

***“Sign up for this. Please buy this. Can you add these dates to your calendar?”***

Do you find yourself overwhelmed by requests for your contribution? This is a symptom of our “attention economy,” where there are so many demands for our interest and time that it becomes a buzz or noise that we wish we could block out. The email subject line reads, *“Click now before this offer runs out.”* But they’re not offering you something. They’re selling you something.

In the face of this fatigued attention economy, we also face this question: *“What does God require of us?”* So often, it’s difficult to answer this question because we struggle to quiet the noise and notice God’s still, small voice. But when we slow down, we notice a gap and space in us. We want to help and serve, but how can we do this in a world that demands so much of us?

Author Frederick Buechner offers us a beautifully simple statement regarding where we are to spend our time as we follow this calling from God: **“The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”** God has designed you to know deep joy and gladness in sharing your gifts in the world. And the world, your community, your church – we celebrate when you bring those gifts in their fullness.

This month, we ask for your commitments for the upcoming year. First, we seek your pledge for financial support, which is essential in helping us form our annual budget. Second, though, is this incredibly important piece of asking for your help in the form of time and talents. We need your help! God has blessed you with particular gifts, and as we share life as a church community, we ask you to show up with those gifts and give them away — help others, serve, and share all the beautiful skills you have to offer to strengthen our community.

Of course, we must use our gifts to help the world and serve our neighbors.

You are already doing this through volunteering around Bellingham, giving your skills to many different organizations that are so blessed to receive them. We also ask you to sign up and get your hands dirty helping each other. So, this season, we ask you to please sign up to contribute your Time & Talents.

- *Do you have administrative skills?* We need your help around the church office.
- *Are you a writer?* We’d love your help with our church communications.
- *Do you play music?* We want to hear you share your gift in worship.
- *Are you a zealous techie?* We need sound, web, and visual support!

In a church community, we need the strengths and gifts of the many to tackle all the little things we do. Sometimes, the opportunities are simple, like giving time to help greet people on a Sunday morning and hand them a bulletin. In other scenarios, we need wise leaders who will help us discern God’s leading for our congregation’s future, folks who can serve as an Elder or Deacon.

This year, we want to hear how you WILL help out around St. James. We can admit that we aren’t always great at asking for help, but this season, as we look forward to 2024, *we are asking for help.* YOUR help!

Additionally, as you consider your 2024 financial pledge, you may want to consider that part of how you can give back to God is with your time and talents. Maybe this isn’t a season when you can give financially, or perhaps you are exhausted by the requests for money you get everywhere and, instead, want to DO something. That’s wonderful because God is directing your deep joy towards the deep hunger and needs that extend far beyond what we offer of our financial resources.

*(continued...)*

Please take time to fill out your Annual Pledge form and, on the back, indicate what areas you would like to serve in the coming year. Think of it as an opportunity to take a risk and step into the dance with one another.

The St. James Time & Talents form is connected with the Annual Pledge form, available right here:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/StJames2024>

Finally, please do not let concerns about not knowing enough or not having the right training get in the way. Practical details can be learned. We need people with hearts ready to serve, learn, and grow together. That's you. Please let us know how you can help.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Seth

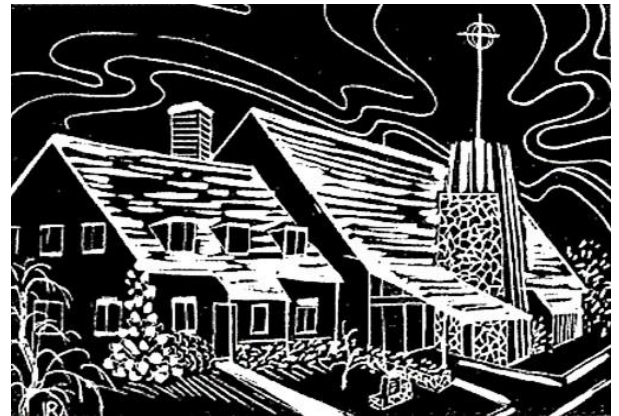
## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

*submitted by Faye Hill, Clerk of Session*

Highlights of the Session Meeting on October 8, 2023

- Deacon Carla Shafer was the representative from the Board of Deacons. She reported on the planning for the Deacon's Lunch on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. The deacons will provide the food and the session members will help serve.
- Treasurer Katie Dunne provided an excellent report for the month of September.

Beginning balance:	\$82,487.39
Income	29,232.11
Expenses	25,549.95
Ending balance:	\$86,169.55



- The Building and Grounds Committee received approval from the Session to move ahead on selecting and purchasing windows and blinds for the Horizon Room.
- The Building and Grounds Committee announced their plan to replace the existing cooking ranges in the kitchen due to the aging issues of the ones that are there now.
- The Christian Faith Committee is in the process of finding the right facilities for the annual all-church retreat 2024. The committee also reported that Toddler Time is going well.
- The Stewardship Committee announced that the kick-off for the stewardship campaign will be on October 29<sup>th</sup>, with the closing date for pledges on November 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Gretchen Pfueller was praised for her work with the Family Promise program which is ending this month.
- The Loving Welcome Committee reported a good response to the recent "date night" program.
- The Personnel Committee is beginning to work on the pastor's Terms of Call and staff salaries for the 2024 budget.
- The Session was reminded of the Northwest Coast Presbytery meeting at St. James on October 26<sup>th</sup>. The Session is encouraged to attend the events on that day.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE - OCTOBER 2023

*By Andrew McLaurin, Finance Chair*

I can already feel the pace of our lives accelerating! In just a few weeks we will be celebrating Thanksgiving. Along with the holidays we celebrate our blessings through our annual Stewardship campaign. This is a chance to support our ministries through pledging a tithe to St. James. Packets are available at the church through November 5th. After that date, packets will be mailed. Your gift will support our valued ministries and allow us to be a church known for compassionate care.

