

# 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](http://www.sjuned.org)

[SJU Facebook](#)

[SJU YouTube](#)

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

(best way to contact the office)

**DECEMBER 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

## **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**

## **CYBER BIBLE CTUDY – 12:15 PM MONDAYS – VIA ZOOM**

**Meeting ID: 820 4208 1882**

**Password: 839873**

**Join online: [Cyber Bible Ctudy Zoom Link](#)**

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

## **UPCOMING DEADLINES**

### **ARTICLES FOR THE CHRISTMAS WEEK FLASH**

All articles for the December 27<sup>th</sup> FLASH need to be submitted no later than noon on FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **2024 DONATIONS**

To be credited to your 2024 giving, your donation must reach the office by noon on MONDAY, DECEMBER 30<sup>th</sup>.

## PASTOR STEVE'S PONDERINGS

December 13, 2024

Sometimes being the pastor's spouse has its privileges. Next Friday, Pastor Kim's husband Steve will be part of the Live Nativity at the Granite Presbyterian Church.

For the second straight year, I am playing King Herod. When I was at Covenant Church in Colorado Springs, I played Pharaoh during Vacation Bible School.

Somehow, I keep playing the villain. I hope I am being cast against type.

It reminds me of the time the great actor Richard Widmark played opposite his dear friend, another great actor Sydney Poitier. Widmark, who was a civil rights advocate, and a very good friend of Poitier played a terrible racist.

On camera Widmark would say awful things and call his friend vile names with vehemence. And as soon as the director yelled, "Cut!" Richard Widmark would literally begin to cry and beg Sidney Poitier's forgiveness.

Poitier would begin to cry, and the two friends would embrace.

When I told Kim the story she said, "Wow!" So, I am leaving it here.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Steve

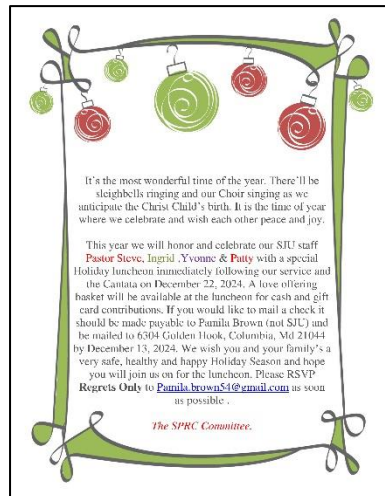
*Pastor Steve's hours are normally Tuesdays and before and after worship on Sundays.*

*NOTE: The Live Nativity is on Friday, December 20, beginning at 7:00pm. All are welcome. Be prepared to eat many cookies following the performance. Granite Presbyterian Church, 10637 Old Court Rd. Woodstock, MD.*

## HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP DECEMBER 22

Our choir will present the **Christmas Cantata** attend a special holiday fellowship hour in Room 18 at 11:45 am for an **appreciation lunch for our staff!**

MORE INFO HERE



## NEWS FROM THE BWES PARTNERSHIP TEAM



This is the final week for our annual **Coat and Mitten Tree** donation event. Bring your **NEW coats and mittens** to the worship service on **December 15<sup>th</sup>**.

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## RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK

### SAVE THE DATE: LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

If it would be good for your soul, we invite you and your loved ones to a Longest Night Service on Sunday, **December 22, at 7pm ET | 4pm PT**. The service will be live streamed on RMN's Facebook and YouTube pages.

If a Longest Night Service is a new term to you: it's a set-apart time that honors the grief and pain we may be carrying in Advent and the holiday season at large. It's a companion to the joy and fun that many experience on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

For more information on this and other news, read their [RMN December 6 Newsletter](#).



Go to their website for links to their YouTube and Facebook pages: [RMNetwork](#)

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## NEWS FROM THE BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling's Advent Messages

### Advent II:

"Our life of prayer, worship, fasting, meditating and praising God should so transform us that God's character becomes our character; God's love becomes our love; God's peace becomes our peace." [Read her message on the Peace of Advent](#).

### Advent III:

[Read her message on the Joy of Advent](#).

