



**United  
Protestant  
Church**  
*of Grayslake*

**2023  
Annual Report**

**Meeting Held on  
January 28, 2024**

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**United Protestant Church of Grayslake, IL**

**2023 Annual Meeting Agenda**

**January 28, 2024**

Declaration of Quorum and Call to Order	Lloyd Lowe
Opening Prayer	Pastor Jason Okrzyński
Approval of January 22, 2023 Meeting Minutes	Lloyd Lowe
<u>Finance</u>	
Approval of the 2023 Financial Reports	Lloyd Lowe
Adoption of the Proposed 2024 Operating Budget	Denise Fuller
<u>Membership</u>	
Membership Report	Pastor Jason Okrzyński
Approval of Membership Cultivation Report	Lloyd Lowe
<u>Nominations</u>	
Nominations Report & Nominations from the Floor	Pastor Jason Okrzyński
Election of Officers	Lloyd Lowe
Other Reports and Business	Lloyd Lowe
Closing Prayer	Pastor Jason Okrzyński
Adjournment	Lloyd Lowe

**2023 Annual Meeting Minutes**  
**United Protestant Church of Grayslake, IL**  
**January 22, 2023**

**Declaration of Quorum and Call to Order**

Lloyd Lowe, Moderator/Chair of Staff Parish Committee, called the meeting to order at 11:37 a.m. and stated there was a quorum. He asked for a moment of silent prayer for Pastor Jason Okrzynski and his family due to a medical incident.

**Opening Prayer**

The opening prayer was given by Sean DelGrosso.

**Approval of the 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes**

Rick Burg made a motion to approve the 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes as submitted; Sean DelGrosso seconded. A voice vote to approve the motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of the 2022 Financial Reports**

Lloyd Lowe gave an overview of the 2022 financial reports found on pages 10-14 of the Annual Report. The Balance Sheet on page 10 is a high-level overview of our finances. It shows the previous year end balance and the current year end balance, so the difference between the 2 years can be compared. The PNC checking account shows available cash of \$27,929.30. This is the total after all outstanding checks have been subtracted. As of December 31, 2022, there was \$45,022 in the checking account but with outstanding checks, the total decreased to \$27,929. Total cash available is \$322,703.36. Under liabilities, there are prepaid pledges of \$450. Total liabilities and fund balances total \$332,703.36. The Fund Activity Report on page 11 lists all the funds of the church. It shows the beginning balance, receipts, disbursements, and any internal transfers that occurred during the year for each fund. The operating fund ended with a negative balance of \$-34,671. This means that we spent more than we received. On January 1, 2023, Lloyd took the prior year carryover balance and zeroed out the general operating fund; \$18,270 went into the general operating balance and \$16,400 came out of the endowment fund to zero out the operating fund. Pages 12-14 show the detailed report of the operating fund. We ended the year for budget purposes with a surplus of \$4,172, which is primarily due to Pastor Jason's letter that went out to the congregation. The last 2 weeks of the year, we collected an additional \$24,000; therefore, we exceeded budget by approximately \$4,000. Each individual line item shows a year-to-date balance, a budget balance, and the difference or variance between the 2 amounts. Under income, we were short by \$19,575 in pledges, but we had a surplus of \$23,023 in contributions. Page 14 shows the total budgeted expenses of \$248,238, but our actual year-to-date expenses totaled \$256,121 which is good considering all the activity we had through the year. We originally projected a deficit of \$-30,911 but the actual deficit totaled \$-34,671. Note that every month we balance to the checking account at PNC as well as the PNC money market and Capital One accounts to make sure that every penny is accounted for. Rose Pech made a motion to accept the 2022 financial reports as presented; Jackie Ianson seconded. A voice vote to accept the motion passed unanimously.

**Adoption of the Proposed 2023 Operating Budget**

Dale Message presented the proposed 2023 operating budget found on page 15 of the Annual Report. The first column shows the budgeted amount for 2022. The second column shows the actual total for 2022, and the third column shows the budgeted amount for 2023. We are projecting revenue for 2023 to be \$201,560. There is an increase in anticipated interest revenue thanks to Lloyd Lowe

asking for a better interest rate from our financial institution this year. Under expenses, we anticipate spending a total of \$284,868 this year. Our projected deficit is \$-83,308. The committee is confident that the Lord is talking to us and that we can do better at the end of this. We will be relying on our members, and as we step out into the community and become known to the community, we feel that this will not be an issue at the end of the year. Jackie Ianson made a motion to approve the 2023 budget as presented; Cynthia Lee seconded. A voice vote to approve the motion passed unanimously.

### **Membership Report**

Lloyd Lowe presented the Membership Cultivation Report on pages 16-17 of the Annual Report. Over a year ago, Ad Council was concerned about the number of members listed in our membership report. They did an analysis, established a subcommittee to review and work on this information, and this is the final outcome of that work. At the end of 2021, we had 323 members. In 2022, we welcomed 2 new members through Confirmation, bringing the total to 325. During 2022, Ad Council and the office staff spent a lot of time contacting people and sent out 2 separate letters to inactive members asking for their responses. Some responded that they would like to be removed from our active membership; that number (37) is reflected in the retired by request column of the report. Other inactive members who are listed on page 17 did not respond and are listed as retired by UPC at the direction of Ad Council; that total came to 83. Lil Eldridge pointed out that a lot of those inactive members have moved out of the area, retired, or can no longer be contacted. If someone on the list decides to come back, it is easy to reinstate that person as a full member. Nothing is permanent in the system and no one will be deleted. We are just changing their status code from full member to retired. As a result of this work, a total of 137 names have been retired due to death, transfer to other churches, retired by request and retired by UPC. This leaves our membership total at 188 full members. This number is not an accurate count of our membership but is a number closer to how many active members we actually have. This report will continue to be a work-in-progress through 2023. If anyone has any changes, please report them to Sue Schmidt and we will check further into the status of those names. In the future, we will be reviewing the UPC Constitution and Bylaws to see about updating the status code classifications and the notification requirements. We currently have 4 classifications to use and "inactive" is not one of the acceptable classifications. It currently takes 3 years to remove someone from membership. This is a time-consuming process. Our membership numbers impact our finances, pledges, and other expenses such as copyright fees and denominational apportionments. Lil Eldridge made a motion to accept the membership report as presented; Sean DelGrosso seconded. A voice vote to accept the motion passed unanimously.

### **Nominating Report**

**Election of Officers (refer to pages 19-22)** – Lloyd Lowe presented the 2023 Nominating Report. Members highlighted in bold print are to be voted on as new leaders for the year. Members who are not highlighted are currently serving in these positions and do not need to be voted on. We have made progress in filling positions; however, we are still looking for more volunteers to serve. After receiving no nominations from the floor, Carol Roselli-Rasmussen made a motion to accept the nominating slate of officers and leaders as presented; Cinda Bartz seconded. A voice vote to accept the motion passed unanimously.

### **Recognition of Honorary Deacons and Stewards**

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Sue Schmidt presented Jerry Wessale as our honorary deacon and steward for 2022. Jerry has been an active participant in serving God and UPC since he joined in 2019. With his commitment to the Home Team, Building & Grounds, the Operations Commission, Adult Education Committee, the handbell choir, and PADS, Jerry has contributed much

of his time, energy and talent to the needs of our church. Congratulations and thanks were extended to Jerry for his service to UPC and our church family.

### **Other Reports and Business**

No other business was discussed. The remaining commission and committee reports are listed in the Annual Report. Members are encouraged to read them for more information. Rose Pech found 3 mistakes in the Annual Report: 1) the Ad Council report on page 23 should be “tendered his resignation” instead of “tenured”; 2) the Budget & Finance report on page 24, the comma should be placed as \$37,604.80; 3) the Membership & Outreach report on page 34 under the first bullet point, “plan” should be changed to “play.” Sue Schmidt has already made these change in the Annual Report.

### **Closing Prayer**

Sean DelGrosso gave the closing prayer.

### **Adjournment**

Lloyd Lowe thanked everyone for attending the Annual Meeting. Sean DelGrosso made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Joan Hendricks seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sue Schmidt, Clerk

## **Mission Statement**

### **MISSION: Who are we?**

As followers of Jesus Christ, we, the people of the United Protestant Church, have come together in covenant to:

- Praise and worship God;
- Grow in the knowledge and Spirit of God;
- Care for one another;
- Serve and pray for our neighbors.

### **VISION: Where are we going?**

Grounded in Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, God is transforming us, the people of the United Protestant Church, into disciples who will:

- Move beyond the comfortable and familiar as we live out our faith;
- Develop deeper personal relationships with God, self, and others;
- Offer God's extravagant welcome to all people;
- Connect our faith with our lives in service to Lake County and beyond;
- Transform our world through God's justice, compassion, and extraordinary love.





