

the Pulse

December 2017

THE SAINT JAMES PRESBYTERIAN MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



So while we might be drawn toward the numbing glow of Christmas lights or distracted by the nostalgic stories of reindeer and elves, the church's proclamation at this time of year is that this is a season to be ready, to come awake, to anticipate the birth of Christ and the coming of the king. Our Sunday readings are apocalyptic and prophetic — unveiling and pointing to the truth of the Christ-child's loving reign!

I'm sure you remember the anticipation of Christmas morning from when you were a child. My sister and I used to sneak up the stairs to our living room, hoping to catch a glimpse of presents around the tree and all the possibility that exciting day would hold. We could hardly contain our wakefulness. But over the years, the wakefulness wears off. The burdens of the broken world and the darkness of the season weigh us down. And yet we are inspired not to lose heart as we hear the story of Advent again — the light is coming! Wake up!

In this season of Advent, I hope you hear the call to wakefulness. Wakefulness in your soul, where you are opened up to the work God is already doing in you. This is a season of hope, faith, joy, and love — markers of the good news in our lives and reminders of God's continual presence with us, calling us to wake from our sleep. Like children anticipating the dawn of Christmas Day, so we also are called to wake up to the coming of the light of Christ, the dawning of Emmanuel.

"The moon the breast of the new fallen snow gave a luster of midday to objects below."

"A people walking in darkness have seen a great light."

Grace and peace,

Pastor Seth

Pulse - December 2017 - "Waking Up in Advent"

"And mama in her kerchief and I in my cap, had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap. When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter..."

A long winter's nap sounds lovely these days. The days are dark and the nights are long, the wind howls and the rain pours down. To sit by a warm fire or tuck in for a good long nap, lulling to sleep during these cold waning days of the year sounds very enticing.

Sometimes we feel like we're asleep even as we walk around in the world. I find myself asleep and ushered into complacency by cheery jingles and bright red coffee cups, worn out by the noise of the holidays and lulled toward hibernation by the sheer volume of the "Christmas Season." It is so easy for me to run headlong into the spirit of the holidays and to totally miss the point.

Advent is for waking up. While the world in darkness dreams during the month of December, it is in these days leading up to Christmas that the church tells a radically different story. We proclaim that the darkness does not have the final word — the light will return and will break out in our lives anew as we celebrate the coming of Emmanuel, God with us.



December Birthdays

- 3** Pastor Seth Thomas
- 6** Sharon Schayes
- 7** Gale Pfueller
- 9** Candy Ellis
- 13** Dick Carr
- 15** Alia Lynnae Bowers
- 18** Scott Wenger
- 31** Katy Read

December Anniversaries

- 5** Wayne and Linda Landis

Presbyterian Women

The St. James Women’s Association will meet early this month, Tuesday, Dec. 12, because of Christmas. Come to the Lounge for Lesson 4 in the Horizon’s bible study, “Cloud of Witnesses” at 10:30 a.m.

Join the group for lunch at noon in the Horizon Room. Bring a salad to share. Speaker for the Christmas luncheon will tell an inspiring story. Those who have favorite local nonprofit agencies will have a chance to weigh in on donations for that and others.

Advent
A Season of Hope & Expectation



Children’s Ministries

Godly Play presents the following stories:

Dec. 3: Children begin the journey toward the mystery of Christmas and the town of Bethlehem by lighting the first candle. The lesson sparks their anticipation, building up toward lighting the Christ candle.

Dec.10: In Advent II, Godly Play focuses on the Holy Family and learning about the prophets. They also are introduced to traditional liturgical language more directly than in previous lessons.

Dec. 17: This Sunday combines Advent III and IV. Children explore the roles of the shepherds and of the wise men. A review of advent invites anticipation of the Christ child.

Dec. 24: Advent culminates in the incarnation. Classical artist renderings tell the story: The Annunciation; Visitation; Nativity; Adoration of the Magi; Presentation in the Temple; Massacre of the Innocents; and the Flight into Egypt. Nonreaders can label and order the pictures; older children can read the text of Madeleine L'Engle's The Glorious Impossible.

Parents:
Please be sure to check in your children downstairs for Godly Play and/or the Preschool/Nursery room. We ask that you turn in a registration form each school year for your child. Ask one of the teachers for one if you did not receive one, and turn it in to a teacher or the Christian Education mailbox in the hallway near the church office.

PULSE

Get to know your church members!

