

For the Beauty of the Earth

As summer draws to a close, we look back upon the beautiful weather we have had here in Bellingham and are grateful for the opportunities we have had to be outdoors with friends, soaking in the beauty of God's creation. And now we look forward into the fall with this beauty lingering in our minds, primed to ask how we can continue to steward God's creation well, how to honor all that is good and beautiful, and how to protect and preserve all creation as good stewards of God's reign here on Earth.

In 2015, Pope Francis declared September 1 to be a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. In the years that have followed, Christians around the world have taken it upon themselves to engage this day with faithful contemplation and action on behalf of the earth and the crisis which faces our global climate. We mark this day again this year by remembering "the Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it..." (Psalm 24:1). All creation cries out to God, giving glory to God's goodness and groaning in longing for health and flourishing for all.

As I have prepared for preaching this fall, I have been wondering at how we are to take matters of such present significance and crisis, such as climate change and its effects, and listen to them with the heart of Jesus. I have wondered at how Jesus' wisdom and teaching can inform our actions and engagement with issues of climate science, environmental stewardship, and working with complex geopolitical issues that face humanity today. If the earth is the Lord's and therefore belongs to Jesus, how do his parables and teachings inform us as disciples in how we act and live today? This is an enduring question of the faith and I am acutely aware of its importance today.

What I have found as I have explored the Scriptures and specifically looked at Jesus' parables is that Jesus offers wisdom to very complex issues. Wisdom that does not bring easy, quick answers. But a way of living that enters into the complexity, rather than shying away; a way of engagement that faces the challenges of science and politics with a grounding in the truth that God's love can and does work within these issues to lead us to the hope of all creation flourishing.

In the month of September, we will be engaging the question of climate change in our worship each week, through the lens of Jesus' teaching. We will be worshipping and serving alongside millions of other Christians, around the world, who are choosing to take a proactive step in engaging the wicked problems of an environmental disaster from the angle of hope and possibility. We will see that in Jesus' teachings calls to humility, sacrifice, and urgency that embolden those who follow him to act faithfully and act now.

The Church has faced many great challenges through its history: war, famine, genocide, racism, persecution. The wisdom of Jesus has and will continue to provide us with a lens for how to live amidst all these challenges. And, through it all, the Church has persisted, modeled hope for all humanity and all creation, sought the flourishing and wholeness of all, for the glory of God and for the life of the world. And today, we continue this work, anticipating God's continued love and faithfulness to us, now and forever. Amen.

Grace and Peace,



Rev. Seth J. Thomas

(photo credit: Selina Perez Baker, Grade 3, Parkview Elementary School, 2019)



Selina Perez Baker, Grade 3, Parkview Elementary School



If you would like to follow along with Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) projects related to Earth Care and Climate Justice, check out: <https://presbyearthcare.org> and <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/eco-journey/>

RESPONSE

Throughout the year, Response will feature members of our vibrant congregation. We hope these brief introductions prompt reflection, spark conversations and create opportunities for meaningful connections in our church family and community.

MEET OUR NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR, DYLAN CISNEROS



Dylan Cisneros was born in Mount Vernon, Washington. His extended family was among the first Mexican families to settle in Skagit County. He lives with his partner of nearly ten years, Kelly Wise, and hopes to establish himself as an all-ages private music instructor in Bellingham, specializing in voice, guitar, and piano. His hobbies include singing, listening to new music, and reading. He holds a degree in Music Education with a K-12 Choral Endorsement from Western Washington University and has a background in secondary choral education. His favorite musicians are Franz Schubert, Janelle Monáe, and David Bowie.

SAY HELLO TO MARLENE AMMAN

Hello, I am Marlene Amman. I was born and raised here in Bellingham. I went to Sunday school in old St. James when it was located across the street here in Bellingham. I attended Larrabee Grade School, Fairhaven Middle School and graduated from Bellingham High School. After graduation, I attended Bellingham Success Business College. I worked at a stenographic service, electronic company and the Bellingham Public Library Book Mobile and Office.

My mom and I joined St. James in 1962. From there I met the man of my dreams and we were married at St. James Presbyterian Church.

We moved to Houston, Texas for a year, moved back up to the Seattle area and rented places. We bought our first home in Mountlake Terrace, WA, joined Terrace View Presbyterian Church. After two years, we started our family. A son and daughter. Lived there for 18 years. We enjoyed traveling, camping, etc.

Sadly, my husband and I divorced after 20 years of marriage. I lived in our family home for three years and decided to move back to Bellingham to be closer to family, and rejoined St. James at that time. I worked in a couple of nursing homes, several years at Allsop and The Blue Sea System of which I retired from. I have lived here this time for 31 years.



