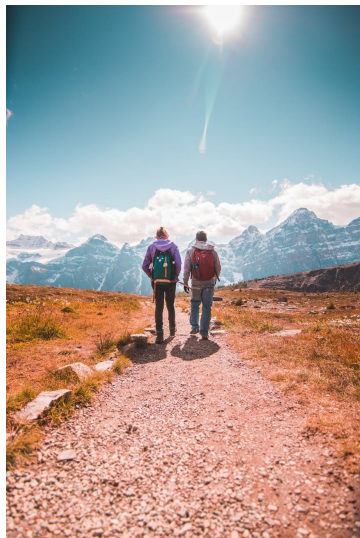


Vital Congregations: Lifelong Discipleship Formation



St. James is participating in the PC(USA)'s Vital Congregations Initiative in 2020-21. In his Pulse articles, Pastor Seth will be sharing a little about each of the 7 Marks of Vitality from the initiative in hopes of unpacking and exploring the concepts for our congregation. This month, we begin with Lifelong Discipleship Formation.

Throughout the Scriptures, the image of the journey is commonly used to illuminate the path we walk with God in our lives. The Hebrew people, journeying out of Egypt to the Promised Land. The missionary journeys of the Apostles, spreading the Good News around the Mediterranean region. The Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, the life-changing revelation of Jesus that sets Paul on another path altogether.

We recognize that our lives have a sense of journey to them. We talk about the road we're on, about how we share the adventure together with fellow sojourners. This is a perfect way for us to think about Lifelong Discipleship Formation. At its core, the concept is that we are a people who are being formed along the way of Jesus, step by step, from birth to death, from point to point of awakening and deepening in our faith together.

This is a clear mark of vitality and health in a church context in how a church is able to integrate and form people in their faith in various stages of life. How my 5-year-old son's needs are formed and learns is different from how I am as a 37-year-old. And we want to offer ways to come into contact with the stories and practices of Jesus for both 5-year-olds and 37-year-olds and 89-year-olds. The journey doesn't end when we discover the love of Jesus — truly, for us who have discovered it, it is the beginning of something greater than we could imagine.

At St. James, we try to prioritize Lifelong Discipleship Formation through the ways we offer Sunday school classes and book studies; through Sunday worship, with forms of worship that connect to a variety of tastes and developmental needs. We prioritize this formation by asking questions of how to best serve our growing children and youth programs: What do these younger members need and how can we support them? And we prioritize it by making sure all people feel welcome to belong, ask questions, and wrestle with their faith, at whatever stage they find themselves. None of what we do is perfect and we have plenty of room to grow, which is what is exciting about engaging in this process of exploring congregational vitality together.

One of the benefits of having a multi-generational congregation is that our faith journey can be passed on. On a journey, it is helpful to walk alongside someone who has been traveling for a while, someone who knows the terrain and can spot dangers, as well as point to the vistas that a less-experienced traveler may miss. When we share our faith journey with one another, we help each other along. You may not have the same questions as you did when you were 37, but how might you share the wisdom of moving through that part of the journey with someone my age? We have such an opportunity to help each other along the way, to help form those who are coming after us. We have the chance to pass our faith on, as a gift.

How do you witness the Mark of Vitality: Lifelong Discipleship Formation at St. James? What are some of the ways you have been influenced by fellow sojourners? Who has passed on the faith to you and who are you passing it on to now? I would love to hear some stories from you. Email me at pastor@saintjamespres.org to share!

Next month, look for my thoughts on the second Mark of Vitality: Intentional Authentic Evangelism!

Grace and Peace,



Rev. Seth Thomas

FINANCE UPDATE: 2019 FINALS

By Dick Carr, Finance Committee



Our year February through December Income and expenses indicate that we have excess funds of \$15,873 at the end of 2019.

There are many factors that have contributed to this wonderful financial result. May this be a lesson to St. James that this dramatic result is most likely to be a one of experience. This is also my final report as I go off session.

