC-UCC Committee on Ministry Rev Dr Cindy Bauleke. The Chapel was filled with congregants Choir, friends, colleagues and supporters, all eager to be a part of this very special event.

And now it's official. Admiral Church has affirmed its covenant with Pastor Jermell Witherspoon. Hooray!

Anita Shaffer for Admiral Council



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A Heartfelt Thank You!

My heart is overflowing with gratitude! Thank you to everyone who helped make yesterday's installation service and the welcoming of our new members such a beautiful and sacred occasion. From those who planned, prepared, participated, and showed up with so much love, please know how deeply grateful I am.

Admiral is such a beautiful congregation, filled with people whose love, faith, and commitment to one another and our wider community continue to inspire me. I am beyond blessed to call each of you not just members of the church I pastor, but family.

As we welcomed new members and celebrated this new chapter in our ministry together, I was reminded of just how special this community truly is. God is doing something wonderful among us, and I am so grateful to be part of it. What a great time to pastor Admiral Church! I love you all, and I cannot wait to see what God has in store for us as we continue building, growing, and loving together!

With such gratefulness,
Pastor Jermell



“Moving Forward Together”

IN COVENANT

"The United Church of Christ advises that, in instances where Ordained Ministers are called to non-parish employment, a covenantal relationship be established among the Ordained Minister, the calling body, the United Church of Christ as represented by an Association or Conference, and the Local Church where the Ordained Minister is a member. This relationship is known as a four-way covenant. The purpose of this covenant is:

1. to strengthen, support and sustain the ministries of all the partners that share in this Covenant;

2. to encourage mutual participation and accountability of and for the life of each by the others;

3. to observe, nurture, celebrate and call forth the ministry of the Ordained Minister."



Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Gordon is member in good standing with the United Church of Christ and the Pacific Northwest Conference who is employed as a Chaplain at Providence Mt. Saint Vincent in West Seattle. She has requested that the Admiral Church engage in a four way covenant with her as recommended by the UCC.

The Admiral Church Council has engaged in a covenant with the Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Gordon, Providence Mt. Vincent, and the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ which will take effect later this month.

Admiral Church's responsibilities in this covenant are:

To Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Gordon:

- Prayers for her work with Providence Mount St. Vincent;
- Inclusion of materials written by Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Gordon in "The Tidings" monthly newsletter and Annual Report;
- Public recognition of Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Gordon as a Minister in Mission of the congregation;

- An annual meeting with the Church Council or other representative to support one another in mutual ministry.

To Providence Mount St. Vincent:

- Support for the work of Spiritual Care at Providence Mount St Vincent. If this support is a collection of an offering contributing to the work of Spiritual Care at Providence Mount St. Vincent or a similarly related ministry, it will be done through the Providence Mount St Vincent Foundation, Chapel Fund.
- Public recognition of the interfaith ministry in spiritual care at Providence Mount St Vincent and the importance of inter-spiritual and interfaith spiritual care generally to individual, community, and societal well-being.

To the Pacific Northwest Conference

- Appropriate documentation of Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Gordon as an Authorized Minister with ordained ministerial standing;
- Annual contributions to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) in recognition of the role of the wider church in the formation and oversight of authorized ministers in the United Church of Christ.

For her part in the covenant, Elizabeth pledges to:

- Maintain her membership in good standing with Local Church, including financial support for the general ministries of this church, participation in the worshiping life of the church whenever possible, and a commitment to earnest prayer for the well-being of this congregation and its ministry;
- Submission of articles for the newsletter or other publications regarding her Ministry;
- An annual meeting with the Church Council or other representative to support one another in mutual ministry;
- A commitment to preach annually at the request of the pastor;
- Public recognition of membership in Admiral Church in duties related to her Ministry.

We look forward to having Elizabeth as a Covenant Minister in our congregation.

SINGING ADMIRAL'S NEW SONG
OR: TO ORGAN OR NOT TO ORGAN?

A DON'T MISS SPECIAL EVENT!
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 12:15-1:00, ADMIRAL CHAPEL

The Admiral Music Advisory Committee invites everyone who is interested in Music at Admiral Church (which is probably nearly all of us, right?) to join a discussion and Q&A session about:

1. The future of music in the progressive church, and more specifically:
2. The future of music in the New Admiral Church, especially:
3. The future of the Admiral Pipe Organ.

