

The Unifier



54 South Whitney Street, Grayslake, Illinois 60030 | (847) 223-8131 | upc@upcgl.org | www.upcgl.org December 2022/January 2023

"But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." -Luke 2:10-12

Grace to you and Peace,

Welcome to the season of Advent 2022. The ground is not yet covered in snow, and the temps seem to keep rising, but I assure you we are in the Advent season. We are certainly seeing lights and decorations in windows and front yards. It is the season to focus our hearts and minds on the incarnation and what the birth of Jesus 2000 years ago means for us this year.

Please consider making an appearance for Christmas worship this year. Much thought and deliberation went into the planning of our Christmas schedule this year, complicated by the fact that Christmas Day is a Sunday; and so is New Year's Day. I have had a number of conversations with different people and boards and it seemed that almost everyone had a different idea of what we should do for scheduling. As I listened and prayed, what really struck me was a feeling of hopefulness for United Protestant Church and for this Christmas season. It is my hope that many will come to safely and joyfully gather and worship this Christmas. In the spirit we will offer the full traditional schedule of services:

<u>WORSHIP SERVICES</u>	<u>EVENTS</u>
Christmas EVE 5:00 PM Children's 7:00 PM Family 11:00 PM Candlelight	Advent Adult Education Sundays at 9:00 AM
Christmas Day 10:00 AM Carol Sing	UPC Caroling December 8th at 6:30 PM
New Year's Day 10:00 AM Worship	YOUTH Christmas Dinner December 10th, 4:30-8:30 PM

I hope that you will "Come Home For Christmas this Year"; by which I mean that I will see you in person at worship and possibly an event. We will of course be offering online services and are grateful for all who feel more comfortable worshipping from home.

Wherever you are celebrating for Christmas, I pray that Christ will be born anew in your heart and life this year. May God's Spirit guide us through a blessed and meaningful year.

*In Christ,
Pastor Jason Okrzynski*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Dear Church Family,

It is hard to believe that we are already approaching the end of another year. This last year has been a wonderful year in our educational ministries. We began our year exploring the book of Nehemiah. I continue to ask you along with Nehemiah, what walls need to be rebuilt in our community? How can we become a community of belonging where people can experience the love of God through us? We then moved on to a wonderful Lenten study written by Paul Tripp. Our Fall worked through the parable of the Prodigal Son(s) in a study written by Tim Keller and then after exploring who we are as people, we did a four-week study of God's character based on Exodus 34:6 – 7 by the Bible Project. All these studies were exciting and challenging in different ways. I hope that you will consider joining us beginning January 8th as we begin our next study working through the book of Galatians. I am doing some reading preparing for this study and am really looking forward to it.

This year, we also got access to a wonderful discipleship resource, RightNow Media, that is available to all of you and to any of your friends, family, or coworkers. During this season of gifts, I really encourage you to pass this subscription around. There are wonderful resources for this Advent/Christmas time, and the whole year. My family is really looking forward to learning what is Christmas with Buck Denver from the creator of Veggie Tales. I enjoyed a study of Genesis by a Chicago pastor named Charlie Dates as well as a study of my favorite New Testament book, Hebrews, by Dr. Derwin Gray. I have posted some other great materials for this Advent season for the whole family as well as some other great resources for your own spiritual walk. You can share this wonderful resource with people by sharing this link or providing them with the following QR code.

Link: <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/upcgrayslake>



Thank you for reading this far. On the family front, we recently got a CD player set-up in our living room, and while we decorated our Christmas tree, the kids picked Christmas CDs to play. Since decorating, multiple times each day, one of our kids will come and ask if they can turn on the CD player and play Christmas music. So, if you were to stop by the house, it is more likely than not you will hear Christmas music playing, especially a CD of my high school choir. I never thought I would hear high school me singing so much.

Blessings,

Ryan Aubrey
Director of Christian Education

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 8: Caroling at the Grayslake Senior Center on Library Lane at 6:30 PM. Join UPC members and friends along with Santa and Mrs. Claus as we sing Christmas carols to Senior Center members and Library Lane residents. All ages are welcome!

December 11: You are cordially invited to attend the UCC Fox Valley Association Installation Service for Pastor Jason Okrzynski at 3 PM in the UPC Sanctuary. Refreshments will be served after the service.

