



Belonging.

Have you ever wondered where you fit?

Have you ever entered a place where everyone else seems at ease and familiar with the surroundings, but you feel alone, even in the crowd?

In all our coming and going as a family of faith at John Knox, we place a high priority on connections – connecting with God, each other, and our neighbors near and far.

We place a high priority on creating space for people to form and flourish through shared practices of worship, service, truth-telling, vulnerability, peacemaking, accountability, and eating, singing, laughing, crying together.

In our life together we cultivate the belonging, imagination and collaborative connection that addresses our deepest longings.

This vision emerges in and through Christ who said,

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

I often use these words from Jesus when inviting our community to the Lord’s Supper. There are times when I pause, looking out, because I know so many are craving a sense of belonging and inclusion. So many are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and so many need a little rest.

So we’re going to stay with this passage through the summer months.

We will be talking about Jesus inviting us into relationship and caring for our weariness, burdens, and rest.

We will be talking about our connection to Jesus and learning the unforced rhythms of grace.

We will be talking about the gentle and humble nature of Jesus and our invitation to receive the rest He provides and assurance that we belong.

You belong. Don’t wonder if you have to do this alone or figure it out by yourself. Come, develop your connections at John Knox and “Get Plugged In.”

Tom

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



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## JUNE CALENDAR

### June 10

Guatemala Meeting  
8:30am—Gallery

### June 11

Creative Caring Card Event  
11am—Trinity Hall

### June 12

Oxcart Pantry Produce Pickup  
2pm—North Parking Lot

### Session

7pm—Lounge

### June 19

#### Juneteenth - Office Closed

Deacons  
7pm—Lounge

### June 26

VBS Kickoff  
5:30pm—Trinity Hall

### June 27

Community Meal  
5:30—Drive-thru

## JUNE HYBRID WORSHIP

### June 4

#### Communion

Rev. Dr. Tom MacMillan  
*II Corinthians 13: 11-13*  
Communion of the Holy Spirit

### June 11

#### Healing Prayer

Rev. Dr. Tom MacMillan  
*Matthew 11:28-30 & Isaiah 55:1-3*  
Invitation of Jesus, "Come to Me"

### June 18

Rev. Dr. Tom MacMillan  
*Matthew 11:28-30 & Psalm 34:17-18*  
*When We Are Weary*

### June 25

Rev. Carmen Cox Harwell  
*Matthew 11:28-30*

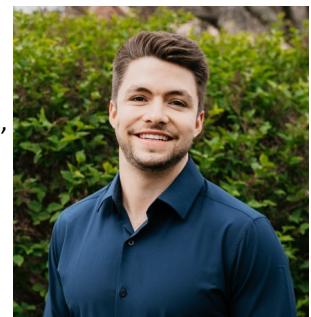
## 2023 SCHOLARSHIP FORMS

Scholarship applications for the 2023-2024 school year are now available. To get an application, stop by the office or email <mailto:info@johnknoxpc.org>. All completed applications must be turned in to the office by June 21, 2022.



## HEALTH, FITNESS, & LONGEVITY WORKSHOP

Join Kyle MacMillan, PT, DPT for a workshop, where you will learn simple but effective ways to improve your health, fitness, and longevity so that you can better express your God-given gifts and serve those you love. Topics discussed will include: the necessity for daily movement, nutrition principles to improve energy and longevity, how to improve joint health, and a sample home exercise routine. Come prepared to move, ask questions, and equip yourself with actionable steps you could take right after the workshop to improve your strength, vitality, and longevity to become a better servant of God's Kingdom. This workshop will be offered June 6, July 11, and August 7 from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM in Trinity Hall.



# WHAT'S UP AT JKPC?

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

### May 15, 2023 MEETING

- Session began with a reading of the Combined Faith Statement from the Confirmation Class of 2023
- Heard report from Treasurer, Mindi Schibley that as of the end of April, the church has received 45% of pledged regular offering for 2023. JKPC is still receiving per capita payments. Discussing per capita with the congregation has helped. Operating expenses are for the most part at or below expected levels month to date. Overall gain month to date was about \$31,000.
- Heard about the Mortgage to Ministry Campaign progress. We have received \$230,000 in commitments and \$62,500 in financial gifts from the congregation so far which is a good start. The loan will need to be refinanced in August. They are planning to make a direct principal payment prior to refinancing to reduce the interest payment. Our interest rate is expected to increase from the current 3.75% to 5.40%.
- Approved motion by e-mail vote from the Personnel Committee to approve the Position Description for Director of Children's and Family Ministry.
- Approved motion by e-mail vote from Personnel Committee to approve the hiring of Laura Mirecki as the Director of Children's and Family Ministry.
- Approved motion by e-mail vote from Personnel Committee to approve the Position Description for Director of Music/Organist/Accompanist
- Approved motion from Worship Committee to approve the reschedule of the celebration of communion during July, 2023 from July 2 to July 9.
- Approved motion from Personnel Committee to approve the Position Description for Alternative Worship and Digital Ministry