FINANCE UPDATE

By Dick Carr, Finance Committee and Stewardship Campaign 2019



The Stewardship Campaign is traditional during the month of October. This campaign is especially important due to the joys and growth with the increase in the number of children that are participating in Godly Play and other activities during this year. We also have four youths to get a start with having a youth program. A year ago Session approved and hired Tracy Caruso as Director of Children and Family Ministries. Tracy and her staff have really provided a great start for the future of children as an important part of St. James. As this program continues to grow, additional funds are necessary to financially provide support. While there is more to the life of St. James, our children should head the list.

The focus of the campaign this fall is totally on the financial support to St. James. Based on our current commitments for 2019, the church needs pledging commitments that will add up to \$200,000 plus just to maintain the status quo.

Per Capita is clearly an annual expense to the Presbytery based on our membership. Finance has chosen to remove this item from the pledge form this year and include the total cost as a line item in our budget. You can still contribute separately if you so desire. The use of a tree last year to show our support was a good idea but a more basic tool is needed to show progress with pledging commitments during the month. A meter will be located in the Narthex to clearly show our status on a weekly basis. The packet this fall will briefly address our needs with children, local mission information, and worship related information. If you have been contributing on a regular basis during the year, a statement as to your status of contributions will be included. Therefore, each packet will be unique to you. Packets with no names identified will also be available.

As a reminder, pledging to St. James over the past three years has stagnated. This level cannot continue and still maintain the commitments that we currently have in place. This level will not allow any growth either. As the church ages along with its members, we are experiencing some additional expenses which have not existed due to the efforts of several members who have donated their expertise. We thank them for all that they have done for decades. We are starting to pay for some of these efforts. The budget for 2019 reflects a situation that our expenses for this year could exceed our total income by \$35,000. So far, our treasurer has predicted a deficit less than this amount. Historically the budget is used as a good tool to compare income and expenses during the year. Deficit budgets are not a good path to follow as there are always some things that surface during the year that were not part of the budget. We do not have a slush fund.

The kickoff for this campaign will be on September 29th. Plan to attend the church that Sunday and pick up your packet after the service. Read the information, fill out the pledge form, and return it to the church quickly to reflect on the meter in the Narthex that we are serious to financially support St. James for 2020. Let's watch our commitments fill up the meter such that it is full to the top by November 1, 2019. (\$200,000 +).
LET'S STEP UP AND SUPPORT ST. JAMES FOR 2020!

	JULY	CURRENT BUDGET	YR TO DATE	YR TO DATE BUDGET
Income	\$15,573	\$16,674	\$147,364	\$127,320
Expenses	\$15,608	\$18,375	\$136,640	\$146,004

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

CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries! We have had a good summer around St. James, enjoying the beautiful weather and slower summer pace. We are shifting into high gear now and preparing for Fall!

Our youth group had a great gathering at Boulevard Park at the end of July and decided to participate in the Family Promise Bed Race on September 8th. They will be decorating and racing a bed and raising money for Family Promise. We will be decorating the bed on

September 7th and if anyone would like to help with decorating or has a truck that we can borrow for bed transportation let me know! The youth will be fundraising on September 1st and 8th here at church or you can contact me to donate.

Our Godly Play program will be returning on Sunday, September 8th. We are planning to paint and freshen up the Godly Play/Scout Room before that. All painters welcome to help! We will be having a welcome back Godly Play event after church on the 22nd. Everyone is welcome to join us for ice cream and a quick tour of the classroom.

Toddler Time will be back on Wednesdays from 8:30-10 beginning on September 11th. Families with children 4 and younger are welcome to join us in the Fellowship Hall for a fun time of free play for kids and coffee for parents. 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!



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 wishlist is up-to-date with current "wishes" for our Godly Play program. <https://www.wishlitr.com/saintjamescfm/>

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE - CLIMATE ACTION FOR PEACE



Whatcom Peace & Justice Center

In solidarity with people around the world, the Whatcom Peace & Justice Center (WPJC) will host "Climate Action for Peace," Bellingham's 16th annual International Day of Peace

celebration, on Saturday, September 21, 2019. Recognized by the United Nations since 1982 and the City of Bellingham since 2010, International Day of Peace is a day for us to envision what our world can look like without weapons, violence, and oppression.

Our keynote speakers this year are Women of Color Speak Out, the collective of Seattle activists who educate communities about the climate crisis. The program includes the presentation of the Howard Harris Lifetime Peacemaker Award and music of love and struggle performed by local artists. Hundreds of community members are expected to attend this popular annual event.

The Bellingham event is inclusive, free and open to the public. This is possible thanks to sponsors' support, whose contributions help to cover venue costs, speaking fees, publicity, language interpretation, childcare, and more. Visit the website to learn more:

<https://www.whatcompjc.org/sponsor-international-day-of-peace.html>.

ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE



St. James Staff

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas

Children & Family Ministry Director: Tracy Caruso

Worship & Music Leader: Dylan Cisneros

Administrative Assistant: Shannon Laws

Treasurer: Marina McLeod

Nursery: Erika Singh-Cundy, Fiona Dent, Lucy Sieczka, Holly Jones, Claire Alarid

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

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

WELCOME BACK

As we welcome the return of Fall, many St. James groups return as well:

Boy Scouts Troop 7- starts Aug. 26th

Bayside Co-op Preschool- starts Sept. 2nd

St. James Chancel Choir- Sept. 5th

Godly Play- starts Sept. 8th

You Are Not Alone (YANA)- starts Sept. 9th

Unsure about a group's time and place?

