

The Unifier



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April 2024

Grace to you and...

Happy Easter! The Resurrection is the absolute foundation of our Christian faith. We follow Jesus. However, the earliest Christians were clear that the resurrection was the reason they were willing to risk life and limb to share the good news. Without the resurrection, the crucifixion of Jesus is just news. However good, however faithful, however Spirit-filled Jesus was, we would likely not know his name if he had just been arrested and crucified. Historically, Jesus was killed because he was a threat to the powers that be in Rome and Israel, but that is not why we celebrate Easter. The real meaning of Easter, and of Jesus' Cross only reveal themselves in the empty tomb. It is there that the surprising victory of God is truly accomplished and fully revealed. The resurrected Jesus is far more than a crucified prophet or teacher. The risen Jesus is the savior who, by his cross took our sin and put it to death, and in his life and resurrection, raised all of humanity beyond sin and death and into eternal life. This is not just news, that is **good news!**

I am so grateful for the Lent and Easter season we just completed. It already seems like an eon ago, but I cannot thank everyone who made our Lenten dramas possible enough. What is more, I am feeling similar gratitude for our Holy Week services, beginning with our fabulous custodian Jackie Ianson, Barb Fischel and the Worship Committee, our administrator Sue Schmidt, our DCE Ryan Aubrey and everyone who helped to put on a fabulous Easter egg hunt; ALL members of The Singers and The Ringers, and of course, all our liturgists and readers! It was a week of worship and prayers that involved our entire congregation. I have heard loud and clear that it was appreciated by the many, many folks who took part.

Easter, of course, also means that summer is fast approaching. However, we have a couple of significant events to look forward to over the next couple of months. First of all, we will be observing Easter for the next six weeks and celebrating the resurrection throughout. May 5th is Confirmation Sunday, and we hope that you will help support our young confirmands as they bear witness to their young Christian faith. May 19th is Pentecost Sunday, on which day we will also be celebrating Music Sunday.

I want to take this opportunity to also let you know about a planned summer worship event. The Membership Cultivation Committee in cooperation with the Worship Committee and the Membership Outreach Committee will be hosting four mid-summer outdoor worship experiences. We are still in the process of developing the services, but the hope is to offer an easy public opportunity for folks to put their toe into worship. The planned worship services will be on the UPC front lawn following the Farmer's Market on Wednesday, June 19th and 26th, and July 10th and 17th. We hope that you might mark the dates on your calendar and consider stopping by. If you plan to be around and would be interested in planning or helping, please contact Pastor Jason at seniorpastor@upcgl.org.

In Christ,

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD
Senior Pastor

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Dear Church Family,

Holy Week is one of my favorite weeks of the year. Going through the process of remembering and participating in Christ's final week in community with other believers is a beautiful thing. This past Holy Week was no different. It was wonderful to celebrate Easter together.

Since coming back from the Pandemic, one of my favorite events we host is our Easter Egg Hunt. It is wonderful to have kids connected with our church and some community families join us on our front lawn and run around picking up eggs together. This year's egg hunt was one of the best we have hosted in recent years. We had around 20 kids this year, and the joy they exhibited as they started the Egg Hunt was beautiful to see. Our event begins with kids and families hearing an Easter children's story, they then get most of the rules for the Egg Hunt, then we go outside for the mad dash to get eggs, finally, once all (or at least we hope all) the eggs are found we share in a time of refreshments and fellowship. All the kids and families found it a wonderful time. In fact, on Easter Sunday, I heard from at least one person tell me that the child they brought had more fun at our Egg Hunt than a community one.

Our Egg Hunt is a wonderful opportunity to invite our community into our building for a safe and enjoyable time for the family. I am so thankful to all of you for your support in these events and opportunities. Thank you so much for all the candy donations, the kids really enjoyed our great variety of treats, and for coming out and interacting with the families that came. You all are always invited to come to our major Children's events, Easter Egg Hunt and Fall Fest.

Looking forward, I am excited to announce our VBS for this coming summer. This year, we will be taking a trip to the beach to explore how God's truth never changes! We will be hosting VBS on June 24th – 27th from 10:00 am to Noon. More information about this event will be coming during the month of April. If you are interested in volunteering or donating items to help make this year's event a success, please let me know.

