



Faithful Listening

“To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God.” (John 6:68)

The disciples were at an impasse. They had begun to witness the miraculous work of Jesus, journeying with him along the road and seeing great multitudes fed and healed. And yet, his words made many uncomfortable. They challenged the status quo and made many

question all they had held dear, perhaps to be forsaken for this Way that Jesus was inviting them to embark on.

Jesus turns to them and asks plainly: “Do you wish to go away?” He offers them an out. And the Apostle Peter replies plainly with the statement above: No Lord, we’ve heard about life from you, the Holy One of God. Even as Jesus’ words have challenged him, Peter wants to stay and listen and find life with Jesus.

Listening faithfully is not an easy task. It is much simpler to step away, to choose a path of less resistance, making our own choices, trusting in ourselves alone. To listen well to the words of God is to be impacted, to be challenged, to see the world reframed and be called out of the places of death we have settled in. To listen is to embrace the possibility that we might hear God’s stirring voice and have to act.

It can be difficult to listen well as individuals and it is most certainly difficult to listen well together as a community. As a leader, I am tempted (and give in more often than I’d like to admit) to listen to my own voice or just a few trusted others instead of exploring what God is actually saying in community. It is easier to make decisions myself than it is to invite discussion, conversation, and the potential for dissonance that comes with communal listening. I will confess I have done these in my calling here at St. James and I long to get better at this, to invite more voices in, to listen better to the way God’s Spirit is speaking among us.

When we listen to our own voice alone, we deny the opportunity for the words of eternal life that come from the Holy One to be spoken to us in fresh ways. We miss out on how God might speak through an unexpected mouthpiece. And in the process, people are hurt or spurned.

But, when we invite a community of voices, each carefully listening for what God is saying in and through them, we learn to hold the space of difference. In this, we invite the possibility that God’s voice might show up in unexpected places and very often discover that new perspectives, fresh expressions, and transformative movements of God’s spirit occur. Listening well, in community, is a practice we are founded upon as a Presbyterian Church. Our polity and governance is designed to lead us into faithful listening together. We are invited to tune in to what God is saying in ourselves, pray for discernment to know what is us and what is the nudging of the Spirit, and then share and listen as a gathered body to find out the way the Spirit is leading us.

As a congregation, we have many things ahead of us that we will need to discern, be they ministry endeavors, building projects, acts of justice in the community, or fresh ways to teach God’s good news. Any healthy, thriving, welcoming, hopeful community must do this. And when we engage all that the Spirit is doing among us from a posture of faithful listening, we open ourselves to experiencing the presence of the Holy One of God in our midst. In the gathering of God’s people, who have turned their hearts into God’s voice and are listening patiently, God will speak.

We pray: Holy One of God, you have those words of eternal life and we wait patiently for you to speak them to us. Come, Spirit of God. Amen and amen.

Grace and Peace,



Rev. Seth J. Thomas

RESPONSE

Throughout the year, *Response*, will feature members of our vibrant congregation. This month, we would like to honor and celebrate our Music Director, Carolyn Mullen for her 21 years of music and beauty that she has given St. James. We hope these brief introductions prompt reflection, spark conversations and create opportunities for meaningful connections in our church family and community.

A letter of thanks to the people of Saint James Presbyterian

From Music Director Carolyn Mullen

In June of 1998, you hired me as your Contemporary Service Music leader. Working with Pastor Mary Robinson-Mohr, pianist Bev Sherman and bassist Erin Wells, we enjoyed creating uplifting worship for the 8:30 am worship service. By September of that year, I was asked to lead the Chancel and Bell Choirs as well. The Chancel Choir was welcoming and eager, making me feel right at home. Dr. Les Belrose, the incredibly talented Organist and accompanist, helped me learn the Presbyterian way of worship. Though I had little bell choir experience, David and Brian Seater educated me in all things bells. Those first few years the bell choir was mostly kids, including young-at-heart Peg Wilke and Bill Read.

My first impression of St. James was friendliness. One of the first weeks I worked for you, I received a very sweet thank you note from Bob Monihan. This had never happened before. I was humbled. Through these 21 years, you helped me grow in music-making. Your involvement in local charities and concerns inspired me to give to our community as well.