December 18: Join us for the Lessons and Carols service at 10 AM led by the UPC choir and Grace Notes bell choir.

December 24, Christmas Eve:

5 PM Children's Service

7 PM Traditional Service

11 PM Candlelight Service

December 25, Christmas Day:

10 AM Carol Sing Service

January 1, New Year's Day:

10 AM Worship Service



Christmas Greetings from the Home Team

The Home Team wishes everyone a blessed and joyous Christmas, and grace and peace in the New Year.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Christmas Gifts for the Veterans are due to the church no later than December 18 when they will be delivered to the VA. Please have your gift wrapped with the tag attached to the outside of the gift and bring it to the church.
- After worship on the first 3 Sundays of December, you will have the chance to purchase an alternative gift through Best Gifts that makes a difference in the lives of others. You can provide a goat in Haiti, a water filter in Cambodia, winter warmth kit in Bosnia and so much more. Please stop by the table in the Narthex after worship to learn more.
- If anyone would like to donate new sets of long underwear for men, sizes medium through XXL, we will be collecting them for PADS during the holiday season. Drop them off at the church. The office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- All commission and committee chairpersons should submit their annual reports to the church office via email to churchsec@upcgl.org by January 3 in order to prepare the Annual Meeting Report.
- The next UPC monthly packing session at Feed My Starving Children is scheduled on Tuesday, January 3 from 7:00-8:45 p.m. FMSC is located at 742 E. Park Avenue in Libertyville. Please use the sign- up sheet on the missions table in the church narthex or contact Cinda Bartz directly if you would like to help or have questions at 847-727-1552 or bartzc@sbcglobal.net.
- The Un-hanging of the Greens is scheduled for January 8 immediately following the 10 a.m. worship service. Help is needed to take down all the Christmas decorations and put into storage.
- The UPC Annual Meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, January 22 following the 10 a.m. worship service. Please mark your calendars to attend this important meeting.
- There will be a special presentation by INK180 on Tuesday, January 24 at 7 p.m. at the church. Please mark your calendars and watch for more information.



MISSIONS

UPC Shopper News

Christmas is just a few weeks away. Now is the perfect time to order UPC Shopper gift cards. You can give them as gifts or use them to buy the gifts or food for your celebration. They make great stocking stuffers or gifts for those who are hard to buy for. See Dian to order before December 11th to assure the cards are here before Christmas.

Oh! Don't forget New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Do you have a special evening planned with the love of your life or a huge family get-together? Either way, let UPC shopper be a part of the celebration. If you are going to the movies, dinner or even taking a trip, we can help. Besides the most common restaurant gift cards we keep in stock, there are many others available to order. Use a card to pick up food for your New Year's Day festivities. Check out the web site & either place an order on-line or let Dian know what you want at least a week in advance & she will be glad to place the order for you.

Remember each gift card you buy supports Operation Christmas Child.

Our **Joy Sharing for January is Lake County Haven**. They now have 2 homes in Libertyville where they shelter women and children who have become homeless. Read on to learn how they serve these families. Also follow their website to learn other ways to volunteer to help.

The Haven's Transitional Shelter Program features a comprehensive array of services designed to transition a woman and her children beyond homelessness and towards independent living.

The shelters are two homes in Libertyville. Hope House is a four-bedroom house that sleeps ten people and has a communal living room, kitchen, two full bathrooms, a playroom, storage facilities, a family room, and a fenced-in backyard with a large outdoor play set. Renewal House has six-bedrooms and sleeps 10 people with many of the same features as Hope House, plus a welcoming porch.

The communal nature of the shelters provide a supportive environment for each resident during her transition from homelessness to independence.

Typical goals that are achieved during a shelter stay include:

- gaining employment
- paying down debt
- saving money (residents are required to save a minimum of 80 percent of their income while in shelter)
- furthering education
- maintaining sobriety
- learning effective parenting, & regaining custody of children in foster care.

Depending on a resident's individualized self-sufficiency plan, she will take advantage of numerous in-house and community-based services. She could take budgeting, parenting, resume-writing, and other life skills classes, attend an in-house support group, and/or receive employment or psychological counseling. She would also work with her case manager to ensure that the emotional, educational, and health needs of her children are being met. Tutoring is available for both adults and children. The case manager would help the resident to apply for all public benefits for which she is eligible. Free transportation to grocery stores, job interviews, work, and support groups is offered when available, as are childcare services during these activities. The average length of stay in the program is three to five months. Visit their website at www.lakecountyhaven.org for more information.