Julie and Craig



Julie and Craig Keyes started attending St. James when their 10-year-old daughter and 8-year-old son were invited to the Advent Festival by friends. That was 18 years ago, and since then, the former household of five has been reduced to three with both children pursuing their future's elsewhere: Erin, an internal medicine residency at UC San Francisco and Sean at the University of Washington Law School.

The family's 9-month-old golden doodle, Toby has provided ample challenge for the empty nest. He has been learning proper etiquette for greeting, how to get through evening FRAPS (Frenetic Random Activity Periods), and barking.



Craig was hit with viral pneumonia and has had various complications in October, resulting in a 5-week recovery. He has been reevaluating his priorities and wants to approach life by "Not sweating the small stuff". Craig and Julie sing in the St. James choir. Craig has enjoyed volunteering at the Food Bank and now is exploring how to support farmworkers and local control of food production and distribution. Julie will become a deacon beginning January y 2018.

Interfaith Coalition Coat Drive a Warm Success

As the cool weather finds us reaching for a jacket, we are reminded that some of our neighbors are in need of the basic item we take for granted. With your generous donations, we provided winter coats as well as hats and scarves to many of our neighbors. We appreciate the generous donations of winter wear from members of your congregation. Thank you for bringing some much needed warmth to others this winter.

It was heartwarming to see parents find warm coats for themselves and their children. Several children beamed as they showed how nice they looked in their new coats and hand knit, colorful hats. Some homeless individuals were able to find layers of sweaters and coats to help on the coldest nights.

We appreciate your commitment to this program and

are humbled to experience the gratitude in words or expressions of those who benefit from your efforts.

Warmly,
Laura Harker, Executive Director
Interfaith Coalition



Recent Notes of Thanksgiving from.....

| | |
|--|--------------|
| INTERFAITH COALITION – Winter Warmth Drive donations (coats, hats, gloves, socks), our commitment to be a support congregation for FAMILY PROMISE | \$3,000 gift |
| NW YOUTH SERVICES – continued donations of single serve food items for homeless youth | \$500 gift |
| LIGHTHOUSE MISSION – “Thank you for caring about the homeless.” | \$1,000 gift |
| OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL – provides multiple services for low income and homeless children, women and men in our community | \$2000 gift |
| HABITAT FOR HUMANITY – support for the building of 40 new housing units on Telegraph Road and homes in progress | \$500 gift |
| BELLINGHAM FOOD BANK – providing food for the hungry | \$500 gift |
| SKOOKUM KIDS – services/housing for kids transitioning into Foster Care | \$500 gift |
| PCUSA DISASTER RELIEF – assistance for Lebanon and Syria | \$1,000 gift |
| PCUSA CO-MISSION WORKERS Bernie and Farsijana Adeney Risakotta – serving in Indonesia | \$200 gift |



The tree in the Horizon Room was decorated on November 24, complete with angel wings. Each wing states a special wish or need of ten individuals; names provided us by Interfaith Council. The hope is those of us who wish to take part, will choose and take one wing, purchase that item listed and bring the gift to the church no later than December 17. The present will be wrapped and delivered. You may wish instead to donate money to the project, and if you do, please mark it clearly “Angel tree”. Thanks! Kay Carr, Chair

PULSE

Highlights from the 12 November 2017 Session Meeting

Session members and their associated committees:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Laurie Anderson | Membership |
| Dick Carr | Finance |
| Tracy Caruso | Nominating |
| Tim Crandall | Personnel |
| Jill Hoyt | Worship and Music |
| Gretchen Pfueller | Mission Social Action |
| Merry Thomas | Christian Faith Formation |
| Jeanne Uhles | Building and Grounds |

From the Treasurer's report, the amount received for 2017 pledges was less than projected, but offerings were more than anticipated. The overall financial status is good and on track for 2017 end of year closeout.

From Building and Grounds, approval was received for the expenditure of \$84,000 (not to exceed) for the bathroom renovation project. The project is scheduled to begin in early January and is expected to be completed in two months.

From Mission and Social Action, the Interfaith "Family Promise" program is set to commence March 2018 with St. James serving as a support church.

Two important dates have been set:

10 December 2017 - Election of Officers and Nominating Committee Representatives

28 January 2018 - Mission for the Year / Review of the Annual Report

Mark Beaty
Clerk of Session

A Surprise Found in Storage!

While looking into boxes being stored recently, our "archivist", Kay Carr, opened one to find several copies of a book entitled "Days of our Years 1889-1989" by Dorothy Koert. It is so interesting to read about the first hundred years of our church. While there is a copy in our church library to read, you may have your own copy by contacting Kay Carr at 360-398-7914. There is a limited number of copies available so call now! You will not find a better bargain at "Free"!