# SUPER SUPPER SCRAMBLE

## SUPER SUPPER SCRAMBLE - PATIO EDITION

The JKPC Super Supper Scramble is back- Patio Edition! Let's connect with one another. Spiritual Growth Committee invites you to this unique small-group dinner experience! Have dinner with a small group of people from John Knox, enjoy and get to know each other! These dinners are for all ages, for singles, couples and families. We will "scramble" you for a social supper where you will get to spend time with people in our John Knox family. Please sign up by July 9 to either host or attend.

Spiritual Growth will then randomly assign you to a group to have dinner together on the night you have selected. These dinners will comprise of 8- 12 people that will take place Saturday, July 15, and Sunday, July 16, at 6:00 PM. Then you will be given an item to bring (main, side, salad or dessert.) Dinners will happen simultaneously at different locations hosted by those who sign up. Even if you put that you are available on both nights, you will only be assigned to one dinner. You will receive your assigned location and meal to bring prior to the event.

Sign up here: <https://forms.gle/nw9zu4TX9xBhhk3XA> or email the office at [info@johnknoxpc.org](mailto:info@johnknoxpc.org).

*Super  
Supper  
Scramble*



# MORTGAGE TO MINISTRY

On May 7th, we launched our Mortgage Debt Reduction Campaign, a 3-year plan designed to eliminate the church's outstanding mortgage debt by 2026.

The Trinity Hall addition was completed in 2012 at a cost of just over \$2.5 million. Through the generosity of the members and friends of the church, we were able to raise approximately \$1.5 million of the cost, but like most of us who have purchased homes, the church had to finance the remaining \$1 million balance. Through the continuing generosity of members and friends of the church, we have been successful in reducing the balance of the mortgage debt during the past ten years to just under \$600,000. We are grateful for how far we have come and for how you have helped to make that possible.

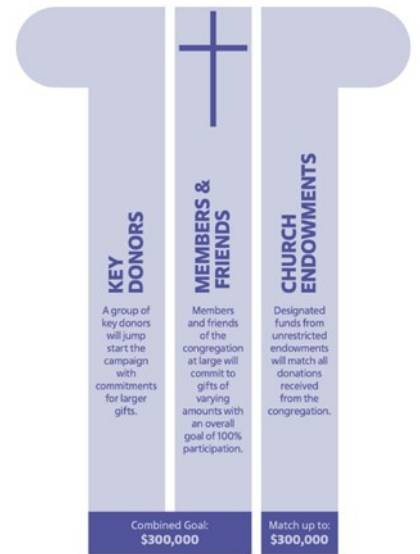
We now seek to eliminate this debt and fully focus on the ministry to which God has called us with a campaign using a three-column plan of support. Donations from the congregation will be combined with donations from a group of key donors and then matched dollar for dollar by unrestricted endowments and the Morris Bequest fund, up to \$300,000.

**This campaign is also very timely given the recent increase in interest rates.** Under the terms of our mortgage loan, the interest rate adjusts every three years. **In August, our interest rate is expected to increase from the current 3.75% to 5.40% for the next three years.** This will translate to an increase of our annual interest expense from \$23,145 in 2022 to approximately \$29,300 (on average) or an increase in interest expense totaling approximately \$18,400 over the next three years. **By using campaign donations to pay down the principal balance of the loan before the interest rate adjustment, we will dramatically reduce our interest expense.**

**We are excited to announce a total of \$297,550 has been committed to date!** This is an amazing blessing, and we are well on our way to removing the encumbrance of the mortgage debt. However, we still need your help to make the goal of zero debt a reality. With all of us working together, our goal for the church to move from Mortgage to Ministry will be fulfilled.

Please prayerfully consider the invitation to participate in this important campaign. If you would like more information, you can visit the Welcome Desk to pick up a brochure and commitment form as well as the church website. **Please complete and return the commitment form or pledge online at [www.johnknoxpc.org/M2M](http://www.johnknoxpc.org/M2M) by June 25th.**

We are so grateful for your generosity. Together in faith, we can turn our Mortgage to Ministry!



# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

The Congregational Life Committee

Invites you to the

*BYOP*

*(Bring Your Own Picnic)*

***Sunday, July 2, 2023***



The Congregational Life Committee is hosting a BYOP (Bring Your Own Picnic) on the South Lawn immediately following the worship service on Sunday, July 2. Bring your favorite picnic fare to enjoy as we gather to rejoice in one another, welcome VBS friends and families, and celebrate all that summer offers.

There are picnic tables and benches, but you might want to bring your own lawn chairs or blanket for seating in case all of the tables are filled. Congregational Life will provide ice cream treats (dairy and non-dairy) as well as refreshing water. You don't want to miss this opportunity to be together. We hope to see you on the 2<sup>nd</sup>!

## STEPHEN MINISTERS

### FINDING PATHWAYS THROUGH GRIEF

Our John Knox Stephen Ministry is sponsoring "Finding Pathways Through Grief" a mutual help support group. Whether it was the death of your life mate, a close friend, or another special relationship, grief is meant to be shared. The first meeting of this group will be on **Thursday, September 14, from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM in the lounge** and will run for 5 weeks.

Since everyone's experience with grief is somewhat unique, you won't find us telling you how you **ought to grieve**. Instead, what you will find here are friends who care and understand what you are going through.

The group is not psychotherapy but it will help you navigate the difficulties of this new experience. No one has to talk but everyone is encouraged to. We will discuss the issues and concerns common to bereaved people including:

- \***What to make of the anger, discouragement, and guilt experienced in grief**
- \***How to deal with the unfair expectations of other people**
- \***Where to look for people you can trust to help you**
- \***How to manage the holidays and other special occasions in grief**
- \***Who to consider for additional support if you need it**
- \***How to take care of yourself physically**

Please call Pastor Susanne Bendoraitis, Marilyn Rep, our Stephen Ministry Coordinator, or any of our Stephen Ministers for more information, or e-mail [info@johnknoxpc.org](mailto:info@johnknoxpc.org) if you are interested in attending.

# John Knox Church

## CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

June 4 is a Family Worship Sunday where we will have All-Age Worship in the Sanctuary and no Kids Sunday School (Nursery is available every Sunday). There will be a children's sermon and communion. We hope you will join us.

Thank you to all who ate ice cream at the Ice Cream Social! We made over \$500 for youth mission, and the ice cream was delicious. A big thank you to Dave at Weber's Ice cream for making this possible. If you want some more of that delicious ice cream, visit Weber's at 20230 Lorain Rd, Fairview Park.

Thanks to all who donated and helped with the soft clothing drive! We had a great time and made over \$800 dollars! A big thanks to Brad Harbison who rented and drove our truck!



Vacation Bible School is here! Sign up for an out of this world VBS! Our theme is Stellar: Shine Jesus' Light! This year, things will be different as VBS will be in the evening, Monday-Thursday, June 26-29, from 5:30-7:30 PM with a light dinner. Cost will be \$30 per child with a family cap of \$75. VBS Sunday and the church picnic will be on July 2. Questions, email Susanne sbendoraitis@johnknoxpc.org. Sign up for VBS or to volunteer here: [vbspro.events/p/36b3c1](https://vbspro.events/p/36b3c1).



We are announcing our local mission trip for 2023: Livin' La Vida Local 2023. This year's three-day trip will take place in our own backyard! We'll serve our local community through a variety of projects which may include Habitat for Humanity, Good Knights, church projects, and more. We will also have fun at the beach, hiking, and with a few surprises. Dates are July 5- July 7, 2023 (the last half of the 4th of July week) This daytime mission experience is for all of those entering 6th grade and above. The cost is \$75 with a \$25 deposit due at registration. Sign up here: [2023 Youth Mission Registration](#) Questions? Contact Susanne!

Susanne, Justine, Laura, and Beckie

### Congratulations

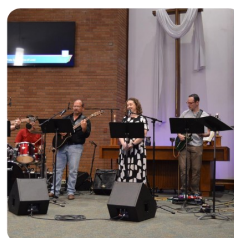
### Confirmands

Zach Barnhart  
Mitchell Belas  
Jonah Bendoraitis  
Micah Bendoraitis  
Lauren Harbison

### Thank You

### Mentors & Volunteers

John Hoffa  
Brian Insley  
Tom Judson  
Glenn Ploegstra  
Sue Ploegstra  
John Schwarz



# 2023 SPRING CONCERT/ ICE CREAM SOCIAL



## WELCOME!

### NEW DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Join us in our welcome of Laura Mirecki to our staff team. Laura is our new Director of Children's and Family Ministry. She and Justine will overlap while Laura is learning the ropes. Stay tuned for information on how we will celebrate Justine and how we will be welcoming Laura. Read on to learn a little bit more about our newest staff member!

