

SJUNews *FLASH*

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

Article submission deadline: Wednesdays at NOON

www.sjuned.org

[SJU Facebook](#)

[SJU YouTube](#)

SJUColumbia@gmail.com

(best way to contact the office)

SEPTEMBER 13, 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](#)

FELLOWSHIP ON SECOND SUNDAYS!

Join us every second Sunday for fellowship right after church in **Room 10**. Everyone is welcome to have a simple snack and a lot of good visiting!

~ Pastor Steve Nofel

Returning on September 29th!

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

NEW! CYBER BIBLE CTUDY (yes, that's the correct spelling)

Beginning on Monday, September 30th at noon, Pastor Steve Nofel will lead a Zoom study of the Scripture passages that will be read in the next Sunday's worship service. The study will begin at Noon with prayer and end at 12:45.

On September 30 we will discuss Ephesians 4:1-7 and Ephesians 4:11-16. Also, since the following Sunday is World Communion Sunday, we talk about the Sacrament of the Lord's Table.

All are welcome, please email me for the Zoom link.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Steve Nofel

MEMORIAL PAGE FOR WHITTY BASS

Melika Bass, Whitty's daughter

We have established a memorial page for Richard Whitfield Bass. This is a place for us to share memories, photos and tributes about Whit. It is a way for us to share all the different ways he impacted our lives. We look forward to seeing your contributions.

Here is the link: <https://www.forevermissed.com/richard-whitfield-bass>

PASTOR STEVE'S PONDERINGS

September 13, 2024

I know this is hard for some of you to believe, but I can be annoying. Just ask anyone who has ever said to me, "We take a collection at church."

I immediately jump in and say, usually louder than necessary, "We don't take collections. We receive offerings. We receive the offering."

We don't give because the church or our leadership assess what we must give to be considered members, to reserve a seat in worship or be the recipient of our love and care.

We offer to God and God's church what we can in time, talents, money, and whatever our generous hearts can manage to give back to God for creating, loving, saving, sanctifying and life everlasting.

As two sacred songs proclaim, "We Give Thee But Thine Own" and "We Are An Offering."

Please pray over and consider how you can respond to God's manifold blessings.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Steve

Pastor Steve's office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am-6pm; before and after worship on Sundays

VOTE OUR VALUES

Presbytery of Baltimore GOTV Campaign



SJU, we **need your help in writing postcards** to North Carolina marginalized voters who may be discouraged by new voter laws. **On September 22, 2024**, immediately after worship, we will write postcards encouraging these voters to exercise their rights. We will not tell them whom to vote for. Please let us know if you plan to participate as we are planning a lite lunch. See the attached notice.

For more details contact Patsy Nwagbaraocha, Mary Lou Shippe, or Rayna Woodford.

Presbyterians Vote our Values

VOTING IS A MATTER OF FAITH

Political, Not Partisan

People of faith are ideally suited to encourage voting because all our faiths agree that each person matters, and all people are connected. Voting is a way of loving our neighbor. It is also a way of expressing the belief that we are all children of God.

In the 2022 general election, only 69.1% of Americans who were eligible registered to vote. Of those, only 52.2% of eligible voters actually cast a ballot.

Encouraging our members and neighbors to vote is a very concrete way to show them that we want to be in community with them. Most of the people who did not vote were registered and could have voted — but something came between them and their ballot and left them feeling a little less connected to the community.

Let's do better. Let's make sure every member of the community understands that they are loved and valued... and that they know when, where, and how to vote.

Presbyterian Church USA Election Center

<https://www.voterveice.net/PCUSA/ElectionCenter>

This page serves as a one-stop place for you to update your voter registration, get to know your current policymakers, and learn about candidates running for upcoming elections in the United States.



www.voterveice.net/PCUSA/ElectionCenter

[“COUNT ME IN” SPECIAL OFFERING](#)

We are taking up a special offering and asking you to prayerfully consider making a contribution that is beyond your normal giving. We’re calling it “Count Me In” because it takes all of us to support the work of Jesus Christ. [GO HERE](#) for the actual letter.



