



## FAST FROM, FEAST ON

*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?*

Isaiah 58:6

Every liturgical cycle, we come around to the Season of Lent. The season spans the forty days leading up to Easter, plus Sundays. Lent is a time to prepare ourselves for Christ's resurrection by remembering his suffering and sacrifice: it is a season of penitence--typically practiced by fasting and abstaining in some capacity to make room for heart work.

Jesus modeled the spiritual discipline of fasting. Following his baptism, Jesus spent forty days in the desert fasting. Christ was tempted by the devil to indulge or "give in" to lesser desires; Christ's time of fasting was in preparation of a ministry that was yet to come. How do we participate in this season of fasting?

As I have reflected in preparation for this season, I've been wondering about actually fasting — literally giving up food for a predetermined period of time. One traditional way of fasting is to eat only after sundown, and drink water during the waking hours of the day. Actual fasting is something that we have an opportunity to rethink and reclaim in our tradition as we enter into the season of Lent. Refraining from food impacts us all in different ways depending on age, physiology, health; fasting must be done with caution, I urge you to consider your health needs and consult a medical professional as you consider your Lenten practice.

The other side of the Lenten coin is that it is a season to feast. The traditional fasts of Lent are always broken on the Sabbath day — the day we celebrate our Lord's resurrection. We don't fast on Sundays, we celebrate! We say thank you for God's abundance and enter into a joyous pause in our season of fasting.

Highlighted in this mixture of traditions is the beautiful tension at work within the Christian story. We are people of the "both/and" — we fast and we feast. We hold tension between the present moment of sacrifice, the "not yet", while we celebrate resurrection and the hope of God's abundant life that *is* and is "yet to come".

In the passage from Isaiah, we hear that true fasting brings liberation. God most desires our hearts. At the end of the day, fasting is about heart change. Fasting invites us to surrender core parts of ourselves to fully rely upon God. The fast we are called to is the fast that relinquishes false idols and feasts upon God's goodness instead. For you, what does fasting look like? Feasting? What will you fast from, feast on, in this season?

Grace and Peace,



Rev. Seth J. Thomas

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## 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). This month, we'd like to use this space to introduce our new members! Stay tuned to meet some of our outgoing and incoming church officers in next month's issue.

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### THE CONWELLS

Pete, Susan, Holland and Atticus originally hail from Houston, Texas. Seeking more time outdoors and in nature, the family relocated to Bellingham, Washington in March 2018 and live in Sudden Valley, where they remain in awe of the woods and wildlife. Pete works for Shell as an environmental engineer, and Susan is the owner of Spry Dogs, a communications and writing firm. When the two are not hiking, Susan teaches a free dance fitness class at the Sudden Valley Dance Barn. Pete takes the class on Monday nights and loves telling anyone who will listen how many calories he burns during class. Having just turned 18 years old, Holland is finishing up her senior year at Bellingham High School, where she enjoys participating in theatre productions, and is looking toward college, where she plans to study marine biology. Atticus is

12 years old and attends Kulshan Middle School. Like Holland, he takes his academics very seriously. He is also hugely into playing the card game, Magic the Gathering (MTG) and appreciates the reputation of being "the only 6th grader who can beat the 8th graders" in his MTG club at school. The Conwells came to St. James in November of 2018 in search of relevant, engaging sermons and a sense of community. They are very happy to join this church family.

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### ALYSON STORRS

I met Jill Hoyt and Cindy Baukele at the YMCA water aerobics class 2 years ago. They invited me to come to St. James to play in the bell choir. I was in a concert bell choir in Mt. Vernon previously before moving to Bellingham. I have lived in Bellingham for 8 years now. I have 3 grown sons, and 3 grandchildren: Aubree is two-and-a-half, Alex is eighteen months, and Colton is eight months old. They live in Oak Harbor and are the loves of my life. I have 2 cats and 1 silly Rottweiler named Thorton. I work as a nanny for a six-month-old baby girl. I also am a licensed caregiver and have worked with Hospice in the past. I have played in the bell choir at St. James for 2 years now and thoroughly enjoy that! I love travelling, music, gardening, playing Rummy, reading and movies. I am so excited to be finally becoming a member at St. James!





## MISSION & SOCIAL ACTION

### COME CELEBRATE ST. PATRICK'S DAY

On Sunday, March 17, we will be preparing and serving a traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner for the Southside Community Meal at Our Savior's Lutheran Church at 5:00 pm. This is a community meal that is served monthly and open to all. We need several people to help with set-up, food prep and cooking, serving and clean-up. Please sign up in the Horizon Room if you are willing to help. If you have questions, contact Ray Dellecker or Gretchen Pfueller.



### FAMILY PROMISE

Thank you to all of you who helped with Family Promise Week at Sacred Heart, February 3-10. What a wonderful opportunity for these families to be in a warm, secure, loving and caring space during a very cold and snowy week.

### 17th ANNUAL HABITAT FOR HUMANITY AUCTION

Save the date for Friday, April 26 at 6:00 pm at the Downtown Depot Market. Great fun for a great cause! More details in the April Pulse.



