

HEALING AND WHOLENESS

Lenten greetings to you. If you're like me, at this point, a couple of weeks into the season of Lent, you're probably struggling to keep up whatever practice or abstention you planned on Ash Wednesday. That's how habits work — they're difficult to start and challenging to break once engrained.

This year, we need to rethink our Lenten journey. Not to throw out the practices and fasting, but to give an extra measure of grace for the difficulty of making real change happen amidst a world turned upside down by the global, national, and personal changes we have experienced over the last year. Please, give yourself some grace.

Instead, I want to remind us this month that the Lenten journey is ultimately about healing and wholeness. Consider this: why we fast, why we adapt our practices, why we focus in this season on the journey to the cross — it is all about tuning in to the sacrificial way of Jesus and finding it for ourselves. And we do not tune in to sacrificial habits just for the fun of it (are they fun?), but rather because through sacrifice, cleansing and purification happen. Surrender leads to healing. We are a people in need of healing. Always. But now, perhaps more than ever, we are aware of how broken things are, and we feel the longing that all things would be made right, somehow.

I'll repeat it — sacrificial practices are about seeking healing. I don't give up sweets or red meat to punish my body, but because they are empirically less healthy for me than salads and tea. Red meat isn't inherently bad. It's just not as healthy as it could be for my body, so I perhaps abstain from it (sacrifice) to clarify and cleanse my system. Or we take on the practice of walking regularly, not because sitting around is sinful, but because regular exercise brings greater wholeness to our physical body, which is to be a temple of the Living God.

I wonder if Lent this year could be a kick-off for us to enter more fully into the rest of our lives with healing and wholeness. (As an aside, those two words, healing and wholeness come from the same Old English root word, hal, inextricably linked together in the formation of healthy, whole, sound bodies and souls).

Healing and wholeness are not only about our physical bodies. They are concepts that we must dig into regarding our spiritual, mental, emotional, and social selves as well. They are at the heart of who we are and who we seek to be. Remember the closing of Psalm 51, where which reminds us that "the sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart." Sacrifice leads us to a place where the healing can begin. Much of the time, we feel the brokenness. From that place, the healing can commence.

Will you let this season be a time to heal? What parts of you are broken and frail? How might you invite Christ to journey deeper into those parts of yourself to bring about healing and wholeness? Indeed, our bodies age and begin to grow weary. But I'm talking about something more profound. There is a wholeness that is beyond the physical and involves our entire self. This is the healing and wholeness we seek.

So, if you've given up something, remember that the sacrifice is meant to purify and bring strength. And if you're struggling, it's ok. That's why we have each other, the community of the Body of Christ. We want healing and wholeness not just for ourselves but for all people, and to this end, we work together to support and sustain that healing over a lifetime together. May the brokenness of our hearts lead us deeper into reliance upon Christ and the sure restoration only the Lord can bring.

Grace and Peace,



Rev. Seth Thomas



FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE - February 2021

Starting Strong in the New Year

By Lindsay Anderson, Finance Chair, lindsaynicole12@gmail.com



It is hard to believe that we are coming up on March and the one-year anniversary of doing life and church amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Last year it was hard to predict where we would be after such a massive global disruption. As the finance committee, elders, and our illustrious treasurer looked over the January 2021 financial report it appears that so far, we continue to fare well, not too differently than pre-pandemic times. While we continue to see lower than budgeted expenses (largely due to staffing) and higher than projected income (thanks to robust pledging and increased building use) we began February with an excess of over \$7500. The finance

committee and session will continue to closely monitor the numbers as we resume in-person worship and account for the wonderful news of Luke's promotion. St. James is blessed to have built up a healthy excess in our General Fund over the years which can serve as a cushion if needed, but the past few years have shown that through conservative income projections, realistic expense projections, and making adjustments to spending as needed, we have been able to avoid deficit spending.

For any questions related to giving - including pledges, general offering, endowment giving, memorials, or designated gifts you may contact Marina McLeod, stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com.

Following is an update on St. James' Year-End Date General Operating Budget:

Income/Expenses As of 1-31-21	JANUARY ACTUAL	JANUARY BUDGET
Income	\$28,387	\$24,021
Expenses	\$20,876	\$23,151

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

- 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>
- 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.

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

Need assistance or would you like to schedule a contact-free donation pick-up?

