



The Beatles' famous tune, "With A Little Help From My Friends," opens with questions: *What would you do if I sang out of tune? Would you stand up and walk out on me?*

Hopefully, if I sing out of tune on a Sunday, you won't stand up and walk out. And more than not walk out: I hope we can count on one another to stay with us, no matter how bad we sound. *This is not a note about joining the choir. Rest assured. Ta Wei would love to work with you. (See their note inside).*

When we face challenges, we often feel alone. Perhaps we're embarrassed to admit we need "a little help" from friends, loved ones, or our church family. Or maybe we fear others won't

respond kindly as we cry for help. Growing up, my parents told me the story of "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" a few too many times. When the dominant narrative is that we can only cry for help when we truly need it, we learn to not trust our guts and our very real feelings of need.

As we enter the Fall, we begin to see the needs of our community in more pronounced ways. Coat drives begin (see note inside, as well). Cold weather shelters are gearing up for the cooler temps and wet weather. And even in a time of harvest and abundance, many face food insecurity and struggle to have even enough.

Later this month, we'll start to consider another important part of our congregation's life: **Stewardship**. Planning and budgeting involves us stepping back and seeing the real needs, inside and outside of our church life, where we collaborate with our friends to intervene in times of both joy and sorrow.

The practical issues and needs of our "friends" are up close and personal. They are things like warm coats, food, gasoline, and housing – **essentials**. I want to share a few ways we pool our resources together as a congregation to help address the needs of our friends and how you can help AND ask for help if you're in need.

First, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we established a **St. James Assistance** fund. With the oversight of our church Session and Deacons, I am able to offer financial support for practical needs in our church community. I frequently hear of needs from individuals in the orbit of our congregation. This fund, which you can contribute to with a donation of a check or on the web using the "Assistance" memo, goes to help support these needs.

Second, our **Mission & Social Action team budgets 10% of our annually pledged giving** to offer financial support to numerous mission partners who are helping folks in our area with housing, food insecurity, and education. Please consider this as you plan for your 2024 Stewardship Pledge.

Finally, there are **simple, practical needs** — warm coats for Interfaith Coalition's annual drive. Meals delivered to the healing or homebound folks in our congregation. Supplies for other mission partners, like Gardenview Tiny Homes. And service, through supporting our students across the street at Lowell Elementary or praying for our One Parish, One Prisoner team and helping assist our friend who will be releasing from prison in 2024.

(continued...)

AND...do you need help? It can be very hard to say, "I need a little help from my friends." But when we speak up, we inform each other on how to come alongside and support. Please, if you are in need of assistance, reach out to me (pastor@saintjamespres.org) or your church deacon. Let's explore ways we can be there for you in times of need.

In this upcoming season, "*I'm gonna try, with a little help from my friends,*" and believe that if we all work together, as one body in Christ, God will make a way for so many who are struggling, lonely, and looking for support.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Seth

Northwest Coast Presbytery

PRESBYTERY MEETING

REGISTER NOW AT
WWW.NORTHWESTCAOST.ORG

Thursday,
October 26

03:30pm - 8:00pm
at St James
Presbyterian Church,
910 14th St,
Bellingham, WA
or Zoom

3:30PM Check in
4:00PM Workshops
5:00PM Dinner
6:00PM Worship
6:30PM Meeting

Agendas and relevant documents pertaining to the meeting will be posted on our website as they become available

For more information: 425.355.0922 or kim@northwestcoast.org

WE'RE HOSTING NW COAST PRESBYTERY, 10/26!

St. James is excited for the invitation to host this Fall's Northwest Coast Presbytery gathering on Thursday, October 26. Included in this gathering will be workshops, worship, and a meeting of Presbytery members (clergy) and commissioners (ruling elders). All are welcome to attend!

Register to attend at: www.northwestcoast.org

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!!

We are hosting a meal, welcoming visitors from around the region, and worshipping together. If you are able to help with **hospitality, meal service (catered for us), and setup or takedown**, please email pastor@saintjamespres.org to sign up. We need folks who can be there earlier in the day or stay later. Thank you in advance!