St. John United Church

United Methodist/Presbyterian Church (USA)

UNITED IN LOVE – UNITED FOR SERVICE

Wilde Lake Interfaith Center • 10431 Twin Rivers Road • Columbia MD 21044
410-730-9137 • SJUColumbia@gmail.com • www.sjuned.org

September 13, 2024

“Count Me In” Special Offering

Dear SJU family:

The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

I write this note asking you to consider making a contribution to our church that is above and beyond your regular giving or 2024 pledge.

At the 2024 annual meeting, the SJU Council presented a budget with a deficit of \$28,725. This was a “Faith-Based Budget.” I call it faith-based for two reasons:

- First, we have the assurance that goes all the way back to Abraham and Isaac. “The Lord will provide” for the people who depend on and call out to God. (*Genesis 22:14*).
- Second, the leadership of our church family has faith in you, our family members. One of the great things about St. John United Church is that we see a need, and address that need.

I personally saw this in the Spring when we were asked to address the need of transportation for mothers giving birth in the Osiligi community. We took up a special offering with a \$3,000 goal. We met the need and exceeded the goal by 20 percent!

This time the need is closer to home. We have not made up the budget deficit we projected in January. In fact, despite the hard work of SJU leadership, the deficit is projected to be reduced by only 20% to 50% by year-end.

A large part of our budget is for staff salaries. Our staff - me as pastor, our administrator, music director, and accompanist - are vital in leading and guiding all our ministries and worship. Although we cannot do it without you and other volunteer support, our staff works extra hard and their leadership is essential.

We need your help. We are taking up a special offering and asking you to prayerfully consider making a contribution that is beyond your normal giving. We’re calling it “Count Me In” because it takes all of us to support the work of Jesus Christ.

You can make your offering through September by check (write Count Me In on the memo line) or using the special donation envelope on Givelify. We will pray over and thank God for our generosity during worship on September 29.

As we are in the process of calling a new permanent pastor, we can support that pastor, our staff, and our exciting future by stepping up and supporting the mission and ministry of SJU in 2024 and then into 2025.

I thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration to “Count Me In”.

In the love of Christ I am,

Rev. Steve Nofel

Interim Pastor

St. John United Church



REMEMBER AND CELEBRATE

Pastor Steve Nofel

The purpose of the video series, “SJU Questions - SJU Answers”, my future Pastor’s Ponderings in the FLASH, the Minute for Mission at the beginning of our worship, and the sermons into the New Year is to remember and celebrate our past and present and help prepare our church for the exciting next season of our SJU life.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

SJU, in partnership with Kittamaqundi Community Church, provides the afternoon meal on the first Wednesday of each month 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 at each meal.

Volunteers are needed in the preparation of hot meals (recipes and aluminum trays provided) and cold food items (fruit, desserts, beverages) 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 FROM THE BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

- **‘Lord in your mercy:’** United Methodists are in prayer for an end to gun violence in light of recent school shootings in Joppatowne, northeast of Baltimore, where a high school student died, and in Georgia, where two students and two teachers were shot and killed. Since the Columbine shooting in 1999, there have been [417 school shootings](#) in the United States, affecting 383,000 students. [Learn more](#) about how your congregation can work for gun violence prevention.
 - [Building Beloved Relationships: Conversations on Gender/Sexuality](#) - Sept. 26, online
-

NEWS FROM THE PRESBYTERY OF BALTIMORE

Vote Your Values Discussion Series

As election season ramps up, **Faith Presbyterian Church** has organized a speaker series addressing some of this year's biggest issues. Sessions take place Sundays, at 9:15 in the Woodmont Room, and all are welcome.

- **September 15: *The Media and the Presidential Race***, with Josh Boak, Reporter for Associated Press
- **September 22: *Christian Nationalism*** with Christine Krieger, Program Director for Institute of Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies
- **September 29: *Project 2025: What You Need to Know***, with political news nerd Andy Fuller.

Go here for the **General Presbyter**’s “Summer Series: The Presbytery, the Strategic Plan and You”:

[General Presbyter's Midweek Message](#)

NEWS FROM ASP

The kick-off meeting for our **2025 ASP trip** is Sunday, **September 22nd**, 6:30 pm, in Room 14/16 of the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center. All are invited!

NEWS FROM THE WLIFC LIBRARY

Interfaith Center Library Meet the Author Event!

