

The Pulse

St. James Presbyterian Church

JANUARY 2014

“A Vulnerable Place” by Pastor Jon Hauerwas

From the roof, it was easy to see the delivery truck coming. I even had a hunch that the driver might be looking for me. Just that morning, my wife had said, “If a package arrives today, don’t open it. It’s your Christmas present.” And so there it was, right on time. The weather that day was bright and clear. But it was also brutally cold, with temperatures fluctuating from the teens to the twenties.

Before Thanksgiving, I had promised my wife that I would attach Christmas lights to the gutters. December was now slipping away, and I was quickly regretting my procrastination. In this kind of weather, my body could only take so much before I felt compelled to stop and retreat to the comfort of our home. Once inside, I was able to regain some of the strength I needed to face the harsh realities of winter.

When the driver approached my door that day, my hands were feeling numb yet again, and I thought about how difficult it must be to face this kind of weather for weeks on end. “It’s not a very nice day to be delivering packages, is it,” I offered. “I was thinking the same thing about what you’re doing,” she replied. “The things we do for love,” I said. “Yeah,” she continued, “and the things we do for money.”

In life, we all make a series of choices. Sometimes we carefully weigh our options. At other times, we act impulsively or make ill-advised decisions. This is, of course, part of what it means to be human. Admittedly, I could choose to hang Christmas lights on another day, or even not to hang them at all! And if the cold weather truly was a hardship for the delivery truck driver, she could likely find another line of work. But, we had each determined that this is how we wanted to spend our time.

One could argue that homelessness is a choice, and I would even agree that, at times, it is. There are individuals who could find lasting employment and long-term accommodation, but who choose to “live rough,” instead. For others, the situation is more complex. Obvious mental illness keeps some out of the workforce for extended periods of time. Meanwhile, others are simply born into a life of abject poverty. Every day, a number of American children live under bridges, or in tents, or in the back seats of automobiles. Would anyone ever claim that their living conditions are a choice?



The day after temporarily fastening hundreds of twinkling lights onto my roof, I served as a volunteer at the Interfaith Coalition emergency cold weather shelter. When the doors opened at 5pm, homeless men began lining up and signing in by the dozens. I learned that the night before, the shelter had hosted over 70 men and, by the time my shift had finished at 9pm that evening, the head count was well into the 60s.

Coming face to face with these men, you have a greater awareness of how vulnerable they really are. On the streets, they have witnessed a variety of evils, which helps to explain why, even in the relative safety of the emergency shelter, these men compete with one another for the best sleeping spaces. A corner is typically preferable because the extra wall provides a sense of added safety. It protects one from others who might sneak up from behind to steal a few, meager possessions or commit an assault on the one who is sleeping. Understandably, survival is deeply engrained in the homeless psyche.

Continues...

PULSE

That night, several of the men engaged me in conversation. One told me about his experiences as a veteran of the war in Vietnam. I learned how his memories still haunted him and how he had turned to alcohol to self-medicate those “hidden” wounds. Another man spoke with me about a book that he was reading. The particular passage that he showed me discussed the dangers of over-medicating youth who are considered too disruptive in the classroom. “This happened to me,” he said. Yet another man told me that he never finished high school. Even still, he instantly pegged me as a pastor, claiming that I both looked and acted the part. After learning that I serve a Presbyterian church, he asked if I had ever seen the 1955 film, *A Man Called Peter*, based on the life of Presbyterian minister Peter Marshall. “Marshall was twice appointed Chaplain of the U.S. Senate,” he noted.

Each of these men has a story, and I had just begun to scratch the surface. I knew that it would be easy to judge them, and even easier to simply ignore them. But, I was there for another purpose – to listen, to serve, and to try to understand them, if only imperfectly. A homeless shelter is a terribly (some might say, beautifully,) vulnerable place. Conversations naturally emerge and, in that process, we are invited to participate in the life of the “other.”

My shift ended at 9pm, and I soon returned home to the warm glow of Christmas lights. Once inside, I was touched by a new appreciation for the many blessings in my life – a comfortable bed, plenty of food, and more stuff than I could ever need or use. Now, as the story continues, I can only pledge to do my part, and to live always with a grateful heart.

