

JOHN KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



The mission of John Knox Presbyterian Church
is to grow in Christ,
be inspired to spread his word,
share his love throughout the community,
and experience joy on the way.



John Knox Presbyterian Church (USA)

PO Box 20968 (452 Cummings Lane N)

Keizer, OR 97307-0968 (503) 393-0404

office.johnknoxpreskeizer@gmail.com

johnknoxpreskeizer.org

Pastor: in transition

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Welcome to Our Story

Greetings to our members and friends!

This annual report tells the story of 2023 at John Knox Presbyterian Church in Keizer, Oregon. We celebrated our 60th birthday this year by traveling with grace and faith through a year of pastoral transition.

With the support of 29 different preachers over the year, we continued to offer exceptional Spirit-led worship and participate in dedicated mission here in Keizer and around the world. Guided by our Interim Moderator, Rev. David Horn, session and the congregation have worked together to identify how John Knox serves God in our community. While looking outward to the community, we have also looked inward at ourselves. What is our understanding of what it means to be the church? What are our expectations of our leadership? Our congregation? What do we want from a pastor, and what do we need? Whose job is it to guide the church and its work? How does our building support our mission? And how can we be most effective as we joyfully share Christ's love throughout the community?

As we look at ourselves and our community, we remain firm in Whose and who we are. We are God's beloved community. We are John Knox, where everyone counts and everyone is cared for and included in fellowship, education, mission, and worship activities. Please join us in celebrating the past year as you read this report. Please join us in prayer as we enter 2024 and continue our story of faith and ministry.

Eileen Sheelar

Clerk of Session



Bethany, Anna, Ezra, Matthew, Micah, and Caleb
"He Came Down" March, 2023

*O sing to the Lord a new song, for
the Lord has done marvelous things!*

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord,
all the earth; break forth into
joyous song and sing praises.*

Psalm 100: 1, 4

Operations Overview

Bronwyn Curtis

Church Administration

Administration duties continue with volunteer staffing. Office hours are regularly scheduled on Monday mornings and other times by appointment. Eileen Sheelar serves as Office Administrator, and Bronwyn Curtis continues to serve as our treasurer. Much of the office work and building management is done remotely. Bronwyn also maintains the church website and CJ High maintains our Facebook presence.

In May, the church sign and the neighbor’s fence were tagged with gang graffiti. A special thank you to Vallory Bunday and Linda Garland for their work to remove the paint and refinish the church sign. Our neighbor removed the graffiti from his fence and we have not had any incidents since.



Building Partners

Three AA groups continued their weekly meetings, and Keizer Old Time Jam music group meets monthly. Our brothers and sisters in Christ from Puerta del Cielo continue to share the building with us for worship and social activities, and they have continued to maintain the grounds and keep the interior of the building in tip-top shape. This truly is a blessing, and we are so very grateful for these brothers and sisters in Christ.

Nominating Committee

Chaired by Rosemary Willhite, the Nominating Committee presented nominations for two ruling elders for the congregation’s vote at the October 30 congregational meeting. Elders Anna Robinson and Bronwyn Curtis were elected for the Class of 2026. These officers were installed on January 7, 2024.

The 2024 Nominating Committee will be elected at the annual congregational meeting in February of 2024. We will present a slate of members willing to serve on this committee. Thanks for all your prayers as we continue to serve this wonderful faith community.

Installation of Bronwyn Curtis and Anna Robinson by Rev. David Horn, moderator, with clerk of session Eileen Sheelar at the lectern.



Operations Overview

Congregational Life

As we have yet to fill the position for a half-time stated supply pastor, we have been blessed with guest pastors, commissioned ruling elders and our own lay leaders leading worship. I am so very grateful to Eileen Sheelar, as Chair of Worship who has sourced a wonderful slate of Pulpit Supply Pastors and Commissioned Ruling Elders in 2023. The guest pastors have brought a wide range of experience and fresh faces to our pulpit. These fresh perspectives and energy have enabled us to diversify our worship experiences and styles encouraging the worship of God in new ways, helping us into a deeper more robust relationship with God.

We share fellowship time each Sunday following worship with coffee, cookies, snacks, and treats. It has been a pleasure to meet and talk with our guest pastors over coffee. On the third Sunday of the month, the Deacons host the celebration of birthdays and anniversaries. Many thanks to Vallory Bunday for organizing and facilitating fellowship times this year. With a change in life circumstances Vallory has passed the torch to the deacons, who are now coordinating volunteers to bring goodies and host fellowship times.



The traditional PDA Blue Shirt Sunday church portrait—Feb. 26, 2023



In September, we hosted an ice cream social for children at Cummings and the congregation. Although the turnout from the school was less than we had hoped for, many people from the congregation enjoyed a lovely afternoon of cookies, ice cream, and visiting. We hope to continue this effort next year and include more neighbors and school children.

Our traditional Church Christmas party became an all-age Church Christmas party and gift exchange and was held in the early afternoon on Saturday, December 16th at the church, starting with a true potluck. Many thanks to Joan Allen for facilitating the potluck and to Carrie High and family for decorating the social hall. We enjoyed a delightful array of foods and great conversations. It was a fun addition to have some of our youth join the celebration. Before the gift exchange commenced, we were asked to share Christmas traditions and stories. You could have heard a pin drop when Shirley Bond was sharing stories of Christmas from her youth. This was a wonderful way to learn more about each other and share holiday experiences.



Operations Overview

Personnel

Mary Jo Emmett

Generally, the Personnel Report addresses the status of paid personnel only, but as it is in small churches, there are uncompensated staff positions filled by volunteers. So, this report recognizes both those who are financially compensated and those who are compensated with only our thanks and appreciation.

We are grateful for our regularly paid staff: Music Director, Anna Robinson, and Pianist, Bethany Cozort, whose music talents, work and leadership enhance and add depth to our worship experiences! Also compensated are our Session Moderator, Rev. David Horn and various supply preachers who have filled our pulpit since the departure of our last pastor in October of 2022.

Our search for a part-time Pastor remains in limbo. The opening is still listed with the Presbytery and has been advertised nationally in two denominational magazines along with so many others. The search process will be revisited in 2024.

