

the Pulse

November 2018

THE SAINT JAMES PRESBYTERIAN MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Saying Grace

In the month ahead, many of us will gather around tables for meals with loved ones, friends and family. Some of us will travel long distances or receive guests from afar; whether near or far, we come together to eat, share stories, and experience each other's company--sometimes after much time apart. It is the season of Thanksgiving, the time of year we return to God gratitude for the abundant harvest: a table filled with enough and lives nourished from God's hand.

As is common for many Christians who gather at table over the Thanksgiving holiday, we practice "saying grace." I grew up listening to my grandparents, parents, uncles and aunts gathering our family together with a word of prayer in response to God's bountiful providence. Saying "grace", puts the words of thankfulness upon our lips. As we speak "grace" aloud, we acknowledge before (and with) others the ways we have personally and communally been impacted by God's providing love.

"Saying grace" is a tradition, but I think there is much more for us to experience in this practice than we typically allow. Sometimes, saying "grace" can be a perfunctory act--the hosting task, the obligation, the liturgical movement that inaugurates the meal. This year, I wonder if we might hear an invitation to experience "grace" as something beyond just words. Could "grace" be an offering--something given *and* received as we gather at the table? Could we find a capacity around our tables this November--and the months to come--to know "grace" in the core of our

being? Could we receive others in love, and allow ourselves to be received as well?

What might this look like? Surrender allows me to recognize my need to give and receive grace, both to others and to myself. I have to accept my own need for grace: for my weaknesses, for my shortcomings, for moments I have squandered the good, spoken carelessly, or been quick to judge.

The grace I receive allows me to offer grace to others: grace for the friend at the table who said a harsh word to me last week, grace for the sibling we wish had not actually shown up to the meal...How are you invited to know grace more deeply? Who around you needs to experience grace --an unconditional welcome, forgiveness, or reconciliation? Where do you need to experience grace?

Grace--rooted in Christ--is not perfunctory, but bold. I write this note in the closing days of October, the month when the church remembers the historic boldness of Martin Luther, who nailed his ninety-five theses to the Wittenberg church door, the same man from whom our reformed tradition gratefully received the strong reminder that it is by "grace" we are saved. We are and are becoming a people of grace. Wholeheartedly.

What is offered to each of us today is that Christ Jesus welcomes us in grace. It is in Christ we find the true meaning of saying and *living grace* --"go now and sin no more." Christ's grace sets us free to then go and fully release others. As we give and receive grace, we open up our hearts to God, to others, and to our world. May we receive this grace more wholly, now and always.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Seth



2018 ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

The Stewardship Committee wishes to thank everyone who has responded to St. James with their pledges, both financial and time and talent, for 2019! You know how important these responses are, as they are crucial for planning how we can move forward. The tree with its leaves and apples shows how near to our goal of \$190,000 we are! If you have not yet returned your pledge forms, please do so now! Thank you to all who have!

As of the deadline for publishing this Pulse, we have received 49 responses and a total in pledges is \$134, 776. The December Pulse will provide the final information.

Dick Carr, Finance Chair

	September	Current Budget	Year-to-Date	Year-to-Date Budget
Income	\$ 18,844.00	\$ 17,883.00	\$ 166,913.00	\$ 145,828.00
Expenses	\$ 18,167.00	\$ 16,236.00	\$ 167,257.00	\$ 164,137.00



ONLINE DONATIONS!

Using our new system you can donate online a few ways:

- * Give from your 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>

And God is able
to make all grace abound to
you, so that having all
sufficiency in all things at all
times, you may abound in
every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8





CHRISTMAS WREATHS

to benefit:

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN AVAILABLE DECEMBER 2

Please reserve yours now by signing up in the Horizon Room or contact Gretchen Pfueller gmpfueller@gmail.com

THANKSGIVING & GRATITUDE

Throughout 2018 St. James has shared \$17,000 of our annual budget with people in need in our community and in other parts of the world through PCUSA. We have received numerous notes of thanksgiving and gratitude from these vital and caring organizations and the Mission & Social Action Committee wishes to share bits of some of those responses.

(Continued on page 5)

A warm thank you to all of you that shared coats, jackets, gloves, and scarves with your neighbors in need!



The Mission & Social Action Committee is introducing a new opportunity for St. James.

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN is a Christian, non-profit organization committed to feeding God's starving children in developing countries. We are partnering with Birchwood and First Presbyterian Churches to bring this one-day event to Whatcom County on Saturday, March 2: we will pack over 100,000 nutritious meals designed specifically for starving children. While this event is a few months away, we are bringing this to your attention now since there will be fundraising involved to support the project. We will be selling Christmas Wreaths as our first fundraising endeavor! We've placed a sign-up sheet in the Horizon Room, please sign up! Wreaths will be available December 2. To find out more about *Feed My Starving Children*, visit their website listed below:

<https://www.fmssc.org/>

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

Greetings! I hope everyone is having an amazing fall season. In October, we continued to see our students immerse themselves in the stories and play of Godly Play. Some of our St. James families had a great time together at Birchwood Presbyterian Church's Fall Festival, with great costumes and plenty of sugar consumed by all!