The Chancel and Bell Choir members truly feel like family. The support, caring, FUN we have together is such a blessing. We have endured everything from trying to sing with incense smoking around us as we held a "14th St" combined Ash Wednesday service with Sacred Heart parish to working with 10, yes, 10 accompanists. Bells, well, bells...absolutely some of my most enjoyable music experience, even in the dark,

when you can't quite see your music, or when it's blowing off your stand, or you play the A flat instead of A sharp. All of you talented musicians have a special place in my heart – you are certainly gifts from God.

While everyone has given so much, I want to especially thank; Bea Aubert, who would phone those who missed Thursday's rehearsals to make sure they were ok – and, "by the way, when will you be back at choir?"; Don & Jill Hoyt, who followed me to St James from the Lutheran part of town; Jim Gresham, who can step in at the drop of a hat to direct any choir; Randy Bowers and Pat Nelson for helping with pianist duties; everyone who has supplied special music over the summers; and Jenny Sue LeSchander, my right hand gal, always ready and willing to step in to do most anything to help. I will certainly treasure our Thursday night rehearsals. Beware, perhaps I'll have time to write that "You Wouldn't Believe What Happens at Church Choir Rehearsal" book.

I've enjoyed working with so many of you at the Women's events – the rummage sale, Arts & Crafts Faire, luncheons, receptions and dinners, and with the Worship, Flower and Sacristy committees. Blessed with saints at work around here.

My future plans: Though Jim and I are not retiring from our day jobs for a year or two, we plan to visit our Oregon Coast cabin just south of Lincoln City as often as possible. (Visit us!). My extra time will be spent on



a life-long dream of creating visual art via mixed media, collage, and sculpture. We will now have more opportunities to visit our far-flung kids (former bell choir members!) – Zach & wife Julie in Prague, Czech Republic and Dr. Keena in Raleigh, NC.

Undoubtedly, new musical adventures will appear. Our Oregon neighborhood has a monthly jazz band jam session that may have me playing piano and singing!

Creating music in serving God's church has blessed me with 38 ½ years at three churches; St. Paul's Episcopal in Mount Vernon, Central Lutheran in Bellingham, and St. James. I have been encouraged and energized by eight Pastors, four Interim Pastors, 10 intern pastors. (Yikes! Thank you, Lord, for patience!) But I am most thankful for the "people in the pews", your constant, loving support, and the meaningful worship we have experienced together.
-Carolyn Mullen



LETTERS OF THANKS TO CAROLYN

Don't know how we will get along w/out our gal about church.... electrician, bell/choir director, pianist, soloist, fun person to be around. She takes charge and things just get done. Dave and I have worked with her since 1999 in BCC, St James, etc. She is always willing to open her home for potlucks and end of year gatherings and brings produce and flowers to the table in Horizon Room; she and Jim do salmon bbq's, and other feasts when asked. We wish her and Jim lots of luck and know they will enjoy their coastal retreat which we hope to visit sometime when the sun shines and the wind doesn't blow... **-The Nelsons**

What fun, what joy, what dedication to our choir. I think of nights when you had been having your patience tested all day by a class of raging hormones but you come to practice and put that aside and somehow generate that enthusiasm that we respond to. Now, go relax and have a bowl of popcorn. **-Mike Smith**

Dear Carolyn,

We have been singing with you close to 20 years. Years filled with inspirational music and beautiful singing. There has been much-shared laughter, some tears. We have always felt we were well taken care of by you- your clear directing, guiding beautiful voice and sensitivity to our personal lives. It has been a JOY to come to choir rehearsal. Thank you for your 20 years of faithfulness and commitment. The parties at your amazing farm are the best, enjoyed by our dogs Bailey and Toby also! Love and best wishes for relaxing weekends and travels **-Julie and Craig Keyes**

