



*You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord,  
"My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."  
—Psalm 91:1-2*

One of my deepest convictions about the church is that we are to be a place of refuge and shelter for all people. So many places in our world offers a welcome, but with qualifications or cost. You can sit in our coffee shop, but you need to buy a drink. Come, have a meal in our restaurant, but please don't stay too long. Of course you can stay the night here — but here are our rules; we'll need a credit card for a damage deposit; and by the way, it's \$200/night.

The church is one of those few places that continues to exist where people are welcomed to come as they are. But even as we say this, we are challenged by our own nature the need to require something from the one who walks in our doors. "Glad you're here, now will you sign on the dotted line that you believe what we believe. So nice to see you again, but next time you're here, could you wash up a bit more before you come?" We trust and serve a God who promises to be our refuge and our fortress, our shelter in the storm. What might it look like for the church to live most fully into this? To be a place that welcomes warmly in order that people experience God's shelter and strength as they arrive? We want to do this, don't we?

One of the things I love about St. James Presbyterian Church is our deeply held value of being welcoming to those who cross the threshold of our doors. I run into many folks in our community who know of St. James for our hospitality toward many 12-step and support groups. Or the visitor who comes back on Sunday mornings and tells of how warmly they've been greeted and made to feel a part of the church. It's important for each of us to be reminded that it matters how we welcome, that we do so with open arms and without agenda. When we love without agenda, welcome people to belong and seek refuge in God before they've got it all together, we make space for the Holy Spirit to act. It is not our work to ensure life-change happens right away. With *welcome*, we can make space for God to act, to move in a person. We make space and ensure the security of all who seek refuge so that we can all let our guard down, breathe, and encounter the Holy One who truly does change lives, who does make all things new, who restores and builds up the broken, the ones in need of strength.

How have you been granted space, refuge, security, as you entered and gathered with God's people? And what do you need still? May you seek the One of shelters, the One who loves, the One who will abide with you. And may you find that here, at St. James, among this family of fellow pilgrims.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Seth J. Thomas

## GUEST ARTICLE: Earth Care Moment



### Going Solar: The Little Congregation that Could

By Gary Simpson, a member of Pittsboro Presbyterian Church, NC



Conversion. For many Christians the term conjures up the vision of a “come to Jesus” supernatural moment of personal salvation. On the road to Damascus, Saul, the persecutor of Christians, looks to the heavens and is blinded by the Son. In this single close encounter with the Son of God, Saul the Pharisee is converted into Paul the Apostle.

But for congregants of the diminutive old Pittsboro Presbyterian Church in Pittsboro, NC, conversion has also taken on another meaning. Conversion at the church is a daily natural occurrence, at least on days when the sun is shining.

The unlikely story of how a small Presbyterian church located in the heart of the historic district in a quaint little North Carolina town became the first congregation in Chatham County to go solar began six years ago. Environmental ministry was not yet a blip on Pittsboro Presbyterian's mission radar and the term eco-justice would never have appeared in a game of congregational Scrabble. But a handful of environmentally conscious members emerged from the study of Carol Johnston's primer, *And the Leaves of the Tree are for the Healing of the Nations: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Eco-Justice*, with a desire to put discussion into action.

Members of the eco-justice group participated in a Solarize Chatham workshop presented by the local community college in partnership with NC Interfaith Power and Light and NC WARN. This led to a rooftop assessment by Southern Energy Management (whose representative just happened to be a Presbyterian elder). His verdict? “You're good to go!” And so we did. We set out in search of churches whose solar dream had borne fruit in order to glean from their harvest. We were impressed by the work done by United Church of Chapel Hill. In 2015 they installed 326 rooftop solar panels including a solar trellis at their church entrance, a shining example of a faithful local response to a global crisis.