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## HOWARD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**Are You Covered?** Open enrollment for Maryland Health Connection is officially here! Through Jan. 15, 2025, you can secure quality health coverage for the new year. This window is a critical time to ensure you, your family, and loved ones have the protection and peace of mind that only health insurance can provide. Health coverage offers access to essential healthcare services, reduces out-of-pocket expenses, and supports preventive care for long-term wellness. Start your enrollment journey today by exploring plans on Maryland Health Connection—together, we can keep Howard County healthy and secure! Learn more at <https://www.marylandhealthconnection.gov>.

**Light it Up!** As the holiday season approaches, we are excited to launch our 2024 HoCo Holiday Lights Map, a tradition that brings joy and togetherness to Howard County. This interactive map showcases the most festive holiday displays, from Columbia to Elkrige, Savage to Woodstock, and beyond. Whether you're planning a magical family outing to enjoy the lights or sharing your own decorations with the community, the HoCo Holiday Lights Map is your guide to holiday cheer. Each listing includes photos, display hours, and special details, making it easy to plan your route. We encourage all residents and businesses to register their displays early to spread the joy.

Explore the map at [data.howardcountymd.gov/HolidayLightsFinder\\_View/](https://data.howardcountymd.gov/HolidayLightsFinder_View/) or register your display at [data.howardcountymd.gov/HolidayLightsFinder/](https://data.howardcountymd.gov/HolidayLightsFinder/). We wish you all a de-LIGHT-ful holiday season!

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**Weekly deadline for submitting SJU \*FLASH\* articles is  
WEDNESDAY by 12 NOON. Send via email to [SJUColumbia@gmail.com](mailto:SJUColumbia@gmail.com)  
Please include "FOR THE FLASH" in your subject heading.**

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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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### PRAYER MINISTRY AND PASTORAL CARE

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

- Prayers for the family of **David Palasits**, ASP co-leader, for the death of his father.
- A speedy recovery from illness for **Pastor Angela Wells** of Christ United Methodist Church.
- Continued prayers for **Lynn Pakulla**.
- Prayers for **Morris Range**.
- **Paul & Jean Weller** and all who are working for justice and needed benefits with the Developmental Disabilities Administration.
- Continue to pray for **Roy Ferguson**'s care, comfort and recovery. He welcomes phone calls (410-730-0484) and emails ([royaferguson@yahoo.com](mailto:royaferguson@yahoo.com)).
- Prayers for all those affected by the multiple hurricanes.
- Prayers for the people of Ukraine, the Middle East, and throughout the world.
- We pray for our neighborhood, county, region, and our nation. We pray for peace, healing, justice, and people working together.
- Prayers for the Pastor Nominating Committee and for all the pastor candidates.
- 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](mailto:SJUColumbia@gmail.com)*

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Check the website "**Member Resources**" page periodically for updated contact information.