Peace,
Jon

Thank you from the Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County

Thank you for the recent financial contributions to Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County. The congregation’s gifts are a blessing to homeless families in need of emergency housing, to those in search of affordable healthcare, to struggling families who can’t afford new winter coats, and to folks without safe places to sleep during the most severe weather.

Thank you for bringing a sense of peace to our most vulnerable neighbors.

In the words of Marlene, a mother who was grateful for Interfaith Coalition housing for homeless families:

“This house was a haven for us when we were in dark flood waters drowning...it really made us feel welcome and safe, so thank you everyone.”

Because of St. James Presbyterian Church, 2014 will begin brighter for those who’ve been struggling in the dark.

We thank you for bringing the blessing of warmth, healthcare and safety to our most vulnerable neighbors.

Faithfully yours,
Laura DeRose Harker, Executive Director
Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County

“When you are done changing, you’re done.”

- Benjamin Franklin, quoted in the *Billings, Montana, Gazette*

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

- President Theodore Roosevelt, quoted in *BleacherReport.com*

Health Moment

A few weeks ago we included an insert in the worship bulletin pointing out why good health is important for everyone and especially you who are part of the St. James family. You feel more alive, have a more cheerful outlook on life and relationships with fellow humans, you save time and money through fewer health care visits, you can be more giving of time and treasure to your fellow humans and St. James, and you can be a more productive person at the local, state, federal and international levels.

One of the most valuable things for good health is exercise. Within the walls of St. James we offer three valuable classes which aid in acquiring and maintaining good health through improving range of motion of your appendages and toning muscle groups. The classes are (1) gentle seated yoga. The exercises are done in a seated or standing position, with no rolling around on the floor. The class meets Thursdays at 10 a.m. in the Horizon Room and the dues are \$15.00 a month. Scholarships are available if the dues will keep you away.

(2) Yoga. This is regular yoga and much is done on the floor from mats. It is a bit more rigorous and concentrates on toning and strengthening muscle groups. Both yoga classes concentrate on breathing and relaxation which are useful for removing stress and improving a healthy mental outlook. Yoga meets on Tuesdays at 2 p.m. in the Horizon Room and dues are \$15.00 a month. Scholarships available. (3) Cross-fit exercise. So called because it promotes cardio vascular conditioning. It includes expanding lung capacity and heart health. Cross-fit meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4 p.m. in Fellowship Hall downstairs and the dues are \$25.00 a month with scholarships available. For more information please contact Bob Monahan at 733-3947 or email at robtmonahan@comcast.net

More on healthy living in the future.

Find the Snowman Family Game Night

Saturday, January 18th

6pm-9pm (dinner begins at 6:30pm)

Join Us on a Snowman Search!

Bring your favorite comfort foods for a potluck dinner. After dinner we'll play word games like Scrabble, Taboo, Bananagrams or Boggle (or bring your own word game to share).

There will be babysitting for the young ones.

Interfaith Coalition Seeks Donations for Annual Hope Auction

To everything there is a season. And the season for Interfaith Coalition's biggest fundraising event of the year is in March - the 2014 Hope Auction will be **Saturday, March 22**. Plan to attend and enjoy an evening of fun and community spirit, and the proceeds will support housing for homeless families and health care for all in need. The evening begins at 5:30 p.m. at the Best Western Lakeway Inn in Bellingham.

Your help is needed to ensure the auction's success! Do you have an auction item or service to donate that would raise essential funds to support programs for our neighbors in need? Popular items include a craft or art item, service your business provides, weekend or vacation home, gift certificate, tickets to a concert, or a dinner or theme party.

There are many other possibilities, as well. Simply think of what appeals to you; chances are those same things will appeal to others. Financial contributions and event sponsorships are another option. If you'd like to participate in making the auction a huge success by offering a donation or purchasing tickets, please contact Bob Monahan or Kara Hauerwas.

PULSE**Session Highlights**

At the December 8th meeting Session voted to:

- Approve funds to provide Wi-Fi service throughout the church.
- Approve a film festival, workshops and Preach-In about environmental issues for the weekend of February 15-16.
- Approve funds for AED defibrillator certification required by manufacturer.
- Approved the 2014 budget for presentation at the January 26 Annual Meeting.
- Approved a 1.5% COLA pay raise for all employees as recommended by North Puget Sound Presbytery.

