

# The Unifier



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June 2025

## 75+ Years of Keeping the Faith

On June 22, we will celebrate United Protestant Church's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Seventy-five years ago on June 20, 1950, the congregations of the Congregational Church of Grayslake and the Grayslake Methodist Church voted separately to combine and form a new church which we now call United Protestant Church. The congregations had been worshipping together throughout the spring of 1950, with a combined Maundy Thursday service at the Methodist church here on Park Avenue and Whitney Street, and an Easter Service at the high school. The congregations considered the merger because the Congregational Church was without a pastor at the time. And, each congregation knew that while they'd gone their separate ways for fifty some years, their roots were entwined together.

The Congregational Church grew out of a Protestant Sunday School organized by John and Sarah Longabaugh in 1889. In 1891, eleven charter members from that Sunday School voted to form a Protestant church; 7 voted to become Congregational and 4 voted to become Methodist. So the church became Congregational, worshipping in the white clapboard structure that is now the Masonic Lodge at Center and Lake Streets. Ten years later, the Methodists in that congregation broke off to form their own church, built on the first lot west of the present UPC parsonage. The Gages Lake Methodist congregation later merged with the Grayslake Methodists and worshipped on the lot at the corner of Park Avenue and Whitney Street ever since.

Our merger in 1950 did not bring together congregations unfamiliar with one another. Rather, it merged back into one the Congregationalists and Methodists who had formed that Sunday School in 1889 and formed the first Protestant church in the village in 1891. In the months leading up to the merger, the two congregations had to gain approval from their regional Congregational and Methodist bodies, and they had to consider a new name. An article from the Grayslake newspaper, dated May 25, 1950, notes that just weeks before the merger, the congregations had not settled on a name. They were strongly considering naming themselves "Church of the Lakes" to reflect the geography of the region. But in a subsequent article dated June 15, 1950, the newspaper reported that the new congregation would be called the United Protestant Church of Grayslake.

"United" is the word carrying the weight in our name. It inspires us to unity despite differences of denominational origin, of personal preference, or worldview. It is an answer to the prayer of Jesus that all his disciples "may be one" (John 17: 21).

As we've prepared for our anniversary, we've said we are celebrating 75 "+" years. The plus is also carrying the weight in our celebration. We are celebrating our heritage, and the people who united their faiths 75 years ago. And we are also looking to our future, the "+" that we will keep living in the years to come. We've been entrusted with faith, and resources, and a vision of unity from those who went before us. Let's keep that vision of being a UNITED church ahead of us for the next 75 years!

Grace and Peace,  
Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD

# STEWARDSHIP NEWS

## **75 (+) for UPC's 75+ Years of Keeping Faith**

Dear UPC Members and Friends,

This year we celebrate United Protestant Church's 75+ years of keeping faith in the Grayslake community. We say 75 "+" because UPC was formed from predecessor churches that date to the founding of the Village of Grayslake and the area: the Congregational Church, the Grayslake Methodist Church, and the Gages Lake Methodist Church. Our history dates back more than 75 years, and with your participation, we'll build up the security of our congregation for beyond these 75 years.

With our anniversary celebration approaching June 22, several anonymous donors have volunteered matching gifts to the church's Endowment Fund. If matched by your gift of \$100, or \$250, \$500 or more dollars, these donors will match the funds as we seek to invest another \$75,000 in our Endowment Fund.

We welcome your gift to our 75 for 75 Campaign. If you would like to make a pledge over one or two years, in a gift at any level your budget and comfort will allow, we welcome it. Pledge cards and materials will be in the Sanctuary beginning later this month.

We will top off the 75 for 75 Campaign in February 2026, which will mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the consecration of UPC's present sanctuary.

Between our generous advance donors and your pledges, we know we can reach 75 or beyond to celebrate UPC's 75+ years of keeping faith!

Blessings,

The Stewardship Committee



## Welcome New Members

*Congratulations to the Confirmation Class of 2025! UPC welcomed our newest members on Sunday, May 4 during the 10 a.m. worship service. Pictured below with Pastor Jason Okrzynski are Joseph Friesema, Timothy Knapp, and Evan Kutsin.*

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## Graduating High School Seniors



Tom Christensen graduated from Grayslake Central High School and will be attending South Dakota State University and majoring in Precision Agriculture.