## FINANCE UPDATE

	January 2019	Current Budget	Current Budget Difference	Annual Budget
Income	\$30,727	\$25,875	\$4,852	\$210,691
Expenses	\$17,065	\$19,361	-\$2,296	\$248,216

\*The higher income for January is due to the fact that several contributors paid pledge money for 2019 in 2018.

Everyone who contributed to St. James in 2018 should have received a financial statement in the mail. If you have not received one or have a concern with the amount indicated on the statement, please contact the treasurer to resolve the concern. Online giving is continuing to be available if you desire to use this option for your giving.

Dick Carr  
Finance Committee Chair

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## CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

Greetings from your Children and Family Ministries Director,

I hope everyone survived the 2019 Bellingham Snowmageddon. February was a month filled with snow and sickness. **Toddler Time** had a couple of low-attendance weeks due to sickness and a cancellation due to snow. The other week was well attended and we are hearing much appreciation for hosting this weekly event. Some of our kids participated in the **Souper Bowl Sunday** collection for *Feed My Starving Children*; they collected over \$400, thank you to all that participated. Now we are looking forward to March and the beginning of our Lenten season. We will be holding a weekly, Wednesday evening **Lenten Study Group**. The first discussion will be on March 13, 2019 from 6:30pm-7:30pm at Evolve Cafe in Village Books. We will be reading and discussing *A Bigger Table* by John Pavlovitz. Please contact Pastor Seth or Tracy if you are interested in attending. See more details on page 5! Finally, our Sunday morning **Adult Education Class** continues to study the lectionary texts each week. The class starts at 9:30am in the lounge, childcare is available in the nursery.

Tracy Caruso  
 Director of Children & Family Ministries  
[tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org)

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### GODLY PLAY SCHEDULE

#### March 3: Work Day

#### March 6: The Mystery of Easter

This Ash Wednesday lesson gives an introduction to the relationship of Lent to the Mystery of Easter as well as how Easter overflows into the season of Easter.

#### March 10: Faces of Easter I

Lent is the season we prepare for Easter. This lesson helps children prepare for the Mystery of Easter. We move toward the Mystery by hearing the stories of Christ's journey toward the Lent is the season we prepare for Easter. This lesson focuses on the face of Christ as a newborn child.

#### March 17: Faces of Easter II & III

This lesson focuses on the face of Christ as the One who was lost and found and the face of Christ as the One who was baptized and blessed.

#### March 24: Faces of Easter IV & V

This lesson focuses on Christ's temptation in the desert and on the face of Christ as healer and parable-maker.

#### March 31: Work Day

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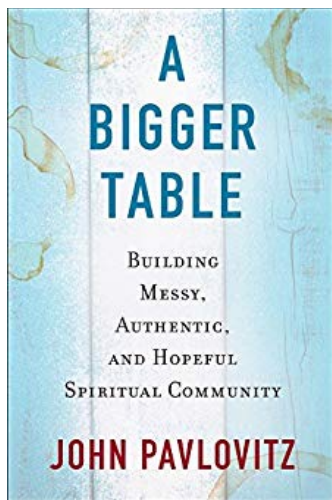
We are always looking for volunteer nursery workers or anyone interested in teaching Godly Play, please let Tracy know if you are interested in either. Our wish list is up-to-date with current "wishes" for our Godly Play program.

<http://www.wishlistr.com/saintjamescfm/>



## LENTEN STUDY

We will be holding a weekly Lenten study beginning Wednesday March 13th. We will be reading and discussing [\*A Bigger Table: Building Messy, Authentic, and Hopeful Spiritual Community\*](#) by John Pavlovitz.



Discussions will be held on Wednesdays from March 13th through April 17th from 6:30pm-7:30pm. The first meeting will be held at Evolve Cafe inside Village Books in Fairhaven. Childcare will be available at St. James from 6:15pm-7:45pm while the group meets. Books can be purchased for \$11. Please contact Tracy or Seth if you are interested in joining us, all are welcome!

## BINGO NIGHT

Bingo Night is back! Join us Friday, March 29th at 6:00pm for a taco dinner and Bingo to follow. This is a fun night of food, fellowship, prizes, and best of all, BINGO! Suggested donation of \$5/person or \$15/family. Hope to see you there!

## ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Our Sunday morning adult education class is studying the lectionary texts each week. The class starts at 9:30am in the lounge, childcare is available in the nursery.



## LENTEN PILGRIMAGE

Join us Wednesday, March 6 at 7:00pm as we celebrate Ash Wednesday here at St. James with First and Birchwood Presbyterian Churches. We will continue our Lenten Pilgrimage with a Maundy Thursday service at Birchwood Presbyterian on April 18 at 7:00pm and a Good Friday service at First Presbyterian Church on April 19 at 7:30pm. Childcare will be provided for each service.



**INTERFAITH COALITION**

Partners in faith. Changing lives.

