

# the Pulse

January 2019

## THE SAINT JAMES PRESBYTERIAN MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



### Making Space for Epiphany

On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me...

On the second day...

On the third day...

Okay, are we almost done?

*Twelve Days of Christmas* — the song references the season of celebration that follows Christmas Day and leads—twelve days later—to Epiphany! Twelve days of celebration and festivities...sounds about right, doesn't it?

See, the problem is that so many of us front load our Christmas celebrations by preparing for Advent, that by the time we reach December 26, we are ready to box it all up and be done!

I hope this note finds you in such a place. Really. Because we have now entered January and find ourselves in the

Season of Epiphany — the days that invite us, like the wise travelers in the Gospel of Matthew, to remain in the presence of Christ. Has Christmas worn you out? Perhaps it would be the very best thing to do to box up all the presents, the tree, and make your life a bit more spare in this season, preparing space for the true gifts of the Savior to be discovered.

Thankfully, we have a rising cultural practice of “decluttering” that can help us in this season. Box up the excess, clear out the “too-much” and embrace the barrenness of this bleak midwinter season in hopes that it will actually open up room in your life and heart for what matters most.

We are invited to make space in our hearts and homes for Christ’s call to be heard and seen in our lives. Hearing and seeing requires intentionally setting aside space to set our hearts and minds on what matters. It is in this season that we make commitments to turn fully toward God in this coming year. Think about a traveler that is following a star — they stay focused on their destination and arrange their travel accordingly, *day by day*.

At the beginning of the year, we as a congregation take part in this process of re-ordering of our collective life. For example, we hold our Annual Meeting (Sunday, January 27, 2019) where we will receive the Session adopted budget for 2019 and ordain and install new elders and deacons. This month, our congregation will be preparing for a new season of church governance as we head into the coming year.

My hope for you in this season is that you would find ways to make space for the Light of Christ to shine in your life a bit more. How can you clear space, after weeks of celebration, for Christ’s light to shine in? Can you open up the curtains and crack the windows in your hearts and homes so that the light lift you up? Can you find spaces where you can reflect and be inspired by the love of Christ that has been so generously given to each of us? May you find this blessed light of Epiphany,.

Grace and peace,

Seth



## RESPONSE

We love hearing how themes from *Grace & Peace* have connected with what God is doing in your own story. If you have a response to Pastor Seth's article from a recent Pulse issue, send it to us at [office@saintjamespres.org](mailto:office@saintjamespres.org).

from November 2018 *Gratitude* >>

When asked to write about what I'm thankful about, my first thought was, "Everything". Each day is filled with so much for which I am thankful – life itself, my health, my partner, my St. James community and the larger community of Bellingham. My life is filled with wonderful people and enjoyable activities. It's easy to float through a day not thinking ... and missing out on the opportunity to deliberately say "thank you" to others and to God.

We all experience difficulties in life, when it's not easy to feel thankful, when we might need to search for people and things for which we give thanks. During my own dark times, the beauty of nature often rekindled my gratitude. That and my relationship with God. When I reflect on all God has done for me, it takes my breath away.

*Merry Thomas grew up in Minnesota and has lived in nearly every corner of the United States as well as in the U.K. before settling in Bellingham five years ago. She worked most of her adult life in journalism – magazines in Southern California, and newspapers in northern Nevada. She has dabbled in archeology, education and library science.*



Merry with John Knox statue last September, in St. Giles Church in Edinburgh, Scotland.

### January Birthdays

- 1 Teresa Bowers
- 3 Susan Burkland
- 5 Kyle Anderson
- 8 Marty Haines
- 11 Don Mellinger
- 11 Zach Engels
- 15 Karen Summers
- 16 Joan Elsethagen
- 17 Dwayne Rogers
- 18 Genevieve Pfueller Roguski
- 23 Hailey Caruso
- 26 Betty Miller
- 31 Marlene Amman

### January Anniversaries

- 2 Ed Simmers and Jane Madden

### ANGEL TREE UPDATE

Thank you so much to all who purchased gifts for our families. The "wishes" and needs of these 2 families came to us via Interfaith Council and were made known to our congregation through the "wings" attached to the Angel Tree in the Fellowship Hall. I am pleased to know that we helped to bring smiles where there may not have been if not for this wonderful program. Thank you for taking part. Thank you too to Julie and Craig Keyes and Dick Carr who helped wrap the gifts you brought, and to Cheryl McGregor for delivering them to the gift drop off place on Monday.