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 26 immediately following worship. At that time the Annual Report, Pastor Jon's Terms of Call and the 2014 budget will be presented for approval by the congregation. Trustees will also be elected. Please plan to attend this important annual meeting.

New Members Class

Would you like to learn more about St. James or are you interested in becoming a member? A New Members Class will be held on Sundays, January 5 and 12 at 9 am in the Scout Room downstairs. The class gives a brief overview of church government, practices, and a more in-depth discussion of St. James. There will be an opportunity to become a member, if you desire, at the worship service on January 12. For more information go to www.saintjamespres.org or call the church office at 360-733-1325.

General Fund

If you have any questions about your pledge or giving for 2013, please email the treasurer, Susanne at greshamse@gmail.com or call 360-593-4173. Giving statements will be mailed before Jan. 15.

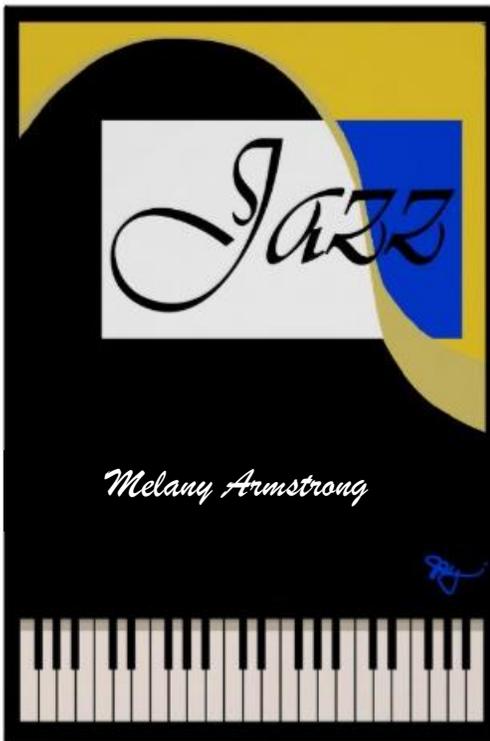
General Fund	November, 2013		YTD 2013	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Income	\$19,329	\$16,620	\$215,349	\$198,750
Expenses	17,684	18,674	180,365	198,972
Net	\$1,645	(\$2,054)	\$34,984	(\$222)

**In This Corner**

An Ohio Presbyterian boy was chatting with his mother after going to Sunday School for the first time. His mother asked him if he liked his teacher. "She was all right," the answer came. "What's her name?" the mother asked. "I don't know," he answered, "but she's Jesus grandmother." Aghast, the mother asked, "What do you mean?" "Well," said the lad, "all she could talk about was Jesus, Jesus, Jesus and she had lots of pictures." *Presbyterian Outlook*

"It's not the load that breaks you down; it's the way you carry it."

Lena Horne, quoted in *HuffingtonPost.com*

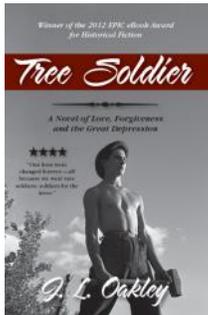


FREE CONCERT! STARRING MELANY ARMSTRONG JANUARY 26TH AT 2PM

Let's do my favorite jazz pieces this time for my concert. I love a relaxed concert, so this is my idea of relaxed and fun. My husband, Dave will M.C., with his great radio speaking voice and his television good looks. Oh, and he wants to sing "St. James Infirmary" in honor of St. James Presbyterian Church, of course. Let's see what I have. How about "Strange Meadow Lark" and "Take Five" by Dave Brubeck. There's "Lucy and Charlie Brown" and "Base Ball Theme" from Charles Schultz's Peanuts cartoon characters, written by Vince Guaraldi's for the TV specials. There's that classy Penthouse Serenade arranged by Cy Walter, and that great collection of George Shearing jazz pieces written in the style of and for jazz pianists like Dave Brubeck, Oscar Peterson, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Jackie & Roy, and George Shearing's own Lullaby of Birdland. Oh, and I found some great Beatles tunes, Yellow Submarine, etc. Don't want to spoil it by giving too much information.