Reese Divis graduated from Warren Township High School and will be attending The Ohio State University and majoring in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences.



Abigail Floral graduated from Grayslake Central High School and will be attending Carthage College and majoring in Nursing.

Grace Floral graduated from Grayslake Central High School and will be attending Carthage College and majoring in Psychology and Criminal Justice.



Blake Kutsin graduated from Grayslake Central High School and will be attending Illinois State University and majoring in Finance.



Congratulations to all of our graduating seniors! They will be officially recognized during the 10 a.m. worship service on Sunday, June 8.

## *Music Sunday*

**Our UPC musicians were recognized on Sunday, May 18 during the worship service. We appreciate all of those listed below who have enhanced our services with their time, talents, dedication, and hard work.**

### **Chancel Choir**

Laurie Bethmann  
Rick Burg  
Lexie Craig  
Barb Fischel  
Ruth Gheysen  
Mary Ann McDowell  
Pastor Jason Okrzynski  
Stephanie Perdew  
Gary Stoodley  
Marcia Twadell, Accompanist  
Kurt Mockenhaupt, Director of Music



### **Handbell Choir**

Cinda Bartz  
Wende Fry  
Ruth Gheysen  
Sally Kelly  
Jan Kendrick  
Abby Madden  
Greyson Madden  
Mary Ann McDowell  
Sue Schmidt  
Karen Thoms  
Jerry Wessale

## *Christian Education Teacher Volunteers*

**The Christian Education Commission wishes to thank all of the teacher volunteers and assistants for their dedication and service to the teaching of God's Word to the children, youth, and adults here at UPC for the 2024-2025 church school year. These volunteers will be recognized during the 10 a.m. worship service on Sunday, June 8.**

Emily Aubrey  
Ryan Aubrey  
Jennifer Cooper  
Erik Fries  
Karen Knapp  
Mary Lillstrom  
Dale Message  
Dylan Okrzynski



Pastor Jason Okrzynski  
Soren Okrzynski  
Stephanie Perdew  
Linda Rambo  
Katelyn Rasmussen  
Carol Roselli-Rasmussen  
Sue Schmidt  
Cathy Vick



## Memorial Day Parade



The Memorial Day parade on May 26 was a huge hit! Thanks to all who participated! We handed out approximately 900 pieces of candy and we ran out. Join us for the Grayslake Summerfest parade on August 16. Watch for more details.

## Upcoming Events

### **UPC's 75th Anniversary Celebration**

SUNDAY, JUNE 22

10 AM Worship Service

11 AM Luncheon in Fellowship Hall

**Saturday, July 12**—UPC needs 20 volunteers to help with the Grayslake 5K Run starting at 7:45 a.m. We currently have 12 people signed up but need 8 more. Please contact the church office if you can help. This is a community event that we can help support. Contact Pastor Jason or Sue Schmidt with any questions.



# JUNE 2025

## United Protestant Church CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 10:00am Worship Service with Communion	<b>2</b> 6:00pm Ryan Aubrey Exit Interview (101) 7:00pm Stewardship Committee (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>3</b> 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>4</b> 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	<b>5</b> 7:00pm Bell Ensemble Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 9:00am Veritas Music Center Recitals (Sanctuary)
<b>8</b> PENTECOST SUNDAY 10:00am Worship Service 11:30am Circle 2 (MR)	<b>9</b> 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>10</b> 5:30pm Circle 9 (Mrs. V's) 6:30pm Pack 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Troop 451 PLC (101) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>11</b> 6:30pm Governance Task Force (MR) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm PUSH (Parlor) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	<b>12</b> 2:00pm Budget & Finance (MR) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 6:30pm North Star District Nominations Committee Meeting (MR) 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> TRINITY SUNDAY & FATHER'S DAY 10:00am Worship Service	<b>16</b> 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>17</b> 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Nami Family Support Group (MR) 7:00pm Troop 451 Committee Meeting (101)	<b>18</b> 3:00pm Spiritual Wellness Booth at Farmers Market 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	<b>19</b> 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 10:00am Set up for Anniversary Celebration (Parlor, FH)
<b>22</b> 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION 10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Luncheon (FH)	<b>23</b> 6:30pm Worship Committee (MR) 7:00pm Mission Committee (103) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>24</b> 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>25</b> 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH)	<b>26</b> 10:00am Mix Family Celebration of Life & Luncheon (Sanctuary/FH) 6:00pm Staff Parish (MR) 7:00pm Bell Ensemble Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 10:00am Worship Service	<b>30</b> 7:00pm Ad Council (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)					



## MISSIONS UPDATE



The next UPC packing session at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 3 from 7:15-8:45 p.m.** If you are interested in participating, please contact Cinda Bartz at [bartzc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bartzc@sbcglobal.net).

