



January 2023
Volume 120

KNOX NEWS

Goliath stood proud and curious at Night in Bethlehem as children dragged parents, siblings, and grandparents to see him. It's not every day that you get to see a camel at church!

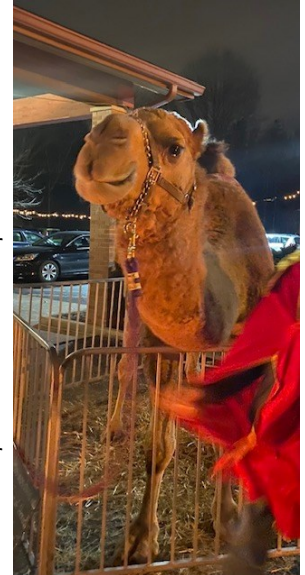
How often it seems we need to be dragged, nudged, or drawn to new sights, new convictions, and new friendships.

There may be plenty of things already on our mind and obligations we're trying to fulfill that it sometimes seems our path toward maturity and growth is impeded. Soon we are stuck in worn out patterns of thought and behavior. What happens when we are not really on the lookout for ways to grow in faith, stretch in compassion, stand for justice, practice meditation, or increase our generosity?

Until a child gives us a nudge, or challenge reveals we don't know where to go, we may not move. Often this is how God finds us and how Jesus, not only ignites our interest, but takes our hand and walks with us. Along the journey we will be baffled and astounded, we will encounter impediments and daunting challenges. This is why the Savior of the world stays with us and welcomes us into a discipling community like John Knox.

I look forward to this new year and all the ways Jesus is leading and drawing us into new dimensions of discipleship. Let us respond in faith when Jesus gently invites us, "Walk with me."

Tom



You're not alone.
God cares about you. So do we.

"It may be that when we no longer know what to do we have come to our real work, and that when we no longer know which way to go we have come to our real journey. The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings."

Wendell Berry



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY CALENDAR

January 3

Men's Bible Study Resumes
7am—Trinity Hall

Women's Small Group
7pm—108-109

January 4

Wednesday Morning Bible Study Resumes
9:30am—Trinity Hall

January 5

Toddler Time Resumes
10am—Fellowship Hall

January 8

Youth Group Bowling
11:30am—RollHouse Bowling Alley

January 9

Session
7pm—Lounge

January 16

Deacons
7pm

January 24

Community Meal
5:30pm—Drive-thru

January 29

Congregational Meeting
11am—Sanctuary & Online



JANUARY HYBRID WORSHIP

January 1

Rev. Dr. Tom MacMillan
Matthew 2:1-2
What we bring to Jesus
Peter Slowik, Viola

January 8

Communion

Healing Prayer

Rev. Dr. Tom MacMillan
Matthew 3:13-17
Why be baptized?
Celtic Amazing Grace, Choir with Betty Dimond, Flute & Tom Macmillan, Guitar

January 15

Rev. Dr. Tom MacMillan
Matthew 4: 1-11
How to face temptation
Seek Ye First & Savior of the Nations, Come, Bell Choir

January 22

Rev. Dr. Tom MacMillan
Matthew 5: 1-12
A better way to be
You Raise Me Up, Choir

January 29

Rev. Dr. Tom MacMillan
Matthew 6: 25-34
Look at the birds
REMIX Band

WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP

Facilitated by Sally Schwarz, this is a come as you are and come when you can women's group that will be held each Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM in Room 108/109. Group will begin on Tuesday, January 10, and will run through January 31 (4 Tuesdays). Hope to see you there!



WINTER YOUTH DATES:

Jan 8 - Bowl into the New Year, 11:30am-2:30pm
Bowling and Pizza.

Jan 22 - Youth group, 4-6 pm

Feb 5 - Youth Group Movie Night. 5-8pm w/ pizza

Late Feb Event: Date and Time TBA

Mar 5 - Youth Group 4-6pm

Mar 19 - Mission and Pizza. After Church. Timing TBA

WHAT'S UP AT JKPC?

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

December 12, 2022

- Heard report submitted by Treasurer, Mindi Schibley, that regular offering received year to date as of the month of November was still about \$50,000 below the 2022 targeted level. She is hopeful that people will catch up with their pledges in December. She noted that people have been generous in contributing to special mission (shoeboxes, scholarships for Guatemala, People in Need Fund...etc.).
- Heard 2023 budget planning report from Terry Jones, Chair of the Finance Committee. Based on the pledges for 2023 and estimated contributions, they are projecting that the church will have a shortfall in 2023. Finance asked that Session members work in their committees to address how they can reduce expenses to lessen the projected budget shortfall.
- Membership Committee put together a list of inactive members and attempts were made to contact them and either keep them on the member list or keep them on the inactive list if they had moved or were attending another church. The inactive member list was reviewed by the Pastors and Session and a motion was made from Membership Committee and approved by Session through e-mail vote to remove the inactive members that were still on the list from the church member rolls.
- Heard report from Mission Committee that the introduction meeting to Kid's Hope at Maple school went well and there was a good response. Nineteen people are interested in being mentors and 30 students have been identified for mentoring. They are going to start with 10 students and 10 mentors and grow from there. More can be added later.
- Continued strategy and road mapping activity discussing roadblocks that may block us from being able to plan creatively.

