

# SJUNews \*FLASH\*

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

**Article submission deadline: Thursdays at NOON**

[www.sjuinted.org](http://www.sjuinted.org)

[SJU Facebook](#)

[SJU YouTube](#)

[SJUColumbia@gmail.com](mailto:SJUColumbia@gmail.com)

(best way to contact the office)

**FEBRUARY 23, 2024**

## **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:** [Sundays at 7pm Zoom link](#)

**Or by phone:** +1 301 715 8592 US

### **Stay Well and Keep Others Well This 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.

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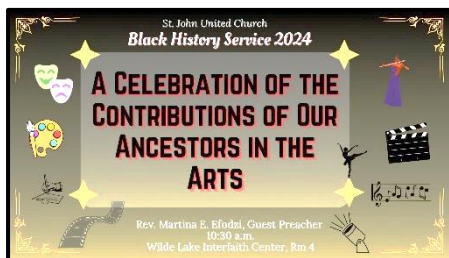
## PRAYER MINISTRY AND PASTORAL CARE

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

- Please pray for **Susan Moody** and her family who are mourning the recent death of her oldest and last living sister, Jean Leek. Please also pray for Jean's daughters, their husbands, and her five grandchildren.
- Please continue to pray for **Greg Phillips and family** on the death of Greg's mother, Donna Budani, age 80 years, after a brief illness. Greg, Meredith, Caitlin, Connor and Ella appreciate your care and prayers.
- Please keep **Roy Ferguson** in your prayers, as he faces some medical issues. Please pray for his care, comfort and recovery. He welcomes phone calls (410-730-0484) and emails ([royaferguson@yahoo.com](mailto:royaferguson@yahoo.com)).
- 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.
- Send good thoughts to **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](mailto: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](mailto: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 ANTI-RACISM / SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAMS



SJU will celebrate **Black History Month on Sunday, February 25th, 10:30 am**. The 2024 theme is “African Americans in the Arts.” Please join us as we make a joyful celebration. Our guest preacher is Rev. Martina E. Efodzi. There will be special treats for our young people. Any questions, please contact Debra Snow or Patsy Nwagbaraocha.

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### INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTICE

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

[SJU Website](#)

[SJU Facebook](#)

### LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

During this Lenten season, you are invited to use the Lenten devotional, “The Sanctuary for Lent”, by Abigail Browka, which contains brief readings for each day in Lent including a suggested Scripture, a short devotion, and a short prayer or practice – all based on the Revised Common Lectionary. The booklet is available free on the SJU website under the [Worship/Bulletins tab](#).

*There are a few printed devotional booklets available. Please email Yvonne if you'd like a copy. [sjucolumbia@gmail.com](mailto:sjucolumbia@gmail.com)*



### NEWS FROM THE BWES PARTNERSHIP TEAM

Invitation from Bryant Woods Elementary School:

You are cordially invited to **Bryant Woods Elementary School**  
for our annual **Guest Reader Day**  
on Thursday, **March 14, 2024**

We would love for you to come to our school to read to a class of your choice for a 20- to 30-minute time frame between 9am and 2:30pm! Please sign up [here](#) if you can join us!

**We appreciate your support!**



The BWES Reading Team

~ The SJU BWES Team thanks you for any support you can give!

## NEWS FROM THE PRESBYTERY OF BALTIMORE

**One Book, One Presbytery:** Everyone is invited to the first of six online discussions exploring *The Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein, on **Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 -8:00 pm.**

Save the dates for this six-week discussion.

- 6 weekly discussions – on Zoom
- **Mondays, April 8 – May 13**, 6:30 – 8:00 pm
- Special guests to be announced soon provide insight to the major topics
- Facilitated small group discussion

**Registration is Open!** Sponsored by the [Presbytery of Baltimore Dismantling Racism Team](#) and In the Loop Ministry Group.

**Faith Presbyterian Church** is generously hosting next month's **Stated Meeting of Presbytery**, on **Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup>**! The 902<sup>nd</sup> meeting will be a hybrid event, enabling participants to **meet in person or tune-in online**. It begins at 10 am, and will be followed by lunch together around noon. [Registration is open](#), so please save the date. The docket, document papers, and more information will be added to our [meeting webpage](#) in the weeks ahead.

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## “ADOPT-AN-ISLAND” PROJECT

What is this project? St. John Catholic Church is sponsoring a **WLIFC project funded by the WLIFC Board** and invites participation from the St. John United community to “adopt” a parking lot island to plant with native plants.

Volunteers will be provided with all the plants and instructions for getting the native plants the best start in the islands. By adopting the islands, participants will be asked to water the islands throughout the summer and weed the space when necessary.

A team may be as large or small as you want it. One excellent resource for understanding a pollinator garden is [How to build a pollinator garden | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service \(fws.gov\)](#).

More information on the project is coming soon. There will be a table event in the facility lobby with more details the first two weekends in April.

For more information, contact Kathleen Valdivia, SJERC Green Team: [kavaldivia09@gmail.com](mailto:kavaldivia09@gmail.com)

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## MESSAGES FROM HOWARD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**Aging-In-Place Tax Credit:** Eligibility for the tax credit requires a minimum age of 65 years old, and at least 30 years, as of June 30th preceding the tax year, residing in a dwelling with an assessed property value up to \$650,000.

Retired service members of the United States Armed Forces with 20 years of active service, or their surviving spouses, are also eligible for the credit. However, the surviving spouse must not be remarried.

The number of years qualifying individuals may receive the credit is eight years. The credit will automatically renew unless the homeowner is no longer eligible. Applications for the [Aging-in-Place credit](#) for tax year 2024 (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025) will be available on March 1st. The deadline to apply is June 30, 2024.