The Christmas Joy Offering celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the truly “indefinable gift,” as well as the gifts of church leaders—past, present, and future.

In the second letter to the Corinthians, Paul talks of a generous gift that has been promised. As he sends folks ahead to make arrangements for this gift, he takes the opportunity to illuminate the impact of generosity. Paul grounds readers first in God’s generosity, reminding us that God not only provides seed for sowing and bread for food, but God goes further, partnering in human generosity both as source and as amplification. The gifts we give are from God, and they are multiplied and increased by God as we give. The result of the generous gift made by the Corinthians therefore has a compounding effect, enriching the Corinthians “in every way.” It results in impact to those whose need is met, and the ministry made possible by the gift—to the giver of the gift as well. It then overflows in thanksgiving to God and benefits the whole church as it inspires and testifies to the gracious work of God through Christ. It is that grace, then, that Paul describes as “indefinable.”

Through the work of the Christmas Joy Offering, we seek the living of this truth: that God’s generosity is the source, the support, and the outcome of our own. We give because God has freely given. We give to support the needs of our church leaders—past, present, and future—and God amplifies and extends those gifts through the ministry of those leaders. Their gifts of ministry extend and amplify as well, “overflowing” in thanksgiving to God, and the entire environment of generosity bears witness to God’s grace, a truly indefinable gift.

Thanks be to God for this
indefinable gift.

-2 Corinthians 9:15

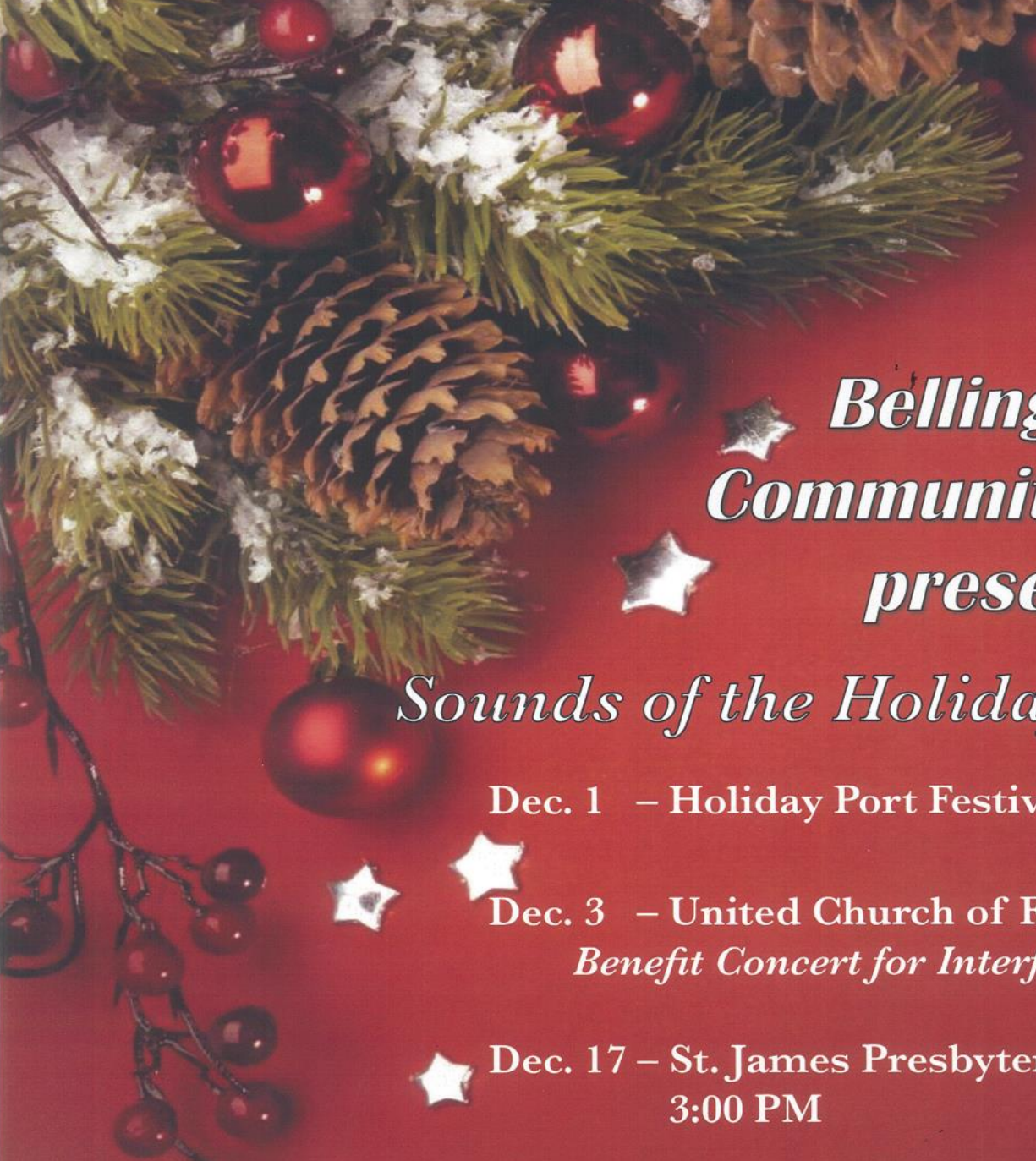
A church worker in a time of need receives the generosity of the church in the same way they have been generous in their service to it—then turns around and makes a gift himself to help other church leaders in need. A student at Presbyterian Pan American School receives the generosity of the church and responds by dedicating his life to serving the church. The work of the Offering is compounding generosity, with unending expansion and ceaseless increase.