Pamela Love, a member of St. John United, will be reading her children's books of legends of the saints. (These are intended for ages 4-10.) She will also discuss how she became an author and wrote these books in particular. Refreshments will be served outside the library before and after the event. There's a sign-up sheet on the desk in the library for up to ten children. Adults may attend with their kids.

Sunday, September 15, 2024, at 1:15:

Staircase for the Sisters: A Story of Prayer and Saint Joseph
A Prayer and a Pickaxe: A Legend About Saint Clement of Rome

Sunday, September 22, 2024, at 1:15:

Brigid and the Butter: A Legend About Saint Brigid of Ireland
The Sword and the Cape: A Tale About Saint Martin of Tours
A Miracle in the Kitchen: A Legend About Saint Zita

HOWARD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Maryland State Board of Elections Warns of Texting Scam

The [Maryland State Board of Elections](#) (SBE) is [warning Maryland voters to be vigilant of texting scams](#) that are spreading disinformation about the 2024 Presidential General Election. Registered Maryland voters have reported receiving a text message that falsely claims that the voter is not registered and urges them to click on a weblink not associated with the SBE. The text message reads:

“URGENT: To vote in the upcoming election, you MUST be registered, but public records show you're not registered at [voter address]. Click the link to register before the deadline: md-voter.link/4VczM

Reply Stop to end. AC”

The SBE reminds voters that its official text messages are sent from (833) 572-1128 and will only include links to official “.gov” websites, and that it will never ask for personal information via text message. Any voter wishing to check their registration status or learn about the 2024 general election should visit SBE's official website at www.elections.maryland.gov.

To report election disinformation, please visit SBE's website at https://elections.maryland.gov/press_room/Dis-Misinformation.html.

Weekly deadline for submitting SJU *FLASH* articles is now WEDNESDAY by 12 NOON. Send via email to SJUColumbia@gmail.com Please include “FOR THE FLASH” in your subject heading.

HOWARD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

The Longest Table 2024: The annual event that brings together people for dinner and powerful conversations about our community is back on **Friday, September 27!**

Gathering for meals is a beloved custom around the world. And no matter our differences - where we grew up, how much money we have, or the color of our skin - we all need to feel welcome and included. When we eat together – we connect and share in the joy of being. Our need to be seen, known and belong is satisfied. In a world of disconnection, there is no more powerful place than the shared meal.

Everyone, high school age and up, is welcome. Social hour begins at 5 pm. Dinner served at 6 pm.

[More Info and Tickets](#)

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.

PRAYER MINISTRY AND PASTORAL CARE

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

- Prayers for the speedy recovery of **Greg Phillips** whose recent surgery went well.
- The celebration of life service for former pastor **Whitty Bass**, who passed away recently, is scheduled for **Saturday, November 2nd**, at 2pm at the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center. Please continue to pray for his family and his wife, former member **Gretta Ferrell**. Gretta is receiving calls: 410-262-8725.
- Pray for **Lynn Pakulla**, recovering from surgery.
- **Dave Douds** is gradually getting better, but “the last couple of weeks have been a bit trying”.
- **Paul and Jean Weller** would like to thank the congregation for their encouraging cards and well wishes during his hospitalization and recuperation at home: 10869 Hilltop La, Columbia MD 21044.
- Continue to pray for **Roy Ferguson's** care, comfort and recovery. He welcomes phone calls (410-730-0484) and emails (royaferguson@yahoo.com).
- **Charles Dyer** appreciates your cards at this address: Brightline Assisted Living, 4722 Old Court Rd., Pikesville MD 21208. Call Charles at 443-657-7148 and ask for his nurse Ms. Marjorie.
- Continue to hold in your hearts and your prayers those who are impacted by the **collapse of Baltimore's Francis Scott Key bridge**, and for all who are working tirelessly on the rebuilding efforts.
- Our hearts and voices continue to join in prayer for the **people of the Ukraine** and all who are experiencing fear and violence because of the now two-year conflict with Russia.
- Please pray earnestly for a ceasefire and end to all violence in **Gaza and Palestine** and for efforts to **alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Gaza**. Pray for 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.
- Please keep our **Pastor Nominating Committee** in your prayers. They are Julliette Dixon, Andy Love, Patsy Nwagbaraocha, Meredith Phillips, Tony Powell, Gayelle Sama, Success Shu, Carole Thompson, and Bruce Worley.
- And **pray for one another**.