I was personally enthused by a section of the report presented by their United Earth Ministries (UEM) team that defined the ultimate rationale for such an ambitious project:

After many months of research and discussion UEM realized that a return on investment (ROI) calculus was the wrong metric to prioritize and that the care of God's creation was/is part of their congregation's call to faith and mission. As a congregation, UCCH's decisions on mission work has always been based on what is right to do. Once the church discerns what is right, they figure out how to fund the mission. UEM realized they needed to think of the solar project in the same way. UEM proposed a large-scale project that would reduce the church's carbon footprint substantially and act as a *billboard for care of God's creation* and hopefully as an inspiration for other churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples in the state...

Congregants of Pittsboro Presbyterian could also experience the kind of joy and satisfaction that the two faithful servants felt by putting talents to use for the Kingdom. In the spring of 2017, the Solar Project proposal was accepted by Session. By year's end, 43 solar panels were converting light from brother sun into electrical energy for a little congregation that found a way.

( photo credit: 2019, Pittsboro Presbyterian Church, [presbyearthcare.blogspot.com](http://presbyearthcare.blogspot.com) )

## FINANCE UPDATE

By Dick Carr, Finance Chair

Note: Our income for June is higher than normal as some persons have paid in advance

	<b>JUNE</b>	<b>CURRENT BUDGET</b>	<b>YR TO DATE</b>	<b>YR TO DATE BUDGET</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$26,066</b>	<b>\$16,668</b>	<b>\$131,791</b>	<b>\$110,646</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$22,824</b>	<b>\$22,335</b>	<b>\$121,032</b>	<b>\$127,630</b>

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

## CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries for St. James! We are having a fun and low-key summer around here.

We are excited to welcome the newest addition to the Aita family, Reid Aita was born July 13th. Everyone is healthy and doing well. We hold them in our thoughts and prayers as they adjust to a new baby.

Our youth continue to have monthly meetings and I am thoroughly enjoying getting to know each one of these amazing, unique individuals! We will continue to meet monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month and are looking at different ways to get our youth involved with some local service projects.

Our Godly Play program will be losing a couple of our teachers for this coming year, so this summer we are looking to hire a couple more teachers/nursery workers, as well as increasing our volunteers for our children's ministries programs. If you are interested or know of anyone who would be, please have them contact me at [tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org).

We will continue to use the Illustrated Children's ministry curriculum until Godly Play resumes on 8<sup>th</sup>. Children are welcome to stay in the service and work on the lectionary based, provided bulletins or to go to the staffed nursery.

Summer means baseball! Come join St. James at the Bellingham Bells game on August 4th at 1:00. We will be sitting in the general admission bleacher seats. Tickets are \$7.50 a person and can be purchased at the game. If you have any questions please let me know.

Our Sunday morning adult education class will continue to study the lectionary texts each week. The class starts at 9:30 in the lounge, childcare is available in the nursery. All are welcome!

I hope you are all having a great summer!

*Tracy Caruso*

*Director of Children and Family Ministries*



- Looking ahead to September and the return of Godly Play we will be looking for Godly Play Teachers and Nursery staff. If you are feeling able or willing to help with our program, please let Tracy know! Volunteers are always needed, and much appreciated!

- Our wish list is up-to-date with current “wishes” for our Godly Play program.

<https://www.wishlitr.com/saintjamescfm/>

## HELP NEEDED: TEAM ST. JAMES FOR THE BED RACE!



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Family Promise Bed Race is only a month away! The bed race is a whacky family fun event that's growing every year and all it is missing is a St. James team. This year we have an opportunity to have a pre-made bed to race. Other teams will pay \$150 registration for a team that includes a bed, but FAMILY Promise host churches and support churches will get a bed on wheels with a mattress for the original \$100 registration fee if we register by Aug. 8. All we need to do is pick up the bed, decorate with a theme, form a

racing team and do some fundraising to support our team as they race around the Civic Field Track.

Who is willing to take on this fun and worthy project? Please contact Gretchen Pfueller for more information: 360-734-3953

## PULSE ON GROUPS: GENDER ALLIANCE

*Pulse on Groups talked with the host of Gender Alliance of Bellingham's, Chrissy Ness, to learn more about the group and how they help the local trans population.*

Gender Alliance is a local peer support group that welcomes all genders and those questioning or curious about theirs. Chrissy shares, “The suicide rate of our attendees over the years at all three groups, Shoreline, Everett, and [Bellingham] is dramatically lower than the national average, which is the main reason I keep attending. I believe what we are doing is essential for helping those with gender issues.”

