



# PARTNERSHIP PRESS

@Partnership Place



**WESTMINSTER**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



**St. John's**  
United Church of Christ

## JANUARY CALENDAR

JAN 1—OFFICE CLOSED - HAPPY NEW YEAR!

JAN 4—CALVARY BRASS JOINS US FOR WORSHIP 10 AM

JAN 5—WPC FINANCE MEETING 1 PM

JAN 6—CENTERING PRAYER 5:30 PM

JAN 7—INTERFAITH SHELTER KIDS' ACTIVITIES 5:15 PM

JAN 8—JACKSON PERSONAL CARE PANTRY 5 PM; NAACP MEETING 6 PM

JAN 11—FIRST STEPS BRUNCH FOR NEW ATTENDEES & VISITORS 11:15 AM

JAN 13 – NURTURE MEETING 10 AM; WORSHIP MEETING 4 PM

JAN 14—SJUCC COUNCIL 4:30 PM, PARTNERSHIP BOARD 5:30 PM,  
SESSION MEETING 6:30 PM

JAN 16—FOOD PANTRY AND BABY SPRINKLES 10 AM – 12 NOON

JAN 20—COMMUNITY DINNER 6 PM

JAN 21—INTERFAITH SHELTER KIDS' ACTIVITIES 5:30 PM

JAN 24—COMMUNITY DANCE 7-9 PM

JAN 25—CONGREGATIONAL MEETING 11:15 AM

JAN 27—HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS ZOOM MEETING 6 PM

CRAFTS EVERY WEDNESDAY 10 AM TO 12 PM IN THE PRAYER ROOM

JACKSON PERSONAL CARE MINISTRY EVERY THURSDAY 5-6:30 PM



## January 2026

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a just  
world  
for all  
[ucc.org](http://ucc.org)

# Mission Updates

Our **December Food Pantry** served 78 people representing 168 family members. 2100 pounds of food were distributed. The community dinner on December 23 served 39 persons.

- Contributed by Carl Robinson

Our **Baby Sprinkle** continues to serve families providing diapers, wipes, and clothing from newborn to size 6. In December we served 28 families and 44 children. Thanks to all who donated and volunteered! We continue to need children's clothing size 2 through 6 and diapers size 4 through 6 as well as pull ups.

- Contributed by Donna Benedict

The **Samaritan Fund** continues to assist with rent and utilities. In December one person received rent assistance. The emergency food pantry provided 16 sacks of food, and 19 people used our church showers.

- Contributed by the Church Office

At the **Jackson Interfaith Shelter**, we had a total of ten kids for December. A family of three kids moved out of the shelter and into a home ... a blessing for that family!

- Submitted by Cindy Osborne

The **Jackson Personal Care Ministry** served 123 guests during the month of December. If you would like to help with this worthwhile ministry, please sign up in the Community Room.

- Contributed by Margo and John Fenstermaker

Our **Clothesline Ministry** provides clothing items throughout the year. Many thanks to Gloria Frederickson for this ministry. Hats, scarves, gloves, and socks are needed. Please bring donations to the church office. Thank you to everyone for your generosity!

Our next **Interfaith Shelter Dinner Church** will be January 28. At least three volunteers are needed to serve the meal and share in worship. This ministry occurs on the fourth Wednesday, every other month. Please see Dawn Depner or Judy if you can help.

At the **Community Dance** in December everyone had a wonderful time with Santa and Mrs. Claus! The next dance will be a Hawaiian theme on January 24 from 7-9 PM. Free food, music, and fun for everyone! Many thanks to Linda Miller and her team.

# Contact Information

To receive the Zoom link for Sunday services, please visit [partnership.place](http://partnership.place) and click "Subscribe". You will receive the Partnership Place Weekly Digest with the Zoom link.



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# From the Pastor's Screen

COZY FANTASY



During 2025 the news has been distressing. Social media has become a battle ground. Friends you know and love have very different opinions about immigrants, vaccines, and tariffs. Families are careful during the holidays to avoid topics that might spark an argument at the table. Due to all the tension, I've developed a new coping skill.

I discovered Cozy Fantasy books. I spend my evenings engrossed in stories about orcs, elves, ratkins, hobs, and dwarves. My favorites are dragons, who have a very powerful kind of magic, and griffins, flying creatures who are part eagle and part lion. I finally confessed (with a great deal of embarrassment) to my book club friends, expecting to be book-shamed. I was surprised to find other cozy fantasy book lovers.

The fantasy characters are just like us, both flawed and wonderful (although they might be green). They have struggles and solutions; there are friendships and arguments; there are dreams and disappointments. The best part? There's always a happy ending.

When I hear about the current events in our world, it's difficult to stay positive. News about military actions, discrimination, racism, poverty, and genocide steals my hope. When I read about friendships, adventure, honor, dreams, and justice, it doesn't matter if the characters are goblins or hobbits. It reminds me that people are still capable of good. That we come from love, that we were created with joy. Just like the characters in my books.

