



December 1, 2024

"You Are A Blessing"

Luke 1:26-38

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

Leah Bruno

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Seth Thomas

***CALL TO WORSHIP & CANDLELIGHTING**

Alice Bailey

In a weary and worn world,
how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

Let us begin with the good news!
Let us begin by trusting that we are a
blessing, loved by a gracious God.
Let us begin with music and singing!
Let us begin with warmth and welcome.
Let us begin with hope.

Yes, let us begin with hope.
Today we light the candle of hope to
shine a light in a worn and weary world.

**May this be our foundation.
May this be our fresh start.
May this be our new beginning.**

May hope flow forth from here.
Amen!

INVITATION INTO THE ADVENT SEASON

Faye Hill

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"
- GTG 93

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Affirming God,

Your first words to creation were words of love.

You looked at this earth and said, "It is good."

You spoke affirmations through the prophets.

You spoke blessings over Mary.

You spoke belonging through Christ.

**At every turn, you have reiterated that we are a blessing,
made in your image, held in your love.**

Forgive us for forgetting this truth.

**Forgive us for measuring our worth by society's measuring stick
instead of yours.**

We believe.

Help our unbelief.

**In Christ's name we pray,
amen.**

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 43:1-7 pg. 672

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM

"Here Am I"

Hannah C. Brown & Kate Williams

St. James Chancel Choir

Soloists: Jessica Parks, Cheryl McGregor,
Holly Hagshenas

SERMON READING

Luke 1:26-38 pgs.56-57

SERMON

"You Are A Blessing"

Rev. Dr. Seth Thomas

***HYMN OF RESPONSE**

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

- GTG 88

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

JOYS & CONCERNS

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Leah Bruno, 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**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

God be with you.

And also with you.

Let us open our hearts.

We open them to our God.

Let us give thanks to the Holy One, our God.

It is right to lift up thanks and praise.

THE INVITATION & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

WELCOME TO THE TABLE

“The body of Christ, given for you.” **Amen.**

“The blood of Christ, shed for you.” **Amen.**

COMMUNION PRAYER & 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.

***HYMN OF COMMITMENT**

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”
- GTG 82

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 8, 2024

“We Can’t Go Alone” Ruth 1

GODLY PLAY: Work Day

A work day is a Sunday when the students don't hear a story. During our typical Sunday morning time, there is often not enough time for some of our art responses or to explore all they want to in the classroom, so we have work days where the children can more fully engage in the "Play" part of Godly Play.

Children will start and stay in the nursery until parents retrieve them after the service.

LECTIONARY TEXTS

For anyone wishing to study the lectionary texts for this week,
December 1st:

Isaiah 43:1-7 (worship)

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Luke 1:26-38 (sermon)

Thessalonians 3:9-13

Psalms 25:1-10

Luke 21:25-36

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 10 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 UNWRAPPED to St. James by Tuesday, December 10th**

ADVENT FESTIVAL

We are already planning for our annual Advent festival with a soup and bread lunch on December 8th. 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/60B054BAAAA2BA5F49-53218169-advent>

NEW GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP - December 11

Beginning in November, Pastor Seth is facilitating a new Grief Support Group, meeting 10-11:30 am in the Lounge. The group will meet every other week. This is a space to process the many forms of grief and find support from others in our congregation.

All are welcome.

PUB THEOLOGY - December 9th

Join us every other Monday from 6:30-7:30pm at Archer Ale House in Fairhaven. Childcare and carpooling are available at St. James beginning at 6:15pm and ending at 7:45pm. The next Pub Theology group will meet on Monday, November 25th.

Led by Jimmy and Jessica Parks, we'll explore themes of Christian ethics-ideas about good, evil, and the in-between, and how we live them out in everyday life. This is not a lecture or Bible study, but an opportunity to have an open discussion in a relaxed, welcoming setting. Jimmy and Jessica will facilitate the discussion and provide resources for deeper engagement, if desired. Outside readings are not required for participation but will allow for a richer conversation. Please reach out to

jimmyjamesjimbo@gmail.com if you would like the resources used for discussion or if you have any questions.

ST. JAMES WRITERS CIRCLE - December 5th

St. James Writers Circle is a gathering of members and friends who are writing (or would like to be) prose, poems, novels, short stories. We are open to all genres and topics, and encouraging of spiritual and other content that is an authentic reflection of your personal views and explorations of ideas. We will meet to support each other's writing and provide resources. Meetings at the church will be at 10 AM on the first Thursday of each month, (Nov. 7, Dec. 5, Jan. 2 and so on) and on Zoom on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7 PM (Nov 20, Dec. 18, Jan. 15 and so on). Writing Circle facilitators are Maureen Kosa and Carla Shafer.

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 next June. Our goal is 100 snacks/month.

Lowell is also in need of mentors and volunteers to read with children at the school. Please contact cfm@saintjamespres.org 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, 12/2	4:00pm, St. James Fitness, open to all
Tuesday, 12/3	5:30pm, Building & Grounds
Wednesday, 12/4	8:30am, Toddler Time
Thursday, 12/5	4:00pm, St. James Fitness, open to all 7:00pm, Choir rehearsal
Next Sunday, 12/8	10:30am In-person and streamed Sunday Worship Service https://www.facebook.com/saintjamespres/ 12:00pm, Advent Festival

PROGRAMS SHARING OUR ST. JAMES FACILITY

AA Fairhaven Group.....	Mondays/ Thursdays
AA Grateful Hearts.....	Mondays
AA Men's Book Study Group.....	Mondays
AA SOS Men's Group.....	Wednesdays
AA Meditation Group.....	Fridays
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
Wild Hearts group.....	TBD
World Peace Poets.....	TBD

ST. JAMES STAFF

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

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

Music Director: Leah Bruno, music@saintjamespres.org

Treasurer: Stefany Ness, treasurer@saintjamespres.org

Admin: Sharon King, office@saintjamespres.org

910 14th Street, Bellingham, WA 98225 360-733-1325 www.saintjamespres.org

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Pastor Seth's Office Hours: Tuesday - Thursday 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

To schedule ahead of time: <http://www.calendly.com/pastorseththomas>
or pastor@saintjamespres.org

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

**You can access online worship through
our website at www.saintjamespres.org/live**

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)

