

JFPC MAY, 2024 NEWSLETTER

Letter From the Pastor:

“Wisdom begins with reverence of the Lord, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

– Proverbs 1:7

Dear Church,

It's May! The month of Mother's Day, Proms and Graduations, Riverfest, Memorial Day, Pentecost. There's a lot happening, which has me thinking about life: rites of passage that shape us, mothers and teachers who influence us, events that impact our identities, people – beloved and strangers—who have sacrificed so much for our well-being, freedom, and growth. May is a month of reflection, which often leads to more questions.

Personally, I love questions. (Usually more than answers!) Questions open us up, inviting us to look deeper or wider than perhaps we normally would. They can open portals into new dimensions. Questions invite power sharing, as we listen to one another. They can be provocative, disarming, even life changing. Jesus knew the transformative power of questions and utilized their incisive edges effectively and often. Out of the 325 some questions He asked, 236 were unique. “What do you want me to do for you?” “What do you think?” “Who do you say that I am?” “Do you love me?” “Do you want to made well?” Which is your favorite?

All this reflection has me pondering. ***What questions are you asking in this season of your own life? What questions are you asking in this season of the life of Jonesville First Presbyterian Church?***

How would you categorize the season of life that we are in? What do you long to see happen? What are you grieving, hoping for, and working towards? How will you use your gifts, talents, and passions to envision and build the next chapter of JFPC?

Confusion, grappling, and incredulity are also forms of questions. Think of Mary, the mother of Jesus at the Annunciation asking, “HOW can this be?” Or Thomas, refusing to believe until he had been shown the same proof of Jesus's resurrection as the other disciples. Or even the father who brough his son to Jesus for healing who exclaimed, “Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. Each of these stayed present to their doubts and questions as they sought faith. They kept seeking and asking until they received wisdom and epiphanies, sometimes one question at a time. What about you? What doubts do you have? What do you need to “touch and see” so that God can help guide you into believing even in our current season?

A favorite quote of mine comes from Austrian poet and novelist Ranier Marie Rilke, who offered this advice to a young poet: *“Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.”*

May God grant us the patience, creativity, and grace to live the questions of this season of our church and gradually to live into their answers.

In Christ's Grace and Love,
Pastor Lynne

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT....

SCOTLAND TRIP FALL 2025:

Some of you have expressed interest in taking a Presbyterian Heritage pilgrimage to Scotland. I had the pleasure of speaking with Rev. James Wallace of Scotus Tours in Scotland. He is very excited about the possibility of planning a trip for us. If you'd like more information about his company, you can google scotustours.com .

We need a MINIMUM OF 24 travelers. (They don't all have to be from JFPC, so feel free to share this with anyone interested.) The price for a 9-day, 8 night tour would be around \$3800 per person (includes lodging, tours, breakfasts & dinners, transportation, etc) PLUS airfare. We need to gauge interest levels ASAP so we can determine whether we can move forward with this trip. If you, or those you know, are interested in this trip, please sign up on the church office bulletin board.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT COMPLETED:

The next time you are in the Memorial Garden, be sure to look for the beautiful bench created by our own Thane DeVries for his Eagle Scout project. Thanks, Thane and Dr. Bill Adams, for your hard work and dedication to our church! We appreciate you.

FROM OUR COMMITTEES....

ADMIN/FINANCE:

- PER CAPITA – what is that?

Presbyterians have used per capita—an annual per member apportionment assessed by the General Assembly (Book of Order, G-3.0106; see also Standing Rule F.4.b.), and by many synods and presbyteries, to enable Presbyterians mutually and equitably to share the ecclesiastical and administrative costs of sustaining our witness to Christ—as a sign of the covenant that binds us together.

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan reports that \$40.05 is the per capita rate, or the amount JFPC is charged for each member, for 2024. Within the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, this includes:

- • \$ 9.80 per person for the Office of the General Assembly
- • \$ 3.25 per person for the Synod of the Covenant
- • \$27.00 per person for the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

Per capita is NOT optional. Last year, our church's per capita bill was over \$4,000. It is greatly appreciated, and goes a long way to helping our budget, when members can cover the annual per capita fee for their own membership. Checks should be made out

to: Jonesville First Presbyterian Church with “per capita” written in the Memo line. Church member’s per capita is not automatically taken from your pledges/offerings – it must be designated on your payment. Thank you for your help!

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:

- **SPRING CLEAN UP** – Spring clean-up will look a little different this year. Trying to plan a Saturday when people are available, just was not working. Having said that, this year the Building and Grounds crew will be available to work any day during the week of May 7th and May 14th. If you have 1 or 2 hours free on any of these days, during the day or at night, please call Gerry Arno at 517-474-0621. He will be happy to sign you up!
- **2024 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN:** Many of you have noticed the deterioration of the walls and ceiling in our beautiful sanctuary. This year we will begin a capital campaign to fund the necessary repairs inside our building. If you’ve ever been blessed with the opportunity to change the lettering on our outdoor sign, you are also aware that it is a potentially life-threatening task as the glass and hinges may come crashing down at any moment. We are investigating quotes on solving this problem. More information to come soon!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

As we wrap up the school year, we are extremely thankful to Emerson, our Youth Leader, for her dedication and faithful presence in our church. Please join me in sharing a word of thanks and encouragement with her before she moves into her summer plans. (She’ll be back in the Fall!) THANK YOU, EMERSON!!

