

Autumn and Sacred Rhythms

September is here, school is back in session, and the world is picking up speed again after the laidback days of summer. And, as I do each year, I'm thinking about sacred rhythms and autumnal resolutions!

Each year, as we reset our schedules and find ourselves swept up in the busyness of the fall, we have an opportunity to recalibrate. We can ask ourselves: what will I do differently? OR what new practice will I take on? And we can ask our community: how will we adjust our life together to be in shared rhythms of life? What are practices we can share as we enter this season?



I focused my teaching session at our recent all-church retreat on just this thing: How do we consider the sacred rhythms of our life and be intentional about how we practice our faith in daily life? We talked about practices like sabbath-keeping, daily prayer, scripture reading, pilgrimage (journeys outside our ordinary routines), and others. We all realize that we can be more intentional with how we craft our daily schedule and what we do (and don't do) to grow in the way of Jesus.

In this way, we move towards the concept of spiritual formation. Spiritual formation is the intentional process of growing and focusing our habits, rhythms, and routines as we progress along the Christian journey. The growth of the Christian life does not end when we believe or join a church community. Instead, God has more in store for us:

- New ways of understanding our calling and vocation
- Greater depth of wisdom and discernment in life's difficult questions
- Maturity in our relationships and prayer practice with God

Spiritual formation is the work of growing in the faith. And it's a lifelong process.

This year, I'm especially mindful of the opportunity for each of us to consider and craft the rhythms of our days, weeks, and years in a bit more free way, continuing to emerge from the disruptions of these last 27+ months. This September, things feel somewhat "normal." This is the perfect time to consider: What do we want that normal to be like if we're moving into a new normal? We all realized there were rhythms and practices in our lives that we adopted to cope with the pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic. Perhaps now we can step back and consider how we might adjust our practices to move out of "survival mode" into ways of living that help us thrive, help us serve others well, and help us know God more deeply.

For me, this looks like establishing some more structure to my days and the ways I practice my faith. An example is how I attempt to wake at a more consistent time each day and immediately follow a prayer routine, get ready for the day, and get out the door. I know that, over time, I will fall back into my old patterns, so I am trying to be intentional about forming a habit right now (alarm clocks, the buzz from my watch, the visual cues of lighting) to get moving each day and begin with structure. I intend to orient my day towards serving God with my whole self, and this starts with how *I begin* each day.

We had a wonderful time on our retreat. I hope we gave some of our community a chance to step away from their everyday routines and take stock of how God might call them to shift and grow in the upcoming season. I discussed this with a number of the retreat participants, and I'd love to invite a conversation with you, too! I would love to set up a time with anyone interested in considering the rhythms of their life and how we might more intentionally order them in the upcoming season (and beyond). So, if you're interested, please reach out to me at pastor@saintjamespres.org so we can set up a time to explore this together.

May the rhythm of your days be steeped with the goodness of God's love, now and always. Grace and peace,



Pastor Seth

FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE - SEPTEMBER 2022

Help, Thanks, Wow!

Submitted by Lindsay Anderson, Finance chair

Author Anne Lamott wrote a book on prayer in 2012 called *Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers*. We all can relate to these very human utterances. When I reflect back on my nearly three years as the Finance Chair, I can hardly think of three better categories with which to make sense of all that has happened in the life of St. James, and in our world!

Help! God continues to meet us in our times of need. This year, we have been asking God to help our treasurer Marina as she went on an urgent medical leave. We have been asking God for help when we as a session and staff were learning how to keep things moving forward during this difficult time. We have been asking God for help as we learn together! It is no small thing to be able to ask for help.

Thanks... and Wow! Nearly three quarters into the year, we continue to have everything we need! Our General Operating Budget income and accounts payable continue to be adequate to help us do what we have committed to doing in 2022! Thank you to our community who continues to give and support the ministry and outreach of St. James. Thank you to our incredible staff, elders, and deacons. A church is sustained not by a few, but by the grace of God and the body of Christ! Wow is all I can say!

