

Table Fellowship in the Pandemic

Peace be with you,

I know this really doesn't feel like a big deal for us these days, but one of the most significant issues the early church faced was division over who they would allow at their table. Specifically, there was a great struggle over who was excluded, who could eat what, and how they practiced hospitality. And to this, the Apostle Paul sent some pretty strong words of criticism in his letters, especially to the Corinthian church.

1 Corinthians 11:19-22 says,

"Indeed, there have to be factions among you, for only so will it become clear who among you are genuine. When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk. What! Do you not have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I commend you? In this matter, I do not commend you!"

One of the problems at play here was an abuse of the Lord's Supper so that it was treated like "any other meal." There was no regard for folks who showed up late, either, and frequently the food was eaten by those who had access and privilege first while neglecting the needs of those who had to work to prepare food and could not engage fellowship as readily as some. In other settings, the way the house was set up excluded some while privileging others with closer access to the table.

Now, what in the world am I getting at here? It's not like we're supposed to be doing large group gatherings when we have to worry about such issues as this right now, amidst a pandemic. What the Apostle Paul and the struggle of the Corinthian church can teach us in this period of disruption is about what it means to practice fellowship that accommodates the needs of the community. The way we break bread, the way we practice our faith, the way we open our doors or keep them closed for safety's sake are all matters of "heart orientation," not merely following rules.

As we look ahead to the day when we will reconvene in worship gatherings at St. James, I hope we will all take into account the needs of others to have access to the meal (or the gathering or the practice). One of us may be healthy and expect for gatherings to resume as normal. Another of us may be afraid of leaving our home for fear of infection due to compromised immune systems. What the people of God do is we act together for the good of the other.

Another associated struggle of the early church was around eating food sacrificed to idols. For some, it did not cause a stumbling block in their faith — they were able to separate the food from its ceremonial purpose. To others, it was a matter that caused great internal turmoil: how could anyone ever do that!

Do our practices of table fellowship or what we eat or drink matter in a 21st-century context? Absolutely! How we care for others' needs and concerns is what is at the heart of these theological questions. And how we care for the most vulnerable among us is a pure reflection of our faith: hospitality and compassion are put into real-life practice.

May we continue to be formed into the kind of people who fellowship and take the needs of all seriously as we do in Christ's loving, welcoming name.

Grace and Peace,



Rev. Seth Thomas



June 2020 Finance Committee Update - PER-CAPITA 101

By Lindsay Anderson, Finance Chair



One mysterious part of being a Presbyterian (to me at least) has been the **Per Capita**. In 2020, churches in the Northwest Coast Presbytery pledge to give approximately \$49 per member to aid in the ongoing work of our Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly - \$40/per member stays within our region. In my 23 years as an active member of a PC(USA) congregation, I have never given the Per Capita much thought... until I became the St. James Finance Chair... in a pandemic.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has had profound economic impacts on our world. Families, individuals, organizations, and businesses are struggling to stay afloat. This means that giving to churches and non-profit organizations is by-and-large down.

This is where, in part, the Per Capita comes into play. Thanks to Per Capita, our Presbytery is able to continue ongoing resources and mentoring to churches and pastors. As of June 2020, Saint James has paid our annual Per Capita (\$6709.50) in full! Our contribution is helping the Presbytery fund ongoing COVID-related relief and resources, such as the Board of Pensions Dues Relief and the grant we received in the spring to aid with unexpected technology and protective expenses to allow us to do church safely. The Per Capita also makes it possible for the Presbytery to support initiatives to help local congregations with anti-racism work.

Thank you for your continued support of Saint James Presbyterian Church. Your financial pledges and gifts help not only our congregation but God's mission at work in churches throughout our region.

Following is an update on Saint James Year to Date General Operating Budget.

