

Evergreen Notes

To Walk Humbly



By Rev. Doug Avilesbernal

".. and to walk humbly with your God."

- Micah 6:8

**"Though I am free with respect to all, I
have made myself a slave to all."**

- I Cor. 9:19

This month is our third and last on the Micah 6: 8 passage. By way of a refresh-

er, this passage is God's answer to the question, with what shall I come before the Lord?" A question that was perfectly reasonable for a human flawed world. How much will it cost me to get your forgiveness? God's answer, however, shifts the entire interaction from a simple zero-sum transaction to a world changing **relationship**.

God's response is not an amount but a transformation path. When followed, these three attitude changes transform not only how we live but the Way we see the world and even the way our world works.

The third change, to walk humbly with your God, can help keep a very powerful trait within each of us in check, our ego. The word in the text is *hatsnea*, which does roughly translate to humble. But the root of the word is what gives us the intended meaning, *Tsana*. *Tsana* implies a way of life that is careful and thoughtful vs a self- reliant or arrogant way. Its power coming from the intent more than the action. In other words, one could walk confidently without demeaning or oppressing others. *Tsana* denotes more the walk of a servant who knows they're not above others, yet is fully confident as they're walking on behalf of the owner.

continued on page 4...



EVERGREEN ASSOCIATION
—OF AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA—
TRANSLATING OUR UNITY TO THE WORLD

Inside this Issue

To Walk Humbly	1
Well Being as Individuals and as Communities....	2
Cascade Snow Weekend	2
Password Managers Part II	3
Baptism at KCCGS.....	4
Hope & Help for the Quariñak Tribe.....	5
Eradicate Hate Global Summit Reflection	5
Annual Gathering Recap and Links.....	8
One Parish, One Prisoner	9
Save These Dates.....	10
November Calendar ..	10

Pray for Churches seeking Pastoral Leadership

Filipino-American Christian Fellowship,
Lynnwood, WA

Grace Baptist Church,
San Jose, CA

First Baptist Church of
Denver, Denver, CO

Mt. Zion Baptist Church,
Seattle, WA

Shell Ridge Community
Church,
Walnut Creek, CA

Well Being as Individuals and as Communities



By Rev. Sam Kim

This year, we finished our first cycle of the Well-BEing Cohort facilitated by Rev. Morgan Fletcher. Our initial evaluation of the process has been an overwhelming success.

Through individual and group sessions with Rev. Morgan, we helped ministry leaders identify and articulate ways in which they could create pathways to better well-being in their individual lives. One particular discovery that was important was identifying that while an individual can find healthy practices, it is extremely challenging to sustain them if they are constantly immersed in environments that are not healthy. Another way of putting it is to say, “I can be healthy, but if the church I’m working in is not healthy, I can only change so much.”

I encourage all of us, lay leaders and pastors, to consider the spiritual, emotional, and relational health of your churches. Do we have systems and structures in place that guard and help well-being flourish? Do the practices and rhythms of our communities help contribute to the nurturing and thriving of all its members, including its leaders? Do our constitutions and bylaws ensure that all of us are working together in an environment that encourages healthy teamwork and gracious accountability?

It is a heavy burden to expect the pastor to be well and healthy when we constantly expect

them to serve in broken and struggling environments. We must certainly encourage our individual ministry leaders and pastors to seek support and resources to take care of themselves, but we must also seek the same for the climate and environment of our churches. As a ministry leader, what is something you could approach in the coming year to help your congregation become a healthier place? It is when we seek the well-being of the individual AND the community that the true Shalom of God becomes evident. Let us seek God’s Shalom together.

Blessings in Christ,
Sam.

Cascade Snow Weekend



How would you like to spend a February weekend in the central Cascades? EBA is sponsoring such an opportunity on the weekend of February 20th -23rd at Cascade Meadows. There will time to relax, enjoy the snowy outdoors, interact with other attendees and more. Activities will

commence the evening of February 20th and you can attend for either two or three nights.

Cascade Meadows is an American Baptist Camp operated under the auspices of the Washington Baptist Convention, which all EBA churches are members of. Accommodations are camp style with attendees participating in food preparation and clean-up. Additional details about Cascade Meadows can be found on it’s web site: [Cascade Meadows Camp](http://CascadeMeadowsCamp.com). If you are interested in attending, please contact Mark Pittenger at mandmpittenger@comcast.net.

