

the Pulse

October 2018

THE SAINT JAMES PRESBYTERIAN MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Practicing Gratitude

It is remarkable how much we have to be grateful for every day: the sun that rises, the air we breathe, warm homes to live in, clean streets in our cities, and the company of friends and neighbors with whom we live, move and have our being.

It is also remarkable how easy it is to become cynical and disoriented by all the heartache, hunger, injustice, and fear that we witness in the world. Whether we turn on the evening news or remember a loved one in the hospital, many circumstances call our hearts to sadness and lament. Untempered, these spaces of sadness and lament can easily lead us to despair.

A faithful practice and powerful remedy for cynicism is the practice of gratitude: a simple, daily remembrance of all that God *has* provided that invites us to respond with thanks and praise. For me, the Scriptures that most inspire me to remember gratitude are the Psalms. David, the writer of many of the Psalms, possessed great wealth, power, and deep intimacy with God. David had much to be grateful for, but his story also held much sorrow: war, betrayal, loss, and the strains of his own sinfulness. Time and again, we see David crying out in lament *and* praise to God. David had many opportunities to move towards cynicism, but the Psalms record David's faithful practice of gratitude. David faithfully practices gratitude and thanksgiving each time he experiences pain; David returns to God each time he is tempted to become cynical. In the Psalms, we discover an account of what it means to see God's faithfulness and providence, even in the midst of brokenness.

Each day we have a choice and opportunity: do we embrace cynicism or return home to God in gratitude? There is much that tempts us to despair, but the faithful practice of Christians (for millennia) has been to return to God in thanks and praise. Paul writes to the Thessalonian church, "Be joyful always, pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for that is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thess. 5:16-18). Every moment presents an opportunity to discover gratitude for all that is praiseworthy. When we foster gratitude, we build resistance to the temptation of cynicism. The discipline of gratitude allows us to bear witness to the work of God in the world to a people desperately in need of hope. The practice of gratitude invites us (and others) to see and experience the goodness of God in each moment. We do not have to succumb to brokenness. As we turn our hearts to God in gratitude, we are sustained and renewed: this strengthens our resolve to love more generously and deeply in response.

As a congregation, we have an opportunity to turn our hearts and minds to the discipline of stewardship each fall: we pray, discern, and commit to how we might return the gifts God has given us in the form of financial pledges and gifts of our talents and time. At its core, this season invites us to (re)engage the *practice of gratitude*. The first step in this practice is to take stock of all the ways we have been blessed by God. We remember, in gratitude, the faithfulness of God in our church: the growing presence of children; our deepening worship and fellowship life together; the opportunities God grants us to engage the cause of justice in our neighborhood and world. When we begin to name and identify these places of God's faithfulness, we speak that "thank you," and allow our hearts to grow in gratitude and generosity.

I pray that you would encounter the richness found in the practice of gratitude during this season—that it would open you up to experience God's great love in new ways and encourage you to respond to God all the more.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Seth



2018 ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Our Annual Stewardship Drive is now an active campaign for the month of October. If you didn't pick up your Pledge Packet at the Sunday morning service on Sept. 30, it's available for pick up in the church office. (Picking it up at church reduces our mailing costs!)

This campaign is our primary opportunity to let St. James know how we each may support both financially and with our Time and Talents for 2019. The Stewardship committee has worked to prepare an informative packet that identifies just a few ideas that St. James hopes to pursue in 2019.

Please read through the packet and respond by returning the financial form and Time and Talent form to the church. The pie chart in the packet depicts a high-level estimate of financial needs for 2019. The only 2018 information given are actuals, pledging and Per Capita dollars. The outer ring shows in a relative manner some of the estimated dollar amounts. This is projected 2019 expenses.

A "skeleton tree" is located in the Narthex that reflects our interest to support St. James in 2019. Each response will add leaves and apples to the tree form!

We want to make sure that all supporters of St. James receive a packet. If you did not receive one or have questions concerning the campaign, please contact the church office at 360-733-1325. Your responses are very important for our 2019 planning. Please return these two forms as soon as possible as we would like to see this tree add leaves and apples as we progress through the month. October 28 is the last Sunday in October and so let's all respond prior to that Sunday. I feel that we all look forward to seeing this tree full of leaves and apples by October 31!