- In June 2020, our income outpaced expenses by \$268.05
- Year to Date, income is approximately \$8,000 under budget
- Year to Date, expenses are approximately \$15,000 less than projected due

Overall we are in a healthy position due to steady giving, lower spending on line items (such as nursery staff, printing costs, etc.), and relief offered by the Presbytery.

As of 6-30-2020	JUNE 2020	CURRENT BUDGET	YR TO DATE	YR TO DATE BUDGET
Income	\$14,945	\$19,799	\$122,593	\$130,687
Expenses	\$14,677	\$22,887	\$119,951	\$135,028

While we are worshipping at home during this time you can to give in **TWO** primary ways:

1. **Online Giving:** You can give a one-time gift or create a recurring monthly pledge. Please visit this webpage to set up or update your online giving here: <https://saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving> if you are new to online giving we've got a handy video to show you how, here: <https://www.loom.com/share/5aea350026204a9cb3c955029dafbdd3>
2. **Mail-In Donations:** You can mail your pledges and gifts to the church. Please note that though the church office will be closed mail will be checked regularly.
Saint James Presbyterian Church, 910 14th Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

By Tracy Caruso, Children & Family Ministry Director



Greetings from the director of children and family ministries! Although it has been a very different summer than we have seen in the past and we are missing each other and some of the activities we would usually be participating in together, It has been a fun July with some new and different things happening. We are taking a break from Godly Play and focusing on our 5-week Vacation Bible School Compassion Camp, where kids and families explore what it means to have compassion for others, ourselves, and the world. We have been posting videos on our website for Bible Stories, music videos, craft projects, and yoga. You can check out all the videos at www.saintjamespres.org/compassion-camp. Please send pictures and videos of kids participating in Compassion Camp to tracy@saintjamespres.org. We will compile them into a final video presentation on the 16th of August. Please submit them to Tracy by Thursday, August 13th.

- The youth group continues to meet every Thursday at 3:00 via zoom. If you have a 6th -12th grader interested in joining us email tracy@saintjamespres.org for the Zoom link.
- Adult Education: Please join us for study and discussion on the book *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo, the New York Times best-selling book exploring the counterproductive reactions white people have when their assumptions about race are challenged, and how these reactions maintain racial inequality. Discussions are at 9:00am on the Sunday worship Zoom link and follow the schedule listed:
August 2: Ch. 7 - 9
August 9: Ch. 10 - 12

As always, if you have any questions, or need anything, please don't hesitate to contact Tracy. I miss you all so much and can't wait to be able to see you all in person!

ST. JAMES MEMBERSHIP CONTACT UPDATES

Make a note! New addresses, phone numbers of church members

Marlene Amman: NEW email address is marleneamman@gmail.com

Tricia Bravener: NEW phone number is 360-410-2283

Kat and Ed DeVaney: NEW contact info are 360-398-3322,

KatherineJHDevaney@gmail.com, EdwardCDeVaney@hotmail.com

Zach and Olivia Engels: NEW address is 1525 Azalea Ct., Lynden, WA 98264

Faye Hill: NEW email address is fayeannhill@gmail.com

Bob Monahan: NEW phone number is **360-671-5728** (Let it ring a while and if not answered, hang up and call again because it is hard for them to get to the phone.)

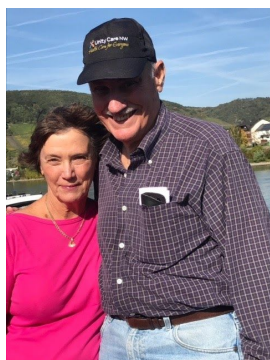
Kirsten Oliver: NEW address is 4201 Parkhurst Dr., Bellingham WA 98229



Have an update that is not listed above to share? Please notify the church office at office@saintjamespres.org

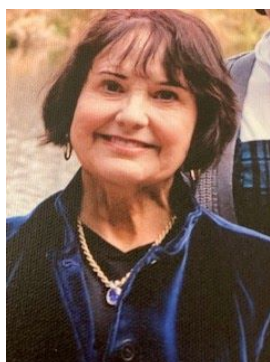
WELCOME TO ST. JAMES THREE NEW MEMBERS!

