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## Time, Talents, and Treasure

*Our reminder to steward God's gifts*

The Word of God does not return void, but is planted as a seed that grows into a mighty tree. This is the promise of God's faithfulness to us. We respond in faithfulness to God.

I write this note today to bring our attention to some important needs in our community and with a hope of inspiring us to move forward together as we serve God here in Bellingham and Whatcom County.

Firstly, I want to share that we have a new Time & Talents survey available! We, your church leaders and staff, request that everyone fill out this survey by June 1.

We've changed a few things about the Time & Talents, so let me draw attention to some of the highlights:

- In the **Personal Information** section, we've added a field for you to share an emergency contact with the church. If you choose, you can add a name and contact info for a person you would like us to reach out to in the case of an emergency. Sometimes, it's hard to get a hold of someone in our congregation. Perhaps you have a friend, sibling, or child you would like us to follow up with should we not be able to reach you. We have also included a space for you to add a medical note, as well. All of this will remain private in the Planning Center church database, which we use for our Giving and Membership records.
- We have updated the **Occupation** field, as well. How do you spend your days? What field of work are or were you in? We want to know, so we can support these important vocational callings. Just recently, in worship, we had a teacher sharing about needs in the education system. We want to help connect affinity groups like this and bless your work as Christ's hands and feet in the world.
- **Helping Around the Church** gives you a number of ways to offer your time and talents. Whether it be through sharing music in worship or helping around the church office or joining a church committee, this is where you can tell us what you would like to do (and see where your skills meet needs here).
- Finally, and this is different, we have a **Missions Survey**. This year, we want to know: Where do you **already serve**? Our Mission and Social Action committee is seeking helpers who can represent St. James as a contact with our many mission partners. As well, we want to know where our community members might be actively serving, but we don't know about it. Or maybe there's a new organization we need to consider supporting. Tell us!

**Please complete the Time and Talents at your earliest convenience. You can find it here:**

<http://www.saintjamespres.org/serve>

**A closing note: Time, talents, and...treasure.** In the coming weeks and months, the Session, Church Finance Committee, and Trustees will be deliberating and discerning our current financial position. We all know that expenses are up. Utility prices have risen. Wages and cost of living continue to increase. We will craft a plan to adapt to these realities, but the clearest picture right now tells us we need to *increase our revenue*. We must think creatively about using our building and finding new tenants. We need to be wise about our expenses and reduce where we can. And we need to expand our reach, growing our giving base as we prepare for the next chapter of our ministry here.

In all of this, we trust in Christ's faithfulness and provision. It is a joy to serve alongside you. Grace and peace,

Pastor Seth

# CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

*Submitted by Tracy Caruso, Children & Family Ministry Director*



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries!

Here at St. James we are into the busy spring season! April saw a month of finishing Lent and changing the colors to Eastertide, a month of joy with another amazing class led by Randy Pries, and a month of preparing for the busy season ahead.

We had an amazing **Easter Sunday** starting with a yummy “munch” a beautiful worship service with more people in attendance than we have had in many years, and an Easter Egg Hunt with more than 30 kids hunting eggs. I want to give a huge shout out to everyone who brought candy to stuff our eggs. I must admit I was nervous because the week before Easter we did not have nearly enough candy for the over 500 eggs we hid, but St. James folks stepped up and we ended up being able to fill all the eggs and have enough left over to keep Sharon’s candy bowl full for the next 6 months! It was a truly beautiful day.



**In our Godly Play class**, we finished the two series we were using following Jesus’ journey to the cross. It is so fun to see the connections and wonderings that the students make each year and how they grow and change from year to year. We have seen a large increase in the number of kids in our Godly Play classroom and we are always looking for volunteers to help!

Because of how busy spring can get for everyone we are again combining our April and May youth group meetings into one bowling afternoon on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Stay tuned for more details.

**St. James Festival of the Arts is back!** On Saturday May 31st from 3-5pm we will again be holding an afternoon of St. James performances and a silent auction of items donated by St. James artists, benefiting our St. James retreat fund. Artists of all kinds are needed! We are looking for anyone who would like to donate a piece of artwork or performance. Artwork can include any kind of physical art, drawing, photographs, paintings, sculptures, woodwork, jewelry, textiles, etc. and performances can be a piece of music, poetry, reading, etc.

