

# The Unifier



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July 2023

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

Happy 4th of July to you and yours. I hope that you will have time this weekend to celebrate our nation.

Every year it seems I end up reading some of Justin Martyr's First Apology around the 4th. Justin lived and wrote around the same time as the Gospel of John. He was born to a Greek family living in Shechem which was located in Samaria, today the East Bank in Palestinian territory. Justin is interesting this time of year precisely because he did not consider himself to be privileged Roman or Jewish pedigree. As such, what we today would call patriotism was either non-existent or at best more complicated than it is for many of us. Justin knew that he was first and foremost a child of God, and his primary identity was as a citizen of the City of God. However, Justin did not understand that as a reason to burn Rome. Rather, he wrote an apology to the Emperor averring the ways that Christian faith, charity and service strengthened and served the Empire by providing care for those who were overlooked and marginalized in that society.

Most of us may not think of the 4th of July, or the summer months for that matter, as being a period of high spirituality. For one thing, church attendance and activity goes down during these months. However, maybe for us Christians this should thus precisely become a time for us to pray and contemplate with greater focus and frequency.

At UPC we are gathering on July 15th to pray, ponder, and plan where we have been, where we are and where God is calling us. That this month opens with the celebration of our country's independence might dovetail and strengthen that moment. Our country is going through some very jarring growing pains at the moment. It has brought out old wounds and unresolved challenges for our nation.

Christians are called to know ourselves first and foremost as citizens of heaven. That said, we are called secondly to serve our neighbors, our world and our country out of love. It only makes sense that as we celebrate our country, we ought also to pray for it. The great opportunity we have is for July to become a time to ask what it means as citizens in the kingdom of God, to live and serve secondarily as citizens of the United States.

However you spend your 4th, may we all know that we are free to shine our lights and hope that all may glorify the One God in heaven!

In Christ,

*Pastor Jason Okrzynski, PhD*

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Dear Church Family,

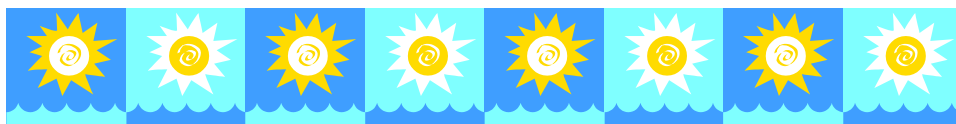
It is hard to believe that the month of June has already passed. Summer continues to move forward and before we know it, we will be beginning to talk about our Fall Education offerings.

It has been a wonderful week here at United Protestant Church. The week of June 19-22, we held Vacation Bible School for a group of 8 elementary aged kids and 3 pre-school children. We all had a wonderful time at each of the activities and learned about God's faithfulness to us through the story of Daniel. One of my favorite parts of VBS is going through Bible stories I already know, but noticing new elements of each story, though this is not exclusive to VBS.

I would like to thank you all for helping us make VBS a reality each year. Through your continual generous giving and willingness to volunteer, we can have the supplies and help needed to share God's love with the children in our church and community. Pray that each of the families that participated in VBS this year would continue to recognize God's faithfulness in their lives and that they would walk in faithfulness to God as Daniel did.

On the family front, we recently went to a White Sox game. William was very excited and he told most of our neighbors where we were going. One of the things he was most excited for was the potential for being on TV; we could become famous, who knows. So, the morning of the game, he comes bounding down the stairs dressed in black shorts, a black polo, and with a black vest on over it. When I asked about his choices, he insisted that he needed to dress in the White Sox colors. While I agree with his thinking, maybe dressing in all black on one of the hottest days in the summer was not the best choice. Either way, we all had fun and thankfully were sitting in the shade for the whole game.

Thank you for reading. Hope that you continue to have a wonderful summer.



Blessings,

*Ryan Aubrey*  
*Director of Christian Education*



# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

## BABYLON—Daniel's Courage in Captivity

*Held June 19-22, 2023*

**SONGS, GAMES, STORIES,  
CRAFTS, SNACKS & FUN WERE  
ENJOYED BY ALL!**



# YOUTH MISSION TRIP

Six youth from UPC along with Pastor Jason and Jasmine Walker joined other church groups on a mission trip to Duluth, Minnesota on June 11-16 where they planted trees, cleaned up parks, and visited the elderly in local nursing homes. The UPC youth consisted of Garrett Fries, Kevin Meyer, Dylan and Soren Okrzynski, Alisha and Gabby Walker.