Please read the bios for some of our new members joining the church & get to know these wonderful new folks.



Kirsten Oliver

Kirsten Oliver immigrated to Whatcom County from Norway in 1951. After relocating to Everett for 20 years, she returned to Bellingham in 1970. Kirsten served as an operating room nurse for 37 years. She has a passion for gardening, especially along two acres of land on Lummi Bay. She considers herself mostly an outdoor girl and enjoys hiking, skiing, blue water, and coastal sailing. She is proud of having built a steel boat and a house from the ground up. Kirsten has volunteered at Planned Parenthood and enjoys time with her large extended local family, a brother in Everett, and a network of friends.



Claudia Allan

Born and raised in Seattle, Claudia Allan is a graduate from the University of Washington and served as a principal for Seattle Public Schools until her retirement. After retiring, she and her husband, Noel, who recently passed away, lived near Stevens Pass, until the couple's son, David, asked them to move to Bellingham to be closer to his family. Claudia also has a daughter, Darcy, and loves spending time with her family as well. She enjoys taking her Havanese dog on daily walks around her home near Whatcom Falls Park and spending time with her grandchildren. Claudia is a supporter of Mount Baker Theatre and attends performances at the local theater, as well as Seattle Repertory Theatre. She looks forward to workouts with her trainer to keep in shape. Though she is recovering from knee surgery in February, Claudia looks forward to volunteering, kayaking, and skiing.



Luke Arnold

There is no doubt you've heard Luke Arnold's beautiful playing during Sunday worship service. The talented pianist serves as St. James' accompanist. A student at Western Washington University, Luke studies piano performance and psychology, is active in student government, and conducts research in psychology. When not studying and working, Luke loves to hike, swim, and spend time with friends. Luke grew up in a Navy family and graduated from high school in Silverdale, Washington before relocating to Bellingham for college. He counts his parents, sister, and dog, Coco, as his favorite people and says he is blessed with a close group of supportive friends who love to have fun together. Though a job first brought him to St. James, Luke has found a family here who genuinely care for him. He finds himself constantly inspired to grow in love and faith.

AN OPEN THANK YOU LETTER FROM NWC PRESBYTERY

Ray Dellecker forwards this encouraging and appreciative message from the NWCP, sent July 9th

Dear Session of Saint James Presbyterian Church,

THANK YOU for supporting NWC Presbytery, Synod of AK/NW, and the Presbyterian Church (USA) with your love, energy, and per capita support. As of June 30, 2020, we had received \$6709.50 from you, which makes our regional and national ministry possible! THANK YOU! Please let us know if your congregation will have difficulty providing your per capita support this year. NWCP Executive Board is anticipating the largest shortfall we have ever experienced when we need these financial resources more than ever. And we want to be able to plan well.

In addition to your per capita support, you have also given generously to our shared mission and partners in the amount of \$1960.00 as of June 30th. THANK YOU! Your partners thank you! See your mission partners along with videos and links to their ministries at www.northwestcoast.org/partners.

All of your resourcefulness in relation to COVID-19 is also being called on to address racial injustice and seeking God's vision for humanity. Toward that end we are engaging, equipping, and encouraging congregations to address these two big challenges! NWC Presbytery has provided comprehensive guidance on re-entering church facilities that we expect all congregations to abide by here:

<https://www.northwestcoast.org/covid-19-re-entry>. PCUSA COVID-19 Resources are here:

<https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/>. We announced the "Beyond Covid-19 Grants" for congregations and new expressions. Applications are due on or before August 30. We also provided resources for learning about systemic racism, unlearning white privilege, and taking steps to be part of God's vision for humanity here:

<https://www.northwestcoast.org/racial-justice-resources>. PC(USA)'s helpful racial justice resources are here: <https://www.pcusa.org/racial-justice-resources/>.

