Building collective power together

Staff Serving in 2021

Joey Ager | Lead Organizer
Beth Amsbary | Philanthropy Manager
Char Davies | Financial Officer
Janet Deters | Staff Accountant
Kimberly Dominguez-Barranco | Immigrant & Refugee Accompaniment Coordinator
Ann Erickson | Office Manager
Annique Green | Philanthropy Associate
Cesar Linares | Organizing Fellow
April Little | Faith Land Organizer through Seattle Service Corps
Joey Lopez | Faith Land Initiative Lead, Community Organizer
Tara Miller | Operations Manager
Meli Morales | Organizer, Faith Land Initiative
Irene Muller | Communications Manager
Michael Ramos | Executive Director
Cinda Stenger | Development Lead
Maricruz Malonado Vargas | Immigrant & Refugee Accompaniment Associate
E.N. West | Faith Land Organizer

Board of Directors Serving in 2021

President J. Vince Larkin
Vice President The Rev. Staci Imes (on leave)
Treasurer Mr. Kevin Cooney
Rev. Dr. Troy Lynn Carr
Mrs. Cheryl Cooney
Rev. Kacey Hahn
Deborah Towner

Organizing Circles Active in 2021

Faith Land Initiative
Accompaniment Core Team (ACT) & Volunteer Network
El Grupo de Solidaridad
Highline Ecumenical Leadership Circle
Eastside Interfaith Gathering
Our 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.

The Church Council Board of Directors approved a new vision and a new mission statement for the Church Council in 2021.

These statements embody the core work of the Church Council in the present and future, as well as the ends toward which our efforts are focused. These reflect the culmination of a process that began after the 100th Anniversary Assemblies in 2019. Those assemblies celebrated our ecumenical and interfaith heritage, our direct services, our advocacy, our public witness, our task forces, and the friendship we have shared among and with congregations in the Puget Sound Region.

As a staff and board, we soon realized that our values and practices needed to change from embrace of dominant church and institutional values to emergent strategies and re-prioritized relationships. In essence, we needed to put “new wine into new wineskins.” Our shift in values and practices has been a faithful expression of reading the signs of the times and responding to the liberating message of the prophets, Jesus, and other wisdom teachers. We needed to change – to transform our self-identity and our organization – to be an authentic vehicle for organizing collective power.

Through 22 1-1 meetings that I conducted with Staff and Board, committee meetings, a board-staff retreat, and group discernment, I am grateful that our process yielded the fruit of these powerful manifestations of spirit for such a time as this. The progress that we made was possible because of an active commitment to become an anti-racist organization that dismantled colonial, patriarchal, and “supremacist” underpinnings in which the church has been caught up all too readily. This move has not been easy. Yet, led by newer staff who are primarily people of color, we collaborate wholeheartedly in listening, learning, acting and reflecting together.

**Justice** and **liberation** are the two words that link our mission and vision statements. They represent the destination for our collaboration. Whether we speak of beloved community, kin-dom of God, or ecology of shalom as the ground of our being together, we are excited for what we can accomplish when we see the thriving of each of us as interconnected and the repair of our world as possible. **Thank you for your companionship on the journey!**

- Michael Ramos, Executive Director
MISSION

Our Mission
The Church Council of Greater Seattle builds collective power through faith-rooted community organizing for transformational change toward liberation and justice.

We believe the process is as important as the outcome. Our work is grounded in a faith-rooted organizing approach:

- **Listening** facilitates relationship building, the foundation of community organizing, which creates the possibility to co-create the beloved community.

- **Learning** guides our education on the systems of power that impact the use of our land, in order to act wisely, accountably, and effectively as we engage those systems.

- **Action** rooted in listening and learning, moves us from talking about the world as it is toward making possible our dreams of the world as it should be.

- **Reflection** creates sacred pause for us to draw out wisdom from our shared experiences and God’s voice. Reflection is critical to our next steps: building on our successes while being accountable to our impact.
2021 committees

Standing committees

Executive Committee
The Executive Committee is made up of Board Officers and other Board Members as designated by the Board. This committee organizes and does research pertaining to Board Meeting agendas, and provides assistance, counsel and advice to the Executive Director in implementing and executing the strategic plans and policies approved by the Board.