**Now Hiring, Election Judges:** Are you ready to make a difference in our democratic process? Howard County is looking for Election Judges, and this could be your chance to contribute! As an Election Judge, you get the unique opportunity to be directly involved in the election process, and get paid for your efforts. If you're 16 or older and a registered voter in Maryland, you're eligible to become an Election Judge. We're looking for people who are ready for a rewarding 15-hour day, can work outside their home precinct, are able to sit and stand for extended periods, and have proficiency in English. Some positions may require lifting items weighing between 10 to 25 lbs. Sign up today and be a part of this crucial democratic process! Learn more at [ElectionJudge24](#).

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## HOWARD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

### **Change Inspired, Courage Ignited**

**Tuesday, March 5 | 3:30 - 7 pm**

Horowitz Center at Howard Community College

5020 Campus Drive Columbia, MD 21044

*(co-hosted by Columbia Association (CA), Howard Community College and Howard County Library System)*

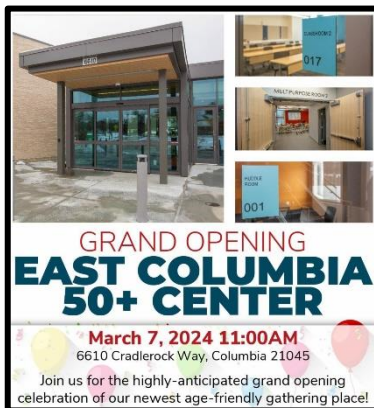
Change Inspired, Courage Ignited is all about connecting with others doing important work across Columbia and Howard County and tapping into all of the ways you can get involved and make a difference. You'll receive valuable tools, information and motivation to take back to your business, organization and community.

Be inspired by work in community building, youth engagement and racial and social justice. Leave ignited with purpose and equipped with tools for your own contributions to our community.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

**Lightbulb Exchange Program Expansion:** Howard County residents can now visit any HCLS branch to exchange used incandescent and compact fluorescent (CFL) light bulbs for new, energy efficient LED bulbs.

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## NEWS FROM PATH

Join us to celebrate the long-awaited ribbon cutting for the East Columbia 50+ Center on March 7<sup>th</sup> at 11 am.

PATH played a key role in winning the final funding (after years of delay) in the budget, addressing long-term inequity for the seniors of East Columbia.

[Event Details Here](#)

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## COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION

**The latest gallery on display at Columbia Art Center.** The [Beyond the Blues](#) exhibit features the incredible work of 65 local artists inspired by African-American culture, **open now through March 8.**

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## 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.

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### ONGOING SJU NEWS / LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

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#### Columbia Community Care (updated 1-5-24)

The contributions of **non-perishable items** from Saint John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church and St John United Church congregations at the WLIFC are greatly appreciated! For calendar year 2023, an estimated total of 13,728 items were contributed to Columbia Community Care from the WLIFC congregations through the office totes and WLIFC lobby. This compares to 17,297 items in CY2022 and 34,306 items in CY2021. CCC and other groups find that in the months after the holiday season there is an increasing need for basic groceries and personal care items.

The CCC pop-up pantries serve an average of 300 families during their two-hour operation on Saturday mornings. These **non-perishable** food items are essential for the hundreds of families who have come to rely on the CCC pantries for weekly support. The season of need is always with us!

Thanks for your generosity.

For more information (updated on 1-5-2024), go here: [FLASH & Announcements](#)

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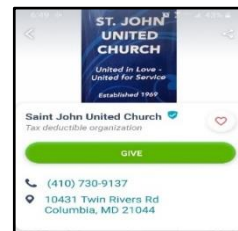
### YOUR CONTINUED GIVING IS APPRECIATED!

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.

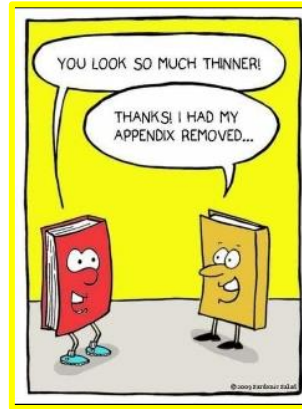
Make your check payable to **ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH**, and mail it (with or without including your contribution envelope) to:

**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.

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## IT's 2024's TURN!



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### **CALENDAR: SCHEDULED FOR WEEK OF FEBRUARY 25 – MARCH 3**

**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](mailto:SJUColumbia@gmail.com) if you wish to receive meeting and contact information on anything below:

Sun, 2/25	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE: BLACK HISTORY MONTH (in-person & streaming) (Guest preacher: Rev. Martina E. Efodzi; Liturgists: Patsy Nwagbaraocha, Debbie Snow)
	7:00 pm	SUNDAYS AT SEVEN (PM!) FELLOWSHIP
Mon, 2/26	7:00 pm	SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING (IFC Library)
Tue, 2/27	7:00 pm	BWES TEAM MONTHLY MEETING
Thu, 2/29	6:00 pm	A/V TECH TEAM REHEARSAL and SJU CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (Room 4)
Sun, 3/3	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (in-person & streaming) (Scheduled liturgist: TBA)
	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](mailto:quiltjudy@gmail.com)), or Evelyn Chesnutt ([lchesnutt@icloud.com](mailto: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.

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**ADMIN OFFICE AND PASTORAL OFFICE HOURS:** Yvonne is in the office for a few hours once a week, normally on Thursdays, and Pastor Renee will determine her time each week. It might be several days before they can retrieve phone messages, so please **send an email instead to both email addresses below** with any questions you have, for help you may need, or to make an in-office appointment.

[SJUColumbia@gmail.com](mailto:SJUColumbia@gmail.com)

[SJUPastor@gmail.com](mailto:SJUPastor@gmail.com)



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