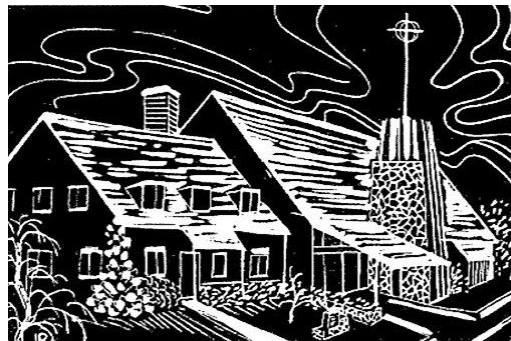
Contact Marina McLeod, stjamestreasurer@gmail.com

Session Meeting Highlights - February 14, 2021

By Faye Hill, Clerk of Session, fayeannhill@gmail.com

- All session members were present for the meeting.
- Deacon Representative, Adam Beaty, reported that the deacons have re-organized and now have six parishes. They are ready to be of help when the church re-opens for worship.
- Treasurer Marina McLeod presented a review of the budget for January:

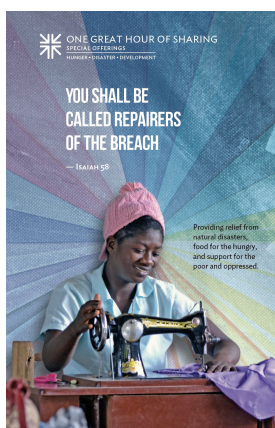
Beginning balance 1/1/21	-0-
Income	\$28,387.10
Expenses	\$20,876.46
Ending balance 1/31/21	\$ 7,510.64



- Motion approved to spend up to \$2,000 from the Facility Endowment Fund for replacement of the water heater.
- Pastor Seth announced that Accompanist Luke Arnold will take on some Music Director duties, beginning March 1st.
- Motion approved to re-open the church building for worship, possibly by March 7th, using a reservation system. National, local, and state reopening guidelines will be adhered to throughout the process of this re-opening. At present we are only allowed 35 people plus the worship team.
- The March meeting of the Session was changed from 3/14 to 3/21.
- The Session expressed appreciation to Elder Mark Beaty, newly retired from the Session, for his hard work for several years as Clerk of Session. The end-of-year reports to the Presbytery were a huge task and are much appreciated by the session and the Presbytery. Thanks, Mark!

Special offering announcement: One Great Hour of Sharing

By Carol Dellecker, Missions and Social Action, chdellecker@gmail.com



The first of four annual Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA), One Great Hour of Sharing's last day is March 7th. This offering is taken during Lent each year, and recipients are the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and Self-Development of People. All proceeds are sent to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. A new "drop-down" option has been added to St. James Presbyterian's online giving system for your One Great Hour of Sharing donations. The direct link to give is: <https://saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving/to/one-great-hour-ofsharing> People can also text-to-give by texting a dollar amount, followed by "oghs" (like "\$10 oghs") to 84321.

Thank you, St. James Presbyterian Mission & Social Action Committee

CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

By Tracy Caruso, Children & Family Ministry Director, tracy@saintjamespres.org

Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries!

February was a month of preparing for, and beginning Lent! We held a drive-thru Ash Wednesday “ashing”, participated in a joint Zoom Ash Wednesday service with First Presbyterian and Cordata Presbyterian churches, and passed out Lent kits that will help with the Examen that we will be holding each Wednesday evening during Lent. If you didn't get a Lent kit and would like one, you can either pick them up in the office or let Tracy or Seth know and we can get one delivered to you.



On Wednesday evenings during Lent we will be hosting a short prayer time at 7:00, led by Tracy Caruso, Pastor Seth, or Glory Johnson, to walk through the **Daily Examen** as a group. If you would like to join us on Wednesday evenings, you can use the same Zoom link as the Sunday morning worship service. There will also be a video posted on the St. James website each week if you are interested in doing the Examen daily.

We are continuing to meet at 9:00am on Sundays as Glory Johnson leads us through a study of Resmaa Menaken's *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending of Hearts and Bodies*. If you are interested in attending, you can join the main worship service Zoom link. Let Seth or Tracy know if you are interested in joining us and need a copy.

Because of school returning to in-person, and sports, and other activities resuming, the **youth group** will be suspending our Tuesday meetings and move to once-a-month Sunday meetings. Anyone in middle or high school is welcome to attend! Contact Tracy for the Zoom link.