On-Line giving continues to be available for those who wish to use this option. Also Giving through your IRA account is also an option if you have to withdraw funds from your account by December 31, 2019.

saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving

	December	CURRENT BUDGET	YR TO DATE	YR TO DATE BUDGET
Income	\$30,041	\$16,688	\$248,386	\$210,691
Expenses	\$22,191	\$22,803	\$232,513	\$248,216

CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

By Tracy Caruso, Children & Family Ministry Director

What a great start to 2020!

Our Godly Play classroom started our parable series that will continue on to Lent. Jerome Berryman says that "it is important for children to encounter parables during childhood so they can develop the ability to hear with their own ears what Jesus was communicating when he spoke in parables." Our parable boxes use 2-dimensional materials to help reiterate that these are Jesus's words and stories to us. The wondering questions used for parable lessons are designed to encourage children to see that there are deeper meanings in the parables than what they might initially encounter.



In the nursery, we have included a story to parallel Godly Play each week. They are extremely short stories designed to get young children used to hearing stories from the bible.

Our nursery staff has 2 new additions so please welcome Frankie and Tova when you see them!

Our Wednesday morning Toddler Time program continues to welcome new faces from around our Bellingham community. A reminder that we follow Bellingham Public schools for weather-related cancellation/closures. We would love to see parents and children birth -5 join us from 8:30-10:30!

Our January movie night featured an excellent film, The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind, and although the snow impacted attendance it was a great night with pizza, popcorn, and fellowship.

(Christian Faith Formation continues)

Please mark your calendars for February 29th for a Bellingham Ukulele Group concert and dinner fundraiser on February 29th. More information to follow!

Our Sunday morning adult education class will continue to study the lectionary texts each week. The lectionary texts are posted each week in the weekly email announcements, if you don't currently receive that and would like to, please contact the office with your email. The class starts at 9:30 in the lounge, childcare is available in the nursery. All are welcome!

COLLIDE 2020 COMES TO HILLCREST CHURCH

*Collide Women's Conference, Friday, February 21st
Hillcrest Church, 1400 Larrabee Ave, Bellingham, WA 98225.*

We all want to be a part of something incredible. We want to experience miracles for our pain, witness transformation for those we love and be used for a purpose greater than ourselves. Yet, the temptation to cling to the safety of the familiar threatens to keep us away from the risk it takes to experience the impossible. But what if a life of miracles and adventure is waiting just on the other side of the invitation to go ahead and step into the unknown?

Guest speakers include Kristen Mattila, Willow Weston, Krista Hengesh.

This will be a night of inspiration as we call women to step out of their comfort zones into the space of the extraordinary.



INTERFAITH'S MUSIC FESTIVAL & HOPE AUCTION!

By Janie Pemble, Outreach Manager, Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County

Interfaith Coalition Music Festival is set for Sunday, February 23rd, 3:00pm, First Congregational Church.



INTERFAITH COALITION
Partners in faith. Changing lives.

Join us for an uplifting program of spiritual music from our diverse congregations, showcasing solo, choral, and instrumental music. It ends with an exuberant grand finale involving the audience and all the performers. This event happens at First Congregational Church (2401 Cornwall Ave., Bellingham) on Sunday, Feb. 23, at 3pm. There will be a freewill offering to support Interfaith Coalition programs.

Interfaith Coalition Annual Hope Auction is on Saturday, March 28th, 5:30pm, Four Points by Sheraton.

For over 25 years, Interfaith's Hope Auction has brought fellowship, inspiration, and hope to our community while raising awareness and support for our neighbors in need. Please join us for an evening that pulls together heart and effort in eliminating family homelessness and poverty. There are many ways to participate: donate an auction item, purchase tickets, or consider sponsorship of the event. Call or go to our website for more info or to purchase tickets: 360-734-3983, www.interfaith-coalition.org.

GREEN ACTION TEAM COMES TO ST. JAMES

By Glory Johnson



The Mission Social Action (MSA) Committee discusses a variety of topics at their monthly meetings that relate to social justice issues. One specific area the committee has decided to highlight at this time is Climate Change, especially in light of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 2020. St. James is also a designated PC(USA) Earth Care Congregation. The goal of the program is to promote greening Presbyterian Churches by inspiring churches to care for God's earth in a holistic way, through integrating earth care into all of church life.