Password Managers: Why Keeping Everything in a Notebook Isn't Cutting It Anymore, Part II



By Rev. Shavon Walker

Hey folks. To recap, for the next few weeks, we're going to talk about password managers. A lot of people have their passwords written down in a

notebook, on a Post It note, or somewhere else. But that's like hiding your house key under your flowerpot. If someone knows where to look, or stumbles across it by accident, then they'll have access to a lot of personal things and can steal valuable items. This is why we're talking about password managers, and today we're going to focus on **Dashlane**.

Dashlane also stores all your passwords in an encrypted "digital vault". Instead of having to remember (or write down) a bunch of different passwords, you only need to remember one (if you need ways to create good, memorable passwords, let me know!). It can create strong, unique passwords and automatically fills them into sites when you need them. It also works on your computer, phone and tablet simultaneously.

Dashlane has excellent customer service. You don't have to worry about a bot here; real people answer the phone and respond to emails. It has a built in VPN connection, which protects your information if you're using a public WiFi in a hospital, coffee shop or elsewhere. And most important of all, Dashlane will alert you if your account is compromised or if a site is untrustworthy, so you can change your password,

which is a simple process. Again, you don't have to remember any of these old or new passwords. Dashlane does it for you. If you've somehow saved the wrong password on a site and need to reset it, you can go through the site's process. Dashlane will automatically ask if you want to save the new one.

My favorite feature of Dashlane is autofill. If I go to a site that I need to log into and I've stored my password information for it, the app will automatically fill in my address, phone number and even credit card information if I allow it to. This saves a lot of time.

And now to the question on everyone's mind. How much does it cost? Dashlane is a subscription based service. You are billed annually; individuals pay \$59.99 annually (4.99/month), and families pay \$89.99 (\$7.49/month). There's also a 30 day free trial.

If you'd like to try Dashlane, you can sign up at dashlane.com using your email. From there, download the app onto your phone, create a strong password and start moving your passwords into the app. Or, you can find the Dashlane extension for Google Chrome, install it there, and make sure it's activated every 14 days (it automatically logs you out after that time for your safety).

That's it for this week. Next week, we'll talk about ProtonPass. If you have any questions or suggestions for articles, you can reach me at Shavon@ea-abc.org. And don't forget to check out our social media on Facebook, Instagram and our website, <https://ea-abc.org/>!

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I wonder what walking humbly looks like in our world. Can we allow ourselves to walk this way in our worlds? Can we follow this command in a world where rudeness and cruelty are presented as strengths instead of the symptoms of fear they are?

Truly this last sentence of our Micah passage can seem paradoxical to our U.S. Americans as our culture seems unable to understand the meaning of humbleness. We seem unwilling or unable to see how to walk humbly has nothing to do with lack of aims or a backbone. Rather, it is to choose a life centered around a constant and indiscriminate use of our privilege to help those our culture tells us we should not. (**Luke 8:43-48; John 8: 1-11, John 4: 4-42; Luke 7:36-50. Mark 1:40-45; Luke 17:11-19; Matt. 25: 34-36; Luke 14:12-14 and more**) often with little to no regard for the very little consequences to ourselves.

However, this is only a paradox if we give our current culture of fear of the other equal footing to God's call. But if we instead choose to walk humbly as God calls us to, each of us can change worlds.

Therefore,

Do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.

How?