*Kay Carr*

### Give to Saint James Online!

Using our online system you can donate a few ways:

- \* Give from your bank account
- \* Make a one-time donation or set up a recurring gift
- \* Designate your gifts as part of your annual pledge
- \* Designate your per capita contribution

Go to: <https://saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving>

### NOVEMBER FINANCIAL STATUS

Our expenses exceed our income through November in the amount of -\$12,030. Our projected budget deficit for 2018 is -\$10,982. Hopefully the December financials will show a reduction in this deficit to end the year.

### 2018 STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

St. James has received 59 pledges for a total pledged amount for 2019 of \$160,416. As you can see this amount is short of the goal of \$190,000. The goal was intended to cover commitments that Session has approved during the 2018 year for 2019.

### 2019 BUDGET FOR ST. JAMES

Session has approved a budget for 2019 which shows that our projected expenses will exceed our projected income by -\$34,015. There is a very minor portion of our budgets that can be adjusted without impacting staffing. Staffing is by far our largest expense each year. The Finance Committee encourages all members to attend the annual membership meeting that will be held **January 27th, 2019** right after our morning worship service. The annual report should be available to read a week before the meeting. Come prepared to ask questions.

Dick Carr  
*Finance Committee Chair*

	November	Current Budget	Year-to-Date	Year-to-Date Budget
Income	\$17,766	\$26,619	\$199,265	\$204,388
Expenses	\$22,792	\$24,430	\$210,247	\$205,146

### MISSION & SOCIAL ACTION

Your **St. James Mission and Social Action Team** has good news to share! We expect our funding in 2019 to be about \$17,000, the same as in 2018. We plan to again disburse 60% of available funds for local needs in our community, and 30% beyond our community, including international missions. We will also reserve 10% of the funds for discretionary use during the year.

*We invite you to join us as we consider how to grow our team, our outreach and our support in and beyond our community. We meet monthly at 3:30 pm on the 1st Wednesday of the month.*

Here is a sample of the agencies and organizations we have funded this year, thanks to your generous donations. A complete list of recipients will be available in your 2018 annual report.

#### IN OUR COMMUNITY

Interfaith Coalition/Family Promise	\$2,400
Habitat for Humanity of Whatcom County	\$2,400
Lighthouse Mission	\$2,000
Bellingham Food Bank	\$2,000

#### BEYOND OUR COMMUNITY

PCUSA Mission	\$3,000
PCUSA Disaster Relief	\$1,000
Presbytery	\$1,000



## CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRIES



Happy New Year! We had a great December and Advent season. We had an awesome turn-out for our Christmas Eve service with a lot of great participation from our St. James kids. The change drive the students held to raise money for *Feed My Starving Children* was a change drive success! So far the kids have raised over \$30.

We are looking forward to a great new year with a lot of new things coming. Starting on January 9<sup>th</sup> we will be having a weekly Toddler Time session on Wednesdays from 8:30am-10:00am. We will also be hosting a movie night on Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup>. There will be a movie set up for kids in the nursery along with a movie set up in the fellowship hall for adults. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Stay tuned for movie details!

The **Adult Bible Study** meets Sunday mornings and will be following the weekly lectionary and studying the text for that Sunday. Please note the new start time of 9:30am. If you need child care please contact Tracy Caruso at [tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org)

Tracy Caruso  
*Director of Children and Family Ministries*

*We are always looking for volunteer nursery workers or anyone interested in teaching Godly Play, please let Tracy know if you are interested in either. Our wish list has been updated and can be found at <http://www.wishlitr.com/saintjamescfm/>*

## GODLY PLAY SCHEDULE

### January 6<sup>th</sup>: Epiphany

In this lesson we remember the arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem. We will recall together all the weeks in Advent as we had before Christmas but give special attention to the final purple candle, the one that represents the three kings. We will stop here and pay attention to what the three gifts were and what they symbolize as gifts for a baby who is the Messiah.

### January 13<sup>th</sup>: Holy Baptism

In this lesson we learn that Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into the Church. For Christians, this rite is the gateway into the family of families we call the Church. We ask the children to remember or look forward to the day of their baptism by lighting candles from the light of the Christ Candle, since this is also the day they receive their "light."

### January 20<sup>th</sup>: Parable of the Good Shepherd

In this lesson we hear the parable of the Good Shepherd, in which the shepherd searches for his one lost sheep, leaving the other ninety-nine to do so. This parable is often considered more of an identity statement than a parable.

### January 27<sup>th</sup>: Work Day



# INTERFAITH COALITION

Partners in faith. Changing lives.

