

2023 ANNUAL REPORT THE CHURCH COUNCIL OF GREATER SEATTLE

building collective power for transformational change



2023 Annual Report designed by Joey Lopez.

Content by Tara Miller, Marina Ortiz, E.N. West, & others as noted.

Template & illustrations by Rose Brickley of Bloom & Glory.

From the Co-Executive Directors

For the past several years, the Church Council has been in a season of listening and learning...

The Church Council is listening to faith communities across Seattle and King County about what matters most to you, and listening to community groups led by those most impacted about the root causes of systemic oppression in our region. We are learning about how to show up together grounded in anti-racism values, about what shared leadership looks like, and about the ways we can operationalize these learnings within our policies, practices, and governance.

These seasons have culminated in a year of action – we bid farewell to Michael Ramos and transitioned to a co-leadership model among staff and board, we adopted new bylaws opening full-participation within the organization to all who are aligned with our mission and vision, and we finalized a thriving compensation plan for all staff.

As part of sustaining our Faith Land Initiative and re-imagining our immigration organizing, we welcomed E.N. West and Marina Ortiz as full-time, lead community organizers. Both E.N. and Marina have previously been part of the Church Council's work in various staffing capacities.

We recognize that systems of oppression are interlocking, so our community organizing efforts must be intersectional. As such, we worked closely with our partners in organized labor to secure equitable wages for front-line workers and showed up in solidarity with multi-faith community leaders calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, a release of all hostages, and a stop to military funding for Israel. We encourage you to read more about all of our community organizing work starting on page 9.

In 2023, the Church Council board and lead staff made the decision to use cash reserves to meet an anticipated budget deficit. Our reserves were intended to be for a rainy season and with the loss of an expected grant, it is time to replenish and stabilize these reserves. Heading into 2024, we need you to be part of the collective power we are building for transformational change toward justice and liberation. We will need to increase our income by \$30,000 more than in past years from faith communities and individuals. Additionally, we will be launching a capital campaign to stabilize our reserves for the future. We build

collective power by organizing people and resources. We invite you to ongoing partnership through our organizing work and by financially sustaining our work for years to come.

We're excited to be stewarding this work into the future and to collaborate with you as our paths cross,

Joey (he, him) & Tara (they, them)
Co-Executive Directors

Staff Gallery

*Staff members pictured will continue operations in 2024.



JOEY LOPEZ
(he/him)



TARA MILLER (they/them)



JANET
DETERS
(she/her)



MARINA
ORTIZ
(she/ella)



E.N.
WEST
(they/he)

Staff Serving in 2023

Board Gallery



SCOTT
BIETHAN
(he/him)



REV. JENN HAGEDORN

(she/her)



J. VINCE LARKIN

(he/him)



Pr. Megan Ramer

(she/her)

Board of Directors Serving in 2023

| J. Vince Larkin | President |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Rev. Jenn Hagedorn | Vice President |
| | Secretary |
| | Treasurer |
| - | Treasurer (incoming 2024) |
| | Vice President (through March 2023) |

Staff & Board Transitions

We celebrate the work of the staff and board members who have transitioned from the organization in 2023.

Kimberly Dominguez-Barranco held the needs of immigrant community members with care as she led the Accompaniment program. Cinda Stenger fostered relationships with donors as she connected them to the stories of our work. Deborah Towner provided guidance as Board Vice President and a development committee member.

Read more about Michael Ramos, Steve Pomeroy, and Char Davies under Long-term Staff & Board Transitions (pg. 4).

^{*}Board members pictured will continue service in 2024.

Long-term Staff & Board Transitions

Michael Ramos, Executive Director (2004-2023)

Michael Ramos announced in March 2023 that he would be transitioning from the Church Council on May 1 after 19 years of service, 15 of which he served as Executive Director.

One of the greatest gifts Michael gave us as staff was his intentionality in listening for and fostering leadership as it is emerging. The history of the church, and by connection the Church Council, has been hierarchical; yet Michael worked



to share leadership among our staff and board and foster leaders within their local communities. That's what community organizing, grounded in anti-racism principles, looks like and how we continue to operate as an organization – so that power is built within the community, following the leadership of those directly impacted by systemic oppression.