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD (OCC)

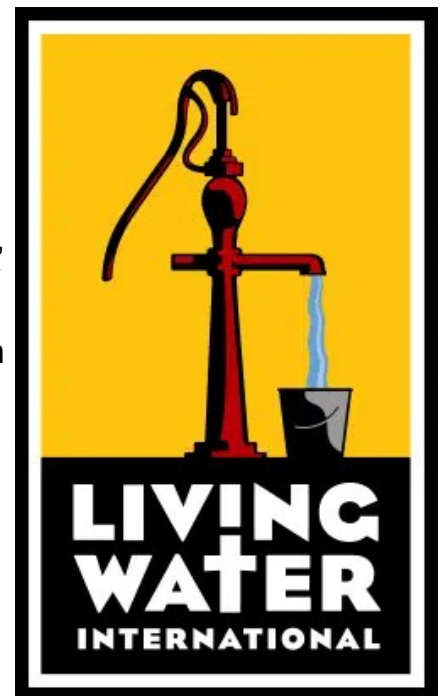
We are collecting the following items for Operation Christmas Child throughout the month of June: reusable cups, small plates and bowls, small kites, fishing kit items, screwdrivers, tape measures, nails, and dolls.

### JOY SHARING FOR JUNE

Living Water International is our Joy Sharing recipient for June. Their mission is to demonstrate the love of God by helping communities acquire desperately needed clean water and to experience 'living water'—the gospel of Jesus Christ—which alone satisfies the deepest thirst.

They build thriving communities by linking arms with individuals, church congregations, and communities to end the global water crisis by cultivating sustainable water access, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programs. As followers of Jesus, their concern is for the whole person—physical and spiritual. Through ongoing Christian witness, we know that only Jesus can truly transform people, restore relationships, and heal factors that lead to poverty, hunger, and thirst in our world.

Since the beginning, water provision has been the cornerstone of LWI. They are committed to high standards by testing the water every year and educating the communities on how to prevent diseases and improve health. They assign and train regional experts. LWI works with their primary partner, the Church, in all forms—national, district and local. Through this partnership they reflect their overall love for their neighbors in need and minister to the unreached through word and deed, and alleviate real social issues.



Living Water International has completed 25,000 water projects and served 7 million people in 16 countries. Please prayerfully consider donating to this amazing ministry. Joy Sharing Sunday is June 15.



### UPC SHOPPER

If you are looking for a gift for a graduate or a father, please consider using gift cards to make your purchase or give the gift of a gift card and let them make their own selection. Shopper profit goes to offset shipping costs for Operation Christmas Child.



## UPC Community Project at Avon Township

**Center:** Thanks to members and friends of Scout Troop 188, UPC members, and Supervisor Michele Bauman for sorting donations and doing other tasks at Avon Township Center from 6:30-8:00 PM on May 17! **All future sessions will be scheduled from 6:30-8:00 PM** because this is more convenient for most of those participating.



**Volunteers are encouraged to come at 7:00 if 6:30 PM is too early for them.** Meet at Avon Township Center, 433 W. Washington St., Round Lake Park. Park on the east side of the building (side closer to the Hainesville Rd. intersection). Enter through the door on that side of the building, then walk through the door immediately to your left; continue walking until you reach the sorting and storage room. Our next session will be **June 24, 2025**. Contact Rose Pech at [rose4nonna@hotmail.com](mailto:rose4nonna@hotmail.com) or 847-682-2837 for more information.

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## ATTENTION UPC YOUTH!

