



The CALENDAR

of JEFFERSON AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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PASTOR'S CORNER

by Rev. Matthew Nickel, Pastor

There are certain journeys that we repeat. Some families gather at the same house for Thanksgiving or Christmas. Some take summer trips to the same State Park, campground, or cottage. Some gather the same friends and family to celebrate. Sometimes we prepare the same recipes each year, as that food tells a story. When we make the same journey, whether a place, a group of people, or recipes, form traditions. Each year though, we change, our lives change, and really, our traditions slowly change and evolve with us as well. When we recognize that we repeat these traditions year after year, we realize they are more than traditions, they are a pilgrimage. Each time we make the journey our hearts grow wider, our relationships grow deeper, and our lives become fuller.

Each year, we make the journey of **Advent**. We sing the same hymns, we listen to the same story in scripture, we gather with our community to welcome Christ again into our lives. The stories become more familiar, not so they

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Christmas Eve Services at 4 & 9 p.m.

Come and hear the good news of a great joy on Christmas Eve. **The Family Lessons and Carols Service** will be at 4 p.m. and the **Candlelight Communion Service** will begin at 9 p.m. with preludes that begin shortly after 8:30 p.m. This service will feature special music performed by the choir and guest musicians. Come gather with us to listen to the story of the birth of Jesus, to sing hymns of celebration, and welcome the light of Christ into our lives.

Deacons Christmas Food Baskets

For years the Deacons at JAPC have offered **Christmas Food Baskets** for neighbors looking for assistance. These Christmas baskets are two large tubs of food that are stocked to provide both grocery staples and the fixings for a Christmas dinner. Opportunities to volunteer will be offered in December. Please consider making a gift. Checks can be made to JAPC and please write Christmas Baskets on your check or envelope. You may also give online at www.japc.org/give

Children's Christmas Pageant goes Virtual

Be a part of our Christmas pageant at home. Your family is invited to take part in the pageant by sharing your own talents of music, art, or drama. To participate, contact Kathy Chateau for a portion of the script; then you will record your family's part and we'll put it together as an online gift to the congregation. Kathy Chateau at kathy@japc.org or call 313-822-3456.

Advent Book Study

On Wednesdays December 1, 8, and 15 at 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., church members will gather on Zoom to discuss short stories from the book *A Stubborn Sweetness* by Katherine Paterson (author of *A Bridge to Terabithia*). Email Margie (margie@japc.org) in the church office or sign-up online to receive the Zoom information and copies of the stories in advance. You can purchase a copy of the book from Westminster John Knox Press or where you like to buy books. Join us for a warm **Advent** discussions that will welcome the light of Christmas.

Music Sunday December 12

During worship, the Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church Chancel Choir will present an Advent music program in collaboration with Jackson and Almeda Berkey, founding members of Mannheim Steamroller. The program, titled, *The Peaceable Kingdom — Witnessing the Mystery of Grace*, will feature several compositions of Jackson Berkey including his settings of *O magnum Mysterium*, *In the Bleak Midwinter*, *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus*, and *O Come All Ye Faithful*. The choir, under Almeda's direction, will be accompanied by a ten-piece instrumental ensemble and organ.

Longest Night Prayer Service Thursday, December 16 at 7 p.m.

The nights grow long around the time of the Winter Solstice. We know the darkness of life and feel its ache in holiday seasons. On Thursday, December 16 at 7pm the church will host a prayer service that is a safe and sacred place to bring to God our grief, loss, sadness, and uncertainty. Join us for healing prayers, scripture, and music. In the secure place of worship, we bring all we experience and open ourselves to the God whose love never ends. If you know someone whose heart is heavy, consider inviting them join you to come and seek peace.

Jazz Advent Worship Sunday, December 19

On December 19, during worship, we will welcome back Marion Hayden and a combo to provide a jazz service in collaboration with our very own Deborah Nero on vocals. Please join us for the unique offering of music during the holiday season.

