“Rise up!”, “O Lord How Long?”, “Awake!”

People of all time have cried out to God to stop the suffering. The Israelites were the needy, they were the exiled, they suffered. God is a redeemer, but we also have a role to play.

I am rooted in Isaiah these days as I follow the #ONEyear plan. God didn’t take the blame for the suffering; it was the people’s own behaviors that brought about the punishments they faced.

“For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed.” (Isaiah 54:10)

A covenant is a partnership.

“If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.” (Isaiah 58:10)

It is clear that the people had a share in their conditions.

At times it feels like we are living in chaos, loud cries for justice, vicious public debates, quiet agonizing sickness, brutally unfair inequities, rising unemployment, chasms of divisiveness. Will God also redeem us? What is our role at this time?

First and always, our purpose is to connect with God. Pray for God’s guidance, ask for clarity of God’s purpose for you at this moment in time. What is your role to play now?

In many ways, our society has delegated the care of the needy to government agencies and policies, this is why politics is important. We are entering the voting season and important issues of justice abound. Politics is not separate from faith. Our faith informs how we see our world, the people, and the issues that affect us and our neighbors.

All of our actions are simply a public witness to how we live out our call as Disciples of Jesus Christ. It is when we live out our faith such that we “loose the bonds of injustice,” “let the oppressed go free,” (Isaiah 58:6) “share our bread,” “bring in the homeless poor,” “cover the naked,” (Isaiah 58:7) when God will say “Here I am!” (Isaiah 58:9)

Thanks be to God,

Pastor Kristin
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Photo: Celebrating the many voices heard as part of the God Is ___ series throughout the summer. Cover Photo: Janine Wilson writes on cars as they drive through the Kids Camp VBS Pickup Parade.
BECOMING ANTI-RACIST
IN THE Community

The start of this summer was marked by uprisings across the nation, as communities came together to declare that Black Lives Matter and to march forward into a future of racial equity. For Bothell UMC, this time challenged many of us to come face-to-face with our own complicity to the racism that surrounds us.

To live out what it means to Become Christ in the Community, we knew that we must commit to Becoming Anti-Racist in the Community. Through a webinar series led by Susan Burton, we have spent two Sunday evenings having conversations with one another about how we can become a more anti-racist community. The first session focused on Transformed People—we began to identify the ways that white supremacy has existed in our own lives. We learned that anti-racism requires us to recognize how our actions have an impact driven not only by our intentions, but by the larger culture in which we exist. Going forward, we recommit ourselves to do no harm, knowing that racism causes each of us to experience the world differently.

Our second session focused on Transformed Relationships—we examined how our systems have created vastly disparate outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. We named together the things that create access to the wealth and opportunity that so many of us take for granted; access to education, home ownership, cultural currency, and so much more. As we enter into our third session on Transformed Conditions, I look forward to the ways our community continues to develop on this journey.

I am inspired by the challenging conversations I have witnessed and taken part in through our anti-racism webinars and in one-on-one conversations with members of our Bothell community. As we march forward together, I challenge you to keep questioning your assumptions, keep having the hard conversations, and keep getting uncomfortable. Because to Become Christ in the Community, we must Become Anti-Racist in the Community.

WRITTEN ON AUGUST 21, 2020.

Recaps and materials from the Becoming Anti-Racist in the Community sessions facilitated by Susan can be found online at bothellumc.org/anti-racist
Mason Thompson is a City of Bothell Council Member. He works as an account manager for Pushpay in Redmond. He is connected to Bothell UMC through Pastor Kristin Joyner and her advocacy work in and around Bothell. In his words he says “I'm not officially affiliated with BUMC in any way, but I think you guys are great. : )” He was asked where he sees hope in our community.

It is an unfortunate necessity that the moments in which we most need hope are also when hope is the most difficult to find. Hope, in a way, is an admission that the present is flawed, since we must look to the future to envision a more just world.

Fortunately, we also have examples of people in our community actively working to create a more just world right here in Bothell.

We have community members organizing in support of the dignity and worth of Black lives.

Other residents have organized produce delivery from farmers to food banks, and have donated over three million pounds.

Some are advocating for a more just and resilient built environment to better prepare us for the next crisis.