Visit the St. James Callendar

<https://saintjamespres.org/connect/calendar/>

CHANCEL CHOIR BEGINS SEPTEMBER

The first choir rehearsal of the year will be held on Thursday, September 5, at 7:30pm. We will have a brief rehearsal, followed by a time to mingle and eat goodies. Come and meet the new director, Dylan Cisneros!

ST. JAMES BOOK CLUB FOR SEPTEMBER

The book club meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7pm in the lounge. The current book is Maria Semple's *Where'd You Go, Bernadette*. We will be discussing it at the September 16th meeting. The books will be available in the office.

ST. JAMES YOUTH RACING TO HELP HOMELESS FAMILIES!

The 3rd Annual Family Promise Bed Race is Sunday, Sept. 8th, 2pm - 4pm at the Civic Field parking lot. There are two fundraising events Sept. 1st and the 8th. Please help our youth raise money for Family Promise. Contact Tracy for more info, tracy@saintjamespres.org

PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST PRAYER VIGIL

The last prayer vigil for 2019 will be at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Wednesday, 5:30pm, Sept 18th. It will restart in March 2020, organized by Bruce Radtke in cooperation with Noriko Lao.

BOY SCOUT TROOP 4007 100TH YEAR!

Sunday, September 29, 1:00pm to 5:00pm, Fellowship Hall Party plans are in the works! The troop would love to have former scouts in Troop 7 to share their pictures and stories at watroop4007+100yrs@gmail.com. All are welcome.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

9/6	Margaret McVie	🎂
9/6	John Sibold	🎂
9/7	Peter and Susan Burkland	💍
9/8	John Harris	🎂
9/11	Bill and Katy Read	💍
9/12	Gracelyn Dobson	🎂
9/13	Aaron and Tracy Caruso	💍
9/14	Robb and Cheryl McGregor	💍
9/17	Dave Nelson	🎂
9/18	Ann Lary	🎂
9/19	David Anderson	🎂
9/21	Asher Thomas	🎂
9/23	Faye Hill	🎂
9/26	Marcus Baker	🎂
9/27	Ken Reimers	🎂
9/30	Phyllis Jones	🎂

WHERE IS IT?

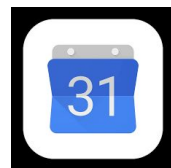


The sign-up sheet for Flower Ministry is in the Horizon Room to the left of the bulletin board.

Want more St. James calendar information? Maybe even sign up for our weekly emails and monthly magazine?

Visit our website:

<https://saintjamespres.org/>



Lose a watch or a pair of glasses? Maybe an earring? Lost & Found is in the church office. Lost coats or sweaters are hanging in the Narthex. Visit or call at 360-733-1325.

→ **ST. JAMES CALENDAR**

Personnel Committee- Lounge

Tuesday, Sep 3, 9:00am

Building & Grounds Committee- Lounge

Tuesday, Sept 3, 5:30pm

Finance Committee- Upper Level

Tuesday, Sept 3, 6:15pm

Mission & Social Action- Lounge

Wednesday, Sept 4, 4:00pm

Christian Faith Formation- Godly Play

Wednesday, Sept 4, 7:00pm

Session- Lounge

Sunday, Sept 8, 12:00pm

Worship & Music Committee- Lounge

Wednesday, Sept 11, 11:00am

Deacons- Lounge

Sunday, Sept 15, 11:45

St. James Book Club- Lounge

Monday, Sept 16, 7:00pm

Grief Support- Lounge

Wednesday, Sept 18, 10:00am

Godly Play Welcome Event

-Fellowship Hall

Sunday, Sept 22, 5:30pm

Pres. Women Bible Study & Luncheon

-Horizon Room

Tuesday, Oct 1, 11:30pm (no Sept meeting)

→ **ST. JAMES WEEKLY CALENDAR**

Toddler Time

8:30am, Wednesdays

St. James Bell Choir

6:30pm, Thursdays

St. James Chancel Choir

7:30pm, Thursdays BACK ON!

→ **PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY**

AA Men's Book Study Group- Horizon Room

6:30pm, Mondays

Happy Hour Al 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

WA Gender Alliance- Godly Play 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

6:30pm, Tuesdays

Bellingham Ukulele Group- Fellowship Hall

1:00pm, 2nd Saturday

Weavers Guild- Fellowship Hall

9:30am, 3rd Saturday

Boy Scouts Troop 7- Godly Play Room

7:00pm, Mondays

Bayside Co-op Preschool

Hawthorne Learning Solutions

Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County



910 14th Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
www.saintjamespres.org
office@saintjamespres.org
(360) 733-1325