

# The Unifier



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June 2026

Grace to you and Peace,

I hope that this Unifier finds you happy and in peace. As the summer sets in, it is time for me personally to be planning ahead. Many of you will be joining me in the next months for a meeting or meetings to plan for the coming fall. I know for many of us summer is also a time for travel. People are in and out of worship with more frequency.

There are a couple of special events in worship in June, and I hope you can join us for them:

- Sunday, June 7, we will be recognizing our three High School graduates—Ava Henne, Dylan Okrzynski, and Alisha Walker. I hope you will join us to celebrate and pray over them.
- Sunday, June 21, our Joy Sharing will benefit Living Water International. In order to specially highlight their work, we hope that you will join us after worship in order to play water games on the church lawn!

Wherever you find yourself on Sundays this summer, I do hope you will make time and space to worship, pray, and hear God's Word. Enjoy the season!

In Christ,

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD  
Senior Pastor

This year's adult mission trip takes us to Iowa! As you can read below, there was a very large flood there in 2024 that they are still recovering from. We will be working under the sponsorship of Mennonite Disaster Service. We were with them at last year's mission trip to Spruce Pine, North Carolina, and they were very organized.

**LOCATION:** Spencer, Iowa

**WHEN:** Sunday, August 9 through Saturday, August 15

**WHAT HAPPENED:** In June 2024, Spencer, Iowa experienced devastating, record-breaking flooding when the Little Sioux River crested at 22.2 feet, inundating the south side of town, damaging hundreds of homes, and requiring the rescue of 800 residents. The surge caused significant infrastructure damage and forced massive, long-term cleanup efforts.

**WHAT MDS IS DOING:** MDS work will focus on drywall, taping/mudding, flooring, and painting.

There are openings for 10 UPC mission trippers. Please contact me at [rickburg10@gmail.com](mailto:rickburg10@gmail.com) if you are interested and can join us. I will be receiving more details as we get closer to the date. Historically, housing and some food will be provided for us. That information and the cost should be available soon. It is always a nominal amount. Please feel free to invite friends and family on this awesome adventure!

Yours in Christ,

Rick Burg

## Confirmation 2026

Congratulations to Greyson Madden who was confirmed on Sunday, May 3 during the 10:00 a.m. worship service. Notice the awesome job he did on his stole!



## 2026 High School Graduates



Ava Henne graduated from Grayslake Central High School and will be attending the University of Iowa and majoring in their Dentistry program.



Dylan Okrzynski graduated from Glenbrook South High School and will be attending Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota and majoring in Computer Engineering.



Alisha Walker graduated from Grant Community High School and will be entering an accelerated nursing program to obtain her LPN at State Career College here in Illinois. She will also be a certified phlebotomist and medical assistant through College of Lake County.



**Congratulations to all our graduating high school seniors! They will be officially recognized during the 10:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, June 7.**

# Church Music Sunday

Our UPC musicians were recognized on Sunday, May 10 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  
Dale Message  
Pastor Jason Okrzynski  
Stephanie Perdew



## Handbell Choir

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

Kurt Mockenhaupt, Director of Music/Organist

If you are interested in joining either the Chancel or Handbell Choirs starting this fall, please contact Kurt Mockenhaupt at [MusicDirector@upcgl.org](mailto:MusicDirector@upcgl.org). Rehearsals are every Thursday evening at 6:00 p.m. for the Chancel Choir and 7:00 p.m. for the Handbell Choir. We would love for you to join us! Come make a joyful noise to the Lord!





**BOOK OF GOLDEN DEEDS AWARD** by Rick Burg

Every year the Grayslake Exchange Club gives a Book of Golden Deeds Award to a long deserving Grayslake resident. On May 12, Rose Pech received this important award. She was lauded for her over three decades long service to the community through teaching special needs area children in classrooms throughout her teaching career. While doing that, she was and still is heavily involved in the PADS program for over 25 years. Also, at UPC, she volunteered and still is involved in the children’s and youth education programs.

As a measure on how beloved she is to the community, there were numerous PADS volunteers in attendance, as well as the head of the Lake County PADS organization, Allen

Swilley. Of course, there were also many UPC folks there as well! It is obvious that she shows the same love to her family. Two of her nieces surprised her by making a five hour drive from southern Illinois just to join in the celebration! As a sign that she is not finished in her good works, immediately after receiving the award, she was asking the crowd to sign up for PADS volunteering. That’s our Rose! Congratulations to a person who richly deserves this award!