Michael often reflected on the call of Micah 6:8, that the Church Council "act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God." Through Michael's legacy with the Church Council he has been faithful to this call. We are thankful for his leadership throughout the years and wish him the best on his next adventure in New York.



Char Davies, Chief Financial Officer (2010-2024) BY STEVE POMEROY, BOARD TREASURER

Char's financial expertise and wisdom have been such a gift to the Church Council. Working with him has always been such a positive experience and a pleasure for me. The thoroughness and timeliness of his work made the efforts of the finance committee, budget planners and auditors much less difficult. His vision has enabled many beneficial changes as the Church Council has moved and transformed over the years.

Steve Pomeroy, Board Treasurer (2022-2023, 2014-2020) BY VINCE LARKIN, BOARD PRESIDENT

Steve's steady hand helped guide our finances for many years. We were more than thankful for his willingness to rejoin the board and resume his role as Treasurer. His gifts extend well beyond the financial, bringing much insight in our anti-racism efforts. He embodies a spirit of mutualism, support, and love for the work of the Church Council...past, present, and future.



Living into Our Vision, Mission, & Values

Vision

The Church Council of Greater Seattle envisions a future when justice is realized, where all people experience liberation, profound peace, expansive equity, and joy-filled human flourishing.

Mission

The Church Council of Greater Seattle builds collective power through faith-rooted community organizing for transformational change toward liberation and justice. We build collective power by accompanying, facilitating, and convening faith communities in Seattle and King County.

Accompany

CCGS comes alongside and meets a community where they are, to work "with" toward liberation and justice.

Facilitate

CCGS equips faith communities through training, skill building, and action grounded in our mission and vision.

Convene

CCGS gathers the right people at the right time to leverage our collective power for liberation and justice.

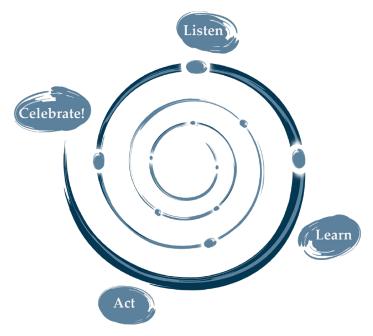
Guiding Principles

Collective Power

Power is organized people (relationships) and organized resources (money, land, networks, privileges). Organized people are our most valuable resource. Collective power identifies the abundance present in community and amplifies it.

Community Organizing

Community Organizing nourishes collective power to address systemic oppression at the root. This work is only possible when it is led by impacted communities. Our role is to accompany, convene, and facilitate communities to organize.



Transformational Change

Impacted communities have the power to fully tap into the abundance that is already present to transcend barriers to their autonomy and self-determination. The fruits of transformational change include liberation, justice, joy, peace, and human flourishing.

Staff Compensation

Over the past few years, staff have undergone an intentional discernment process to make salaries and benefits consistent with the values that undergird our organizing work in the community. Grounding our work in a deeper practice of anti-racism and living into our mission and vision mean that our outward calls for justice must start from our own internal analysis.

Prioritizing thriving wages and the well-being of staff is key to sustaining our work toward liberation, and it is a radical form of resistance to the rising costs of living in this city and nation. We are thrilled to share our process and progress toward this goal, and we welcome conversations with organizations who are interested in doing this work.



CCGS archive photo from the 2014 Living Wage campaign.

The Church Council formed a Compensation Committee in 2021 to create transparency around staff salary bands and build equity into our compensation practices. Committee members created a proposal which outlined our guiding values, our proposed salary bands, and local and state resources that informed our decision making. The committee discussed the proposal with all staff, and the board of directors approved the proposal in July 2021.