So Many Volunteers, So Much Gratitude

Much gratitude is to volunteers who make the church's ministries possible. A big thank you goes to those who usher for worship services. **Ushers** are vital to our Sunday morning experience. Thank you to **Deacons** who coordinated the **Annual Bake Sale** and the church members who contributed baked goods. Thank you Deacons for the delicious **Chili Cook Off** and for the chili cooks. Thank you to the ushers and people who prepared the church for **Scottish Sunday**. Thank you to those who hang the greens. Thank you to volunteers who helped with **Thanksgiving Dinners**. Thank you choir for **Music Sunday**. Thank you to those who contribute to the **Deacon Christmas Baskets** and help assemble and distribute. Thank you to people who participate in **Angel Tree**. Thank you to the livestream team. There is so much happening at church. It is exciting. Thank you for the energy, intelligence, imagination, and love you share through the ministries of the church.



A beautiful day for a bike ride! Parish Life sponsored a Halloween bike ride along the Detroit riverfront.

Mission Committee Report

by Paul Booker, Mission Committee Chair

The Mission Committee has had a busy year — that may not adequately sum it up, but it is pretty close. We have experienced a rebirth in the past year. We have taken on new partnerships, we have seen new opportunities open to us, and we have seen JAPC's mission outreach grow in ways we did not think possible. It's hard to predict what will come next. We have had multiple conversations with varying groups interested in what we are doing and how they may partner with us. I would like to mention a few of our partners and how they have directly impacted our work.

Danielle Todd

Danielle has been instrumental in our mission and views us as a partner in so many ventures. It is hard to believe that a year ago she was trying to figure out the logistics for the Thanksgiving Dinner 2020. It was hard to imagine how it would be pulled off, but I remember thinking about a week before it actually happened, "she's got this!" 1,000 bags containing complete chef made dinners were distributed on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and our church's role in it did not go unrecognized. It did not conclude there. Two months later, three chefs were working in our kitchen at JAPC to produce 50 meals weekly. As the funding increased, so did the number of meals. As 2021 went on, we were producing 175 meals per week. During **Advent** — new beginnings and possibilities, we know that many things will happen when you are open to think in new ways.

Alberta Asmar

Alberta contacted the church in mid-February of this year. I happened to be in the office and Margie handed me the phone. Alberta explained her work with Harbortown Market and how we might be a distribution point for her reclaimed groceries ministry. We are blessed to be able to get food into the hands of folks that need it. Alberta has supplied us with a variety of food and perishable items that we distribute weekly. One week, she asked if I thought adult undergarments might be distributed. I turned 50 shades of red but said we would try. They were very well received and have become one of our most sought-after items that we distribute. It seems God uses us in ways we don't think possible or necessary. Although no one likes to talk about such items, they are a significant expense for budgets that may already be stretched in ways we never thought possible. It is one more example how a partnership has allowed us to help those struggling in the 48214 zip code.

Kristi Lewis

Kristi is one of our many partner volunteers. There are countless names I could mention but Kristi is one of our longest serving volunteers. She was at the Thanksgiving preparations, has driven the **Make Food Not Waste** van to do pickups, and shows up weekly to help distribute. Kristi truly exemplifies servant leadership. Through the various stages of parking lot heat, windstorms, rain deluges, and bitter temperatures, she has been there helping our guests and taking care of their needs. When Kristi arrives, she always says, "what do you need?" and immediately pitches in to help. Her dedication to our mission has been ongoing for many years and as it changes, Kristi steps in where needed. Byrum Patrick, Chelsea Gilbert, Sally Owens, and countless others have joined in our commitment to food distribution and to seeing that folks are well taken care of when they come through our gates.

The Journalists

The press often gets a bad rap, but they have been very generous with JAPC this year and our efforts have not gone unnoticed. *Planet Detroit*, *Detroit Free Press*, *National Geographic*, and *Presbyterians Today* are just a few of the newspapers and periodicals where our church's ministry has been mentioned, highlighted, and recognized. Recognition is good but it is fleeting. The real work is just starting. As you read this, we probably have our second Thanksgiving dinner in the rearview mirror. It will be a much smaller outreach this year and will be more targeted towards those that drive in weekly to get food. After countless articles about what churches are not doing and how churches are failing, it is nice to know that we have been recognized for our efforts and that our willingness to partner with other groups has not gone unnoticed.