The Office Administrator (aka church secretary) and Treasurer are crucial roles in how the church functions. For close to a dozen years, Bronwyn Curtis has taken on the Treasurer's duties, Pledge Secretary and Chair of the Administration Committee which oversees the stewardship of funds, building operations and related activities. Equally critical is the Office Administrator which had been a paid position until the fall of 2021; but after October 2022, those many tasks had been left to unpaid volunteers. There came a point when it became evident that a more consistent presence was needed, and Eileen Sheelar stepped up! Her professional expertise, experience in church matters and technical knowledge serves to keep the church on track and functioning. Thanks be to God for both of these servants and their skill sets, knowledge, and dedication!

We are grateful too, for Pastor Tomas and his Puerta del Cielo (PDC) congregation members who attend to the janitorial, grounds-keeping, and maintenance needs of the building. We receive these services in lieu of rent; however, we would be hard pressed to be able to pay for the work that PDC does.

Recognitions should be extended to so many of you, the church, who make JKPC what it is – witnesses to Christ's love through the good works within and outside of the church building: Deacons and helpers, greeters and ushers, volunteers who reach out to feed the hungry, liturgists and readers, musicians and 'techie' assistants, creators and organizers and those whose presence and prayers deepen our spiritual connection to God – Thank you to all who have answered the call to *Be the Church!*

Operations Overview

Stewardship

Eileen Sheelar

Stewardship season at John Knox is an interesting time. I may be a little biased, but I have come to believe that we have a pretty good handle on stewardship here at John Knox. When I look at various stewardship promotion programs, I find myself thinking, “We know this already,” or “We do this all the time.” That’s not to say we’re perfect, but time and time again, this group of people demonstrates that we get it when it comes to giving and sharing. Our hearts are tender and we care about others. The proof is in this report. As you read, you will see the result of our gratitude for what we have and how we share from the abundance of God’s provision.

This year, we received pledges, or financial commitments, from 21 units. Pledges help us create a budget and talk and dream about plans for the coming year. We also have a number of people who do not pledge and who are faithful in their giving. We are very grateful for the financial support of our mission to spread the gospel, to care for and further God’s kin-dom, and to live out and share the grace, love, and mercy of God, *who, by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine* (Ephesians 3:20).



Stewardship is so much more than giving money. Stewardship is how we care for all of God’s creation—the environment as well as people around the world and in our neighborhood who are experiencing disruptions in their lives for myriad reasons. We are all connected in many different ways, even when it’s not apparent at first glance. Sharing our building with recovery groups links us to those in recovery and makes us more sensitive to their needs. Sharing our coins (and paper money!) with Congregations Helping People helps us recognize and meet the needs we may not think of—like identification required for obtaining a drivers license. Supporting PC(USA) Special Offerings reminds us of our connections to the national church and the people served by its various missions. Our relationship with Cummings Elementary as Backpack Buddies helps us realize how we can make a difference in individual lives every week. Our connection to Marion County Child Welfare has immediate impact on the lives of youth in foster care. Keizer Community Food Bank started many years ago as a closet-based mission of John Knox and has grown to include four other churches in the work of feeding hungry people in our community. Our many and varied relationships clearly express our belief that every single person must be treated as God’s precious child, for that is who we are and Whose we are.

Thank you for your generous gifts toward nurturing God’s kin-dom in Keizer and around the world. Let us know your ideas and dreams for how to continue and expand that work. We are all in this together, and to co-opt the theme from PC(USA) Special Offerings: *If we all give a little, it adds up to a lot!* As we give money, time, effort, skills, relationships, actions, prayer—with God’s help, we can accomplish far more than we ever could imagine. Amen.

Worship

Eileen Sheelar
Mary Jo Emmett

*“Worship isn’t God’s show. God is the audience. God’s watching.
The congregation, they are the actors in this drama. Worship is their show.
And the minister is just reminding the people of their forgotten lines.”*
Soren Kierkegaard

Worship at John Knox in 2023 was filled with a wonderful variety of guest preachers who came to us from all over Oregon. From Sisters to Eugene, from Hillsboro to Independence and all sorts of places in between, guest preachers offered solid preaching and worship leadership. Including four JKPC ruling elders, we hosted 28 different preachers in 2023. Some of them preached two weeks in a row if their schedules allowed it, providing some consistency for them and us. We are very grateful to each person who joined us in leading worship through 2023.

In December, after listening to the congregation and ourselves, session determined that JKPC has two pastoral priorities that were not being met in the pulpit supply rotation model. After discussion, session endorsed the concept of retaining a committed pulpit supply person for a fixed period of time. We have asked Rev. Maggie Lewis to fill that need through Pentecost of 2024. This arrangement does not preclude her from applying for our open half-time position just like any other applicant. For more information on the details, please contact Eileen Sheelar, Chair of Worship, or Mary Jo Emmett, Chair of Personnel. Rev. Lewis is also the half-time pastor at K-Center on the campus of University of Oregon. We are delighted to have her creative worship leadership and preaching skills at this time as we work to discern our path to the future.

The second priority we have identified is the availability of pastoral services, particularly counseling during various life situations. Rev. Lewis may be able to meet some of those needs, and compensation will be negotiated as the need arises. This is a “handshake agreement” and open to change at any time. Those with previous church experience will say, “We never used to do this,” and they are correct. There is a very limited number of pastors available and willing to serve in a part-time position. Smaller churches in transition in the presbytery are considering many different models of “being church” and are encouraged to think outside the box, listening for where God might be leading, and being open to new ideas.

Worship is at its best when combined with music, and we are very fortunate to have talented musicians serving at John Knox. Anna Robinson is the music director, responsible for choir, handbell and chimes, and leading congregational singing. Bethany Cozort is our pianist. Bethany selects some amazing pieces to open and close worship, preparing us to join in worship and sending us on our way with joy and energy. We have several vocalists in the congregation who have added depth and variety to our singing. Our youth and some adults have contributed with violin, cello, drums, and other instruments. We are grateful for the talent that is shared every week as we worship with song, prayer, and the Word.

Worship

During this year of transition, we have participated in faithful, Spirit-filled worship led by pastors and lay leaders whose goal is to glorify God and to enjoy God forever by sharing God’s word and living out God’s call. Following are pictures and descriptions of some of those services.



