

A Season for Renewal

Peace be with you,

Spring has arrived. The buds form on the trees, ready to burst forth with leaves and new life. The birds have returned, calling to one another, settling into their nests, and preparing for a bright season of growth. The weather shifts from dark rain to bright rain...ahh, the Pacific Northwest!

And we, the church, are in the last days of the Lenten season. Easter approaches. We gather for the final times as we journey to the cross with Jesus and see on the horizon the hope of resurrection, our assurance of God's grace, and the promise of life beyond the power of death.

There is such power in letting the seasonal shifts form us, allowing them to call us back into focus or onward in commitment to God and others and self. With each change in the calendar, we can experience a bit of renewal and resurrection in our own lives — each new day, each new season, time moving forward as God leads creation into life abundant.

But departing the long winter (hasn't it been winter since December of 2019?) is not always an easy task. Debris from the storms has built up around us. Fallen branches and dead vines remind us of the accumulation of suffering, hardship, and death that has built up in ourselves. To step into Spring, to the newness that it promises, we must also let go and sweep clean within ourselves. Lent has been a season for purifying, and I wonder...once we've gathered up the residue, can we let it go?

In the Spring, we relearn how to make space for growth and newness to explode into full view. And at Easter, the people of Jesus learn to step out of the tomb ourselves, acknowledge that we must leave behind the wrappings of the dead we have worn, and step forward into new life with Christ. Resurrection happens in us. We walk with Jesus in the garden, outside the empty tomb, and realize that we have been made new with him. Death no longer has the sting — it has happened, yes, but it is not the final word.

St. James family, how is God calling you to let go and let die all that has accumulated and weighed us down? How is God inviting us to cultivate a life of renewal and fresh starts? Perhaps it is time to admit our addictions, our vices, the ways we harm ourselves and each other. Maybe it is time to sweep the floor clean with a longtime adversary and seek reconciliation and friendship in Christ. Spring and Easter resurrection lead us to a place where we can look out further, envision a new future, a time of renewal where God's justice and love break forth in fresh ways among us.

I am feeling this invitation myself. This year, I'll turn 40. And as that stares me down, I sense the opportunity to find renewal and life in Christ in fresh, resurrected, restored ways. I delight that we can share these seasonal changes and milestones, celebrating God's renewing Spirit.

Grace and peace,



Pastor Seth



FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

New Year, New Possibilities

By Lindsay Anderson, Finance Chair

Normally this time of the month, I am sitting down to write a pretty predictable update from the St. James Finance Committee. Today is different. As many of you know, our dear treasurer, Marina McLeod is on extended medical leave while she undergoes treatment for nasal cancer.

The Finance Committee has been holding Marina and her family in our prayers. Marina's attention to detail and organizational skills are a true gift to the St. James community! The role of church treasurer is critical to ministry operations, especially for an active congregation and a bustling building, such as ours. Session, staff, and the finance committee are actively working to ensure we continue to monitor and manage our financial resources well during this time. We are focusing on the WHAT and the HOW.

The WHAT - Priorities

- Regularly depositing all income that is designated to our General Fund, including pledges, offering, and building use fees.
- Ensuring that all accounts payable are up to date for ongoing bills and contracted services.
- Continuing our standard payroll schedule for salaried and hourly staff.
- Learning how to do the monthly financial reports (in progress).

The HOW - Steps Taken

- **Sharon King**, our incredible office assistant, will be adding hours to take lead on the above priorities. The Finance Committee is in regular communication with Sharon to support.
- Sharon and the Finance Committee will continue to meet monthly to review our financials.
- Session will also continue to monitor our budget and accounts monthly.

What Does This Mean for My Contributions or Treasurer Questions?

- Continue giving in the manner in which you have been giving.
- The stjamestreasurer@gmail.com email has and will be checked by Sharon during this time. You can continue to email this address as in the past.

We hope to have an updated financial report soon. Thank you for your continued prayers for Marina, as well as for the St. James staff and session while we make adjustments to continue operations during this time. We will continue to update as we are able.

With Grace,

Lindsay Anderson, Finance Chair

How to Give to St. James:

1. **Online Giving:** <https://saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving>
2. **Mail-In:** St. James Presbyterian Church, 910 14th St. Bellingham, WA 98225
3. **In-Person:** Drop your gifts in the contact-free giving box in the sanctuary

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

submitted by Faye Hill, Clerk of Session

Highlights of the Session Meeting on February 13, 2022

The Session met at noon in the Fellowship Hall of the Church on March 13, 2022.