**United Protestant Church of Grayslake - Grayslake IL**  
**Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2023**

**Monday, January 1, 2024**

**Page 1 of 1**

Account #	Account Name	Previous Year Balance	YTD Balance
<b>Assets</b>			
1.100.101	PNC Checking	27,929.30	1,816.11
1.100.102	PNC Money Market	3,001.69	69,557.75
1.100.103	Capital One	291,772.37	250,352.56
	<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$322,703.36</b>	<b>\$321,726.42</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
2.400.400	Prepaid Pledges	450.00	350.00
	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$450.00</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>
<b>Fund Balances</b>			
3.100.100	General Operating Fund Balance	(34,671.48)	(55,777.61)
3.150.100	Above and Beyond Fund Balance	18,270.50	36,137.36
3.200.200	Helping Hand Fund Balance	2,016.00	1,516.00
3.201.200	Bell Choir Fund Balance	44.30	44.30
3.202.200	Capital Improvement Fund Balance	20,568.15	48,225.21
3.203.200	Music Fund Balance	2,083.77	2,083.77
3.204.200	Youth Activity Fund Balance	2,521.58	(247.30)
3.205.200	Home Team Fund Balance	1,546.45	1,477.61
3.206.200	Childrens Ministry Activity Fund Balance	2,831.65	1,881.65
3.207.200	OCC/OCH Fund Balance	6,652.67	4,416.35
3.208.200	Endowment Fund Balance	214,499.06	198,098.08
3.209.200	Endowment Programs & Facility Balance	807.75	807.75
3.210.200	Endowment New Ventures Balance	15,281.62	15,281.62
3.211.200	Missions -General Fund Balance	41,021.18	40,640.61
3.212.200	WCF - Mission Balance	387.50	12.50
3.213.200	Soles for Jesus Fund	(25.00)	0.00
3.214.200	Adult Education Fund Balance	1,360.11	672.22
3.215.200	Nursery Coordinator Fund Balance	N/A	4,650.00
3.300.300	Adult Mission Fund Balance	25.00	25.00
3.301.300	Bishop's Apeal Fund Balance	50.00	75.00
3.302.300	Curt's Cafe Balance	0.00	50.00
3.303.300	CWS Best Gifts Fund Balance	150.00	150.00
3.304.300	Tyler and Brittany Fund Balance	410.00	5.00
3.307.300	INK 180 Fund Balance	75.00	0.00
3.313.300	Veterans Tree Balance	256.20	334.20
3.314.300	Northern Illinois Food Bank Balance	0.00	60.00
3.400.400	PADS Fund Balance	5,633.86	4,731.82
3.500.500	Memorials Fund Balance	15,664.88	12,260.80
3.600.600	UPC Shopper Card Fund Balance	4,792.61	3,764.48
	<b>Total Fund Balances</b>	<b>\$322,253.36</b>	<b>\$321,376.42</b>
	<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>	<b>\$322,703.36</b>	<b>\$321,726.42</b>

If the accounts in the subtotals have changed or if ledger (marked with "\*\*") and subsidiary account attributes have changed, Previous YTD totals may not represent a valid comparison.

**United Protestant Church of Grayslake - Grayslake IL  
Consolidated Fund Activity Report as of 12/31/2023**

**Monday, January 1, 2024**

**Page 1 of 1**

Account #	Account Name	Beg Balance	Receipts	Disbursement	Transfers/JE's	End Balance
3.100.100	General Operating Fund Balance	(34,671.48)	213,507.62	269,285.23	34,671.48	(55,777.61)
3.150.100	Above and Beyond Fund Balance	18,270.50	36,137.36	0.00	(18,270.50)	36,137.36
3.200.104	Land,Building/Furniture Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.200.200	Helping Hand Fund Balance	2,016.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	1,516.00
3.201.200	Bell Choir Fund Balance	44.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	44.30
3.202.200	Capital Improvement Fund Balance	20,568.15	53,901.17	29,244.11	3,000.00	48,225.21
3.203.200	Music Fund Balance	2,083.77	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,083.77
3.204.200	Youth Activity Fund Balance	2,521.58	3,135.00	5,903.88	0.00	(247.30)
3.205.200	Home Team Fund Balance	1,546.45	10.00	78.84	0.00	1,477.61
3.206.200	Childrens Ministry Activity Fund Balance	2,831.65	50.00	0.00	(1,000.00)	1,881.65
3.207.200	OCC/OCH Fund Balance	6,652.67	175.00	2,411.32	0.00	4,416.35
3.208.200	Endowment Fund Balance	214,499.06	0.00	0.00	(16,400.98)	198,098.08
3.209.200	Endowment Programs & Facility Balance	807.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	807.75
3.210.200	Endowment New Ventures Balance	15,281.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,281.62
3.211.200	Missions -General Fund Balance	41,021.18	0.00	380.57	0.00	40,640.61
3.212.200	WCF - Mission Balance	387.50	12.50	387.50	0.00	12.50
3.213.200	Soles for Jesus Fund	(25.00)	305.00	305.00	25.00	0.00
3.214.200	Adult Education Fund Balance	1,360.11	302.00	989.89	0.00	672.22
3.215.200	Nursery Coordinator Fund Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,650.00	4,650.00
3.300.300	Adult Mission Fund Balance	25.00	290.00	290.00	0.00	25.00
3.301.300	Bishop's Apeal Fund Balance	50.00	25.00	0.00	0.00	75.00
3.302.300	Curt's Cafe Balance	0.00	662.50	612.50	0.00	50.00
3.303.300	CWS Best Gifts Fund Balance	150.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	150.00
3.304.300	Tyler and Brittany Fund Balance	410.00	565.00	970.00	0.00	5.00
3.305.300	Feed My Starving Children Fund Balance	0.00	555.00	555.00	0.00	0.00
3.306.300	Lake County Haven House Fund Balance	0.00	475.00	475.00	0.00	0.00
3.307.300	INK 180 Fund Balance	75.00	953.75	1,028.75	0.00	0.00
3.308.300	Neighbors in Need Fund Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.309.300	One Great Hour of Sharing Fund Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.310.300	PADS Joy Sharing Fund Balance	0.00	320.00	0.00	(320.00)	0.00
3.311.300	Red Bird Mission Fund Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.312.300	World Relief Balance	0.00	360.50	360.50	0.00	0.00
3.313.300	Veterans Tree Balance	256.20	190.00	112.00	0.00	334.20
3.314.300	Northern Illinois Food Bank Balance	0.00	440.00	380.00	0.00	60.00
3.400.400	PADS Fund Balance	5,633.86	2,005.14	2,227.18	(680.00)	4,731.82
3.500.500	Memorials Fund Balance	15,664.88	3,335.00	386.06	(6,353.02)	12,260.80
3.600.600	UPC Shopper Card Fund Balance	4,792.61	11,317.00	11,345.13	(1,000.00)	3,764.48
<b>Total</b>		<b><u>\$322,253.36</u></b>	<b><u>\$329,029.54</u></b>	<b><u>\$328,228.46</u></b>	<b><u>(\$1,678.02)</u></b>	<b><u>\$321,376.42</u></b>

**United Protestant Church of Grayslake - Grayslake IL**  
**Treasurer's Report as of December 2023 for General Operating Fund**

Monday, January 1, 2024 9:11 AM

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Account #	Account Name	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Over/Under YTD+(-)
<b>Income</b>				
4.100.100	Pledges	137,666.75	160,000.00	(22,333.25)
4.100.101	Contributions	56,155.50	25,000.00	31,155.50
4.100.102	Interest	10,136.25	7,500.00	2,636.25
4.100.103	Loose Offerings	1,496.29	525.00	971.29
4.100.105	Church School	0.00	15.00	(15.00)
4.100.106	Initial Offerings	120.00	300.00	(180.00)
4.100.107	Heating	480.00	220.00	260.00
4.100.108	Lent\Easter	1,673.00	1,700.00	(27.00)
4.100.109	Thanksgiving	88.00	100.00	(12.00)
4.100.110	Building Use	3,168.75	3,500.00	(331.25)
4.100.111	Advent\Christmas	496.02	1,000.00	(503.98)
4.100.112	Prior Year	1,740.00	1,500.00	240.00
4.100.113	Sacred Grounds	197.06	200.00	(2.94)
4.100.114	Fund Raising	0.00	0.00	0.00
4.100.115	Mis Income	90.00	0.00	90.00
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$213,507.62</b>	<b>\$201,560.00</b>	<b>\$11,947.62</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
5.100.201	UMC Mission Outreach	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
5.100.202	UCC Mission Outreach	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
5.100.301	Mission Committee Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.302	Membership/Community Outreach	263.19	300.00	(36.81)
5.100.303	Worship Supplies	667.48	500.00	167.48
5.100.304	Upper Room	193.50	200.00	(6.50)
5.100.305	Copyright License	367.00	355.00	12.00
5.100.306	Bulletin Covers	34.96	30.00	4.96
5.100.307	Community/Social Outreach	103.08	500.00	(396.92)
5.100.308	Sacred Grounds Expense	178.08	0.00	178.08
5.100.309	Stewardship	104.18	250.00	(145.82)
5.100.310	Evangelism	46.50	300.00	(253.50)
5.100.311	Choir Music	33.00	0.00	33.00
5.100.312	Bell Choir Music	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.313	Annual Church Conference	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.314	Marketing\Promotion	0.00	300.00	(300.00)
5.100.315	Piano Maintenance	175.00	150.00	25.00
5.100.316	Organ Maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.317	Handbell Maintenance	0.00	100.00	(100.00)
5.100.318	Council General Expense	610.00	0.00	610.00
5.100.319	Communications	0.00	300.00	(300.00)
5.100.401	Adult Education	451.19	200.00	251.19
5.100.402	Bibles	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.403	CMC Curriculum	111.86	250.00	(138.14)
5.100.404	Church School Supplies	112.25	210.00	(97.75)
5.100.405	Vacation Bible School	106.47	300.00	(193.53)
5.100.406	CE Commission Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.407	Teacher Recognition	0.00	50.00	(50.00)
5.100.408	Teacher Training	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.409	Confirmation	262.31	200.00	62.31
5.100.410	Cradle Roll	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.411	Programs\Retreats	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.412	Youth Curriculum	168.15	300.00	(131.85)
5.100.413	Senior Gifts	0.00	0.00	0.00