Our ultimate hope rests in God’s ongoing process of reconciling all things. Being able to see our neighbors be part of God’s process and watch them do things that both offer concrete help to those with needs right now, as well as plan for a more just future, grounds that hope in something we can see with our own eyes.

Fred Rogers famously recounted his mother telling him to “look for the helpers” when he would see alarming events on the news as a child. When I see the helpers, I see a future worth hoping for. I see the moral arc of the universe bending toward justice. I see the world being made more like God would have it be.

The helpers make it easier to hope.
NOTE FROM DREW HOGAN
I still recall the day that I came to the church that morning, camera, mask, and sign in hand. I had the honor of marching alongside students and alumni from Northshore School District, and community members for the Black Lives Matter march in Bothell. I ran into one family, the Hulderson family who were approaching the day knowing they had valuable and important work to do, because it’s boys like theirs, two young boys, who can and will be part of the solution to create a more just and equitable world. They were some of the faces on the previous issue of The Witness. I asked them about this experience for them and they expressed its value both in having their young boys participate, and the importance for them to support Black Lives as they continued the transformations happening for them.

WHY DOES BLM MATTER TO US?

We are raising two white boys, ages 4 and 7, and we want to raise them to be anti-racist. We know that as their parents we play an integral role in making them aware of white privilege, which is a harsh reality and something we’re still identifying ourselves. We are trying to help them recognize racial bias and that starts with realizing where we may have had bias. We’ve been searching for anecdotes that are easy for them to understand. We want our children to love all people and celebrate differences, and not see “colorblindness,” which was a common ideology when we were growing up.

We are grappling with how to have these conversations because, innately, we want to protect our children from the tragic nature of this time and the disenchantment of learning about the racial divide, xenophobia, and inequality that remains all too prevalent today. These conversations are necessary, difficult, and upsetting and there is no way to hide that when talking about Black Lives Matter. We don't have all the answers, and that is hard to admit, but we do admit that we are trying, learning, growing, and changing. We won't stop because these conversation can't stop until real change is made.
My kids looked forward to Kids Camp VBS each week! We have four children (ages 6, 4 ½, 2 ½ and 8 months) and since VBS was adapted to be at home, even my two-year-old was able to fully participate alongside his siblings. They excitedly picked out their Vacation Bible School t-shirts to wear each Wednesday and danced, sang, and jumped around the living room as they sang about God's love and learned that God can be seen, heard, felt, and experienced in the world around them. Opening their weekly VBS bag was like opening gifts at Christmas! They were so eager to see what's inside and celebrate each discovery. We had lots of fun doing the crafts, activities, and games. It enabled me to sit down with them and engage alongside them since it was all prepared and provided ahead of time.

I noticed they each had more questions about, more awareness of, and more desire to connect with God. On their own they expanded on what the weekly lessons taught. They found their own unique ways (not just in the ways suggested) to see God in the world around them and connect with the expansive and intimate story of God's love and work in the world. I cherished hearing their spontaneous personal reflections throughout the week as little things they noticed reminded them of the VBS lessons.

The kids also looked forward to the weekly Zoom connections, both the small group time and the “Wrap Party.” (The singing, dancing, and energetic prayer time was a huge hit!) They did lots of extra chores to earn money for the migrant worker rental assistance offering and that opened up meaningful conversations in our home about people who live different lives than we do and the immense love and care God has for them and how we can reflect God by practically loving and caring for others ourselves. (They also couldn’t wait to see Pastor Joe slimed when they hit the offering goal.)

Thank you to each person who planned, prepared, and participated to make VBS such a success!
In our 2020-2021 Small Group year, we will offer a wide variety of options for you to connect in community. We will be offering two semesters of Small Groups, Fall and Winter. Fall Semester will consist of two sessions, each lasting 4-6 weeks, and will run from September to Thanksgiving. Winter Semester will start in January and run through May with three sessions, each lasting 4-6 weeks. Each semester will start with a 4-week All-Church study session! In the in-between, we will continue to offer opportunities for growth and connection during Advent and the summers, and breaks embedded as well!