Preachers during Lent followed the lectionary as we journeyed to Holy Week



On Palm Sunday, Rev. Kelly Dickson led us through scriptures and meditations in a service that did not follow our “normal” order of worship, much in the same

way that Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem and Passover celebration was not “normal” or routine. We incorporated Communion in the story of Holy Week, and the choir offered a special anthem, “Love the Lord.” The postlude “Were You There?” took us through the events of Holy Week, preparing us for Easter.



The assembly of the flowered cross is a community effort. We bring the flowers and turn them over to a group of volunteers who create a beautiful arrangement, then others join in to process the cross and put it in the stand. We all contribute to the celebration of our risen Lord! Thank you to Sheila for gathering and coordinating the volunteers for the assembly.

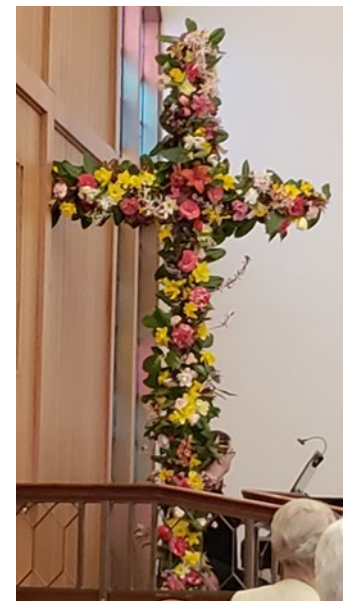


Our friend Rev. Beverly Crow preached on Easter Sunday, blessing us with a beautiful service. I offer you her benediction to carry with you through 2024:

*It is God who gives you life.
It is God who renews your life.
Because it is God Who is life.*

*Know that life within you and around you,
and enter this world that God still creates
and still dearly loves.*

*As you reenter the world, remember that God,
who Creates, Redeems, Sustains, and Empowers,
goes with you, right now, this very day,
and forever and ever! Amen*



Late spring and summer pulpits included a variety of preachers. We took a “5th Sunday” vacation on the last Sunday in July to provide a much-appreciated break for the worship team. We all came back refreshed and glad to be back together in worship and fellowship.

Worship



During November's Communion service, the choir offered "In Remembrance of Me," accompanied by Bethany Cozort (not pictured)

Left to right: Doug Anderson, Mark McKelvie, Adam Robinson, Pat McKelvie, Cayla High, Vallory Bunday, Chuck Willming, Anna Robinson (music director), Lane Oxley, Janet Anderson, Teresa Read



Advent and Christmas liturgical art created by Mary Jo Emmett. Above is from the first Sunday of Advent; to the right is Christmas Eve morning, and below is Christmas Eve. We are blessed to have such a talented, creative artist in our midst.



Christmas Eve service began with a bell prelude to Joy to the World, and then as we sang, the bells continued to accompany the congregation. It was indeed a joyful way to begin the Christmas Eve Candlelight service.

L-R: Micah and Caleb Robinson (Bethany Cozort behind them at the piano), Anna Robinson, Teresa Read, Ezra Robinson, Sheila Cunningham, Cariana and Cayla High, Carrie and CJ High, and Adam Robinson.

On the Sunday after Christmas, we participated in a unique worship service created by Rev. Maggie Lewis that presented the viewpoints of seven characters present at the birth of Jesus. Each viewpoint was followed by a song, prayer, or congregational response. We heard from Joseph and Mary as well as the angels, innkeeper, animals, shepherds, and wise men. What an inspiring way to end the Christmas season!

Christian Education

Mary Jo Emmett

Christian Education at John Knox doesn't always look like the traditional model. Busy schedules complicate planning, and we don't want to overload those schedules even more! Our middle and high school youth continued to participate in the Westminster Presbyterian, Salem youth group. That group is now joining with First Presbyterian and other churches to form a Salem Youth Collective, offering an opportunity to join with other youth in service, learning, and fellowship adventures.

Led by Lane Oxley, Women's Fellowship meets monthly and is using the Horizons Bible Study *What My Grandmothers Taught Me*, which looks at the women in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus. Exploring the stories of Jesus' grandmothers of the faith helps us identify with Jesus as a young man, growing in faith to follow where God called him.

Ruling Elder Sheila Cunningham has led two different adult studies. Over Lent, she hosted a weekday Zoom study based on The Presbyterian Outlook Lenten devotionals, followed by a study of the Gospel of John. Sheila began a Zoom study of Rob Bell's book, *Love Wins*, in January of 2024. Using Zoom allows the participants to meet at times convenient for all. This is a meaningful time for spiritual formation and fellowship.

In monthly meetings, Rev. Horn has led us in exploring various scriptures together and how they apply to our lives as ruling elders at John Knox. These times of exploring the Word guide us in our deliberations and decision making.

Time with the Children of God in worship challenges our youth (and adults!) to consider many different topics, usually related to the scripture of the day. They look forward to participating in this special time for them in worship.



Cayla High's violin solo enhanced "Sing to the Lord of Harvest" in November.

Our youth also sing in the choir, offer special music, play bells, and help with other worship activities. Seasonally, we may offer an informal opportunity for conversation and learning in the narthex before worship begins. This year, they helped lay out squares of fabric that Mary Jo Emmett eventually formed into liturgical paraments for the lectern, pulpit, and table. It was a great inter-generational activity that promoted conversation and fellowship.

We continue to look for ways to encourage worship participation and faith formation in both formal and informal ways as we seek to walk and live in the way of our risen Lord.

Mission

Sheila Cunningham

The members of the Mission Committee include Sheila Cunningham, Linda Garland, Dixie Schafer and Lane Oxley. Everyone is welcome to join our meetings.

Mission Through the Larger Church

Cascades Presbytery Partnership Giving \$7,392

This is basic mission support (undesignated giving) which supports the work of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly in our area and around the world. We calculate this amount based on a tithe (10%) of pledges received by January 2023 as well as projected offerings.



Special Offerings (PCUSA) \$4,429



**WE GO
FOUR
FOR
FOUR**

Christmas Joy (\$1060) supports past, present, and future leaders of the church through racial/ ethnic schools and the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions.

One Great Hour of Sharing (\$830) supports many different programs around the world including Self Development of People, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

Pentecost (\$695) supports young people and inspires them to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world. We keep 40% (\$278) of this offering to use for local mission for youth. \$200 was donated to K-Center at the University of Oregon to be used for their student meal program.

Peace & Global Witness (\$1,005) encourages the church to embrace God’s reconciling mission to those around the corner and around the world, empowering congregations and individuals to become peacemakers themselves. We kept 25% (\$251) to use for local peacemaking projects, forwarding \$754 to Presbytery and PCUSA.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance \$929

In addition to the four special offerings, John Knox also received \$929 of designated donations for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. These funds are received on the first Sunday of Lent, “PDA Blue Shirt Sunday” and through the season on Lent. \$539 was sent to assist with earthquake victims in Syria/Turkey, \$190 was used for relief from wildfires in the United States, and \$200 was sent to assist the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.



We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It’s easy to say, “It’s not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.” Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes.

~~Fred Rogers

Mission

Local Mission

Keizer Community Food Bank \$3,400



We budget \$100 per month to support the food bank located at Faith Lutheran Church, and we also pass through designated monetary gifts. In 2023 we sent \$2200 in donations along with our budgeted pledge. This year we focused on a different food item each month and will continue that practice in 2024. Lane Oxley and Teresa Read volunteer at the food bank each week. Sheila and Jacob Cunningham also volunteer at Marion Polk Food Share each week. See the separate KCFB report for more details.

Backpack Buddies \$3272.57

We continue to provide four weekend meals to students at Cummings Elementary. For the 2023-2024 school year we were able to increase our number of students served to 20, up from 15 in the past. We spent \$3272.57 in 2023 for these meals. Although we budget \$300 a month to cover these costs, we were able to cover these expenses by donations of \$2164 made in 2023 as well as donations carried over from 2022. This strong congregational support means that we did not need to use any of our budgeted money. We continue to send home a jar of peanut butter each month along with a note in both English and Spanish telling about the days and hours of the food bank at Faith Lutheran Church. In the fall John Knox hosted the Presbyterian Women gathering where a free will offering was taken. The host church is able to decide how this donation is used and it was decided to use the \$394 received to purchase peanut butter. This generous donation was used to provide peanut butter for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.

Oregon Department of Human Services/Child Welfare Gift Cards \$2,440 (up from \$1,972 last year!)

See the separate article under Deacons for a description of this established outreach.



Congregations Helping People (CHP) \$3,024.11

We budget \$100 a month to support this non-profit organization. In addition to this pledge, we received \$1824.11 in designated donations as well as coins and money collected on Christ Jar Sunday, the third Sunday of each month. CHP is supported on a regular basis by 11 churches in the Salem/Keizer area. John Knox is the third largest donor to this organization. We should feel very good about that!! CHP is currently located at the Las Naciones Building located at 820 Jefferson St. NE in Salem. However, that building is being sold and CHP will need to find another location soon. Sharon Brenneman is the part time director. Client hours are Monday thru Thursday, 10:00 – 1:00. CHP's mission is to help individuals and families to remain in their homes and avoid homelessness. They provide assistance with rent, utilities, identification cards, birth certificates, gas vouchers and bus passes. CHP is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, of which Sheila Cunningham is a member.

Mission

Local Mission (con't)

Hygiene Kits \$125

Items for hygiene kits were collected over a couple of months and assembled on May 28. We assembled 27 kits that were donated to the men's UGM shelter in Salem. These kits included toothbrushes, toothpaste, combs, tissues, and band aids, among other items.

Other mission projects

We are a drop-off point for pull tabs for Ronald McDonald House, styrofoam that is taken to the recycling center on Center Street in Salem, bibles for the Bible Foundation, and greeting cards that are sent to St. Jude Children's Camp.

Little Free Library

Linda Arnold



In August, a Little Free Library (LFL) was placed to the side of the church sign on Cummings Lane. Linda Arnold built, painted, and installed it, and Linda Garland added some original drawings on each side to finish the design. The concept of a Little Free Library is that neighbors bring books and take books—sharing the joy of reading and helping make books accessible in the neighborhood for children and adults alike. This is an example of someone who heard a call and saw a way to bless our neighbors through a small corner of our property. By making a weatherproof receptacle for a book exchange, we have shown people that we care and want to add something to the neighborhood that people can enjoy any time.



Mary Jo has registered our Little Free Library with the national organization, giving us access to deals on new books and placing us on a map of LFLs around the nation.



Mission

Mary Jo Emmett

A Profile of John Knox Community Garden

Each year, gardeners come and go; 2023 welcomed eight new-to-us gardeners replacing five gardeners from the previous season who left, giving us 18 gardeners (30 if spouses are included) growing fresh produce for their families, friends and community. Only Pastor Tomas and Puerta del Cielo (PDC), our building partner church, and our family (Lee & Mary Jo) have gardened all of JKCG's 15 years; two gardeners have been with us for 14 and 13 years respectively: Craig Churches who contributed his skills, time and labor working on many garden projects (pictured building the tool shed in 2013) and John and Virginia Parks who have faithfully maintained their garden spaces since 2011. Most the gardeners have been community members living within a couple of miles from the garden; there are currently five church members gardening: Andrea Breuer, Emmetts, Teresa Read, and Dixie Schafer.



Historically, our ethnic diversity reflects our greater community: we have had a few Hispanic gardeners (not associated with PDC), two refugee / new immigrant families an extended family of 14 from Yemen in 2018 and this year, a family of four from Cambodia and a smattering of other ethnic origins (Asian and Middle Eastern). The majority of our gardeners are not of retirement age: only two are retired out of six single individual gardeners and five retired couples out of 11 couples/ or with family at home.

Almost everyone filled out an end of year survey reporting good harvests and sharing their bounty with other family members, friends, neighbors and donating to the community; a few problems of produce theft persist but no vandalism this year. Several expressed appreciation for the garden space that the church provides freely; at least one gardener gave a generous donation towards the garden fund and we received a grant of \$105 from Keizer United. Support from Marion Polk Food Share is still received in the form of compost, seeds and transplants and garden coordinators meetings. Many thanks go to Roger Applegate, a gardener since 2021 who maintains the Nibbling Garden boxes along Cummings Lane and has laid wood chips along most of the paths.

Our main project for 2023 was to place one or two raised bed boxes in each plot which makes it easier for gardeners to maintain without compromising what is grown; some flat, in-ground space is maintained for traditional gardening which includes work rototilling. Goals for the 2024 season are redesigning the herb garden to include more pollinator-attracting plants, paint the pergola, improve the soil around the blueberries and continue removing weeds around the fences. Also on the wish list is possibly establishing a stand of prune trees near the garden by transplanting volunteer trees from the church's back yard area.

Keizer Community Food Bank

Jim Johnson
Chair of KCFB

2023 Year End Report



The volunteers who worked during 2023 provided stellar service to our clients and have demonstrated exceptional loyalty to KCFB. KCFB continued to provide goods to the clients as they remain in their vehicles. This method of distribution has proven to be effective and efficient for all. No changes were made during the year.

KCFB needed to continue to purchase lots of goods due to supply chain disruptions. Canned vegetables, peanut butter, and canned soups (to name a few items) continued in short supply in 2023.

Since March, 2022, we ordered what was offered by Marion Polk Food Share (MPFS) and supplemented what we received with purchases from local grocery stores. We did not receive what we ordered/wanted most of the time from MPFS. We were spending about \$1000/week to continue to provide very similar food boxes to what we have always provided.

In mid 2023, the pantries had a meeting with MPFS and requested that they supply the core goods and let the pantries go after the rest of goods supplied. We had to continue to purchase foods that were still not provided. We were able to cut our purchases to about \$1000/week. Judi and Cindy continued to provide excellent purchasing of the goods we needed when we needed them. GREAT WORK!!!!

Judi continued (with help from Mark Studer and Chris) to collect food goods from Fred Meyer's. Actually, several volunteers participated in these pickups on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The amount and types of goods collected varies greatly each day. Anywhere from 50 to 400 pounds of food were available each day. Excellent Work!!!!

The check-in and records method started several years ago continued. Link2Feed (L2F) is our records system. The use of computers during distribution was suspended in March 2020 and will continue to not be used at distributions as long as the clients remain in their vehicles. Jim Johnson has done the L2F entries at home. Sherie Ball took over this responsibility in October, 2023. By the way, using L2F eliminates a UDSA requirement to maintain written records. The computerized L2F system totally replaces the paper system.

We maintained distributions on the 5th Monday in each month, with each church serving one Monday and all serving on the last 5th Monday of the year.



Clients are served at their cars; requests are taken, then food is boxed indoors and delivered to the car.

Keizer Community Food Bank

HISTORICAL ANNUAL COMPARISON

Total families served in 2023
 4,337 clients; 15,900 individuals
Total food goods provided
 613,124 pounds

Year	# Clients	Notes
2019	2,173	
2020	3,851	77% increase over 2019
2021	3,589	
2022	4,337	20.8% increase over 2021; 99.5% over 2019
2023	8,004	84.6% increase over 2022; 368.3% over 2019

This year, as previously stated, we needed to purchase significant pantry goods locally. Fresh produce and personal items traditionally supplied to meet our distribution needs were purchased. At times, we were spending over \$1,000 per week. We have been able to do this because of the **fantastic financial support** received from our Keizer community. More than 46 entities donated during the year exceeding \$86,735.41 (2023). **WE HAVE FANTASTIC SUPPORT FROM THE KEIZER COMMUNITY!!!!**

For Thanksgiving, we did our own program. We have struggled in past years with the Safeway Turkey Dinners provided through MPFS. Safeway did not provide delivery of goods until the Friday before Thanksgiving. This meant that our Thursday clients did not get anything until after Thanksgiving. We wanted to ensure that every client had a turkey for Thanksgiving. So, we purchased turkeys and turkey breasts of about 10-14 pounds each; added canned goods and stuffing to complete a traditional dinner. We provided 177 meals on Thursday, 12/16, and 169 on Monday, 12/20, before Thanksgiving. We took measures to ensure that these were separate and individual clients on each day.

The Keizer Elks struggled a bit starting back up after the pandemic. The Lady Elks provided a monetary donation of \$711.00. The lodge donated about 200 pounds of goods per month.

The Keizer Chamber of Commerce continued to provide Christmas boxes this year. Oregon Food Bank began selling additional foodstuffs but their items were limited and costs were in line with local grocery stores. So, we directed them to local purchasing, but did not participate in purchasing for them.

UPTOWN MUSIC and TONY’S COMICS have provided continuous great support. Uptown’s Christmas drive this year provided over \$2,300 cash as well as many pounds of goods collected.

The van has proven to be a tremendous asset. We have moved many loads of goods from Fred Meyer’s, McNary Estates, Tony’s, Uptown Music and several Chamber partners. We were able to pick up two or three pallets of fresh produce from MPFS on Mondays.

A HUGE THANKS to ALL of our churches and volunteers. Keizer Food Bank needs everyone to serve the food insecure. Special thanks to Faith Lutheran Church who continues to allow us to share their space.



Your servant,
 Jim Johnson, Chair

Participating churches: Faith Lutheran Church, John Knox Presbyterian Church, St. Edward Catholic Church, Clearlake United Methodist Church, and Keizer Christian Church.

Session

Eileen Sheelar

Session and Clerk's Report

During this time of pastoral transition, Rev. David Horn continues to moderate session. We are grateful for his friendship, guidance, and commitment to John Knox as we discern where God is leading us. Session spends time at the beginning of each meeting in a “Discernment Discussion” guided by a scripture and devotion shared by Rev. Horn.

At the beginning of 2023, we installed Ruling Elders Bronwyn Curtis for her second term on session and Anna Robinson for her first term after a year of sabbatical. Elder Rosemary Willhite is taking a well-deserved break from active service. We are thankful for the officers who served in 2022 and those who will serve this year and in the future:

RULING ELDERS			2024			DEACONS		
Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026	Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026	Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026
CJ High	Sheila Cunningham	Bronwyn Curtis Treasurer	Carrie High	Joan Allen Moderator	Linda Garland	(vacant)	Lane Oxley	(vacant)
Eileen Sheelar Clerk of session	Vallory Bunday	Anna Robinson	(vacant)	Betty Correll	(vacant)	(vacant)		
Mary Jo Emmett	Beth Neal	(vacant)	(vacant)					

In 2023, our average attendance was 31 during in-person worship. Website statistics indicate 3-5 views online each week.

At the end of 2023, we have 31 active members on the rolls. This does not count our youth or a number of people considered “friends of the church,” those who actively participate in the life and worship of JKPC but who have not officially joined as members. We appreciate and enjoy their participation in our faith community.

Member Nancy Morgan and previous member Darlene Fletcher joined the great cloud of witnesses during 2023. We celebrate their grace-filled lives and we are grateful they shared their faith and wisdom with many of us. Well done, good and faithful servants!

Deacons

The position of deacon is one of caring and compassion. During 2023, Joan Allen, Betty Correll, Linda Garland, Carrie High, Lane Oxley, and Dixie Schafer served as deacons. Joan Allen was the representative to session and the Nominating Committee.



Shirley Bond and Bill Flanary

The deacons are responsible for the coffee/social hour after worship. Thank you to other members and friends of the congregation who helped with this great time of fellowship.

The third Sunday of each month, we celebrate birthdays and anniversaries for that month. We also celebrated the 100th birthdays of Bill Flanary and Shirley Bond in October.

Deacon meetings were held as needed. The deacons kept in contact with their flocks via calls, visit, card, and email.

Linda Garland and others provided transportation for a retired pastor so he could attend worship.

In March, the deacons prepared and delivered to Marion County Child Welfare four different “dinner baskets” for foster parents who receive a new foster child in their home. Child Welfare presented JKPC with a certificate of appreciation.



In July, the deacons hosted a long-delayed retirement party for the Rev. Dr. John Neal and his wife, Dr. Elizabeth Neal. Dr. John officially retired in April of 2020. However, the pandemic kept us from honoring his time with JKPC in person. Finally, we were able to do that on July 16. Dr. John preached, his family joined him, and we had a great official send-off!

The Christmas fundraiser this year was to purchase gift cards for youth in the care of Marion County Child Welfare Program. The gift cards, valued from \$10-\$50, are used to purchase clothing and other personal items, especially for teens. They are also used to provide incentives and rewards for behavioral and academic improvement.

Linda Garland coordinated this effort on behalf of the congregation. \$2440 was generously donated for the purchase of gift cards in varying amounts to Walmart, Dutch Brothers, Target, Ulta Beauty, Taco Bell, Panda Express, Amazon, Subway, and McDonalds.



Delivering gift cards to Oregon DHS/Marion County Child Welfare

Treasurer

Bronwyn Curtis

2023 saw us end the year with a net operating revenue of \$35,268.15. This can be attributed to several factors:

1. Your faith-filled commitment to the work of Jesus Christ through John Knox by maintaining your tithes and gifts, some \$16,000 above budget.
2. Not paying the salary, pension, and health insurance expenses for a half-time Stated Supply Pastor for the six months that we budgeted for, saving \$16,500.
3. Overall expenses were slightly under budget.

Another factor to consider: our expenses are kept low by the fact that we do not pay for a part-time Office Manager, Building Manager, or Treasurer. Our creative liturgical arts use materials we already have on hand and re-sources used materials creatively. These roles are filled by volunteers. Our brothers and sisters in Christ at Puerta Del Cielo maintain our building and grounds in lieu of cash rent.

The usable income was around \$89,620 which is made up of the pledge, offering, and building rent categories. The balance of the income categories is predominantly pass through (mostly mission). The income of \$13,565.96 from our investments was re-invested.

On the profit and Loss statement look at the income actuals vs budget for Christ Jar (CHP), Food Bank, and Backpack Buddies. These line items reflect the gifts designated specifically to these ministries. Most years, the actual is more than we budgeted. In 2023 we budgeted a total of \$4,080 for these three categories, and our actual total was \$6,188!

Your generosity towards foster children in Marion County through the Oregon Department of Human Services was simply amazing; you gave \$2,440 to purchase gift cards. Giving to the four Special Offerings through the PC(USA) totaled \$3,590. The majority of these funds go to help ministries within the USA and around the world to lift up the oppressed, find long term solutions to feeding the hungry, to work for justice and peaceful resolutions to conflict, and to increase the safety of children and provide education opportunities. We gave to help with natural and man-made disasters around the globe through the PC(USA) PDA: \$539 for the Syria/Turkey Earthquake, \$190 USA Wildfires (Hawaii) and \$200 Israel/Palestine war.

Annette Hatley, CPA reviewed our financial practices for 2022 and I am pleased to say we passed without exception. *Editor's note: Thank you, Bronwyn!!*

The Fidelity Investment funds continue to be managed by Headwater Investment Consulting, who provide monthly commentary on the economy and the markets. We meet via Zoom at least once a year for an in-depth review of our investment returns and goals. Our investment strategy continues to be conservative, and we currently reinvest all returns.

Treasurer

Bronwyn Curtis

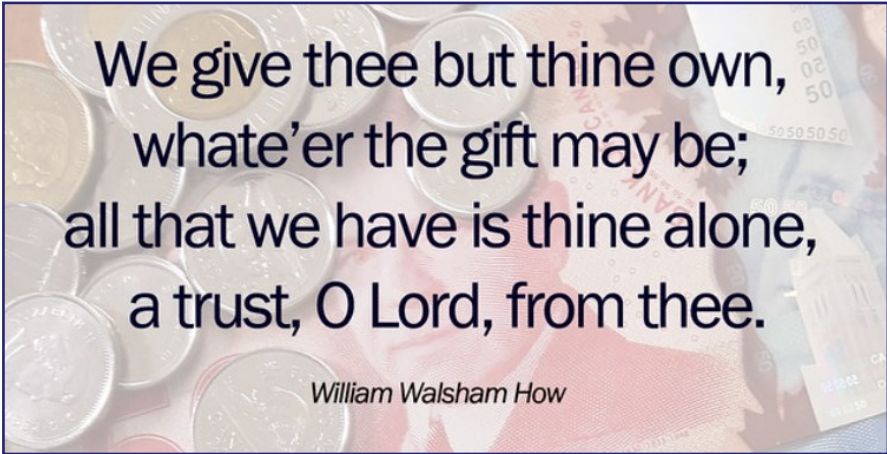
2023 saw much volatility in the investment markets as the Federal Reserve took measures to stabilize the economy, slow inflation and avoid a recession. As Interest rates/returns on Bonds and cash investments increased the session approved the transfer of \$15,000 from our checking account to a Certificate of Deposit with Umpqua Bank. Our Fidelity and New Covenant investments ended the year with an unrealized positive gain of \$36,953.74, with investment expenses of \$2,472.00.

Matt Dressel, an advisor and portfolio manager at Headwater Investment Consulting wrote:

“A lot has happened in 3 years. Beginning with the chaos of the pandemic in 2020, the resulting inflation, which forced the Fed to raise interest rates in 2021, a faltering supply chain and a war in Europe that fueled further losses in the stock and bond market in 2022.

... Prices are still high, but inflation has stopped increasing and unemployment has stayed very low. The stock and the bond markets rallied, turning 2023 into a positive year for investments. Now we are entering a new era: falling interest rates.

There are still a lot of risks – two wars, continued high prices, a divided and contentious electorate going into an election year... However, we see a case for financial optimism... Hopefully we can shake off the last 24 months and look forward to a strong 2024.”



We give thee but thine own,
whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is thine alone,
a trust, O Lord, from thee.

William Walsham How

PROFIT & LOSS**2023**

INCOME	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Pledges	\$ 67,068.00	\$ 68,420.00
Offerings	\$ 21,242.00	\$ 5,500.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 11,638.00	\$ 9,100.00
Christ Jar	\$ 1,824.00	\$ 1,080.00
Building Use	\$ 1,310.00	\$ 1,100.00
Per Capita	\$ 921.00	\$ 500.00
Food Bank	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,800.00
Backpack Buddies	\$ 2,164.00	\$ 1,200.00
TOTAL	\$ 108,367.00	\$ 88,700.00
EXPENSES	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Salary/Wages	\$ 10,143.00	\$ 21,616.00
Operations	\$ 22,073.00	\$ 21,730.00
Worship	\$ 10,183.00	\$ 11,918.00
Finance	\$ 175.00	\$ 175.00
Christian Education	\$ 4,672.00	\$ 4,600.00
Property	\$ 2,259.00	\$ 3,600.00
Mission	\$ 23,341.00	\$ 22,472.00
Outreach	\$ 252.00	\$ 200.00
TOTAL	\$ 73,098.00	\$ 86,311.00
NET PROFIT/LOSS	\$ 35,269.00	\$ 2,389.00

STATEMENT OF POSITION

		12.31.2022	12.31.2023
	FUND ACCOUNTS		
9001	Capital Improve & Maint	\$ 17,641.60	\$ 17,641.60
9002	Food Bank	\$ 135.00	\$ 275.00
9003	Christmas Joy	\$ 565.00	\$ 1,060.00
9004	Peace & Global Witness	\$ -	\$ -
9005	Pentecost	\$ -	\$ -
9006	One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ -	\$ -
9007	JK Education Reserve	\$ 3,314.17	\$ 3,163.67
9008	Deacon's Reserve	\$ 253.46	\$ 164.07
9009	Youth Reserve	\$ 1,892.75	\$ 1,892.75
9010	Peace & Global Witness Reserve	\$ 305.00	\$ 556.25
9011	Congregations Helping People	\$ 187.17	\$ 147.25
9013	Community BBQ	\$ -	\$ 50.00
9014	Community Garden	\$ 367.10	\$ 542.19
9015	Youth Triennium Fund	\$ 632.20	\$ 632.20
9016	Backpack Buddies	\$ 1,468.69	\$ 360.12
9017	PDA	\$ -	\$ -
9018	Choir/Music Reserve	\$ 355.12	\$ 355.12
9019	Fellowship Times	\$ -	\$ 116.52
9020	Women's Fellowship	\$ 189.20	\$ 189.20
9021	DHS Gift Cards	\$ -	\$ -
9022	Pentecost Reserve	\$ 391.20	\$ 469.20
9023	Hygiene Kits	\$ 57.20	\$ 49.71
9024	Transportation Reimbursement	\$ -	\$ 860.00
9025	Eco Justice Reserve	\$ 45.00	\$ 45.00
9054	Pastor Health Insurance Costs	\$ 16,982.11	\$ 16,982.11
9059	Insurance Deductible Fund	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
9060	Unrestricted Short Term Gifts	\$ -	\$ -
9099	Memorial - Misc.	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
	Subtotal Fund Accounts	\$ 49,881.97	\$ 50,651.96
	General Fund	\$ 51,381.33	\$ 70,879.49
	Balance Checking Account	\$ 101,263.30	\$ 121,531.45
	Checking Account	\$ 101,263.30	\$ 121,531.45
	New Covenant Mutual Funds	\$ 34,144.01	\$ 39,869.70
	Fidelity Investments	\$ 369,352.07	\$ 411,251.69
	Savings Account	\$ 25,855.39	\$ 25,858.01
	Umpqua Bank CD	\$ -	\$ 15,419.77
	TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 530,614.77	\$ 613,930.62

2024 Budget Explanation



Session approved the 2024 budget at the January Session meeting. If you just skimmed straight down to the end of the line-item budget and saw the bottom-line net profit of \$16,011, you might think, “Wow! This is a great budget which shows a very healthy surplus to end the year. Why do I need to give money to John Knox?”

At first glance this is one assumption you could make. Looking through the budget line item by line item tells a different, more in depth story. It tells a story of a small church being led by a dedicated session. It tells of volunteers stepping up to fill needs as they arise. It tells of a heart for our community, the children in particular.

In straight up dollars and cents this budget is based on utilizing guest pastors, lay leaders and commissioned ruling elders to fill our pulpit each week for the full 12 months. There is no allowance for a half-time stated supply pastor which costs around \$30,000 per year without health insurance. If we amend our budget to show the same income, adjusting our expenses to reflect 12 months with a half-time pastor (no health insurance), the bottom line will look more like this – a loss of \$4,800. Reality is that we must consider how to afford some kind of contribution for a pastor’s health insurance, increasing our deficit even more. The budget shows we value our music staff with a COLA raise of 4.1% p.a. to reflect their financial realities. Our copier expenses are lower after Eileen negotiated a new lease; this saving is offset by the rising cost of paper goods, property and liability insurance and utility costs.