Our guiding values included:

- Engage transforming anti-racism* values in every aspect of compensation, by valuing lived experience alongside education and professional experience, creating sustainability of positions, narrowing the gap between the lowest and highest paid employees, having clear job descriptions with regular review opportunities, and defining positions according to potential trauma exposure and emotional labor required.
- Create infrastructure and policy to ensure we always hire for sustainability, by prioritizing full-time employment, compensating staff in a way that they can live and thrive in the communities we organize with, and manage our budget well so that layoffs do not become necessary.
- Consider the realistic costs of living and thriving in the Seattle Metropolitan Area, by having a minimum annual Cost of Living Adjustment of 3%, considering cost of living through a racial equity lens, utilizing data and resources to ensure equitable compensation, and assess and adjust our staff benefits so staff may thrive.

2023 Salary & Benefits (based on full-time employment)

Along with salary and hiring practices, we also began to assess our staff benefits. This led to us adding a paid Wellness Benefit to offset the need for staff members to find culturally and personally relevant healthcare when our insurance did not cover those needs.

2023 Salary Bands

| Position Classification | Minimum Salary | Maximum Salary |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Associate | \$54,075 | \$70,298 |
| Organizers | \$59,483 | \$75,705 |
| Leads | \$64,890 | \$81,113 |
| Executive Directors | \$75,705 | \$97,335 |

2023 Benefits

Paid Leave:

- 22 vacation days
- 14 holidays (1 flex)
- 12 sick/wellness days

Additional Benefits:

- \$1K wellness stipend
- \$1K professional development
- 3% SEP-IRA contribution after first year of employment

aitional beliefits.

Considerations for 2024

- Transitioning all staff to an employer paid PPO health insurance plan to allow for flexibility in services and a more comprehensive vision plan
- Staff will be discerning how and when to transition to a 32-hour work week
- Exploring a dependent care benefit

Employer-paid insurance:

- Medical with vision (PPO option at cost)
- Dental

^{*} The Church Council partners with <u>Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training</u> to guide our organization's internal anti-racism work and our organizing work in the community.

Bylaws Revision

Over the past several years, the Church Council has been making an intentional shift toward a mission centered in community organizing principles, grounded in anti-racism values. As we began living into our new mission and vision, continued to work deeply with Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training, and held listening sessions with our community partners, we were called to rewrite our bylaws.

Three major shifts emerged and are reflected in the new bylaws:

Community Organizing

Our new bylaws affirm our organizing principles: Grounded in anti-racism, we organize by accompanying, facilitating, and convening faith communities to be in accountable relationship with community-based groups led by those most impacted by systemic oppression.

Board Membership

Historically, our bylaws have limited our board membership to representatives from Christian churches. However, in practice, we have partnered with leaders from all faiths as well as community-based groups. Our new bylaws open our board membership to all who share our mission, vision, and values.

Shared Leadership

In alignment with our shift towards mutual interdependence and accountability, the Church Council moved to a Co-Executive Director model in May 2023. Our Board structure similarly took on a co-leadership model, utilizing the positions of Immediate Past-President, President, and Vice President as a shared leadership team.

Our new bylaws were approved by board vote and affirmed by a Special-Called Assembly in September 2023. Rev. Jenn Hagedorn, '23 Board Vice President, was a key author in writing the new bylaws and designing the affirmation ceremony. We thank her for these invaluable contributions and dedication to this process. Our new bylaws guide us to a shared understanding of the relational ecology and distribution of power in the community of which the Council is a member. It informs our accountability to impacted communities and partners in our work, as we build relationships through our shared organizational values.



Visit our website for more information about our <u>new bylaws!</u>

Organizing for Transformational Change

The Church Council's primary means of building collective power happen through our Faith Land Initiative and our Immigration Organizing. Because our work is deeply invested in equitable land stewardship and in the lived experiences of people navigating the immigration system, we also collaborate on related efforts of community partners. Two such places we have devoted energy in 2023 are supporting organized labor and an interfaith coalition for a ceasefire in Gaza.

Organized Labor

The Church Council has a long history of supporting workers' fights for just labor practices. In 2023, we joined efforts for higher wages and benefits for grocery workers, janitors, healthcare workers, and city workers. At our Weaving Our Strengths organizing gathering in the fall, we invited our partners at SEIU6 Property Services NW, SEIU 1199NW, and the King County Labor Council to lead a panel discussion highlighting the voices from local organized labor efforts on how faith communities can support and show up for working families in Seattle.