In gratitude to God for the gift of Jesus, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) invites congregations to join this celebration of God’s presence with us by supporting those in need of help and hope.

Thank you for your support of this life-changing Offering. Please encourage your congregants to give generously.



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS



***Bellingham
Community Chorus
presents...***

Sounds of the Holiday Season

Dec. 1 – Holiday Port Festival 6:30 PM

Dec. 3 – United Church of Ferndale 3:00 PM
Benefit Concert for Interfaith Coalition

Dec. 17 – St. James Presbyterian Church
3:00 PM

Benefit Concert donations will go to
Interfaith Coalition Family Housing Program

*Your support will provide lasting hope and help children
and families experiencing homelessness.*



Dec. 17th Concert is suggested donation
\$5/individual & \$10/family

Tickets available at: <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3136748>

Sponsored in part by the Bellingham Music Enrichment Project 501c3 EIN 81-2831140

Thank you so much to all who have responded during the campaign indicating interest to support St. James in 2018, financially and with your time and talents. Without this support, the future of St. James would be in jeopardy. We look forward to Pastor Seth leading us into a year of growth!

We distributed 94 packets. To date, we have received 59 responses. The total pledged is \$158,324 of our \$200,000 goal. Commitments toward Per Capita is \$3722. Per Capita is based on membership (\$48 per member). Our church's payment to Presbytery is estimated at \$7,000 for 2018.

If you have not yet responded, it is certainly not too late, as we have started to prepare our 2018 budget. The committees are eager to learn of your interests to support with your Time and Talent! If your pledge form has been misplaced, please contact the church office, and you will get a replacement!

You're Stewardship Campaign Members

- Dave Armstrong
- Peter Burkland
- Pam Gibson
- Don Hoyt
- Marina McLeod, Treasurer
- Pastor Seth Thomas
- Dick Carr, Chair



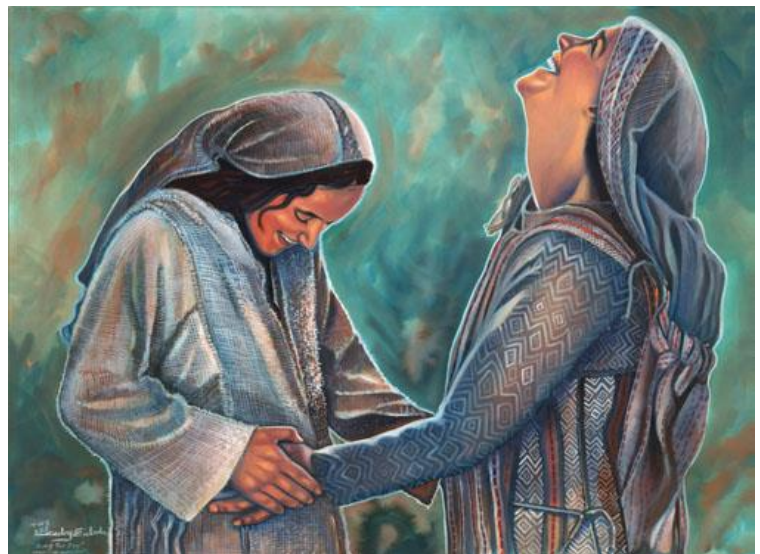
OCTOBER FINANCIAL STATUS

| | October | Current Budget | Yr. to Date | Yr. to Date Budget |
|----------|-----------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Income | \$20,322. | \$15,903. | \$186,448. | \$171,626. |
| Expenses | \$16,364. | \$16,454. | \$157,939. | \$172,853. |

