

The Unifier



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February 2025

Grace to you and Peace,

February is an unusually quiet month at UPC. Ash Wednesday is not until March 5, so this month we will continue with the Season after Epiphany, which is the season for looking at how God is made manifest, that is made clear in the stories of Jesus. There are a few notable events coming up in February. First, we will welcome new members on Sunday, February 9. We will be joined by Troop 451 for our annual Scout Sunday and will celebrate our relationship with them. Finally, a quick reminder that UPC has a new ongoing volunteer opportunity the fourth Tuesday of every month, helping to sort food and clothing at the Avon Township Center. We hope to see you on Tuesday, February 25 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. I pray that we as a congregation might listen closely throughout these days as we ponder who this God is that is made known by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Men's Breakfast

All points bulletin to the men of UPC: Please put Saturday, March 15 on your calendar for a men's breakfast. We will gather at 8 a.m. in Fellowship Hall for a hot breakfast, hot coffee, and warm conversation. There are two specific things on the agenda that morning. First, we will check in and enjoy each other's fellowship. Second, we will discuss the future of men's ministry at UPC with possibilities of ongoing monthly breakfasts, a summer Boundary Waters trip, men's Bible Study, pretty much anything and everything is up for discussion. Hope to see you then.

In Christ,

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD
Senior Pastor

SAVE THE DATES:

Ash Wednesday Service—**March 5, 7 PM**

Ladies BUNCO—**March 8, 1-3 PM in Fellowship Hall**

Men's Group Breakfast—**March 15, 8 AM in Fellowship Hall**

St. Patrick's Day Potluck—**March 16, 11:30 AM in Fellowship Hall**

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Dear Church Family,

As we enter February, we are quickly approaching the Lenten season. Through our study of the Gospel of Luke, two main themes have stood out to me as I have read and studied. First, our response to Jesus is based upon our willingness to repent. Repentance is a key concept throughout Luke. It involves both a turning away from a sinful lifestyle and a turning toward God. In turning toward God, we are to embrace God's merciful, compassionate forgiveness, and turn toward true life found only in Jesus. This concept is put front and center at the very beginning of the book as John the Baptist is ministering in the wilderness. He is calling people to a baptism of repentance. One of the keys that Luke wants his readers to grasp, though, is that repentance is not merely an acknowledgement of wrongdoing and a desire to live for God. Rather, true repentance is demonstrated and made evident in the fruit that we produce.

This is a second major thread that weaves its way throughout the Gospel of Luke. Disciples of Jesus are to live out Jesus's Kingdom teachings. Repentance has moral and ethical implications for our lives. Again, from the very beginning, Luke emphasizes this aspect as he puts into the words of John the Baptist, "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." (Luke 3:8) For John the Baptist, this includes, but is not limited to generosity, caring for the most vulnerable, and not abusing the power given to us. Jesus expands upon this throughout the Gospel of Luke. Disciples of Jesus are to be committed to both Spiritual formation and to liberative justice. They are to continue Jesus's ministry of hospitality for all people. Jesus teaches that his followers are to be humble because they live out of God's mercy rather than human status and achievement. Finally, Jesus encourages his disciples to reject greed and to share their resources with others.

I encourage you to prepare your hearts and minds over the course of February for this Lenten season. Think over God's call to us through Jesus to extend God's generous welcome to all around us and to find ways to exhibit fruit that is in keeping with repentance. May the Holy Spirit be at work in you, so that you might demonstrate Jesus's kingdom teachings to those you come into contact with each day.

Finally, I encourage any parents to put our Kids Night Out on your calendar so that you can enjoy some time apart from your kids. This year, we are holding it on February 21 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Blessings,

Ryan Aubrey
Director of Christian Education

From leading a life
of repentance we find
the best way of
following Jesus.

Kids — Enjoy a night of fun without your parents! There will be pizza, popcorn, a movie, puzzles, crafts, and games. Sign up now! RSVP to Ryan Aubrey at ryanaubrey@upcgl.org by Wednesday, February 19. Friends are welcome!