Many of our programs started in the past few years continue to flourish. Bags of food that are packed for students at Nichols School. Sandra Nichols and Laura Boyle shop, bag, and keep a watchful eye on the backdoor pantry. Louis Asmus delivers our 30 bags to Nichols every week. Sandra and Laura also sort the items we receive from Harbortown making sure our guests receive quality items. **The Angel Tree** party, coordinated by Pat Slone, continues assuring that children of incarcerated parents have something under the tree. Five kitchen angels plus one gave our kitchen a much needed thorough cleaning! This list could go on for several more paragraphs, but I will stop.

Advent signals a rebirth and a new beginning. Our Mission Committee's work is not finished but truly has had some rather fast starts this past year. Please join with us this **Advent** as we prayerfully seek our next steps and reach out for new partners for JAPC. Join us as we look for other ways to serve Christ from the corner of Burns and Jefferson.

Music Series 2021–22

by Stephen Warner, Director of Music

The '20–'21 information about the series was released in November. By the time you read this, we will have already hosted Nicholas Schmelter and Tyler Kivel in their “Dual Art” program for organ and piano. The series this year includes a number of personal connections for me so it will feature the organ a lot this year!

In June, I will be putting on a “Steve and Friends” style concert celebrating the 100th anniversary of the passing of Camille Saint-Saens. I will perform a few of his original organ compositions along with a few transcriptions of favorite symphonic works like *Dance Macabre*. We will also feature my classmate, Christine Westbury, on piano with the first movement of the *Egyptian* piano concerto. Saint-Saens lived a very long and interesting life. He was well travelled and educated in science. Like Charles-Marie Widor, he outlived the fashion of his own compositions, but was always a vital part of the Parisian musical culture. The program will give us a chance to enjoy the now timeless beauty of his melodies and sparkle in his musical settings.

On March 27, we will feature my professor from the University of Michigan, Dr. James Kibbie, in a solo organ concert. Dr.

Kibbie is the chair of the organ department and has been on the faculty at U of M since the early 1980s. He has won several prestigious performance competitions including the famed Chartes Competition and the Prague Spring Festival. In the early 2000, Dr. Kibbie undertook a project to perform the complete Bach organ works in 18 recitals. He recorded the complete catalogue on historic organs in Germany and has made them all available for free download. I am pleased to have the chance to feature my mentor this year.

We are also trying something different this year by featuring artists during worship. Jackson and Almeda Berkey have been great friends to our worship program. On December 12, will be bringing them back to do an **Advent** service with our chancel choir. Instead of one cantata, we are creating a service with a few of his shorter works. The centerpiece will be his new setting of the text *O Magnum Mysterium*. This text points to all the animals surrounding Christ in the Manger and invites the theme of the “peaceable kingdom” to be explored in the service. This piece and others will feature a small ensemble of strings, woodwinds, percussion, harp and organ. We are excited to have a chance to collaborate with the Berkey’s again and have a chance to share their great work in ministry!

Carillon practice keyboard among choir room treasures

The beautiful oak carillon practice keyboard — a facsimile of the “real” key and pedal board in the tower — sits quietly in our second-floor choir room at JAPC. This practice instrument uses tuned metal bars instead of bronze bells for sound. They are struck when the keys and pedals are depressed and allow the player to learn new music and review pieces that might need polishing without climbing into the tower.

The practice console still has all the tiny ivory numbers (1 through 23) and note names on its keys. The carillon keys, through use and probably temperature changes in the tower, are missing several of the little discs. And the practice keyboard has special ivory plaque reading “By Royal Warrant to H. M. King George V.” If the real carillon ever had one, it is no longer attached.

Stop by the choir room sometime and take a look at the carillon practice key/pedal board. And if you can read music (it resembles piano music) and have an interest in learning to play the carillon, please see Stephen Warner or Jenny King. Our Gillett & Johnston carillon at JAPC was cast in Croydon, England in the mid-1920s and is the oldest and smallest carillon in Michigan.

The carillon practice console right





Jazz Series Came Alive This Fall

Our Jazz events this fall have been well attended and well received. Thanks to extra publicity work by Jenny King, both events were well promoted and had good attendance. We are grateful to Trena Ruffner for curating such a wonderful collection of talent for us to enjoy each season and look forward to the offerings of the winter and spring half of the season!