# STEWARDSHIP NEWS



Dear Members and Friends,

We are all members of the Body of Christ because of someone else's hospitality. When Mark and I were looking for a church with our young children, Jan Peterson, the choir director at the time, invited us to the United Protestant Church. Thank God and thank Jan! As a result of her kindness and hospitality, the UPC is now our second home. God's gift of hospitality cultivated Jan's gift of hospitality and challenges us to this day to welcome others as we have been welcomed.

People need to know that they have value and are loved by God. As members of the UPC, the responsibility becomes ours to reach out to others, welcome them into our church, surround them with love and friendship and walk with them through life's ups and downs acknowledging that it is God who leads us. Acts of hospitality provide a sanctuary for God's people to be warmed by His love through us.

Radical hospitality is when we exceed all expectations as we welcome others. It is when we go above and beyond what is expected of us, inviting a stranger to join us in the pew, holding the crying baby as Mom and Dad get acclimated, saying "Good morning" with a genuine smile and warm handshake even when it takes us out of our comfort zone.

Radical hospitality is when we help someone change their flat tire and then invite them to our church. It is when we see someone struggling with sadness and introduce ourselves and offer to pray for them and give them assistance, if needed. It is offering VBS to the community as well as to our church family so that we can freely offer the glorious stories of our faith to all children.

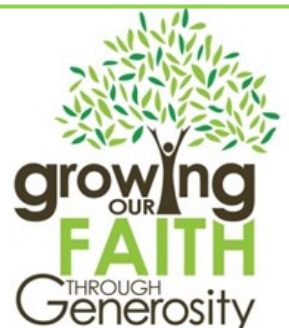
Radical hospitality can be providing free child care at every church event, offering a tour of our facilities after services, using social media to share our ministries with the community, and contacting first time visitors within 36 hours by e-mail, a phone call or a visit.

"Radical hospitality involves seeing a need and taking the initiative to help" (R. Schnase, 2018). This is who the UPC was when I came in 1989 and who it continues to be. I pray we can endeavor as a community of faith to continue to grow in our hospitality as we welcome God's people into our "home".

**"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." (Mt. 25:35)**

Trusting Our God Who Provides,

Carol Roselli-Rasmussen, Stewardship Chairwoman



# JULY 2023

## UPC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>25</b> 10:00am Church Service	<b>26</b> 7:00pm Mission Committee (Parlor) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>27</b> 9:00am Park District Summer Camp (201) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>28</b> 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Membership Cultivation Committee (MR) 7:00pm Troop 451 (FH)	<b>29</b> 9:00am Park District Summer Camp (201) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> 10:00am Church Service	<b>3</b> 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>4</b> OFFICE CLOSED 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>5</b> 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Board of Review (101) 7:00pm Troop 451 (FH)	<b>6</b> 6:00pm-8:30pm Staff Parish (MR) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> 10:00am Church Service	<b>10</b> 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>11</b> 5:30pm Circle 9 (Hillside) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm FMSC (Libertyville)	<b>12</b> 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's-Grayslake) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm PUSH (Parlor) 7:00pm Troop 451 (FH)	<b>13</b> 7:00pm Budget & Finance (MR) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 9:00am All-Church Retreat 12:30pm Walker Quinceanera (Sanctuary)
<b>16</b> 10:00am Church Service	<b>17</b> 7:00pm Ad Council (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>18</b> 6:30pm Pack 451 Monthly Pack Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Nami Family Support Group (MR) 7:00pm Troop 451 Committee Meeting (101)	<b>19</b> 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 (FH)	<b>20</b> 7:30pm AA (106,105)	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 10:00am Church Service	<b>24</b> 7:00pm Mission Committee (Parlor) 7:00pm Worship Committee (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>25</b> 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>26</b> 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Membership Cultivation Committee (MR) 7:00pm Troop 451 (FH)	<b>27</b> 7:30pm AA (106,105)	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 10:00am Church Service 11:30am Circle 2 (MR)	<b>31</b> 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>1</b> 6:30pm Pack 451 All Dens Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>2</b> 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Board of Review (101) 7:00pm Troop 451 (FH)	<b>3</b> 7:00pm Staff Parish (MR) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>



# MISSIONS

## July Joy Sharing — World Relief

World Relief is a global Christian humanitarian organization whose mission is to empower the local church to serve the most vulnerable. We aim to tackle the world's greatest problems with holistic, locally-driven solutions that lead to lasting change — whether in response to [disasters](#), [extreme poverty](#), [violence](#), [oppression](#) or [mass displacement and immigration](#). World Relief's work in the United States, specifically, focuses on helping refugees and other immigrants in vulnerable situations rebuild their lives in a new country.