Nominating
Nominations for membership on the Board of Directors are made by a Nominating Committee. Nominees shall be solicited and considered from the Members and Associate Members.

Finance Committee
The Finance Committee provides guidance, support, oversight and, as necessary, direction for the financial management and budget development and execution on behalf of the board, in collegial relationship with the staff and the Executive Director. The Finance Committee reviews finance reports every other month and issues a report to the board, through the Treasurer, each month.

Philanthropy Committee
The Philanthropy Committee is commissioned by and responsible to the Board of Directors to partner with staff in cultivating the philanthropic relationships and culture needed to support our mission.

Ad hoc committees

Compensation
In 2021 the CCGS Compensation Committee conducted internal and external research and 1-1 meetings with staff, and discerned together as a committee toward recommendations to the Board of Directors. These recommendations addressed wages and wage equity infrastructure at the Church Council to reflect our vision and anti-racism values, taking into particular account the financial reality of living and thriving in the Greater Seattle Area. These recommendations were reviewed and adopted by the Board of Directors in 2021, for implementation in 2022. This committee continues, currently conducting a similar process regarding CCGS Employee Benefits with a similar goal of offering well-rounded, community-facing recommendations to our Board.

Mission & Vision Committee
This committee made up of CCGS Staff and Board members developed the proposed Mission and Vision statements and stewarded them through the process of Board review and adoption.
Faith communities have a unique opportunity to steward the acres of underutilized, vacant, and surplus faith-owned land in the Puget Sound Region. The Faith Land initiative supports a network of congregations and faith leaders to model a community-based approach to land stewardship & equitable development. To support this work, the Church Council hired an additional Faith Land Organizer, Meli Morales.

The core of our Initiative is the Faith Land Discernment Cohort, a 6-month process designed to train and accompany faith leaders in faith-rooted organizing practices and anti-racist values while discerning faithful stewardship of their land within their faith communities and broader neighborhood. In 2021, the Faith Land Discernment Cohort:

• Engaged 17 congregations across the county in contextual listening around their discernment of the future mission-aligned use of their land, buildings and assets

• Refined a 6-stage community organizing curriculum for the possibility of in-person facilitation and training

• Convened the Faith Land Discernment Cohort with 10 faith leaders from 2 congregations and 1 judicatory body over 6 months

• Accompanied congregations in 36 small group coaching sessions and over 100 1-1 meetings to contextualize and implement their cohort learning

For the Faith Land Initiative to flourish, we must advocate for equitable public policy that supports community-led land development and stewardship projects. In 2021, through the Faith Land Initiative the Church Council:

• Joined with multi-cultural community groups to urge King County to adopt the Equitable Development Initiative.

• Successfully advocated, in partnership with the Nehemiah Initiative*, for the City of Seattle to implement Washington House Bill 1377, a tool to support congregations considering affordable housing development that permits them to increase their density to enable more financially feasible development of affordable housing.

Additionally, the FLI began accompanying a congregation post-discernment to listen and learn from Black & Indigenous community leaders in Seattle. The congregation committed to gift the property in 2022, supporting community-based stewardship of land and equitable development.

*The Nehemiah Initiative seeks to empower the African American community in the Seattle region and beyond to support the retention of historically Black institutions by advocating for development of real property assets owned by those historically Black institutions. For more information visit: https://www.nehemiahinitiativeseattle.org/
The Church Council upholds and affirms the rights and dignity of all immigrants and refugees.

We all have a shared humanity, and physical presence is a manifestation of our solidarity.

Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their past.

Everyone has a right to due process and equal access to justice.

There are no “good immigrants” and “bad immigrants.”

Together in community, through accompaniment and solidarity we hope to bring about a just and flourishing world. We do this by addressing the immediate need for accompaniment as community members are dehumanized, criminalized, and targeted by the US immigration and criminal justice systems. The Church Council collaborates with immigrant-led groups to encourage, support, equip, and train faith communities to build collective power.