Ceasefire

Core to our founding, The Church Council has stood firm in our opposition to war and militarism, grounded in our vision of a world where justice is realized. When the October 7 attack in Israel was followed by the bombing, collective punishment, and displacement of the Palestinian people (which continues as of the time of drafting this report), the Church Council joined a growing interfaith coalition to call for:

- an immediate and long-term ceasefire,
- the release of all hostages,
- an end to US funding of Israel,
- an end to the occupation, and
- an end to antisemitism and Islamophobia.

We participated in drafting the WA Solidarity Statement, in facilitating the press conference that followed, and in many campaigns and meetings with local, state, and federal elected officials to enact these demands for peace. We have also participated in direct actions to continue bringing this issue to the forefront until peace is realized. Our work continues into 2024.

Faith Land Initiative

This year marked the Faith Land Initiative's transition from an emerging program within the Church Council, to an innovative, established, and recognized model that is proven to work and ready to share with a wider audience. This change was exemplified in two major areas: The progress made in discernment by faith communities within the Faith Land Initiative network, and new investment in the Initiative by national funders.

Our faith land network is growing...

The network is creating cross-cohort, as well as inter- and intra-denominational collaboration, facilitating significant progress for several faith communities in their respective discernment processes. This includes a faith community completing a season of internal listening conversations within their congregation, another voting to explore building affordable housing on their campus, and another successfully submitting a proposal for federal funding to their U.S. senator.

FLI Network

- faith communities practicing equitable and faithful discernment
- faith leaders across several major Christian denominations
- strong relational brain trust comprised of real estate professionals, experienced faith communities, land trusts, & BIPOCled community-based organizations

National recognition from the equitable development ecosystem...

FLI received program funding from Trinity Church Wall Street's Mission Real Estate Development program, and CoGenerate, a national organization with a mission to create change through bridging generations. As a result, E.N.

presented at MRED's *Gift of Place* conference and will participate in CoGen's 2024 cohort. Additionally, Joey and E.N. were able to present this work to our regional

colleagues at *Housing God's Beloved*, the Greater Northwest United Methodist Church's Housing Symposium in Portland, OR.

Sustaining relationships for the long haul...

Joey and E.N. traveled for another year to Holden Village to share lessons learned in faith land discernment as teaching faculty and guests on the Holden Village podcast. We also hosted our first faith land discernment panel at the Church Council's Weaving

Our Strengths conference and heard wisdom from our

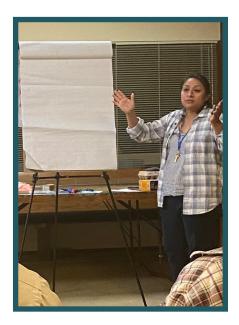
network of the highs and lows in practicing discernment toward dignity restoration and community stewardship of land.

We look forward to even broader collaboration, stronger relationships, and transformative actions in 2024!

Immigration Organizing

During 2023, the Church Council paused our Immigrant Accompaniment program to allow for deeper evaluation and reflection. During this pause, we re-engaged our Grupo de Solidaridad (Solidarity Group). Grupo is comprised primarily of community members navigating the immigration system, with a few key allied community leaders. This summer, we launched a consultative process with Grupo to establish the organizing priorities for this work.

Through the fall, Grupo spent time exploring the faith-rooted community organizing spiral - listen, learn, act, celebrate, and reflect. These deeper sessions have led Grupo to develop three programs that will be built out moving forward:



- **Educational Program:** Create a political education program aimed at migrant communities from Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central & South America to raise awareness of their rights and receive support in their struggle against racist, discriminatory, and homophobic systems.
- Resource Mobilization: This program aims to develop a concrete policy to distribute contributions from fundraising campaigns for families in complex deportation cases. Grupo will create guidelines and criteria as well as offer recommendations for how these funds will support migrant communities.
- Convivencia: As part of this component, we will meet once a month to make connections with each other - to sing, dance, get to know one another, listen to presentations and develop workshops on experiences related to immigration, and learn more about the needs of our community and practice solidarity with each other.



