

# Joy of ST. JOHN'S UCC

## Ten-Week Bible Study at WPC

LED BY PASTOR KAREN

Our congregation has been invited to a Bible Study at Westminster Presbyterian Church each Thursday morning at 11 AM for 10 consecutive weeks (Sept. 21 through Nov. 30, skipping Thanksgiving). This study is called "Words of Life: Jesus and the Promise of the Ten Commandments."

"What if the Ten Commandments were not just a set of ancient rules, but a guide to experiencing the good life today? Author Adam Hamilton brings modern eyes to the most important set of ethics in history. He considers the commandments in their historical context, considering the meaning of each commandment in Hebrew, unpacking how Jesus reinterpreted them, and showing how every 'thou shalt not' was intended to point to a life-giving 'thou shalt.' He also explores how the latest research in science and psychology illuminates these commandments, rightly understood, as a way of ordering one's life beautifully in the present day. In a culture marked by workaholicism, materialism, and social media-driven envy, God has given us a time-tested path that leads to gratitude, confidence, and peace." Everyone is welcome! Sign up in the Fellowship Room.

## Baby Shower

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Planning for the annual Community Baby Shower is underway! We already have 73 moms registered. Sign up in the Fellowship Room if you can volunteer. Donations of car seats, baby swings and baby clothes newborn to 12 months are appreciated. New or gently used items accepted. Help is needed beginning Sunday, Sept. 17, and throughout the week. If you can help during the shower, plan to be at church from 11 AM to 4 PM on Saturday, September 23.

## Myrrh Project

COMBINED MISSION PROJECT

St. John's UCC and Westminster Presbyterian Church will undertake a joint mission project this fall to provide Thanksgiving dinners to less fortunate families in Jackson. Each family unit in our respective congregations is asked to purchase one specific food item each week for 8 weeks. Please bring your food item to church each Sunday. We will begin the project on Sunday, Oct. 1, and end on Sunday, Nov. 19, the Sunday before Thanksgiving. The following Monday we will pack the dinner boxes, and on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, we will distribute the dinners. See page 5 for a complete list of items needed.



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# From the Pastor's Screen

## THE TRIPLE PACKAGE

Last month my friend Jeff and I were talking about a concept called the "Triple Package." He explained that scholar Amy Chua and her husband Jed Rubenfeld studied eight cultural groups in the United States who have achieved some level of success. The authors identified three characteristics that these groups all had in common.

In an interview Chua said, "The first element is what we call a superiority complex. That is a sense of your specialness or exceptionality. The second is the opposite of that. That is a sense of insecurity, a feeling that you or what you have done is not good enough. The third is impulse control, by which we mean self-discipline, self-control and the ability to resist temptation."

As soon as Jeff mentioned these three traits, I began to wonder. Why is the church down the street flourishing? Do they have these three qualities? Chua's book suggests that anyone, regardless of background, can benefit from these traits. Especially the first two, which appear to be opposites -- how can a group of people feel both special and not good enough?

Suddenly my days as a young Evangelical came flooding back -- and I could see the triple package!

The first trait arrives early: The church tells you that you are special -- chosen by God before time began -- and when the end times arrive, you will be "raptured" out of here.

The second trait shows up weekly: We must show up for church, read our bibles, pray, and develop a personal relationship with Jesus. If we don't, we may not be one of the chosen ones.

The third trait is cultivated: We know the way to eternal life, so we must tell everyone. Their salvation depends on it, so we work tirelessly.

Combine these three traits with a sense of being threatened as a group, and we have a winning combination. For centuries Christians have persisted in the belief that they are persecuted by "the world," even when they're not. It's part of our history. To be fair, Christians are persecuted in other places on the globe. Here in the West, their perceived persecutors often bear the title "liberals." A common enemy can strengthen the community.

Chua might be on to something -- and if so, how can we develop these three traits to strengthen our church?

First, are we special? If so, what makes us special? Is it our heritage, love, location, and missions? Is it our extravagant welcome or our theology?

Second, are we a little insecure? Do we have to work harder than other churches? Do we feel like we are lacking in some sense?

Finally, have we learned the skill of delayed gratification? Can we work and worship, serve and give, even when our reward may not occur in our lifetime? Are we able to see a full-bodied future that lives on after we are gone?