At World Relief Chicagoland, we come alongside refugees and other immigrants in vulnerable situations as they rebuild their lives in the United States. For over 40 years, we've been welcoming immigrants and refugees across Chicagoland, starting with refugee resettlement in Chicago and DuPage County (1979), and later in Aurora (1999).

For decades, we have empowered churches, community organizations and people like you to adapt to the challenges of the moment for the sake of refugees. As needs have increased in recent years, we have expanded our work beyond refugees to include all immigrants in vulnerable situations. Today, World Relief Chicagoland is part of a national network of offices through which over 400,000 immigrants and refugees have been welcomed into this country.

### Church Centered

Working with the local church is not only a good strategy, it's at the very heart of our work. We believe that God gave us a plan to save our broken world, and that it begins with his church, and his people, leading the way. We want to see local churches creating and leading change in their communities.

### Holistic

We believe in transformation of the whole person — mind, body and spirit. That's why our programs focus on addressing the root causes of poverty, vulnerability and injustice. Beyond physical change, we focus on driving mental, social and spiritual transformation.

### Sustainable

We understand that lasting change requires more than quick fixes and band-aid solutions. We prioritize the leadership and participation of those we serve, whether people, churches or local institutions, as critical to creating and sustaining change. Many of our staff are immigrants themselves and have a deep understanding of the challenges our clients face.

***Joy Sharing Sunday is July 16th.***

## Feed My Starving Children

Due to the upcoming holiday, the next UPC packing session at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville is scheduled for **Tuesday, July 11** from **7:00-8:45 p.m.** Please contact Cinda Bartz at [bartzc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bartzc@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested in participating.

On June 14, the regular Wednesday UPC group enjoyed fellowship and lunch at Curt's Café in Highland Park after packing meals at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville. This group volunteers every Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. throughout the year. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Cinda Bartz at [bartzc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bartzc@sbcglobal.net).



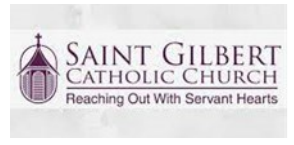
Pictured from left to right: Cinda Bartz, Dave Bartz, Mary Ann McDowell, Al Sommer, Jack Powell, Linda Rambo, Amanda Bartz, Karen Thoms

## Operation Christmas Child

The featured OCC item for July is new small toy cars. We hope to collect enough to fill 200 shoebox gifts before the packing party in mid-November.







## **LOOKING TOWARD 2023-2024 PADS EMERGENCY SHELTER SEASON**

**UPC PADS SITE** volunteers are likely to be supporting the **ST. MARY OF VERNON PADS SITE**. **BOTH St. Mary of Vernon and UPC sites** need enough volunteers to provide a safe environment for guests and volunteers. **UPC is currently in need of 3 volunteers for the 1st shift, 12 volunteers for the over-night and early morning shifts, AND a shift leader for the 3rd shift.** Considering this and the fact that St. Mary's would likely be unable to recruit the necessary volunteers to replace our volunteers at their site if we did open, our next *UNIFIER* article is likely to announce that UPC PADS Site will be closed for the 2023-2024 Season to play a supportive role and keep the larger St. Mary of Vernon PADS Site open. Some volunteers may be serving at nearby PADS shelter sites, such as Shepherd of the Lakes on Monday nights and Wildwood Presbyterian on Tuesday nights if UPC doesn't open. **More emergency shelter sites are needed, and volunteers are needed at all the PADS Lake County sites.** Please Contact Rose Pech for more info: 847-223-8131 ext.17 or pads\_at\_upc@hotmail.com.

## **PADS LAKE COUNTY CURRENT NEEDS LIST**

**Food: shelf-stable items in microwaveable ready bowls:** Easy Mac, Chef Boyardee, Dinty Moore meals, Cup of Soup, Ramen Cups

**New Clothing:** Men's boxers M-2XL, Women's underwear & sports bras S-2XL, Men & Women's T-shirts M-2XL, Men & Women's sweatpants & sweatshirts M-XL

**Gift Cards:** Grocery (Jewel or Walmart preferred), Gas gift cards, Fast food cards

**Survival Supplies:** Tents, Sleeping bags, Duffle bags, Back packs (larger size)

Items can be delivered to 1800 Grand Avenue in Waukegan Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 AM and 4 PM.