## SAVE THE DATE!

*Hope Auction 2019*

*Interfaith Coalition's annual **Hope Auction** is the biggest fundraiser of the year for *Interfaith Coalition*. It features one of our community's largest silent and live auctions, among friends who believe in the potential of every child and family in our community. Our March Hope auction was an evening of abundant generosity and support and we are deeply appreciative of the community for partnering with us to transform the lives of people in need of a fresh start. Together, we offer emergency and transitional housing, meals, warm clothing, and faith in a brighter day. This year's auction will be held on **March 23, 2019**.*

*Please join us by donating auction items, attending the benefit, or becoming an auction sponsor.*

*Please contact Interfaith Coalition at 360-734-3983 for more information!*



In February of each year, choirs and music groups from member congregations of *Interfaith Coalition* come together to share spiritual music from diverse traditions. Music ensembles and choirs perform individual pieces and then all the singers come together for a joyful combined choir of over 200 singers. This is a delightful afternoon of spiritual music. If your choir or music ensemble is interested in participating, please contact Laura Harker at [laura@interfaith-coalition.org](mailto:laura@interfaith-coalition.org).

*An offering to benefit Interfaith Coalition will be accepted.*

This year's concert will be on Sunday, February 24 at 3:00pm at First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Avenue



Because of you, this new year finds: Many families are in safe homes instead of homelessness and fear; 3,000 of our neighbors have coats & hats to stay warm this winter; people on the streets know that a simple meal and friendly smile awaits them at CAST each week; 105 families enjoyed the holidays with the help of

generous gift donors; and thousands of children have discovered the joy of snuggling up with a good book. On their behalf - Thank you and may you also enjoy hope and joy in the new year!

*For over 35 years, the member congregations of Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County have been working together to eliminate homelessness and poverty in Whatcom County. [www.interfaith-coalition.org](http://www.interfaith-coalition.org)*

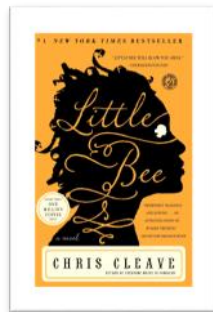
PULSE

**Presbyterian Women**

The women of the church will meet Tuesday, Jan. 22, for the monthly Bible study at 10:30 a.m. and luncheon at noon. The Bible study is based on Lesson Five from the Horizon “God’s Promise” curriculum. The focus will be on “God With Us When We’re Powerless”. The primary Scriptures are 2 Chronicles 20: 1-4, Deuteronomy 20: 1-4. This month’s luncheon will be soup and bread, provided by the hostesses.

**St. James Book Club**

Our selection for the **January 21th** meeting is *Little Bee* by Chris Cleave. **Meetings are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month in the Lounge at 7pm.** The library book kits will be kept in the office. Grab a book and join us!



**Church Pianist/Accompanist**

We seeking to hire someone for ongoing support of the music program at St. James. If you know someone who may be interested, please have them contact Carolyn Mullen at [zolhavn@gmail.com](mailto:zolhavn@gmail.com) a with cover letter and resume.

**Annual Meeting**

We will hold our annual congregational meeting on January 27 following worship. The meeting will be to approve the Session adopted budgets and terms of call for Pastor Seth. All are welcome to attend to hear reports of God’s faithfulness in our ministry--looking back on 2018 and into the year ahead.

**Annual Reports**

Committee chairs and elders, please complete and submit your annual reports by Wednesday, January 9 as we are beginning to compile them for our January 27 annual meeting.

**Property Manager Position at Interfaith Coalition**

Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County seeks a half-time property manager and maintenance person to work with our small staff in a dynamic, non-profit organization. The coalition is a partnership of diverse congregations and operates a network of homes with support for families experiencing homelessness. The ideal candidate has a variety of maintenance and construction skills, compassion for the population we serve, and is self-directed and organized. For a complete job description, please email [laura@interfaith-coalition.org](mailto:laura@interfaith-coalition.org) or visit the website: <https://www.interfaith-coalition.org/our-story/job-openings/>

**Pulse**

How are you clearing space in your home and heart this month to remain present to the light of Christ? What practices and intentions do you set to start your year? Send your response to [office@saintjamespres.org](mailto:office@saintjamespres.org) -- we’d love to include it in next month’s issue!