**UPC Financial Update as of April 30, 2026:**

YTD Income: \$77,801.59  
 YTD Expenses: \$86,807.22  
 YTD Deficit: \$ -9,005.63



Do you enjoy gardening? Join the UPC Gardening Team and help plant flowers and keep our church property looking beautiful. Contact Sue Schmidt at [churchsec@upcgl.org](mailto:churchsec@upcgl.org). 847-223-8131

**UPC Youth Group News**

May held quite a few special events for some of our youth: Celebrations began the first of the month with Greyson Madden’s Confirmation. Greyson Madden and Gabby Walker both graduated from 8<sup>th</sup> grade! Ava Henne, Dylan Okrzynski, and Alisha Walker were high school graduates and are working full time as they also prepare for college classes and continue to meet their goals for further education and the careers of their choice. Congratulations to all these youth and God’s blessings as you continue your various paths during the days, months, and years ahead! Schedules are becoming hectic and diversified for many students with summer months bringing jobs, classes, such as Driver’s Ed., family travel, sports camps, and so on. However, several of our youth have found time for both a fun outing to Six Flags on June 4 with Andrew Friesema and Erik Fries and time to help Savanna Johnson, PADS Volunteer Coordinator, and a couple of other adults with a PADS mission project the following week. They will sort items and organize those that can be used at the Family Shelter Site in August. Young people and their parents should check for personal emails, texts, and/or notices in Tuesday Newsday emails during June for information about planning July activities.





# JUNE 2026

## United Protestant Church CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 5:30pm Staff Parish (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>2</b> 7:00pm Building & Grounds Team (MR) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:15pm Feed My Starving Children (Libertyville)	<b>3</b> 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Website Team Zoom Meeting	<b>4</b> 6:30pm Grace Notes Bell Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH/Front Lawn) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>5</b> 4:00-8:00pm Veritas Music Center Recitals (Sanctuary)	<b>6</b> 10:00am-5:00pm Veritas Music Center Recitals (Sanctuary)
<b>7</b> 10:00am Worship Service With Recognition of High School Graduates 11:30am Sunday School Teaching Team (MR)	<b>8</b> 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>9</b> 1:00-4:00pm PADS Sorting with Youth 3:00pm Budget & Finance (MR) 5:30pm Circle 9 (Mrs. V's) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>10</b> 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm PUSH (Parlor)	<b>11</b> 6:30pm Grace Notes Bell Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH/Front Lawn) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 10:00am Worship Service	<b>15</b> 7:00pm UPC Board (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>16</b> 7:00pm PADS Team 3 Meeting (FH/Kitchen) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Nami Family Support Group (MR)	<b>17</b> 6:30pm North Star District Commissioner Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	<b>18</b> 6:30pm Grace Notes Bell Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH/Front Lawn) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> FATHER'S DAY 10:00am Worship Service with Joy Sharing 11:00am Water Games (front lawn)	<b>22</b> 6:30pm Worship Team (MR) 7:00pm Mission Team (103) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>23</b> 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	<b>24</b> 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	<b>25</b> 6:15pm Grace Notes Bell Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:00pm Active Shooter Presentation (FH) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (Front Lawn) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 10:00am Worship Service 11:30am Circle 2 (103)	<b>29</b> 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	<b>30</b> 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)				

## MISSIONS UPDATE



The next UPC packing session at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 2 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

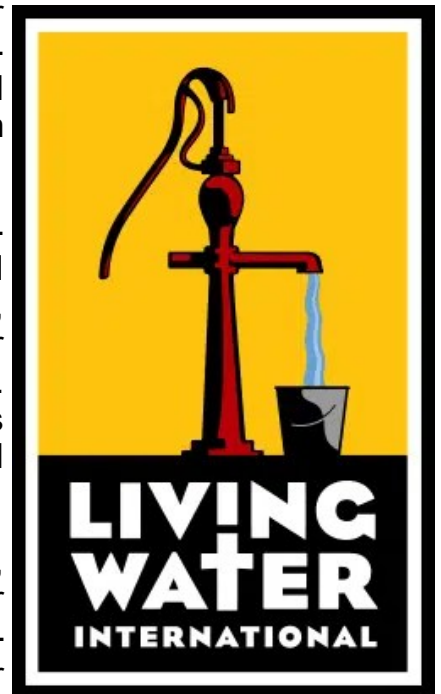
Living Water International, LWI, is our Joy Sharing recipient for June. Their mission is to demonstrate the love of God by helping communities acquire desperately needed clean water and to experience 'living water'—the gospel of Jesus Christ—which alone satisfies the deepest thirst.