- The Session welcomed Elder-Elect Andrew McLaurin and Deacon Rick Seater to the meeting.
- Deacon Rick Seater reported that the annual church picnic will be held on July 24th at Lake Padden Park. Teresa Bowers will be the session representative at the meeting of the Board of Deacons on March 20th.
- There was no Treasurer's Report today due to the illness of Treasurer Marina McLeod.
- The session voted to appoint Sharon King to the position of Interim Treasurer to help take over some of Marina's duties as needed. This will be in addition to Sharon's duties as Administrative Ministry Assistant. Sharon will report to the Finance Committee for the Interim Treasurer duties.
- Clerk Faye Hill announced that all year-end reports and copies of the 2021 Session Minutes have been submitted and received by Presbytery.
- Pandemic Response Chairperson, Susan Diemont-Conwell announced that food may be served in the church now. She also noted that masks are optional in the church except for children four years old and younger and the teachers who work with them.
- In response to the great concern among our members over the war in Ukraine and the many church members who are experiencing health issues, the session requested that a Prayer Vigil be planned soon.
- The Session voted to approve the four quarterly special offerings for 2022.
- Pastor Seth announced the death of member Irene Rome on March 2, 2022. An Open House reception to honor her is planned for April 24th, from 2-4pm.

UPCOMING MEMORIALS AND REMEMBRANCES

St. James has said goodbye to a number of beloved members over these 2 years. Some celebrations have taken place, others have been delayed. Others have passed more recently and it is time to grieve, remember, and celebrate the resurrection in their memory. Here are some of upcoming dates and times for Services of the Resurrection and remembrance.

- The friends and family of Irene Rome will celebrate and remember her life on Friday, April 22, with an open house in the St. James Horizon Room from 1-3 pm.
- A celebration for Katie Sherwood and Galen Biery will be held at the Bellingham Ferry Terminal on Friday, April 22, at 4 pm.
- Gale Pfueller's Celebration of Life will be held at St. James on Saturday, April 30, at 11 am.
- John Dobbie's Celebration of Life will be held at St. James on Saturday, May 7, at 1 pm.

CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

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



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries!

Spring has sprung! We are looking forward to so many upcoming events here at St. James!

We are continuing our study of the Apostles Creed Sunday mornings thru April 10th. Join us on the Sunday morning worship zoom link at 9:00am.

After a two year break we will again be holding our Easter Egg Hunt after Worship on Easter Sunday. We are in need of donations of nut free individually wrapped candy to stuff the eggs. Donations can be dropped off in the office before Friday April 15th.

Our Youth Group will be meeting on April 24th for a game night from 4-6pm. Bring your friends and favorite games and join us for a time of fun, snacks, and games!

This summer, June 27th thru the 30th, we will be joining with First Presbyterian church to hold a Creation Camp Vacation Bible School! Registration opens April 11th for kids entering Kindergarten through 5th grade. Join us for Godly Play stories, crafts, music, games, science projects, and more! We will also need volunteers before, during, and after camp! Let Tracy know if you are interested in registering or volunteering, or if you have any questions!

With so many youth, children, and family events coming up we are in need of volunteers to help with everything! If you have any interest in helping with Children's Ministries, even if you don't have a lot of time or can't commit to anything regularly, please let Tracy know as we have many opportunities to help!



Godly Play Schedule for April:

April 3rd

Faces of Easter V: Lent is the season we 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 lesson focuses on the face of Christ as healer and parable-maker.

April 10th

Faces of Easter VI & VII: Lent is the season we prepare for Easter. This lesson continues to help children 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 last lesson focuses on the faces of Christ as he offers the Twelve-and us-the bread and wine, and Christ on the cross and on Easter.

April 17th

Jesus and Jerusalem The Story of Holy Week: This lesson tells the history of Jerusalem and into when Jesus came to Jerusalem for the last time and how the story of Holy Week unfolded.


April 24th

Knowing Jesus in a New Way. Known in Absence: The season of Easter extends the experience of Easter Sunday for six weeks, but it also helps prepare for the coming of the Mystery of Pentecost. This period is a transition between Jesus' earthly ministry and the coming of the Holy Spirit. It is a time when the disciples and others began to know Jesus in a new way. This week focuses on the tomb.