If you would like to be added to or removed from the prayer list, please email the office:

SJUColumbia@gmail.com



Suggested by Patsy Nwagbaraocha:
[Prayers for a Peaceful Election Season](#)

Check the website “**Member Resources**” page occasionally for updated member contact information.



ONGOING SJU NEWS / LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

The Meeting House Gallery. Slip into the gallery's cool embrace where the shimmer of Summer is no mirage. *Summer Sojourn*, through **October 19, 2024**, showcases summer's vibrant colors and spirit without the sweat or the burn.

Don't miss the opportunity to meet the *Summer Sojourn* artists and learn about their work. The **Meet the Artists reception on Sunday, September 8 from 2:00-4:00pm** will include an art marketplace, live sax music and light refreshments. Mark your calendar!

Preview some of the art here: [Art Preview](#)

Columbia Community Care

The following information is gathered from CCC Facebook posts (organization and public group pages):

9-3-24:

~ April Lee, Facebook public group page admin

BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE who volunteered this past month as shopper/deliverers and translators!! We finally got through the backlog of waiting orders and can once again accept new orders. Whew! We ALWAYS need more help with pantry deliveries and translating/dispatch. Please sign up if you are able to help! Thank you as always! We could not do anything without your support! ❤️

(EDITOR'S NOTE: As a reminder, they do NOT accept expired foods. Cans of food, mostly tuna, that were in their donation bins expired 2 or more years ago. They appreciate donations, but also want to make sure the food they distribute is safe.)

VISIT THE WEBSITE for donation and volunteer information.

[Columbia Community Care](#)

Most-needed items (pic):



Link to our Amazon wish list: [CCC Amazon Wish List](#)

VOLUNTEER TRANSLATOR DISPATCH SIGN-

UP: <https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLSfls98A.../viewform>

VOLUNTEER SHOPPER SIGN-

UP: <https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLSfl1fNWZeX.../viewform...>

[Columbia Community Care website](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/columbia.community.care> (Columbia Community Care-CCC - organization page)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/807588256400584/> (Columbia Community Care - public group)

Collection bins are available at Wilde Lake Interfaith Center as well as Bethel Korean Presbyterian Church.

Monetary donations link: <https://columbiacommunitycare-bloom.kindful.com/...>

Amazon wish list for our Amazon Angels: <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2GZ09AG7QWLME...>



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.

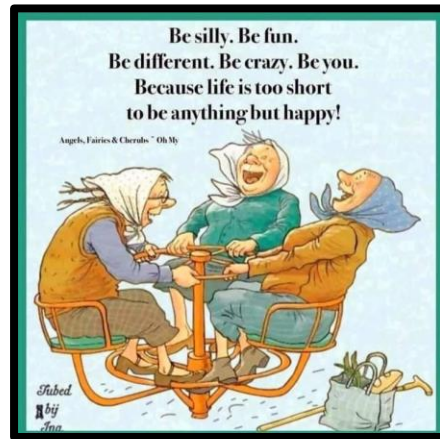


Donate by mail. Yvonne checks the mail for contributions, and makes weekly deposits.

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.

IT'S 2024'S TURN!



CALENDAR: SCHEDULED FOR WEEK OF SEP 15 - SEP 22

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 to, engage, and invest 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, 9/15	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (<i>Liturgist: Joy Buckingham</i>)
Mon, 9/16	7:00 pm	COUNCIL
Thur, 9/19	6:00 pm	A/V TECH TEAM (<i>Room 4</i>)
	7:00 pm	PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE
	7:30 pm	CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (<i>Room 4</i>)
Sun, 9/22	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (<i>Scheduled liturgist: Pamela Love</i>)

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.

ADMIN OFFICE AND PASTORAL OFFICE HOURS: Yvonne is in the office as necessary during the week, but mainly on Thursdays. Pastor Steve's hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am-6pm, and before and after worship on Sundays. **It might take a day or two 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

snofel@baltimorepresbytery.org



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