

SJUNews *FLASH*

A weekly email to share important information
and to alert you to upcoming events.

Article submission deadline: Thursdays at NOON

www.sjuned.org

[SJU Facebook](#)

[SJU YouTube](#)

SJUColumbia@gmail.com

(best way to contact the office)

DECEMBER 1, 2023

***Reminder: have your juice and bread/crackers prepared for holy communion on December 3rd.**

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE – 10:30 AM **LIVESTREAM FROM THE INTERFAITH CENTER**

Use this same link for EVERY SJU worship service!

[SJU Worship Service Livestream](#)

This worship service link is also posted on both our website and our Facebook page.

[SJU Website](#)

[SJU Facebook](#)

Our service also streams live on our Youtube page, beginning at 10:30 am.

[SJU YouTube](#)

We invite all persons back into worship on Sunday mornings at our 10:30 a.m. service in Room 4 of the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center. We hope you have been able to receive all COVID vaccinations and boosters.

SUNDAYS AT SEVEN (PM!) FELLOWSHIP – 7:00 PM – VIA ZOOM

Meeting ID: 835 8748 4349

Password: 940379

Join online:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83587484349?pwd=MmhCampLL0tnMWhOc1hEWtBwQ29BQT09>

Or by phone: +1 301 715 8592 US

WHAT DO THE ADVENT CANDLES MEAN?

This Sunday, many United Methodist churches will light the first candle of the Advent wreath. Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications, explains why Christians do this and what it means.

ADVENT CANDLES





November 29, 2023

“In Light and Darkness” Our advent and Christmas season theme this year is “In Light and Darkness”. In the midst of early setting of the sun and lengthier nights, we look for, we yearn for the light that breaks through and wakes us each day. Jesus is the Light of the World, and he said that we are, too. That is, the image of Christ, the peacemaking, reconciling, justice bearing actions done the way Jesus did, bring light into the dark places of our lives. We hope you will join us for worship on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. for the tradition of lighting advent candles each week to celebrate the Light that is coming again. Whether you come in person to worship or join us online through the link at www.sjuinted.org, we hope you come! We welcome you to celebrate this season.

An Advent devotional is available as our gift to support your inward spiritual preparation for the season. We hope you find a quiet space and time to set aside for daily reading. It takes just 10-15 minutes a day to read, reflect, pray and give thanks to our Lord and Savior. This year’s devotional grounds daily Scripture and reflections with the practical divinity of everyday life, like feeding, clothing, and visiting those in need. You may wish to have an advent wreath of your own at home this season.

“In Light and Darkness” is our theme for worship this Advent and Christmas, beginning on **December 3rd**, the first Sunday of Advent. “Startling Hope” is the theme that day, with candle lighting and the initial trimming of our **Christmas Mitten Tree**. The mittens, gloves and hats you bring to church will be shared with our neighbor students at Bryant Woods Elementary School. Items will be collected now through December 17th.

The annual **ASP wreath sale** continues through December 10th. Wreaths can be purchased online at [ASP Wreath Order](#) and picked up at the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center on Sundays, from 8:30am – 2pm, December 3rd through December 10th.

December 10th, our Advent theme speaks to “Just Peace”. Perhaps we are hurting over the polarization in our world, or the lack of connection from estrangement, and want to be an instrument of God’s peace in a hurting world. Learn how to make God’s peace known to others and be part of healing a hurting world.

During the 10:30 a.m. worship service on **December 17th**, our choir will present special music and readings from the cantata “I Hear the Prophet Calling”, with the advent candle theme of Joy.

*****New this Year! December 21st is the Longest Night of the Year.** This year, SJU will join with Christ UMC, Locust UMC, Linden-Linthicum UMC and Kittamaquundi Community Church at **7:00 p.m. at Emmanuel UMC at 10755 Scaggsville Road in Laurel** for a

worship service. Designed especially for those experiencing challenges, grief, and other complex emotions this season that need compassion and healing, this ecumenical service is certain to be a blessing to everyone in need of light on this longest night. Through the vision of Rev. Angela Wells of CUMC, with support from all the clergy, there is a radical welcome to our LGBTQ+ family and community members in need of the wide-loving life-giving message of Jesus the Christ. Please join us this year at Emmanuel UMC.

December 24th is the Fourth Sunday of Advent – and Christmas Eve. We will have our regular **10:30 am** Sunday morning worship service to celebrate the 4th Sunday of Advent and the theme of Love. At **7:00 pm**, we will have a candlelight service which includes traditional carols and spirituals. We hope to see you!

Sunday, December 31st at 10:30 a.m. will be a special storytelling service for children and families with more Christmas carols!