MISSION & SOCIAL ACTION

Family Promise Support Opportunities - April 25. St. James will be providing meal kits (ingredients for specific meals) as we partner with our neighbors, Sacred Heart Catholic Church and Our Savior's Lutheran Church to assist homeless families. The families are currently living in Interfaith Coalition individual housing units during this time of Covid-19. If you are willing to provide a dinner kit for one of the families, please contact Gretchen Pfueller at gmpfueller@gmail.com. for more information. She will have a list of needs soon.

Volunteers are also needed as tutors at the after school Interfaith Learning Center at First Christian Church. Training will be provided and previous experience in an educational program is desired. This program is not limited to Family Promise children and if you know of other children who may benefit from this excellent tutoring opportunity, please check out the information on Interfaith Coalition's website.

<p>Ash Wednesday <i>March 2nd, 7:30pm</i> <i>St. James Presbyterian</i></p> <p>Maundy Thursday <i>April 14th, 7:30pm</i> <i>Cordata Presbyterian</i></p> <p>Tenebrae <i>April 15th, 7:30pm</i> <i>First Presbyterian</i></p>	<h1>Lenten Pilgrimage 2022</h1>	
		

ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas, pastor@saintjamespres.org

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

Music Director: Luke Arnold, music@saintjamespres.org

Treasurer: Marina McLeod, stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com

Administrative Ministry Assistant: Sharon King, office@saintjamespres.org

SESSION OF ST. JAMES

Lindsay Anderson

Tess Bowers

Aaron Caruso

Sarah Condreay

Susan Diemont-Conwell

Faye Hill (Clerk of Session)

Maureen Kosa

Andrew McLaurin

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, Alice Beaty
Deacons Parish 5	Pam Gibson, Adam Beaty
Deacons Parish 6	Kirsten Oliver



<https://mlp.org/>

Worship Schedule - Online and In-Person, Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Masks are required inside the church building, regardless of vaccination status.

Thank you!

Live streaming at:

<https://saintjamespres.org/live>

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

Church Office Hours:

9:00am - 2:00pm, Monday - Thursday



UPCOMING EVENTS

ST. JAMES BOOK CLUB is currently reading *Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jill Franklin* by Jill Lepore, the story of Benjamin Franklin's younger sister. We will meet the third Monday in April, April 18th at 7:00pm. Email tracy@saintjamespres.org for the Zoom link. Books are available in the church office.

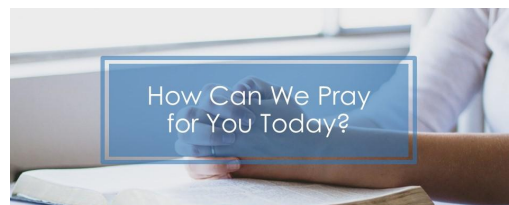
LENTEN BIBLE STUDY MARCH 6 THROUGH APRIL 10

During the Season of Lent, we will be studying the Apostles' Creed. Join Pastor Seth for a 9 am Bible Study Sunday mornings before worship, where we will use Alister McGrath's "Apostles' Creed" study guide to connect the Creed with the Scriptures. In-person and on Zoom. Guidebooks are available upon request.

PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY

AA Fairhaven Group (in building, Sundays/ Thursdays)
AA Grateful Hearts Women's Group (in building)
AA Men's Book Study Group (in building, Mondays)
AA SOS Men's Group (in building, Wednesdays)
AA WITS Women's Group (in building, Tuesdays)
Bellingham Com. Chorus
Bellingham Ukulele Group
Boy Scouts Troop 7 (in building, Mondays)
Happy Hour Al-Anon (in building, Tuesdays)
Overeaters Anonymous (in building, Saturdays)
St. James Fitness (in building, Mondays/ Thursdays)
St. James Yoga
Linda's Tai Chi (in building, Mondays)
WA Gender Alliance
Weavers Guild
You Are Not Alone (YANA)
Bayside Co-op Preschool (in building)
Hawthorne Learning Solutions (in building)
Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County (in office part-time)

Add your request to the **St. James Prayer Chain**
 Contact your Deacon or St. James at:
 360-733-1325 | office@saintjamespres.org



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

4/12	Sally Crandall	🎂
4/16	Erin Keyes	🎂
4/17	Bruce Kraig	🎂
4/20	Sally Albers	🎂
4/23	Mark Beaty	🎂
4/25	Valerie McBeth	🎂
4/29	Cheryl McGregor	🎂
4/30	Annah Baker	🎂

Deadlines for church publications

Weekly bulletin: Wednesday, 2:00pm

Weekly email: Thursday, 2:00pm

Monthly "the Pulse": the 25th, 2:00pm





Ordaining and installing Andrew McLaurin on 3/27/22



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