

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 22, 2023

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

Stay Well and Keep Others Well This Holiday Season!

We ask that you stay home and worship with us virtually via our **[SJU Worship Service Livestream](#)** if you or a member of your household:

- have any symptoms of flu, RSV, pneumonia, or COVID-19, such as fever, chills, headache, cough, gastric distress, loss of smell, and shortness of breath;
- have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 5 days; or
- have had close contact with a person who has tested positive for, or who has symptoms of, COVID-19 within the past 5 days.

For those who wish to worship in person, masking is at your discretion, and we recommend congregants seat at a comfortable distance from one another for worship. Everyone is invited to sing.

Masks and hand sanitizer will be available at the door to the sanctuary as needed. Tithes and offerings will be collected upon exit of worship in a basket near the door.

INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTICE

** In case of inclement weather, please check either of the following for announcements:

[SJU Website](#)

[SJU Facebook](#)

*All donations sent by mail must be **received by DECEMBER 28th** in order to be credited to 2023.*

[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.
 - **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.
 - 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.
 - For the **world at large**, please pray earnestly 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 in its pastoral transition, 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.
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NEWS FROM THE PRESBYTERY OF BALTIMORE

Go here to read the December 19th Message from the General Presbyter:
[General Presbyter's Message 12-19-23](#)

NEWS FROM THE BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

Tis the season to dress the trees, hang the mistletoe, stockings, lights, and other festive decorations. For some these are the signs that Christmas draws near. Like many of you, I enjoy this season with all the bustling and buzz. And, we know even without all the festivities, it would still be Christmas. O Holy night has a deeper meaning this season.

Christmas is all about Christ. Christmas offers a gift for the world in the form of a baby born in Bethlehem. O little town of Bethlehem is starkly still this season while war rages all around. During this holy season, where is the hope and holy in all the hellish events surrounding us? Wars around the Holy Land. Wars in other parts of Europe and in Africa. Conflict at the border and chaos is on full display in many parts of the world. And if we are honest, chaos and conflict are also happening in our hearts and in our homes.

Long ago, the prophet Isaiah offered these words 'For a child is born to us...and he is named Wonderful Counsellor... Prince of Peace.' This season, we sing, hope, and pray for peace. And yet, peace seems illusive in many parts of the world. This is all the more reason for us to pray. Prayer has a way of ushering us into the holy. Prayer connects our heart deep within the heart of God.

As we move closer to Christmas where once again, we will rejoice in our Savior's birth, I'm reminded of the beautiful Christmas carol, 'O Holy Night' which we will sing in the coming days. This carol is a stark reminder of the world languishing... "Long lay the world in sin and error pinning, Till He appears and the soul felt it's worth."

Siblings, our places of worship, our engagement in discipleship, our mission and ministry, our gift of service and resources in all the places God sends us is a sign of hope. Let us join in singing, hoping, praying and especially, giving thanks to God for the greatest gift of love, Jesus Christ.

May justice and joy; promise and peace surround us all. Merry Christmas.

Emmanuel,

dawn



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.

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE BWES PARTNERSHIP TEAM



Thank you SJU for your generosity! The church collected two dozen hats, seven hat-and-glove sets, 25 gloves/mittens and four scarves in our Hat and Mitten Tree collection this year.

Thanks! *The BWES team*

HOWARD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Save the date for A Flower-full Evening in the Stacks

Sat, Feb 24, 2024 | 7 – 11 pm | [HCLS East Columbia Branch](#)

Ticket Sales begin January 10:

\$100 per person through Jan 31

\$125 per person starting Feb 1 or two for \$225



More information: [2024 Evening in the Stacks](#)

League of Women Voters Legislative Breakfast: January 6, 2024

The [League of Women Voters of Howard County](#) is partnering with Howard County Library System to organize their annual pre-session Legislative Breakfast with the members of the Howard County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly.

The public is invited to attend. Legislators will speak about their plans for the upcoming session, listen to constituent concerns, and answer questions from the audience.

Doors open at 10am. At this event, we will serve light refreshments and we will hear from the Howard County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly. This is an 'in-person' event and will be held in the Belmont/Hockley rooms of the Elkridge Branch of the Howard County Library (6540 Washington Blvd, Elkridge MD).

[Register for Legislative Breakfast](#)

Maryland Family Caregiver Survey

The [Maryland Commission on Caregiving](#) has developed a 15-minute online anonymous survey that asks questions about the person being cared for, the caregiver's knowledge of available programs, and priorities for supports and services. Please take a moment to [complete the survey](#) between now and December 31; everyone who takes the survey will be entered into a raffle for a \$20 e-gift card.

For more information or assistance, contact the [Howard County Caregiver Support](#) program at 410-313-5955 (voice/relay).

[Take the Maryland Family Caregiver Survey](#)

Bystander Training

We at Christ United Methodist Church are very pleased to host Howard County's Office on Human Rights and Equity as they present the Bystander Intervention and Cultural Awareness Training at the Owen Brown Interfaith Center, January 28th from 3-6 pm. (There is no snow date.) Please join us to learn how to be a part of a peaceful humane solution. More logistical information to follow in January.

~ Blessings, Karen Ohlrich for Christ United Methodist Church



SANTA'S HOTLINE IS OPEN

(FreeConferenceCall.com)

We welcome you to experience a magical phone call with Santa on his very own hotline! Dial +1 (605) 313-0691 on any of your calling devices to hear St. Nick's joyous laugh. Call with a mobile device to receive a text at the end of your call. When you call Santa's hotline, you can leave a message and your wish list to let Santa know exactly what his elves should work on this year. Learn more about how the hotline and recordings work at our Santa's Hotline website link below: [Santa's Hotline Website](#)

ONGOING SJU NEWS / LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Columbia Community Care (updated 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.



CALENDAR: SCHEDULED FOR WEEK OF DECEMBER 24 - DECEMBER 31

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, 12/24	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (Liturgist: Dawn Cooper Barnes; Candle Lighters: Greg & Meredith Phillips family)
ADVENT IV		
CHRISTMAS EVE	7:00 pm	CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (Scheduled liturgist; Lisa Cooper Green; Candle Lighters: Cooper/Green family)
Mon, 12/25		OFFICE CLOSED
Tue, 12/26		OFFICE CLOSED
Thu, 12/28	6:00 pm	A/V TECH TEAM REHEARSAL (<i>Room 4</i>)
Fri, 12/29		OFFICE CLOSED
Sat, 12/30	9:00 am	SJU MEN'S GROUP
Sun, 12/31	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (The "ABCs of Christmas" Family Service)
NEW YEAR'S EVE		

We must receive your mailed year-end gifts by Thursday, December 28th
in order to credit them to your 2023 giving.

We will be closed on December 25th, 26th and 29th, and on January 1st 2024.

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. Kananan, 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.

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PastorKanananSJU@gmail.com

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