### Program Cycle

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### SIGN UP TODAY FOR SESSION 1

**ALL-CHURCH STUDY OF THE SERMON SERIES**  
GATHERS WEEKLY | SEPTEMBER 14 – OCTOBER 10

Bothell UMC is kicking off the program year with a Church-Wide study of our 4-week sermon series.

The Church-Wide Study groups will meet at various days and times to give everyone a chance to easily join one of the 4-week small groups. Meet over Zoom (call-in option available) for an hour each week with your Study group.

**Interested in joining a small group?**

learn more at bothellumc.org/small-groups or email celeste@bothellumc.org.
Fall Sermon Series
Written By Pastor Joe Kim, Lead Pastor

And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?
- Micah 6:8 -

I recently read a social media post from Rev. Eugene Cho, former pastor of Quest Church here in Seattle and now President and CEO of Bread for the World. In the post, he said:

“Social justice is not the totality of the Gospel... but the Gospel without a commitment to neighbor, the vulnerable, justice, and the common good is not a faithful Gospel.”

I was struck by this as I have been reflecting on the past few months as our world and our community live in the midst of pandemics. We have seen the politicizing of what it means to care for our neighbors as we live through the COVID-19 era, and we have been made more aware of the racial injustices that plague our society.

Through it all, I keep wrestling with how we, as people of faith, are called to respond? Surely, our faith goes beyond the comforts of our lives, our homes, our church, our community... surely, our faith requires a doing of justice, a loving of kindness, and the continued walking with our God!

Throughout September and October, we will embark on two different sermon series that will encourage us and empower us to live into our purpose of Becoming Christ in the Community.

The first series will take a closer look at our purpose statement and ask the question: what does “community” mean? As we look to the communities that gathered in Scripture, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of the people and places where God is calling us. The second series will look forward to the election-season later this fall. We will look at stories in Scripture when the community gathered relied on God’s wisdom and guidance, and on the movement of the Spirit, to direct their actions and their next steps. This series will not inform you on how to vote, but rather, we will reflect on our responsibility and obligation as people of faith to move our society towards justice and kindness.

I hope you will join us in these series and hold our church, our community, and our world in your prayers as we live into our purpose of Becoming Christ in the Community!
This summer, the youth had originally planned to serve alongside the United Methodist Church in Blackfeet, Montana. Committed to ‘doing no harm’, the youth put in a rain check to go to Montana for the summer of 2021 and to serve locally for three intentional days this summer. One student, Liv Alderin-Olson, shares about her experience:

I really wanted to help where I could, besides, I’ve never been on a mission before. Mom came along as support for me. She thought it was an excellent time for me to learn to sew!

As with many pre-planned activities, the COVID 19 pandemic had an impact on the annual Youth Group mission week. We had choices this year to stay closer to home than usual for our mission.

I chose to stay really close to home and sew face masks. These masks are made for those who do not have easy access to them. Mom and I made reusable face masks for children staying at Mary’s Place. I also made cards to be placed in grocery bags filled with food from University District Food Bank. The cards were fun as I could put drawings and stupid little jokes on them. I think the cards might help to bring a smile to someone’s face during this tough time.

My favorite part of the mission was at the very end of our week connecting with other Youth Group members in the parking lot of the DQ in Woodinville. Everyone talked about what they did during mission week. Even after making all of those masks, I may not be an expert seamstress, but it was a good feeling to be part of something much bigger than myself and to help out those in need. I can’t wait for next year.

Thank you to the community for your ongoing prayers and financial support of youth missions that help cover costs of things like mask-supplies and allow our students to look to future trips without the financial burden.
Beacon: Peace & Prayer in a Pandemic
Written By Marcy Cahill

Our current time has been singular in our shared histories in many ways, including how we've had to make adjustments to how we live our lives. For me, it meant balancing virtual work, school-at-home for three children, and trying to put together a new exercise routine after my gym closed (I'm still working on that one!). The massive disruption of all our routines forced us to learn new roles and figure out how to share space; and I felt anxious, exhausted, and overwhelmed.

The Bothell Beacon service offered a moment of respite from the noise. When I plugged in my headphones to listen to the service, I felt I could focus on God for a moment. I listened to the music and was able to take a pause during moments of silent meditation.