Thank you!
Dick Carr, Stewardship Campaign chair



AUGUST FINANCIAL STATUS

	<i>August</i>	<i>Current Budget</i>	<i>Yr. to Date</i>	<i>Annual Budget</i>
Income	\$14,820	\$19,059	\$148,069	\$147,965
Expenses	\$20,073	\$19,360	\$149,089	\$147,901



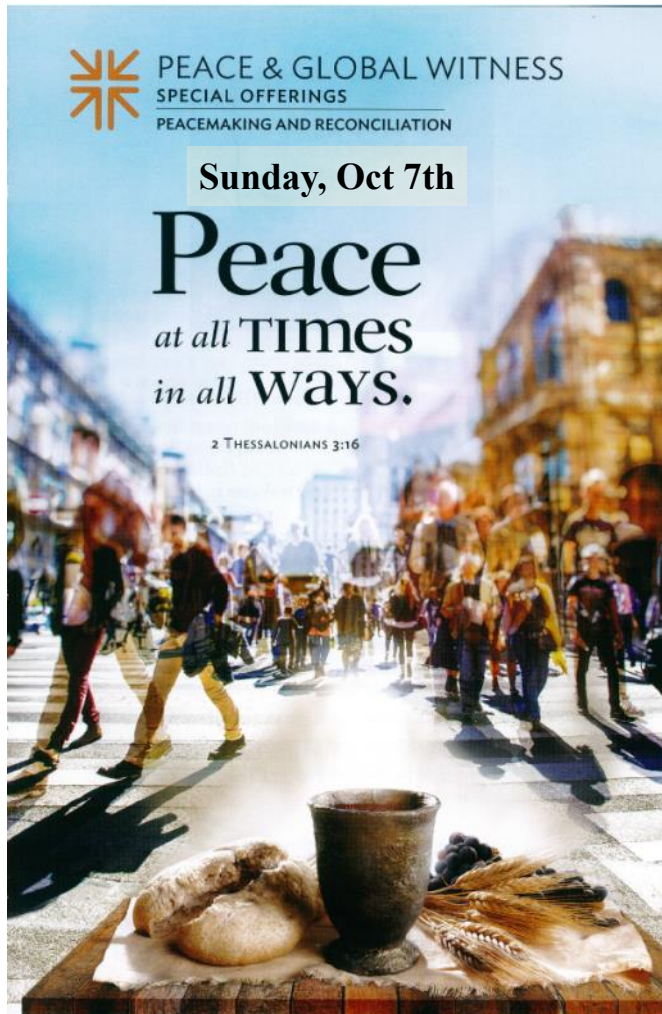
ONLINE DONATIONS!

Using our new system you can

- * Give from you bank account
- * Make a one-time donation or set up a recurring gift
- * Designate your gifts as part of your annual pledge
- * Designate your per capita contribution

Go to: <https://saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving>

OCTOBER 2018



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

Sunday, Oct 7th

Peace
at all Times
in all Ways.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:16

On Sunday, Oct 7th, a special offering will be taken - Peace & Global Witness. You can read how the offering collected will be broken out, and the 25% of the offering that stays with our congregation will be given to Northwest Youth Services.

Northwest Youth Services is a non-profit organization serving young people ages 13-24 experiencing homelessness in Whatcom and Skagit Counties.

We support youth in identifying goals and building the skills necessary to reach their own sense of stability.

Northwest Youth Services offers housing, street outreach, help finding a job or enrolling in school, connection to mental health services, support for LGBTQ youth, restorative justice for juvenile offenders, and referrals to other services in the community.

For more information please follow the link below:

<https://www.nwys.org>



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

The 2018 Peace & Global Witness Offering encourages the church of our time to cast off anxiety and fear, discord and division, and embrace our reconciling God's mission with those around the corner and around the world, as active peacemakers — *at all times in all ways.*

By giving to the Peace & Global Witness Offering, we work to share Christ's peace with one another, beyond our doors, beyond our community and across boundaries.



25%

of this Offering stays with our congregation,
for ministries of peacemaking and reconciliation
in our community.



25%

of this Offering will go to mid councils,
joining with other congregations in our area to
support peacemaking work in our region.



50%

of this Offering supports
the work for peace and reconciliation
being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

**IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE,
IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!**

Thank you!

