

Joy of ST. JOHN'S UCC

NHL

CONTRIBUTED BY SARA VOWLER

The Nancy Hackworth Literacy Initiative (NHL) means a lot to my family because it's a way to honor my grandmother's memory as well as honoring the Jackson community she so loved. She dedicated most of her life to helping children in her community reach academic success in reading. We hope to keep her legacy alive by continuing to serve her community.

It was always important for us to make sure that this program would stay true to something that meant a lot to my grandma -- this church. My grandma was a lifelong member and even became an elder. She donated her time to so many of the different programs that the church ran. Her heart and soul truly belong to St John's United Church of Christ. We have gone to great lengths to make sure that this program would be something that my grandma, the community, and the church would be proud of.



**NANCY HACKWORTH
LITERACY INITIATIVE**
— AT ST. JOHN'S UCC —



Connections that Sustain Us

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Have you watched the news lately? Or read the newspaper? Everything is changing, and change can be overwhelming. Treat yourself to this time to be refreshed and recharged.

Our spring retreat gives us that opportunity. We'll begin with a potluck meal at Westminster Presbyterian on Friday, June 2. On Saturday we'll meet at Camp DeSales in the Lawrence Lodge in Brooklyn. Coffee, snacks, and lunch will be provided. On Sunday morning our retreat leader Sharon Hronek will be our morning speaker at SJUCC.

There is no charge for this retreat, and donations are always welcome. Registration forms are available at the church office. Everyone is welcome, so invite a friend and register today!

-- Retreat Planning Group



IN THIS ISSUE

- NHL
- Spring Retreat
- The Pastor's Screen
- May Calendar
- Spring Cleaning
- Tech Update
- Worship Time Change
- Mission Updates
- WPC Invitation
- Centering Prayer
- Attendance & Giving
- Council Update
- Partnership Team

From the Pastor's Screen

SHELTER IN THE STORM

Last month while cleaning out our mother's garage, my brothers and I found three tiny kittens up in the rafters. Days old, they mewed and wriggled, searching for their mother. She was outside the garage pacing -- alert, watchful.

While I found a cardboard box, my brother John carefully scooped up the kittens. Chuck found a piece of foam which made a nice bed. Relocated, the kittens settled down for a nap as we placed the box in the barn, just inside the open door so mama could find them. My mother called from inside the house, "Make sure they're all the way inside the barn! They need shelter."

Shelter -- inside, out of the elements, warm, safe, and dry. Don't we all need that?

The dictionary defines shelter as a place giving temporary protection from bad weather or danger. Shelter can also be a verb, to protect or shield from something harmful. Our church was a shelter for those who were without power last February.

I'm wondering if we can be another kind of shelter -- a shelter for churches.

Every week churches are closing. Another church in Jackson held their last service on April 30. They've run low on members, money, and clergy. They love their church family, and they are searching for a way to keep their family together. Just like the mama cat, they've been pacing, watching their family move and adapt, warily eyeing

the circumstances that threaten their beloved faith communities.

Could we shelter these faith families here at St. John's? Could we share our office space, classrooms, parking lot, and sanctuary? Why wouldn't we? I can't think of a single reason why not.

What would this look like? St. John's would not gain members. We would simply open our doors and our hearts. Churches in crisis could use our building for worship. They could stay together. Their offering dollars and gifts might help us keep the lights on. They could partner with us in our missions. As time goes by, if they find it comforting, they could join our worship. Or not. Who knows what might happen?

If this is a future path for St. John's, then I propose a new name for our building: **Partnership Place**. In scripture when people partnered with God in a specific way, God changed their names. Abram became Abraham. Simon became Peter. While our church will always be St. John's UCC, our building might become "Partnership Place -- the home of St. John's UCC ..." plus the names of congregations who choose to join us here.

What might it look like if we had three worship services here every Sunday -- all different denominations? What if each faith family brings its own special gifts, which we all share? We have much more to offer than a cardboard box inside the barn doors. We can provide everything our fellow Christ-followers need.

Psalm 91 says, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Let's be a refuge and shelter for others.

-- Pastor Judy



He who dwells in the shelter
of the Most High
shall abide under the
shadow of the Almighty.
I will say of the Lord,
"God is my refuge
and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust."