Blessings,

Ryan Aubrey

Director of Christian Education





*EASTER
PARTY &
EGG HUNT
March 30th*



STEWARDSHIP NEWS



Stewardship

sharing the gifts we have been given

As members of the United Protestant Church, we are part of the mission of the Church, not merely sponsors of it. Hence, all giving is about how we are contributing to God's Work. Our Christian mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. In so doing, we ought to give from our hearts, regardless of the amount.

When you decide whether or not to pledge or contribute to the church, do you consider the blessings of having a safe, warm (or cool) place to meet, a staff passionate about leading and instructing disciples of Christ, missions that benefit the community, the country and/or the world, classrooms with volunteer teachers sharing their time and love with our children as they explore the Biblical stories of our faith, space where we can house the homeless, school children seeking asylum from danger and local clubs in need of a place to meet? Do you ever think you are taking advantage of having restrooms mopped before anyone arrives, a welcoming voice answering the phone when you need to speak to a friend, a pastor on hand to walk your family through a difficult time?

As members of the UPC, we are ALL stewards of God's blessings. This April as you celebrate life with the newly risen Christ, please remember these words from Peter,

As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another.

(1Peter 4:10)

Trusting Our God that Provides,

Carol Roselli-Rasmussen



*Please remember the
United Protestant Church
in your Estate Planning.*





APRIL 2024

UPC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:00pm Stewardship Committee (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	2 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	3 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:15pm Troop 451 Board of Review (101)	4 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 7:00pm Staff Parish (MR) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	5 4:00-8:00pm Roger Richardson Visitation at Strang's	6 10:00am Roger Richardson Funeral (Sanctuary)
7 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service 11:30am Circle 2 (MR)	8 7:00pm Children's Ministry Committee (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	9 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 5:30pm Circle 9 (Mrs. V's) 6:30pm North Star District Commissioner Meeting (MR) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 PLC (101)	10 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft) 7:00pm PUSH (Parlor) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	11 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Budget & Finance (MR) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	12 6:00-8:00pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting (FH-Aubrey)	13
14 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	15 7:00pm Ad Council (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	16 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 Pack Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Nami Family Support Group (MR) 7:00pm Troop 451 Committee Meeting (101)	17 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	18 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	19	20
21 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service 4:00pm Piano Recital (Sanctuary—Emily Aubrey)	22 7:00pm Mission Committee (Parlor) 7:00pm Worship Committee (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	23 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Membership Cultivation Committee (MR)	24 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	25 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	26	27
28 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	29 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	30 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)				

MISSIONS

Feed My Starving Children

The next UPC packing session at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville is scheduled for Tuesday, April 2 from 7:00-8:45 p.m. If you are interested in participating, please contact Cinda Bartz at bartzc@sbcglobal.net.

Operation Christmas Child

During the month of April, we would like to collect stuffed animals, puzzles, games, stickers, playing cards, and card games to fill 250 shoebox gifts.

April Joy Sharing

The Joy Sharing offering for April will benefit Curt's Café. Please read on to learn more about their mission.

Proven at-risk or formerly incarcerated young adults have few resources available to them. With little hope of securing employment, even for entry-level positions, many end up living on the streets and return to destructive habits. Cycling through the courts, 86% of those released are sent back through the system within 3 years. We all pay the price for such recidivism. For our sake and theirs, it makes sense to direct these young adults toward a secure and productive future.

At Curt's they provide that opportunity by teaching marketable skills to young adults and then assisting in securing employment. They teach culinary techniques but also provide instruction needed to fill in educational gaps, gain confidence, and become job-ready.

The student-trainees, aged 15 through 24, are living in at-risk situations, such as having contact with the judicial system, or are homeless, food insecure or have dropped out of school.

A portion of Curt's Café's mission reads "We promote education, respect, compassion and integrity, and embrace the philosophy of restorative justice in all we do."

These young adults are determined to build a positive future for themselves. For them, being able to get and hold a job will contribute immeasurably toward their success.

And you can contribute to that success by prayerfully considering your financial contribution to Curt's Café. And consider dining there! The food is delicious! Their closest location is 1766 2nd Street, Highland Park. Thank you!