It is with immense gratitude that I want to say my farewell and blessing to you, Carolyn. These past two years working alongside you to cultivate the worshipping life at St. James Presbyterian have been so rich. Thank you for your mentoring, your encouragement, your faithful presence week in and week out. St. James' congregation has been blessed by your playfulness and sense of beauty for so many years — it certainly is a legacy of love that you leave behind. Thanks for helping me along as I've learned so much these last two years, for your patience and insight and care. May God bless you deeply in this next chapter...and may you keep on singing! **-Pastor Seth**

MISSION & SOCIAL ACTION



Paddle to Lummi 2019

The Tribal Canoe Journey is coming to Lummi Nation this summer! From July 24-28, 2019, Lummi Nation will welcome to its shores more than 100 canoes from other tribal nations in Washington and British Columbia. The Tribal Canoe Journey is hosted by rotating tribal nations along the Pacific Northwest Coast annually. The journey honors the rich traditions of tribes of the Northwest who travel the waters to meet and gather for ceremony and celebration. The event is free, open to the public and family friendly.

To learn more: (<https://paddletolummi.org/>) or contact Beth Brownfield (bethbrownf@aol.com)

To donate online: <https://www.gofundme.com/paddle-to-lummi-2019>

(photo credit: Canoes queued up for 2007 Paddle to Lummi, Northwest UU Justice Network, 2007)

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Mark Beaty, Clerk of Session

Highlights from the 16 May 2019 Session Meeting

- St. James Bylaws are being reviewed by Session
- Membership class has been delayed until September
- Building and Grounds has been approved to fill the custodian and groundskeeper position (one person performing both duties)
- Carolyn Mullen's retirement sendoff is set for 23 June after church service
- Two listening sessions for sanctuary study (ways to make the sanctuary more welcoming) will be scheduled – participation from the congregation is required

-Mark Beaty
Clerk of Session

FINANCE UPDATE

By Dick Carr

| | April 2019 | Current Budget | Year-to-Date | Year-to-Date Budget |
|----------|------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Income | \$15,863 | \$16,675 | \$89,904 | \$77,308 |
| Expenses | \$23,689 | \$21,270 | \$76,255 | \$87,074 |

Even though our pledge income is down a little, our overall income to date is good. Our expenses are down as no funds for Mission related efforts have been submitted for payment. An **Assistance Fund** is being created to assist a member with a special need. If you wish to contribute to this fund please indicate with your contribution to St. James Presbyterian Church that it is to go to the Assistance Fund so that our treasurer can ensure it goes into this specific fund. Thank you!

GIVE TO ST. JAMES ONLINE

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

saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving

CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

Greetings from your Director of Children and Family Ministries! We have had a busy spring and are already looking ahead to summer!

We had our last Wednesday Toddler Time until fall. It has been exciting to see this program grow and hear the thanks and appreciation from parents. The Toddler Time program has been a great way for us to welcome the Bellingham community by offering a safe and fun space for children and parents to get together once a week. We are looking forward to resuming Toddler Time in the fall.

Our youth met up for an hour of ice cream and discussion and we plan on having regular monthly youth meetings. Once September hits we will be adding a monthly youth Sunday school. Look for more information on dates and activities to follow.



Looking ahead:

VBS still needs volunteers for the week of June 24-28th Please contact Tracy if you are interested in helping. We are also looking for donations for snacks for the week, look for the donation cards in the Narthex or ask Tracy for one.

This summer we will again be breaking from Godly Play and will be using the Illustrated Children's Ministries summer series. Students 4 and up are encouraged to stay in the service and work on the provided ICM bulletins. We will have the nursery open and staffed for children 3 and younger, or those not wishing to stay in the service. Godly Play will resume on Sunday, September 8th.

**Sunday, June 2 we recognize the children of St. James as we close out a school year.
We mark milestones in their lives of faith and celebrate them in our worship service.
Congratulations to all our students!**

Tracy Caruso
Director of Children & Family Ministries
tracy@saintjamespres.org



GODLY PLAY SCHEDULE



- **June 2nd: The Circle of the Holy Eucharist**
This is another lesson in the series developing themes in the Holy Eucharist. It helps students pull together the sequence of liturgical actions and images from the Godly Play presentations they have seen and from their church's Sunday celebration.
- **June 9th: The Mystery of Pentecost**
This lesson pairs the story of the Tower of Babel with the story of Pentecost and completes the cycle of the three great times in the Circle of the Church Year (along with the Mystery of Christmas and the Mystery of Easter).