Our Accompaniment network continues building community through these times of the ongoing COVID pandemic, when many are so isolated, through our Accompaidment Hotline and 1-1 meetings between Accompaniment staff and volunteers and community members to build community relationships over time. These community relationships center values of trust, solidarity, and convivencia. Justice and liberation for immigrants requires collective power. No one knows what’s best for the community, but the community themselves. From building infrastructure and capacity, to cultivating more leadership circles we support, building collective power has been the goal.

Time and time again, the message of accompaniment resounds: ¡No están solas! – You are not alone!

Those seeking accompaniment can contact the Accompaniment Hotline Monday through Friday 9am-5pm at (253) 343-1410 or email accompaniment@thechurchcouncil.org
Immigrant & Refugee Accompaniment

Our 2021 actions around Immigrant & Refugee support include:

**Immigration Appointment Accompaniment.** Responding to approximately 110 urgent requests from our immigrant partners and impacted community members, we are the backbone and frontlines for a coalition that recruits, trains, and deploys ~100 faith volunteers to be a supportive presence with immigrant folks navigating a complex - and often threatening - immigration system. A community member seeking support for a medical appointment, renewing a driver’s license, or attending a court hearing can request support via our Accompaniment Hotline, a highly successful communication channel created by CCGS in 2019. Primarily, this program supports immigrant community members; it also builds convivencia (coexistence), hospitality and solidarity. During 2021, the accompaniment program continued to respond to the challenges of COVID-19: we figured out how to accompany via Zoom and in-person with social distancing and masks. Responding to requests from key partners, we launched and refined state court accompaniment training virtually. The Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN, described below) adopted our model in 2020 and expanded the virtual training across Washington State in 2021.

**Sanctuary Hospitality to Keep Families Together.** We support several circles of faith communities offering sanctuary hospitality, a form of deportation defense, to immigrants seeking legal remedies for their cases. While they each operate as their own entities, Church Council staff are in constant contact with hubs as a practical and spiritual resource: media updates, trainings, and strategies.

**We are core participants in the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network, WAISN,** a multi-sector action center sprung to life in response to current enforcement threats. WAISN connects groups working directly with the immigrant community with on-the-ground community members, to build collaborations and joint actions across networks -- activating wider responses centered on the folks on-the-ground.

**Maintaining the network of congregations and individuals** described above with electronic updates, media advisories, consultations, and know your rights & rapid response trainings.

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In 2021 our Accompaniment Core Team (ACT) witnessed a widening gap in services, as folks continue struggling to find and coordinate legal support beyond our capacity. In response, we have been able to provide a list of immigration attorney referrals and, in some cases, accompaniment through scheduling initial consultations.

**Threats to Immigrant and Refugee people are ever evolving.** This network provides a nimble, relational way for faith communities to walk with Immigrant community members and allies in claiming their dignity and creating new opportunities for themselves.
THANK YOU to Sanctuary congregations and communities! Sanctuary is an ongoing process of accompaniment, even after impacted community members have moved forward from the grounds of the congregation that has hosted them.

The Church Council honors and affirms the love and support that Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Seattle and Temple Beth Hatfiloh in Olympia continue to offer sanctuary to Jose Robles and family (Gethsemane) and Maria and family (TBH). While both have been able to leave sanctuary without an imminent threat of deportation, their cases have not yet been resolved. We maintain an abiding hope for a future of thriving for them with permanent status in the U.S. In the meantime, inspired by their example, we seek just immigration policies that transform oppressive systems that exclude and marginalize immigrant siblings. The pathway to citizenship, family reunification, justice on the job and due process is written by the lives of sanctuary and other immigrant leaders.

Photos: (top) Jose Robles shortly after his release from the NWDC, standing with the Revs. Joanne Engquist and Kari Lipke of Gethsemane Lutheran Church where Jose and his family previously took sanctuary. (bottom) photo by Jen Dev/Crosscut shows Maria, a scarf wrapped around her to preserve anonymity, standing in the sanctuary of Temple Beth Hatfiloh in Olympia on Sept. 5, 2019.

Longterm Accompaniment: The Church Council continues to accompany a small number of households of Central American and Mexican origin over the long term. These households have lived in the homes of faith community members, in congregation-managed apartments, and in affordable rental units. Many of these household members have experienced compounded trauma, from the migration journey to the uncertainty of the legal process, to economic dislocation from the pandemic.