Certain lyrics made a deep impression on me and seemed particularly relevant during this time: "Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us. Let not my doubts nor my darkness speak to me. Let my heart always welcome your love." (From the Taizé Community in France) Those words spoke to my heart, so I wrote them down in my prayer journal. I like to keep small phrases that I can think upon when I'm feeling anxious or overwhelmed.

Bothell Beacon gave me the gift of these few words, and after meditating on them, I felt more at peace about starting another day in the "New Normal."

Join Marcy and others online for this monthly mid-week contemplative service offering times of silence, music, and meditation on Facebook Live. To learn more or get the link, go to bothellumc.org/beacon
OPINION

Voting Motives
Written By Alan Jacobsen

How might our faith impact decisions about voting, especially with the plethora of competing and often loud voices?

First – VOTE! Sometimes we may wonder what difference one vote makes. But as people of God we are called to live out our everyday lives in faith. That surely means making our faithful voices heard in voting; bringing to the elections our understanding of what God intends for the world.

As we vote, how do we make decisions based on our faith? In voting for candidates, I'm drawn to the concept of Servant–Leadership as was promoted by Robert Greenleaf in his book “Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness.” He stated that the truest test of a servant-leader is: “Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit...?”

So, which of the candidates are true servant-leaders? And are they wise and inclusive of others in their decision-making and perspectives?

The same may be said about the issues we are asked to vote on; what is the impact of the issue on society, the marginalized, and least privileged?

As United Methodists we also have the Social Principles to inform our voting decisions. They state:

“Taking an active stance in society is nothing new for followers of John Wesley. He set the example for us to combine personal and social piety. Ever since predecessor churches to United Methodism flourished in the United States, we have been known as a denomination involved with people’s lives, with political and social struggles, having local to international mission implications. Such involvement is an expression of the personal change we experience in our baptism and conversion.

The United Methodist Church believes God’s love for the world is an active and engaged love, a love seeking justice and liberty. We cannot just be observers. So we care enough about people’s lives to risk interpreting God’s love, to take a stand, to call each of us into a response, no matter how controversial or complex. The church helps us think and act out a faith perspective, not just responding to all the other ‘mind-makers-up’ that exist in our society.”

Who and what we vote for is a personal matter; we must each make our own decisions. However, we can all use our faith and our understanding of what God calls us to do and be in making those decisions.
Joshua 5 Team

Bothell United Methodist Church created a "Joshua 5" Team of staff and diverse church members to consider how we can return to life within the church building, while holding above all the need to "Do No Harm."

The Team has now completed an interim plan for re-opening the church which has been sent to the District Superintendent for approval. Out of an abundance of care and caution, Bothell United Methodist Church will not hold in-person worship for the rest of 2020. We will continue to gather online and be creative in our worship as we prepare for the fall and Advent seasons, and we look forward to how God will continue to unite our community as we worship together virtually.

In the near term, we expect to allow "critical" community partners to gather in the church, under strict standards for screening, physical distancing, sanitation, and other safety measures. This includes groups that address the immediate health and safety of an individual. Other community partners and ministry groups of the church will be allowed to gather in the church after King County is in Phase 4 of the Washington State Coronavirus Response.

Visit bothellumc.org/joshua-5 for the significance of the Joshua 5 reference, to see the complete plan, meet the team members, and understand the challenges facing the team as we look forward to the day when we can gather in person, sharing in the community and love that binds us together, celebrating God's faithfulness and remembering how, in the midst of uncertainty, God was and is with us.

The Bible In a Year

#ONEyear

MAKE THIS THE YEAR

Whether you’ve been reading the Bible since January 1st or just found out about the #ONEyear challenge, feel free to pick up today & join us.

There’s no shame if you miss a day, just hop back in where you left off!

Learn more and download your bi-monthly bookmark at bothellumc.org/oneyear
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Photo: Sophomore Cary Trott helps cheer on families during the Kids Camp VBS Pickup Parade.
“For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed.”

Isaiah 54:10

Becoming Christ in the Community
Transformed people. Transformed relationships. Transformed conditions.

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ONLINE WORSHIP TIMES
9am (Blended Service with monthly communion)

The Witness is a bi-monthly publication. Want to submit a story or photo for consideration?
Email Drew Hogan at drew@bothellumc.org