

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)

JANUARY 31, 2025

Reminder: have your juice and bread/crackers prepared for holy communion on February 2nd.

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

Use this same link for EVERY SJU livestream 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](#)

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

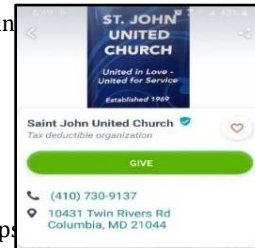
YOUR CONTINUED GIVING IS APPRECIATED!

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.
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.

The 2024 giving statements have been mailed.

PASTOR STEVE'S PONDERINGS

January 31, 2025

Last Sunday, as I welcomed our congregation, our Methodist District Superintendent Rev. Jim Miller and our Presbytery Executive Rev. Jackie Taylor into worship, I said, "Welcome to the Catacombs."

I entertained myself thoroughly with that line.

You remember the catacombs. They were the cave-like places the early Christians gathered keeping Jesus' worship and ministry alive through persecution and trials.

Of course, we are not suffering persecution to the extent of the early believers, but these certainly are trying times, aren't they?

One of our trials is the asbestos abatement and ceiling reconstruction in Room 4. With the walls and floors covered in plastic sheeting, with most of the furniture and accoutrements moved out, and with sparse lighting, it feels cave-ish.

Yet, as both Rev. Miller and Rev. Taylor proclaimed, "The Holy Spirit is in this place." Let me add, the Holy Spirit is roaring through us like a freight train! Do I get an AMEN!?!

Sure, we have stuff in our church, in our building and in our lives. Yet, here we are. As I asked on Sunday: Who Are We? We are ST. JOHN UNITED! We are Jesus people. We are Jesus' worshipers and doers.

Let us continue to worship, praise, pray and do, even from the catacombs!

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Steve

P.S. We are clear of asbestos. Work is going great. We may even be ahead of schedule. Please pray we are all done and can dedicate our completed space on Sunday, March 9 – The First Sunday of Lent!

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Steve

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

PASTOR STEVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Baltimore Presbytery's Tidings Newsletter:

• **Cuban Churches need our help:** As part of our presbytery's ongoing partnership with ministries in Cuba, several recent trips by Baltimore delegations have witnessed their daily challenges due to economic hardship. The congregations in Cuba are resilient, faithfully serving their communities in the face of scarcity. From providing spiritual guidance to supporting vulnerable families, their ministries are a vital source of hope and strength. However, they urgently need our help to secure basic necessities.

We have an opportunity to support our partner churches with an Amazon Wish List. If you are interested in purchasing any of these items, they will be included in a shipment to coincide with presbytery representative's next trip to Cuba in February. Your generosity can provide the tools these churches need to thrive and continue being a light in their communities.

• **Protect your Directories:** Scammers are contacting local church offices and requesting a copy of their church directory. They will use a story that they have been recent visitor or have been visiting occasionally with a partner, and are wanting a copy of your directory to see who else they might know in the church.

If they are able to get a copy of the church directory, they then begin sending out spoof emails and text messages from a local number pretending to be the pastor or a fellow church member and asking for emergency assistance. This is becoming far more disruptive of an event for affected churches and their pastors than previous scams. Please do NOT share church directories by email, unless you are absolutely certain about the request.

- **2025 Youth Triennium:** Baltimore Presbytery wants to ensure that any students from our churches who would like to attend the 2025 Youth Triennium have that opportunity. If youth from your church are interested in attending please contact Registrar Virginia Callegary at vcallegary@firstpreshc.org.

Date: July 28th-31st

Location: Louisville, KY

Cost: \$199 participant fee plus travel/lodging, estimated total of \$1000 per person

ROOM 4 CEILING REPLACEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Debbie Parker, Chair of Council

January 31, 2025

The project to replace the ceiling and lights in our worship space continues to progress well. Electrical work, removal of the old lights, and installation of new/temporary lights was performed during the week of January 27th. The walls and floor will continue to be covered in plastic. Drywall installation is scheduled for the week of February 3rd.