Faith community members and volunteers seek to practice cultural humility as we walk alongside these leaders as they adjust to life in the Pacific Northwest. We are especially grateful to faith community members that have assisted families to navigate complex health, educational, and employment systems. The asylum process takes multiple years and work permits are often delayed. We thank the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network and other immigrant-led organizations for the direct assistance generated by relentless advocacy in the State of Washington.

We have learned through our own direct assistance efforts, with strong community support, that assistance can serve as a segue to the solidarity of organizing and building power together.
At a press conference at Saint Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral on Monday December 20, 2021 Jaime Rubio Sulficio and his family shared with us that his case has been re-opened. This means Jaime is no longer a priority for deportation, and he and his family can safely begin the process of leaving Sanctuary without the looming threats of deportation and separation that gave them no choice but to go into Sanctuary in the first place back in 2019.

As the fight for a just and permanent legal remedy continues, the Rubio family begins the process of rebuilding their lives beyond the boundaries of the Saint Mark’s property where they have taken refuge from the threat of unjust separation for nearly three years.

“To be happy, you need someone to love and something to do and something to be proud of. And I fulfilled those three elements while being here [in Sanctuary],” Jaime said in a piece by KNKX reporter Lilly Ana Fowler.

“So many people ask me where I would like to go, what place I want to visit after being in sanctuary for so long. And I just have one answer: My biggest wish is to take my son to the park,” he said during the press conference. “I can only look at the fathers and mothers who are being deported each day, they deserve to be recognized. I will continue to advocate not only for me but for the millions of others who will not want to be separated from their loved ones.”

The Rubio family is pictured above sharing their first trip to the park together in nearly three years after the 12/20 press conference.

THANK YOU for your love and support in the fight to keep this family together!

#KeepJaimeHome #FamiliesBelongTogether #NoEstanSolas
In 2021, the Highline Ecumenical Leadership Circle (ELC) organized with community members to take collective action for policy outcomes that would benefit their communities.

In the first half of 2021, much of our community’s focus was in support of the Downtown Emergency Service Center’s (DESC) proposal for 95 units of affordable, supportive housing as part of the City of Burien’s Affordable Housing Demonstration Program. In January 2022, King County’s Housing Finance Program (HFP) announced that it has awarded DESC Burien over $5.27 million for this project.

Low-income families and individuals in Burien have few options for affordable housing in the city. While the cost of living and rent continues to rise, new housing developments are approved in Burien, but none of these have any units designated for low-income families or individuals. The evident gap in affordable housing access in Burien is even more obvious and worrisome as it relates to individuals that are unhoused and experiencing chronic homelessness.

The approval of DESC would not have been possible without the efforts of the community, including the Highline Ecumenical Leadership Circle. The Highline ELC pressured city council and showed up to every meeting possible. DESC supportive housing is one of the best options that the city of Burien can put forth to find a real, effective, and bold solution in providing housing to a segment of the population for whom access is historically far too limited. This is a model for area municipalities to follow in Burien’s footsteps.
Faith leaders and service providers in East King County continued organizing together under the name Eastside Interfaith Gathering (EIG) in 2021.

After noting lessons learned from our local efforts in 2020 to increase city budgets for affordable housing and support under-funded, transformational community organizations like the Muslim Community Resource Center (a member of EIG), the EIG chose to focus on system-wide tenant protections in light of the economic crisis exacerbated by the pandemic.

Eastside leaders saw an opportunity to advocate for four state bills that, if passed, would have a positive effect on low and modest income residents on the Eastside. We launched the “Keep People Housed” campaign in partnership with Washington Low Income Housing Alliance to support these bills. EIG members made phone calls, wrote letters, and offered verbal, public testimony to their elected officials. They also continued to advocate to Governor Inslee for extensions to the eviction moratorium and for legislative increase to the Housing Trust Fund. **Ultimately, the Eastside Interfaith Gathering played a critical role in the passage of 4 bills, the extension of the moratorium, and the increase to the Housing Trust Fund.**

**Bills whose passing we critically supported include:**
1. HB 1236 – Just Cause now required before evictions
2. HB 1277 – Document Recording Fee increased from $78 to $100, established as a permanent funding source
3. HB 1220 – Growth Management Act changes requiring cities and counties to include needed shelters and affordable housing in their local land use planning
4. SB 5160 – Right to Counsel established for low-income tenants facing eviction.