Additionally, the Church Council has been an active member of a coalition of 30+ non-profits and community groups advocating for greater support of newly arriving migrants. As a consulting partner to the coalition's coordinating team, the Church Council began to activate faith owned land and mobilize faith leaders to amplify the needs of migrants. Through a joint fundraising effort between the <u>Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice</u>, collectively we raised over **\$30,000** to support the needs of newly arriving migrants.

Weaving Our Strengths

After three years, we brought back our beloved Weaving Our Strengths day-long skill building event. The day was filled with workshops and reflection on the organizing practices and anti-racism values that have undergirded our transition to faith-rooted community organizing work over the last several years.



The day started with a Community Organizing training led by E.N. West and Joey Lopez. Then, attendees had the opportunity to participate in two workshops from the following options:

Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training

An introduction to the Crossroads anti-racism values and continuum. These resources support shaping participants' communities toward liberative practices.

Immigration Organizing: Grupo de Solidaridad

A workshop aimed to identify new support techniques, committing to maintain the connections of solidarity towards the immigrant community - our brothers, sisters, and siblings.

Lessons in Discernment from the Faith Land Initiative

Faith communities in the FLI network reflected on the impact discernment has had in their efforts to transform faith-owned land.

Faith Communities Support Organized Labor

A panel discussion highlighted the voices of MLK Labor Council, SEIU 6 Property Services NW, and SEIU Healthcare 1199 NW on how faith communities can support and show up for working families in Seattle.

The day ended with a Special Called Assembly to affirm and celebrate our new Bylaws and install Joey Lopez and Tara Miller as Co-Executive Directors.

Fundraising Dinner

The night before Weaving Our Strengths, we hosted a dinner to honor the two decades of service by former Executive Director, Michael Ramos. During the dinner, Rev. Joanne Engquist, Rev. Dr. Leslie Braxton, and Rev. Dr. Linda Smith shared stories of the Church Council over the last 19 years under Michael's leadership.

The dinner was a huge success, not just in doubling our fundraising goal, but in building connection with you and you with each other. We're excited to make this dinner an annual Fall event.

Individual Donors

Thank you for building power with us in 2023!

We strive to recognize each donor appropriately. Let us know if we need to update your acknowledgment at info@thechurchcouncil.org.

1ST GIFT 25+ YEARS AGO:

Rosalinda Aguirre Lynne Armstrong June Arnett

Laura & Bill Bailey

Debby Beck Jean M. Bell Jeff Berner

Rosemary Blakemore

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Wayne Daly
Elise DeGooyer
Betty Eberharter
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Diana Gale & Jerry Hills

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Alice Woldt

Individual Donors (cont.)

1ST GIFT 15+ YEARS AGO:

Betsy Bell

Rev. Paul Benz &

Linda Olsen

Sally Buckley

Revs. Susan & Red

Burchfield

Elaine Clark

Lisa Dennison

Rev. Richard & Anne Gillett

Kristina Gonzalez

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Michael & Donna Ramos

Chris & Lee Sargent

Sallie Shawl

Revs. Greg & Kathy Turner

1ST GIFT 5+ YEARS AGO:

Len & Judy Andrews

Diane & Jean-Loup Baer

Rev. Ruth Brandon

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Cinda Stenger

Richard Stolz

Kathleen Sullivan

Sutro-Paul Giving Fund

Laurie Weckel



Individual Donors (cont.)

1ST GIFT 1-5 YEARS AGO:

Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown Pr. Glenn Brumbaugh Shelley Carton

Ross & Dinah Coble Rev. Jenn Hagedorn

Toni Long Tara Miller David Morton

Joshua Rubenstein

Matthew Saunders

Susan & Alan Schulkin

Kalai Socha-Leialoha

Devin & Andrea Soroko Naar

Richard & Carolyn Stein

John & Deborah Towner

Bishop Shelley Wee



1ST GIFT THIS YEAR:

Sophia Agtarap

Dustin Alin & Joey Lopez

Robert Anderson Jenny Asarnow Councilmember

Claudia Balducci

Rev. Laura Baumgartner

Matt Berry

Rev. Arleigh Champ-Gibson

Steven & Janet Deters

Kaleena Devine Mark Epstein

Anitra Freeman

Ernesto Garcia

Gordon-Thureson Living Trust

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Richard & Barbara Miller

Hal & Rev. Susanna Orensky

Marina Ortiz

Jose Robles

Judith Ryan

Judith Schainen

Paul Schneider

Kyna Grace Shilling

Evan Smith

Meta Thayer

Greg Thiessen

Rev. David Valera

Kevin West

Mimi Williams

THANK YOU!