The finance committee is beginning the development of next year's budget. Pledges will allow us to build a realistic budget and expand our ministries. We are excited to report that our church is financially healthy. Please help us continue this trend next year.

### Income/ Expense - as of 10/31

	Oct Actual	Oct Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
<b>INCOME</b>	\$ 26,592.11	\$ 21,604.17	\$ 213,281.32	\$ 239,750.00
<b>EXPENSES</b>	\$ 20,478.43	\$ 24,855.15	\$ 234,787.67	\$ 298,262.00

**Aside from utilizing contact-free offering on Sunday morning, you can give in TWO primary ways:**

1. **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: <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>
2. **Mail-In Donations or Pledges:** You can mail your pledges and gifts to the church.  
Saint James Presbyterian Church  
910 14th Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225

## CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

Submitted by Tracy Caruso, Children & Family Ministry Director, [tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org)



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries!

October was another good and busy month around St. James! Our Godly Play lessons continue to focus on some more in-depth stories from the Old Testament, our youth group had a great October meeting with some good discussion, pizza, and of course hide and seek. We had an amazing turnout for our annual Parish Lunch, and we hosted a very successful Presbytery meeting. Toddler Time continues to grow, and we are seeing some amazing connections in our community happening because of Toddler Time.

We are once again joining with Lowell Elementary school to provide snacks for children who may need them during the school day. We are asking for donations of individually wrapped nut-free snacks. Items can be left in the tub in the narthex or outside Tracy's office. This will be an ongoing need until the school year ends in June. Lowell is also in need of mentors and volunteers to read with children at the school. Please let Tracy know if you have any questions or are interested in volunteering.

Our connections with the community are seen all over Bellingham! Our support of Lowell Elementary, with families attending Toddler Time and then signing up for the music class that rents space at St. James, or families from the music class signing up for the preschool that rents space and all coming to Toddler Time. We also have a large St. James representation at Roosevelt Elementary School and have seen families from the school participating in Toddler Time. See the included pictures of our St. James families at the Roosevelt Bear a Thon. It is a joy to watch St. James truly being the hands and feet of Jesus in our community.



On November 12<sup>th</sup> we will finish our Sunday morning class led by Jeff King and take a break until we begin our new Advent class on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. A huge Thank You to Jeff for leading such an amazing class. Even if you have not attended yet we hope everyone will join us for the final two sessions!

We are already planning for our annual Advent festival with a soup and bread lunch on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. We need people to bring soup, bread, and cookies, along with volunteers to help with set up and cleanup. If you can contribute or volunteer, you can sign up on the sheet in the Horizon Room or at the following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B054BAAAA2BA5F49-45736417-advent>

I hope everyone has a bit of a restful time this month before we begin our busy time of Advent.

November Godly Play Schedule:

November 5<sup>th</sup>: The Story of Samuel

November 12<sup>th</sup>: The Story of David

November 19<sup>th</sup>: The Story of Job

November 26<sup>th</sup>: Work Day

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## BOOK CLUB

**ST. JAMES BOOK CLUB** is currently reading *How to Change Your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence*. We will meet on the **fourth** Monday in November, November 27th at 7:00pm. Email [tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org) for the Zoom link. Books are available in the church office.

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## MISSION & SOCIAL ACTION

*Submitted by Maureen Kosa, Mission and Social Action chair*

Once again St. James would like to sponsor Christmas stockings for the residents at Gardenview Tiny Homes. If anyone is interested in helping with the shopping for stocking items or with assembling the stockings, please let me or anyone on the Mission and Social Action Team know. (mkosa@hotmail.com) Thank you!

Also, road2home is looking for volunteers to help with the Winter Weather Shelter. Please see the attached flyer for details.

### WINTER WEATHER SHELTER 2023-24: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

*Help keep vulnerable community members safe,  
warm, and protected from nature's elements.*

**Shelter opened:**  
**Dec. 1, 2023- Feb. 29, 2024.**  
**7 p.m. - 8 a.m.**

- Shifts to accommodate your schedule.
- Comprehensive training.
- Professional on-site staff.
- Relationship building opportunities.

**Volunteer Commitment:**

- 1-2 shifts per week
- Shifts
  - 6:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
  - 6 p.m - 10 p.m.

[www.road2home.com](http://www.road2home.com)



Apply at: [www.jotform.com/211485377281157](http://www.jotform.com/211485377281157)

## ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas, [pastor@saintjamespres.org](mailto:pastor@saintjamespres.org)

Children & Family Ministry Director: Tracy Caruso, [tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org)

Music Director: Ta Wei Tsai, [music@saintjamespres.org](mailto:music@saintjamespres.org)

Treasurer: Katie Dunne, [stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com](mailto:stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com)

Administrative Ministry Assistant: Sharon King, [office@saintjamespres.org](mailto:office@saintjamespres.org)

### SESSION OF ST. JAMES

Tess Bowers  
Aaron Caruso  
Sarah Condreay  
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



### NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

11/2	Trevor Murphy	
11/5	Pete Conwell	
11/6	Aaron Knight	
11/6	Benjamin Knight	
11/7	Jean Seater	
11/11	David Seater	
11/12	Julie Keyes	
11/13	Patricia Harris	
11/19	Nancy Wagar	
11/22	Miranda Keefe	
11/27	Wendy Crandall	
11/29	Craig Keyes	
11/30	Claudia Allan	
11/30	Cedric Engels	

### 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 Al-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](mailto: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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