State legislators joined us in celebration of passage of these bills. Six attended our virtual celebration on July 6: Representative Bill Ramos, Representative My-Linh Thai, Representative Larry Springer, Senator Manka Dhingra, Representative Amy Walen, and Senator Patty Kuderer. As Rep. Bill Ramos stated at our gathering: “Keeping people housed is cheaper and better than providing them housing after they experience homelessness. Set up systems so people don’t lose their housing.”

**Following the conclusion of the “Keep People Housed” campaign,** we are conducting 1-1 and community meetings to re-orient our efforts centering transformational values to discern a local, sustainable focus moving forward.
The Youth Chaplaincy Coalition has transitioned to an independent non-profit, Circle Faith Future. The YCC began in 2012 as a task force of the Church Council of Greater Seattle and has been a vital program of the Church Council organization since. We welcome this new chapter of their legacy with friendship and deep belief in all the Rev. Terri Jane Stewart and all that the YCC community has done, is doing, and will do for court-involved youth in King County and the state of Washington. If you’d like to learn more about what’s next for the program, you can visit Circle Faith Future at circlefaithfuture.org or contact Rev. Stewart at terri@circlefaithfuture.org.

A statement from Rev. Stewart reads...
It has been my privilege to serve with the Church Council of Greater Seattle since 2012. It was in May 2012 that I received the Gertrude Apel award and made application to Rev. Christopher Boyer to be granted status as a task force. I am grateful to have received approval for that status. Then, in 2014, I first drew a salary. It was then a big step forward as we moved into Peacemaking and a more integrated relationship with CCGS in 2017. It has been eight years of relationship building that I do not take for granted. I am deeply grateful for the shelter that CCGS has provided from the infancy of the YCC. Without the wisdom, care, and connection that has been provided, we would not be where we are.

Looking back, together, we have been part of changing the juvenile justice system in the state of Washington. Together, we have changed laws and policies that have led to more abundant life. We can find joy in looking back. And in looking forward, imagining a new way of being in a social relationship, as Paolo Freire would say, we will not break the dialectic. It is not either-or, it is both-and. We will move towards a relationship of co-creation and collaboration centered on a relationship of equals that will lead to more justice and more peace.

Circle Faith Future is expanding the work of youth chaplaincy to a broader view of chaplaincy including climate chaplaincy. They will be taking a co-creative, strengths-based approach to resolving trauma in communities and individuals so that the healing of all of creation, from climate to children, can occur.
The passing of our beloved sibling in the struggle, Yosh Nakagawa, occurred just days before the 80th Anniversary of the issuance of Executive Order 9066. Yosh, having experienced firsthand the suffering of the resulting mass incarceration, was among the foremost witnesses for justice for all his years, sharing what he lived and calling on all of us to persist courageously in the work of an inclusive, liberating justice. His challenge to us on the Church Council’s 100th Anniversary in 2019 was to continue our historic quest for justice in the present, facing the issues of today with grace and tenacity. We honor Yosh by reaffirming our commitment to rise up to his challenge to us. We thank you, Yosh, for your leadership and for your clarity about the fundamental values of humanity to which all are accountable. Yosh Nakagawa, presente!” – Michael Ramos, CCGS Executive Director

“We worked together for many years in the Asian Pacific Task Force at the Church Council of Greater Seattle and the Council for Pacific Asian Theology. Yosh was a highly successful businessman and put his deeply religious beliefs and life’s experiences of “all people are created equal” into his work and life. I miss the lunches and talks and strategizing of our special group of faith based people and clergy. I have been so privileged to have known Yosh and people like him. They used their time on this earth to work for social justice.” – Cindy Domingo, current member of the CCGS Asian Pacific Task Force