Every one of these are meaningful worship services to which you can invite friends, family members, neighbors and co-workers! We invite you to remember and experience “In Light and Darkness” this Advent and Christmas season.

Our administrative office will be open every Thursday (and also by appointment) weekly through Thursday, December 28th – the deadline to receive your year-end gifts. We will be closed on December 22nd, 25th, 26th and 29th, and on January 1st 2024.

See you in church!

May God be with you in the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love of Christ this season,

Pastor Mary Ka

St. John United Church • 10431 Twin Rivers Road • Columbia MD 21044
410-730-9137 • SJUColumbia@gmail.com • www.sjuned.org

United in Love – United for Service

Go here for your
[Advent Calendar of Devotions 2023](#)

ASP WREATHS!!!

The St John Home Repair Ministry/ASP will once again be providing Christmas WREATHS this year!!! Proceeds are used for ASP ministry expenses such as building supplies and trip costs. Wreaths will cost \$30 (payment by cash or check to SJERC).

Wreaths will be available for pick up at WLIFC from 8:30AM – 2PM on Sunday, November 26, December 3 and December 10.

Please use this link to place orders: [ASP Wreath Order Form](#)

Questions can be sent to Mary Beth at mamalast3@gmail.com



PRAYER MINISTRY AND PASTORAL CARE

This Week in Your Prayers (your prayers are felt and make a difference!):

- Keep **Roy Ferguson** in your prayers, who recently suffered a medical incident. He is home and is following up with his doctor. Please pray for his care, comfort and recovery.
- Please continue to pray for the **Becker** family on their healing from the death of **Bill Becker** on November 19th. His memorial service is scheduled for Friday, December 15th at 11 am at SJU. The family will receive visitors at 10:30 am, and a light repast immediately follows the service.
- **Karen Hopkins** requests prayers for her family following the tragic death of her 27-year-old nephew, Andrew, who left behind his wife of two years and a 9-month-old baby girl.
- Please continue to pray for **Judy Brown**, for strength in her recovery at home.
- **Judy Douds** continues her recovery from a stay at St. Agnes Hospital. Keep her and her husband, **Dave**, in your prayers. Both would appreciate cards: 719 Maiden Choice La, BR 231, Catonsville MD 21228.
- Continue to pray for **Andrea Barnes**, whose son, **Eric**, will be undergoing major surgery for a health matter. Please keep Eric Barnes in Michigan, in your prayers for diagnosis and recovery. Cards and calls are welcomed: 6682 Possum Ct, Columbia MD 21045; 301-596-2836.
- Remember **Charles Dyer**, who is unable to get to church easily these days, and is awaiting a transition to an assisted living facility nearby. Cards and phone calls will be appreciated: 9895 Palace Hall Dr, #313, Laurel MD 20723; 301-604-4750; cadassoc@aol.com
- Remember **Morris Range**, age 96, living at Riderwood retirement community.
- **Nancy Gabie** asks for prayers for her brother, Terrence Gabie, is experiencing health issues and is seeking costly medical treatment. Your prayers for a way to be made are earnestly requested by Nancy on behalf of her whole family.
- **Debra Snow's** mother, **Mary**, is resting comfortably in hospice care. Debbie would welcome prayers, cards and calls of support: 12100 Little Patuxent Pky #E, Columbia MD 21044; 510-708-1127; debrasnow@sbcglobal.net
- **Pamela Love** requests prayers for her **brother Brad Gibson**, living with a serious chronic health condition, and for her **mother**, whose dementia is worsening. Pamela welcomes cards: 6229 Light Point Pl, Columbia MD 21045.
- Our hearts and voices continue to join in prayer for the **people of the Ukraine** and all who are experiencing fear and violence as a result of a conflict with Russia, and all around the world who are **affected by recent natural disasters**.
- For the **world at large**, please pray earnestly for the **people in Maine** affected by the recent mass shooting, and for the ones **suffering in Israel and Palestine** following unprecedented attacks on life. Pray for an end to the violence in Israel, the preservation of innocent lives caught in this war, and a just resolution that brings some peace to the land of our Biblical and spiritual heritage.
- Pray for our **church worldwide, pray for SJU and its leaders and members**, pray for one another, our neighbors, and for yourself and often. Pray for what burdens your heart and mind for the world, our nation and our neighborhood.

DAY CENTER MEAL PROGRAM

Meredith Phillips

SJU, in partnership with Kittamaquundi Community Church, will provide the afternoon meal on the **first Wednesday of each month starting in January** to The Leola Dorsey Community Resource Center in Jessup.