A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

For the New Year

Arianne Braithwaite Lehn

Gracious One,

I thank you for holding my
hand in this fresh, new year...

Against my inclination
and with your help,

I let go of my desire for
more control over my life.

My hunger to know what's coming
and to be ready for it.

My expectations to be in charge.

Have you not taught me again and again
how the joy is in the flexibility?

How all the unexpected,
the unwanted, the unexplained
things coalesce to carve me into
the person I really want to be?

Even the changes I asked for,
the changes I wanted,
can cause anxiety.

Treading on this shifting soil
calls for a steadiness
beyond my own capabilities.

So I trust your hand to hold mine,
carrying me into this new land –
good but different.

You are my Birthing Mother,
always re-creating, always open to change.

You keep showing me
while change is eternally constant,
so is your presence.

You engrain in me
how hope is born through struggle
and the fresh start brought through
change is an invitation to grow.

Whenever something leaves,
something new comes.

Please give me the
wisdom of soul, Loving One,
to look for it.

For a soft heart open to newness,
sensitive to others' pain,
resilient with hope,
trusting in darkness....

this is the heart for
which I pray this year.

Amen.



Another year has gone by, and we are heading into a new year. At this time, we often look both backwards at what has happened and forwards into what can be.

John Knox has finished the year with forward momentum and a strong exit from the pandemic. We have seen new programs flourish and existing ones continue without losing much of their stride. Some things have returned in much the same way and others are being reimagined and refreshed. It certainly has been an exciting year.

Yet, throughout it all, you have been at the center of what has happened this past year and what you have brought to our church family. You are what makes John Knox be a home for God’s ministry to flourish. Without your partnership, we would not be here.

As we look forward, one of the first things we will do as a church will be to receive our 2023 budget at our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 29. This will take into account where we are with our Stewardship Campaign. As of the time of this writing (Dec 30), we have received 145 pledges with commitments totaling \$616,315, which is 64% of our goal of \$957,215.

Session meets next week to approve on the 2023 budget. Your support will help determine what we are able, and not able to do this year. If you have not already done so, we invite you to let us know of your commitment to financially support John Knox for 2023. If you have questions, feel free to contact Mindi Schibley, the Finance Manager, at mschibley@johnknoxpc.org.

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

What is per capita?

A question we often receive at this time of year is what is the Per Capita apportionment envelope in my offering envelope box?

Per capita is a set amount of money per member that is paid to the Presbytery of the Western Reserve, the Synod of the Covenant, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). Per capita covers the ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions. It can also be described as the Presbyterian Covenant Community Fund. Because every Presbyterian shares the benefit of the PC(USA)’s system of government, the expenses associated with the coordinating and performing the functions of that system should be shared by everyone as well.

As Presbyterians, we have a responsibility to stewardship in the life of the church and to support the work of the larger church. The apportionment is based on church membership as reported in the prior year. As of December 31, 2021, John Knox Church has 576 members on the rolls. The 2023 per capita apportionment is \$36.50 per member. Total per capita apportionment payable to the Presbytery for 2023 is \$21,024. Your support will help us offset this expense paid by our church. Join us by taking a moment to send in your per capita apportionment or submit it online through Realm. If you have any questions concerning the per capita or ways to give, please contact Mindi Schibley, our Finance Manager, at 440-777-3744 x102 or mschibley@johnknoxpc.org.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Save the Date Valentine Party Sunday, February 12



Congregational Life is hosting a Valentine Party on
Sunday, February 12
following Sunday worship.



Join us for soup, salads and desserts;
make some Valentines for loved ones and
enjoy an extended time of fellowship.



Watch for more details in the Sunday bulletin, Mid-Week Blast
and next month's edition of Knox News.

KIDS HOPE

John Knox is partnering with Maple Intermediate Elementary School in a big way. We are the face of John Knox and Kids Hope USA in our community and are so grateful for all of your prayers, contributions of supplies, and the interest in becoming a mentor or a prayer partner.

We are hopeful to be in Maple Elementary mentoring kids sometime in January and will continue to keep everyone updated as the program begins.

We are still in need of prayer partners. If you are interested in learning more about this vital role, please reach out to Athena or Chris Hoffa, info@johnknoxpc.org or ckh649@gmail.com.