What reminds you that life is still good -- that God created us from joy, to experience all that life offers? Where do you find peace? I hope that our church provides comfort ... that the story of God's love, that we hear again and again, will continue to remind us that our story will also have a happy ending.

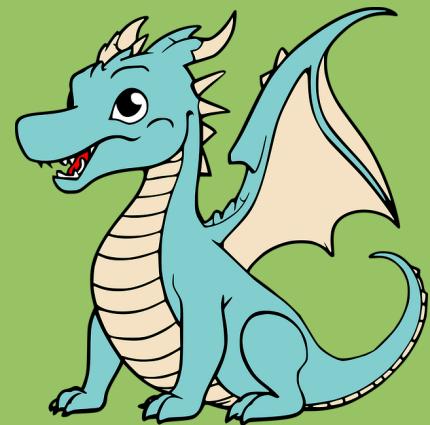
In the meantime, a little dragon magic won't hurt! Pastor Judy



 Ugly Sweater Contest Winners 

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13



BE THE BLESSING  
SOMETHING FOR  
EVERYONE!

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO  
TO BE A BLESSING:

INVITE FRIENDS TO CHURCH

OFFER YOUR MUSICAL GIFTS

DONATE CHILDREN'S  
CLOTHES & PULLUPS

SIGN BIRTHDAY CARDS

VISIT THE HOMEBOUND

HELP WITH COFFEE HOUR

PRAY

NOTICE WHO'S MISSING,  
AND REACH OUT WITH LOVE!

# 2025 SJUCC Giving Statements

This year, your 2025 giving statement will be sent by email directly from our donation software, Tithe.ly. In past years, statements were printed and mailed or handed out at the church, so this is a small change we wanted to be sure to share. Please note that the email from Tithe.ly may be directed to your spam or promotions folders. If we do not have an email address on file for you, your statement will be printed and mailed, just as it has been in the past.

Thank you for your continued generosity and for supporting the ministries of our church.

Gratefully, Bert Steck, SJUCC Financial Secretary

## *Tithe.ly*

SJUCC is migrating our online giving from Givelify to Tithe.ly. Givelify will still be available to use until March 31, 2026, after which it will no longer be available. Please scan the QR code with your smartphone to access Tithe.ly for St. John's online giving - and thank you for your generosity!



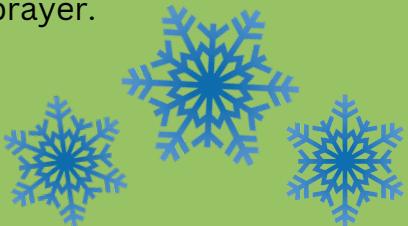
## *Ringing the Bell*



## *Centering Prayer*

Every month several dedicated individuals join together in the slow, centering movement of Tai Chi and then pray silently in our sanctuary. This month we will meet on Tuesday, January 6 at 5:30 PM.

Everyone is welcome to join us for this quiet time of prayer.

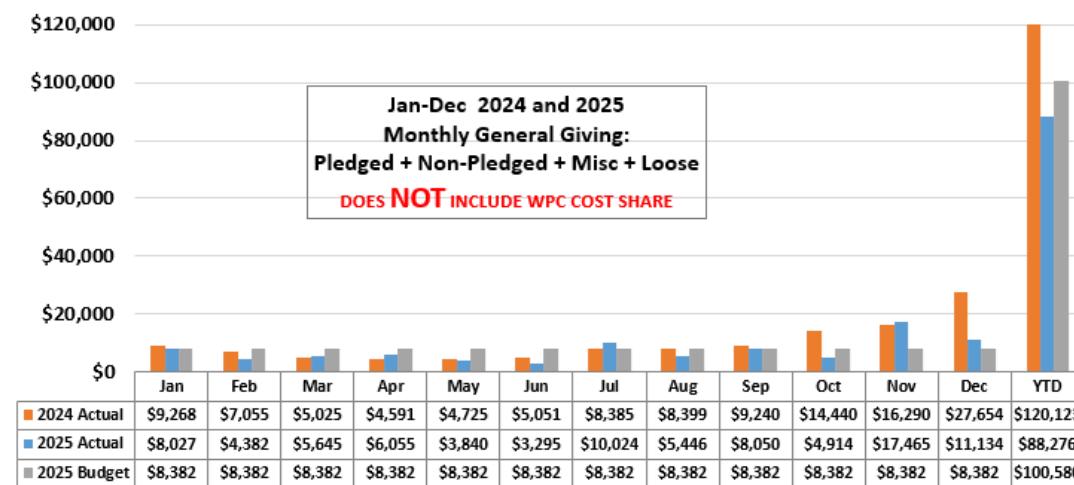
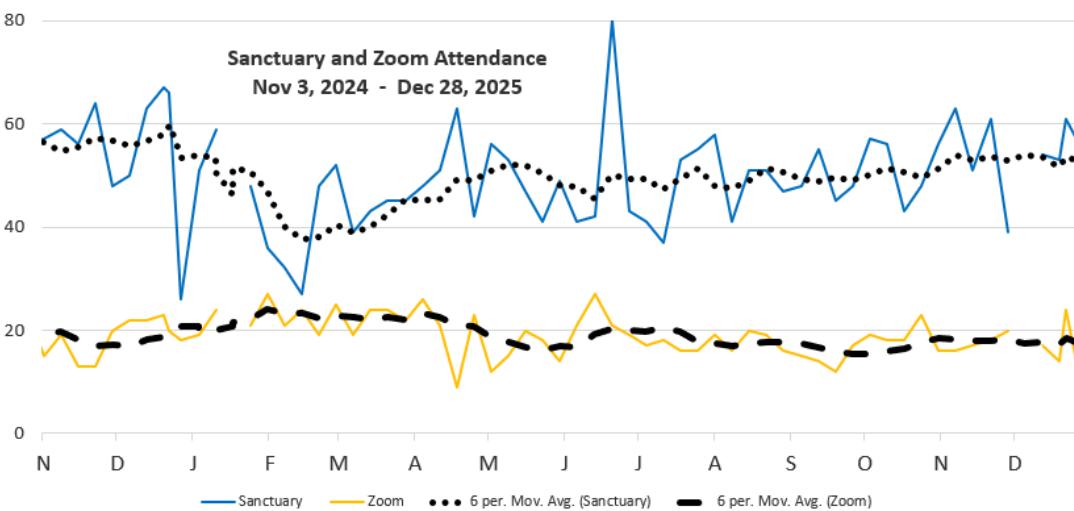