**United Protestant Church of Grayslake - Grayslake IL**  
**Treasurer's Report as of December 2023 for General Operating Fund**

Monday, January 1, 2024 9:11 AM

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Account #	Account Name	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Over/Under YTD+(-)
5.100.501	Pulpit Supply	0.00	500.00	(500.00)
5.100.502	Senior Pastor Expense	1,025.50	1,500.00	(474.50)
5.100.503	Staff Development	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.504	Sr Pastor Salary & Housing	77,100.00	77,100.00	0.00
5.100.505	Sr Pastor Pension, Life & Disability	11,872.88	10,800.00	1,072.88
5.100.506	Sr Pastor Medical & Dental Insurance	31,442.15	31,400.00	42.15
5.100.507	Christian Education Director	31,904.25	32,214.00	(309.75)
5.100.508	Director Youth Ministry	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.509	Nursery Coordinator	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.510	Church Secretary	8,381.25	9,360.00	(978.75)
5.100.511	Organist/Pianist	11,291.72	11,200.00	91.72
5.100.512	Sunstitute Musician	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.513	Adult Music Director	5,284.83	10,709.00	(5,424.17)
5.100.514	Custodian #1	7,511.25	9,360.00	(1,848.75)
5.100.515	Custodian #2	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.516	Staff Pay Increases	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.517	Staff Related Special Events	456.00	0.00	456.00
5.100.518	FICA - Employer Portion	9,234.36	11,550.00	(2,315.64)
5.100.519	Background Checks	72.50	250.00	(177.50)
5.100.601	Office Supplies	974.85	2,300.00	(1,325.15)
5.100.602	IT Hardware/Software/Repairs	2,624.94	1,400.00	1,224.94
5.100.603	Offering Envelopes	622.75	550.00	72.75
5.100.604	Repair/Maintenance Contracts	60.00	300.00	(240.00)
5.100.605	Copier Expense	1,484.06	1,400.00	84.06
5.100.606	Postage	840.00	2,100.00	(1,260.00)
5.100.701	Property/Liability Insurance	9,475.27	9,000.00	475.27
5.100.702	Workers Comp Insurance	1,075.73	980.00	95.73
5.100.703	Maintenance Supplies	1,543.58	3,000.00	(1,456.42)
5.100.704	Church Repairs	6,847.47	3,000.00	3,847.47
5.100.705	Pest Control - Church	340.20	400.00	(59.80)
5.100.706	Pest Control Park Ave	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.100.707	Park Ave Repairs	1,204.50	400.00	804.50
5.100.708	Fire Prevention	2,511.48	2,000.00	511.48
5.100.709	Elevator Maintenance	1,615.26	3,000.00	(1,384.74)
5.100.710	Snow Removal	3,050.00	4,000.00	(950.00)
5.100.711	Lawn Maintenance	1,109.32	1,400.00	(290.68)
5.100.712	HVAC Contract	4,995.00	7,500.00	(2,505.00)
5.100.713	Sate Boiler Inspection	100.00	100.00	0.00
5.100.801	Electricity	8,662.90	7,500.00	1,162.90
5.100.802	Water/Sewer	865.66	600.00	265.66
5.100.803	Refuse Collection	866.47	850.00	16.47
5.100.804	Natural Gas	10,322.91	11,000.00	(677.09)
5.100.805	Park Ave Utilities	1,874.16	3,000.00	(1,125.84)
5.100.806	Telephone	2,283.45	3,200.00	(916.55)
5.100.901	Bank Charges	135.00	300.00	(165.00)
5.100.902	ACH Fees	244.68	350.00	(105.32)
5.100.903	Payroll Services	1,990.70	1,500.00	490.70
5.100.904	Misc. Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$269,285.23</b>	<b>\$283,868.00</b>	<b>(\$14,582.77)</b>
<b>Difference</b>		<b>(\$55,777.61)</b>	<b>(\$82,308.00)</b>	

**United Protestant Church of Grayslake IL**  
**Proposed 2024 Budget**

<i>Income</i>	2024		
Account Name	2023 Budget	2023 YE Actual	Proposed Changes
Pledges	160,000.00	137,666.75	160,485.40
Contributions	25,000.00	56,155.50	52,201.00
Interest	7,500.00	10,136.25	9,534.00
Loose Offerings	525	1,496.29	1,302.00
Church School	15	0	5.00
Initial Offerings	300	120	120.00
Heating	220	480	520.00
Lent\Easter	1,700.00	1,673.00	1,673.00
Thanksgiving	100	88	50.00
Building Use	3,500.00	3,168.75	2,555.00
Advent\Christmas	1,000.00	496.02	1,025.00
Prior Year	1,500.00	1,740.00	1,740.00
Sacred Grounds	200	197.06	209.00
Fund Raising	0	0	0.00
Mis Income	0	90	0.00
	<b>\$201,560.00</b>	<b>\$213,507.62</b>	<b>\$231,419.40</b>

***Expenses***

UMC Mission Outreach	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
UCC Mission Outreach	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
<b>Mission Outreach</b>	<b>\$2,000.00</b>	<b>\$2,000.00</b>	<b>\$2,000.00</b>
<b>Spiritual Life and Outreach</b>	<b>\$3,285.00</b>	<b>\$2,775.97</b>	<b>\$3,336.00</b>
<b>Christian Education</b>	<b>\$1,510.00</b>	<b>\$1,212.23</b>	<b>\$1,373.00</b>
<b>Staff Parish</b>	<b>\$205,943.00</b>	<b>\$195,576.69</b>	<b>\$188,002.00</b>
<b>Church Office</b>	<b>\$8,050.00</b>	<b>\$6,606.60</b>	<b>\$5,735.00</b>
<b>Building and Grounds</b>	<b>\$34,780.00</b>	<b>\$33,867.81</b>	<b>\$38,902.00</b>
<b>Utilities</b>	<b>26,150.00</b>	<b>24,875.55</b>	<b>26,790.00</b>
<b>Budgetary</b>	<b>\$2,150.00</b>	<b>\$2,370.38</b>	<b>\$2,146.00</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$283,868.00</b>	<b>\$269,285.23</b>	<b>\$268,284.00</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>(\$82,308.00)</b>	<b>(\$55,777.61)</b>	<b>(\$36,864.60)</b>

## Membership Report December 31, 2023

<b>Members as of December 31, 2022</b>	<b>188</b>
<b>Members Received by Confirmation:</b> Ben Ansell, Connor Bethmann, Garrett Fries	<b>+3</b>
<b>Reinstated by Request or Clerical Error:</b> Evelyn Munts	<b>+1</b>
<b>Transfer from UCC Churches:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Transfer from other churches:</b> Drew Madden, Abigail Madden, John Porteous, Margaret Porteous	<b>+4</b>
<b>Total New Members</b>	<b>+8</b>
<b>Total Members</b>	<b>196</b>
<b>Members Removed by:</b>	
<b>Deaths:</b> Doris Craig, Priscilla Wackerlin, Felix Flok, Sr.	<b>-3</b>
<b>Transfer to UMC Churches:</b> Brian Batteiger, Linda Batteiger	<b>-2</b>
<b>Transfer to UCC Churches:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Transfer to other Churches:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Retired by Request:</b> Vanessa Eldridge, Matthew Martinez, Diane Kiblinger, Erika Kiblinger, Varsha Mall	<b>-5</b>
<b>Retired by UPC:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Removed</b>	<b>-10</b>
<b>Total Members as of December 31, 2023</b>	<b>186</b>

## Honorary Deacons and Stewards

1950 – 2023

2022	Jerry Wessale	2003	Frank Osburn	1987	Bernadine Poska
2021	Jackie Ianson	2002	Edna Munsinger	1986	Florence Madsen
2020	Kelly Truckenbrod	2002	Howard Munsinger	1986	Edith Manusos
2019	Lillian Eldridge	2001	Mark Rasmussen	1985	Elaine Francis
2018	Cherlyn Lowe	2001	Carol Roselli-Rasmussen	1985	Joseph Francis
2018	Dale Message	2000	Doug McDowell	1985	Winifred Manuel
2017	Diane Rarick	2000	Mary Ann McDowell	1985	Evelyn Turner
2016	Jim Fisher	1999	Alice Broadhurst	1984	Blanche Hawkins
2016	Steve Truckenbrod	1999	Dennis Craig	1984	Eleanor Roberts
2016	Kristen Johnson	1999	Darlene George Craig	1983	Ruth Tidlund
2016	Karen Knapp	1999	Rose Pech	1982	Clarence Perry
2014	Chuck Martin	1998	Candi Becker	1982	Florence Perry
2014	Sue Schmidt	1998	Ted Becker	1981	Helen Pegg
2013	Eric Stahl	1998	Lois Bemis	1980	Berenice Friend
2013	Steve Rarick	1997	John Harnagel	1979	Florence McKay
2012	Bill Churchill	1997	Janet Kendrick	1978	Lillian Watters
2012	Brian Hides	1996	Barb Fischel	1977	Alta Neville
2011	Christine Hides	1996	Craig Fischel	1976	Dorothy DeGraff
2011	Kevin Smith	1995	Hal Alvin	1976	Kathryn Hook
2011	Val Smith	1995	Nancy Alvin	1975	Charles Connelly
2010	Lloyd Lowe	1995	Laurel Bruggen	1974	Clara Rehder
2010	Linda Rambo	1994	Verlee Jones	1973	Harold Burge
2009	Cliff Grost	1994	Jean Tanner	1972	Emma Laursen
2009	Tom May	1993	Bob Peterson	1971	Stanley Evans
2009	Peggy Grost	1992	Janice Peterson	1970	Irene Welty
2008	Joe Hobson	1992	Jerry Badgerow	1968	Gertrude Kocher
2008	Sarah Pressly-James	1992	Marlene Badgerow.	1967	Helen Beckwith
2008	Tammy Swick	1992	Roger Baumeister	1966	Charles Manuel
2007	Sandy Findlay	1992	Ruth Ann Baumeister	1965	Belle Shanks
2007	Marjorie Miller	1992	Alan Knickerbocker	1964	Alice Washburn
2007	Rosanne Taylor	1992	Karleen Knickerbocker	1963	Thyra Wicks
2006	Paula Rothacker	1992	Doris Craig	1962	Robert Washburn
2006	Dorothy Smith	1991	Joanne Lawrence	1961	Lloyd Odell
2006	Cathy Vick	1991	Richard Lawrence	1960	Ethel Rich
2005	Rick Burg	1990	Jane Conradi	1959	Ebenezer Harris
2005	Marie Frandsen	1990	Helen Simpkins	1958	Gwyneth Duddles
2005	Joyce Norton	1990	Warren Simpkins	1957	Grace Harris
2004	Bruce Bassett	1989	Rose Hornberger	1956	Margaret Vassau
2004	Carol Bassett	1989	Arthur Hornberger	1955	Adelia Englert
2004	Sharry Lockhart	1989	Elaine Johnson	1954	Sarah Longabaugh
2004	Linda Markham	1989	Ruth Pester	1953	Cora Wightman
2003	Cinda Bartz	1988	Dale Craig	1952	Mabel Hook
2003	Helga Churchill	1987	Eugene Davis	1951	Anne Pester
		1987	Lois Fenters	1950	John Allen
		1987	Melva Kerry	1950	Harry Rich



# Nominating Committee Report 2024

## Administrative Council

Chair	<b>Dale Message</b>	<b>2024</b>
Vice Chair	<b>Bill Churchill</b>	<b>2024</b>
Spiritual Life and Outreach Commission Chair	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2026</b>
Operations Commission Chair	<b>Rick Burg</b>	<b>2024</b>
Christian Education Commission Chair	Sue Schmidt	2024
At-large member	Jennifer Cooper	2024
At-large member	Rose Pech	2024
At-large member	Jamie Fuller	2024
At-large member	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2026</b>
Moderator/Lay Leader	<b>Carol Roselli-Rasmussen</b>	<b>2024</b>

## Non-Voting Members

Senior Pastor	Jason Okrzynski	
Director of Christian Education	Ryan Aubrey	
Director of Youth Fellowship	TBD	
Clerk	<b>Sue Schmidt</b>	<b>2024</b>
Financial Secretary	<b>Jan Kendrick</b>	<b>2024</b>
Co-Financial Secretary	<b>Cinda Bartz</b>	<b>2024</b>
Treasurer	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2024</b>

## Church Officers/Lay Leaders/Administrative Council Committees

Clerk	<b>Sue Schmidt</b>	<b>2024</b>
Financial Secretary	<b>Jan Kendrick</b>	<b>2024</b>
Co-Financial Secretary	<b>Cinda Bartz</b>	<b>2024</b>
Treasurer	<b>Lloyd Lowe</b>	<b>2024</b>
UCC Delegate	<b>Sean DelGrosso</b>	<b>2024</b>
UMC Delegate	<b>Dale Message</b>	<b>2024</b>

## Staff Parish Committee

Moderator/Chair	<b>Carol Roselli-Rasmussen</b>	<b>2024</b>
Administrative Council Chair	<b>Dale Message</b>	<b>2024</b>
Administrative Council Vice Chair	<b>Bill Churchill</b>	<b>2024</b>
At-large member	<b>Michelle Adams</b>	<b>2024</b>
At-large member	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2025</b>

## Nominating Committee

Chair	Pastor Jason Okrzynski	
	<b>Sue Schmidt</b>	<b>2025</b>
	<b>Jackie Ianson</b>	<b>2025</b>
	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2026</b>
	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2026</b>

## Spiritual Life and Outreach Commission

Chair	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2026</b>
Vice Chair	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2026</b>
Worship Committee Chair	Barb Fischel	2024
Membership & Outreach Chair	<b>Emily Aubrey</b>	<b>2024</b>
Stewardship Chair	Carol Roselli-Rasmussen	2025
Mission Committee Chair	<b>Linda Rambo</b>	<b>2026</b>
Communications Committee Chair	<b>Jason Okrzynski &amp; Jennifer Cooper</b>	<b>2024</b>

### Historian

TBD	2026
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### Stewardship Committee

Chair	Carol Roselli-Rasmussen	2025
	Katelyn Rasmussen	2025
	Linda Rambo	2025
	Sue Schmidt	2025

### Worship Committee

Chair	Barb Fischel	2024
	Linda Markham	2024
	<b>Denise Fuller</b>	<b>2024</b>
	Jackie Ianson	2024

### Non-Voting Members

Pastor	Jason Okrzynski
Music Director	TBD
Accompanist	Marcia Twadell
Children's Choir Director	N/A

### Membership & Outreach Committee

Chair	<b>Emily Aubrey</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Terese Bell</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Ann Drevalas</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Laurie Bethmann</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Lori Rische</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Sue Schmidt</b>	<b>2024</b>

### Mission Committee

Chair	<b>Linda Rambo</b>	<b>2026</b>
	<b>Judi Becker</b>	<b>2026</b>
	<b>Mary Ann McDowell</b>	<b>2025</b>
	<b>Cinda Bartz</b>	<b>2026</b>
	Janette Leathem	2024

### Home Team

Chair	<b>Jerry Wessale</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Lois Wessale</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>June Smith</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Kim Lenzen</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Candi Becker</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Cathy Vick</b>	<b>2024</b>

### Communications Committee

Co-Chair	<b>Jason Okrzynski</b>	<b>2024</b>
Co-Chair	<b>Jennifer Cooper</b>	<b>2024</b>
Press Releases	<b>Kim Lenzen</b>	<b>2025</b>
Marketing	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2025</b>
Website	Administrative Assistant/Staff	
Facebook	Katelyn Rasmussen	2024

### Operations Commission

Chair	<b>Rick Burg</b>	<b>2024</b>
Vice Chair	<b>Jerry Wessale</b>	<b>2024</b>
Budget & Finance Committee Chair	Denise Fuller	2025
Building & Grounds Task Force Chair	Jackie Ianson	2024
Memorials Committee Chair	<b>Cynthia Lee</b>	<b>2025</b>

### Non-Voting Members

Treasurer	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2024</b>
Financial Secretary	<b>Jan Kendrick</b>	<b>2024</b>
Co-Financial Secretary	<b>Cinda Bartz</b>	<b>2024</b>

### Budget & Finance Committee

Chair	Denise Fuller	2025
	<b>Terry Norton</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>June Smith</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Jerry Wessale</b>	<b>2025</b>
	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2026</b>

### Non-Voting Members

Treasurer	<b>TBD</b>
Financial Secretary	<b>Jan Kendrick</b>
Co-Financial Secretary	<b>Cinda Bartz</b>

### Building & Grounds Task Force

Chair	Jackie Ianson	2024
	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2025</b>
	<b>TBD</b>	<b>2025</b>

### Memorials Committee

Chair	<b>Cynthia Lee</b>	<b>2025</b>
	<b>June Smith</b>	<b>2024</b>

## Christian Education Commission

Chair	Sue Schmidt	2024
Vice Chair	TBD	2025
Adult Education Committee Chair	TBD	2025
Children's Ministry Committee Chair	Sue Schmidt	2024
Cradle Roll Committee Chair	TBD	2025
Youth Ministry Committee Chair	Jason Meyer	2024
Confirmation Task Force Chair	Erik Fries	2024

### Non-Voting Members

Senior Pastor	Jason Okrzynski
Director of Christian Education	Ryan Aubrey
Director of Youth Fellowship	TBD

### Adult Education Committee

Chair	TBD	2025
	Jerry Wessale	2025
	Abby Madden	2025

### Non-Voting Member

DCE	Ryan Aubrey
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### Youth Ministry Committee

Chair	Jason Meyer	May 2024
	Kevin Meyer	May 2024
	Sarah Fries	2025
	Garrett Fries	2025

### Non-Voting Member

DYF	TBD
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### Children's Ministry Committee

Chair	Sue Schmidt	2024
	Katelyn Rasmussen	2024
	Lexie Craig	2024
	Cathy Vick	2024
	Dian Weinkauff	2024

### Non-Voting Member

DCE	Ryan Aubrey
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### Confirmation Task Force

Chair	Erik Fries	2024
	TBD	2025

### Non-Voting Members

DCE	Ryan Aubrey
DYF	TBD

### Cradle Roll Committee

Chair	TBD	2026
	TBD	2026
	TBD	2026

### Non-Voting Members

Nursery Coordinator	Cecilia Regep
DCE	Ryan Aubrey

## **Administrative Council Report**

Much was accomplished during 2023 by the church membership and leadership. Thanks to the church musicians, they accepted the challenge and found ways to ensure church worship included musical selections due to the staff changes in the musical ministry.

On the positive side, a nursery coordinator was hired providing a vital service to the families worshipping at United Protestant Church. Thanks to the committees and commissions that provided the funding to pay for this position.

Finances continue to challenge the church. To help reduce the church debt, an above and beyond fund was created to provide an opportunity for donations to this special fund.

Thanks to those that accepted the call to lead and serve the Stewardship Committee; they provided a reenergized mission to the church membership this year.

A retreat was conducted in July to review the responsibilities and develop goals with the commission and committee members.

I visited all the active church committees this year and personally thanked them for all they do for the church.

The church partnered with Grayslake High School to offer a facility for reunification of students with their parents/guardians should an active shooter require students and staff to flee the school.

I want to thank all the council membership - commission chairs, lay leader/moderator, treasurer, the members-at-large along with the clerk - for all their tireless work, along with the commissions and committees, for all they do to continue the mission of the church.

In addition, I thank the church staff for all they do each day to enable all the members of United Protestant Church to be the word of God and Jesus to everyone they encounter each and every day.

Please contact any member of the Administrative Council or Staff Parish Committee with any ideas or concerns. They want to hear from all members of United Protestant Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale A. Message  
Chair, Administrative Council

## Staff Parish Report

2023 was a very busy year for the Staff Parish Committee. During the year we had to deal with several staff changes along with the regular administrative duties of the committee. The Staff Parish Committee has the responsibility of handling all the Human Resources functions for the UPC staff and congregation in a confidential and thoughtful manner.

We had several key staff changes in 2023. First, we recruited a Nursery Coordinator, Vanessa Marteniz, who unfortunately resigned in December. We were fortunate to find a replacement for her, Cecilia Regep, who will start in January 2024. Also, our Music Director, Kay Sutton, resigned her position this past summer. The Staff Parish decided to hold off on recruiting for her replacement until the 2024 Operating Budget is approved.

We implemented a performance review program for the staff that consists of quarterly meetings with Pastor Jason to review their performance and an annual formal written review process. This was developed to ensure an open line of communication with our staff.

The 2023 Staff Parish Committee consisted of the following elected members: Michelle Adams, William Churchill, Dale Message, Carol Roselli-Rasmussen, and Lloyd Lowe. The Pastor also attends and contributes at all Staff Parish meetings.

Respectively submitted,

Lloyd Lowe,  
Chair, Staff Parish Committee

## Report of the Senior Pastor

Grace to you and Peace from God our Father and from Jesus Christ,

I am thankful for the last year with United Protestant Church. I am thankful for your patience and grace as I have been growing and slowly getting to know a new church and a new job position. The year has confirmed my initial impression: that UPC is a vibrant, living, and love-filled congregation full of faith in Jesus Christ. As we look back and look ahead, I believe that whatever our questions or challenges, the strengths and opportunities here should be the story we tell ourselves and each other about what God is up to at UPC.

Our Commission and Committee members accomplished an incredible amount of ministry this year. A few highlights include:

Thanks to Carol Roselli-Rasmussen, we resurrected our Stewardship Committee, whose work raised both the number of households pledging, and the total pledges for the year by over ten percent. Working with the Finance Committee, we launched the Above and Beyond Fund, which raised over \$36,000 to cut our year-end deficit from over \$80,000 to under \$20,000. These efforts also underscore a congregation that was very generous and faithful with their finances this last year!

The Operations Committee, with the leadership of Rick Burg and Jerry Wessale, took care of our beautiful and aging building by replacing the asbestos flooring in one of our classrooms, keeping everything in our building up to code and up to date, worked to replace a boiler, and fixed the broken-down kitchen in the meeting room.

We saw our Worship Committee and Membership and Outreach Committee partner with our Membership Cultivation Committee to create updated church brochures and visitor bags and resurrect the Covid-paused greeters' program.

Together as a church we held a Church-wide Retreat and held a first-time interactive Easter Vigil. We welcomed two new family members and confirmed three of our young men. And together we committed Doris Craig, Pat Curnow, Felix Flok and Stanley Worden to life eternal.

Our Christian Education Commission, under the leadership of Sue Schmidt, Ryan Aubrey, Erik Fries and Jason Meyer, again offered a year of stellar programming, including yearlong Adult Education, a widely-attended outreach event including our annual Egg Hunt, and Fall Fest. Finally, planning and leading a Youth Mission Trip to Duluth, Minnesota.

Our incredible Mission Team, under the leadership of Cinda Bartz and Linda Rambo, led us in 12 incredibly generous Joy Sharing Sundays benefitting: The Lake County Haven, Tyler & Brittany, Northern Illinois Food Bank, Curt's Café, participated in the PADS Sleep-out for Shelter, Soles for Jesus, Adult Mission Trip, World Relief, PADS, Ink180, FMSC, Veteran's Tree, and Heifer International. On top of that, UPC participated in the PADS sleep-out fundraiser and was the top donor in Lake County.

Also, we hired a Nursery Coordinator and saw our Choir and Bell Choir self-direct their performances.

All these remarkable highlights are in addition to, and only possible because of our incredible day-to-day life of worship, prayer and fellowship together. Thank you to our Moderator, Lloyd Lowe for his incredible leadership and selfless service to UPC. Thanks as well to all our Commissioners and our Administrative Council members for your leadership and faithful service.

We are blessed by a talented staff who strives every day to serve our shared life of faith. Thank you to our Director of Christian Education, Ryan Aubrey, Administrator Sue Schmidt, Custodian Jackie Ianson, and our Organist Marcia Twaddell for all your planning, teaching, caring, leading, organizing and stepping up to serve whenever needed.

Finally, I want to highlight a significant upcoming transition. Dennis Craig is stepping down as our weekly A/V master during worship. Dennis' commitment and sacrifice to sharing worship virtually began during pandemic, and he has served with a smile as a singularly devoted volunteer at the digital helm and his faithfulness, expertise and personality will be missed.

As we move into another year that will no doubt bring unexpected challenges and blessings, we do so with much reason to be grateful and hopeful. It is my prayer and endeavor that we might continue to embody the faithful spiritual presence in the heart of Grayslake that UPC has been since our founding.

In Christ,

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD



## Director of Christian Education Report

Dear Church Family,

Thank you all for a good 2023. We had wonderful participation in our various offerings throughout the year, and I have learned so much from you all as we talked and walked through each of our Sunday mornings together.

This summer, I took time to map out a vision for our educational ministry's discipleship process. Thinking through what it means for us to be disciples of Christ and how we can encourage our community in both their personal faith journey and our faith journey as a community of Christ followers. To that end, my desire is that we are creating communities where people experience **belonging, believing** the foundational elements of our faith, and are increasingly **becoming** more like Christ. We hope to accomplish this throughout our educational ministries through relationships, discussion around the Bible, and practical steps for application, affirmation, and accountability.

With that in mind, one of my goals for each ministry year is that we explore four large buckets each year. Each of these buckets touch on items that are important for our faith growth. The categories are Book of the Bible, Topical Study, Theology, and Church History and Practice. These large groupings often overlap, but my main goal each year is for us to spend extended time in each of them.

Over the course of 2023, our Sunday morning adult classes touched on multiple buckets. We worked through two books of the Bible: Galatians and Hebrews. Dr. Stephanie Perdeu led us through Discipleship and the Didache. We also spent several weeks learning about and practicing Lectio Divina. In each of these classes, we had good discussions and I really enjoyed participating and preparing for each class.

Our Children's program continued to work through the Journey's in Faith curriculum. At the beginning of the calendar year, they finished tracing the major theme of Witnessing God's Presence. In the Fall, they began the second chapter of the curriculum discovering how God works with His people in and through Covenants. We also had wonderful events (Easter Egg Hunt, Back-to-School Sunday, and Fall Fest). Finally, VBS was a really enjoyable week for the kids and volunteers exploring God's faithfulness through the story of Daniel.

Thank you again to all my volunteers, committee chairs (Sue Schmidt, Erik Fries, Jason Meyer), and committee members. Without you we could not maintain our ministries. Your hard work and help are very important to not only our educational ministries, but also our church family.

I look forward to our next year of faith development and pray that we as individuals and as a community will grow in our faith.

Blessings,

Ryan Aubrey, Director of Christian Education

## **Christian Education Commission Report**

Christian Education Commission consists of the Adult Education Committee, Children's Ministry Committee, Confirmation Task Force, Cradle Roll Committee, and Youth Ministry Committee. Reports from each of these areas will follow.

Each committee set goals and continues to work to accomplish them. The Cradle Roll Committee did not function in 2023 due to lack of volunteers; however, a Nursery Coordinator was hired to operate the nursery each Sunday morning starting in the summer. The Youth Ministry Committee got the youth group going again since the pandemic with activities and a few fundraisers to fund their summer mission trip without a Director of Youth Ministry. Confirmation classes were taught by Ryan Aubrey from January through May, and Pastor Jason Okrzynski has been teaching this class since the fall semester began. Children's Ministry continues to offer Sunday School classes, unity projects, VBS and other seasonal fellowship activities. The Adult Education Committee continues to offer inspiring classes throughout the year, including Lenten and Advent studies.

A special thank you is extended to all our dedicated volunteers who make our programs successful. We also thank those who supported and participated in our programs, most of which are held on Sunday mornings, and occasionally on Tuesday evenings via Zoom. Our gratitude is also given to Ryan Aubrey, Director of Christian Education, and Pastor Jason Okrzynski for their invaluable guidance and leadership.

You are all encouraged to participate in our educational opportunities offered in 2024 to continue to grow your faith as Christ's disciples.

On Behalf of the CEC,

Sue Schmidt, Chair

## **Adult Education Committee Report**

During 2023, we offered a variety of Adult Education classes. We held four studies in addition to our annual Lenten and Advent studies. Classes were held in person on Sunday mornings and over Zoom on Tuesday evenings.

This year, we examined two books of the Bible: Galatians and Hebrews. Dr. Stephanie Perdew walked us through the Didache and its role in discipleship in the early church. The favorite study from the year was The Lectio Course. We talked about what the Lectio Divina is and how we can use it in our lives to read Scripture and to pray. Each week, participants practiced one part of the Lectio for the week. Participants enjoyed the class videos, discussions, and even the homework.

Our Lent Study was *40 Days Living the Jesus Creed*. We explored how to put into action and our lives the words of the Sermon on the Mount. Our Advent Study looked at the arrival of our Eternal King, Jesus.

Thank you all for a wonderful year in Adult Education. We look forward to our upcoming year and the various opportunities we will explore and discover this year.

Blessings,

Ryan Aubrey  
Director of Christian Education

## **Children's Ministry Committee Report**

The Children's Ministry Committee provided educational opportunities for children during 2023. Sunday school classes were offered to preschoolers through 6<sup>th</sup> graders in either Fellowship Hall or room 102 each Sunday morning at 9 a.m. The curriculum we used was the *Journeys in Faith (JIF) Year 1: Witness to God's Presence* curriculum from January through May, and *JIF Year 2: The Covenant* from September through December. The *JIF Year 2* curriculum will continue to be taught for the first half of 2024. Children's Church was offered throughout the year each Sunday morning during worship where preschool children through 1<sup>st</sup> graders attended a shortened Sunday school class after the Children's Moment.

Our monthly Unity Sunday projects occurred throughout the year. The children made bird feeders in January to assist our feathered friends during the winter, prepared their assignment of Noah's Ark for the Easter Vigil in February and March, assisted the Mission Committee with Operation Christmas Child in April and October, collected used crayons throughout the summer for the Super Crayon Project in September, and learned more about the PADS program from Rose Pech in November.

The annual Easter Party and Egg Hunt was held outside on the front lawn on April 8 where approximately 24 children and their families participated. The VBS program: *Babylon—Daniel's Courage in Captivity* was held on June 19-22. The Back-to-Sunday School registration and celebration, as well as the blessing of the backpacks was held in conjunction with a picnic and ice cream social on August 27. We also had a lot of fun participating in UPC's annual Fall Fest on October 28 where we offered the bouncy house, pumpkin painting, trunk-or-treat, Ga-Ga ball, and refreshments. Bibles were presented to two 4<sup>th</sup> graders on October 29.

This committee is dedicated to providing quality Sunday school programs for our children. Students are encouraged to invite friends and relatives to attend our classes and events throughout the year. Special thanks are extended to Ryan Aubrey, DCE, and committee members: Lexie Craig, Katelyn Rasmussen, Cathy Vick, and Dian Weinkauf. We also extend our gratitude to our other teacher volunteers and helpers: Emily Aubrey, Connor Bethmann, Jennifer Cooper, Charlie Craig, Garrett Fries, Ruth Gheysen, Evan Kutsin, Dale Message, Dylan Okrzynski, Linda Rambo, and Carol Roselli-Rasmussen. Children's Ministry meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month as needed at 7 p.m.

Sue Schmidt, Children's Ministry Chair

## **Youth Ministry Committee Report**

The UPC Youth Group supported three goals for 2023 with qualified success: 1) Maintaining a youth program without a Director of Youth Ministry, 2) Offer of a youth group activity monthly, 3) Offer of an off-site mission trip.

In June six youth and two adults traveled to Duluth, MN for a week of fellowship and serving in the community. Joining with other youth groups, they volunteered at a nursing home, food pantry and assisted in a beach clean-up. Before the trip in June, the group met several times for the trip planning and fundraising including a car wash in May.

In April we joined the congregation in the Easter Vigil and in September the youth shared the mission trip experiences including how the trip has contributed to their faith journey.

In September Pastor Jason kicked off a weekly youth group meeting that several youth have joined, however, we were unable to get together for a Christmas party and traditional Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser.

Jason Meyer, Youth Ministry Chair

## **Confirmation Task Force Report**

Pastor Jason and Erik Fries continued teaching the Confirmation program at UPC in the fall. This past May 2023, we confirmed three students: Connor Bethmann, Garrett Fries and Ben Ansell.

The Confirmation Task Force met over the summer to plan for Fall of 2023 and discussed curriculum, retreats and how to implement the mentorship program.

In the Fall of 2023, we welcomed three new students. The Confirmation Committee is continuing to work on its goal for building a mentorship program by seeking volunteers to sit as additional adults during class which can help build the relationships with our confirmands. As of January 2024, all 6 Confirmation students have reached out to a member of our congregation and asked someone to be their Confirmation mentor. As the year progresses, we will continue to hold meetings and build upon this program, mediating the building of relationships with our confirmands and their mentor. Recently we held a mini retreat on Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, and all students are caught up on the Old Testament. We have another retreat planned for April 28<sup>th</sup> to complete the New Testament and prepare for Confirmation Sunday.

We switched curriculums this year and it has been well received by the confirmands. The current Confirmation class has six students, three of whom are 8<sup>th</sup> graders and will be confirmed on May 5, 2024.

Erik Fries, Confirmation Chair

## **Cradle Roll Committee Report**

The Cradle Roll Committee did not function in 2023 due to a lack of volunteers; therefore, there is no report. The nursery was a “cry room” for half of 2023. A Nursery Coordinator was hired for the second half of the year.

## **Worship Committee Report**

It seems 2023 went by so very fast for those of us on the Worship Committee. We no sooner take down our holiday decorations at Un-hanging of the Greens, then we jump into a New Year with plans for Ash Wednesday, Lent and Easter. Shortly after Easter we have Confirmation and say thank you to our choirs for another year of great music. With summer comes summer music and we love our volunteers who are willing to sing or play an instrument for us during the summer months. Fall brings us back to our regular schedule with World-Wide Communion in October and All Saints in November. And here we are again planning our Advent/Christmas services around the celebration of the coming of the Christ Child. God keeps us very busy for sure. I am always thanking the people on my committee for their hard work (Linda Markham, Jackie Ianson, Marcia Twadell, Denise Fuller and our pastor, Jason Orkrzynski). I left off one of our most important people, Lil Eldridge, who has served as our Commission chair for the last several years. Lil is fantastic and a great supporter of all that the Worship Committee does. Lil will be stepping down this year and to say we will miss her is an understatement. I would be remiss if I did not also thank our congregation for their input and their involvement in our many projects.

I always say we on the Worship Committee serve a living Lord and you better be ready to step up when He calls on you. In my testimonial a few weeks ago, I said churches are important and we on the Worship Committee totally understand that. The church is an important stabilizing factor in our lives. We wish more people would realize that in this very chaotic world.

We ask for God’s continued support for our committee and for everyone here at United Protestant Church. Through all the seasons of the church one thing is most evident, our God is an Awesome God and with Him all things are possible!

Yours in Christ,

Barb Fischel, Worship Chair

## **Home Team Report**

The Home Team is a volunteer ministry designed to provide contact with home-bound members, family and friends, and others who may be in need, sick, grieving or in distress. Through our contacts we hope to foster a sense of community, compassion and caring by sharing God's love in the name of Christ.

The Home Team provides transportation for the Library Lane and Alto Grayslake residents and for non-driving members and friends to/from Sunday worship. Transportation is also provided (when possible) for medical appointments (within reasonable distance) throughout the year for members or regular attendees who need assistance. We continue to send cards to mark birthdays, deaths of a church member or family member, and to recognize those suffering from illness. We also make phone-call contact and pray with and for many church members. We have three people sending cards to folks on a regular basis. Our transportation team (three people currently) has been providing rides for a variety of needs, such as to/from church, doctor/dentist appointments, and hospital services. The demand for such a service was relatively high during various periods in 2023.

The Home Team is a valuable ministry made up of dedicated, compassionate people who serve as the hands and feet of Jesus. For the transportation services, phone calls, the sending of cards, home/residence visits, and just spending time listening, we are very grateful to these humble and faithful servants of God. Thank you to all of you so very much.

Blessings and yours in Christ,

Jerry Wessale, Home Team Chair

## **Membership and Outreach Report**

The Membership and Outreach Committee is designed to work toward promoting Christian fellowship at UPC and beyond our doors. With that goal in mind, this team hosted and contributed to several events throughout 2023. There include:

- Joining with the Women's Christian Fellowship to participate in their BUNCO event on March 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Ice Cream Social, combined with hot dog lunch and outdoor service on August 27. MOC served ice cream and provided toppings and helped with set-up and clean-up.
- Cider Sunday on October 1<sup>st</sup>, where we provided cider and apple cider donuts from Royal Oaks orchard. This is a well-received event by the congregation.

Other accomplishments this year include updating our visitor gifts to reusable UPC shopping bags, made by Laurie Bethmann. We also went through and contacted people from our inactive members list, helped with information from the office from Sue Schmidt, and retired such members who have moved and/or are attending other churches.

Thanks to this year's members for their work and stepping up to provide help when needed: Terese Bell, Laurie Bethmann, Lori Rische, and Ann Drevalas. We are also grateful for Pastor Jason's support this year and couldn't have made this happen without the thoughtful and important contributions from Lil Eldridge, the commission chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Aubrey, Chair

### **Mission Committee Report**

The Mission Committee is overwhelmed with the generosity of our UPC family and friends donating their time, talents and treasures in our mission to help all of God's children and sustain His creation, planet earth.

Committee members include Cinda Bartz, Judi Becker, Janette Leatham, Mary Ann McDowell and Linda Rambo. As Chair of the Spiritual Life and Outreach Commission, Lillian Eldridge has been extremely supportive and an additional committee member. Thanks to the amazing committee members and Pastor Jason for their dedication in bringing new missions to our attention and for continuing to strengthen the bond that we have with our existing mission partners. We also would like to thank Dave Bartz who, along with Cinda, coordinates the collection bins to keep items out of landfills and bring additional funds to our mission partners. The committee meets the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 pm in the parlor. We are open to suggestions from the congregation regarding new missions and Joy Sharing opportunities.

Joy Sharing is an opportunity to give on the third Sunday of the month to one of the UPC supported missions. Funds may be received any time during the year. The organizations chosen for 2023 are listed below. The committee sincerely thanks our congregation for their generous support. There are many other organizations in need, and it is always a challenge for the committee to prayerfully determine which organizations to support financially through Joy Sharing.

January	Lake County Haven	\$475.00
February	Tyler & Brittany (missionary in Africa)	565.00
March	Northern Illinois Food Bank	440.00
April	Curt's Café	662.50
May	Soles For Jesus	305.00 +
		1,254 pairs of shoes
June	Adult Mission Trip	290.00

July	World Relief	360.50
August	PADS	340.00
September	INK180	819.50
October	Feed My Starving Children	555.00
November	Veteran's Tree	200.00
December	Heifer International	620.00

A huge thank you to all of you for your generosity on behalf of our country's hospitalized veterans. We were again able to select names from the Veteran's Tree and purchase individual gifts. Together with Bank of America, we collected gifts for 86 veterans. A huge thank you to Wende Fry, Denise Fuller and Jamie Fuller for organizing and working with this amazing organization.

This year the committee selected Heifer International as our partner to provide an opportunity for UPC to give alternative Christmas gifts to their family and friends. \$620.00 was given to buy much needed items for people in under-developed countries.

UPC continues our dedicated support of Feed My Starving Children. During our many volunteer sessions in 2023, we have provided 1,577 volunteer hours to pack 350,107 meals to feed 959 kids for a year.

In addition to Joy Sharing, UPC supports several other missions, collections and recycling opportunities. These efforts provided an additional \$134.25 to INK180 through our ink cartridge recycling. We collected 3.5 pounds of pop top tabs for Ronald McDonald House and 2 pounds of plastic bread bag tags for Danielle Cares for Chairs (to provide wheelchairs for those in need). Please check out the UPC website and select Missions to see the full list, which is updated regularly, to see where you can get involved. You can also visit our collection bins in the Narthex where you can obtain a list of items for donating and recycling.

This year UPC packed and mailed 206 shoe boxes during our Operation Christmas Child event. These boxes are sent to children living in poverty around the world. This year's boxes traveled to Trinidad and Tobago, The Bahamas, Paraguay, Jamaica and Chile. The children who receive the boxes also hear the story of Jesus Christ! What an amazing gift! The committee also helps to promote the UPC Shopper Cards, which are available throughout the year. These funds help cover shipping costs for Operation Christmas Child.

This summer and fall, UPC volunteers and friends worked together to glean from our local farms and orchards. The combined group gleaned 3,100 pounds of corn, 410 pounds of tomatoes and 5,234 pounds of apples. These items were donated to the Northern Illinois Food Bank, PADS, Blessed Trinity Church, and First Presbyterian Church food pantries.

The committee is working closely with Rose Pech and Rick Burg to assist PADS in collecting food to distribute to our homeless neighbors in local hotels.



The committee oversees UPC's Mission Start-Up Program. This year the program sponsored the Companions Journeying Together mission which provides cards for prisoners to help them stay connected with their families and friends. 986 Christmas cards and 235 various other cards were provided for the inmates to send. There were also 131 Christmas cards with uplifting messages to be given to the inmates.

The mission work described above happened only because of the gifts of time, donations and dedication from our committee members and the support and generosity of the UPC congregation who showed extraordinary generosity for the mission outreach of UPC. A heartfelt thank you to all!

Our challenge for next year is, "We can do more in 2024". Help us to fulfill this goal!

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Rambo  
Mission Committee Chair

### **Stewardship Committee Report**

After a few years of dormancy, the Stewardship Committee was re-established at the UPC in 2023. Members of the committee include: Linda Rambo, Katelyn Rasmussen, Chairwoman Carol Roselli-Rasmussen, and Sue Schmidt. The committee was supported by Spiritual Life and Outreach Commission Chairwoman Lillian Eldridge, Treasurer Lloyd Lowe and UPC Senior Pastor Reverend Dr. Jason Okrzynski.

At the time of this writing (12/28/23), the 2024 Pledge Drive has received a total of 51 pledges for a total of \$175,392, an approximately 15% increase over 2023. THANK YOU, members and friends, for your generous support of the mission of the UPC to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

In 2023 the Stewardship Committee:

- Offered monthly testimonials by members during the worship service.
- Contributed monthly articles to the *Unifier* newsletter. For example, several of these articles included the promotion of *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* for the edification of our membership concerning church excellence.
- Sent personal, handwritten THANK YOU notes to all committee/commission leaders for their continued effort on behalf of the UPC and to all members/friends who submitted a 2024 pledge.
- Created and disseminated UPC magnets, prayer jars, promotional booklets (a pictorial account of the ministries of the UPC including the astounding number of volunteer hours gifted to make our missions and services a success) and the Narrative Brochures which are a summary of our various missions/services/activities and the costs from the operating budget to keep them afloat.

- Promoted finance classes offered online on Right Now Media, currently gifted to our congregation by individual donors, including "Navigating Your Finance's God's Way" and "Rock Solid Finances".
- Added access to VANCO, our online giving app, to the opening page of our UPC website (through the efforts of Ryan Aubrey, DCE).
- Facilitated the addition of the Above & Beyond Fund to help offset anticipated deficits in the 2023 Budget. Thanks to our amazing donors the fund yielded \$36,137.36.

Pledging our time, talent and money is a sacred act of worship. We are made in the image of a generous God who provides all that we have that is good in our lives. By giving back to Him with your own acts of kindness, you will feel blessed that you, too, are His servants in bringing love and good to the world.

Trusting Our God Who Provides,

Carol Roselli-Rasmussen, Chairwoman

## **Operations Commission Report**

Concerns were brought up in Administrative Council about potential asbestos hazards in a couple of rooms that have deteriorating floors. Experts were brought in to test for airborne asbestos and none was found in room 104 or 106. Room 106's floor was determined to be in the worst shape and is heavily used throughout the week. An epoxy floor was installed and looks great!

The fellowship hall/kitchen floor was damaged by the Christmas of 2022 flooding, but we have held off on replacing it because of budget concerns.

We made an agreement with Riverside Foundation to temporarily house their patients in an emergency. We supplied them shelter several years ago when their facility was flooded out by the Des Plaines River.

Two canopy tents used for special events and a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor water cooler were purchased with funds from the Memorials Committee.

A more favorable snow removal contract was signed for the coming winter.

There were many maintenance items that were addressed this year. This is understandable since we have an aging building. Below is a partial list:

- Repair of the Viking oven door
- Repair of the HVAC fencing
- Outside kitchen door repair
- Various clogged sinks were rodded out on the lower level floor
- Heating problems in the loft were resolved
- Outside education wing water valve was replaced

- Carpets in 11 rooms were professionally cleaned
- Front door was sanded, stained and resealed
- Outdoor bench was sanded and resealed
- Building use fee schedule was updated
- The boiler room hot water tank was replaced
- Selling of the 1950s meeting room kitchen unit was discussed in Administrative Council but we were able to get the sink back on line. The entire kitchen unit is now functioning as of January 4, 2024.
- VOIP was installed by AT&T and we will soon have a special line for the elevator as well.

Thanks to all of our Operations Teammates and a special shout-out to Jerry Wessale and Jackie Ianson! Both of these folks went above and beyond this year keeping our building in good shape. Also, a shout-out to all that helped clean up the mess from our Christmas 2022 flood!

Our **Technology Committee** is still in need of some help. If you are capable in this area, please consider helping out this ministry!

Yours in Christ,

Richard Burg, Chair

## **Memorials Report**

The purpose of the Memorial Committee is to preserve the memory of the person who has passed and directing their memorials to a gift that the committee and the family would appreciate.

Memorial gifts this year were used for: Church's General Fund, an office computer, 2 tents, flooring for room 106, a stainless-steel water cooler, and we were able to help the church by giving a portion for the Nursery Coordinatort Fund.

Gifts were received from the families of: Darwin Schwaderer, Doris Craig, Fern Hammond, Ken and Sarah Press, Pat Curnow, Vuel Smith, Wynelle Wharton, and Pat Wackerlin.

There are memorial gift envelopes that can be found on the front table near the stain glass windows and at Strang's Funeral Chapel.

Respectively submitted by:

Cynthia Lee, Chair

## Women's Christian Fellowship Report

During 2023, WCF members of Circles 2, 4/5 and 9 enjoyed the fellowship time during regular meetings which had been resumed during 2022. Meetings for Circle 2 were held in the Meeting Room at 11:30 a.m. on one Sunday a month except for January and February when they had no meeting. The Sunday varied, depending on other congregational events. Circle 4/5 began meeting at Culver's Restaurant at 11:30 a.m. on the first Wednesday of the month. Circle 9's meetings continued to be held at 5:30 p.m. at Hillside Restaurant on the second Tuesday of each month, with a few cancellations due to members having other obligations. Circle 10 members kept in touch on Facebook. Catherine Vick (Circle 2), Sue Schmidt (Circle 4/5), Ruth Gheysen (Circle 9), and Jasmine Walker (Circle 10) continued to be chairpersons. The contact person for WCF was still Rose Pech. Catherine Vick continued as Secretary and the only official officer, as we no longer had a Historian.

- BUNCO gatherings were held in both March and October with members and other friends enjoying a fun afternoon at each event.
- Communication was done in person as well as via internet and phone, with regular mail used for members when needed.
- The WCF Mission Fund that was used to support Tyler & Brittany's projects in West Africa, was combined with the UPC fund for them to avoid the confusion of having two different funds for the same purpose.
- WCF members assisted with ushering as needed; however, there was no longer a designated Sunday for women to be the ushers.

We were deeply saddened by the loss of dear friends and long-time members Doris Craig, Pat Curnow, and Pat Wackerlin.

WCF has maintained the connection with the Lake North District of the Northern Illinois Conference as part of United Women of Faith. We do not pledge because we no longer raise or maintain funds.

### Ministry & Mission Expenditures in 2023:

- Individual member donations were made to the UPC Fund for Tyler & Brittany's outreach in Africa.
- PADS: Monetary and other donations for PADS Lake County guests in motels and at St. Mary of Vernon PADS Site where UPC PADS volunteers served during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 PADS Emergency Shelter Seasons, ending May 1, 2023.
- Gifts for veterans at the James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center whose names were on the Veteran's Tree.
- Avon Food Pantry, St. Mary of Vernon Food Pantry.
- Curt's Café, Sacred Grounds.
- Soles for Jesus, World Relief.
- Meals, visits, cards, and calls to members.

We are thankful to all who supported WCF throughout 2023 and look forward to 2024!

Rose A. Pech, WCF Contact Person

## History and Archives Report

2023 came with a host of activity for the ministries of the United Protestant Church. Some highlights of the year include, in no particular order:

- Continued Sunday morning worship in the Sanctuary, which was livestreamed on YouTube, along with weekly Christian education opportunities for all ages.
- A renewed/recreated/redesigned Stewardship Committee under the leadership of Carol Roselli-Rasmussen which focused the congregation's attention on the theme of generosity and the concepts in Robert Schnase's book Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations.
- An all-church retreat on Saturday, July 15 with the theme "Crossing Over."
- A youth mission trip to Duluth, Minnesota in June.
- Collection of items for Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes throughout the year, culminating in a packing party in November at which just over 200 shoe boxes were packed.
- Meaningful Holy Week worship and activities, including Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Easter Sunrise and Easter worship services, an Easter egg hunt for children on Saturday afternoon and an Easter Vigil on Saturday evening.
- Vacation Bible School in June: "Babylon – Daniel's Courage in Captivity."
- An adult mission trip in March to Mayfield, Kentucky to help rebuild tornado-damaged homes.
- Two presentations by Chris Baker of Ink 180 on human trafficking and safe practices on social media.
- Monthly Joy Sharing opportunities continue to support projects outside our walls as did monthly packs for Feed My Starving Children.
- Celebration of Sean Del Grosso's 11 years as Director of Music as he "retired" from that role this past spring.
- Fall Fest at the end of October on the front lawn of the church in conjunction with the downtown Grayslake's trick-or-treating at businesses.
- Outdoor worship on August 27 followed by a picnic, registration for Christian Education and a mission fair. Backpacks, both those being used by UPC folks and those being given to be sent to others, were blessed during the worship service.

We look forward to 2024 with excitement as we continue our journey in ministry together in Grayslake and the world beyond.

Take care and God bless.

Dennis Craig, Historian