Although the group makes it plain they are not mental health professionals, Gender Alliance operates as a peer support meeting with standard AA-type guidelines. Confidentiality and discretion are at the heart of the support meeting; what is said there will stay there.



Since 1996, the Bellingham group has been gathering. They are the support and outreach arm of the Pacific Gender Institute, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization Incorporated in Washington serving communities across the State of Washington. Support group meetings are held once a week in each community, without fail.

WHEN: Every Tuesday, 7:30 PM.

WHERE: In the Scout Room, St. James Presbyterian Church, 910 14th St., Bellingham, WA 98225.

COST: FREE

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## 21st ANNUAL SENIOR DAY IN THE PARK

Join the programs of the Whatcom Council on Aging on August 14th, 10am to 2pm, for our 21st annual Senior Day in the Park at Hovander Homestead Park in Ferndale! This year the event will feature an expanded senior resource fair featuring over 40 local businesses and programs including sponsors, VibrantUSA and Kaiser Permanente, as well as additional covered seating. Attendees will also enjoy BBQ, live music, bocce ball, a Hovander House tour, performances, raffle prizes and more! It will be a day you won't want to miss!



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## ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE

### 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

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### St. James Staff

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas

Children & Family Ministry Director: Tracy Caruso

Administrative Assistant: Shannon Laws

Treasurer: Marina McLeod

Nursery: Erika Singh-Cundy, Sophie Rose Kendrick, Lucy Sieczka, Holly Jones, Claire Alarid

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### BELLINGHAM BELLS DAY!

Come join St. James at the Bellingham Bells game on August 4th at 1:00. We will be sitting in the general admission bleacher seats. Tickets are \$7.50 a person. See Tracy for more info.

### PASTOR SETH ON VACATION

Pastor Seth will be away for vacation this coming week and return to worship on August 4. In his absence, please contact your deacon or the church office if you have a pastoral care emergency. Kerrie Bauer of First Presbyterian Church and Greg Ellis of Birchwood Presbyterian are available for on-call pastoral support.

### PRESBYTERIAN PULPIT SWAP 2019

For the second year in a row, the 3 Bellingham PC(USA) churches will be swapping preachers on Sundays in August. We will welcome Rev. Doug Bunnell of FPC Bellingham on August 11 and Rev. Greg Ellis of Birchwood Pres. on August 18. Pastor Seth will be preaching at the other two churches in those weeks. What a joy to share in ministry (and our ministers) with one another!

### TEAM ST. JAMES FOR THE BED RACE!

The 3rd Annual Family Promise Bed Race is only a month away! The bed race is a whacky family fun event that's growing every year and all it is missing is a St. James team. The beds are pre-made and ready to decorate. If we register by Aug. 8th we save \$50 on the entrance fee.

Who is willing to take on this fun and worthy project? Please contact Gretchen Pfueller for more information, [gmpfueller@gmail.com](mailto:gmpfueller@gmail.com).

### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

For the summer months, the Presbyterian Women's Bible Study group will meet for a potluck luncheon only. For the summer finale the pot luck will be at Gretchen's house in her yard. Meet at St. James on Tuesday, Aug 27, 11:00pm to carpool over. Everyone is invited to attend.
















## BOOK CLUB FOR AUGUST



St. James book club will meet on Monday, Aug 19, 7:00pm. The book for August is Maria Semple's "Where'd you go Bernadette?" A comedy novel. The plot revolves around an agoraphobic architect and mother named Bernadette Fox, who goes missing prior to a family trip to Antarctica. It is narrated by her 15-year-old daughter Bee Branch.