Dear Friends,

As choir returns to singing for the congregation on October 1st, I'd love to continue to extend the invitation for you to join us. Come next week, come the week after - come whenever your heart desires. We meet every week on Thursday evenings in the sanctuary from 7-8pm, and again at 9:45am on Sundays (prior to the worship service); we would absolutely love to have you as part of our group! All music lovers welcome - no prior experience of singing in the choir required. Looking forward to having you with us!

Best Wishes,
Ta Wei (they/them)



CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

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



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries!

I hope everyone had a good September with all the craziness of back to school and the end of summer. We had a great month at St. James with our Godly Play kickoff, bringing Toddler Time back, our regular monthly youth group meeting, a fun game night, an amazing new adult ed class led by Jeff King, and the beginning of our Women's bible study, Sacred Encounters. Many of those activities will be continuing into October!

We hope if you haven't already joined us, you will join us in our 9:00am class led by Jeff King on the correlations between modern psychology and the scriptures. Childcare is available during that hour.

Toddler Time will continue every Wednesday morning from 8:30-10:15. Come join us in the Saint James Fellowship Hall for an open play time. Parents have a chance to socialize with other parents and enjoy free coffee while their children play. This is a free, unstructured playtime; while it will be staffed, parents/guardians must be present at all times. We provide a few toys but feel free to bring your own to share.

Our Youth Group will be meeting on October 29th for our regular monthly meeting and will begin our Simple Sundays curriculum as part of our discussion time.



Our Godly Play class continues to expand on some of our core stories with new extension lessons that have been fun to introduce to our students. We are still looking for volunteers who are willing to be a door person or storyteller for Godly Play. Email tracy@saintjamespres.org if you are willing to help or are just interested in learning more about Godly Play!

Godly Play Schedule for October

October 1st The Great Family & The Story of Abraham/The Story of Sarah
 October 8th The Story of Jacob
 October 16th The Story of Joseph
 October 23rd The Story of Moses
 October 30th The Story of Ruth



Ingall's Creek Women's Retreat
OCT 27-29

HOLDING SPACE

Faith isn't static.

Our questions are likely bigger than when we first came to believe, but no matter what questions arise there is something unshakeable about Jesus.

So what does it mean to grow in God throughout our entire lives? And why are we often so terrible at making room for questions - our own, or the questions of those around us? Join us as we deepen in this wonder together bringing our whole selves to the task. We'll have intergenerational conversation about faith, and hold space for one another on the journey.



Register today by scanning the QR code or visiting
<https://www.ingalls creek.org/2023/08/20/womens-retreat/>

Have questions? Contact becca@ingalls creek.org

BOOK CLUB

St. James Book Club is currently reading *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd. This exquisitely written novel is a triumph of storytelling that looks with unswerving eyes at one of the most devastating wounds in American history, through women whose struggles for liberation, empowerment, and expression will leave no reader unmoved. We will meet on the third Monday in October, October 16th at 7:00pm.

Email tracy@saintjamespres.org for the Zoom link. Books are available in the church office.

INTERFAITH COALITION COAT DRIVE

COATS are NEEDED as well as hats, gloves and scarves by our neighbors preparing for winter on the streets of Whatcom County and for those who realize a needed coat is not in their budget. We will be collecting these clean items in good condition for children, men and women, now through October 10. There is a designated place for your donation inside our church's main entrance.

The coats will be shared by our partner, Interfaith Coalition, with those in need.

Questions: Gretchen Pfueller –
gmpfueller@gmail.com

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

submitted by Faye Hill, Clerk of Session

Julie Keyes was the representative from the Board of Deacons. She reported that the Deacon's set the date for the all-church lunch for October 22nd. All members and friends of the congregation are invited. Julie shared with the Session the various ways that the deacons minister to the congregation and try to stay connected with those who are unable to attend worship.



The Session received the Treasurer's report for the month of August.