Since St. James is an Earth Care Congregation, the MSA committee decided to create a task force that would help bring awareness to climate change issues and to look at ways we as a church can go more "green." The task force, created last month, includes 5 members of the church. We call ourselves GAT – "Green Action Team." The task force plans to meet once a month at least through April to discuss climate change issues and what St. James can be doing.

Toward this end, we are starting off with a survey to gather information from the congregation to see where people are at with this issue, what they might be doing already, and what interest there is in this topic. After the survey is complete, GAT will gather the information and make an action plan for the next steps that we can take together as a congregation.

"The earth and all creation are God's. God calls us to be careful, humble stewards of this earth, and to protect and restore it for its own sake and for the future use and enjoyment of the human family. As God offers all people the special gift of peace through Jesus Christ, and through Christ reconciles all to God, we are called to deal justly with one another and the earth."



This is the Earth Care Congregation pledge, and since St. James is an Earth Care Congregation we want to take this pledge seriously and do our part in following this mandate. The task force GAT is excited about what this means for our congregation and we hope all of you will join us in the movement of going green! Contact Glory Johnson for more information: gloryjohnson12@yahoo.com

Climate Change Survey Questions:

1. What do you think are some serious threats related to climate change?
2. What actions do you take to help solve the current climate crisis?
3. What are the challenges you face related to this crisis, and what keeps you going when facing these challenges? (For example, do you hold grief or anger around this topic, and do you feel like you have a safe space to talk about it?)
4. What do you think hinders people from taking action on climate change?
5. What do you think maybe the next steps in our path of making even more of a difference? What can we collectively do?

ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas
Children & Family Ministry Director: Tracy Caruso
Worship & Music Leader: Dylan Cisneros
Accompanist: Luke Arnold
Treasurer: Marina McLeod
Administrative Assistant: Shannon Laws
Nursery: Claire Alarid, Fiona Dent, Holly Jones
Lucy Sieczka, Erika Singh-Cundy

Office Hours:
Tuesday, Wednesdays 9:00am-12:00pm
Thursday, Friday 9:00am-2:00pm



SESSION

Moderator: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas

Clerk of Session: Mark Beaty
Building & Grounds: Aaron Caruso
Christian Faith Formation: Sarah Condreay
Finance & Stewardship: Lindsay Anderson (to be ordained Feb. 9th)
Membership & Congregation Life: Susan Diemont-Conwell
Mission & Social Action: Carol Dellecker
Nominating: Jenny Sue LeSchander & Sarah Condreay
Personnel: Faye Hill
Trustees: Sarah Condreay, Mark Beaty, Aaron Caruso
Worship & Music: Nebiyu Tesfa



DEACONS

Moderator: Alice Beaty*

Alice Beaty, Adam Beaty, Julie Keyes, Carla Shafer
Rick Seater, Jean Seater, Marlene Amman, Valerie McBeth, Pam Gibson
Brian and Glory Johnson (to be ordained Feb. 9th)
**Contact Alice Beaty for your parish information. The 2020 list will be available in the March edition.*

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study
9:30 a.m. Youth Bible Study (Second Mondays)
10:30 a.m. Worship
10:45 a.m. Children's Time



UPCOMING EVENTS

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S LUNCHEON & BIBLE STUDY

The monthly Women's Bible study and the Women's Association luncheon will be held on Tues, Feb 28th. Bring a dish to share for the potluck luncheon and fellowship time.

*Bible Study 10:30-11:30 (Lounge),
Luncheon 11:30-1:00 (Horizon Room)*

SMALL GROUP DINNERS START

Small group dinners are set! Small group dinners are a one-time dinner with 5-10 people assigned/put together for the evening. Each participant brings part of the dinner to share with the volunteer hosts home. It is a wonderful way to meet others in the congregation. If you thought you signed up but did not receive a group, please let Tracy know!

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE INTERFAITH HOPE AUCTION!

Interfaith Coalition's Hope Auction happens on Saturday, March 28, beginning at 5:30 p.m. The auction will take place at the Four Points by Sheraton.