### ST. JAMES TURNS 130!

Thoughts are turning nostalgic as we consider the 130 years St. James has been serving the community. Our monthly newsletter "The Pulse" is seeking stories to share throughout the year. Have a story to share? Please email a one-page "memory" to the church office [office@saintjamespres.org](mailto:office@saintjamespres.org), or call us with questions: 360-733-1325.

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

8/5	Gary Culbertson	
8/6	Tim and Wendy Crandall	
8/7	Jeanne Uhles	
8/12	Wilma French	
8/13	Rick and Jean Seater	
8/13	Jill Hoyt	
8/13	Lois Anerson	
8/16	Megan Pfueller Melrose	
8/19	Bill Read	
8/21	Dwayne and Karen Rogers	
8/23	Keena Mullen	
8/24	Rick Seater	
8/25	May Van Der Veen	
8/25	Dale and Wilma French	
8/28	Marilyn Monahan	

  OOPS: *The publishers of "The Pulse" want to wish a Belated Happy Birthday to Gretchen Pfueller (7/21) and Belated Happy Anniversary (7/22) wishes to both Gale and Gretchen Pfueller. God is perfect, to human is typo.*

→ **ST. JAMES CALENDAR**

**Personnel Committee- Lounge**  
Tuesday, Aug 6, 9:00am  
**Building & Grounds Committee- Lounge**  
Tuesday, Aug 6, 5:30pm  
**Finance Committee- Upper Level**  
Tuesday, Aug 6, 6:15pm  
**Worship & Music Committee- Lounge**  
Wednesday, Aug 7, 11:00am  
**Mission & Social Action- Lounge**  
Wednesday, Aug 7, 3:30pm  
**Christian Faith Formation- Scout Room**  
Wednesday, Aug 7, 7:00pm  
**Session- Lounge**  
Sunday, Aug 11, 12:00pm

**St. James Book Club- Lounge**  
Monday, Aug 19, 7:00pm  
**Grief Support- Lounge**  
Wednesday, Aug 21, 10:00am  
**Pres. Women Bible Study & Luncheon**  
**-Horizon Room**  
Tuesday, Aug 27, 12:00pm

\*No Deacon Meeting for August

→ **ST. JAMES WEEKLY CALENDAR**

**Toddler Time**  
8:30am, Wednesdays (On Summer Break)  
**St. James Bell Choir**  
6:30pm, Thursdays (On Summer Break)  
**St. James Chancel Choir**  
7:30pm, Thursdays (On Summer Break)

→ **PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY**

**AA Men's Book Study Group- Horizon Room**  
6:30pm, Mondays  
**Happy Hour AI Anon-Horizon Room**  
5:30pm, Tuesdays  
**AA SOS Men's Group- Horizon Room**  
6:00pm, Wednesdays  
**AA Fairhaven Group- Fellowship Hall**  
7:15pm, Thursdays and Sundays  
**Overeaters Anonymous- Lounge**  
10:00am, Saturdays  
**You Are Not Alone (YANA)- Lounge**  
6:00pm, 2nd Monday (On Summer Break)  
**WA Gender Alliance- Scout Room**  
7:30pm, Tuesdays  
**St. James Fitness- Fellowship Hall**  
4:00pm, Mondays and Fridays  
**Tai Chi- Fellowship Hall**  
5:15pm, Mondays  
**Yoga-Horizon Room**  
10:15am, Tuesdays and Thursdays  
**Bellingham Com. Chorus- Fellowship Hall**  
7:00pm, Tuesdays, Summer Session  
**Bellingham Ukulele Group- Fellowship Hall**  
1:00pm, 2nd Saturday  
**Community Ukulele Players- Fellowship Hall**  
Time: TBD, 1st and 3rd Wednesday  
**Weavers Guild- Fellowship Hall**  
9:30am, 3rd Saturday  
**Boy Scouts Troop 7- Scout Room**  
7:00pm, Mondays (On Summer Break)

**Bayside Co-op Preschool**  
**Hawthorne Learning Solutions**  
**Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County**



Sign up for email updates  
and view a full list of  
calendar events at our  
website:

<https://saintjamespres.org/>



910 14th Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225

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

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

(360) 733-1325