Carillon Series welcomed Jenny Hyojin Moon

On Sunday, November 14, carillonneur Jenna Moon played the second and final program in our 2021 carillon series. Her music, which began at 3:45 p.m., was a prelude to the 2021-2022 Music Series organ-piano program at half-past four.

Hyojin (Jenna) Moon earned her Doctoral degree in Sacred Music at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor earlier this year. An avid carillon ambassador of diversity, she has performed over 95 weekday carillon recitals at the Lurie and Baird carillons. Moon received the 2021 MLK spirit award and was co-recipient of 2020 Sonic Scenographies research grant. Moon received the EXCEL Enterprise Fund for her project, highlighting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion through featuring works by composers of color. At U of M, she studied organ performance and organ literature with Dr. James Kibbie, sacred music and hymn improvisation with Dr. Kola Owolabi, and carillon performance with Dr. Tiffany Ng and Dr. Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra.



The Carillon Series at JAPC debuted in 1994 as the Summer Carillon Series. Our season now extends into the fall months. John Widmann of Frederick, Md., opened the '21 series July 24 at the **Thank You Picnic** for participants in our Friday community food program.

Children's Ministries

Christian Education

It has been so good to see our children again. Meghan Fiscus has been welcoming our little ones (infant – 5 years) with tender and joyful care. The nursery opens every Sunday at 10:15 a.m. through 10 minutes after worship ends.

Anne Maters, Clare Rogan, and Kathy Chateau have rotated teaching in our **Church School** classes on Sundays. We use a curriculum called *Growing in Grace and Gratitude* which provides Scripture, background, activities and prayers designed for a multi-age classroom. The curriculum offers ways children and youth can find meaning and be open to grace through discovering Bible stories. For more information about the nursery or church school classes, please contact Kathy Chateau at 313-822-3456 or kathy@japc.org.

Advent and Christmas

Back by popular demand, ALL families are invited to participate in our virtual **Christmas Pageant**. Each family is given a short script that is part of the Christmas story and presents it in whatever way they choose whether it be song, art, or drama. The clips will be put together for the whole congregation to enjoy. (To see last year's, you can go to <https://vimeo.com/492090409>)

Tutoring Tree and Outreach

Students have been so eager to return to **Tutoring Tree**. We gratefully have welcomed four new tutors this year to help us serve our children. Despite and perhaps because of the many challenges this year presents, our volunteers have been so energetic in supporting the students in so many ways. It is an awesome sight to see the dedication and persistence of our tutors, the resilience and joy of the students, and the compassion of all our support volunteers.

I received this email recently from a new tutor :

I can't tell you how meaningful & how much I love coming on Tuesdays. It's my favorite volunteer activity so far!!

Thanks for all the work you do!!

Ron

Blessing for the New Year

You walk across the threshold to a new year,
May you say goodbye to a year that has passed with compassion.
May you receive new found wisdom and refuse to set it aside.
May you be able to create life wherever you have power to do so.
And where you do not, may you dedicate to trying anyway.
In the New Year,
May you feel God's spirit of new possibility.
May you know new graces to heal the wounds of past years.
May the knowledge learned from difficult circumstances strengthen you for the year to come.
May you live peaceably, even with sorrows felt.
Even more so, may you flirt with joy daily.
May a new year bring new possibilities.
May you have the courage to have faith in these new beginnings.
May you be encouraged to carry on even when they seem unlikely to come to be.
When signs of the same old, same old appear and reappear,
When hoped for possibilities seem to look like they will turn to dust or shadows,
May you have faith that a deeper love is about to be revealed.
May you have faith that a more connected life is preparing to blossom.
May you have faith in new directions that surely will come,
Even when you feel uncertain, may you have such faith.
May you have this faith in the face of even what is unknown,
That God's goodness will be revealed.
May you find yourself among people who believe:
Who believe in a grace that is stronger than any suffering,
Who believe that compassion is powerful and lifegiving.
May you find yourself rooted in communion and community,
And may you find these two to be woven together such that they can never be separated.
May you be among those who want to transform brokenness into beauty.
May you encounter God renewing and restoring and sustaining wonderful mercy and goodness.
May you find people who embrace you, who empower you, who lift you up, who are companions for the journey.
May you find people who open your eyes and listen to your heart.
May you experience new life and may you know this life in the year to come.
And so may you know the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
May you know God's love that never ends,
May you know the embrace of the Holy Spirit that surrounds, guides, sends and nurtures every day.
May you know this now and in the year to come. *Amen.*