Updates, Celebrations, and Next Steps:

- Behind the scenes, Marina has been able to help us with our 2022 financial reports. We hope to have updated financials available soon. Sharon will continue to handle the day to day deposit and accounts payable operations for the interim.
- Regular deposits, accounts payable, and payroll continue as they have in the past!
- We are consistently monitoring activity in our General Fund, Endowments, Mutual Funds, and Designated Funds. Everything continues to be generally as projected, with the exception of market losses in our endowments and mutual funds (which is to be expected in 2022).
- 2023 general operating budget planning is underway and our Stewardship Campaign will launch later this fall.

We appreciate your prayers, support, and generosity. If you have any questions about a current or past contribution, please email stjamestreasurer@gmail.com or call Sharon King in the office, 360-733-1325.

With Grace,
Lindsay Anderson, Finance Chair

How to Give to St. James:

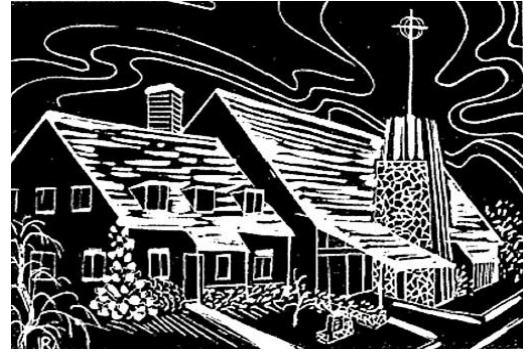
1. **Online Giving:** <https://saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving>
2. **Mail-In:** St. James Presbyterian Church, 910 14th St. Bellingham, WA 98225
3. **In-Person:** Drop your gifts in the contact-free giving box in the sanctuary

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

submitted by Faye Hill, Clerk of Session

Highlights of the Session Meeting on August 14, 2022

- The Session met in the church lounge at noon on August 14, 2022. A quorum was declared.
- Deacon Alice Beaty reported on the work of the deacons. They are in the planning stage for the annual parish lunch. The continuing presence of COVID makes it difficult to plan for this kind of gathering.
- Treasurer Marina McLeod is recovering from her illness and has been able to help Interim Treasurer, Sharon King, by answering questions and providing direction.
- The Clerk reported the death of Margaret deMaine on August 9, 2022. She requested not to have a service.
- The Clerk reported that Peter Burkland asked to be removed from the St. James membership roll and the session voted to strike his name from the roll.
- The Building and Grounds Committee will be painting the kitchen soon.
- Several folks have already signed up for the congregational retreat at Warm Beach Retreat Center August 26-28.
- A new members class is being planned.
- A class on "Presbyterian Basics" will be offered on Tuesday evening in September.
- Pastor Seth's annual review will be conducted by the Personnel Committee on September 28th.
- Seth will conduct the memorial service for Milt Schayes on September 10th.
- We are looking forward to welcoming our new Music Director, Ta Wei Tsai, on September 4th.
- The Session voted to accept the updated COVID guidelines for the church as presented by the Pandemic Response Committee. These guidelines will be shared with the congregation.
- The Session voted to accept a new lease with the Table Church, allowing them to use our building for worship and fellowship.



CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

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



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries!

What a wonderful summer we have had around St. James! Starting with an amazing Creation Camp and ending with a fun and relaxing church retreat! July, while generally a “slow” month in the life of the church, was packed with some great events and activities around St. James! Several of our members were able to participate in the Bellingham Pride parade and event on July 17th. It was a great time and we handed out over 170 friendship bracelets to event attendees. We also had a great St. James picnic at Lake Padden park with much fellowship and fun. At the end of July our Mission and Social

Action committee along with the Youth Group, hosted a kids table at the Sacred Earth Fair. It was fun to see so many of our St. James family at the fair, and much fun and learning was had by all!

August saw a fun and educational Godly Play training with First Presbyterian and Mosaic Churches. It was wonderful to see so many people drawn together by their love of Godly Play! We got to experience different worship leadership with the annual pulpit swap with Cordata and First Presbyterian Churches. August ended with an amazing church retreat to Warm Beach Camp. So much fun, relaxation, fellowship, and exploring of spiritual practices was had by both the folks who spent the weekend and those who joined us for the day on Saturday.