MISSION

MITTEN TREE DONATIONS

A huge thank you to Congregational Life for organizing the Christmas Mitten Tree drive. And, many thanks to everyone who donated new mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, and socks for children and adults. You may have noticed the Christmas tree surrounded by shopping bags filled with donations. Our prayer is that these items will keep families warm and remind them of God's love.

The donations were delivered to these locations in Cleveland and in Elyria:

- 1) Garden Valley Neighborhood House
- 2) Building Hope in the City
- 3) Kanisa House and
- 4) St. Andrew Episcopal Church in downtown Elyria.



GUATEMALA - FUNDENOR (AQ"AB"AL")

On Sunday, December 11, Terry Jones, Tim Claiborne, and the team with pictures in Trinity Hall shared some of the stories from our trip six weeks ago. The medical team saw over 900 patients, and the water team provided 125 Pure Water Systems. We know our efforts make a difference because they tell us so and we saw it first hand. Several people have asked about Fundenor and our relationship with them. It began 20 years ago, and we have sent teams since 2010.

The Director of Fundenor, Williams Picon, is a dedicated leader who receives no compensation. The organization has only 7 devoted college graduates who are women raised in the communities being served. Fundenor is a Guatemalan NGO dedicated to improving the lives in 10 - 12 communities in the mountains of the Verapaces. They have communities who wish to be part of their program of Community Development, but sadly Fundenor does not have the staff to provide the teaching and training.

Their latest success is the Girls Scholarship Program in which 25 girls received education in a residence and in communities. In 2023, they hope to expand to 33 girls and have a waiting list. The parents and the girls are dedicated to learning in a culture that has tended to empathize men/ boy's learning.

John Knox and five other churches and friends are seeking to provide funds for the scholarship program. Every gift makes a difference! If you have a question, contact any member of the JK Guatemala team: Terry and Dona Jones, Tim and Donna Claiborne, Stephanie Thompson, Lillian Predota, Phil Huffman, Tim MacMillan, and Pastor Tom MacMillan. Please keep our partner in prayer.



SERVICE & OUTREACH

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

A warm thank you to the John Knox community for your continued support of our food pantry. Your gifts of nonperishable foods and your financial donations have really helped! If you are interested in volunteering in this ministry, please email the office, info@johnknoxpc.org.

During the month of January, the food pantry request will be for protein, jelly, and reusable plastic bags. These items are much needed and often are overlooked when making purchases to donate to food pantries.

Canned Chicken

It's simple to toss this non-perishable item into soups and casseroles or add it to a sandwich or cracker. Its versatility and high protein content make it a popular item.

Canned Fish (Tuna and Salmon)

Canned fish has vitamins, omega-3 fatty acids and protein, and it makes for a quick and easy meal.

Canned Meat (SPAM and Ham)

Grab some SPAM or canned ham and drop it into a food donation bin. It's shelf-stable, doesn't require much prep or equipment to eat, and delivers a quick hit of protein to keep individuals feeling full for longer.

Peanut Butter

Kids and adults like it, and it's high in protein, making peanut butter one of the most popular items requested.



CHRISTMAS CAROLING
AT THE RENAISSANCE



CHRISTMAS CONCERT 2022



John Knox Church Christmas Concert 2022



John Knox Church

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATES

Thank you for all the ways family and youth participated in our Advent and Christmas activities. The Christmas season was full of wonderful opportunities to celebrate together, including Hanging of the Greens, Pancakes and Pajamas, the Live Nativity, Youth group Christmas parties, and lively Family Christmas Eve Services. Thank you to all of our staff, congregation, and volunteers who made these events lively and engaging. A big thank you to the congregation who generously supported the youth in their Cookie and Cocoa fundraiser after the winter concert.

As we come into the New Year, we invite families to continue to participate in **Children's and Youth Sunday School**. Beginning Sunday, January 8, children will check in at the family check in area. Youth will be back in the youth room for Poptarts and continuing the *Reform* curriculum for Sunday School.

Interested in Confirmation? Confirmation is an opportunity to celebrate the youth of our church and their decision to make a public profession of faith. Confirmation is a continuation of the faith journey that began at baptism and continues throughout their whole lives. Confirmation is a time when youth are given the opportunity to 'confirm' their own faith and become members of the church. This winter and spring we are hoping to have a confirmation class for our youth who are interested. This will include 6-8 extra meetings after church, attendance at specific Sunday School sessions, a few special events, and working with an adult mentor. **If you are interested in your youth participating in Confirmation, please contact Susanne at sbendoraitis@johnknoxpc.org to sign up by January 15.**

Blessings to all and wishing our JKPC families well in this New Year!

Susanne and Justine





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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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PLEASE
PLACE
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