Hosted by the Children's Ministry Committee



FEBRUARY 2025

United Protestant Church CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	3 7:00pm Stewardship Committee (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	4 9:00am Park District Preschool Class (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106)	5 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	6 9:00am Park District Preschool Class (202) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Staff Parish (MR) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	7	8
9 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service 11:30am Circle 2 (MR)	10 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	11 9:00am Park District Preschool Class (202) 5:30pm Circle 9 (Mrs. V's) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm Governance Task Force (MR) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106) 7:00pm Troop 451 PLC(101)	12 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm PUSH (Parlor) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	13 9:00am Park District Preschool Class (202) 2:00pm Budget & Finance (MR) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	14	15
16 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	17 7:00pm Ad Council (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	18 9:00am Park District Preschool Class (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 Monthly Pack Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106) 7:00pm Nami Family Support Group (MR) 7:00pm Troop 451 Committee Meeting (101)	19 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm North Star District Commissioner Meeting (MR) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	20 9:00am Park District Preschool Class (202) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	21 5:00pm Kids Night Out (FH)	22
23 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	24 6:30pm Worship Committee (MR) 7:00pm Mission Committee (103) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	25 9:00am Park District Preschool Class (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm Membership Cultivation Committee (MR) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106)	26 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Membership & Outreach Committee (MR) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	27 9:00am Park District Preschool Class (202) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	28	

MISSIONS UPDATE



The next UPC packing session at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville is scheduled for **Tuesday, February 4 from 7:15-8:45 p.m.** If you are interested in participating, please contact Cinda Bartz at bartzc@sbcglobal.net.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD (OCC)

We are collecting the following items for Operation Christmas Child throughout the month of February: hair accessories, combs, brushes, stuffed animals, baseballs, and softballs.

JOY SHARING FOR FEBRUARY

Our Joy Sharing for February benefits Tyler and Brittany. TYLER & BRITTANY run a FRUIT TREE FARM in WEST AFRICA. Its MISSION is *to use farm profits from fruit sales to provide fruit trees to poor rural farmers so they have year-round access to nutritious food* and its VISION is *to help every child in their region eat enough for their daily nutritional needs*. THANKS for helping us provide access to nutrition and God's Word in Kon! Joy Sharing Sunday is February 16.

AVON TOWNSHIP

OUR NEW HANDS-ON COMMUNITY MISSION at Avon Township Center, started January 28, and will continue February 25 from 7:00 to 8:30 PM.

Who: **YOUTH, ADULTS, AND FAMILIES** from UPC and other churches and organizations and individual volunteers

What: Sort food, clothing, and/or other donations

Where: Avon Township Center inside the Food Pantry or other donation areas

433 E. Washington Street, Round Lake Park, IL

Date: 4th Tuesday of each month, except March--Date to be announced later.

Time: 7:00 to 8:30 PM (Shorter time if needed.)

Specific Tasks: Check dates, sort, and shelve food donations as needed.

When food sorting isn't needed, sort clothing donations or other donated items.

Requirement: An Avon Township Volunteer Application is required. Complete one when you arrive if one hasn't already been submitted. Printed forms are on the UPC Mission Table or can be requested by email. A sign-up sheet is on the Mission Table, but advance sign-up is not required. We hope this will become a community service just as UPC, St. Gilbert Church, other organizations and individuals made the UPC PADS Site a community site for more than 30 years. Contact Rose Pech (847-682-2837 or rose4nonna@hotmail.com) for more information or to have an application form emailed to you. **Come any month you're available!**



Missions Thrive in 2025!



PADS LAKE COUNTY & UPC PADS:

Update on Fixed Family Shelter Site:

PADS officially took ownership of the Travelodge on North Lewis Avenue in Waukegan on December 17. The title is in PADS name, and zoning approval has been received to convert the building. PADS is currently in final design stages and hopes to begin actual construction in early spring. We're told there are still many "what if's" but things are on the way.

PADS Clients currently receiving assistance:

As of January 24, 2025, **381 clients** were checked into motel shelters. UPC PADS continues to assist in providing food, clothing and other essentials to these clients as needed and to clients who are still "on the streets" and being helped by the Outreach case managers. Essential items needed by 3 newborn babies were provided between December 14 and January 24. Other PADS guests received work clothes, boots, winter coats, gloves, and hats in addition to cleaning supplies for their hotel rooms. Gas gift cards were also donated. St. Gilbert Parish and School continue to partner with us in providing food. The Parishioners donate gift cards for food (\$3,000 worth received this month), and the school students, staff and parents donate food items which Mary Lou Delahanty delivers to First Presbyterian Church.