Adapted from Psalm 91



St. John's UCC
801 S. Mechanic
Jackson, Michigan
49203

stjohnsuccjackson
@gmail.com

stjohnsjx.com

517-784-7580



Residents in Action event
at SJUCC April 6

May Birthdays

TIME TO CELEBRATE

- 3 - Jeannine Daugherty
- 4 - Louis Cubille
- 4 - John Roggenbuk
- 7 - Ruby Canter
- 8 - Miriam Brown Dorsey
- 11 - Diamond Shannon
- 12 - Sherman Smith
- 16 - Ian Wilson
- 20 - David Chesney
- 25 - Patrick Bymhold
- 27 - Emily Benedict
- 27 - Ron Thompson

Tech Update

PENDING UPGRADES

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Technology Fund. We began with about \$1,700 and we now have \$3,550! We are almost at our goal of \$4,000, which will pay for a subwoofer, noise balancing, and new microphones.

If you worship with us on Zoom, you will soon receive a short survey about your experience. We want to hear from you! What works well? How can we improve our online service? Please watch for this survey in your inbox.

Special Dances

SATURDAY, MAY 27, AT 7 PM

There was a record-setting crowd at the April dance! The next Special Needs dance will be Saturday, May 27. Help is needed for decorating before the event and clean up afterward. Snacks and monetary donations are also appreciated. If you would like to help, dance, and have fun, call the office.

Spring Cleaning

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, AT 10 AM

It's that time again! Our sanctuary and grounds need some TLC. The pews and sanctuary need dusting and polishing. The landscaping needs a few weeds pulled and trash picked up. Bring your work gloves and yard tools. Pizza will be served. It's not a party without YOU!



Community Dinner

TUESDAY, MAY 23, AT 6 PM

Our next free Community Dinner is on Tuesday, May 23, at 6 PM. We are grateful to Carl for cooking and to the United Center for funding these events. Mark your calendar and bring a dessert!

Worship Time Changes

10 AM SUNDAY, MAY 28

Our summer worship schedule begins on May 28. Our worship time will be 10 AM each Sunday, with coffee hour following. We will meet at 10 AM throughout the summer months, and we will return to 10:30 AM on Sunday, September 10. On May 28 our preacher will be our own Evelyn Park -- please mark your calendar.

May Calendar

MAY 2—RETREAT PLANNING MEETING 7PM ZOOM

MAY 4—NHL MEETING 3PM

MAY 5—LEAP WITH FRANCIS PRIMARY 1:30-3:30PM

MAY 10—CHURCH COUNCIL MEETS 3PM

MAY 13—ACTIVITY AND GAME NIGHT AT WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN 6-8PM

MAY 14—REGISTRATIONS FOR RETREAT DUE

MAY 16—RETREAT MEETING 6PM ZOOM

MAY 17—SPRING CLEANING 10AM

MAY 19—FOOD PANTRY AND BABY SPRINKLES 10AM-12PM

MAY 19—LEAP WITH FRANCIS PRIMARY 1:30-3:30PM

MAY 23—COMMUNITY DINNER 6PM

MAY 27—SPECIAL NEEDS DANCE 7PM

MAY 28— WORSHIP AT 10 AM

MAY 30—CENTERING PRAYER 5PM

JUNE 2—LEAP WITH FRANCIS PRIMARY 1:30-3:30PM

JUNE 2,3,4—SPRING RETREAT "CONNECTIONS THAT SUSTAIN US"

Samaritan Fund

BECOMING GOOD SAMARITANS

In April our Samaritan Fund distributed \$400 in assistance. We had 4 requests for help with rent; one payment was issued. One person requested water bill assistance; one payment was issued. We received 9 requests for help with Consumers bills; five payments were issued. Requests for help with motel stays and gas money were referred to other agencies. Eight persons received emergency food. Twenty three participated in the Showers for Homeless program.

Food Pantry

COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

Our Community Food Pantry was held on April 21 and continues to serve families in need. Last month we provided 1800 pounds of food and served 106 individuals, representing 263 family members. We are so grateful for Carl and our faithful team of volunteers. The next Food Pantry will be May 19, from 10 AM to 12 Noon.

Baby Sprinkles

KIDS' CLOSET AND MORE

Baby Sprinkles and Kids' Closet provide clothing up to size 14, in addition to baby items, infant clothing, and diapers. Last month 34 families received items; 56 children were served.

We appreciate donations. Come see us in action on May 19 at 10 AM.

LEAP

LEARNING ENRICHMENT AND ARTS

LEAP students, teachers, and volunteers will gather twice in May. We'll meet on Friday, May 5 and 19, from 1:30-3:30 PM. in the Community Room at SJUCC.

Grandparents are needed -- and you can be one! LEAP is funded by grants from the United Center for Caring. Call the office if you can help. Come join the fun!