We will return to both in-person and livestreamed worship in our worship space on February 2nd. Please go to our website or follow the link in this Flash to obtain the worship bulletin as there will be no slides or videos.

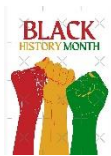
Watch future editions of the Flash and listen to the announcements in worship for more information as it becomes available.

We are SJU! We can do this!

NEWS FROM THE BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

- **We pray for the nation:** At the Service of Prayer for the Nation last week [January 21], Episcopal [Bishop Mariann Budde called on President Trump to show mercy](#) to immigrants and others and was met with criticism from the president and others. Bishop Easterling and others responded to this criticism. [See her comments.](#)
 - **Read the [Bishop's Call to Prayer Following Plane Crash.](#)**
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HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING AND INDEPENDENCE



OAI's annual **Black History Month celebration** kicks off February 1 and continues all month to honor the contributions of African Americans throughout history. [Learn more and register for events.](#)

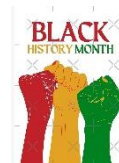
FELLOWSHIP and NEEDLEWORK GROUP ON SECOND SUNDAYS

These activities are suspended during the abatement work.
Their return dates will be announced when they are set.

HOWARD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

• **Mon, Feb 10: Marlene Jereaux: Pre-Civil War African-American History in Howard County (Miller Branch)**

Join researcher and historian Marlena Jereaux as she shares the results of years of her research. Jereaux is the Executive Director of Howard County Lynching Truth & Reconciliation. Her archival research has revealed some narrative changing information about what life was really like for Black and Mulatto people here in Howard County, both free and enslaved. Presented in partnership with Howard County Historical Society. [REGISTER HERE](#)



• **Fri, Feb 14: American Red Cross Blood Drive. 9am-3pm. Supreme Sports Club.**

[SIGN UP HERE FOR THE BLOOD DRIVE](#)

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.

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

PRAYER MINISTRY AND PASTORAL CARE

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

- Continued prayers for Dave Douds who is now receiving rehab in Charlestown's Wilton Overlook care center. Cards and notes are most appreciated at this time: 719 Maiden Choice Lane BR231, Catonsville MD 21228.
- Prayers for Jean Weller's sister, Barbara Paulson, soon to start radiation treatments.
- Continued prayers for Lynn Pakulla.
- Prayers for Morris Range.
- Continue to pray for Roy Ferguson's care, comfort and recovery. He welcomes phone calls (410-730- 0484) and emails (royaferguson@yahoo.com).
- Prayers for all those affected by the multiple wildfires and the New Orleans terror attack.
- 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

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

ONGOING SJU NEWS / LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

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/.../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...>



Howdy, 2025!



CALENDAR: SCHEDULED FOR WEEK OF FEB 2 – FEB 9

All meetings are via Zoom (unless otherwise noted).

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, 2/2	8:30 am	CHRISTIAN APPLICATION
	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person and streaming</i>) (<i>Liturgist: Guy Moody</i>)
	7:00 pm	SUNDAYS AT SEVEN (PM!) FELLOWSHIP
Tue, 2/4	7:30 pm	PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE
Wed, 2/5	2:00 pm	CONGREGATIONAL CARE COMMITTEE
Sat, 2/8	9:00 am	COUNCIL RETREAT – DAY 1 (<i>Granite Presbyterian Church</i>)
Sun, 2/9	8:30 am	CHRISTIAN APPLICATION
	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person and streaming</i>) (<i>Scheduled liturgist: Eric Schoch</i>)
	11:30 am	COUNCIL RETREAT – DAY 2 (<i>Conference Room</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), 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 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

snofel@baltimorepresbytery.org

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SJUColumbia@gmail.com • 410-730-9137 • www.sjunited.org
Facebook: [SJU Facebook](#) YouTube: [SJU YouTube](#)