“I sought out Yosh 18 years ago to do an oral history interview and was captivated by his life story of struggles, entrepreneurship, and social justice activism. Yosh was a tireless promoter and became the head of Seattle’s largest sporting goods company, Osborn & Ulland. After doing the Denso interview, Yosh would call me several times a year and regale me with stories of Arthur Ashe, Magic Johnson, and Billie Jean King. However, the real purpose of his calls was to listen to me and lift my spirits. He would always end the conversation reminding me of the importance of our work and give effusive praise for the work of Denso...in ways that left tears in my eyes. Rest in Peace Yosh, and thank you for the talks.” – Tom Ikeda, founding Executive Director of Denso

“A celebration of life will be held later this year when it can be done so more safely. If you would like more information, please e-mail the family at yoshnakagawaou@gmail.com. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts can be made in Yosh’s name to the charity of your choice.” – the Nakagawa Family via Yosh’s Obituary
2021 financial report

Public Support and Revenue
- 9,000 Foundations
- 44,215 Religious Organizations
- 218,107 Individuals
- 21,690 Businesses & Organizations
- 375,000 Board Released Funds (Incl. Seattle Found. COO and Hughes Found.)
- 625 Misc. Revenue
**$668,637 Total Public Support and Revenue**

Expenses
- 503,473 Personnel
- 41,205 Professional Services
- 16,151 Office Costs
- 24,507 Occupancy
- 34,692 Equipment & Technology
- 31,713 Direct Assistance
- 13,724 Other
**$665,465 Total Expense**

**$3,172 Total Excess**

*These numbers are unaudited.*

2021 donors & sponsors

Thank you for supporting local faith-rooted leaders to transform and heal our communities. Your partnership and commitment to our collective movement toward justice is seen, felt, and appreciated. Thank you for all the ways you show up for justice!

**FOUNDATIONS** • The John C. & Karyl Kay Hughes Foundation • Seattle Foundation • Loyal Bigelow & Jedediah Dewey Foundation • University Christian Church Legacy Foundation

**FAITH ORGANIZATIONS - DENOMINATIONS** • Community of Christ - Greater Pacific Northwest • Episcopal Diocese of Olympia • Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches • Northwest Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) • Presbytery of Seattle • The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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**FAITH ORGANIZATIONS - CONGREGATIONS**
- Alki United Church of Christ
- All Pilgrims Christian Church
- Bethany United Church Of Christ
- Community of Christ - Crystal Springs Congregation
- Community of Christ - Rainier Congregation
- Community of Christ - Woodland Park Congregation
- Congregational Church On Mercer Island U.C.C.
- Fairwood Community United Methodist Church
- Fauntleroy Church U.C.C.
- First Congregational Church, Bellevue
- Gethsemane Lutheran Church
- Haller Lake United Methodist Church
- Immanuel Lutheran Church
- Journey Christian Church
- Keystone Congregational U.C.C.
- Newport Presbyterian Church
- Normandy Park Congregational UCC
- Northshore United Church Of Christ
- Our Redeemer’s Lutheran Church
- Plymouth Church
- Prospect Congregational United Church Of Christ
- Queen Anne Christian Church
- Queen Anne United Methodist Church
- Renton United Methodist Church
- Richmond Beach Congregational
- Saint Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral
- Sand Point Community United Methodist Church
- Seattle First Baptist Church
- Seattle Mennonite Church
- St. Andrew Presbyterian
- St. James Cathedral
- St. Paul’s U.C.C.
- University Congregational U.C.C.
- University Friends Meeting
- University Lutheran Church
- University Temple United Methodist Church
- University Unitarian Church
- Woodland Park Presbyterian Church

**EMPLOYEE MATCHING AND WORKPLACE GIVING**
- Abbott Laboratories
- Boeing Employees Credit Union
- Costco.com/ Costco Wholesale
- Google Matching Gifts Program
- King County Employee Giving
- Microsoft Giving Campaign
- United Health Group

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- Robert Anderson
- Robert Andrews
- Len & Judy Andrews
- June Arnett
- Diane & Jean-Loup Baer
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- Catherine Gunstone
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- The Rev. Kacey Hahn

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