TREE SOLDIER by Janet L. Oakley A novel of love, forgiveness, and the great depression.

All of us in the Saint James community can be proud of Janet Oakley, for writing and publishing this great historical novel. It is based on experiences of forestry work in the CCC work camps during the 1930s depression, organized under the F.D.R. Roosevelt administration. The novel was the winner of the 2012 EPIC eBook award for historical fiction.



In May, she won the Mayor's Art Award for history and writing in May. In the summer, she went to Gettysburg with her big brother John and relived the times her great-grandfather was there 150 years before as an assistant surgeon in the 11th PA. In September, she went on a 13 day Rick Steves tour through France. A student there 47 years ago, it was a big item on her bucket list.

Her novel, *Tree Soldier*, was selected as the 2013 Everybody Reads for novel for the Lewis and Clark Valley and neighboring Palouse communities. For 5 days, she was feted by librarians all over the region, meeting book clubs and library patrons who had read *Tree Soldier*. Even had some CCC boys show up for her talks. Truly a writer's dream tour. The prequel, *Timber Rose*, is close to publication.

In her acknowledgements, Janet includes the late Hank Reasoner, also a long-time member of Saint James. Hank was a forestry specialist. He provided Janet with insight about forestry practices in our area.

“No snowflake in an avalanche ever feels responsible.”

Poet Stanislaw Lec, quoted in *The Boston Globe*

PULSE

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF ST. JAMES

Come join us Tuesday, January 28th 28, 2014
10:30am – Bible Study, 5th lesson in the Lounge
12:00pm – Salad Potluck Luncheon in the Horizon room

Our guest speaker will be Janet Oakley. She will be speaking on her latest book to be published later this year *Timber Rose*.

ANGEL TREE

Many thanks to all who helped to organize and set up the Advent 2013 “Angel Tree”. Many thanks also to the generous members of the St. James community, to provide gifts (in kind as well as money) for the 45 tags on the tree. The gifts were wrapped after the service on December 15, and taken for distribution by Interfaith Coalition.

PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The January prayer vigil will be hosted by Faith Lutheran Church, on Saturday, January 18 at 5:30 p.m. Faith Lutheran Church is located at 2750 McLeod Road (near corner with NW Avenue). Tel. 360-733-3970

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE

Saturday, January 18, at SYRE Center, Whatcom Community College. Doors open at 9:30 p.m., program from 10 a.m., till 3 p.m. Sponsored by Whatcom Human rights Task Force and Whatcom Peace and Justice center. Workshops include “Root Causes of Injustice Related to Indigenous People” and “Coast Salish Historical Trauma”.

UNITED FOR HEALTH CARE

Thursday, January 23, 7 p.m. at St. Luke Community Health Education Center, 3333 Squalicum Parkway (near St. Joseph Hospital), “Obamacare Update”.

January Birthdays

- 1 Teresa Bowers
- 2 Phil Jones
- 3 Susan Burkland
- 7 Stacey Miller
- 8 Marty Haines
- 11 Don Mellinger
- 12 Marv Blount
- 13 Nancy Pace
- 15 Karen Summers
- 16 Joan Elsethagen
- 17 Dwayne Rogers
- 18 Genevie Pfueller Roguski
- 20 Wayne Landis
- 21 Peg Wilke
- 22 Michael Hoffman
- 23 Hailey Caruso
- 26 Melany Armstrong
- 26 Betty Miller
- 28 Mark Danielson
- 31 Marlene Amman

January Anniversaries

- 2 Ed Simmers and Jane Madden



**Come help with the
stewardship of the church
building!**

We have a work party on the second Saturday of every month, and as they say, “Many hands makes light work!” There’s always plenty to do and we need help at all levels – dusting to painting to yard maintenance to general clean up. Please join us on January 11th at 9am (until approx. noon) to experience just how much fun it can be to help care for our beautiful building and property. No need to bring anything – we have plenty of supplies. Please contact Jeanne Uhles if you have any questions. Hope to see you on January 11th at 9am!!