To donate an auction item and purchase tickets, please contact Pastor Seth or Interfaith Coalition at 360-734-3983 or through the website:

www.interfaith-coalition.org

ST. JAMES BOOK CLUB IN FEBRUARY

St. James Book Club for February
Monday, February 7th, 7:00pm, the Lounge
The St. James Book Club meets the 3rd Monday of each month at 7pm in the Lounge. The current book is *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson. The book is an account of the memories and legacy of John Ames as he remembers his experiences of his father and grandfather to share with his son. We will be discussing it at the February 17th meeting. Copies of the book are available in the office.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

2/2	Louise Hardin	🎂
2/5	Janet Oakley	🎂
2/12	Tim Crandall	🎂
2/18	John Dobbie	🎂
2/20	Randy Bowers	🎂
2/22	Gail Haines	🎂
2/23	Jim Gresham	🎂
2/26	Ralph Rinne	🎂
2/27	Kay Carr	🎂
2/28	Nancy Peck	🎂

WHERE IS IT?



The usher sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Horizon Room. Sign up to meet, greet & usher folks that gather for worship.



Want to help brighten the chancel up with a bouquet? It's a beautiful way to mark a special occasion or in memory of a loved one. The sign-up sheet for Flower Ministry is in the Horizon Room on the right side of the bulletin board.



Need more? Get more St. James calendar information and sign up for our weekly emails and the monthly e-magazine *the Pulse*. Visit our website:
<https://saintjamespres.org/>

→ **ST. JAMES CALENDAR**

Personnel Committee- Lounge

Tuesday, Feb 4, 9:00am

Building & Grounds Committee- Lounge

Tuesday, Feb 4, 5:30pm

Finance Committee- Upper Level

Wednesday, Feb 5, 6:15pm

Mission & Social Action- Lounge

Wednesday, Feb 5, 4:00pm

Christian Faith Formation- Godly Play

Wednesday, Feb 5, 7:00pm

St. James Work Party

Saturday, Feb 8, 9:00-11:00

Session- Lounge

Sunday, Feb 9, 12:00pm

Worship & Music Committee- Lounge

Wednesday, Feb 12, 10:00am

Deacons- Lounge

Sunday, Feb 16, 11:45

St. James Book Club- Lounge

Monday, Feb 17, 7:00pm

Church Office Closed

Presidents Day

Monday, Feb 17th

Grief Support- Lounge

Wednesday, Feb 19, 10:00am

Pres. Women Bible Study & Luncheon

(The Lounge & Horizon Room)

Tuesday, Feb 25, 10:30am-1:30pm

→ **ST. JAMES WEEKLY CALENDAR**

Toddler Time

8:30am, Wednesdays

St. James Bell Choir

6:30pm, Thursdays

St. James Chancel Choir

7:30pm, Thursdays

→ **PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY**

AA Fairhaven Group- Fellowship Hall

7:15pm, Thursdays and Sundays (childcare)

AA Men's Book Study Group- Horizon Room

6:30pm, Mondays

AA SOS Men's Group- Horizon Room

6:00pm, Wednesdays

Bellingham Com. Chorus- Fellowship Hall

6:30pm, Tuesdays

Bellingham Ukulele Group- Fellowship Hall

1:00pm, 2nd Saturday

Boy Scouts Troop 7- Fellowship Hall

7:00pm, Mondays(except school holidays)

Happy Hour Al Anon- Horizon Room

5:30pm, Tuesdays

Overeaters Anonymous- Lounge

10:00am, Saturdays

St. James Fitness- Fellowship Hall

4:00pm, Mondays and Fridays

Tai Chi- Fellowship Hall

5:15pm, Mondays

WA Gender Alliance- Godly Play Room

7:30pm, Tuesdays

Weavers Guild- Fellowship Hall

9:30am, 3rd Saturday

Yoga- Horizon Room

10:15am, Tuesdays and Thursdays

You Are Not Alone (YANA)- Lounge

6:00pm, 2nd Monday

Bayside Co-op Preschool

Hawthorne Learning Solutions

Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County





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