Music has been an integral part of how humans relate to each other and to creation since the first cave dweller discovered he could hum a tune or she could make a lovely sound by blowing into a shell. It has been central to worship since the days of the psalmists and long before: "Make a joyful noise to the Lord!" We love old timey hymns and new ones, pianos and organs and tambourines and shakers, guitars and violas…

What will music look like in liberal churches in Seattle in 20 years? In 40 years? We at Admiral are "building a new way", embarking on a journey with a new group of neighbors, striving for the growth that is critical to our survival in a brand new space. What will those who walk in our doors be looking for in a potential new church? What will make them want to come back, to join us? How will music fit into that?

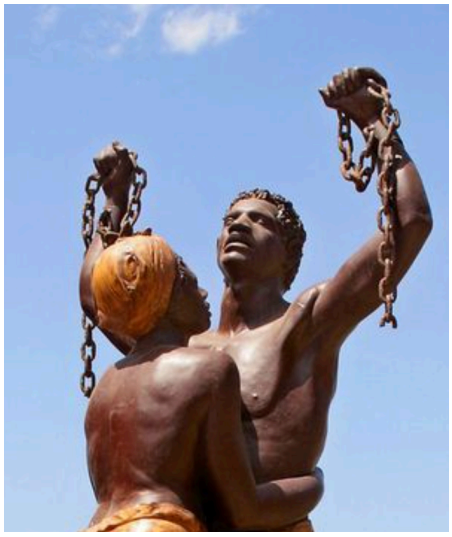
Well, frankly, none of us can be certain. We know we're building not for only ourselves, for the way things have been in the past, the way they are now, but for the new generations of the United Church of Christ-to-be. And we're seeking your input on crystal-balling the answer.

Will a pipe organ be an asset? A liability? We're at the point of needing to decide whether to design our new sanctuary to include the pipes from our old organ, which are in storage, or whether to put our musical priorities into other baskets. We plan to have rough sketches about what that might look like and cost estimates. Please come and lend your voice to the conversation. See you after worship on November 8.

Anita Shaffer, Music Advisory Committee Chair

FAITH JOURNEY, SACRED RECKONINGS AND RACIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEES

WA: REPARATIONS ADDS AN ADDITIONAL WEEK



We are nearly done with our original eight weeks of this series, but there are still several weeks to join in if the spirit moves you.

Since this series has been so well received an additional week has been added to discuss "What's next?".

Getting involved could make you an ally in bringing about reparative justice.

Here are the subjects for the next two sessions:

Nov 5	Japanese Am Redress Playbook, WA Reparations in the coming year, & 2028 Elections.n- Former State Rep Attorney Jesse Wineberry
Nov 12	Intergenerational Impact on Health & Well-being. - Dr Ben Danielson, UW pediatric psychiatrist, Director of ASHAY
Nov 19.	Wayfinding forward.

The sessions are free, though registration is requested, so that we have your contact email. Please see our admiral.church website. It's not too late to join in!

ACT! REGISTER TODAY! COME ON THURSDAYS AT 6:00.

WA: REPARATIONS STUDY A BIG SUCCESS! BUT THERE'S LOTS MORE TO BE DONE…

Admiral Church gives a HUGE thank you to our new members, Michael and Rev Dr Elizabeth Gordon, to Pastor Jermell and to all the guest speakers who worked so hard to bring this critically important information and insight to a very appreciative Zoom audience. When the last class finishes on November 19, there will have been nine sessions which have reached over two dozen individuals representing three UCC congregations and a number of non-church affiliated organizations. Admiral Church also held a related screening of the anti-racism documentary film "The Thirteenth".

What we have learned and explored together has been stunning, hard and convicting. The overwhelming volume of the truths we DID NOT know about the history of chattel slavery and the Black experience in America and the continuing daily severe harms to our brothers and sisters of color has really hit home to all of us. There has been so much to hear, to take in and to say. The sessions had been planned for one hour each, but most have run over two hours, because we participants just couldn't stop talking about what had moved us.

What's next? A way forward for just Reparations, healing and an end to harms for ALL persons of color, all victims of white supremacy in our State and our Nation WILL come, MUST come! And we can all play a part! It starts with knowledge and solemn, thoughtful acceptance of the reality of the past and the present. Admiral Church is already playing a role in this. The Sacred Reckonings Committee, so ably led by Tyna Ek, did extensive research and education on the subject of Indigenous, especially Duwamish, harm and injustice in 2023, including educational outreach to several West Seattle churches. Our current WA:Reparations efforts are planned to continue and spread the word regarding Reparations to those of African descent. Stay tuned! There's MUCH more to come!