But what else does our budget say about John Knox? I believe it says we are a small church, with a big heart. That we have Christ centered members and friends who are faith-filled and committed to the work of Jesus in the world.

“... Mission spending is \$14,000 to a projected income of \$81,000, which works out to almost 18% ... that's a big percentage of our budget going to Mission (which I kind of think of as the church's tithe). That, I think, is something to celebrate!

Rev. David Horn, Interim Moderator

2024 Budget Explanation (con't)

Under the guidance of Rev. David Horn, our Committee on Ministry appointed Moderator, session has been exploring what it means to be John Knox Presbyterian Church both internally and in our community. Our budget should reflect these values. This exploration has been, at times tiring, uplifting, affirming, and trying. It has stretched our comfort levels, requiring us to reevaluate our personal expectations and preconceived ideas of what a church is, and what it should look like, and what roles we play.

Lillian Daniel, who serves as Conference Minister with the Michigan Conference UCC, recently wrote :

“When I started in ministry, my mentors said, “There is no such thing as part-time ministry.” They assumed pastors would and should work full-time in one church... How things have changed. I have seen the shift to part-time ministry speed up, as churches get smaller and so do resources...

In the worst cases, pastors’ hours and pay are cut but church expectations stay the same. The “dispensable hours” never fall on Sundays... I see us doing better when I visit churches where part-time ministry has invigorated the congregation. Lay leaders step up to preach, pray at meetings, and visit the sick. Pastors set boundaries because their other job compels them to, which brings health and freedom to their ministry...

Was the apostle Paul a tentmaker on the side? Or was the tentmaker Paul an apostle on the side? I reject the whole question. I don’t believe the Holy Spirit does anything in our lives on the side.”

The timing of this reflection (January 17th) was divine timing. God does have a plan for us. It is our job to intentionally discern this plan and ensure our budget becomes a sacred song.

	INCOME	2024
1001	Pledges	\$ 75,120.00
1002	Offerings	\$ 5,004.00
1003	Miscellaneous	\$ 11,140.00
1004	Christ Jar + CHP Pledges	\$ 1,080.00
1005	Building Use	\$ 1,104.00
1006	Per Capita	\$ 600.00
1007	Food Bank Donations	\$ 1,800.00
1008	Backpack Buddies Donations	\$ 1,200.00
	TOTAL INCOME	\$ 97,048.00
	EXPENSES	
	Salary & Wages	
2001	Pastor - Salary	
2002	Pastor - Housing Allowance	
2003	Pastor - Professional Expenses	
2004	Pastor - Pension	
2005	Pastor - Continuing Education	
2006	Pastor - Life/disability Insurance	
2007	Pastor - Social Security (SECA)	
2008	Pastor - Major Medical	
2020	Staff - Music Director	\$ 5,174.00
2021	Staff - Office Manager	\$ -
2022	Staff - Musician	\$ 5,174.00
2024	Payroll taxes	\$ 1,200.00
	TOTAL SALARY & WAGES	\$ 11,548.00
	Operations	
3001	Operations costs	\$ 1,500.00
3002	Equipment Lease & Maint	\$ 2,028.00
3003	Insurance	\$ 5,870.00
3004	Per Capita Expenses	\$ 1,505.00
3005	Electricity	\$ 2,040.00
3006	Natural gas	\$ 1,950.00
3007	Telephone & Internet	\$ 1,476.00
3008	Water & Sewer	\$ 1,800.00
3009	Garbage Service	\$ 684.00
3010	Janitorial Supplies incl PPE	\$ 400.00
3011	Session Expenses	\$ 1,800.00
3012	Deacon & Fellowship Expenses	\$ 350.00
3015	Bank Fees/Charges	\$ 50.00
3016	Communications & Licensing	\$ 1,195.00
3017	Transportation Reimbursement	\$ 1,040.00
	TOTAL OPERATIONS	\$ 23,688.00

	Worship	
4001	Worship - Supplies	\$ 150.00
4002	Worship - Liturgical Arts	
4003	Worship - Music Materials	\$ 100.00
4004	Worship - Pulpit Supply	\$ 12,000.00
4005	Worship - Substitute Musicians	\$ 384.00
4006	Worship - Technology	\$ 450.00
4007	Worship - Special Music	\$ -
	TOTAL WORSHIP	\$ 13,084.00
	Finance	
5003	Finance - Financial Review costs	\$ 175.00
	TOTAL FINANCE	\$ 175.00
	Christian Education	
6001	CE- Children	\$ 3,600.00
6002	CE - Adult	
6003	CE - Supplies	
6004	CE - Library	\$ -
6005	CE - Volunteer Appreciation	\$ 1,000.00
	TOTAL Christian Education	\$ 4,600.00
	Property	
7001	Building & Grounds Maint	\$ 3,600.00
7002	Capital Improvement Exp	\$ -
	TOTAL PROPERTY	\$ 3,600.00
	Mission	
8001	Mission - Presbytery Pledge	\$ 8,012.00
8002	Mission - Backpack Buddies pledge	\$ 3,600.00
8003	Local - Misc.	\$ 2,000.00
8005	Special Offerings	\$ 4,000.00
8006	Food Bank Pledge	\$ 1,200.00
8007	Local - CHP	\$ 1,200.00
8008	Youth Mission Scholarship	\$ -
8009	Community Garden	\$ -
8010	Food Bank Donations	\$ 1,800.00
8011	CHP Donations	\$ 1,080.00
8012	Campus Ministry	\$ -
8013	Backpack Buddies donations	\$ 1,200.00
	TOTAL MISSION	\$ 24,092.00
	Outreach	
8501	Outreach	\$ 250.00
	TOTAL OUTREACH	\$ 250.00
	TOTAL INCOME	\$ 97,048.00
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 81,037.00
	PROFIT/(LOSS)	\$ 16,011.00