



December 10, 2023

"Let Us Be Light - The Prophets

Mark 1:1-8

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE
A TIME FOR GATHERING AND QUIET MEDITATION
Welcome. We are so glad you have joined us for worship today.
We would love to connect with you and support
how God is moving in your life.

Please visit www.saintjamespres.org/contact to share
how we can be of support!

**Please stand in body or in spirit*

ORDER FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Ta Wei Tsai

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Seth Thomas

CALL TO WORSHIP

Faye Hill

Wilderness living calls us to seek God
in the voice that cries out,
"Valleys will be lifted up
and mountains will be made low,"
to seek God
in the sound of the one who speaks of peace,
"The day of the Lord is coming,"
to seek God in the loud noise
that foretells what will be made new.
In the wilderness,
let us listen only for God's voice. Let us worship God!

INVITATION TO GODLY PLAY & ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

"Comfort, Comfort Now My People" - GTG 87

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**“Prepare the way of the Lord,” your prophet says to us.
Forgive us when we have failed to prepare your way.
Forgive us when we have stood in your way, instead:
when we let the challenging words of your prophets roll off of lives,
rather than let them spark change;
when we walk around a neighbor in need,
rather than encounter a chance for compassion.
Forgive us, O Lord, and grant us assurance
that the glory of your coming does not depend
upon the righteousness of your followers.
Forgive us, O Lord, and free us to try again.**

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S GRACE

***THE PEACE**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 40:1-11 pg. 667

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM

How Great Our Joy!

By Craig Courtney, based on a traditional German Carol
SJPC Choir

SERMON READING

Mark 1:1-8 pg. 34

SERMON

“Let Us Be Light - The Prophets” Rev. Dr. Seth Thomas

***HYMN OF RESPONSE** “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” - GTG 347

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

JOYS & CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Carol of the Bells

By Mykola Leontovych, arranged for piano by Rousseau
Ta Wei Tsai, Piano

***DOXOLOGY**

"For the Life That You Have Given" - GTG 717

For the life that you have given, for the love in Christ made known,
With these fruits of time and labor, with these gifts that are your own;
Here we offer, Lord, our praises; heart and mind and strength we bring;
Give us grace to love and serve you, Living what we pray and sing.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***SINGING WELCOME AS CHILDREN RETURN TO SANCTUARY**

Welcome, children, welcome, we are glad you're here.

Welcome, children, welcome. Now to God draw near.

***HYMN OF COMMITMENT**

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" - GTG 88

WE GO INTO THE WORLD AS GOD'S AMBASSADORS

***BLESSING & CHARGE**

POSTLUDE

*As our worship concludes, our service begins.
We invite you to join us for fellowship following worship. Please introduce
yourself to those new to you and extend a welcome of peace and
friendship to everyone.*

Next Week, December 17, 2023
Third Sunday in Advent: Testifying to the Light

ADVENT ADULT EDUCATION CLASS

We hope you will join us Sunday mornings during Advent at 9:00am for a study of some of our favorite Advent Hymns. We will look at some of the history and stories behind the hymns and what the hymns are saying to us today. Devotionals are available for \$10. Childcare is available. Contact Tracy if you have any questions.

GODLY PLAY: Advent II The Holy Family

This lesson, along with the next three lessons, help the children to anticipate the mystery of Christmas. In the Advent lessons we will move toward Bethlehem and arrive at the birth of Jesus and the lighting of the Christ Candle. This week's lesson focuses on the Holy Family.

Students will start in the sanctuary and hear the story with the rest of the congregation then go downstairs for work response time. Students will be brought upstairs for the final hymn.

LECTIONARY TEXTS

For anyone wishing to study the lectionary texts this week, December 10th, the Lectionary texts are:

Isaiah 40:1-11 (worship)

Mark 1:1-18 (sermon)

Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: Next Sunday

Please join us for a brief congregational meeting next Sunday, December 17. We will hear a report from the St. James Nominating Committee and vote on newly-elected and renewing Deacons and Elders.

ONE PARISH/ONE PRISONER (OPOP) Update

The OPOP team (Diana, Alice, Wendy, Jenny Sue, Mark, Seth, Ryan) recently solicited your help with locating a habitable trailer for Cliff. Good news to share – Cliff now has a trailer and it's in place for his arrival. If the help request has stirred an interest about OPOP and you would like to learn more, please ask any of the team members.