Love deeply

Show up

Stand firm

Repeat as necessary

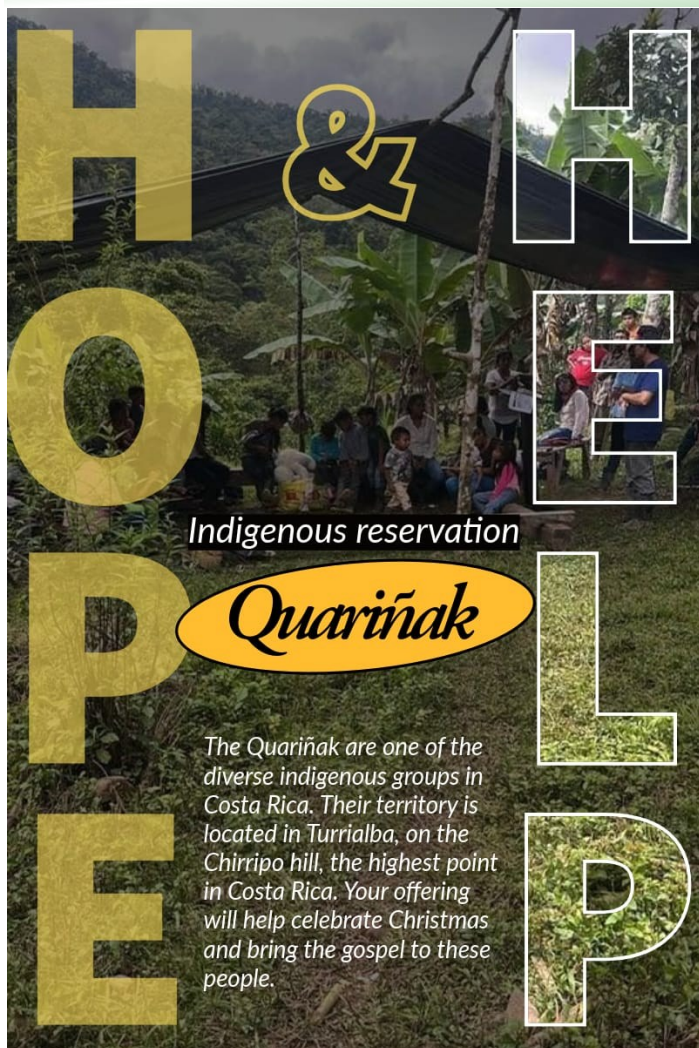
Baptism at KCCGS

By Rev. Dr. Paul Aita



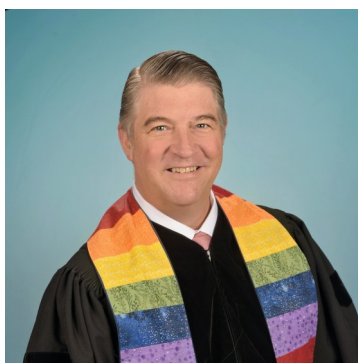
Karen Community Church of Greater Seattle held a service of baptism in the Cedar River near Maple Valley on Saturday, October 4th. The candidate was Nay Soe, and the officiant was Rev. Joseph Nananaikum, a pastor from Thailand visiting the US and a childhood friend of KCCGS's retired pastor, Maggie Po. Several members of the congregation met at the riverside to witness Nay Soe's confession of faith in Jesus Christ.





Every year, **Iglesia Bautista Nueva Esperanza** in Bremerton, adopts a church and supports it with an offering. We have supported churches in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua. This year, we want to support an indigenous community of the Quariñak tribe. This indigenous community in Costa Rica is located in the Turrialba territory in Chirripó, the highest point in Costa Rica. We would like to contribute a voluntary offering to celebrate Christmas with the children of this tribe. Also, if possible, help build a small church, since they only have a space with a roof and no walls. If you would like to contribute, it will be welcome. This offering is completely voluntary. I promise it will be well spent. Gifts must be received by December 10th so there is time to send it to Costa Rica. May God continue to bless you. —**Pastor Erick Ramón López López, IBNE**

Eradicate Hate Global Summit Reflection



By Rev. Dr. Curtis Price

In September I attended the Eradicate Hate Global Summit in Pittsburgh representing the Faith Community for the Utah coalition. I had promised to pass on some of the insights and information I received there once I had a chance

to process it more. Here is my summery of the event.

Eradicate Hate was born out of the October 2018 massacre at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue. It was an attack motivated by anti-Semitic and anti-immigrant hatred that ultimately led to the tragic shooting deaths of 11 people. Sadly, it became the deadliest anti-Semitic event in U.S. history.

Eradicate Hate and the annual Eradicate Hate Global Summit bring together multi-disciplinary global experts and leaders who are committed to the global eradication of all forms of hate-fueled violence. The Summit was three days filled with workshops, presentations and in depth dialogue as well as smaller breakout workgroups addressing a myriad of topics. Here are some of the significant topics and learnings.

The State of Hate:

The summit began with an overview of where the world is in relation to hate and hate fueled violence. As you can probably surmise, things are not getting better, but worse. Antisemitism, Islamophobia, Homophobia, Transphobia, Misogyny, human trafficking and exploitation of young people are all on the rise. It can feel disheartening when we realize how pervasive hate has become. Incidentally, in Utah, the most instances of hate fueled violence and incidence are against the LGBTQ community, the trans community in particular.