OCTOBER 2018



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries at St. James. We have had a great September with a good kickoff for our Godly Play program and are looking forward to a great year. I want to give a special thank you to Claude Hill for creating some beautiful shelves and materials for our classroom. We are truly seeing the wonder of Godly Play alive in the classroom and encourage you to come see what it is all about. We are hoping to have another Godly Play fellowship time after church soon. Keep your eyes out for the date.

With our Stewardship campaign kicking off this month, many people have asked how they can contribute to our children's program. In addition to pledging towards St. James campaign for 2019 you can also always check out our wish list of materials at <https://www.wishlistr.com/saintjamescfm>. Any and all donations are greatly appreciated. There are items that range from \$5-\$100 on our list.

Godly Play Schedule for October:

October 7th The Great Family: In this lesson we continue seeking the elusive presence of God. God was present at creation, blessing all that was made. Noah walked with God and was led by God's presence to build the ark that preserves life. And then? The people living around Abraham and Sarah believed that there were many gods embedded in nature. This meant that gods had to be "here" or "there." Abraham and his family believed that God was everywhere, but was that really true? What if they were to go into an unknown place or experience, would God be there? They were not sure of this, but they put their faith in God's promises and found them to be true.

October 14th Exodus: In this story, we continue to evoke the People's experiences of God's elusive presence. These moments of high drama reveal the complexity of such experiences and provide a narrative of their richness. This not only gives children an appropriate language to name, express and value their own experiences, but also permission to talk aloud about them.

October 21st The 10 Best Ways: In this story we continue to witness God's elusive presence with God's People on three occasions at Mt. Sinai: First in the burning bush when God revealed to Moses the name of God. Second, when God gave the Ten Commandments to the people through Moses. Third, when, after breaking the tablet in anger, Moses climbed up to Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments a second time.

October 28th Work Day



Our Sunday morning adult Bible study is continuing its study on the book of Acts. Everyone is welcome to attend and if you need childcare during that time please let Tracy know.

Presbyterian Women will meet twice in October because of not having a September meeting. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, Oct. 2 and Tuesday, Oct. 23. Meet at 10:30 a.m. in the lounge for a bible study -- lessons one and two in the new Horizons study book. Each Tuesday's bible study will be followed by a potluck salad luncheon at noon in the Horizon Room. The meetings will focus on new ideas for the group, so be there and make your voice heard!



OCTOBER 2018



INTERFAITH COALITION

Partners in faith. Changing lives.

Providing Warmth to Neighbors in Need

Interfaith Coalition's annual winter warmth drive provides warm outerwear for everyone from babies to seniors.

Please bring clean, gently-used or new winter coats and jackets, gloves, scarves and hats to worship services through October 14.

If you are a knitter, handmade hats and scarves are also cherished. For many of our neighbors, this program means they won't need to spend limited income on a winter coat or do without.

Thank you for sharing the warmth!



Warm bodies and hearts.

Interfaith Coalition Annual Hope Meeting and Celebration

Tuesday, October 16 at 7:00 PM

Congregation Beth Israel, 751 San Juan Blvd. in Bellingham

(Go South on Yew Street Road and then West on San Juan Blvd)

Please join Interfaith Coalition for a meaningful evening of fellowship, inspiration and opportunity. Hear from volunteers and families who share stories of compassion and hope. Learn how we are serving additional homeless families through our new Family Promise program, and help celebrate congregation Beth Israel's new synagogue home. You are part of an active and caring community of individuals and congregations dedicated to our neighbors in need. Please join us for this special evening.

Dear Pastor Seth and Everyone at St. James Presbyterian Church:

Thank you so much for your recent gift of \$600 to Interfaith Coalition in support of this partnership we share to help our neighbors. We are so grateful for your generosity to us with your financial resources, especially as we know that there are many needs and ministries that you support. We are equally grateful for the amazing congregation members from St. James who devote many hours of their time to help care for the kids and parents when you help with Family Promise, feed the hungry at CAST, donate and help distribute warm coats, support all of our transitional homes and, most of all, provide our staff and office with such a supportive and beautiful office space! St. James is a light in the darkness, and a spark for those in need of an example or inspiration.

Blessings and much gratitude –
 Laura Harker
 Interfaith Coalition Executive Director

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



THANK YOU to all those who helped make this past week at Family Promise a great success! Your time and donations were very much appreciated. More trainings will be offered before our next opportunity starting on February 3.