**UPC Youth from those just completing 6th grade through 2025 high school graduates**

**are being contacted about making plans for at least one youth-planned activity/event for them and their friends each month**



during the summer and continuing youth activities in the fall and going into 2026. Erik Fries has switched from being a member of the Confirmation Committee to Youth Ministry and is eager to facilitate a program in which youth take the lead by providing their ideas and dates when they can participate and doing the planning. Pastor Jason, parents, and other adults will assist as facilitators at various times. Youth and parents who have given input so far are eager to get started.

Cards were sent to young people for whom UPC had contact information. If you know of a young person within this age range who has not received a card, please contact the office with the name and contact information so no one is left out. Personal follow-up contacts will be made the first week of June to collect and compile a master list of ideas and dates to facilitate planning. The list will be used immediately to plan the first activity/event, which will be a fun one when the young people can also choose 2 or 3 activities/events to be scheduled for the summer, and can be helpful for planning future events. See information in future Tuesday Newsday emails and Sunday worship bulletins.



**PADS Lake County: 155 clients currently in shelter (71 are children)**

**Saturday, September 20, 2025, 6:30 PM.** Mark your calendars for an unforgettable evening! **PADS Lake County's Annual Celebration for 2025: Casino Royale: A Night of Chance and Change:** will be held at **Tighthead Brewing Company, 161 N. Archer Avenue, Mundelein, IL. Save the date!** Together, we'll raise critical support and brighter futures for our most vulnerable neighbors.

<http://tinyurl.com/Path2Progress25> is the link to purchase tickets. Tickets purchased by 7/11/25 11:59 PM are \$80; tickets are \$100 if purchased 7/12/25 or after.

**UPC PADS Support to PADS Lake County:**

**UPC PADS** has been asked to advertise and participate in this 2025 Annual PADS fundraiser in addition to continuing our ongoing support, and one way is to donate "Theme based" baskets to be auctioned for additional funds. Please watch Tuesday Newsday emails for more information.

**\$300 worth of food purchased using donated Walmart gift cards was delivered to First Presbyterian Church PADS pantry the last Wednesday of May.** Check the weekly Tuesday Newsday for each week's current needs. Non-food items should go into the "CLOTHING" UPC bin. Put food donations into the "FOOD" bin at UPC, deliver to First Presbyterian Church in Libertyville between 4:00 & 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, or deliver directly by using their Amazon wish list link:

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/XD5I2ZRDQKE5?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/XD5I2ZRDQKE5?ref=wl_share)

Contact Rose Pech at 847-682-2837 or [rose4nonna@hotmail.com](mailto:rose4nonna@hotmail.com) for donating large items and/or large quantities of items other than food. Thank you to all who donated and who continue to do so!

**UPC Financial Update as of April 30, 2025:**

YTD Income:       \$ 77,474.05  
YTD Expenses:     \$ 95,248.06  
YTD Deficit:       **\$-17,774.01**

It's garage sale season. If your neighbors have a sale, please consider stopping in to ask them if they will donate any unsold shoes to Soles for Jesus. They can give the shoes to you to bring to UPC, or if there are too many, they can contact Cinda at 847-727-1552.

**UPC STAFF:**

SENIOR PASTOR  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC  
ACCOMPANIST  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/CLERK  
TREASURER  
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD  
Kurt Mockenhaupt  
Marcia Twadell  
Sue Schmidt  
Lynn Hallen  
Jan Kendrick, Cinda Bartz



## *WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP*

### **HAPPY FLAG DAY!**

“**Springing Forward in Growth**,” the spring spiritual workshop presented by the Women United in Faith Lake North District on May 31, was attended by WCF members Rose Pech and Catherine Vick. Presentations by Laura Dean Friedrich and Charlotte Wyncoop followed registration and light morning refreshments. After the highlight of a Labyrinth and the program’s closing with worship and Communion, the ladies enjoyed a box lunch and time to visit with past acquaintances from towns who were in our Elgin District and meet new women who are all part of our Lake North District.

**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.

**USE INFORMATION BELOW and the TABLE BELOW** to choose what works for you!

**Circle 2** meets once a month on a Sunday at **11:30 AM in the UPC Meeting Room**. Sundays vary monthly based on other UPC events. Members will sort and strip crayons for SCARCE donations **at UPC during their June 8 meeting**. Linda Markham will provide the devotions. Contact Catherine Vick for more information.