UPC PADS SITE UPDATES—DECEMBER 2022



PADS MOTHER & INFANT RECEIVE SPECIAL HELP: An expectant mother and her yet-to-be-born child (expected to be born Thanksgiving week or the following week) received the items needed for them as a new family thanks to many of you who've made donations to UPC PADS & to those who gave additional gifts along with donations received from St. Mary of Vernon via Jim Wogan. The response to this need was amazing and serves as just one example of what we can do through PADS for the less fortunate in Lake County!

PADS LAKE COUNTY SITES NEED VOLUNTEERS—Sign up online or contact church!

Sunday: 1st Presbyterian Church of Deerfield (Men only site)

◇ <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45a9a929a5fcc52-pads>

Also Sunday: Christian Assembly in Zion (Women only site)

◇ Contact church for info: 847-872-3541; christianassembly@outlook.com

Monday: Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church, Washington St.

◇ <https://signup.com/go/nVVtqLp>

Tuesday: Wildwood Presbyterian Church, Gages Lake Road

◇ <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44A5A72BA1FAC61-pads>

Wednesday: 1st Presbyterian Church of Libertyville

◇ <https://firstpreslibertyville.org/serve-page/>

Thursday night has sufficient help at this point.

Friday: St. Mark Lutheran Church, Grand Ave., Lindenhurst

◇ signup genius is on the St. Mark Lutheran Church website under Ministry Partners PADS: Friday Night PADS Sign Up ([signupgenius.com](https://www.signupgenius.com)).

Friday & Saturday: Both nights at The Chapel in Libertyville (Friday is sponsored by Libertyville Campus & Saturday by Grayslake Campus—both use same online signup)

◇ <https://chapel.org/pads/>

BAD NEWS- SOME GUESTS ARE STILL SLEEPING OUTSIDE! or trying to find all-night places where they can spend the night several nights each week because not enough church sites are open!

GOOD NEWS--WE'RE CLOSER TO OPENING OUR DOORS NEXT SEASON!!

We're half a step closer to opening our doors next fall. Rose Pech will be meeting the first week of December with a person who's interested in becoming our UPC PADS Volunteer Coordinator for the main shifts. Two volunteers who are interested in becoming 1st shift leaders and one who's interested in becoming a 3rd shift leader will be receiving training in February. We will need an additional 3rd shift leader, one more 2nd shift leader, and several more volunteers for each of our shifts. **PLEASE PRAY!!! MERRY CHRISTMAS! HAPPY NEW YEAR!** – From the UPC PADS Site Leadership Team

WCF NEWS — DECEMBER 2022
WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
WCF WELCOMES ALL WOMEN 18 & OVER!! PLEASE JOIN US!!

CIRCLE NEWS

Circle 2 welcomed visitor Jeanne Yomine to our meeting on Sunday, November 20, when Joan Hendricks was our hostess and shared very inspirational devotions on sharing God's love in practical ways in our world today. A birthday card was signed for Bobbie Weichman, and Carolyn Korell was sent a Thanksgiving card. Members enjoyed the fellowship time and catching up on each other's news. Our next meeting will be Sunday, December 11 at 11:30 a.m. in the UPC Meeting Room.



Circle 4/5 members enjoyed lunch at Culver's in Grayslake on November 2 and will meet again at the same Culver's restaurant at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 7.

Circle 9's November meeting included members who'd been unable to attend for a while along with members who've been able to join the group more regularly. The joy of sharing time together in the midst of all the busyness of our lives is such a blessing for us all. We hope more ladies will consider joining us on December 13 at 5:30 PM at Hillside Restaurant.

See the chart below for a summary of December meeting information for all 3 of these circles.

Watch for more detailed information regarding changes for circle meetings in the Tuesday Newsday emails, weekly church bulletin, & our monthly UNIFIER articles. To contact chairpersons: See the church directory or Rose Pech 847-682-2837; rose4nonna@hotmail.com.