Cindy Spiess, Kathy and Katrina Johns, Lynn and Gary Kenworthy, and Margo Fenstermaker all rang the Salvation Army bell at Jackson Crossing on December 16.

# Healthy Congregations

Our first Healthy Congregations meeting will be Tuesday, January 27, from 6PM to 7PM on ZOOM. We will discuss Triangulation, which is a Family Systems Theory concept. We all form triangles in our relationships. When a relationship between two people becomes anxious, we naturally turn to a third person to off-load the stress. This can be a very healthy process, and it can also be damaging and unhealthy.

Let's talk about relationship triangles on January 27. This meeting will be ZOOM only. A second class will be offered onsite if there is enough interest. Everyone is welcome! Please sign up in the Community Room.



Charts contributed by Bert Steck

It is health  
that is real wealth  
and not pieces  
of gold and silver.

Mahatma Gandhi



## Partnership Board

The Partnership Board is made up of the WPC Session and the SJUCC Council.

Westminster Session members: Sandy Clark, Kathy Johns, Andy Rieman, Pat Baumgartner, Dennis Johns, Gary Kenworthy and Bette Watkins. Rev. Kristin Stroble serves as the Moderator.

St. John's Council members: Carl Robinson, Gary Reasoner, Eric Canter, Gene Johnson, Michele Wilson, Bert Steck, Cindy Osborne, and Jeannine Havens.

Our next meeting will be held on January 14.

# Per Capita for Westminster Members

The Presbyterian Church's per capita assessment is \$42.42 per person for WPC members. If you can help by paying the per capita for all members in your household, that would be greatly appreciated! Just put 'per capita' in the memo line of your check or on an envelope.

- Contributed by Bette Watkins

## WPC Giving Envelopes

Due to the cost of boxes of envelopes and the fact that very few were used, Westminster did not order envelopes for 2026. Please contact Bette Watkins (517-748-1137) if you would like to have quarterly or monthly envelopes. There are also envelopes at the back of the sanctuary near the offering box that can be used for both WPC and SJ. Just mark where you would like your donation directed.



We are made wise  
not by the recollection  
of our past,  
but by the responsibility  
for our future.

George Bernard Shaw

## 2026 Special Offerings

The Presbyterian Church is collecting 3 special offerings in 2026:

- One Great Hour of Sharing (traditionally received on Palm Sunday or Easter, but can be offered at any time during Lent);
- World Communion Offering (Sept. 6 - Oct. 4, 2026 & traditionally received on World Communion Sunday);
- Christmas Joy Offering (traditionally received on the 4th Sunday of Advent or on Christmas Eve but can be received anytime during the Advent season).

There will be a sheet posted explaining how the Presbyterian Church will use these offerings to support important causes.

-Contributed by Bette Watkins

Editor's Note: The UCC has corresponding special offerings at the same times, including Neighbors in Need. More information to come.

## Partnership Projects

Beginning in October 2025, a group of dedicated individuals met weekly to review financial policies for WPC and SJUCC. The revised combined financial policy will be presented at the upcoming Partnership Board meeting for acceptance.

In addition, anti-racism and anti-harassment policies were developed and will also be presented to the Partnership Board. These policies are required by the Presbytery and strongly recommended by the Michigan Conference UCC.

Membership language for our Partnership Agreement was also revised. Those who wish to become members may join either Westminster, St. John's, or the combined congregation. Membership numbers and financial gifts from our "affiliate" members will be equally divided between the two denominations.

Many thanks to all those who worked on these projects! We're better together.

- Judy

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