LWI builds 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.

LWI strategically incorporates their WASH Program Area, WPA, into a region to focus more intentionally on the people and their unique needs. Through the WPA model, LWI works in a pre-determined geographical location for 5-7 years, allowing their teams to collect data on all projects and activities.

Rooted deeply into select regions, LWI forms partnerships with local governments, drills deeper and more complex water systems, changes hygiene behaviors over long periods, and forms stronger relationships with local church leaders to expand God's kingdom through disciple work.

LWI 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 21.



### 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. UPC Shopper profit goes to offset shipping costs for Operation Christmas Child.

## COMPANIONS JOURNEYING TOGETHER

There are just over 200 days until Christmas. Could you take a few minutes to write a short message on a Christmas card once a day, or even once a week, to brighten someone else's life? The message can be as simple as "May the true spirit of Christmas shine in your heart and light your path." Sign the card with your name and "United Protestant Church". Put the card back in the unsealed envelope and return them to the mission table. Those cards will then be sent to men and women in Illinois prisons who will be away from their families for the holidays. This is a great way to give hope to others while putting our faith into action as we all try to grow closer to Christ. (Cards and message suggestions are on the mission table.) Questions? See Cinda Bartz or Rose Pech.



**Turn Used School Supplies into Hope for Children in Honduras.** Help the environment and help children in need by donating used/new school supplies. Items like notebooks with unused pages, extra pencils, crayons, rulers, folders, and other supplies often still have plenty of life left in them. Instead of throwing these items away, donate them to Midwest Mission for children in poverty in Honduras. Help them learn, grow, and build a brighter future.

## LAKE COUNTY HAVEN

On June 16, UPC will be providing a meal for 10 adults at Lake County Haven's women's shelter. The meal will include burgers, hot dogs, sides, and dessert. There is a sign-up sheet on the mission table. All items must be brought to UPC by Sunday, June 14. Please put refrigerated items in the meeting room refrigerator with LCH marked on them. All other items marked with LCH can be left on the meeting room table. Please help provide this summer fare to these women who are turning their lives around. See a Mission Team member with questions.

## AVON TOWNSHIP

Join us on **Tuesday, June 23, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.** when UPC and Boy Scout Troop 188 co-sponsor the **Avon Township Community Night of Giving**, where anyone who wishes may come to the Township Center, located at 433 W. Washington Street in Round Lake Park, to help with chores that need to be done. Contact Rose Pech at [rose4nonna@hotmail.com](mailto:rose4nonna@hotmail.com) or 847-682-2837 with questions or suggestions. **Avon Township** has its **"FOOD GIVE-AWAY"** on the **first and third Saturdays of each month**. **Volunteers are needed from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.** **Contact the Township Office at 847-546-1446** if you'd like to



help bag and distribute food items during either of these times. It's a great feeling to know that we're helping to make food, clothing, and other necessities safe and available for those in need!

***The Mission Team would like to, once again, thank everyone who ordered Kringles during our recent fundraiser. We raised \$361 for the UPC general budget. We hope you enjoyed them.***





**PADS Lake County Update:** The PADS food donation announcement that is shared in the UPC Thursday Mission email comes to us weekly from David Marsden who is the coordinator for the PADS food hub at First Presbyterian Church in Libertyville and a new member of the PADS Lake County Board of Directors. **When the program first began, shelves at First Presbyterian were kept full enough** that there was no concern about running out. **Recently**, the supply of necessary food items and cleaning supplies is **running VERY LOW**, as you have seen in the Thursday emails. The donations made **directly at UPC have also dropped**, causing us to use more of the Walmart gift cards for food to deliver to First Presbyterian. PLEASE PRAY that God will use each of us and other members of Lake County communities to provide the needed food and cleaning supplies so there is always enough. We can donate microwaveable shelf-stable food at UPC, deliver it to First Presbyterian Church, or use their Amazon link [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/XD5I2ZRDQKE5?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/XD5I2ZRDQKE5?ref=wl_share)

Other PADS donations can be made online directly to support the PADS Lake County programs by going to their website: [www.padslakecounty.org](http://www.padslakecounty.org). Find their wish list or click on the word "Donate" in the upper right corner of the home page, click the type of donation you wish to make, and follow the instructions. Donations can be made in honor or memory of someone.