UPC Shopper

Whether you use gift cards to do your shopping, to plan a special celebration, to give as the perfect gift or to support PADS, you can help spread the gospel around the world. Your purchase of gift cards is earning funds towards paying for Operation Christmas Child's 2024 shipping goal of \$2,500. Does buying gift cards really make a difference? Let me give you an example.

If you spend \$200 on groceries every month for a year at your store of choice (let's use Jewel as an example), it would be like you donated \$108 to OCC. That would be enough to ship 10 shoebox gifts to kids in need around the world and have them get to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. All that happens without costing you a penny more than you would normally spend. This is because 4.5%* of every Jewel card purchased is donated to the shipping fund.

There are over 750 store brands to choose from. See Dian for a complete list if you don't see what you want in stock. Special orders usually take one week. Won't you help?

**Percentage varies from store to store.*



LATEST NEWS FROM PADS LAKE COUNTY:

- **PADS is moving closer to agreements** that will lead toward more effectively meeting clients' needs by having a fixed site. Please **pray** for success in each step toward approval of purchases needed for the future program using a combination of motels and transitioning into fixed sites which will meet the needs of clients in a much safer, more efficient and effective manner. Watch for details as more information becomes available.
- **An updated list of current needs** is being sent weekly to PADS leaders who are coordinating donations in their local churches. These needs include lunch and dinner items and baby food previously listed as well as gift cards and other non-food items. PADS clients and staff are extremely appreciative of all the donations received. **Items always needed** include microwavable lunch and dinner meals, Walmart gift cards, gas cards, and fast-food cards.

UPC PADS UPDATE: UPC PADS will continue collecting and delivering healthy shelf-stable and microwavable food items year-round.

- **A list of currently needed food items** is being shared weekly in the Tuesday Newsday email for everyone who wishes to donate at UPC. Our PADS shoppers, Cinda Bartz, Rick Burg, Rose Pech, Laura Tussing, and Mary Zorc also receive the list and use Walmart gift cards and other PADS donations for purchases which they deliver to First Presbyterian Church in Libertyville, which is the food hub for weekly church donations, or to the PADS office if needed there. PADS leaders at the churches receive the list from Dave Marsden who coordinates the First Presbyterian PADS collection, storage, and delivery to the motels.
- **UPC Shopper gift cards purchased for a PADS donation allow you to give twice, locally and internationally, without any extra cost to you.** A small percentage from each purchase goes into our Operation Christmas Child fund (OCC), helping to pay for shipping the OCC boxes to children overseas, while the entire amount of the gift card helps PADS clients—AND you don't have to go shopping! All this, by just purchasing the UPC Shopper cards for Walmart to donate for UPC PADS or cards for gas stations or fast-food places for PADS Lake County. Please indicate where you want the cards to be donated: UPC PADS or PADS Lake County. Rick Burg coordinates the use of UPC PADS Walmart cards and Rose Pech delivers the cards to PADS Lake County.
- **Your donations are helping to clothe, feed and provide needed supplies and services** to the more than 430 PADS clients in motels and to other clients who receive PADS services. Watch the Tuesday Newsday emails for specific updates.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND OTHER SUPPORT!

Contact Rose Pech 847-682-2837 or pads_at_upc@hotmail.com for more info.



WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT WCF? *Contact Sue Schmidt, Catherine Vick, Ruth Gheysen, Rose Pech, or call the church office 847-223-8131 for more info. See the church bulletin, Tuesday Newsday, and UNIFIER for updates.

Circle 2 members plan to give more of their time in mission as they schedule their monthly mission projects for 2024. Meetings are held at **11:30 A.M. in the UPC Meeting Room** one Sunday each month from March through December. Our next meeting will be Sunday, April 7. Contact Catherine Vick.

Circle 4/5 meets on the first Wednesday of each month, and the next meeting will be **at 11:30 A.M. on April 3 at Culver's** in Grayslake. Contact Sue Schmidt.

Circle 9 is growing! Staff at Mrs. V's added an extra table when 9 members of Circle 9 came to the March meeting. A few months ago, we welcomed new member Lynn Hallen, and now Dian Weinkauf joined us. **Join us on April 9.** The staff has assured us that they can add more tables as needed. Meetings are held year-round on the second Tuesday of each month **at 5:30 P.M. at Mrs. V's on Rollins Road in Round Lake Beach.** Occasionally, a meeting must be cancelled, so please check with Ruth Gheysen or one of the other Circle 9 members if you plan to attend.