However, there are hopeful trends as spaces such as eradicate hate seek to take on these seemingly insurmountable challenges. Innovation and cross-sector collaboration is the model for the summit and seeing how many groups and agencies are finding affective ways to combat this growing threat of hate-fueled violence is en-

couraging.

Survivor Testimonies

The summit found its origins in the wake of a mass shooting incident in Pittsburgh. We heard from survivors of that shooting along with several other survivors of other incidences. Each of them shared their personal struggles in the aftermath of experiencing mass violence firsthand. Yet to the person, they also described how they took that trauma and dedicated themselves to addressing the issues that lead to the traumatic events.

It was difficult but powerful to hear these stories. The importance of survivor testimony is that it makes it real. For most of us, it is easy to see these events as just news stories of places and people that are far removed from our reality. Firsthand accounts of the experience take it out of the abstract. Listening to the survivors share reminded me of an event years ago where one the survivors of the shooting at Trolley Square that happened in 2007 shared her experiences and advocated for gun safety and regulation.

The Challenge of Reporting Hate Incidences

One of the foci of the on-going work of the summit was reporting of hate incidence. While not every act of hate can be classified as a crime, it is important that we have a clear understanding of how often incidence occur. This has been the focus of the Utah group Partners Against Hate. Last year we produced a pamphlet explaining how and where to report hate crimes and incidences along with a PSA featuring local civic leaders encouraging people to speak out when something occurs.

Quite often, because people don't think it is something can be called a crime, events and incidences go unreported. For example, when our pride flags were stolen, I didn't really think about reporting it because it is something that seems to happen every year and it is not likely

that anyone would ever be caught. I did end up letting the police and the attorney general's office know so that they had a record of the incident.

Building Bridges

I attended a session with several groups that were working to bring groups that are often adversarial together for dialogue and bridge building.

These were mostly faith-based groups including Interfaith America which shared their work in bringing together faith groups that don't often interact to do mission work together. Addressing common needs in their communities together is an amazing bridge builder. You can read about their work here: <https://www.interfaithamerica.org>

One of the presenters, Steve Harvey, who is an interfaith minister, talked about his efforts to reach young men, particularly white men, who are by far the most prevalent group responsible for hate-fueled violence. His programs which he called, "Practical

Spirituality for Dudes," tries to address the issues of isolation that keep young men from forming bonds and makes them easy targets for hate speech and extremism. I was intrigued by this as I have observed this isolation among young men in my own experiences. Pastor Fred and I have been talking about the possibility of a group that focuses on young men as a ministry opportunity here.

Common Ground USA shared their resource, 50 things anyone can do. You can find this here: <https://www.cg-usa.org/resources>

PERIL; Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab has many tools that are designed specifically for the faith community. Including the "Peacemaker Toolkit" and "Peacemaking Process Practice Cards." These tools help people know how to be in dialogue with people who are being influenced by extremism and hate groups. You can access these resources here: <https://perilresearch.com/faith-leaders-small-businesses/>

A group that targets young people called "Dare to Be



Grey” takes a public health approach radicalization prevention: not as security-driven, but as community health and resilience.

“By meeting (young) people where they are (both physically and digitally) and empowering local networks, we create an environment where hate and extremism struggle to take root.”

They mainly work in schools and can be found here:

<https://www.daretobegrey.com>

Comprehensive Violence Prevention Strategies

Several states have developed comprehensive, interagency strategic plans for addressing violence and hate. We looked at the plans from Illinois, New York and Texas. This is an area the Partners Against Hate group would like to put some effort. Governor Cox has not shown much interest in developing this kind of plan in the past, but we hope to persuade him in the coming year.

Nihilistic Violent Extremism and the Online Risk for Children

The most difficult topic to engage is the shocking rise of Nihilistic Violent Extremism (NVE) as it relates to children. Young people, mainly those in Jr. High or Middle School are falling prey to some of the most extreme forms of online exploitation and violence. These groups seem to be driven by a desire to see how far they can push people into doing sadistic acts of violence and sexual exploitation. They make contact with children through online gaming such as “Roblox” or “Minecraft” or on social media platforms like X and Instagram. They lure them into private chat spaces and then coerce these children into doing something that they can exploit or blackmail them over. Once they have something on them, they make increasingly extreme demands. These will be sexual in nature or violent and in many cases deadly, all done on video from a phone or computer. I will spare you the details of what some of these groups have done. But it was disturbing and frightening. I am eager to develop some resource for our parents and educators both from the church and our childcare center. It is something parents need to think about even before they get into school. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is working on developing some materials for this. You can see what they have here: <https://www.missingkids.org/home>

Governor Josh Shapiro

To end on a more positive note, one of the highlights was a speech by the Governor of Pennsylvania, Josh Shapiro.