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/>



INTERFAITH COALITION
Partners in faith. Changing lives.

INTERFAITH COALITION

If you are in St. James often, you may often notice individuals with bags or boxes making their way upstairs. Sometimes stopping to ask directions to the Interfaith office, or sometimes going up and down the staircase many times with multiple bags or boxes, these are people taking time out of their lives to donate or do what they can to make life better for others.

Everything that Interfaith Coalition does to support people in need is accomplished through the generosity of our congregations and community. Hats are knitted, coats, books, toiletries, holiday gifts, furniture, and so much more is donated, volunteer time and financial gifts offered – whatever is needed, is provided by local caring and generous people. Most often, gifts are small – a few hats, a bag of books, a few dollars. But added together, and with the faith that motivates it, they become a significant impact. We value each gift, person, and prayer for the people we care for. And we remind each other that the power of the love of neighbor started it all. Thank you, St. James, for your continued love of neighbor!

I can do no great things, only small things with great love. (Mother Teresa)

Janie Pemble
Outreach Director



Photos: Interfaith volunteers making sandwiches and sorting through donated hats, Don Bayne,(center), and friend show us their book donations.

UPCOMING EVENTS

PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERINGS

On June 2nd and June 9th. Each year on Pentecost Sunday, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the church. This offering helps our youth begin life with a strong foundation of faith formed in the first third of life, childhood through young adult. Congregations keep 40% of the raised funds for young people in their communities. Since 1998 Presbyterians have raised more than \$15 million that benefit younger members of God's family. Look for the red offering envelopes during service, text **YOUNG** to 56512, or give online at presbyterianmission.org/give/pentecost.

HOLY LAND TRIP: SPRING 2020

A second presbytery-wide trip to the Holy Land is being offered on April 23 - May 6, 2020. Arrangements are being made with Pilgrims of Ibillin to visit holy sites as well as meet with Christians, Jews, and Muslims in Israel and Palestine. More details can be found under "Living Stones Pilgrimage" at <https://www.pilgrimsofibilin.org/>. Total cost including airfare will be around \$3,200. If interested, please contact Rev. Charlie Lewis from First Pres. Snohomish at charlie@snopres.org or call/text at 425-328-5283.

CAST: CAN YOU HELP?

Four nights a week, people living on the street come to Interfaith Coalition CAST (Coffee and Sandwiches Together) table for a simple meal, cup of coffee, and the friendliness of the volunteers. We are in need of small hotel-size toiletries, razors, combs, hats, toothbrushes, and new socks. CAST also needs more volunteers to help transport and serve the meals. If you can help, please call us for more info about the volunteer shifts (360-734-3983) or drop off items at Interfaith.

WORKSHOP AT WPJC

Western Washington cultural, equity, bias awareness and diversity trainer Kim Harris, M.Ed., is conducting a workshop at the Whatcom Peace & Justice Center entitled, *"Religion, Faith & Politics: Is your faith making you biased?"* Wednesday, June 12th, 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Whatcom Peace & Justice Center located at 1220 Bay Street in Bellingham. The cost is \$20, general public and \$15 for seniors/students. Participants can register online at <https://www.whatcompjc.org/racial-equity.html>

CANOE JOURNEY 2019

Fundraising and planning have begun for the 2019 Canoe Journey happening July 24-28th. The local Lummi Tribe is hosting this international and public event the first time since 2007! For more information visit paddletolummi.org or contact Cathy Chen at Community Connections, 360-920-6879.