You can email Tracy cfm@saintjamespres.org with the type and approximate length of what you would like to contribute, or with any questions. Submissions for performances are due by May 11th, and auction pieces by May 18th! Tickets go on sale May 5<sup>th</sup> and can be purchased ahead of time for \$15/person or \$30/family at the following link <http://www.saintjamespres.org/festivalofarts>, or at the door for \$20/person and \$40/family

**Pub Theology** took April off but will return the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays in May at Trackside from 6-730. Because Trackside is such a family-friendly location we will not be offering childcare at church. We hope you will join us for this time led by Jimmy and Jessica Parks where 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.



## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

This year we are partnering with First Presbyterian and St. Paul's Episcopal church for our Into the Deep VBS. We will be holding vbs from June 23rd-the 26th from 9am-12pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. We need more volunteers this year as this will be double the size of the programs we have been putting on at St. James the past three years. Register your camper or to volunteer here:

<https://fpcbellingham.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2856984>

## Godly Play for May

May 4<sup>th</sup> Work Day

May 11<sup>th</sup> Mary the Mother of Jesus

May 18<sup>th</sup> Knowing Jesus in a New Way

May 25<sup>th</sup> Knowing Jesus in a New Way (cont)

## FINANCE UPDATE

*Submitted by Andrew McLaurin, Chair of Finance*

As I reported last month, our YTD income continues to exceed our budget projections due to several annual pledges being paid in full during January and February. Expenses are slightly higher than budgeted, mainly due to increases in utilities. A review of March financials tells a more concerning story. Our income from pledges was under budget by approximately \$800 when adjusted for those mentioned above prepaid annual pledges. Our general offerings were also under budget by \$1,100. This is a concerning trend to see this early in the year. We are hopeful that missed pledges will be current before summer. Consistent support from the congregation is necessary for us to fund our mission work, maintain programs and support our staff. Our expenses were about \$1,800 over budget expectations. The committee will continue to monitor our finances closely.

Our Building and Grounds committee is reviewing operations and looking for ways to reduce our utility consumption. We are actively seeking additional tenants to lease space and increase our rental income. The minimum wage in Bellingham is slated to increase in May, which will further strain our budget. We recognize the challenges we are all facing and ask our congregants to prayerfully consider their support of our church.

	Actual Cash Flow, April, 2025	Budgeted Cash Flow, April, 2025	Actual Cash Flow, Year-to-Date, As of: April 30, 2025	Budgeted Cash Flow, Year-to-Date, As of: April 30, 2025
<b>Rental Income</b>	\$1,443.75	\$1,930.31	\$7,972.81	\$7,721.24
<b>Annual Pledges</b>	\$5,643.78	\$13,018.84	\$81,974.25	\$89,349.31
<b>General Offering</b>	\$1,149.40	\$3,815.41	\$13,325.74	\$15,976.75
<b>Uncategorized Offerings Income*</b>	\$9,350.00		\$9,350.00	
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$17,586.93</b>	<b>\$18,764.56</b>	<b>\$112,622.80</b>	<b>\$113,047.30</b>

\*April includes some Uncategorized offerings income due to the closing of the month and Sharon King's illness. These will be organized/recategorized in May.

## GIVING TO ST. JAMES

If you have any questions regarding the finances of Saint James Presbyterian Church, please feel free to contact Stefany Ness at [treasurer@saintjamespres.org](mailto:treasurer@saintjamespres.org)

**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>

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



## MISSION & SOCIAL ACTION – MAY EVENTS

### Southside Community Meal

We are serving the meal at Our Savior's Lutheran Church on Sunday, May 18 from 5:00-6:30 pm.. The Southside Community Meal is a great opportunity to connect with others in the neighborhood, serve our friends with hospitality and good food. Pastor Aaron Walters, from The Table, will be cooking. Come to serve and support! Talk with Carol or Ray Dellecker for sign up information.

### Social Justice Speaker: Sojourners Magazine President, Rev. Adam Taylor

*Where Do We Go From Here? Chaos or Beloved Community?*

May 9, 6:30pm at First Congregational Church (2401 Cornwall Avenue). Join our local faith community in hosting this inspiring and thought-provoking evening. In an era marked by uncertainty and the looming challenges of authoritarianism, Rev. Taylor will delve into how we can resist oppressive forces while envisioning a vibrant, inclusive democracy where everyone can thrive.

## SUNDAY TECH AND WEBSITE HELP NEEDED

We would like to expand our offerings through the St. James church website. We are looking for a team to help review our current website content and tools and help develop the next version, hopefully launching in Summer 2025. Talk with Pastor Seth to get involved.