## **THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT OF THE PADS PROGRAM!!**

**--The UPC PADS Site Leadership Team**



# WCF NEWS — JULY 2023

## WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

### JULY AND AUGUST PLANS FOR WCF CIRCLES:

**Circle 2** meets one Sunday a month throughout the summer at 11:30 AM in the Meeting Room after visiting with others in the congregation following worship. **The next dates are July 30 and August 20. VISITORS ARE WELCOME!**

**Circle 4/5** will meet at 11:30 AM on Wednesday, July 12 at Culver's in Grayslake, and will try to get together for lunch in August as well. Contact Sue Schmidt for more details. **VISITORS ARE WELCOME!**

**Circle 9** meets year-round at 5:30 PM on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Hillside Restaurant on Rt. 83 in Grayslake. **VISITORS ARE WELCOME!** Occasionally, the meeting may be cancelled, so visitors should check with Ruth Gheysen or one of the Circle 9 members prior to going to Hillside.

**Circle 10** does not meet in person on a regular basis, but members are in contact with each other on Facebook. Contact Jasmine Walker for more information.

### **WCF WELCOMES ALL WOMEN 18 & OVER!!**

**See the chart below to find which day and time work for you!**

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** To contact chairpersons, see the church directory or contact Rose Pech at 847-682-2837 or email [rose4nonna@hotmail.com](mailto:rose4nonna@hotmail.com).

Circle	Day/Date	Time	Place	Contact
2	Sun., July 30	11:30 AM	UPC Meeting Room	Catherine Vick
4/5	Wed., July 12	11:30 AM	Culver's in Grayslake	Sue Schmidt
9	Tues., July 11	5:30 PM	Hillside Restaurant	Ruth Gheysen
10	TBD	TBD	TBD	Jasmine Walker

**WCF MISSION FUND:** **Joanna Eden has joined Tyler, Brittany, and Danielle to make them a family of 4. Congratulations to all!!** A reminder that they need a monthly income of \$2,000 to meet their budget. We encourage those who can donate now and anytime during 2023 to do so by either going online to [www.ilad.ngo/D2002](http://www.ilad.ngo/D2002) or by paper check payable to ILAD with D2002 written in the memo. Mail checks to ILAD, Atten: D2002, P.O. Box 383153, Duncanville, TX 75138-3183. Donations for 2024 can be made with checks payable to UPC with "WCF Mission Fund" in the memo or by cash in an envelope marked WCF Mission Fund.

--Blessings, Rose Pech

## July Birthdays

7/3 Joanne Lawrence  
7/3 Tim Pech Sr.  
7/5 Joan Hendricks  
7/5 Evan Kutsin  
7/8 Dan Watkins  
7/9 Laurel Bruggen  
7/12 Caroline Walker  
7/14 David Bartz  
7/14 Katelyn Rasmussen  
7/16 Abigail Madden  
7/20 Ann Thompson  
7/23 Karen Knapp  
7/27 Katherine Christensen  
7/28 William Weller

## July Anniversaries

7/11 Ryan & Emily Aubrey  
7/14 Joshua & Sarah Grubbs  
7/30 Wendell & Helene Fry



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

**Members:** Bill Churchill, Marie Frandsen, the Fuller family, Susan Green, Joan Hendricks, David Holliman, Joanne Lawrence, Marjorie Miller, Pat Wackerlin, Dan Watkins, Bobbie Weichman, and Dian Weinkauf.

**Tyler, Brittany & Danielle – WELCOME to Joanna Eden** who was born on June 20! All are doing well! Prayers are requested for good health and transition for the family of 4 and for the speedy processing of Joanna's birth certificate, passport & visa. Prayers have been answered for Danielle's sleep schedule to be regulated, and the family will be completing tasks here and making preparations for their return to West Africa as a family of 4. Please continue to pray for all to go well here and in West Africa during the remainder of their stay in the U.S. Pray for them to have the same peace that Paul had in Philippians 4:11-13 regardless of their circumstances.

**Relatives & Friends:** Allen Anglin, Kathy Behm, Joe Boccaleoni, Kathy Weichman Bradley, Megan Brown, Lorine Cooper, Patricia Davis, Lynne Fuller, Judy Hendrickson, Mary Mason, Gloria Meier, Tommy Nellesen, Gary Sadlack, Leslie Stahl, Stephan, Erik and Kacie Stanley, their son and Erik's mother, Diane; Kelly Truckenbrod and family, and the family of Connie (Sheldon) Dunbar.

**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, Sue (PADS friend), Wendy (friend of Rose Pech), and Michelle (friend of Linda Markham).

**LOVING GOD,**



**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

United Protestant Church  
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E-mail: [upc@upcgl.org](mailto:upc@upcgl.org)

Pastor: Rev. Jason Okrzynski

Email:  
[seniorpastor@upcgl.org](mailto:seniorpastor@upcgl.org)  
Cell: 224-463-2171

Church Office Hours:  
Tuesday & Thursday  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Grounded | Empowered | Transformed

United Protestant Church of Grayslake  
54 S. Whitney Street  
Grayslake, IL 60030