Mary's Song of Praise

And Mary¹ said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

Luke 1:46-49



The background of the entire page is a stylized illustration of a night scene. A large, bright yellow star with a long, glowing tail points downwards from the top center. The sky is dark blue with several smaller white stars and dotted lines representing constellations. In the foreground, a white, snow-covered hill features the silhouettes of three animals: a large sheep on the left, a pig in the middle, and a cow on the right. In the background, a town is depicted with various buildings, including a prominent minaret with a crescent moon on top, a palm tree, and a central stable with a thatched roof. The stable is illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. The overall scene is set against a dark blue night sky.

★ Christmas Eve Services

Sunday, December 24th

10:30 a.m. Christmas Service

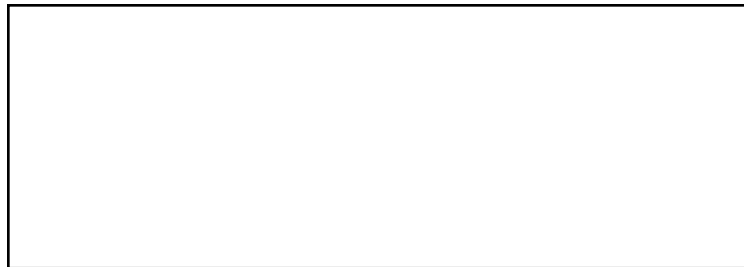
7:30 p.m. Candlelight Service

PULSE

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | ¹ | ² 10am OA |
| ³ 9am Adult Church School 10:30am Worship w/Communion 12pm Advent Festival 7:15pm AA | ⁴ 10am Grief Support Group 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7pm Boy Scouts | ⁵ 10:15am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit 5:30pm Al Anon 5:30pm Finance 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance | ⁶ 10am Worship Committee 3:30pm Mission & Social Action 6pm SOS Men's AA | ⁷ 10:15am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit 5:30pm Building and Grounds 5:30pm Congregational Life 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA 7:30pm Choir | ⁸ 12pm Prime Timers | ⁹ 9am Church Work Party 10am OA 1pm B |
| ¹⁰ 9am Adult Church School 10:30am Worship 12pm Session BYOL 7:15pm AA | ¹¹ 9am Book Group 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7pm Boy Scouts | ¹² 10:15am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit 5:30pm Al Anon 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance | ¹³ 6pm SOS Men's AA | ¹⁴ 10:15am Yoga 3pm Christian Faith Formation 4pm Cross-fit 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA 7:30pm Choir | ¹⁵ | ¹⁶ 9:30am Weavers Guild 10am OA |
| ¹⁷ 9am Adult Church School 10:30am Worship 11:45am Deacons 7:15pm AA | ¹⁸ 10am Grief Support Group 5:15pm Tai Chi 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study 7pm Boy Scouts | ¹⁹ 10:15am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit 5:30pm Al Anon 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance | ²⁰ 6pm SOS Men's AA | ²¹ 10:15am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit 6:30pm Bell Choir 7:15pm AA 7:30pm Choir | ²² | ²³ 10am OA |
| ²⁴ Christmas Eve 9am Adult Church School 10:30am Worship 3pm Bellingham Community Chorus Concert 7pm Candlelight Service 7:15pm AA | ²⁵ Christmas Day 6:30pm AA Men's Book Study | ²⁶ 10:15am Yoga 10:30am Women's Bible Study 12pm Women's Salad Potluck 4pm Cross-fit 5:30pm Al Anon 7:30pm WA Gender Alliance | ²⁷ 6pm SOS Men's AA | ²⁸ 10:15am Yoga 4pm Cross-fit 7:15pm AA | ²⁹ 3pm Membership | ³⁰ 10am OA |
| ³¹ New Year's Eve 9am Adult Church School 10:30am Worship 7:15pm AA | | | | | | |

St. James Presbyterian Church
910 14th Street
Bellingham, WA 98225

Return Service Requested



St. James Presbyterian Church

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

Office Hours: Tue-Fri, 9am-2pm

St. James Staff

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas
Children's Ministry: Zadra Nolan, Coordinator
Teachers: Erika Singh-Cundy, Sophie Rose Kendrick,
Lucy Sieczk
Administrative Secretary: Natasha Orme
Treasurer: Marina McLeod
Music Director: Carolyn Mullen
Pianist/Accompanist: Julian Fajardo

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Worship
10:45 a.m. Children's Time

