

CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

Submitted by Tracy Caruso, Children & Family Ministry Director



Greetings from the Director of Children and Family Ministries!

We have had a good and relaxing summer around St. James after the super busy end of June with a great Milestone Sunday celebration, and an amazing Vacation Bible School. It is hard to believe we are already into September with school started and fall in the air. We have a lot to look forward to at St. James this season.

We are excited to have Toddler Time back beginning Wednesday September 3rd. Join us on Wednesday mornings from 8:30-10:30am for ages four and younger. We will meet in the St. James Fellowship Hall for an open play time. Parents, grandparents, and caregivers have a chance to socialize with other adults 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.

Calling all students, teachers, professors, parents, grandparents, and anyone else who would like to join, bring your backpacks on Sunday, September 7th for a special Blessing of the Back Packs during our worship service. We will pray for and encourage all our back-to-school folks. Everyone participating will receive a special backpack tag!

Our Godly Play lessons also resume Sunday, September 7th. The Godly Play story will be told in service and then we hope you will join us for an ice cream sundae bar after worship. We will have the Godly Play classroom open and staffed so you can explore and ask questions. Our Godly Play curriculum will be following the sermon series this fall. We are excited for some stories we don't get to tell often and some side-by-side stories where we get to wonder what stories are saying to each other.

This year, we will be inaugurating the St. James Children's Choir, directed and accompanied by Leah Bruno. Children of any age may join, and those who may be shy are encouraged to bring an adult for support! Although regular attendance is encouraged, the choir is meant to be low-pressure, and kids who will not be present every Sunday may still join. Ample time will be given to learn each piece.

Who: children of any age (accompanying adults welcome!)

When: weekly, directly following the Sunday service; **beginning October 5th**

Where: **sanctuary** @ St. James Presbyterian

What: Rehearsals will start with fun warm-up activities.

Contact: Leah Bruno music@saintjamespres.org

We are excited for this coming season and all that it has to offer. If you have any questions about how to get involved with our children and family ministries programs email me at cfm@saintjamespres.org.

September Godly Play Schedule

September 7th Creation/Deep Well

September 14th The Great Family/Abraham

September 21st Jacob

September 28th Moses

SESSION NOTES - DECEMBER 2024

Submitted by Rick Seater, Clerk of Session

Opening Prayer and Call to Order: Seth opened with prayer and called the meeting to order.

In Attendance: Seth Thomas, Pastor-Moderator; Tess Bowers, Faye Hill, Andrew McLaurin, Jimmy Parks, Nebiyu Tesfa, Rick Seater, Stefany Ness

Absent: Ralph Buchan, Aaron Caruso, Carol Dellecker.

Guests: Merry Thomas, representing the Deacons.

Agenda Approval: Seth moved, and it was seconded to approve the agenda. The motion passed.

Welcome and Privilege of the Floor: Seth moved to excuse the absence of Ralph, Aaron and Carol and grant privilege of the floor to Merry. The motion passed.

Devotions and Prayer: Jimmy Parks gave the devotion

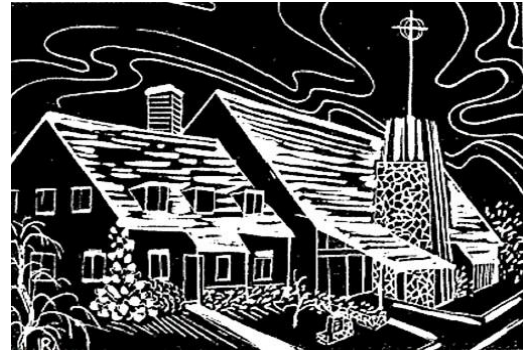
Deacons Report: Merry reported that the Deacons are pleased with how the picnic went. The deacons are beginning preparation for the Parish Lunch.

Clerk's Report and Consideration of the Minutes

Andrew moved to approve minutes. The motion was passed.

Treasurer's Report: Stefany reported that Revenue in July exceeded budget expectations, Expenses held steady, and we are on track with the budget. Cash flow is steady, and the account balances are all good. She passed out account summaries and details that support this. We had some discussion about where to direct unexpected donations. If the donor specifies where they want the funds to go, we will honor that request. Otherwise the donation will be deposited in the general fund and the Session will determine how it will be utilized.

Seth moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was passed.



Committee Reports:

Finance: We are having issues with People's Bank concerning who the officers of corporation are and who has signing authority. Andrew explained the history of how we got to where we are. There was considerable discussion on how to proceed. Rick made a motion that we designate offices as follows:

1. Trustee Aaron Caruso is designated as President of the Board of Trustees.
2. Trustee Teresa Bowers is designated as the Secretary of the Board of Trustees.
3. Trustee Ralph Buchan is designated as the Treasurer of the board of trustees.

The motion passed.

Building and Grounds: Nothing new to report.

Christian Faith Formation: Nothing new to report.

Loving Welcome: Working on organizing a trail mixer hike.

Mission and Social Action: Waiting until next quarter before making further disbursements.

Nominating: Nothing new to report.

Personnel: Nothing new to report.

Worship: Nothing new to report.

Pastor's Report: Seth gave a brief update on Stacy's progress and status. He will be taking some vacation later in August. He is also working on his Pastoral expenses report that is due this month.

New Business: Some members of the congregation have requested that we pave all or part of the upper parking lot for easier handicap access. It is extremely difficult to maneuver wheelchairs and walkers in the gravel. Seth will pass this on to the buildings and grounds committee.

Attend Deacons Meeting September meeting: Tess Bowers

September Devotions and Prayer: Aaron Caruso

Building lock up: Upstairs – Jimmy; Downstairs - Rick

Closing prayer: Jimmy closed us in Prayer.

Adjournment: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

FINANCE UPDATE

Submitted by Andrew McLaurin, Chair of Finance

July was a better month financially than we usually see. It is clear that many of our congregation have responded positively to Seth's letter. That response provided funds that surpassed our budget expectations for July. We are still anticipating a year-end deficit unless we can maintain the increased giving; however, the response has been very encouraging. Fortunately, our expenses are holding steady at expected levels. We are able to support our ministries and outreach activities as planned.

As many of you know, I am not able to attend church on a regular basis. Please feel free to send me questions or concerns via email: drewmclaurin@gmail.com. I look forward to a time when I can join you in worship.

	Actual Cash Flow, July, 2025	Budgeted Cash Flow, July, 2025	Actual Cash Flow, Year-to-Date, As of: July 31, 2025	Budgeted Cash Flow, Year-to-Date, As of: July 31, 2025
Rental Revenue	\$1,160.00	\$1,930.31	\$13,085.93	\$13,512.17
Annual Pledges Revenue	\$16,556.24	\$13,018.84	\$132,596.45	\$128,405.83
General Offerings Revenue	\$6,426.95	\$3,815.41	\$28,132.10	\$27,422.98
Interest Earned and Refunds Received	\$1,324.36		\$69.60 \$1,324.36	
TOTAL INCOME:	\$25,491.02	\$18,764.56	\$176,657.62	\$169,340.98

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

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

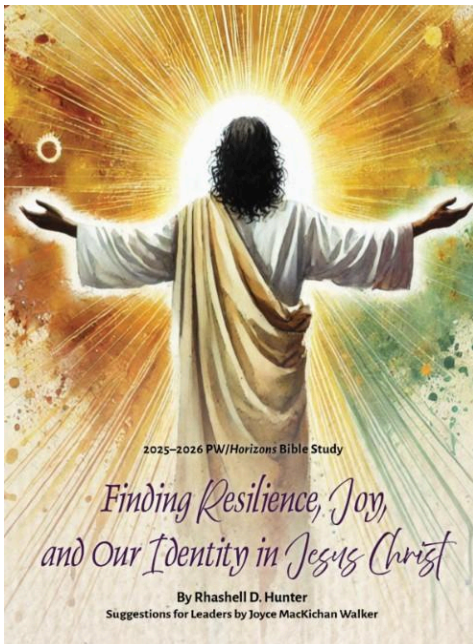
TEMPORARY ADDRESS FOR MCLAURIN'S

Many of you have asked for our Seattle address. For the next 6 weeks you may send cards and letters to Jennie McLaurin at the following:

1700
Cristalla Condominiums
2033 2nd. Ave.
Seattle, WA 98121

Thanks for your continued prayers and support.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY



Women's Study Begins on Tuesday, September 30th

The new women's study, "Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ" will begin on Tuesday, September 30th at 10:30 in the lounge. In the last several years we have experienced stress and change in our personal lives, our community and our world. In this Bible study, we will explore the meaning of resilience, joy and identity in Jesus Christ as life-giving sources of healing and strength. Best of all, we will learn and grow together through the words of our lessons, the scripture, our group discussions and praying together as women of faith. Please see the bulletin board in the main hall for a beautiful pictorial review of our lessons. You can pick up a copy of the study in the church office. For more information, please contact Faye Hill.

INTERFAITH COALITION - WINTER COAT DRIVE

Providing Warm Coats for Our Whatcom Winters

Please support the Interfaith Coalition - Annual Winter Coat Drive. Bring new or clean gently used coats, hats, gloves, socks and scarves to the church by October 19th. Items can be dropped off in the Narthex. Thank you!

WHAT'S HAPPENING UPSTAIRS?

Did you know we have a third floor at St. James? Above our main office space, three large workrooms have been home to Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County and other previous St. James ministries.

We aim to explore new ways to utilize this part of our building. So, with a bit of help from volunteers, we've begun to gather some workspace furniture (tables, desks) to make the space more usable for drop-in use. Do you know someone who works in a coffee shop all day and needs a change of scenery? Or do you need a place to work for a few hours with a beautiful view of Bellingham Bay? Maybe you can help us brainstorm ways to develop "The Attic" into a hub of activity at St. James. We have a small team exploring this concept and would welcome others. Contact Jessica Parks or Pastor Seth for more info.

MEAL FREEZER

The Deacons will be starting a freezer meal service to provide a few meals to those in our congregation who are in need of a meal or two to help in the event of an illness, or emergency, or any other type of need where a precooked meal would come in handy. We are looking for help preparing a few meals a month. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Horizon room. Meals should be delivered in containers that do not need to be returned and labeled with the name of the meal, preparers name, and what kind of diet it fits i.e, vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, etc. If you are in need of a meal please coordinate with the Deacons.

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.

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

ST. JAMES STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE

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

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

Music Director: Leah Bruno, music@saintjamespres.org

Treasurer: Stefany Ness, treasurer@saintjamespres.org

Administrative Ministry Assistant: Sharon King, 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

9/6	Margaret McVie	
9/6	John Sibold	
9/8	John Harris	
9/11	Bill and Katy Read	
9/13	Aaron and Tracy Caruso	
9/13	Amy Morriss	
9/14	Murphy "Door" Parks	
9/14	Robb and Cheryl McGregor	
9/17	Dave Nelson	
9/18	Ann Lary	
9/18	Andrew and Jennie McLaurin	
9/19	David Anderson	
9/21	Asher Thomas	
9/23	Faye Hill	

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 Summer Office Hours:

10:00am - 1:00pm, 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
 Linda's Tai Chi
 Little Sapling Music
 Overeaters Anonymous
 St. James Fitness
 The Table Church

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





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