**Circle 4/5** meets on the first Wednesday of the month at **11:30 AM at Culver’s** in Grayslake. Contact Sue Schmidt to join these ladies for **lunch on June 4**.

**Circle 9** meets year-round at **5:30 PM** on the second Tuesday of each month **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 Circle 9 members prior to joining these ladies for **dinner on June 10**.

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

| <b>Circle</b> | <b>Day/Date</b> | <b>Time</b> | <b>Place</b>                 | <b>Contact</b> |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| 2             | Sun., June 8    | 11:30 AM    | UPC Meeting Room             | Catherine Vick |
| 4/5           | Wed., June 4    | 11:30 AM    | Culver’s in Grayslake        | Sue Schmidt    |
| 9             | Tues., June 10  | 5:30 PM     | Mrs. V’s in Round Lake Beach | Ruth Gheysen   |
| 10            | N/A             | N/A         | N/A                          | Jasmine Walker |

**Tyler, Brittany, Danielle, & Joanna** are excited as they have a new schedule, Tyler works on technology updates, they know their Nanny is staying longer, and they enjoy time back in their village. They appreciate all our prayers, the messages, and the financial support they receive from us. See their recent praise items and prayer requests on the UPC Prayer List. Donations are always much needed and may be made to their UPC fund or at <http://www.ilad.ngo/D2002> at any time.



### **June Birthdays**

6/9 Barb Fischel  
6/9 Andrew Schmidt  
6/11 Linda Dzwonkiewicz  
6/11 June Smith  
6/12 Elizabeth Madden  
6/15 Charles Craig  
6/16 Rosanne Taylor  
6/18 Jason Okrzynski  
6/19 Denise Fuller  
6/19 Lori Rische  
6/23 Spencer Craig  
6/23 Gavin Fries  
6/23 Diane Trowitch  
6/30 Cathy Vick

### **June Anniversaries**

6/21 Gretchen & Jerome Jagla  
6/22 Jerry & Marlene Badgerow



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

**Members:** Bill Churchill, Craig Fischel, Marie Frandsen, Lynn Hallen, David Holliman, Jan Kendrick, Joanne Lawrence, John Porteous, Dan Watkins, Bobbie Weichman, and Jeff Ziegler.

**Tyler, Brittany, Danielle, & Joanna:** report that Tyler is in the thick of technological things as their emails are changing soon, and he only wants to change them once, meaning regular updates from them may be delayed for a while. In the meantime, Tyler has received exciting news inviting him with all expenses paid to a conference in Italy--the details of which will be shared with UPC in future updates. Along with praise that Alayna decided to stay until September, they still have the request for someone to "Nanny" from October 2025 through July 2026. Other requests include the farm worker to help Tyler and successful implementation as Team Kon tries a new schedule, so their national translators no longer have to work independently.

**Relatives & Friends:** Allen Anglin, Kathy Behm, Kathy Weichman Bradley, Lorine Cooper, Patricia Davis, Judy Hendrickson, Jennifer Hitch, Mary Mason, Albert Meier, Gloria Meier, Pat Mielke, Tommy Nellesen, 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, Mary Brase, Don & Tina Busch, Brad Fuller, Trish Jelinek, Rick Juern, Ben Kelly-Fuller, David Novak, Sue (PADS friend), Wendy (friend of Rose Pech), and Michelle (friend of Linda Markham).

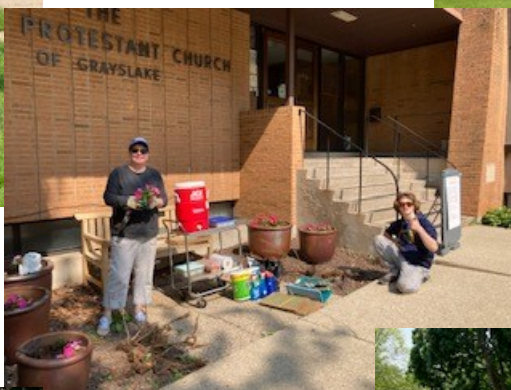
*Lord, in your mercy,  
hear our prayers.*





# Spring Cleanup

May 31



Thank  
you!



**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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Grayslake, IL 60030

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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 3 p.m.

Grounded | Empowered | Transformed

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