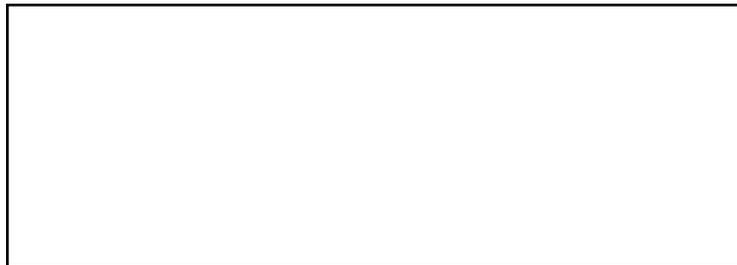
JANUARY CALENDAR 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Year Day 6pm SOS Men's AA	2 10am Yoga 11am Staff 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 5:30pm Congregational Life 5:30pm Building & Grounds 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:30pm Choir 7:30pm AA	3	4 10am OA 1pm Bellingham Ukulele Group (BUG)
5 9am Adult Bible Class 9am New Members Class 9am Fellowship Breakfast 10:30am Worship - Communion, Instal- lation/Ordination of Officers 7pm AA	6 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 6:45pm Boy Scouts	7 8am Prayer Group 2pm Yoga 2:30pm Christian Faith Formation 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 5:30pm AI Anon 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	8 8am Men's Bible Study 5pm Finance 6pm SOS Men's AA 6:15pm Mission & Social Action 6:30pm Weavers Guild	9 10am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:30pm Choir 7:30pm AA	10 12pm Prime Timers 4:30-7pm Parents Night Out	11 9am Church Work Party 10am OA
12 9am Adult Bible Class 9am New Members Class & Session 9am Fellowship Breakfast 10:30am Worship 7pm AA	13 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 6:45pm Boy Scouts	14 8am Prayer Group 2pm Yoga 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 5:30pm AI Anon 7pm Preschool Parent Meeting 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	15 8am Men's Bible Study 6pm SOS Men's AA	16 PULSE DUE! 10am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:30pm Choir 7:30pm AA	17	18 9am Deacons Retreat followed by Session & Deacons Meeting 10am OA 5:30pm Prayer Vigil for Peace in the Middle East at Faith Lutheran 6pm Family Game Night
19 9am Adult Bible Class 9am Fellowship Breakfast 10:30am Worship 7pm AA	20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study	21 8am Prayer Group 10:30pm Personnel 2pm Yoga 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 5:30pm AI Anon 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	22 8am Men's Bible Study 6pm SOS Men's AA	23 10am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:30pm Choir 7:30pm AA	24 4:15pm Member- ship	25 10am OA 5:30pm Music Teachers Assoc.
26 9am Adult Bible Class 9am Fellowship Breakfast 10:30am Worship - Annual Congrega- tional Meeting 11:30am Sermon Feedback 2pm Jazz Concert 5pm Hawthorne Solutions 7pm AA	27 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7pm St. James Literary	28 8am Prayer Group 10:30am Women's Bible Study 12pm Women's Luncheon 2pm Yoga 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 5:30pm AI Anon 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	29 8am Men's Bible Study 10am Pulse Crew 6pm SOS Men's AA	30 10am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit Exercise Class 6pm Worship Com- mittee 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:30pm Choir 7:30pm AA	31	

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St. James Presbyterian Church

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www.saintjamespres.org
office@saintjamespres.org
360-733-1325

Ministers: The Congregation
Melany Armstrong, Organist/Pianist
Susanne Gresham, Treasurer
Tim Chandonnet, Custodian
Gary Culbertson, Interim Director of Educational Programs
The Rev. Jon Hauerwas, Pastor
Carolyn Mullen, Music Director
Natasha Orme, Office Administrator
Kayla Stejstal, Teacher for 3, 4 and 5 year olds
Carolyn Trainer, Youth Leader



Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto man His Son hath given;
While angels sing with tender mirth,
A glad new year to all the earth.

Martin Luther
Biography and Information

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study
9:00 a.m. Fellowship Breakfast
10:30 a.m. Worship
10:45 a.m. Children's Time

Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
You may reach Pastor Jon after 2pm at
360-510-1750 email:
jon@saintjamespres.org

Don't forget to check out the St. James website for all of the latest church information, sermons, daily prayers and more!
saintjamespres.org