Anita Shaffer, Faith Journey Committee Chair

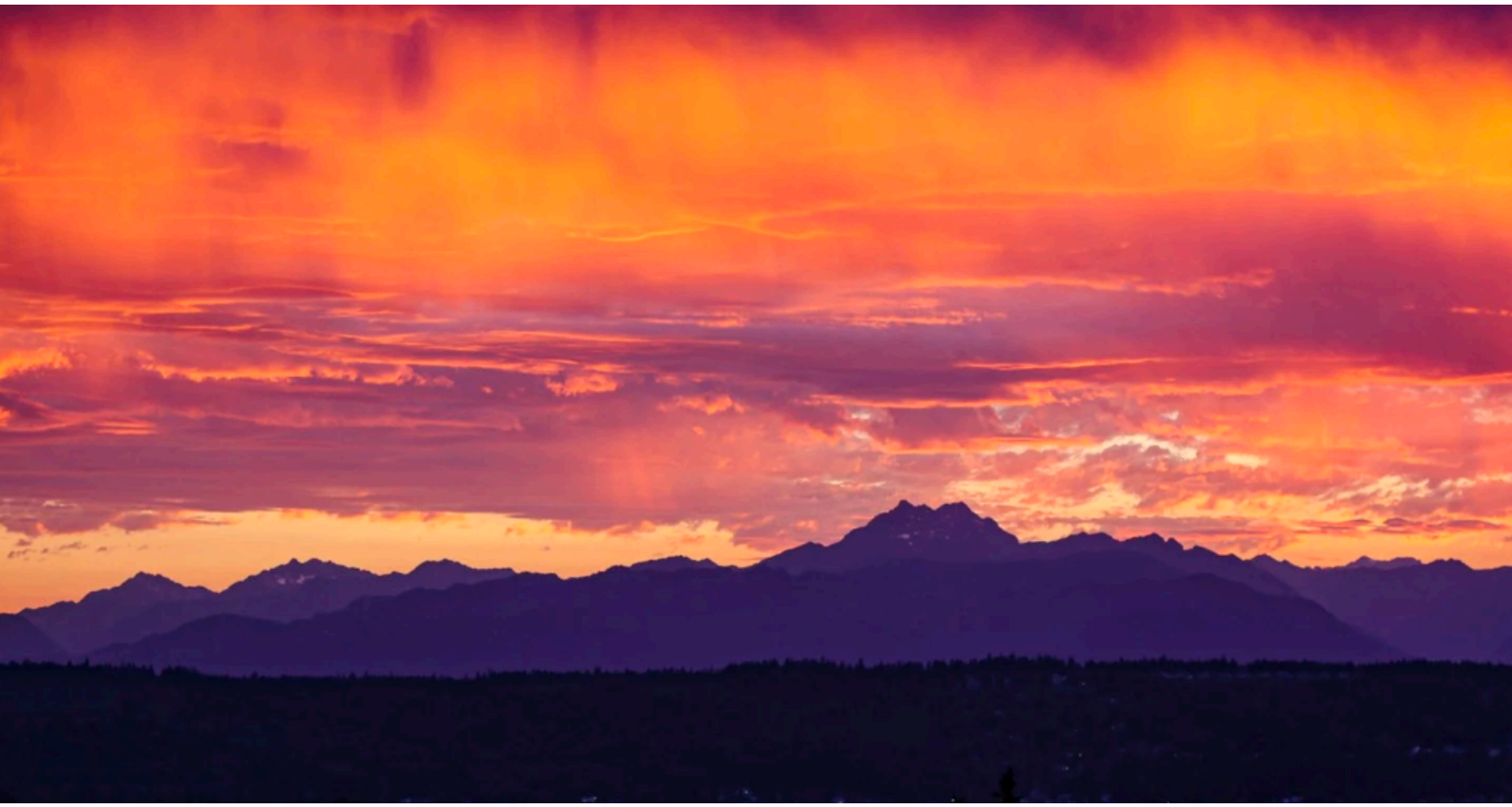
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PFLAG MEETING MONDAY NOVEMBER 16th
7:00-9:00
At the Admiral Chapel at SJB

PFLAG is meeting in the Admiral Chapel at St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church. On every third Monday night, Coco and Anita Shaffer will be there to provide peer-to-peer support, publications, toolkits, and other resources to make sure that the family members of people who are LGBTQ+ get the support they need.

Please join us for our next PFLAG meeting on Monday, November 16th @7:00 PM! Supporters are welcome!

"Moving Forward Together"



GAMES, GAMES, GAMES
NOVEMBER 7th from 2:00-5:00

Are you an old-fashioned gamer? Expert or beginners are welcome. Hands on boardgames, traditional games, new games, card games, whatever type of game you like to play - this is your chance to show us what you've got! Come share a fun time with church friends and their friends on the first Saturday of each month at the SJB Chapel!

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