The current edition of the local magazine [\*Bellingham Alive!\*](#) has a six-page feature story on Interfaith Coalition and the Family Promise program. With some inspiring stories about Interfaith housing and Family Promise families, it's a wonderful view of the effort that St. James

and so many generous and faithful volunteers have put into caring for your neighbors. If you're reading the *Pulse* from your phone, tablet, or computer, click the link for a preview of the article ["Helping the Homeless"](#) by Cheryl Stritzel McCarthy and Hailey Hoffman. Pick up a copy of the March 2019 issue of *Bellingham Alive!* to read the full article!



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)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### HOPE AUCTION

Saturday, March 23, 2019; 5:30pm

Four Points by Sheraton in Bellingham.

It's not too late to attend this year's Auction! Rally a group of family and friends or make it an endearing evening for two. Tickets are \$65 each, including dinner. Gold Level Tickets (\$100) provide an additional, meaningful donation in supporting Interfaith's mission.

### THE FLOWER COMMITTEE

Roses are red, violets are blue...sign up to bring flowers a Sunday or two! There are many ways to worship on Sundays; if you would like to serve in a tangible capacity, we're in need of people to bring flowers for the Sanctuary. If interested, please sign up in the Horizon Room.

### CHURCH DIRECTORY 2019

Thanks to Laurie Anderson and Alice Beaty for compiling and organizing this year's directory! Directories are available in the church office or the Narthex following service.

### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The monthly Bible study and luncheon (soup & bread) is scheduled for Tuesday, March 26.

Everyone is invited to attend the study at 10:30am and the luncheon at noon.

### ST. JAMES BOOK CLUB

The books are in! Stop by the office to check out a copy and join us Monday, March 18 at 7:00pm. Our selection for the March meeting is *The Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle. The book club will be meeting at Jenny Sue's house this month, please let Jenny Sue know if you plan to attend at [jleschander@hotmail.com](mailto:jleschander@hotmail.com).

### GIVE TO SAINT JAMES ONLINE

Using our online system you can give from your bank account, make a one-time donation, set up recurring gift, designate your gifts as part of your annual pledge, and designate your per capita contribution.

[saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving](http://saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving)

### CHURCH PIANIST/ACCOMPANIST

We are 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) with a cover letter and resume.

### MARCH BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

3/3	Jody DeWilde	
3/8	Martha Speer	
3/11	Stacy Thomas	
3/13	Richard Green	
3/14	Virginia Green	
3/17	Liam DeWilde	
3/18	Madeleine Smith	
3/21	Marion Dobbie	
3/21	Pam Gibson	
3/24	Zach Melrose	
3/25	Peter and Mary van der Veen	
3/27	Donna Lane	
3/28	Mike Smith	
3/28	Margaret Humble	

→ **ST. JAMES CALENDAR**

**Building & Grounds Committee**

Tuesday, March 5, 5:30pm

**Finance Committee**

Tuesday, March 5, 6:00pm

**Christian Faith Formation Committee**

Wednesday, March 6, 5:30pm

**Ash Wednesday Service**

St. James Presbyterian Church, 7:00pm

**Daylight Savings**

Sunday, March 10

**Session + Deacons**

Sunday, March 10, 12:00pm

**Worship & Music Committee**

Wednesday, March 13, 10:00am

**Mission & Social Action Committee**

Wednesday, March 13, 3:00pm

**Lenten Study**

Wednesdays, March 13, 6:30pm

**St. James Book Club**

Monday, March 18, 7:00pm

**Pres. Women Bible Study & Luncheon**

Tuesday, March 26, 10:30am

**Worship & Music Committee**

Wednesday, March 27, 10:00am

**Bingo Night**

Friday, March 29, 6:00pm

- ★ See **Upcoming Events** (pg. 6) for featured activities and current happenings in our church and community.

→ **ST. JAMES WEEKLY CALENDAR**

**Adult Education Class**

9:30am, Sundays

**Grief Support**

10:00am, 1st and 3rd Mondays

→ **ST. JAMES WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*(continued)*

**Toddler Time**

8:30am, Wednesdays

**St. James Bell Choir**

6:30pm, Thursdays

**St. James Chancel Choir**

7:30pm, Thursdays

→ **PROGRAMS SHARING OUR 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

**You Are Not Alone (YANA)**

6:00pm, 2nd Monday

**WA Gender Alliance**

7:30pm, Tuesdays

**St. James Fitness**

4:00pm, Mondays and Fridays

**Tai Chi**

5:15pm, Mondays

**Yoga**

10:15am, Tuesdays and Thursdays

**Bellingham Community Chorus**

7:00pm, Tuesdays

**Bellingham Ukulele Group**

1:00pm, 2nd Saturday

**Weavers Guild**

9:30am, 3rd Saturday

**Boy Scouts Troop 7**

7:00pm, Mondays

**Bayside Co-op Preschool**

**Hawthorne Learning Solutions**

**Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County**



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360-733-1325

Office Hours: Tue-Fri, 9am-2pm

**Sunday Worship Schedule**

9:30 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 Siczka