COMMUNITY UKULELE PLAYERS

Players from Bellingham Ukulele Group and more join together for a night of music and a pot luck at St. James, Fellowship Hall, Wednesday, August 7, 5:00pm

**Missing a watch or a pair of reading glasses?
Please visit or call the church office
Tuesday-Friday, 9 am to 2 pm**



SESSION

Moderator, Rev. Seth J. Thomas

Clerk of Session, Mark Beaty

Building & Grounds - Jeanne Uhles

Christian Faith Formation - Sarah Condreay

Finance & Stewardship - Dick Carr

Membership & Congregation Life - Laurie Anderson

Mission & Social Action - Carol Dellecker

Nominating - Jenny Sue LeSchander & Sarah Condreay

Personnel - Faye Hill

Trustees - Dick Carr, Jeanne Uhles, Mark Beaty

Worship & Music - Jill Hoyt

DEACONS

Co-Moderators, Sue Smith & Alice Beaty

Parish 1: Alice Beaty and Adam Beaty

Parish 2: Merry Thomas and Jim Gresham

Parish 3: Julie Keyes and Carla Shafer

Parish 4: Marlene Amman and Kate Haworth

Parish 5: Karen & Dwayne Rogers and Pam Gibson

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

Administrative Assistant: Shannon Laws

Treasurer: Marina McLeod

Music Director: Carolyn Mullen

Teachers: Erika Singh-Cundy,

Sophie Rose Kendrick, Lucy Sieczka

Nursery: Holly Jones, Claire Alarid



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(360) 733-1325

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



Stay current on activities and happenings @saintjamespres

JUNE BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|---|
| 6/1 | Alice Beaty |  |
| 6/3 | Tracy Caruso |  |
| 6/4 | Craig & Julie Keyes |  |
| 6/5 | Barbara Harnden |  |
| 6/9 | Jane Botsford |  |
| 6/9 | Fred Daugert |  |
| 6/12 | Bob & Madeleine Smith |  |
| 6/15 | Sue Smith |  |
| 6/16 | Bob & Barbara Harnden |  |
| 6/16 | Bob & Marilyn Monahan |  |
| 6/17 | Mark & Alice Beaty |  |
| 6/19 | Dick & Virginia Green |  |
| 6/20 | Amber Wainscott |  |
| 6/23 | Bob Smith |  |
| 6/27 | Corinna Bowers |  |
| 6/30 | Claude & Faye Hill |  |

ST. JAMES WEEKLY CALENDAR

Adult Bible Study

9:30am, Sundays

Grief Support

10:00am, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays

PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY

AA Men's Book Study Group

6:30pm, Mondays

Al Anon

5:30pm, Tuesdays, childcare provided

AA SOS Men's Group

6:00pm, Wednesdays

AA Fairhaven Group

7:15pm, Thursdays and Sundays

Bellingham Ukulele Group

1:00pm, 2nd Saturday

Boy Scouts Troop 7

7:00pm, Mondays

Overeaters Anonymous (OA)

10:00am, Saturdays

St. James Fitness

3:45pm, Mondays and Fridays

Tai Chi

5:15pm, Mondays

WA Gender Alliance

7:30pm, Tuesdays

Weavers Guild

9:30am, 3rd Saturday

Yoga

10:15am, Tuesdays and Thursdays

You Are Not Alone (YANA)

6:00pm, 2nd Monday

Bayside Co-op Preschool

Hawthorne Learning Solutions

Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County

ST. JAMES CALENDAR

Personnel Committee

Tuesday, June 4, 9:00am

Building & Grounds Committee

Tuesday, June 4, 5:30pm

Finance Committee

Tuesday, June 4, 6:15pm

Christian Faith Formation Committee

Wednesday, June 5, 7:00pm

Mission & Social Action Committee

Wednesday, June 5, 3:30pm

Student Cello Recital w/Coral Marchant

Saturday, June 8, 12:00pm

Student Cello Recital w/Coral Marchant

Sunday, June 9, 1:00pm

Session

Sunday, June 9, 12:00pm

Worship & Music Committee

Wednesday, June 12, 10:00am

Prime Timers

Friday, June 14, 12:00pm

Deacons

Sunday, June 16, 12:00pm

St. James Book Club

Monday, June 17, 7:00pm

Prayer Vigil for Peace in the Middle East

Tuesday, June 18, 5:30

Pres. Women Luncheon

Tuesday, June 25, 12:00pm