Our first All-Zoom presbytery leadership summit was held on June 11. The workshops, worship led by Rev. Matt Paul and First PC of Port Angeles, fantastic sermon by Rev. Emily Mitchell are available online for you at <https://www.northwestcoast.org/leadershipsummit>. We were blessed to have PC(USA) partners Kathryn Threadgill (Vital Congregations Initiative) and Rev. Cindy Kohlmann (PCUSA Co-Moderator) join us for key moments. Co-Moderator Kohlmann commissioned our GA delegation, Elder Moon Lee, Rev. Faith McClellan, and YAAD Maya Schlosser-Hall, as they prepared to participate in the 224th General Assembly June 19-27, 2020. The first "virtual" assembly: <https://gapcusa.org>.

May the peace of Christ which passes all understanding rule in your hearts and minds as you live the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Gratefully Yours,

Dr. Corey Schlosser-Hall & Rev. Gustavo Carvajal
Executive Presbyter Presbytery & Executive Board Moderator
NWC Presbyterians pray for GA Delegation.



ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas, pastor@saintjamespres.org
Children & Family Director: Tracy Caruso, tracy@saintjamespres.org
Accompanist: Luke Arnold
Treasurer: Marina McLeod, stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant: Shannon Laws, office@saintjamespres.org
Teachers: Claire Alarid, Tova Breen, Fiona Dent,
Frankie Morrissey, Lucy Sieczka

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
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
Marlene Amman, Alice Beaty, Adam Beaty, Pam Gibson
Julie Keyes, Valerie McBeth, Rick Seater, Jean Seater, Carla Shafer

Worship Schedule- Join us for streaming service

9:00 a.m. Online Daily Prayer, Monday - Friday

10:30 a.m. Worship is a LIVE Service Stream from our website:

<https://saintjamespres.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/saintjamespres/>



Photo: Almost ready for the new carpet.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ST. JAMES BOOK CLUB IN AUGUST

We will be meeting Monday evening August 17th at 7:00pm via Zoom. If you are interested in joining us please email Tracy Caruso tracy@saintjamespres.org for the Zoom link.

Deadlines for church publications

Weekly bulletin: Wednesday, 2:00pm

Weekly email: Thursday, 2:00pm

Monthly "The Pulse": the 20th, 2:00pm

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

8/4	Corenia Murphy	🎂
8/5	Gary Culbertson	🎂
8/6	Tim and Wendy Crandall	💕
8/7	Jeanne Uhles	🎂
8/12	Wilma French	🎂
8/13	Jill Hoyt	🎂
8/13	Rick and Jean Seater	💕
8/16	Megan Pfueller Melrose	🎂
8/19	Bill Read	🎂
8/21	Dwayne and Karen Rogers	💕
8/24	Rick Seater	🎂
8/25	Mary van der Veen	🎂
8/25	Wilma and Dale French	💕
8/28	Marilyn Monahan	🎂

ST. JAMES CALENDAR

All in-person church gatherings have been postponed until further notice. Committees and groups will be gathering online. Please contact your Committee Chairperson or Group Coordinator to find out more about current offerings and times.

→ PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY

AA Fairhaven Group- Fellowship Hall

AA Men's Book Study Group- Horizon Room

AA SOS Men's Group- Horizon Room

Bellingham Com. Chorus- Fellowship Hall

Bellingham Ukulele Group- Fellowship Hall

Boy Scouts Troop 7- Fellowship Hall

Happy Hour AI Anon- Horizon Room

Overeaters Anonymous- Lounge

St. James Fitness- Fellowship Hall

Tai Chi- Fellowship Hall

WA Gender Alliance

Weavers Guild- Fellowship Hall

Yoga- Horizon Room

You Are Not Alone (YANA)- Lounge

Bayside Co-op Preschool

Hawthorne Learning Solutions

Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County





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