Laura's passion for children's Christian education began in the Sunday School classroom. Going to Sunday School as a child, placed the belief in Laura that Jesus was with her throughout her childhood. She is a graduate of John Carroll University with a degree in Spanish and a Master's in Education. Laura has taught different grade levels in Columbia schools over the years. The position of Director of Children's and Family Ministry brings together her 2 passions: faith and education. She is also the wife of Julius, our building manager. They are proud parents of two grown daughters, Jessica and Amy. In her spare time, Laura enjoys reading, swimming, taking long walks and visiting Lake Erie. Would you like to get in touch? Laura's email is [lmirecki@johnknoxpc.org](mailto:lmirecki@johnknoxpc.org).



*Welcome Laura!*

# SPIRITUAL GROWTH

## WALKING WITH JESUS

“Walking With Jesus” is an opportunity to deepen your faith through three 1.5-hour interactive sessions designed to review and practice the teachings of Jesus. The objective is to equip participants with specific Scripture references and practical strategies for using the teachings of Jesus to navigate life today.

Session one will focus on Biblical teachings for when to pray and how to pray more effectively.

Sessions two and three will address key Biblical guidelines for walking in faith. In session two, we will review the benefits derived from accepting our identity in Christ Jesus, trusting in the promises of God, and living as God intends. In session three, we will address the advantage of discerning spiritual warfare, putting on the full armor of God, and reaping the blessings that come from life’s trials and tribulations.

Participants should bring a Bible and blank journal or notebook. All sessions will meet from 7:00 to 8:30 in the church lounge on the following dates: June 14, July 12, and August 9. Participants are free to attend one, two, or all three sessions.

Please direct any questions to Mary Lou Higginson by email ([mlhigger@yahoo.com](mailto:mlhigger@yahoo.com)) or phone (440-417-3698). Mary Lou will facilitate all three sessions.



# MISSION

## GUATEMALA WATER MISSION TEAM UPDATE

Our team will leave on August 12 and return on August 21. There are 12 people who have responded to God's call to "GO" and this will give us six teams of two to install 150 systems in the rural communities around the Tactic Mountain region. Pure water is a significant issue in every rural community and the Fundenor organization, with whom we have worked for the past 12 years, seeks to improve the living conditions in their communities. The last report from their Director, Williams Picon, stated that no member of the communities in which they work have seen anyone choose to migrate north!

Our team will consist of Terry Jones, Tim and Donna Claiborne, Bill and Lillian Horschke, John and Max Davenport, Bill Fike, Ken Langdon, Tom Drew, Bill Blackie and Sande Seib. Thank you for all your support and prayers. You help us make a difference in a region where there is great need.



**FILTER OF HOPE**  
CLEAN WATER FOR LIFE



# HONORS BRUNCH

After several years of not being able to officially honor the members of John Knox Church who reached/exceeded 80 years of age, our 2023 celebration returned with a bang! The Deacons hosted and stepped in where they were needed. A special thanks goes out to Pam Brown, who fearlessly led the deacons through the event. She says, "I truly appreciate everyone who helped either at the Brunch or behind the scenes." Athena McGinnis was key in assisting with invitations, while Sue Twining made phone calls to follow up with the invitations that went out.

Thanks to those who came early Sunday morning and helped with baking, setting up, making coffee, preparing fruit salad, and slicing quick breads: Tonya Sesek, Laury Patwardhan and Ellie, Cathy Wheeler, Chris Harbison, Jim Brown, and Bonnie Juzenas as well as those who came later: Sue and Glenn Ploegstra, Sue Schueller, Tom Haag, and Susanne Bendoraitis, all of whom assisted in the clean up effort. Bob Wheeler's talents on the piano were also a great addition to the experience. Just under 50 people joined the festivities. We are grateful for the lives of these octogenarians and hope to celebrate them again in 2024!





**JOHN KNOX**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**KNOX NEWS**

June 2023  
Volume 125



**JOHN KNOX**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

25200 Lorain Road  
North Olmsted, OH 44070

Phone: 440-777-3744  
E-mail: [info@johnknoxpc.org](mailto:info@johnknoxpc.org)

Website: [johnknoxpc.org](http://johnknoxpc.org)



PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE