

# The JPC Monthly

## May 2026

### THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR JAY

#### Not Just a Thursday

It is not easy to come up with a newsletter article every month. The end of the month often sneaks up on me and then I am scrambling to find a topic. Usually, the topic comes from the season of the church year or something special happening in that month.

Sometimes it comes from a recent life experience or even Walmart trip that I feel like you can laugh at or benefit from. For May the low hanging fruit is either Memorial Day or Mother's Day. I bet in my 20+ years of ministry I have written at least ten newsletter articles on each of these. I love my mother. I am thankful for the mother Erin is to our children. I am also thankful for this great nation and for the sacrifices others have made so that we can live, prosper, and worship in freedom.



With all that being said, I am not going to write about either of these days. I am going to write about an often overlooked but important day in the life of the church. It is one that has deep theological importance and one that even is promised by Jesus at his appearance before Mary at the tomb. He says, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" This month we are going to learn about the Ascension of the Lord.

The day of Ascension happens forty days after Easter. Remember forty is a very important number for the Israelites and for Christians. In the Bible, the number forty signifies a period of testing, trial, probation, or preparation, often representing a transformative interval before a significant change or new beginning. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years; Jesus was tested in the desert for forty days and modeling that temptation we just finished the season of Lent which is forty days (not including Sundays). Moses was on the mountaintop forty days when he received the ten commandments, and it rained for forty days and forty nights when Noah was saved from the sin filled world and the waters of the flood.

The Day of Ascension is celebrated on that fortieth day, a Thursday, or on the Sunday that follows. On this day we believe and celebrate Jesus physically ascended into heaven, body and soul, forty days after his resurrection on Easter. Celebrated on a Thursday (or the following Sunday), it marks the end of his earthly ministry, his return to glory at God's right hand, and the inauguration of his rule. The event is recorded in the first chapter of Acts. Jesus leaves the disciples and they get to work. The next thing that happens is they elect a replacement for Judas and then the Holy Spirit falls on them and they get to work.

There are a couple of main points that we can take from the Ascension. It marks the end of Jesus' earthly ministry. Jesus blessed the disciples and then left them. This shows that he is the ruler of all creation and that he is going to heaven not to kick back and relax after a job well done but to pray for us, to intercede on our behalf before God.

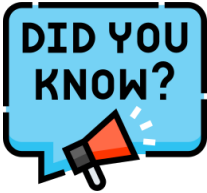
The other main takeaway from the Ascension is that it is not a permanent "farewell" but a shift in presence, allowing Jesus to be with his church in a new way, paving the way for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Other than the fact that they elected Matthias and that they were together for the Feast of

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Pentecost we don't know much about what happened in those 10 days between Jesus' departure and Pentecost. We certainly know what happened after. About 3000 people became followers of Christ on Pentecost and the last verse of Acts 2 reminds us that "The Lord added daily to the number being saved."

The day of Ascension is a promise. Jesus will return. It is also the reassurance that we are not alone, the Holy Spirit calls us by name and guides us. Finally, it is a call to get to work. The Apostle's work was ongoing. We tend to think about completed tasks on church committees. This month as we celebrate the ascended Christ may we be reminded that the work is not finished until He returns.



"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:13-16).

**Witnessing.** This can be as simple as an act of kindness; or a smile to someone you don't know. Witnessing can also be expressing a welcome to a visitor to JPC.

We have a Foundation set up to protect the future of JPC. Another key to protect our JPC future is new members! There are new neighborhoods springing up in "our neighborhood"! Some of the printed JPC information and invitational handouts are being refreshed as you read this. That's just the beginning of this restart of our Membership Committee. Have you noticed that your current Elders are wearing name tags? We want to be easily visible to visitors or members that have concerns or questions. Even Jay is wearing a name tag!

We need each of you to do your part in this building up of our membership. (Back to the witnessing part...) That part can be as simple as introducing yourself to someone you don't know when you see them at church. Encourage them to fill out a Visitor Card (also being updated) and take home a new brochure. It's being aware of situations when they present themselves! And taking the first step... "Hi. I'm glad you chose to join us this morning! I'm...." Every smile, every welcoming action is a way to show anyone what a wonderful, welcoming congregation we are!



If you want to be more active in this mission, please reach out to me! It doesn't have to be a major commitment. Every little bit helps!

**Peggy Maynard, Membership Elder, Class of '27**  
919-394-2458

## DONATIONS

Donation has been made to the Outreach Fund in honor of Mr. Bob Williams, by Leisure Fellowship

Donation has been made to the General Fund in loving memory of Mary Lowe Perkins, by Elaine Stewart

Donation has been made to the General Fund in honor of the Prayer Shawl Ladies, by Andy and Mary Beamon



**Dear Jay and Friends at JPC-**

Thank you so much for the prayers, kind words and beautiful shawl (Nurse Sophie will enjoy wrapping me up in that!). According to my doctors, the surgery and recovery have met or exceeded expectations. While Mary's diagnosis was upsetting to us, her decline was merciful and afforded each of us ample time to pray with her and say goodbye. In each case, we are certain that your efforts were impactful on the outcomes that we've experienced. Thank you.

**The Stewart Family**

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The Outreach yard sale was a huge success. So far, we have raised just over \$20,000 for Outreach missions! Thank you to the following:

- Those who help setup and move what seemed like thousands of items
- Those who priced
- Those who donated items to the raffle and yard sale
- Those who purchased raffle tickets and treasures at the yard sale
- Those who collected money, and worked the crowds
- The volunteers who provided the "early" sale chili dinner
- The cleanup team

"Many hands make light work"

**The Community Garden** is all cleaned up and ready for spring. We have planted about half of our summer crops and are continuing to harvest asparagus, spinach and collard greens. We refreshed the planting beds with good compost we created ourselves. The blueberry bushes are packed with little berries to ripen in a few weeks. The tomato plants started from collected seeds are making good strides getting established. We are looking forward to a great harvest this summer.