Circle	Day/Date	Time	Place	Contact
2	Sun., Dec. 11	11:30 AM	UPC Meeting Room	Catherine Vick
4/5	Wed., Dec. 7	11:30 AM	Culver's—Grayslake	Sue Schmidt
9	Tues., Dec. 13	5:30 PM	Hillside Restaurant	Ruth Gheysen
10	TBD	TBD	TBD	Jasmine Walker

WCF MISSION FUND: There is still time to donate to the WCF Mission Fund for Tyler & Brittany as they continue to need additional funds to fill the gap caused by **unforeseen expenses** mentioned last month and for the **additional expenses they face following the car accident** in which Tyler was injured and their car was totaled after another vehicle hit them. Tyler didn't need surgery for his facial fracture, but he is still having pain as he recovers from the injury. For donations to be sent in early 2023, you can make your check out to UPC and write "WCF Mission Fund" in the memo or put a donation into an envelope marked WCF Mission Fund. The amount in the fund at the end of December will be sent to help Tyler & Brittany as they return to West Africa during 2023. Donations may be made online at any time for them to receive funds before the end of the year or in next year. To donate online, go to www.ilad.ngo/D2002. Donations may also be made directly by paper check payable to ILAD with D2002 written in the memo. Mail the check to ILAD, Atten: D2002, P.O.Box 383153, Duncanville, TX 75138-3183. Praying they will receive more donations thru WCF, UPC, online, or by mail to ILAD!

--Blessings, Rose Pech

December Birthdays

12/1 Sue Sweeney
12/3 Doris Craig
12/3 Emma Henne
12/4 Katie Gheysen
12/5 Reese Divis
12/9 Vanessa Eldridge
12/9 Nancy Johannsen
12/11 Susan Green
12/13 Julius Mall
12/15 Suzanne Harvey
12/15 Polly Muehleman
12/20 Jackie Ianson
12/26 Darlene George Craig
12/27 Joshua Mall

January Birthdays

1/4 Alex Rasmussen
1/5 Shelly Kutsin
1/14 Madeline Berkey
1/14 Kori Henne
1/15 Felix Flok Sr.
1/16 Linda Markham
1/18 Richard Johannsen
1/18 David Knapp
1/20 Sarah Fries
1/21 David Ashton
1/28 Andrew Sawicki

January Anniversaries

1/9 Lloyd & Cherlyn Lowe

December Anniversaries

12/5 Julius & Alva Mall
12/13 Shelly & Felix Kutsin
12/14 Aimee Divis & Dennis Wong
12/16 Richard & Nancy Johannsen
12/28 Simon & Samia Mall



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

Members: Ben Kelly-Fuller, Marie Frandsen, Susan Green, Joanne Lawrence, Marjorie Miller, Eddie Smith, Pat Wackerlin, and Bobbie Weichman.

Tyler, Brittany & Danielle – Please pray for continued healing for Tyler and his 2-week brick-making class, and for additional funds to cover unexpected expenses, including a car replacement. To donate electronically, please visit the project page at www.ilad.ngo/D2002. To donate by paper check, make checks payable to ILAD with D2002 written in memo, and mail the check to: ILAD, Atten: D2002, P.O. Box 383153, Duncanville, TX 75138-3183. See posters at UPC with detailed information. We also continue to pray for them to have the same peace Paul did in Philippians 4:11-13 regardless of their circumstances.

Relatives & Friends: Kathy Behm, Jim Bethmann, Joe Boccaleoni, Kathy Weichman Bradley, Lorine Cooper, Patricia Davis, Judy Hendrickson, Mary Mason, Gloria Meier, Debbie (Behm) Pakaluk, Gary Sadlack, Larry Smith, Stephan, Erik and Kacie Stanley, their son and Erik's mother, Diane, and George and his family.

Long-term prayers: Bruce Baird, Flora Boehm & family, Betty Bournes, Thomas Bournes, Mary Brase, Don & Tina Busch, Barry Craig, Pat Curnow, Brad Fuller, Trish Jelinek, Rick Juern, Tommy Nellessen, Sue (PADS friend), Wendy (friend of Rose Pech), and Michelle (friend of Linda Markham).

**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 2 p.m.

Grounded | Empowered | Transformed

United Protestant Church of Grayslake
54 S. Whitney Street
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