Circle 10 does not meet in person. Members are in contact with each other on Facebook. Contact Jasmine Walker.

Check the table below for meeting information and choose what works for you!

Circle	Day/Date	Time	Place	Contact
2	Sun., April 7	11:30 AM	UPC Meeting Room	Catherine Vick
4/5	Wed., April 3	11:30 AM	Culver's in Grayslake	Sue Schmidt
9	Tues., April 9	5:30 PM	Mrs. V's in Round Lake Beach	Ruth Gheysen
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	Jasmine Walker

*Contact information is available online in the **Instant Church Directory** or at the UPC office.

Tyler, Brittany, Danielle, & Joanna give praise for all the blessings they receive through prayers, messages, and donations. They welcomed a new teammate family with a young daughter and infant twins who joined them and Megan in the village. Prayers for patience and favor as they share some of the same appliances and spaces. **Treatment** is a priority for Tyler who has recently had to deal with several health issues and for the continued availability of the Malaria Vaccine. **Treasure** need is to increase monthly funds by \$325. **Thanks for your continued support of Tyler and Brittany and their family!**

April Birthdays

4/1 Cinda Bartz
4/2 Soren Okrzynski
4/2 Paula Watkins
4/5 Anabelle Aubrey
4/8 Ramsha Mall
4/8 Jerry Wessale
4/11 Aimee Divis
4/11 Brett Henne
4/11 Margaret Porteous
4/11 Roger Weichman
4/15 Cynthia Lee
4/18 Milla Kutsin
4/18 Gabrielle Walker
4/19 Emma Craig
4/19 Linda Rambo
4/23 Chris Celeslie
4/23 Jamison Fuller
4/23 Karen Thoms
4/23 Carter Trowitch
4/30 Olivia Downey

April Anniversaries

4/3 John & Lillian Eldridge
4/26 Jerry & Lois Wessale



UPC's Continued Prayers for Members, Relatives, and Friends:

Members: Marlene Badgerow, Laurel Bruggen, Marie Frandsen, David Holliman, Joanne Lawrence, Marjorie Miller, John Porteous, Dan Watkins, Bobbie Weichman, and Dian Weinkauf.

May they rest in peace: Susan Green, Roger Richardson

Tyler, Brittany & Danielle, & Joanna: are always very grateful for your prayers and financial support. They request prayers for unity as they and their new teammates are for the first time all living in the village together. Other prayer requests include completion of the guest house pool by their mid-April trip to the capital, for local churches to encourage and empower neighboring ethnic groups to work more intently with the unreached, for all projects to increase progress rate to complete at least 4% of a Bible each year, for networks of churches using Kon Scripture to grow and multiply, and for their neighbors to have written and oral access to the Easter story in Kon.

Relatives & Friends: Allen Anglin, Kathy Behm, Joe Boccaleoni, Kathy Weichman Bradley, Lorine Cooper, Patricia Davis, Judy Hendrickson, Mary Mason, Gloria Meier, Pat Mielke, Tommy Nellesen, Sohail Rana and the Alam family, Gary Sadlack, Stephan, Erik & Kacie Stanley, their son & Erik's mother, Diane.

Long-term prayers: Bruce Baird, Flora Boehm & family, Betty Bournes, Thomas Bournes, Mary Brase, Don & Tina Busch, Brad Fuller, Trish Jelinek, Rick Juern, Conny Kappler, Ben Kelly-Fuller, David Novak, Sue (PADS friend), Wendy (friend of Rose Pech), and Michelle (friend of Linda Markham).



*Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.*

To Access UPC's Calendar On
Line

[http://
www.mychurchevents.com/
calendar/calendar.aspx?
ci=L6F0H2O9G1F0O9L6I3](http://www.mychurchevents.com/calendar/calendar.aspx?ci=L6F0H2O9G1F0O9L6I3)

Contact Us

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Church Office Hours:
Tuesday & Thursday
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Grounded | Empowered | Transformed

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