I sent home Lent Kits for our kids that include a combination of **Godly Play** at home and an Illustrated Ministry Lent Devotion for families, as well as some crafts. I would love to receive and pictures or videos of our St. James kids participating in any of the activities or crafts! Please send them to tracy@saintjamespres.org.

Godly Play in March will be continuing our **Faces of Easter** series. This month the Parent Pages were sent home in the Lent Kits. Let me know if you need an emailed copy. It is hard to believe that I will be recording these again as this is where we began our recordings last year. Godly Play is meant to be a 3-year cycle and so it is normal for children to hear the same stories repeated each year. For children, it is a chance to hear the story after a year of growth and maturing and see what else they can get out of it. I encourage the adults who are hearing the stories over Zoom or Facebook to consider them in that same way and see what new feelings, expressions, and understandings you find after a year of Covid.

As always if you have any questions or need anything, please don't hesitate to contact me! I continue to miss seeing our St. James kids and can't wait until we can be together again.

Godly Play Schedule for March

March 7th: Faces of Easter II & III Lent is the season we prepare for Easter. These lessons help children continue to prepare for the Mystery of Easter. We move toward the Mystery by hearing the stories of Christ's journey toward the cross and resurrection. This week's lesson focuses on the face of Christ as the One who was lost and found and the face of Christ as the One who was baptized and blessed.

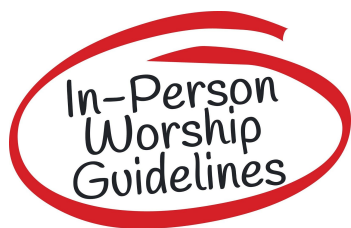
March 14th: Faces of Easter IV This week's lesson focuses on Christ's temptation in the desert.

March 21st: Faces of Easter V This week's lesson focuses on Christ's temptation in the desert. on the face of Christ as healer and parable -maker.

March 28th: Faces of Easter VI & VII This week's lesson focuses on the face of Christ and he enters Jerusalem and offers the Twelve-and us-the bread and wine and the faces of Christ on the cross and Easter.

In-Person Worship Resumes With Limitations March 7th

The Rules of the Game, A message from the Worship Team



Are you thinking about returning to in-person worship? The St. James Church Reopening Task Force has put together a set of rules we all need to follow as we gather together again in person. They caution that no guideline or procedure is 100% foolproof in keeping you healthy. **Until vaccinated, those at higher risk of complications from COVID-19 are still encouraged to worship from home. (Service will continue to be live-streamed.)**

If you've had that long hard talk with yourself and returning to in-person worship is right for you, then focus in and read on. These are the rules of the game that must be followed to help keep you and others safe:

- **Reserve Your Spot.** Space is limited to the first 30 people who sign up for a given service on our website. We'll open up reservations for our March 7 service on Tuesday, March 2 at 10 a.m. If you have trouble, don't despair. Help can be had by calling our church office at (360) 733-1325. Don't forget to register every single person who's attending church with you. And if reservations fill up or you need to cancel your reservation, call the church office. We'll have a waiting list on hand and can free up spaces or consider additional services, if needed.
- **How Ya Feeling?** Have you been feeling a little "off" lately? Stay at home if you have experienced cough, fever, chills, muscle pain, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, sore throat or a loss of taste or smell in the last 48 hours. And please call the church to cancel your reservation.
- **Mask On!** Before you step out of your car, put that mask on—and make sure your mask covers your mouth and nose. Everyone who is over 2 years old must wear a mask to help protect others. You're going to keep that mask firmly affixed (nose and mouth) at all times, even while in the restroom. Please note: Masks are required regardless of vaccination status.
- **Make a Stop.** Get your temperature taken before entering the office door. A volunteer will do a mask check and verify your reservation as well.
- **Stay the Course.** Walk directly to the sanctuary and sit yourself down in a spot with a blue X. Your family unit or bubble should sit right down next to you. Stay at least 6 feet from anyone who's not in your household or bubble.
- **Stay Seated.** Aside from when nature calls, stay in your pew during the entire service...even the kiddos. There will be no daycare or Godly Play and children should remain in the pew during the children's message.
- **Keep Those Tunes to Yourself.** No singing or humming since it can spread those tiny droplets. You may notice other things that look different during the service. We won't have bulletins, pass the collection plate or serve communion.
- **Visiting After Church.** After service, make your way out of the narthex doors. Once outside, keep that mask on and stay at least 6 feet apart while talking with friends. While masks are a requirement, no food or drink will be served during the fellowship.

