

# Joy of ST. JOHN'S UCC

## Partnership Update

CONTRIBUTED BY VICKIE STECK

We've spent a wonderful spring and summer getting to know the people of Westminster Presbyterian Church. We've played games, joined in volunteer work, shared a meal the night before our retreat, and we spent a beautiful spring day developing "Connections That Sustain Us."

We've also been blessed to join together in worship the past three Sundays. After each worship, during fellowship hour, we shared discussion questions aimed at helping us get to know individuals better.

Oh, and did I mention laughter yet? We've shared laughter on every one of these occasions.

The Partnership Team here at St. John's hopes you've all had a chance to read our church profile and especially the WPC Church Profile. From what we have witnessed, Westminster truly is "the little church with the big heart."

We'll be worshipping with them again August 6 at 10 AM, with an ice cream social to follow! YUM! Plan to join us at WPC, 2301 Ridgeway Road, Jackson.

The Partnership Team is listed on pg 5.

## Baby Shower

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

The 17th Annual Community Baby Shower is quickly approaching! We already have 60 moms registered, and we need 20-25 volunteers. Sign-up sheets are in the Fellowship Room. Donations of baby clothes newborn to 12 months, car seats, and baby swings are appreciated. New or gently used is fine. Car seats must have at least one year left on their use by date (yes, they expire!) Watch for more information.

## Meeting Recap

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

During our Congregational Meeting on July 23, we accepted proposed changes to our constitution for regarding Social Justice giving. Our Social Justice team made suggestions for recipient organizations which were approved. Dollars available are from Living Memorial Fund interest earned.

We also reviewed an extensive list of repairs needed for our sanctuary and community building. The initial expenditure of over \$60,000 was approved, as well as the formation of a work group to explore our options regarding the balance of the repairs. Grants, a capital campaign, and use of cash resources will be considered.



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# From the Pastor's Screen

## GAME PLAN

During my vacation I binge-watched a drama-comedy about a failing British soccer team and their American coach, Ted Lasso. Lasso has the difficult job of creating a successful team against all odds. His indefatigable compassion and limitless encouragement sustain the players, the team's owner, and everyone he meets – even when he must endure his own failing marriage and separation from his family. It was wonderfully entertaining and just what I needed -- because last month was rough.

Last month we learned that our building has been neglected far too long. The list of necessary repairs is extensive, and finances are limited. We need a game plan. We need Ted Lasso to coach us through this!

Ted would spotlight our strengths and watch for opportunities for growth. We have a base of committed individuals, a common mission, a great location, and community partners. We have an opportunity to dream and explore. We are forming a team to gather data and imagine every path forward.

Ted would stay positive, curious, and goal focused. For Ted, the goal isn't winning the game. His goal is to create space for everyone to be the best they can be – on and off the field.

What exactly is our goal? Our mission statement is "Love God, Love People, Serve Both." Every possible solution will support that goal, creating space for each of us to love God, love people, and serve both.

In his book *Synchronicity*, author Joseph Jaworski identified trials like ours as “supreme ordeals” which test our commitment. While synchronicity is a state of spiritual connection where miracles and coincidence abound, supreme ordeals are filled with traps and roadblocks. Synchronicity disappears, and we are tempted to regress to negative thinking patterns. This is a difficult part of any journey, but it is necessary for growth.

Jaworski named four possible responses to supreme ordeals: *Ostrich* – we stick our heads in the sand and ignore the issues; *Lame Duck* – we limp along with no clear plan, patching holes as we go; *Icarus* – we conceive an unsustainable plan, throwing all our resources at the problem; and *Flamingo* – we create a path for gradual and sustainable improvement.

Every plan is tested against these four possible responses. Ted Lasso would choose flamingos. They're odd birds who become pink from the algae they eat. Some flamingos live up to forty years. They are social creatures that communicate visually and vocally. Flamingos create very strong bonds, and most importantly, they rise slowly and fly together.

Jaworski suggested changing our stance from resignation to possibility. If we do, we can create our future. What wants to emerge? What might happen when we rise slowly and fly together?

We don't have a roadmap, but we have each other, and we have faith in a God who makes a way where there is no way. We don't need Ted to coach us. We already have everything we need.

Eyes on the Goal,

Pastor Judy

Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Matthew 6: 26 NRSV



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## August Birthdays

### TIME TO CELEBRATE

- 8 - Larry Martin
- 13 - Vickie Steck
- 18 - Sheila Simpson
- 19 - Dorothea Henry
- 20 - Judy Goodrow
- 25 - Evelyn Park
- 31 - Daniel Canter



## Little Book House

### TAKE A BOOK; LEAVE A BOOK!

Our Little Book House is getting noticed -- and used! Many in the neighborhood have stopped by. Thank you, Claire Ivie, for painting the beautiful plaque above.

We already have many children's books to share, and we need more adult fiction books. If you have books you don't need, please share!

## The Upper Room

TUESDAY, AUG. 15, AT 10 AM

Let's create some room in the Upper Room! On Tuesday, August 15, we will be organizing and cleaning our storage area. We will begin at 10 AM. Bring your muscle and organizational skills, and join the cleaning crew.

## Books Galore!

### LIBRARY BOOKS ARRIVE

Many thanks to Don Tassie and the Francis Street Primary School for donating nearly 40 crates of books for the Nancy Hackworth Library. We now have plenty of books to share in the library as well as the Little Book House. Thank you!

## In Appreciation

### ROBINSON TO STEP DOWN

After many years of serving as the Food Pantry organizer, Building & Grounds Lead on Council, and the United Center for Caring treasurer, Carl Robinson has decided to retire from these volunteer activities. He will continue to serve as our custodian.

Carl will continue to be an important person at St. John's. He will use his culinary skills at our community dinners and his tech skills during our Sunday morning worship. He would like to see the Food Pantry continue and hopes a volunteer will step up to lead it. We appreciate Carl and will miss his leadership. When you see Carl, be sure to say, "Thank you!" Thank you, Carl.

## August Calendar

AUG 4,11,18,25 NHL LIBRARY  
OPEN 1-4 PM

AUG 6 - COMBINED WORSHIP  
AT WESTMINSTER  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
10 AM

AUG 7,14,21,29 NHL LIBRARY  
OPEN 4-5 PM

AUG 8 - ELECTION

AUG 13 - WORSHIP 10 AM

AUG 15 - UPPER ROOM  
CLEAN UP 10 AM  
CENTERING PRAYER 5 PM

AUG 18 - FOOD PANTRY AND  
BABY SPRINKLES 10 AM-  
NOON

AUG 20 - WORSHIP 10 AM

AUG 22 - FINANCE TEAM  
MEETING 10:30 AM  
COMMUNITY DINNER 6 PM

AUG 23 - AMERICAN RED  
CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

AUG 27 - WORSHIP 10 AM  
OPEN AND AFFIRMING  
CONVERSATION 11:15 AM

SEP 3 - WORSHIP 10 AM  
LABOR DAY WEEKEND

SEP 4 - OFFICE CLOSED

SEP 10 - WORSHIP 10:30 AM

# *Samaritan Fund*

## BEING GOOD SAMARITANS

In July our Samaritan Fund received 16 requests for assistance. We had one request for help with rent; one payment was issued. We had seven requests for help with Consumers bills; four payments were issued. We had one request for help with a water bill; one payment was issued.

Requests for help with motel stays and gas money were referred to other agencies. Six people received emergency food. Showers were used 53 times last month. Donations to the Samaritan Fund are always welcome!

## *Food Pantry*

### COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

Our Community Food Pantry was held on July 21. Last month we provided 1800 pounds of food and served 148 individuals, representing 371 family members. We are so grateful for Carl and our faithful team of volunteers. The next Food Pantry will be August 18 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. More families are being served each month! Last month 39 families received items; 48 children were served. Many thanks to all our volunteers! We will be open next on August 18 at 10 AM until 12 noon.

# *ONA Q&A*

## OPEN & AFFIRMING CONVERSATION

What does the bible say about sexuality?

On Sunday, August 27, Pastor Judy will lead us in a conversation about the so-called "clobber passages" in the bible. How do we respond to questions from family and friends? What does it mean for us to be an Open & Affirming congregation? Let's talk following our worship service on August 27.

## *Silent Prayer*

### CENTERING PRAYER ON AUG. 15 AT 5 PM

Take a deep breath, hold, release. Ahhh! Centering Prayer is a silent prayer time that creates space for stillness. This month we will meet on Tuesday, August 15, at 5 PM. After some brief breathwork, we will sit in silent contemplation for 30 minutes. Join us!

## *Community Dinner*

### AUGUST 22 AT 6 PM

In July, Carl Robinson and our community cooks prepared tacos and sloppy Joes for more than 50 persons at our free dinner. Lots of young people attended! Our next Community Dinner is Tuesday, August 22, at 6 PM.

We are grateful to Bill, Caroline, Darryl, and all who serve and clean up each month. Funding for these events is provided by the United Center for Caring. Mark your calendar and bring a dessert to share!



## Be the Blessing

### SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

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

- Clean the Upper Room
- Donate for building maintenance
- Visit the Little Book House
- Support MyBakery
- Invite friends to church
- Attend the Community Dinner
- Help with the NHL library
- 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
- Bring donations and sign up to volunteer for the Baby Shower
- 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!

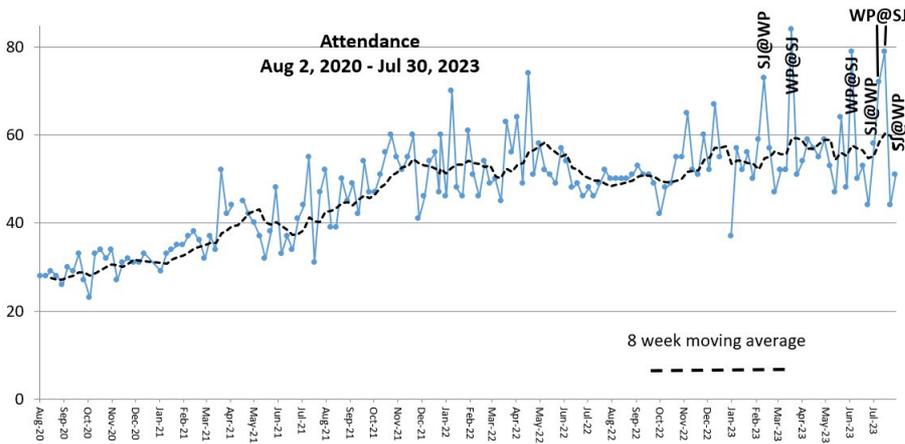
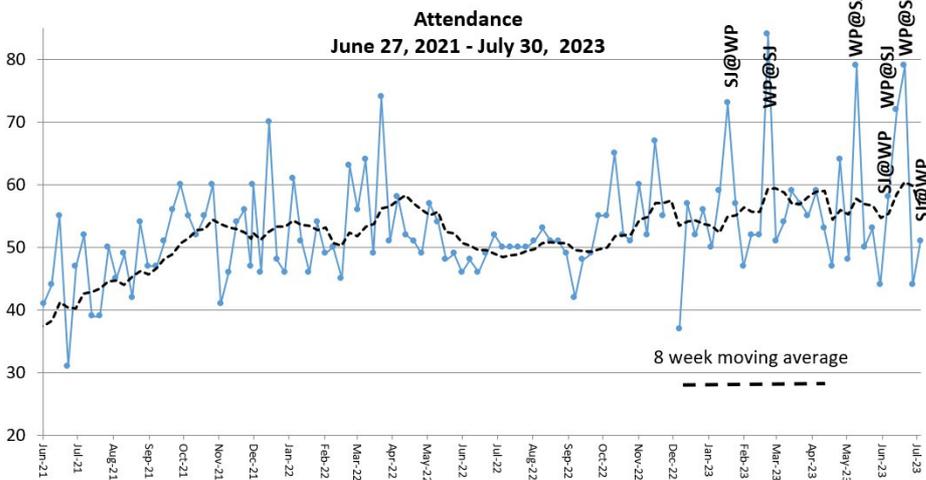
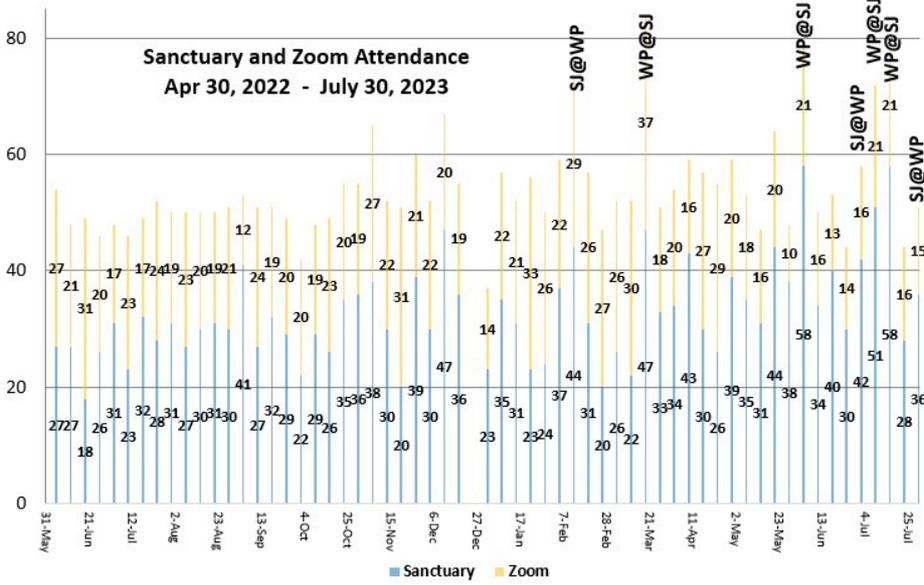


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Note: \$12K of total 2023 Pledged Amount was donated in 2022 - will not appear on this chart

## Your Partnership Team

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



## Council Update

The Church Council is on summer break until September. Meeting minutes for past meetings are available in the church office. Our next Council Meeting will be September 13 at 3 PM in person and via Zoom.



Judy's vacation place: The Art of Living Retreat Center in Boone, North Carolina.

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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](http://stjohnsjx.com)