ALL THE WAYS YOU CAN GIVE

Stewardship 2022

Growing in Grace, Flourishing in Faith

Thank you to those who have already submitted your pledge. As of November 15, 2021, from those who have pledged, 68% have increased their giving, 22% have maintained, and 10% are new commitments, and no decreases. Thank you for your generous and faithful commitments! This is a great start that puts the church on course to meet or exceed our stewardship goal for 2022. Financial commitments make the mission and ministry of the church able to support the life of the congregation and our city. If you have not made a commitment, the Finance and Stewardship Committee invites you to make a pledge for 2022 for the ministries of the church that keep us Growing in Grace and Flourishing in Faith. Thank you!

Keep Up Your Financial Commitment

The Finance Committee strongly encourages members and friends who have made pledges to meet the terms of your pledge. If you have not made a pledge, we ask that you consider making the commitment. The mission and ministry of JAPC cannot happen without the faithful and generous commitments made by the congregation.

Online Giving is Available

Online giving using credit and debit cards is accessible from the church's website. A button is on the top-right side of the website, at www.japc.org/give to access secure online giving. Questions about online giving can be directed to Phyllis phyllis@japc.org.

Coffee Hosts

Want to share a smile, a cup of coffee and a cookie? Be a coffee host after worship some Sunday. Home-baked cookies are a treat but if you are not a baker, store cookies will do. We need at least five dozen.

If you would like to volunteer, call the Church Office (313 822-3456).

Returnable Collections

In the Tower Entryway that is a bin for collecting returnable cans and bottles. Church members and friends in the community are invited to share their rinsed returnables. Over the years the proceeds have contributed to projects led by the Board of Deacons. Consider putting your returnables to work for the ministry of the church.

Amazon Smile

If you shop on Amazon, JAPC can earn 0.5% of eligible Amazon purchases if a user designates Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian church as their designated charity. All you have to do is visit smile.amazon.com and enter Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church in the search box and select it as your charity. Purchases have to be made using the Amazon Smile portal.

Kroger Community Rewards

Kroger Community Rewards program benefits JAPC. To enroll (you will need the church's ID number [BL037] and your Kroger Plus Card), go to www.krogercommunityrewards.com or contact Kroger Customer Service at 1-800-576-4377. Every time you use your Kroger Plus Card, a portion of the proceeds will go directly to JAPC.

A Gift of Music

Opportunities are available to purchase music for a choral anthem to remember or honor a special friend or loved one, or to commemorate a special day. Your gift will be acknowledged each time the music is used in worship.

For further information, please speak to Stephen Warner stephen@japc.org.

Ushers Are Essential *Are you called to be one?*

Would you like to assist during the service on Sunday by being an usher? The Board of Deacons are looking for women and men who would serve as ushers for a Sunday (or two). The ushers play a vital role during the worship service, helping make members, friends and visitors feel welcomed, passing out Bulletins, taking the offering, and assisting in an emergency. If you would like to volunteer, please call the Church Office.

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become rote, rather so we hear their nuances. We sing the same songs, not so they become easy to sing or favorite songs, rather, we sign them because they become the rhythms of our lives. Each time we make this journey our hearts grow wider, our relationships grow deeper, and our lives become fuller. And our faith finds its home, again, with Jesus.

And together we will sing the promise that comes to us from the one born to the manager, as the words of a great hymn will remind us: Come, though long expected Jesus, born to set they people free; from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

JAPC E-Notes

Want to be kept informed about what's happening at JAPC? Our weekly E-Notes, with announcements and "late breaking" news, are sent mid-week. Call the Church Office or email Margie Uysal margie@japc.org to be added to the mailing list.

Looking Ahead to 2022

January brings a season of special worship services:

January 2

EPIPHANY SUNDAY

January 9

BAPTISM OF THE LORD SUNDAY

January 16

MLK JR. JAZZ SUNDAY

January 30

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING