



SPRING UPDATE

March 2023

Welcome to St Joe!

It has been an exciting and action filled season of starting to get to know folks. My family is beginning to settle in Fort Wayne. I am delighted to be your pastor. That being said, I will admit, these first few weeks have not been easy! There have been many decisions, transitions, griefs to attend, and plenty of seeds to scatter for the sake of hope. The loss of membership, budgetary deficits, deficits of trust and hope are deep. Within this update you will find some sobering information that is intended to communicate our current situation with transparency and clarity. **BUT TAKE COURAGE!** We remain a congregation with a host of talented, passionate, faithful people. I believe there are good days ahead for St Joe and St Joe @ the Y! God has blessed us with so much that will equip us for a more hopeful future!



*For us to arrive at a more hopeful future, however, it will take support and effort from everyone. Many people have stepped up to serve, lead, and give. It is well that they should. **Now is the time.** Now is the season we must begin to change the story of these last difficult years at St Joe and St Joe @ the Y. Now is the time we step into God's hopeful future. With your help and God's, the future will be bright.*

Your pastor,

Glenn

What does it mean to be “For the Fort?”

We need to explore this together and want to hear your values!

Check out the survey available [online](#).

Paper copies are available in the church office. All responses are needed no later than Palm Sunday, April 2.

From the Finance Team

We want to celebrate the generosity shown to make the emergency roof replacement last fall. Glory to God! A total of **\$187,000** has been raised! **\$27,000** is still needed as families complete their commitments. We had an additional cost of **\$20,000** in the same season to replace air handling units over the sanctuary.

As we look to the coming year our invitation is that faithful folks continue pray about how they might give sacrificially to support the mission of St Joseph UMC. Last fall we cut more than \$70,000 from our budgets for staffing to reduce more than half of our significant budget shortfall (a need for a 10% increase in overall giving remains projected). We believe, however, that the time for cuts has come to a close and the time to do ministry has begun. Please pray about how God might use your financial gifts and talents as we step into the hopeful future before us!

Next Steps with St Joe & St Joe @ the Y

Beginning April 13 a new class will be meeting at 6:30 p.m. each Thursday for 6 weeks.

We'll be exploring what it means for us to exist within our theological tradition as United Methodists and how we might take next steps to be "For the Fort".

This class, led by Pastor Glenn, will meet in the Worship Center on Reed Road with 2 of its sessions being held at the JRL YMCA

Anyone who completes this class will be eligible to be welcomed as a new member. Current members are encouraged to attend as well to help discern what their next steps and new commitments might be with St Joe and St Joe @ the Y.

New Group for 55+!

The "over 55+" group will exist to help adults at our church and our community, enjoy and thrive in our pre and post-retirement years. We will seek to improve the health and well-being of adults 55 and older through meaningful opportunities for service, lifelong learning, active play, and social connection. We will provide a welcoming environment that fosters wellness, encourages socialization, and promotes active aging. More is coming soon! Stay Tuned! *Jeff Jones & Bob Scott*



WHAT'S UP WITH THE Y?

Change is never easy. But when we lean into Jesus, and each other, there's nothing He won't use to remind us He's always with us and FOR us. While we miss some

familiar faces, we also welcome new ones! On top of welcoming Pastor Glenn as lead pastor, our new worship director, Austin, has been an incredible addition to our team. If you haven't had the chance to ask how God worked through that do ask sometime, it's a powerful story. The ministry of presence we have at the Y through the Prayer Table has been strengthened through the creation of a team of chaplains to connect with Y members and staff throughout the week, and we've handed out hundreds of suckers to little ones in the process! Our partnership with the Y through community outreach events (such as the Bunny Bounce) continues to be a vital part of our identity. Circle Church (2nd Sunday) and Brunch Church (4th Sunday) remain to be unique opportunities to connect with each other and reach out to the community. This next season of St. Joe at the Y will build upon the strong foundation established as we, collectively as a church and individually, find ways to embrace all the ways in which we can love people to Jesus. *-Ashley Moreland*



HOLY WEEK



St. Joe UMC
6004 Reed Road
Maundy Thursday, 7p
Good Friday, 7p

EASTER SUNDAY
Sunrise (Praise Park), 6:45a
Contemporary, 9a
Traditional, 11a

St. Joe @ the Y
5680 YMCA Park Dr W
Good Friday Prayer
Stations, 8a-8p

Bunny Bounce, Sat 10a-12p

EASTER SUNDAY
Contemporary, 10a



Family Faith Formation

And.....we're.....off.....
 There are so many amazing and wonderful things coming up in Family Ministries this Spring.