Each year Birchwood Presbyterian Church holds an amazing Fall Festival. This year we are encouraging our families to attend and have a St. James Family Fun Night at the Birchwood Fall Festival. The festival will be on Friday October 26th from 6:00-8:00pm, at Birchwood Presbyterian Church. Let Tracy know if you can make it so we can arrange a place to meet up!



Welcome, Kate!

We have a new face in the St. James office. Kate recently moved to Bellingham from Bend, Oregon. Kate graduated from The Seattle School of Theology and Psychology in 2017 and practices as a mental health therapist in Marysville and Bellingham. Kate enjoys literature, music, movies, and running. She would love to know your favorite local spots! Kate will be in the office Tuesdays-Thursdays from 9:00am-2:00pm, come say hi!

October Birthdays

1	Rick Hodgson
1	Laurie Anderson
1	Jim Mullen
4	Lance Melrose
6	Jim DeWilde
7	Aubrey Caruso
8	Marilyn Methven
10	Neal Jackson
11	Carla Shafer
12	Christian Beaty
12	Ian Jackson
13	Don Hoyt
15	Rob Reimers
24	Claude Hill
24	Sean Keyes
26	Peter Burklund
27	Robin Crandall
28	Sammy Mohr
31	Rook Van Halm

*in
everything
give
thanks*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18



OCTOBER 2018 CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 10am Grief Support Group 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7pm Boy Scouts	2 10:15am Yoga 10:30am Pres Women Luncheon 4:15pm St James Fitness 5:30pm AI Anon 5:30 B & G 7pm Bhm Comm Chorus 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	3 3:30pm Mission & Social Action 6pm SOS Men's AA 7pm CFF committee	4 10:15am Yoga 5:30pm Congregational Life 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA 7:30pm Chancel Choir	5 4:15pm St. James Fitness	6 10am OA 3pm World Peace Poetry
7 9am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship w/Communion 6:15pm AA Fairhaven	8 5:15pm Tai Chi 6pm YANA 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7pm Boy Scouts	9 10:15am Yoga 4:15pm St James Fitness 5:30pm AI Anon 6pm Finance 6:30pm Bayside Parent Mtgs 7pm Bhm Comm Chorus 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	10 10am Worship Committee 6pm SOS Men's AA	11 10:15am Yoga 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA 7:30pm Chancel Choir	12 12pm Prime Timers 4:15pm St James Fitness	13 10am OA 1pm Bellingham Ukulele Group
14 9am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship 12pm Session 7:15pm AA Fairhaven	15 10am Grief Support Group 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7pm Boy Scouts	16 <u>Pulse items due</u> 10:15am Yoga 4:15pm St James Fitness 5:30pm AI Anon 7pm Bhm Comm Chorus 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	17 6pm SOS Men's AA	18 10:15am Yoga 5:30pm Peace Vigil (location TBD) 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA 7:30pm Chancel Choir	19 4:15pm St James Fitness	20 9:30am Weavers Guild 10am OA
21 9am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship 11:45am Deacons 7:15pm AA Fairhaven	22 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7pm Boy Scouts	23 10:15am Yoga 10:30am Pres Women Luncheon 4:15pm St James Fitness 5:30pm AI Anon 7pm Bhm Comm Chorus 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	24 6pm SOS Men's AA	25 10:15am Yoga 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA 7:30pm Chancel Choir	26 3pm Membership Committee 4:15pm St James Fitness	27 10am OA
28 9am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship 12pm All-Church Luncheon 7:15pm AA Fairhaven	29 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 6:30pm Boy Scouts	30 10:15am Yoga 1pm Personnel 4:15pm St James Fitness 5:30pm AI Anon 7pm Bhm Comm Chorus 7:30pm WA	31 6pm SOS Men's AA	<div> Bayside Co-op Preschool Schedule: 360-733-3972 Hawthorne Learning Solutions Schedule: hlearningsolutions@gmail.com </div>		





910 - 14th Street, Bellingham, WA 98225
www.saintjamespres.org
office@saintjamespres.org
360-733-1325
Office Hours: Tue-Fri, 9am-2pm

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 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
Pianist/Accompanist: Kaitlyn Ronstadt
Teachers: Erika Singh-Cundy, Sophie Rose Kendrick, Lucy Sieczka