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**PROGRAMS SHARING OUR ST. JAMES FACILITY**

**AA Men’s Book Study Group:** 6:30pm, Mondays

**AI Anon:** 5:30pm, Tuesdays

**AA SOS Men’s Group:** 6:00pm, Wednesdays

**AA Fairhaven Group:** 7:15pm, Thursdays and Sundays

**OA:** 10:00am, Saturdays



910 14th Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

[office@saintjamespres.org](mailto:office@saintjamespres.org)

(360) 733-1325

[saintjamespres.org](http://saintjamespres.org)

**Bayside Co-op Preschool Information:** (360-733-3972)

**Hawthorne Learning Solutions:** Contact Matt and Emily Hawthorne [hlearningsolutions@gmail.com](mailto:hlearningsolutions@gmail.com) for times and dates.

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

01 02 03 04 05

New Year's Day  
10:15am Yoga  
5:30am AI Anon  
7:30pm WA Gender Alliance

3:30pm Mission & Social Action  
6:00pm SOS Men's AA  
7:00pm CFF

10:15am Yoga  
6:30pm Bell Choir  
7:15pm AA  
Fairhaven  
7:30pm Choir

4:00pm St. James Fitness

10:00am OA

06 07 08 09 10 11 12

9:30am Adult Bible Study  
10:30am Worship/ Communion  
6:15pm AA  
Fairhaven

10:00am Grief Support  
4:00pm St. James Fitness  
5:15pm Tai Chi  
6:30pm Men's Book Study  
7:00pm Boy Scouts

9:00am Personnel  
10:15am Yoga  
5:30pm AI Anon  
5:30pm Building & Grounds  
6:00pm Finance  
6:30pm Bayside  
Co-op Parent Meetings  
7:30pm WA Gender Alliance

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE!  
8:30am Toddler Time  
6:00pm SOS Men's AA

10:15am Yoga  
6:30pm Bell Choir  
7:15pm AA  
Fairhaven  
7:30pm Choir

4:00pm St. James Fitness

10:00am OA  
1:00pm Bham Ukulele Group

13 14 15 16 17 18 19

9:30am Adult Bible Study  
10:30am Worship  
12:00pm Session  
7:15pm AA  
Fairhaven

4:00pm St. James Fitness  
5:15pm Tai Chi  
6:30pm Men's Book Study  
7:00pm Boy Scouts

10:15am Yoga  
5:30pm AI Anon  
7:30pm WA Gender Alliance

PULSE DUE!  
8:30am Toddler Time  
6:00pm SOS Men's AA

10:15am Yoga  
12:00 Worship & Music  
6:30pm Bell Choir  
7:15pm AA  
Fairhaven  
7:30pm Choir

4:00pm St. James Fitness  
5:30pm Prayer Vigil for Peace in the Middle East

9:30am Weavers Guild  
10:00am OA

20 21 22 23 24 25 26

9:30am Adult Bible Study  
10:30am Worship  
11:45 Deacons  
7:15pm AA  
Fairhaven

MLK JR. DAY  
4:00pm St. James Fitness  
5:15pm Tai Chi  
6:30pm AA Men's Book Study  
7:00pm Boy Scouts  
7:00pm Book Club

10:15am Yoga  
10:30am Pres. Women Bible Study & Luncheon  
5:30pm AI Anon  
7:30pm WA Gender Alliance

8:30am Toddler Time  
6:00pm SOS Men's AA

10:15am Yoga  
6:30pm Bell Choir  
7:15pm AA  
Fairhaven  
7:30pm Choir

4:00pm St. James Fitness  
5:30pm Movie Night

9:00am Hawthorne SAT Prep  
10:00am OA

27 28 29 30 31

9:30am Adult Bible Study  
10:30am Worship  
11:45am Annual Meeting  
7:15pm AA  
Fairhaven

4:00pm St. James Fitness  
5:15pm Tai Chi  
6:30pm Men's Book Study  
6:30pm Boy Scouts

10:15am Yoga  
5:30pm AI Anon  
7:30pm WA Gender Alliance

8:30am Toddler Time  
6:00pm SOS Men's AA

10:15am Yoga  
6:30pm Bell Choir  
7:15pm AA  
Fairhaven  
7:30pm Choir





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[office@saintjamespres.org](mailto:office@saintjamespres.org)  
360-733-1325  
Office Hours: Tue-Fri, 9am-2pm

**Sunday Worship Schedule**

9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study  
10:30 a.m. Worship  
10:45 a.m. Children's Time and Godly Play

**St. James Staff**

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas  
Children & Family Ministry: Tracy Caruso  
Ministry Assistant: Kate Hoskin  
Treasurer: Marina McLeod  
Music Director: Carolyn Mullen  
Teachers: Erika Singh-Cundy, Sophie Rose Kendrick, Lucy Sieczka