HOLIDAY JOY

Our youth group is once again helping with the Holiday Joy program. We have the Angel Tree set up in the Horizon room. This year we agreed to provide gifts for 16 children and families so we need a lot of help! Please look at the gift tags and see if you can help by purchasing a gift for children and families in our community who need a little joy this season. **Gifts will need to be brought to St. James by Tuesday, December 12th.**

MEMORIAL POINSETTIAS

This is a fundraiser for the St. James Flower Committee. The poinsettias will decorate the St. James Chancel during Advent and be taken home on Christmas Eve evening or the following Sunday. Fill out the included order form to purchase a poinsettia(s) in honor/ memory/ etc of a loved one. Poinsettias will be on display in the Sanctuary on December 17th.

CAROLING

Join us on December 17th for caroling at the Gardenview Tiny House Village! We will meet at St. James at 5:30 for hot chocolate and carpooling, or you can meet us there at 6:00. Keep in mind that parking is very limited.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Please give generously to our Christmas Joy offering. This offering supports retired ministers and church workers and their families; the offering also supports students in Presbyterian - related schools and colleges equipping communities of color as they pursue their education. Envelopes will be in the Christmas Eve bulletin. You may also contribute by using the drop down menu titled Christmas Joy on the St. James website. Our Godly Play students received change boxes so they can participate as well. Parents please help your student return their box by December 31st.

YOUTH GROUP

Our monthly youth group meeting will be at First Presbyterian Church on December 17th from 2-5 this month. Dress in your holiday festive clothes, bring a white elephant gift to share, and come have fun!

CHORAL CONCERT

A musical highlight of the season comes up next weekend right here at St. James. The Bellingham Community Chorus performs its winter concert, "To Everything There is a Season" on Friday, Dec. 15 at 7pm and Saturday, Dec. 16 at 3pm. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students and teens. No charge for children 12 and under. We hope to see you there!

BELLINGHAM COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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 if you have any questions or are interested in volunteering.

PRAYERS, PRAISES, AND UPDATES

If you have a prayer request or update you would like to share, please email office@saintjamespres.org.

THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

Monday, 12/11	4:00pm, St. James Fitness
Wednesday, 12/13	8:30am, Toddler Time
Thursday, 12/14	4:00pm, St. James Fitness 7:00pm, Choir rehearsal
Next Sunday, 12/17	9:00am, Advent Adult Education Class 10:30am In-person and streamed Sunday Worship Service https://www.facebook.com/saintjamespres/ 12:00pm, Deacons

PROGRAMS SHARING OUR ST. JAMES FACILITY

AA Fairhaven Group.....	Mondays/ Thursdays
AA Men's Book Study Group.....	Mondays
AA SOS Men's Group.....	Wednesdays
Bayside Co-op Preschool.....	Monday-Friday during school year
Bellingham Community Chorus.....	Tuesdays September-April
Bellingham Ukulele Group (BUG).....	1st Saturday of each month
Boy Scouts Troop 7.....	Mondays
Happy Hour AI-Anon.....	Tuesdays
Liberation Yoga.....	TBD
Linda's Tai Chi.....	Mondays
Little Sapling Music.....	Wednesdays/ Thursdays quarterly
Overeaters Anonymous.....	Saturdays
The Table Church.....	Sundays
Whatcom Weavers Guild.....	TBD
World Peace Poets.....	TBD

ST. JAMES STAFF

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

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

Music Director: Ta Wei Tsai, music@saintjamespres.org

Treasurer: Katie Dunne, stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com

Admin: Sharon King, office@saintjamespres.org

910 14th Street, Bellingham, WA 98225 (360) 733-1325

Office Hours - Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

www.saintjamespres.org

In consideration of others, please refrain from wearing heavy perfumes and scents, and please silence your cell phones before the service.

**St. James Sunday morning worship continues to be held online
as well as in-person.**

**You can access online worship through
our website at www.saintjamespres.org/live,
the St. James Facebook page at www.facebook.com/saintjamespres
or via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88335387843>.**

CONTACT pastor@saintjamespres.org FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Give toward an
existing pledge:



Give to
St. James Online:

[Click Here](#)

Give to general
offering:



Stay current on activities and happenings [@saintjamespres](https://www.instagram.com/saintjamespres)