The center's meal program is run under the guidance of Grassroots and serves 100 – 150 individuals. Your opportunity to serve is primarily in the preparation of hot meals (recipes and aluminum trays provided) and cold food items that are to be delivered to the center at 1:30 pm on the first Wednesday of each month.

If you are interested in contributing to this endeavor or would like additional information, please contact **Meredith Phillips**, meredithcp88@gmail.com.

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE BWES PARTNERSHIP TEAM

- **Thank you, SJU** - the five children we were asked to help for Christmas have each gotten an SJU Sponsor!
- The **Coat and Mitten Tree** is starting up again - bring your NEW coats and mittens to the services on December 3rd, 10th or 17th.
- The school is looking for **volunteers** to help on December 6th and 12th from 5:30 pm-7:30 pm in the evening, and on December 7th and 8th from 9 am to 2 pm. On the 6th the school is looking for childcare while parents are learning better ways to support their children learning. On the 12th, the school needs people to run the coding, arts/crafts and reading stations. if you'd like to help on any of these days, please email G Cornwall@hcpss.org and Karenrandall@gmail.com
- Finally, we're **collecting gift cards** for the BWES staff. Please bring \$5 gift cards to the church up to the 17th (or write a check to SJU and note that it is for the BWES staff cards).



Thanks!

The BWES team

NEWS FROM THE BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

Dec. 10 (deadline)—Project SPIRIT Sickle Cell Fundraisers: Fruit Sale and Silent Auction

Rev. Dr. R. Lorraine Brown, Executive Director, Project SPIRIT Sickle Cell invites you to join their 2nd annual fruit sale, follow this link to place your order -- <https://www.projectspiritsicklecell.org/home> and visit Project SPIRIT's Facebook page to bid on their silent auction items -- [Project Spirit Sickle Cell | Facebook](#).



FROM UMC.ORG: Looking for a new way to make this Advent season more meaningful? Why not prepare by looking for the visual reminders of God's presence each day? Read more here: [UMC advent-photo-a-day-2023](#)

How Great Thou Art: A Sacred Celebration -- National UMC in Washington, D.C., is the setting for a very special concert, and you can watch it this week on PBS. Join Kristin Chenoweth, Patti LaBelle, Will Liverman, Sandi Patty and more for a night of uplifting sacred music. [Learn more.](#)

DIRECTED DONATIONS

At this time, the Finance/Investment team asks that you please do not designate or direct your contributions to SJU toward a specific ministry unless asked. When SJU is aware that specialized ministries need funding, that need will be publicized in advance, and solicited for a specific time and use. The elected leaders of the Church Council are in continual discernment to guide all of SJU's human, financial and spiritual resources in responsible and impactful ways, for the transformation of the world.

MESSAGE FROM HOWARD COUNTY EXECUTIVE CALVIN BELL

Map the Way: Through our [Holiday Lights Map](#), Howard County residents and visitors can continue the beloved holiday tradition to walk or drive around our neighborhoods and view the festive holiday lights. Throughout the holiday season, I encourage you to plan a festive evening to tour the bright lights and support all our residents and businesses who dedicate so much time and effort to their displays. To learn more, check out this recent *The Baltimore Sun* [article](#).



Toys for Tots: With the holiday season underway, it's the perfect time to reflect on our countless blessings and the special people in our lives. For our friends and neighbors who may be financially struggling in silence, this time of year can be especially hard. That is why I am so grateful for our partnership with the Marine Corps Reserve and our annual Howard County Toys for Tots toy drive to help make the holidays a little lighter and brighter for every child.

Please donate a new, unwrapped toy at one of our many Toys for Tots drop off locations set up throughout the county. Donations are being accepted now through noon on December 15th.

NEWS FROM HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING AND INDEPENDENCE

Howard Community College Senior Choir holiday concert: Ellicott City 50+ Center December 6, 10:30 a.m. / [Register](#)

Enjoy a magical holiday season with our very own HCC Senior Choir! Join the choir as they sing holiday tunes that will be music to your ears. Holiday refreshments will be served. Seating is limited; registration is required. Free; register on ActiveNet.

Nostalgic toys: ElkrIDGE 50+ Center December 13, 11 a.m. / [Register](#)

Join Phil Lord for a nostalgic look at the toys of your childhood. Reminisce with pictures from old catalogs and collector sites, and see some of the special toys Phil has collected. Bring a vintage toy to show, or share an old photo or memories about a favorite toy you loved. Free; register on ActiveNet.

There are holiday events happening at other 50+ centers, so go here to find details:

[Howard County 50+ Centers](#)

NEWS FROM PATH

PATH has a new website: [PATH MARYLAND](#) Check it out to see details of upcoming actions.