Centering Prayer

TUESDAY, MAY 30, AT 5 PM

Centering Prayer is a silent prayer time in our beautiful sanctuary. Participants choose their own sacred word, quiet their minds, and listen for God. We will meet on Tuesday, May 30, at 5 PM. After a brief discussion we will pray silently for 30 minutes, so we leave feeling connected and refreshed. Join us!

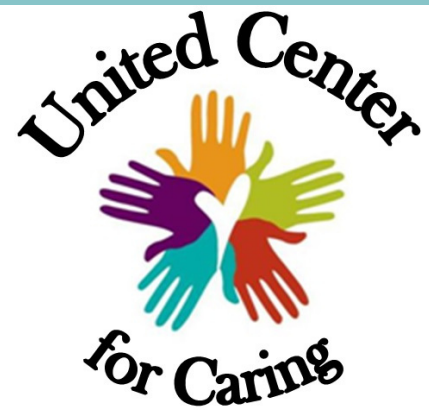


You're Invited!

PERSONAL CARE MINISTRY/GAME NIGHT

SJUCC is invited to partner with Westminster Presbyterian at their Personal Care Ministry on May 4. Please see Allen Schroeder if you are interested.

Our new friends at WPC love to get together and have fun! We are all invited to a game night on Saturday, May 13, from 6-8 PM. Bring your crafts, puzzles, and games. WPC is located at 2301 Ridgeway Road in Jackson. Let's get better acquainted. See you there!



Be the Blessing

**SOMETHING
FOR EVERYONE**

Here's what you can do to
be a blessing:

- Sign up for our spring retreat
- Invite friends to church
- Attend the Community Dinner
- Help with the NHL Initiative or LEAP
- Pray for our church every day
- Donate time or money to the Samaritan Fund or Food Pantry
- Bring donations for the Baby Sprinkles and Kids' Closet
- Volunteer to be an Usher
- Sign up for Coffee Hour
- Offer your musical gifts
- Notice who's missing from worship ... and reach out with love!



Rev. Judy Goodrow

260-668-9173

pastor@stjohnsjx.com

kjgoodrow3kids@gmail.com

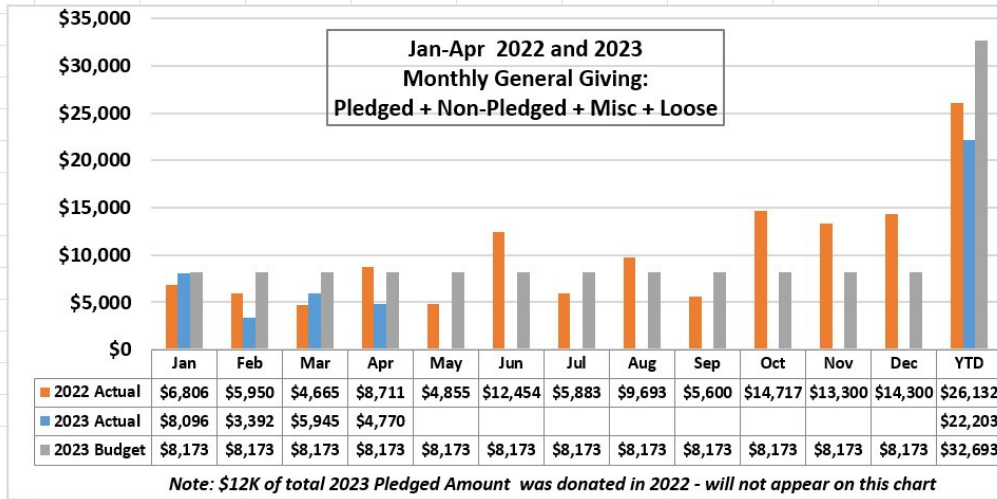
Partnership Team

PREPARING FOR PARTNERING

Our Partnership Team continues to collect our questions and concerns following the Round Table Conversation on April 30. Our friends at WPC are invited to worship with us on June 4 and July 9, 16, and 23. We are invited to worship at their location on July 30 and August 6 while Judy is on vacation. Stay tuned!

Your Partnership Team

Duane Leece
 Carl Robinson
 Vickie Steck
 Allen Schroeder
 Cindy Osborne
 Michele Wilson

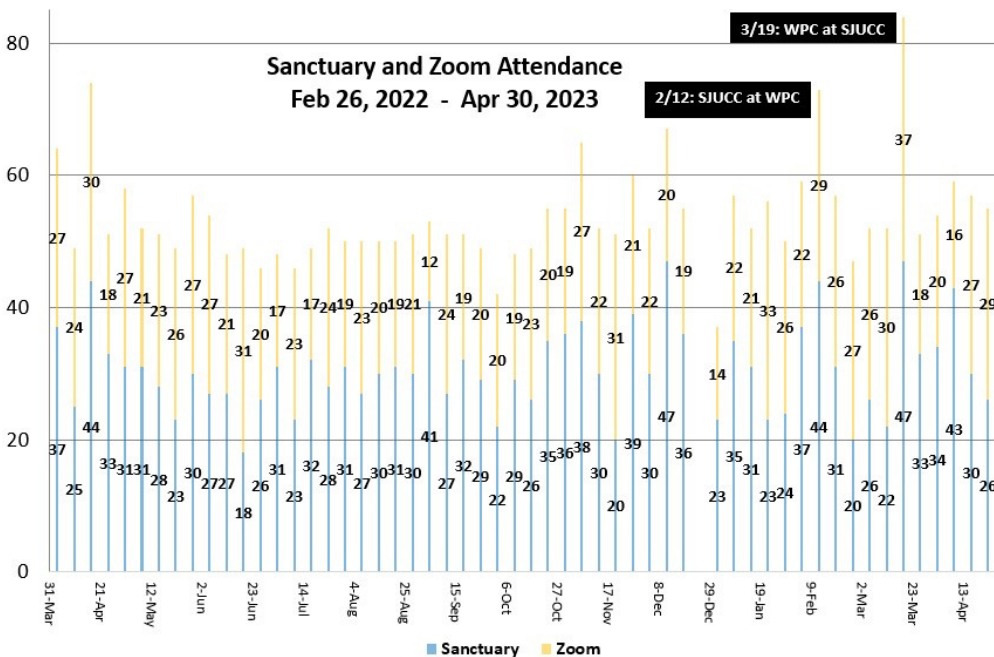
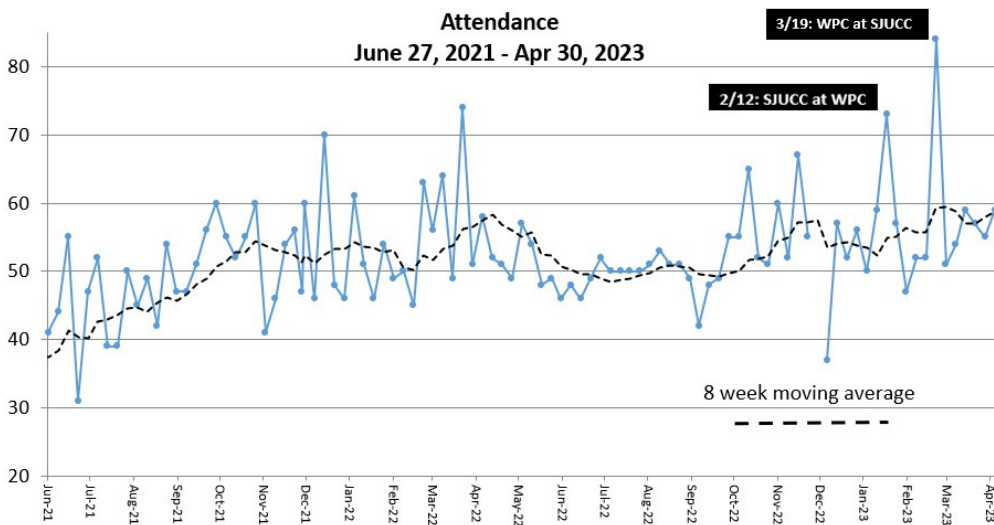


Council Update

The Church Council met April 12 and the following items were discussed:

- The fire marshal has ordered a Knox Box be installed outdoors as well as an inspection of the downstairs emergency system.
- New chairs may be available from DHHS free of charge. Carl will follow-up.
- The office will obtain a cell phone and a monthly plan.
- The kitchen stove hood will be cleaned and inspected.
- Partnership Team will meet April 25; on April 30 the congregation will hold Round Table Conversations.
- Retreat costs will be covered by Fellowship and Recreation budget.
- The Finance Team recommended investments be moved to Charles Schwab.

Meeting minutes for past meetings are available in the church office. The next Council meeting will be May 10 at 3 PM in person and via Zoom.



St. John's UCC
801 S. Mechanic Street
Jackson Michigan 49203

Postage

stjohnsuccjackson@gmail.com
stjohnsjx.com
517-784-7580



Affix Address
Label Here

Encouraging people to

reach up to worship God,



reach in to strengthen faith, and

reach out in service to others.

St. John's

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Love God ♥ Love People ♥ Serve Both

stjohnsjx.com