We will be having a Godly Play lesson on **November 18 after church from 12:00pm-1:00pm**. Any and all are invited to come experience the wonder of *Godly Play*.

We are looking forward to the season of Advent. To help celebrate, the students will be holding a change drive to raise money for *Feed My Starving Children*. Look for change containers to come home the last Sunday in November.

We are also looking forward to beginning a weekly toddler-time program for children ages birth through three years and their parents. We would love to have you join us for a time of play and community. Details are still being arranged, but we will be meeting downstairs in the fellowship hall, stay tuned for more details!

Our Sunday morning Adult Bible Study is finishing its study on the book of Acts. They will be doing an Advent study on the history of various hymns during the month of December. If you are interested, please talk to Faye Hill. Everyone is welcome to attend and if you need childcare during that time, please let me know.

Tracy Caruso

Director of Children and Family Ministries



Godly Play for November

November 4th: The Ark and the Tent

Moses experienced God's presence on Mt. Sinai, but also in the tent of meeting. In addition, God's presence

was in—or more likely seated on—a throne above the ark of YHWH (a box or chest that contained at least the tablets of the commandments, and possibly the rod of Aaron and a vessel of manna). This story describes how the two traditions of the tent and the ark came together in the tabernacle.

November 11th: The Ark and the Temple

In this story we see a continuation of the travels the tablets of the commandments took. We see new way for thinking for the people of God in regard to the experience of God's presence.

November 18th: The Exile and Return

In this story, the Babylonians capture Jerusalem and take God's People into exile. Even though this journey is forced upon them, they make an astonishing discovery: God is not just in one place, in the temple in Jerusalem, but also in a foreign and strange land. God's presence is not here or there, but everywhere, waiting. To be found. To find us.

November 25th: Work Day

Change containers will be sent home today!

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 has been updated and can be found at <http://www.wishlist.com/saintjamescfm/>



For December, we will discuss and learn the "back stories" of eight of our beloved Advent and Christmas carols/hymns. Below is a tentative schedule for the advent study.

◇ **December 2**

*Oh Come All Ye Faithful
O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

◇ **December 9**

*What Child Is This?
It Came upon a Midnight Clear*

◇ **December 16**

*Go Tell It on the Mountain
Angels We Have Heard on High*

◇ **December 23**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem
O Holy Night*



INTERFAITH COALITION

Partners in faith. Changing lives.

Benefit Concert for Family Promise of Interfaith Coalition

Please plan to attend **Hope-Filled Dreams**, a vocal showcase of solos and ensembles to benefit Family Promise, a program of Interfaith Coalition. The concert will be held

**Sunday, November 18 at 2:30 pm at
Bellingham Unitarian
Fellowship, 1207 Ellsworth Street.**

The featured performers will be local soloists, *Vocal Pyro Ensemble* and the *Bellingham Community Chorus* under the direction of Musical Director, Rob Viens. There will be a freewill offering with all proceeds benefiting Family Promise, a vital program providing shelter and support to children and their parents experiencing homelessness.

Please join us for some beautiful music while supporting our neighbors most in need.



Check out the flyer for *Hope-Filled Dreams* posted in the hallway outside of the church offices.

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

THANKSGIVING & GRATITUDE (continued from page 3)

Interfaith Coalition: St. James is a light in the darkness, and a spark for those in need of an example of inspiration. Thank you for your generous and vital support of our neighbors!

Lighthouse Mission: I always find it spectacular to see the difference in people's lives because of gifts like yours. You are allowing people to dream again. God bless you.

NW Youth Services: Thank you for playing a role in establishing a safety net and support system for young people ages 13-24 who have experienced trauma resulting in homelessness. I am so grateful for your partnership as we work together to ensure that youth and young adults in Whatcom and Skagit Counties have an ally and safe place to go when they are in crisis.

Habitat for Humanity: We can't thank you enough for keeping our mission and partner families close to your hearts.

Bernie and Farsijana Adeney-Risakotta, co-mission workers in Indonesia: We are so thankful to you, our sisters, brothers and congregations of the PCUSA who pray for us and support our work in Indonesia. Without your tangible support, our work could not continue.

Doug Dicks, associate for Ecumenical Partnerships serving in Israel and Palestine: Thank you all for your continued and faithful prayers, correspondence and financial support. All are much appreciated and most needed.

Tyler and Rochelle Holm, mission worker in Malawi: Thank you for supporting Tyler's work at the University of Livingstonia, College of Theology. Your prayers and financial support have helped make a difference to the lives of people living in Malawi.

PULSE

St. James Book Club

The rejuvenated St. James Book Club is up and reading. Our selection for the **November 19** meeting is *Secrets from the Vinyl Café* by Stuart McLean. **Meetings will be the 3rd Monday of the month in the Lounge at 7pm.** The library book kits will be kept in the office. Grab a book and join us!