Questions/Concerns? If you're feeling the need to read more on the subject, visit <https://saintjamespres.org/reopening/> for the latest guidelines and procedures. And if you've got a question, email Jenny Sue LeSchander at jleschander@hotmail.com.

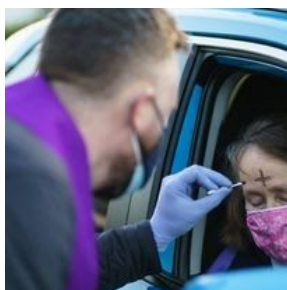
ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas, pastor@saintjamespres.org
 Children & Family Director: Tracy Caruso, tracy@saintjamespres.org
 Music Director: Luke Arnold, music@saintjamespres.org
 Treasurer: Marina McLeod, stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com
 Administrative Assistant: Shannon Laws, office@saintjamespres.org
 Teachers: Claire Alarid



SESSION OF ST. JAMES

Lindsay Anderson
 Tess Bowers
 Aaron Caruso
 Sarah Condreay
 Carol Dellecker
 Susan Diemont-Conwell
 Faye Hill
 Jenny Sue LeSchander
 Nebiyu Tesfa



DEACONS

Deacons Parish 1	Merry Thomas, Alice Bailey
Deacons Parish 2	Jean & Rick Seater
Deacons Parish 3	Julie Keyes, Carla Shafer
Deacons Parish 4	Valerie McBeth, Adam Beaty
Deacons Parish 5	Pam Gibson, Adam Beaty
Deacons Parish 6	Kirsten Oliver, Milt Schayes

Worship Schedule- Join us for a streaming service

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

<https://saintjamespres.org/>

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

Office Hours:

Tuesday 9:00am - 12:00pm

Thursday 9:00am - 2:00pm

Friday 9:00am - 2:00pm

Enter via the office door on 14th Street.

A mask is required to enter the building, sign in at the temperature station.



Photo credit: February 17th, drive-thru ashing, photos by [Gregg Brekke Media](#) for the [Presbyterian Foundation](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW BOOK FOR ST. JAMES BOOK CLUB

St. James Book Club is currently reading *A Very Punchable Face* by Colin Joost. In these hilarious essays, the **Saturday Night Live** head writer and Weekend Update co-anchor learns how to take a beating. We will be meeting Monday evening March 15th @ 7:00. Email tracy@saintjamespres.org for the Zoom link.

SUNDAY BOOK STUDY FOR MARCH

Join us Sundays at 9:00am for a study of Resmaa Menaken's *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending of Hearts and Bodies*. Join the main worship service Zoom link. Let Seth or Tracy know if you are interested in joining us and need a copy.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

3/3	Jody DeWilde	🎂
3/8	Martha Speer	🎂
3/11	Stacy Thomas	🎂
3/17	Liam DeWilde	🎂
3/18	Madeleine Smith	🎂
3/21	Marion Dobbie	🎂
3/21	Pam Gibson	🎂
3/24	Zach Melrose	🎂
3/25	Peter and Mary van der Veen	💍
3/27	Donna Lane	🎂
3/28	Mike Smith	🎂
3/28	Margaret Humble	🎂



Deadlines for church publications

Weekly bulletin: Wednesday, 2:00pm

Weekly email: Thursday, 2:00pm

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

ST. JAMES CALENDAR

Until there is a vaccine that is widely available and widely used, the Reopening Task Force will remain in place throughout all phases of reopening. The church guidelines and procedures will be updated as the state, local and presbytery recommendations and guidance evolve.

PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY

AA Fairhaven Group
 AA Men's Book Study Group
 AA SOS Men's Group
 Bellingham Com. Chorus
 Bellingham Ukulele Group
 Boy Scouts Troop 7 (back in-building)
 Happy Hour Al-Anon
 Overeaters Anonymous
 St. James Fitness
 St. James Yoga
 Linda's Tai Chi
 WA Gender Alliance
 Weavers Guild
 You Are Not Alone (YANA)

Bayside Co-op Preschool (in session)
 Hawthorne Learning Solutions (in session)
 Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County (in office)



St. Patrick's Day, March 17th

MARCH DAYS TO NOTE

World Day of Prayer, March 5, 2021

Daylight-Saving Time begins, March 14, 2021

First day of spring, March 20, 2021

Palm/Passion Sunday, March 28, 2021

Holy Week, March 28 – April 4, 2021



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Bellingham, WA 98225
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