Additionally, we are looking for more folks to help run cameras and sound for our online service streaming each Sunday. YOU can do it...and WE can train you! This involves arriving at the church by 10:00 to set up and live streaming during the regular worship service. Email [pastor@saintjamespres.org](mailto:pastor@saintjamespres.org) if you can help!

## SIGN UP HERE FOR USHERS, COMMUNION, LECTORS & OFFERING COUNTERS

We *need* ushers, lectors, offering counters, and communion servers! The following links will take you to an online signup where you can sign up for Sundays that work with your schedule and receive an automatic reminder a few days before your service. If you have questions, please contact Sharon at [office@saintjamespres.org](mailto:office@saintjamespres.org).

- Usher: <https://tinyurl.com/UshersStJames>
- Lector: <https://tinyurl.com/LectorStJames>
- Offering Counters: <https://tinyurl.com/OfferingCountersStJames>
- Communion Servers: <https://tinyurl.com/CommunionServerStJames>

MAY 2025



**20  
25**



# **FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS**

**LIVE ART AUCTION  
LIVE PERFORMANCES  
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS**



**PURCHASE TICKETS:  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/35FFUMU](https://tinyurl.com/35ffumu)**

**MAY 31, 2025  
3 P.M. – 5 P.M.**

**EARLY BIRD \$15 INDIVIDUAL // \$30 FAMILY  
AT DOOR \$20 INDIVIDUAL // \$40 FAMILY  
(SUGGESTED DONATION)**



**910 14<sup>TH</sup> ST. BELLINGHAM, WA 98225  
350-733-1325**

**QUESTIONS? EMAIL [CFM@SAINTJAMESPRES.ORG](mailto:CFM@SAINTJAMESPRES.ORG)**

## ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE

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

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

Music Director: Leah Bruno, [music@saintjamespres.org](mailto:music@saintjamespres.org)

Treasurer: Stefany Ness, [treasurer@saintjamespres.org](mailto:treasurer@saintjamespres.org)

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

## SESSION OF ST. JAMES

Tess Bowers\* – Loving Welcome

Ralph Buchan\* – Personnel

Aaron Caruso\* – Building & Grounds

Carol Dellecker – Mission & Social Action

Faye Hill – Worship

Andrew McLaurin – Finance

Jimmy Parks – Christian Faith Formation

Rick Seater – Clerk of Session

Nebiyu Tesfa – Nominating

Pastor Seth Thomas, Moderator

\*Church Trustees

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

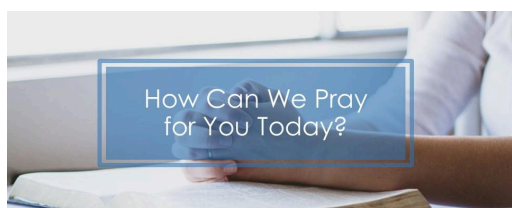
**Live streaming at:**

<https://saintjamespres.org/live>

<https://www.facebook.com/saintjamespres/>

## MAY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

5/2	Jenny Sue LeSchander	🎂
5/4	Aaron Caruso	🎂
5/13	Bruce and Marsha Lockhart	💕
5/14	Peter van der Veen	🎂
5/14	Sarah Condreay	🎂
5/16	Lindsay Anderson	🎂
5/22	Alex & Ben Gilbert	🎂🎂
5/29	Leslie Farris	🎂



## DEACONS

Deacons Parish 1 – Merry Thomas\*, Alice Bailey

Deacons Parish 2 – Judy Buchan, Gena Gustafson

Deacons Parish 3 – Buzz & Holly\* Hagshenas, Jean Seater

Deacons Parish 4 – Valerie McBeth, Alice Beaty

Deacons Parish 5 – Diana Philbeck, Jenny Sue LeSchander

Deacons Parish 6 – Kirsten Oliver, Gretchen Pfueller

\* Deacon Co-Moderators

**Church Office Hours:**

9:00am - 2:00pm, Monday - Thursday

## PROGRAMS SHARING OUR FACILITY

AA Fairhaven Group

AA Grateful Hearts Women's Group

AA Men's Book Study Group

AA SOS Men's Group

AA Meditation 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

Deadlines for church publications

Weekly bulletin: Wednesday, 2:00pm

Weekly email: Thursday, 2:00pm

Monthly "the Pulse": the 25th, 2:00pm

**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)**