Nov. 19 *Secrets from the Vinyl Café*.
Dec. 17 *Whistling Past the Graveyard*
Jan. 21 *Little Bee*
Feb 18 *The Tortilla Curtain*
Mar. 18 *The Power of One*
Apr 15 *All the Light We Cannot See*
May 20 *West with the Night*



Arts and Crafts Group

The Arts and Crafts Group will be meeting on **Monday November 12 and 26 at 10:00am** in the Horizon Room. We will be focusing on holiday card making at these meeting. There are many other projects we want to try in the future. Directions for prayer shawls are also available. If you like to craft or want to learn a craft, join us.

Mission & Social Action would like to invite you to an upcoming talk. Dr. Yoav Litvin, Israeli-American Psychologist and Neuroscientist, will be speaking at Garden Street United Methodist Church on Zionism and Settler Colonialism on Wednesday, November 7 at 7:00pm.

Bake Sale

This year the St. James Presbyterian Women are trying something new. We will be participating in the Christmas Market at the Fairhaven Winterfest on **Saturday, November 24 from 12-5 pm.** We will have our homemade cookies, candies, and hot drinks ready for you to enjoy at Winterfest. If you would like to donate baked items please contact Merry Thomas at vchmerry@gmail.com.



Presbyterian Women

Mark your calendars for **Tuesday, Nov. 27.** We will meet in the Lounge at 10:30am for Bible study, followed by a potluck salad luncheon at noon. You may pick up a copy of *God's Promise: I Am With You*, this year's Horizon Bible study at any time during the year. Lesson Three, "God With Us in Our Discouragement" focuses on God's promise of presence, which gives us courage, strength, boldness and hope. The primary scriptures are Deuteronomy 31: 1-8; Joshua 1: 1-9; and Haggai 1: 1-15 and 2: 1-9.

Calling all Office Saints!

If you are interested and available to volunteer on weekdays in our church office, we'd love to have you! We are hoping to build a team of regular office volunteers. Please contact Kate at office@saintjamespres.org if you would like more information.



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3	Irene Rome
3	Patricia Harris
7	Jean Seater
10	Dick Johnson
11	David Seater
12	Julie Keyes
19	Nancy Wagar
20	Caitlin Lockhart
22	Margaret deMaine
22	Miranda Keefe
22	Marilyn Madden

24	Eva Landis
25	Marie Mellinger
27	Wendy Crandall
29	Craig Keyes

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

4	Wally and Jane Botsford
14	Bob and Irene Rome

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				01	02	03
				10:15am Yoga 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA Fairhaven 7:30pm Choir	4:15pm St. James Fitness	10:00am OA
04	05	06	07	08	09	10
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS 9:00am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship/ Communion 6:15pm AA Fairhaven	10:00am Grief Support 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7:00pm Boy Scouts	ELECTION DAY 10:15am Yoga 4:15pm St. James Fitness 5:30pm Al Anon 5:30pm Building & Grounds 7:00pm Bhm Comm Chorus 7:30pm	3:30pm Mission and Social Action 6:00pm SOS Men's AA 7:00pm CFF	10:15am Yoga 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA Fairha- ven 7:30pm Choir	12:00pm Prime Timers 4:15 St. James Fitness	10:00am OA 1:00pm Bellingham Ukulele Group
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
VETERAN'S DAY 9:00AM Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship 12:00pm Session 7:15pm AA Fairhaven	VETERAN'S DAY (OBSERVED) 10:00AM Arts & Crafts 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:00pm YANA 6:30 AA Men's Book Study 7:00pm Boy Scouts	10:15am Yoga 4:15pm St. James Fitness 5:30pm Bayside Annual Potluck 5:30pm Al Anon 7:00pm Bhm Comm Chorus 7:30 WA Gender Alliance	10:00am Worship Committee 6:00pm SOS Men's AA	10:15am Yoga 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA Fairhaven 7:30 Choir	PULSE DUE! 4:15pm St. James Fitness	9:30am Weavers Guild 10:00am OA 6:00pm Piano Recital
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:00am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship 11:45 Deacons 12:00pm Godly Play 5:30pm Prayer Vigil 7:15pm AA Fairhaven	10:00am Grief Support Group 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7:00pm Boy Scouts 7:00pm Book Club	10:15am Yoga 4:15pm St. James Fitness 5:30 Al Anon 7:00pm Bhm Comm Chorus 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	6:00pm SOS Men's AA	THANKSGIVING DAY 7:15 AA Fairhaven		10:00am OA 12:00pm Bake Sale
25	26	27	28	29	30	
9:00am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship 7:15pm AA Fairhaven	9:00am Personnel 10:00am Arts & Crafts 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 6:30pm Boy Scouts	10:15am Yoga 10:30am Pres. Women Bible Study & Luncheon 4:15pm St. James Fitness 5:30pm Al Anon 7:00pm Bham Comm Chorus 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance	4:30pm Mission & Social Action 6:00pm SOS Men's AA	10:15am Yoga 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA Fairhaven 7:30pm Choir	3:00pm Member- ship 4:15pm St. James Fitness	





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
Teachers: Erika Singh-Cundy, Sophie Rose Kendrick, Lucy Sieczka