Please consider coming out to help us work in the garden on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. If neither of these times work for you let Nancy Seay know at 336-380-3611. She is trying to accommodate everyone so that you can participate as your schedule permits. Happy Spring!





### JPC Foundation “Did You Know?”

Did you know that endowments are invested by the Foundation, and up to 4% of the earnings are transferred to JPC each year for expenditure? Funds associated with an endowment are subject to all restrictions of the endowment.

## Creative Ways to Give to the Jamestown Presbyterian Church Foundation, Inc.

### Part I: Smart Financial Strategies

Giving to a nonprofit charity like the Jamestown Presbyterian Church Foundation, Inc. (Foundation) is one of the most meaningful ways to put your resources to work. IN managing one’s resources, today’s donors have more options than ever to make a lasting difference. The choices can not only benefit you and your family, but also a specifically chosen organization, church or group. In this two-part series, we’ll walk through eight creative giving strategies that go well beyond writing a check.

Part I focuses on four financial strategies that can stretch your giving further through thoughtful tax and estate planning.

#### Planned Giving and Bequests

A bequest, a gift through your will or estate plan, may be the single most impactful thing a donor can do. It costs nothing during your lifetime and can represent a transformational gift to the Foundation after you’re gone.

Bequests come in several forms. A specific bequest designates a fixed dollar amount or named asset. A percentage bequest leaves a share of your estate. A residual bequest passes whatever remains after other gifts are distributed. A contingent bequest only takes effect if other beneficiaries predecease you. Beyond bequests, other planned-giving vehicles, retirement account beneficiary designations, and payable-on-death or transfer-on-death accounts — can all carry a lasting legacy.

**Donor tip:** *Let the Foundation know about your bequest intent. Our Forever Fellowship recognizes bequest donors, and knowing about future gifts helps us plan for greater impact.*

#### Donor-Advised Funds

A donor-advised fund (DAF) is one of the most flexible and tax-efficient tools available. You contribute to the fund, claim an immediate tax deduction, and then recommend grants to the nonprofits of your choice on your own schedule.

Donors love DAFs because they accept cash, stock, or other assets; the balance grows tax-free before distribution; and a single account can support many organizations. They’re also a natural way to involve family members in grant decisions, turning philanthropy into a multigenerational conversation.

**Donor tip:** *If you have a windfall year — a bonus, inheritance, or business sale — consider front-loading your DAF to maximize the deduction when your tax rate is highest, then giving gradually in the years that follow.*

#### Gifts of Appreciated Stock or Securities

Instead of selling investments and donating the cash proceeds, consider giving the securities directly. This strategy lets you avoid capital gains tax on the appreciation while still claiming a deduction for the full fair market value.

It works especially well if you hold stocks, mutual funds, or ETFs that have grown significantly; if you were planning to rebalance your portfolio anyway; or if you want to give more than cash alone would allow.

**Donor tip:** Let the Foundation know before initiating a transfer so we can prepare to receive the asset smoothly.

### Qualified Charitable Distributions

If you're 70½ or older and have a traditional IRA, you can transfer up to \$111,000 per year (the 2026 limit, indexed for inflation) directly from your IRA to a qualifying nonprofit — tax-free. This is called a Qualified Charitable Distribution, or QCD.

The advantages stack up: the distribution counts toward your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), it's excluded from your taxable income entirely (even if you don't itemize), and it lowers your adjusted gross income — which can in turn reduce Medicare premiums.

**Donor tip:** A QCD is often more tax-efficient than taking the RMD, paying tax on it, and donating what's left. Before committing, talk it through with a financial advisor.

### Coming in Part 2

In the next issue, we'll cover four more creative giving strategies — donating real estate, maximizing workplace matching programs, using life insurance as a giving tool, and making tribute and memorial gifts that honor the people who matter most.

### Final Thought

Before implementing any complex giving strategy, consult a qualified professional (financial advisor, tax professional, and/or estate planning attorney). The right combination of tools, matched to your situation and your philanthropic goals, can make an extraordinary difference for the causes you care about most.

Please save your empty **clear or white gallon** milk / water jugs for VBS! Please note we are only accepting the size and shape shown below, as Jordan Smith will be collecting them over the next few months for a VBS project . We ask that you kindly be sure they are rinsed really, really, REALLY well!  
Please bring to the office or to worship. Thank you so much!



**Sunday, May 24**  
Pentecost (first combined service of the summer)

**Tuesday, May 26**  
First day of office summer hours

**Sunday, May 31**  
Churchwide Cookout

**Sunday, June 7**  
Senior Sunday

**Monday, July 20 - Friday, July 24**  
VBS



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Visit us on the Web  
[www.jamestownprez.org](http://www.jamestownprez.org)

### **CHURCH STAFF**

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**Dr. Jon Brotherton, Director of Music Ministries**

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**Finance Office**

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### **JPC SESSION**

#### **Class of 2026**

David Bean  
Becky Brown  
Nancy Seay  
Anne Wright  
Cam Tally

#### **Class of 2027**

Jim Gonsiewski  
Kirk Lesley  
Peggy Maynard  
Kerry Miller  
Jenny Rathjen  
Dick Whitt

#### **Class of 2028**

Evy Hazenberg  
Katie Heineman  
Pam Hjelmquist  
Randy Stroud  
Ellen Winnett