Current Food Needs:

- All food items and cleaning supplies are needed and can be donated at UPC, delivered to First Presbyterian Church in Libertyville 4 to 6 PM on Wednesdays, or provided directly to First Presbyterian Church by using:
https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/XD5I2ZRDQKE5?ref_=wl_share
- Sack lunches for all clients seeking help from PADS can be donated at 1800 Grand Avenue in Waukegan any weekday. Use their online signup genius for an open date, or call 847-689-4357 to set the date and time you would like to deliver lunches to the office.

UPC members and friends are invited to attend a free pancake supper at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church located at 31 Park Avenue in Grayslake on Tuesday, March 4 from 6-8 p.m.





WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT WCF? Call the church office at 847-223-8131 or talk with Cathy Vick, Sue Schmidt, Ruth Gheysen, Rose Pech, or other circle members. See updates in the church bulletin, Tuesday Newsday, and UNIFIER.

VOLUNTEER AT Avon Township on February 25: See details elsewhere in this UNIFIER and/or contact Rose Pech at 847-682-2837 or rose4nonna@hotmail.com.

BUNCO! Saturday, March 8, 1-3 PM. Watch for more details in the March UNIFIER.

Circle 2 meetings are held monthly on Sundays at **11:30 AM in the UPC Meeting Room.** Members will be stripping crayons for SCARCE and preparing Matching Games for Operation Christmas Child at our **February 9 meeting.** Contact Catherine Vick.

Circle 4/5 meets on the first Wednesday of each month. The next meeting will be on **February 5 at 11:30 AM at Culver's** in Grayslake. Contact Sue Schmidt.

Circle 9 meetings are held year-round on the second Tuesday of each month at **5:30 PM 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. The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, February 11.**

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

Check this table for meeting information and choose what works for you!

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

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

Tyler, Brittany, Danielle, & Joanna request prayers for God's provision of an African believer to help them by living on and helping manage the farm. See the photo collage flyers posted at UPC with farm pictures from 2024 and the flyer with their financial needs. Other prayer requests are found on the next page.

February Birthdays

2/1 Frank Garnier
2/2 Dave Schmidt
2/4 Timothy Knapp
2/10 Lillian Eldridge
2/11 Jeff Taylor
2/12 Garrett Fries
2/21 Alva Mall
2/23 Michelle Adams
2/23 Warren Bell
2/28 Wendy Holliman
2/28 Matthew Thoms



February Anniversaries

2/18 David & Karen Runyon
2/22 Craig & Barb Fischel
2/26 Ken & Anne Craig
2/26 Dale & Nancy Message

♥ *happy* ♥
Valentine's
♥ *day* ♥

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

Members: Craig Fischel, Marie Frandsen, David Holliman, Joanne Lawrence, John Porteous, Dan Watkins, Bobbie Weichman, and Jeff Ziegler.

Tyler, Brittany & Danielle, & Joanna: praises include Nanny Alayna arrived and has committed to staying 6-18 months. Requests include 1) Alayna's adjustment as homesickness will probably be her biggest struggle; 2) favor in brickmaking, finalizing building design, soil delivery, and forming an 8-man work team; 3) God's provision of an African believer to help them by living on and helping manage the farm; 4) wisdom in diagnosing and fixing their solar battery problem; 5) being able to fix the brick mold and wisdom in moving forward with brick-making.

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

Long-term prayers: Bruce Baird, 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 prayers.*





JOIN US FOR A

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

POTLUCK!

SIGN UP SHEET IN PARLOR

MARCH 16
11:30



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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Phone: 847-223-8131

E-mail: upc@upcgl.org

Pastor: Rev. Jason Okrzynski

Email:
seniorpastor@upcgl.org
Cell: 224-463-2171

Church Office Hours:
Tuesday & Thursday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Grounded | Empowered | Transformed

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54 S. Whitney Street
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