Beginning Balance:	\$81,359.96
Income:	20,724.59
Expenses:	19,057.16
Ending Balance:	\$83,027.39

A generous gift was received in memory of the former St. James Treasurer, Marina McLeod.

The Session agreed to a request from the Building and Grounds Committee to install a donated TV into the lounge to allow for Zoom, PowerPoint and other uses.

The Bible Study class hosted by Jeff King at 9am on Sunday mornings is off to a good start.

The Session agreed to purchase a book cart to be used in various ways to display books that folks might wish to take home to read. The Mission and Social Action Committee will soon have books on display about climate justice which can be checked out.

The Finance Committee will begin work on the Stewardship program soon.

The Pastor's annual performance review is scheduled for October 11th.

Fred Hartsook is scheduled to preach on October 1st while Pastor Seth is away.

Jeff King will preach on October 15th in connection with Indigenous Peoples' Day.

The Northwest Coast Presbytery will meet at St. James on October 26th.

The Christian Faith Formation Committee is beginning to plan the next all-church retreat and welcome suggestions from members.

FOREST BATHING/ NATURE THERAPY

As a culminating activity for ALL IN for Climate Week in Bellingham, Stillpoint at Becksides in partnership with Unity Spiritual Center presented a Forest Bathing/Nature Therapy activity on Saturday, September 23rd. St. James co-sponsored this retreat on the five acres of sacred earth. Forest Bathing, also referred to as Nature Therapy, is a practice “of soaking up sights, sounds, and the feel of the natural environment.” Alice Bailey, Jean Seater (who graciously consented to getting up early), and I traveled to Stillpoint together where we were guided through a series of invitations to connect with our “more-than-human” world. We explored motion in nature, textures in nature, and received treasures from the earth.

As Thoreau reminds us, “In Wildness is the preservation of the World,” or as Richard Nelson writes, “I am never alone in this wild forest of elders, this forest of eyes.” Forest Bathing is a beautiful reminder to see the earth with “new” eyes and to turn our attention, as Robin Wall Kimmerer says, to the “covenant of reciprocity” with our sacred earth.

Submitted by Maureen Kosa, MSA Elder



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: Katie Dunne, stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com
 Administrative Ministry Assistant: Sharon King, office@saintjamespres.org

SESSION OF ST. JAMES

Tess Bowers
 Aaron Caruso
 Sarah Condrey
 Faye Hill (Clerk of Session)
 Maureen Kosa
 Andrew McLaurin
 Jimmy Parks
 Nebiyu Tesfa

DEACONS

Deacons Parish 1 – Merry Thomas*, Alice Bailey
 Deacons Parish 2 – Pam Gibson, Judy Buchan
 Deacons Parish 3 – Julie Keyes, Carla Shafer
 Deacons Parish 4 – Valerie McBeth, Claudia Allan
 Deacons Parish 5 – Pam Gibson, Adam Beaty
 Deacons Parish 6 – Kirsten Oliver, Amy Morriss*

* Deacon Co-Moderators

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



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

10/1	Laurie Anderson	
10/2	Alyson Storrs	
10/4	Lance Melrose	
10/7	Aubrey Caruso	
10/9	Andrew McLaurin	
10/11	Carla Shafer	
10/12	Christian Beaty	
10/13	Don Hoyt	
10/21	Jessica Parks	
10/24	Claude Hill	
10/24	Sean Keyes	
10/28	Ezra May Moody	
10/31	Selina Baker	

PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY

AA Fairhaven Group
 AA Grateful Hearts Women's Group
 AA Men's Book Study Group
 AA SOS Men's Group
 Bayside Co-op Preschool
 Bellingham Community Chorus
 Bellingham Ukulele Group
 Boy Scouts Troop 7
 Happy Hour AI-Anon
 Liberation Yoga
 Linda's Tai Chi
 Little Sapling Music
 Overeaters Anonymous
 St. James Fitness
 The Table Church
 Whatcom Weavers Guild

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, 2:00pm



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