Community Donors

FOUNDATIONS:

The John C. & Karyl Kay Hughes Foundation Loyal Bigelow & Jedediah Dewey Foundation

Denominations & Faith-Based Organizations:

Community of Christ - Greater
Pacific Northwest
Episcopal Diocese Of Olympia
Evergreen Association of
American Baptist Churches
Holden Village
Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice
Northwest Washington Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church of America (ELCA)
Oregon-Idaho Conference of The
United Methodist Church

ORGANIZATIONS:

SEIU 6 Property Services NW SEIU Healthcare 1199 NW UFCW Local 3000

WORKPLACE GIVING:

Abbott Laboratories Costco.com/Costco Wholesale

BEQUESTS & ESTATES

Estate of Janet Allison

FAITH COMMUNITIES:

Alki UCC Community Church of Issaguah Community of Christ - Crystal **Springs Congregation** Community of Christ -**Renton Congregation** Community of Christ - Woodland Park Congregation Eastgate Congregational UCC Eastside Friends Meeting Fauntleroy Church UCC First Congregational UCC - Bellevue Gethsemane Lutheran Church Haller Lake UMC Immanuel Lutheran Church Journey Christian Church Normandy Park Congregational UCC Northshore UCC Plymouth Church Queen Anne Christian Church Saint Marks Episcopal Cathedral Seattle First Baptist Church Seattle Mennonite Church St. James Cathedral St. Paul's United Trinity Parish Church University Congregational UCC

University Friends Meeting

University Lutheran Church

University Gathering (UMC)

University Unitarian Church Woodland Park Presbyterian

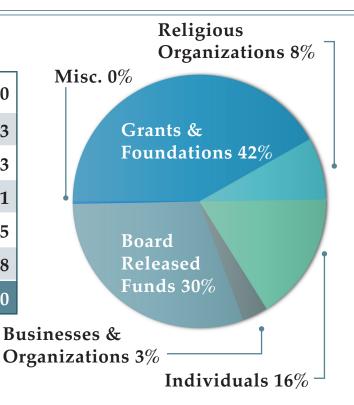
We are excited to announce two grant awards for 2024:

- \$100,000: Trinity Church Wall Street, Mission Real Estate Development
- \$20,000: CoGen Challenge

Financial Report

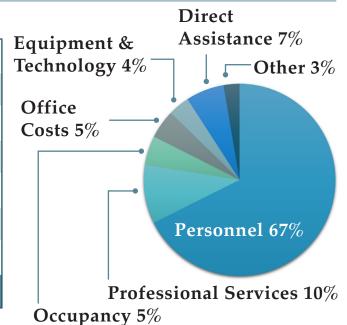
Public Support & Revenue

| Grants & Foundations | \$248,600 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Religious Organizations | \$47,073 |
| Individuals | \$96,993 |
| Businesses & Organizations | \$19,531 |
| Board Released Funds | \$180,135 |
| Misc. Revenue | \$1,958 |
| Total Public Support | \$594,290 |



Expenses

| Personnel | \$439,023 |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Professional Services | \$63,967 |
| Office Costs | \$32,083 |
| Occupancy | \$31,376 |
| Equipment & Technology | \$23,506 |
| Direct Assistance | \$42,559 |
| Other | \$17,904 |
| Total Expenses | \$648,18 |



The Church Council was honored to be the fiscal sponsor for *Songs of Black Folk*. Associated funds are not included in this report.

save the date



04

27

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Weaving Our Strengths 2024

Join the Church Council for a day of workshops and reflection on the community organizing practices and anti-racism values that ground us in transformative change toward liberation and justice.

Blaine Memorial United Methodist Church

3001 24th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98144

April 27, 2024