# December 2024

## SJU Meetings and Events Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 1 <b>8:30 am</b> Christian Application (Zoom) <b>9 am</b> ASP Wreath sale (lobby) <b>10:30 am</b> Communion Worship (Rm 4) Hat/Mitten tree donations <b>7 pm</b> Sundays at Seven (PM!) Fellowship (Zoom)	2 <b>12 noon</b> Cyber Bible Ctdy	3 <b>7 pm</b> Worship: "Giving Tuesday" (Zoom) <b>7:30 pm</b> Pastor Nominating Committee (Zoom)	4 <b>2 pm</b> Congregational Care Committee	5 <b>6 pm</b> Worship Rehearsal (Rm 4) <b>7:30 pm</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Rm 4)	6 <b>6:30 pm</b> Fellowship Gathering of SJU and SJERC leadership (lobby)	7
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 8 <b>8:30 am</b> Christian Application (Zoom) <b>9 am</b> ASP Wreath sale (lobby) <b>10:30 am</b> Worship (Rm 4) Hat/Mitten tree donations & gift card donations (BWES) <b>11:30 am</b> Needlework Group (lobby) 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday Fellowship (Rm 10) <b>7 pm</b> Sundays at Seven (PM!) Fellowship (Zoom)	9 <b>12:15 pm</b> Cyber Bible Ctdy <b>4:00 pm</b> Finance Team	10 <b>7 pm</b> Communications Team (Zoom) <b>7:30 pm</b> Pastor Nominating Committee (Zoom)	11	12 <b>6 pm</b> Worship Rehearsal (Rm 4) <b>7:30 pm</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Rm 4)	12	14
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 15 <b>8:30 am</b> Christian Application (Zoom) <b>9 am</b> ASP Wreath sale (lobby) <b>10:30 am</b> Worship (Rm 4) Hat/Mitten tree donations & gift card donations (BWES) <b>7 pm</b> Sundays at Seven (PM!) Fellowship (Zoom)	16 <b>12:15 pm</b> Cyber Bible Ctdy <b>7 pm</b> Council Meeting (Zoom)	17 <b>7:30 pm</b> Pastor Nominating Committee (Zoom)	18 <b>7 pm</b> Longest Night Service	19 <b>6 pm</b> Worship Rehearsal for Dec 22 and Dec 24 (Rm 4) <b>7 pm</b> WLIC Board Meeting <b>7:30 pm</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Rm 4)	20	21
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 22 <b>8:30 am</b> Christian Application (Zoom) <b>10:30 am</b> Cantata Worship (Rm 4) <b>11:45 am</b> Holiday Fellowship & Staff Appreciation (Rm 18) <b>7 pm</b> Sundays at Seven (PM!) Fellowship (Zoom)	23	24 <b>7 pm</b> Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship (Rm 4)  OFFICE CLOSED	25 CHRISTMAS DAY  OFFICE CLOSED	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27 LAST DAY FOR OFFICE TO RECEIVE MAILED OR DROP-OFF DONATIONS TO BE CREDITED IN 2024.	28 <b>9 am</b> Men's Group (Zoom)
29 <b>8:30 am</b> Christian Application (Zoom) <b>10:30 am</b> Worship (Rm 4) <b>7 pm</b> Sundays at Seven (PM!) Fellowship (Zoom)	30	31	December 25 – January 3 Pastor Steve is away for his son's wedding on January 1			31

# ONGOING SJU NEWS / LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

## Local Interest

[Glen Mar UMC](#) in Ellicott City will hold a **Longest Night Service** on **Dec. 21 at 7 p.m.** This peaceful, contemplative service of candlelight, music and hope is for anyone who is having a hard time singing "Joy to the World" this year. All are welcome.

## Columbia Community Care

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/.../1FAIpQLSf1s98A.../viewform>

VOLUNTEER SHOPPER SIGN-

UP: <https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLSf1fNWZeX.../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!

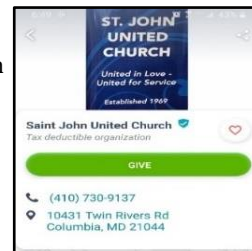
Please continue helping us meet our need so that all of our ministries and missions can continue and be prepared for the fullness of service in the coming months.

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 direct link: [Donate Today.](#)



**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!

I miss the 90's when bread was  
still good for you and nobody  
knew what kale was.



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### **CALENDAR: SCHEDULED FOR WEEK OF DEC 15 – DEC 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](mailto:SJUColumbia@gmail.com) if you wish to receive meeting and contact information on anything below:

Sun, 12/15	8:30 am	CHRISTIAN APPLICATION
	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE ( <i>in-person &amp; streaming</i> ) ( <i>Liturgist: John Telis</i> )
	7:00 pm	SUNDAYS AT SEVEN (PM!) FELLOWSHIP
Mon, 12/16	12:15 pm	CYBER BIBLE STUDY
	7:00 pm	COUNCIL
Tue, 12/17	7:30 pm	PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE
Thu, 12/19	6:00 pm	A/V TECH TEAM ( <i>Room 4</i> )
	7:30 pm	CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL ( <i>Room 4</i> )
Sun, 12/22	8:30 am	CHRISTIAN APPLICATION
<b>(Cantata)</b>	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE ( <i>in-person &amp; streaming</i> ) ( <i>Scheduled liturgists: Greg Phillips and Ella Phillips</i> )
	11:45 am	<b>HOLIDAY LUNCHEON &amp; STAFF APPRECIATION</b> ( <i>Room 18</i> )
	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 as necessary during the week, but mainly on Thursdays. Pastor Steve's hours are normally Tuesdays 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](mailto:SJUColumbia@gmail.com)

[snofel@baltimorepresbytery.org](mailto:snofel@baltimorepresbytery.org)



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