ONGOING SJU NEWS / LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Columbia Association:

Holiday crafting. Columbia Art Center Director Liz Henzey shared [family-friendly art activities](#) that all ages can enjoy. Also, mark your calendar for the [Art Center's annual holiday show](#) December 6-16 (perfect for affordable and creative gifts).

Columbia Community Care (update, 11-12-23)

Did you know that:

- The CCC pop-up pantries serve an average of 300 families during their two-hour operation at the WLIFC on Saturday mornings?
- Many of the recipients of these non-perishable items are individuals who are employed but are unable to purchase sufficient food to support their families. They turn to CCC and other pantries to support their families with adequate food?
- The contributions from the WLIFC congregations represent 40% to 60% of the materials distributed by Columbia Community Care?
- The average weekly contribution of 162 items (May - Oct 2023) has been falling since 2021 when we had an average weekly contribution of 672 items?

We hope you will consider increasing your contributions to the WLIFC totes. During the Thanksgiving season, totes and boxes will be available in the lobby and outside the WLIFC office during services on Thanksgiving Day.

Thanks for your generosity.

For more information (updated on 11/12/23), go here: [FLASH & Announcements](#)

YOUR CONTINUED GIVING IS APPRECIATED!

Please continue helping us meet our need so that all of our ministries and missions can continue and be prepared for the fullness of service in the coming months. Here's how you can help:

Donate through GIVELIFY.

With Givelify, you have two options:

1. Download the GIVELIFY app (iphone or android), search for us by name (Saint John United Church) or phone number (410-730-9137), and follow the steps, or
2. Donate online through this link: [Donate Today](#) and search for us as explained above.



Donate by mail. Yvonne checks the mail for contributions, and makes weekly deposits.

Make your check payable to **ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH**, and mail it (with or without including your contribution envelope) to:

St John United Church, 10431 Twin Rivers Rd, Columbia MD 21044

Donate through your bank or credit union. Set up St. John United Church as you would any other bill through your bank's bill payment option.

HEY! IT'S ALMOST 2024!



ADVENT BEGINS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3rd.

CALENDAR: SCHEDULED FOR WEEK OF DECEMBER 3 – DECEMBER 10

All meetings are via Zoom unless otherwise noted:

links to any open meetings are in this issue

All meetings are open to the members and affiliates of SJU unless otherwise noted. Members are encouraged to connect, be engaged and invested in the life and leadership of this Body of Christ, the church! Contact SJUColumbia@gmail.com if you wish to receive meeting and contact information on anything below:

Sun, 12/3 ADVENT I	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (Liturgist: Nancy Gabie; Candle Lighters: Nancy Gabie & Edna Quoie)
	12 noon	NEW MEMBER CLASS (<i>Office Meeting Room</i>)
	7:00 pm	SUNDAYS AT SEVEN (PM!) FELLOWSHIP
Wed, 12/6	2:00 pm	CONGREGATIONAL CARE COMMITTEE
Thu, 12/7	6:00 pm	A/V TECH TEAM & CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (<i>Room 4</i>)
Sun, 12/10 ADVENT II	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (Scheduled liturgist: Debra Snow; Candle Lighters: Debra Snow & Barbara Memory)
	7:00 pm	SUNDAYS AT SEVEN (PM!) FELLOWSHIP

Prayer Group Ministry: Anyone in the church may submit a prayer concern to a group prayer chain. Contact Judy Miller (quiltjudy@gmail.com), or Evelyn Chesnutt (lchesnutt@icloud.com). If you would like to be part of the Prayer Group Ministry, also contact Judy or Evelyn and let them know so they can add you to the distribution.

Pastoral Care: Self-Care in the Pandemic: Pastoral Care, Coaching and Spiritual Direction for Individuals or Households. Rev. Kanahan, a trained IFC Coach and Spiritual Director, is here to offer Pastoral Care, Coaching and Spiritual direction during this time. Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-11 am or 6-8 pm. All 50-minute appointments and interactions are confidential and customized for your needs. She is willing to listen, encourage, pray or offer resources according to your request. Schedule your self-care consult by contacting her at: pastorkanahansju@gmail.com or 410-428-8090.

ADMIN OFFICE AND PASTORAL OFFICE HOURS: Yvonne is in the office for a few hours once a week, normally on Thursdays, and Pastor Mary Ka is in as needed each week. Because it might be several days before they can retrieve phone messages, please send them an email with any questions you have, for help you may need, or to make an in-office appointment.

SJUColumbia@gmail.com

PastorKanahanSJU@gmail.com

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