August was also filled with preparations for fall at St. James. We have a lot of events and offerings for September! Beginning on Tuesday September 6th we invite you to join us in our Presbyterian Basics class. Whether you are a lifelong Presbyterian, long term St. James member, new to St. James or exploring your faith, this class has something for you. Tuesdays in September at 7:00 pm Pastor Seth will lead us in examining the Book of Order and the Book of Confessions. We will dive into what it means to be Presbyterian and what our faith is all about.

We will be having our Godly Play kickoff and Godly Play lessons will resume on Sunday September 11th! Join us for our first lesson of the school year in our worship service and an ice cream sundae bar after worship. We will have the Godly Play classroom open and staffed so you can explore and ask questions. We are still looking for Godly Play volunteers so please let Tracy know if you are interested in helping!

On September 25th we will be holding a St. James game night and pizza dinner from 5-7pm for anyone wanting to have some food, fellowship, and fun!

We are looking forward to a great Fall season at St. James! Please let Tracy know if you have any questions or are looking for a way to get involved!

Godly Play for September:

September 4th Work Day

September 11th Creation and Second Creation: Falling Apart

September 18th The Flood and the Ark

September 25th The Great Family



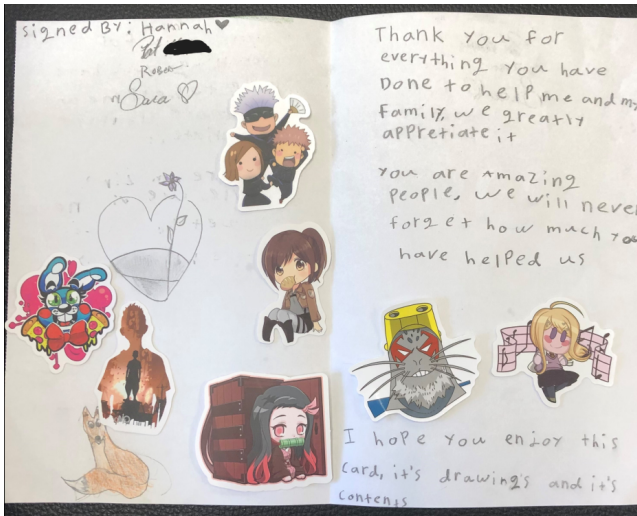




Photos from summer at St. James... Vacation Bible School, tabling at Pride, the All Church Picnic at Lake Padden, tabling at the Climate Justice Fair, farewell to Luke Arnold, and the All Church Retreat at Warm Beach Retreat Center, August 26-28.

MISSION & SOCIAL ACTION

FAMILY PROMISE & INTERFAITH COALITION AUCTION NEWS



Thank you to the volunteers who prepared dinner kits for the Family Promise families working their way out of homelessness in our community. And, a special thank you to Jean Seater and Julie Keyes who delivered the kits to the thankful families. We had two new families this month, one family consisting of a grandmother, her two adult children and a sixteen year old granddaughter who was especially excited to be living in a home as she returns to school this fall. The other new family had been displaced from their unrepairable home in Sumas due to flooding and the grandfather also is battling a terminal illness. Family Promise has been a blessing to them in so many ways. Our next opportunity to provide meal kits will be in October. If you would be willing to help, please contact Gretchen Pfueller at gmpfueller@gmail.com.

The annual **INTERFAITH DINNER AUCTION** is Sunday, September 18 at Twin Sisters Brewery. The silent/virtual auction starts on-line September 10. For the latest information and to buy tickets or register for the auction visit <https://www.interfaith-coalition.org>

CLIMATE JUSTICE MOVIE VIEWING

The Multifaith Network for Climate Justice will be hosting a movie "The Magnitude of All Things" on Saturday, September 24 at 10am here at St. James. This movie is an event for Climate Action Week, September 19 - 25. The 2022 theme is "Inspiring Community Action Through Climate Conversations." The objective of the week is to provide a platform for our community to showcase, discuss, or learn about experiences with our changing climate and local solutions... The movie will be followed by a panel discussion at 12:30pm. The event is free and open to everyone.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Celebrating Sabbath

The 2022/23 Women's Bible Study will begin on Tuesday, September 27th at 10:30 in the church lounge. If you need a study book, please call or email Faye Hill and she will make arrangements for delivery. The books are \$10, with checks made out to St. James Presbyterian Church.