- **MONTREAT:**

Calling all High School students (rising 9th graders through 12th grade graduates). Our Presbytery will be taking a group of 20 students to Montreat for a Summer Youth Conference. Join us for a week of fun, friends, and faith (the week of July 21). Please let Pastor Lynne know if you’d like to join us. Scholarships are available!

- **WHAT’S HAPPENING WITH VBS:**

After much discussion, JFPC has determined that hosting a traditional, week-long, summer Vacation Bible School will not work well for our volunteers or our church families. Trying to plan around schedules that are packed with vacations, camps, sports, school extracurriculars, etc has become extremely difficult.....

YET... JFPC values our youth, our commitment to their faith formation, and our call to care for the littlest among us.

SO.... We are excited to consider hosting our “VBS” in the Fall. Currently, plans are underway to hold FRIDAY NIGHT FUN in the Fall. This will provide a “date night” for parents, as well as offering an opportunity for the children of our community to grow in faith and fellowship. Stay tuned for more information and volunteer opportunities!

- **ADULT EDUCATION BOOK STUDY:**

As part of our Adult Christian Education offerings, we are beginning Debby Irving's book, Waking Up White, and Finding Myself in the Story of Race. For most of us, this is a first opportunity to discuss race in the context of a faith community. If you are interested in joining us in these provocative, moving, and important conversations, we'll be meeting on Thursdays at 10:30. Having read the assigned chapter of the week is helpful, but not required.

FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH:

You have asked for JFPC to be more outreach/mission focused. We listened. Here are some of the ways we'll be offering fellowship and mission opportunities.

- **CARE BEARS/BUDDIES IN CHURCH:**

You may start seeing stuffed animals in the pews. This ministry has been effective in other churches. The bears/buddies sit in church each week, absorbing the Good News, prayers, the love of our church... they will have a little tag tied on them saying as much. They are meant to be shared with folks who may be feeling lonely, in pain, sick, or disconnected. Please help us share the love of Christ with those who need a reminder that someone cares.

- **RIVERFEST PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

Please help spread the word to invite folks to our annual delicious Pancake Breakfast. Saturday, May 18th starting at 8am!

- **BOXES OF BLESSING:**

Session has approved the building of a Community Blessing Box which will be located on our church grounds and stocked with food and hygiene items. This project is in its beginning phase. Look for more information to come.

- **GENTLE CHAIR YOGA AT JFPC**

Many of you enjoyed experiencing "Chair Yoga" under the direction of Yogi Rhonda Carrier during our Lenten Lunch series on healing. Some asked for more! If you are interested in gently moving your body/mind/spirit and trying out what Christian yoga is like, Fellowship and Outreach has created a Session sponsored opportunity for you!

Join us in the Fellowship Room for Gentle Chair Yoga taught by Radomi Goodlife. The class will begin on Thursday, May 16th at 10:00 a.m. The class will run every Thursday for 8 weeks with the possibility of more if the interest is there. All you need is comfortable clothing and a bottle of water. This is an opportunity for you to give yourself 45 minutes of golden time just for you. The cost is \$10 per session. Please text Diane Langan (734-658-2339) with any questions and to indicate your interest.

- **COMMUNITY DINNERS & GAME NIGHTS**

It's hard to believe our first Community Dinner was 5 months ago! Fellowship and Outreach Committee is excited to schedule and plan future events. Look for more information to come!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

May 1: 11am Bible Study, 1:10pm Life Goes On

May 2: 10:30 Book Study

May 3: Senior Tea @ JUMC

May 5: 10:30 **Worship with Communion** (Kathy Adam's birthday)

May 8: 10:30 Bible study, 1:10 pm Life Goes On

May 9: 10:30 Book Study, 6:30pm F&O Zoom

May 12: **10:30 Worship (Mother's Day)**

May 15: 10:30 Bible study, 1:10 pm Life Goes On

May 16: 10:30 Book Study; Noon Take-A-Break lunch, Cavoni's; 5:15 Worship Committee

May 18: Riverfest Pancake Breakfast, starts at 8:00 a.m.

May 19: **PENTECOST – Wear Red, Honoring our Graduates in Worship**

May 21: Life Goes On Luncheon at Coldwater Trainwreck Grill 1pm

May 22: 10:30 Bible study, 6:30pm SESSION

May 23: 10:30 Book Study

May 26: 10:30 Worship

May 27: Memorial Day