If we can answer these questions, and boldly share our answers, the triple package can work for us too.

Pastor Judy



I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you ...

Ephesians 1 :15-18a NRSV



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

stjohnsuccjackson  
@gmail.com

stjohnsjx.com

517-784-7580



## September Birthdays

### TIME TO CELEBRATE

- 1 - Russ Church
- 5 - Linda Miller
- 8 - Donna Benedict
- 14 - Diane Brush
- 16 - Kathy Schroeder
- 16 - Jim Benedict
- 17 - Eugene Johnson
- 17 - Fred Wessels
- 25 - Walter Shuberg
- 26 - Gary Handloser
- 27 - Joanne Schuler

## Orchard Care

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

On September 20, we'll spend the morning weeding the Orchard and preparing the church grounds for fall. Bring your gardening gloves and tools and join the yard crew. Let's help our outdoor areas look loved!



Neighborhood folks stop at the Little Book House every day. Check it out!

## Neighbors in Need

### UCC SPECIAL OFFERING

On Sunday, October 8, we will collect our Neighbors in Need offering. Our own Baby Shower was once a NIN grant recipient! Please consider making a donation to this worthwhile UCC program. Watch for information.



*"God saw everything God made and behold, it was very good."* Genesis 1:31

## Food Pantry Team Steps Up!

### FOOD PANTRY TO CONTINUE

After ten years of service, Carl's final Food Pantry will be September 15. As soon as our Food Pantry volunteers heard that Carl was stepping down, they stepped up! Cheryl George, a United Center board member, David Tyra, and SJUCC's Bob Neustifter will lead a team to continue feeding the needy in our neighborhood. Team members also include Connie Williams Moodie, Gloria Frederickson, Jerry Johnson, Shirley Leonardson, Linda and Eric Canter, Jacqueline Coleman, and Linda and Bill Nichols. We are so proud of you all! Thank you!

## September Calendar

SEP 3 - WORSHIP 10 AM WITH HOLY COMMUNION

SEP 4 - OFFICE CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY

SEP 5 - UNITED CENTER BOARD MEETING 12 NOON

SEP 8 - NHL MEETING

SEP 10 AND 17 - COMBINED WORSHIP WITH WPC HERE AT SJUCC AT 10:30 AM (WINTER HOURS BEGIN SEP 10)

SEP 13 - BABY SHOWER PLANNING MEETING 10 AM; COUNCIL MEETING 3 PM

SEP 15 - FOOD PANTRY AND BABY SPRINKLES 10 AM-NOON

SEP 19 - VISION 2025 MEETS AT 10:30 AM; COMMUNITY DINNER 6 PM

SEP 20 - ORCHARD CARE 10 AM TO 12 NOON

SEP 23 - COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER 11 AM TO 4 PM

SEP 24 - WORSHIP 10:30 AM OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONVERSATION 11:45 AM

SEP 30 - SPECIAL NEEDS DANCE 7 PM TO 9 PM

OCT 1 - COMBINED WORSHIP AT 10 AM AT WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH; MYRRH PROJECT BEGINS

# *Samaritan Fund*

## BEING GOOD SAMARITANS

In August our Samaritan Fund received 25 requests for assistance. We had nine requests for help with rent; four payments were issued. We had 16 requests for help with Consumers bills; nine payments were issued. Requests for help with motel stays and gas money were referred to other agencies. Ten people received emergency food. Showers were used 36 times last month. Donations to the Samaritan Fund are always welcome -- and needed!

# *Food Pantry*

## COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

Our Community Food Pantry was held on August 18. 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 September 15 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 31 families received items; 52 children were served. Many thanks to all our volunteers! We will be open next on September 15 at 10 AM until 12 noon.

# *ONA Q&A*

## OPEN & AFFIRMING CONVERSATION

What does the New Testament say about sexuality? On Sunday, September 24, Pastor Judy will continue our 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 September 24.

# *Centering Prayer*

## MEDITATIVE PRAYER IN OCTOBER

Centering Prayer will not meet in September, so we're meeting twice in October! Join us in the sanctuary on Tuesday, October 2 and Tuesday, October 31 at 5 PM. Following a brief guided meditation, we sit in silent contemplation for 30 minutes. Join us!

# *Community Dinner*

## SEPTEMBER 19 AT 6 PM

Each month SJUCC and community volunteers prepare and serve a free meal in our Community Room. Our next dinner will be on Tuesday, September 19, at 6 PM. We serve more than fifty people, which requires lots of help! Thank you to everyone who cooks, serves, donates desserts, and washes dishes.

Funding for these events is provided by the United Center for Caring and Blue Cross Connect. 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:

- Help in the Orchard
- 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!



Rev. Judy Goodrow

260-668-9173

[pastor@stjohnsjx.com](mailto:pastor@stjohnsjx.com)

[kjgoodrow3kids@gmail.com](mailto:kjgoodrow3kids@gmail.com)



## 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.

## Myrrh Project

ITEMS NEEDED EACH SUNDAY

OCT 1 - BOX OF INSTANT MASHED POTATOES

OCT 8 - CAN OF GREEN BEANS

OCT 15 - BOX OF STUFFING MIX

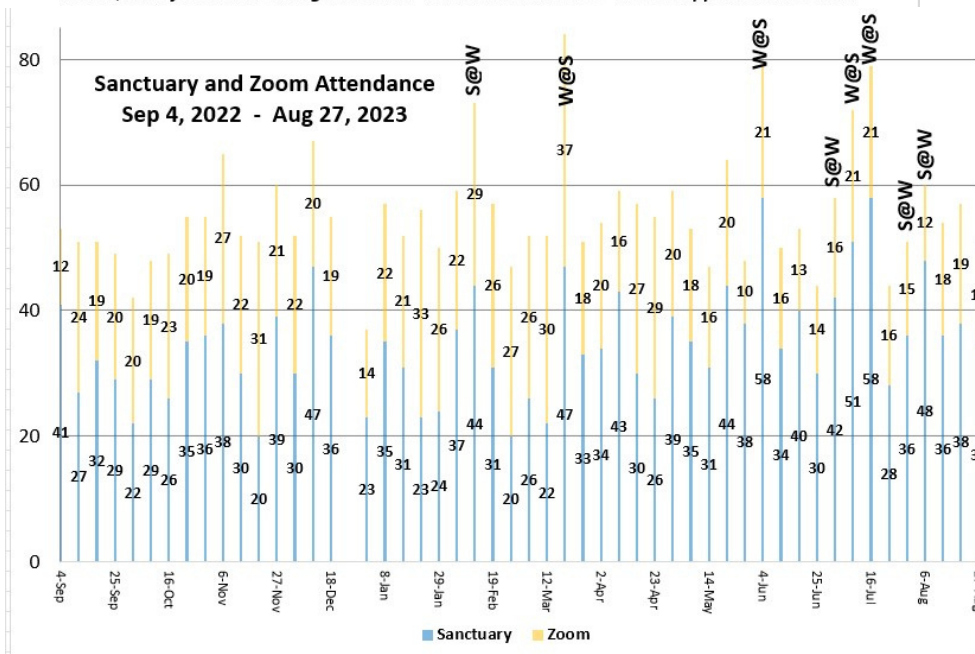
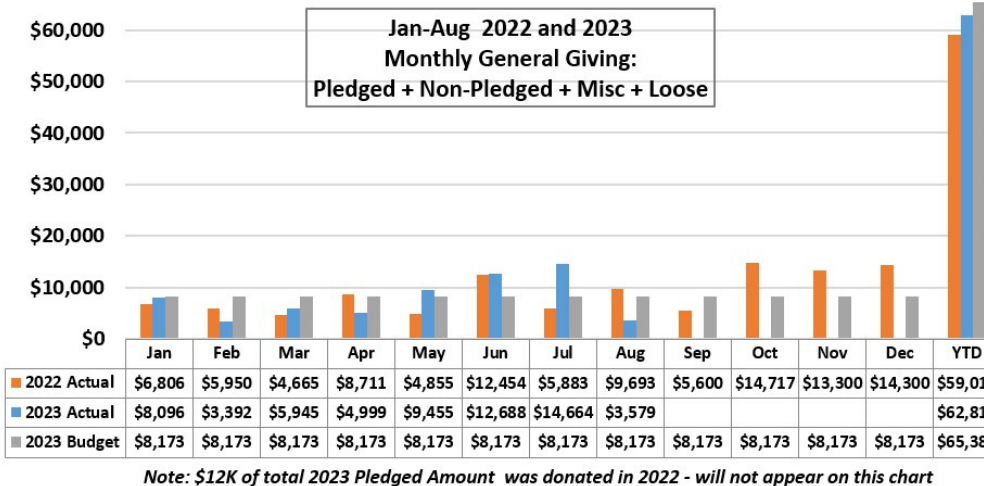
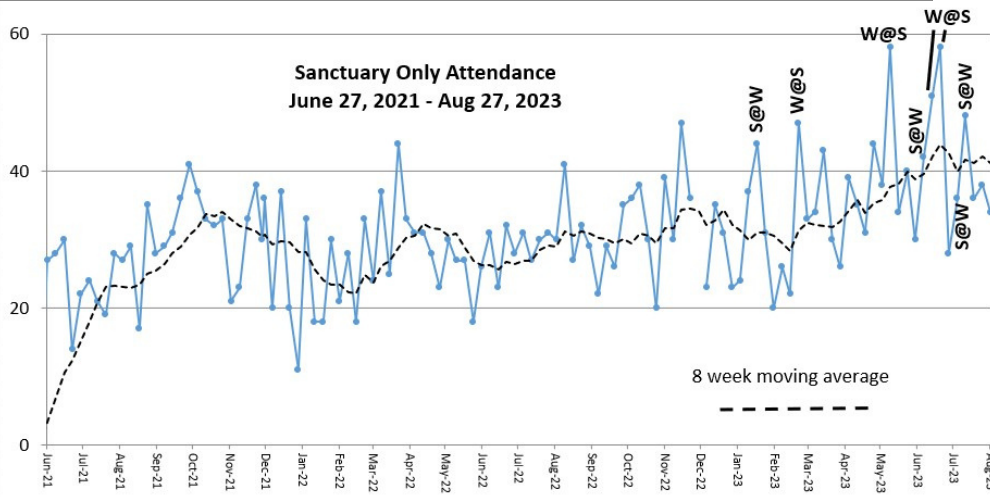
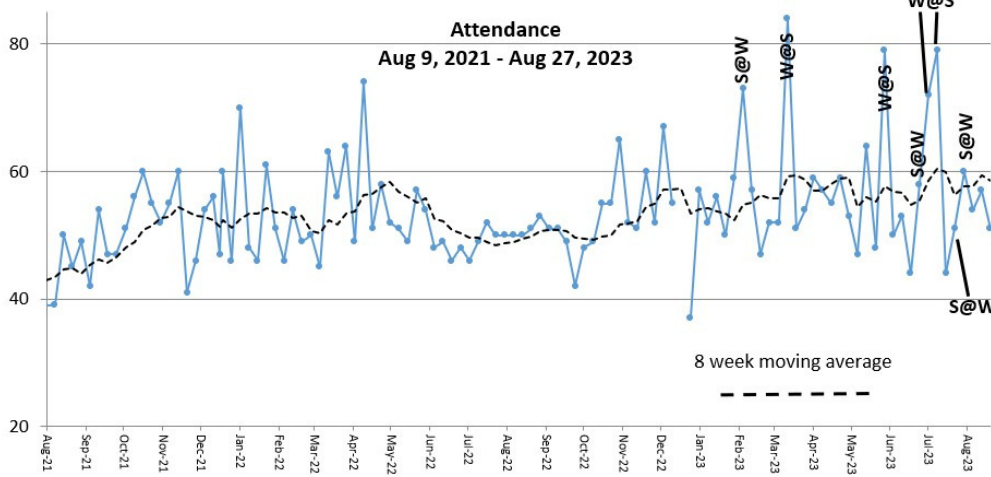
OCT 22 - JAR OF TURKEY GRAVY

OCT 29 - CAN OF CRANBERRY SAUCE

NOV 5 - CAN OF SWEET POTATOES

NOV 12 - COST OF ROLLS & PIE

NOV 19 - COST OF MEAT



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

Postage

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



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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

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