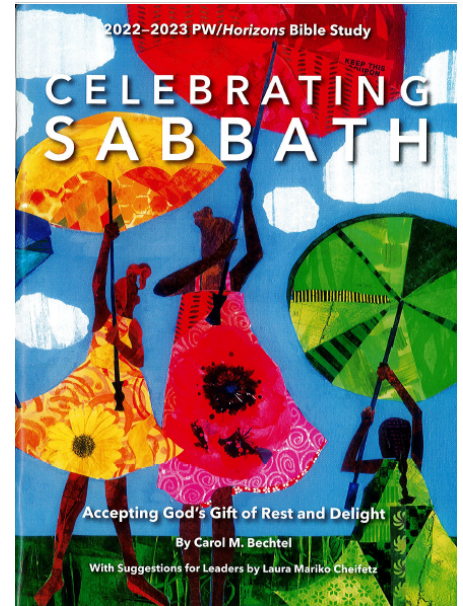
The nine-lesson study will give us a surprising new way of understanding and accepting God's gift of rest and delight as we learn what it means to truly celebrate Sabbath. If you have ever wished for a better understanding of Sabbath and/or desired to make it an important part of your life, I encourage you to take this journey with us as we explore what it might mean to accept God's invitation to celebrate Sabbath.

The author tells us that the Sabbath is more about "yes" than "no". At its heart, Sabbath is more like a party with people we love than it is a list of obligations. If you are excited to learn more about this gift from God, as I am, I invite you to join us.

If you have questions, feel free to talk with me.

Faye Hill

Women's Study Leader



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: Ta Wei Tsai, 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, Amy Morriss



<https://mlp.org/>

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

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 *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett. It tells the story of a brother and sister, Danny and Maeve Conroy, who grow up in a mansion known as the Dutch House, and their lives over five decades. We will meet the third Monday of September, September 19th at 7:00pm. Email tracy@saintjamespres.org for the Zoom link. Books will be available in the church office beginning August 28th.

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

8/4	Corenia Murphy	🎂
8/5	Gary Culbertson	🎂
8/6	Tim & Wendy Crandall	🎂
8/7	Jeanne Uhles	🎂
8/10	Jeff King	🎂
8/12	Wilma French	🎂
8/13	Jill Hoyt	🎂
8/13	Rick & Jean Seater	💕
8/16	Megan Pfueller Melrose	🎂
8/19	Bill Read	🎂
8/21	Dwayne & Karen Rogers	💕
8/24	Rick Seater	🎂
8/25	Mary van der Veen	🎂
8/25	Wilma & Dale French	💕
8/26	Luke Arnold	🎂
8/28	Marilyn Monahan	🎂

9/6	Margaret McVie	🎂
9/6	John Sibold	🎂
9/8	John Harris	🎂
9/11	Bill and Katy Read	💕
9/12	Gracelyn Dobson (Gracie)	🎂
9/13	Aaron and Tracy Caruso	💕
9/14	Robb and Cheryl McGregor	💕
9/17	Dave Nelson	🎂
9/18	Ann Lary	🎂
9/19	David Anderson	🎂

9/21	Asher Thomas	🎂
9/23	Faye Hill	🎂
9/26	Marcus Baker	🎂
9/30	Phyllis Jones	🎂

PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY

AA Fairhaven Group (in building, Sundays/ Thursdays)
AA Grateful Hearts Women's Group (in building, Tuesdays)
AA Men's Book Study Group (in building, Mondays)
AA SOS Men's Group (in building, Wednesdays)
Bayside Co-op Preschool (in building)
Bellingham Com. Chorus
Bellingham Ukulele Group (in building, Saturdays)
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
The Table Church (in building, Sundays)
Linda's Tai Chi (in building, Mondays)
WA Gender Alliance
Whatcom Weavers Guild (in building, Saturdays)
You Are Not Alone (YANA)

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



Deadlines for church publications

Weekly bulletin: Wednesday, 2:00pm
 Weekly email: Thursday, 2:00pm
 Monthly "the Pulse": the 25th, 2



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