Right after the **Easter Bunny Bounce** (see above for info), **Family & Youth Ministries will be flipping some flapjacks at our Camp Breakfast Fundraiser April 16th from 8:30am-12:30pm at St. Joe UMC.**

Come in to the gym, take a seat and be served pancakes and sausage by our lovely campers. We do not charge by the plate but ask for a free will donation to allow all of our children to go to camp, regardless of families ability to cover the cost. There will also be an envelope wall for donations. Can we, the church, fill all of those envelopes? If you are unable to join us April 16th, come to **St. Joe at the Y on April 23rd at Brunch Church** for a special pancake station and another opportunity to fill envelopes.

Invite your family and friends to the **St. Joe UMC Skate Party May 21st 5:30-7:30pm** at the Roller Dome! The church covers the entrance and skate rental, but snacks and arcade games are up to each family.

Summer is coming soon and we are opening our doors to the **YMCA Summer Day Camps**. We are so excited to host the Sports, Cooking and Arts Specialty Camps this summer and share mini Bible lessons with them every week. Our children and youth are headed to Camp Lakewood, Camp Adventure and Epworth Forest this summer for unforgettable weeks of camp. Stay tuned for pictures and updates from the kids about their experiences. This summer we are hosting an **Artistic Opportunities Camp, a week full of wonderful ways to express ourselves, learn new paths of creativity and discover God's grace and love**. This is a New Event that will be created and curated by the "For Families" Team with the help of our very talented congregation. *Teah Aldred-Ash*

We are THANKFUL for the faithful staff of St Joe UMC & St Joe @ the Y!

We are THANKFUL for the many St Joe members that have stepped up to LEAD this church and who were recently elected. See the church office for the complete list of newly elected lay leaders!

Facilities "For the Fort"

St. Joe is blessed with amazing facilities at the Reed Road location and Praise Park (adjacent to the Lehman Y). This blessing is good news. The challenge, however, is to exercise good stewardship by using the facilities effectively and faithfully. The truth is that our facilities are too often underutilized (they stand empty too many hours of the week), and their cost does not match current giving patterns. *We are spending money to maintain space that needs to be used more creatively and faithfully!*

A "Facility for the Fort" task force, headed by Greg Friend and facilitated by Pastor Mark, is beginning to work on reviewing the condition and current use of our facilities. They will also be imagining new ministries and activities (inside and outside our church) where our facilities and property could better be used for God, for the Fort, and for the larger world in the name of Jesus Christ. *Pastor Mark Fenstermacher*

Ministry With ARTS!

St Joe UMC has enjoyed a long standing history of musical excellence in all areas of worship. We have created a planning team to develop and design a community music and arts academy to facilitate multiple lesson and learning opportunities in music and visual arts for everyone. This is an exciting time of dreaming, brainstorming, researching, and planning. We invite your prayers as we continue on this journey." *Beth Wind*

Rev. Glenn Knepp- Lead Pastor

Rev. Dr. Ron VerLee- Pastor of Visitation

Rev. Dr. Mark Fenstermacher- Shepherding Pastor

Administration

Erica Gray- Office Administrator

Ginny Stine- Financial Manager

Barry Davis- Facilities Manager

For Families

Teah Aldred-Ash- Faith & Families

Holly Glentzer- Faith in Motion

St Joe @ the Y

Ashley Moreland- St Joe @ Y Engagement

Austin Lambert- St Joe @ Y Worship Lead

Worship

Beth Wind- Director of Choirs

Jonathan Young- Accompanist

Matt Deckard- Modern Worship Lead

Caring Ministries

Laura Deckard- Caring Ministries Coordinator



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