The Eradicate Hate organization has rule about not having speakers who currently hold public office. The exception was made for Governor Shapiro because he and his family were victims of hate fueled violence when someone broke into the governor’s mansion on Passover (Governor Shapiro is Jewish) and firebombed the house. No one was injured but the trauma of the incident is ongoing. The governor was an exceptional speaker for one thing (I love good oratory). But more significantly, like all the other survivors, he shared his resolve to address the issues that fuels hate. I heartened by his story of just how many people came together around him and his family in that moment. Every living governor of the state of Pennsylvania and the families of some that had passed, Republican and Democrat, came together to lend their voices to confronting the hate that prompted this attack. It was a historic moment that brought a lot of hope to the state. The Governor ended with a story about a pastor at an event who had written him a card and on the back of the card he had inscribed a priestly blessing that comes from Numbers 6:22-27

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

This same blessing is a prayer that in the Jewish tradition, parents pray over their children. The Governor then began to recite it in Hebrew and Dr. Jacobson and Liz Paige from the Jewish Federation here in Utah joined in reciting the prayer. It was a touching story about connection on a deep and spiritual level that transcended the differences. It is that kind of connection and realization of our common humanity that gave me a sense of hope even as the challenges get more and more daunting.

The Eradicate Hate Global Summit served to highlight the importance of the ministry we do together. First Baptist Church is a place where people come from many different backgrounds and experiences. Many come here with the wounds of hate. Many come here seeking a more hopeful and a more gracious spirituality. Here they experience healing, love, compassion, empowerment and deep connection to God and to other people. While keeping any church vital and relevant these days if a challenge, our faithfulness in being a safe space to explore and live out one’s faith has never been more urgent or significant.

Annual Gathering Recap and Links

By Rev. Paul Schneider

What a fantastic time we had at the Evergreen Annual Gathering last month! Thanks to all who attended in person or online. We had our highest attendance for an Annual Gathering since COVID began, with well over 130 attendee badges created for those who were in person, and more people joining us online.

In addition to our great Laity and Ministers' Council Clergy Gatherings on Thursday Night, we had three great workshops, led by Rev. Doug Avilesbernal, Rev. Sam Kim, and Rev. Rick Barlow, Darrell Simmons and Robert Simmons. Our worship service on Friday night saw us ceremonially welcome in four new congregations to Evergreen: New Community Church in Menlo Park, CA; Grant Park Church in Portland, OR; Church by the Side of the Road in Berkeley, CA; and Belfair Community Church in Belfair, WA. Our featured preacher on Friday night was the American Baptist Churches-USA General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain who brought a relevant and timely message of "Harmony As a Priority." Saturday brought our Annual Business Meeting, and some fun Olympia Experiences, including a trip to the Olympia Farmers' Market, a trip to the Squaxin Island Museum with a follow-up conversation with Author Sandra Crowell, a trip to Tumwater Falls for a nature hike, or just getting time to fellowship or explore elsewhere. Meanwhile, our work-

shops were presented for our online attendees. Our Saturday night worship service included a presentation from Kihomi Mabudiga on the important work she and Nzunga Mabudiga do with Haitian refugees in the Dominican Republic. Our featured preacher was Rev. Dr. Angela Barker-Jackson, Vice President of Institutional Advancement for the Berkeley School of Theology, who is also a member of CrossWalk Community Church in Napa, CA, an Evergreen congregation.



Rev. Dr. Angie Barker-Jackson preaching Saturday Night—Photo by Rev. Shavon Walker

Some important things came out of this meeting, beyond the friendships and renewed connections. One is that the Annual Gathering next year is going to be at CrossWalk Community Church in Napa, CA. Additionally we learned that Rev. Doug Avilesbernal has been accepted to the Doctor of Ministry program at the Berkeley School of Theology. Next year there will be two local gatherings –

locations to be determined, but we are aiming to hold those in May and August. Local gatherings are open to anyone, not just the churches in a given area, and are times of fellowship, learning and connection, without any business agenda to be conducted. More information on that will be forthcoming.

If you'd like to catch the Friday Night Worship service recording it can be found at: <https://youtu.be/dP4itTm3yXs?si=VT6ijl0KEDuzmwN>

And the Saturday Night Worship service recording is at: <https://youtu.be/mdYbCKHgrIs?si=qFaNqz8wuKE5QSmx>

If you attended the Annual Gathering this year either in person or online, and haven't filled out the feedback survey, we would love for you to do so. You can find that here: <https://forms.office.com/r/TQy6SvNfX1>

We want to again thank those who helped make the Annual Gathering possible, especially the incredible host congregation, Olympia First Baptist Church, who went above and beyond. Their hospitality and dedication helped make the annual meeting a fabulous event. We also want to encourage you to build on the connections with our Mission Partner organizations who were present at the Annual Gathering, including ABC-USA's Office of the General Secretary, the American Baptist Home Mission Societies, the American Baptist Foundation, the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists, the Berkeley School of Theology, the Burma Advocacy Group, the Kaleidoscope Institute, Underground Ministries, and World Relief Western Washington.

Thanks for making this Annual Gathering one for the record books!



One Parish, One Prisoner



My name is Candice Baughman, and I serve as a Program Specialist with One Parish One Prisoner (OPOP). I was also a participant and was blessed to come home connected to a church in Thurston County Washington. I

can confidently say that experience changed my life. Walking with a church during my own transition home gave me consistent encouragement, accountability, and the kind of relational dignity that systems alone can't provide. Today, my church continues to grow its justice ministry and remains deeply involved with people returning home. I've had the joy of working with First Baptist Olympia and would love to partner with more American Baptist churches who feel called to accompany justice-impacted individuals and help expand this life-changing work.

One Parish One Prisoner equips local faith communities in Washington State to embrace people returning home from prison. A small team of 7-10 people gather monthly, write letters, and learn along the way together on a two year journey with their new friend. They build release plans together, "roll away the stones" of reentry barriers together, and discover that **we belong to one another**. This is a ready made discipleship opportunity for churches to put faith into action, practicing what we believe, and experiencing the hope of the resurrection. Find us online at oneparishoneprisoner.org

If you are outside of Washington and interested in this ministry, we have a couple of options. In Illinois and South Central Texas, we have pilot programs that are up and running. Contact us to get more connected at the link below. If you are in another state, we are having conversations all over about what it takes to bring One Parish One Prisoner to you. Learn more here: undergroundministries.org/newstates



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Return Service Requested

Evergreen Notes, the newsletter for member churches, ecumenical partners, national affiliates, and friends of the Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches is published monthly. Please submit articles by the 20th of the month prior to expected publication. You are encouraged to copy and/or reprint information and articles for your congregation and community.

Building Bridges, Resourcing Churches & Translating Our Unity

Mission Statement

Being a culturally diverse people who are one in Christ and who value the liberties of our American Baptist Heritage, the Evergreen Baptist Association will **Build bridges** between communities; **Provide resources** to equip member churches to share Christ and teach God’s word; and **Translate our unity** to the world.

We are profoundly thankful for our whole and diverse Evergreen Family!

Save these Dates!

We’ve got some great events coming up. Please mark your calendars so you can participate in these fantastic events!

Ordination of Min. Yoke Wong

Sunday, November 2nd at 3pm at Japanese Baptist Church. Clergy please bring Robes and Stoles and arrive at least 20 minutes early.

Ordination of Min. John Malcomson

Sunday, January 18, 2026 at 1pm at Seattle First Baptist Church.

MLK Jr. Day Celebration Worship

Monday, January 19, 2026 at 7pm at New Beginnings Christian Fellowship

November Calendar

November 1—All Saints Day

November 2—Ordination of Min. Yoke Wong—3pm at Japanese Baptist Church—Clergy please bring Robes and Stoles and arrive at least 20 minutes early.

November 4—Election Day—Please exercise your right to vote!

November 11—Veteran’s Day

November 13—World Kindness Day—Do something nice for someone else!

November 17—National Hiking Day—Get outside and take a hike!

November 20—Transgender Day of Remembrance

November 22—Northwest Alliance of Asian American Baptist Churches Gathering—10am at Panther Lake Community Church.

November 27—Thanksgiving Day

November 30—National Personal Space Day