**PADS Fixed Site Shelter Update:** Families who will be living in the **Family Shelter** in **AUGUST need hot dinners! More volunteers, both individuals and groups are needed.** A list of other items and ways to volunteer is being developed by PADS and will be shared soon. Contact Savannah Johnson [sjohnson@padslakecounty.org](mailto:sjohnson@padslakecounty.org) to receive the latest PADS news and meeting link.

**UPC PADS Support for PADS Lake County's Fixed Family Shelter Site:** **Team 3 members** Mark Irvin, Mary Lillstrom, Karen Soucie, Karen Thoms, and Mary and Bob Zorc will meet early in June to formulate guidelines and plan for preparing and delivering a hot "Dinner for 60" to people at the PADS Family Shelter on the third Thursday of every month starting in August when the shelter opens.

**MORE TEAMS ARE NEEDED** to prepare and deliver "Dinner for 60" on the other Thursday afternoons, so we can **provide dinner every Thursday! Substitutes** are also needed.

**SAVE THE DATE: SOUP & SALAD DINNER** and informational meeting for UPC PADS "Dinners for 60" **VOLUNTEERS will be in UPC Fellowship Hall, Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. RSVP:** Rose Pech at [pads\\_at\\_upc@hotmail.com](mailto:pads_at_upc@hotmail.com) or 847-682-2837.

**MORE WAYS TO HELP: FIRST PRAY AND SHARE OUR INFO!** If able, donate restaurant size disposable aluminum pans, aluminum foil (heavy duty), quality plastic wrap, food service gloves, dish washing detergent, kitchen staples, such as salt, pepper, sugar, and desserts. (More than one person can donate for the same date as needed to feed the 60 people.) Donating Walmart gift cards bought at the UPC Shopper table helps in three ways: (1) money from your purchase goes to ship OCC boxes, (2) the gift card buys items for PADS dinners, and (3) the empty card goes to recycling where guitar pics are made and given to veterans. Place the card(s) in an envelope marked "PADS Dinners." Monetary donations can be cash in envelopes marked for PADS Dinners or check(s) to UPC with "PADS Dinners" on the memo line.

If you're interested in helping in **any** way, please contact Rose Pech [pads\\_at\\_upc@hotmail.com](mailto:pads_at_upc@hotmail.com) or 847-682-2837. Give your name and contact information (name, address, email address, and phone number).



# 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! Updates in church bulletin, Tuesday Newsday, and UNIFIER.

**CURRENT INFO & UPDATES: Ladies 18 to 108: We'd love to have you join us!**

**Circle 2** members meet in the UPC Meeting Room or Room 103 monthly on a Sunday at 11:30 AM. Sundays vary monthly based on UPC events. The May meeting began with prayer and devotions; members shared joys and concerns, wrote notes to honorary members of the Circle, and packed Marble game bags for OCC. (Thanks to Jerry Badgerow for his help!) Members took sheets to cut cards at home for the OCC Matching Game. The meeting ended with a group closing prayer. The June meeting will be on **Sunday, June 28**, in room 103 with devotions by Marlene Badgerow. The mission will be packing bags for the Tic Tac Toe OCC game. Contact Catherine Vick for more info.

**Circle 4/5** meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 11:30 AM at Culver's in Grayslake. Join us for friendly conversation and good food. The next lunch meeting will be **Wednesday, June 3**. Contact Sue Schmidt.

**Circle 9** meets at 5:30 PM on the second Tuesday of each month at Mrs. V's on Rollins Road in Round Lake Beach. Join us for fellowship, food, and fun. 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 **Tuesday, June 9**.

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

Circle	Day/Date	Time	Place	Contact
2	Sun., June 28	11:30 AM	UPC Room 103	Catherine Vick
4/5	Wed., June 3	11:30 AM	Culver's in Grayslake	Sue Schmidt
9	Tues., June 9	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** give praise for time with former Nanny, restful time at friend's "Garden House," Hershey Gardens & Chocolate World, **standing room only** at our joint presentation at former Nanny's church! Our requests include **Scheduling Wisdom**: balancing visiting friends, work, time with girls, connecting with Shovel and Team Kon, and **Wisdom** about whether to **redesign** the first (small) building so we can move out to the farm sooner because we still have no resolution with African landlord. Donations may be made by giving to the UPC fund or online at this link <http://www.ilad.ngo/D2002>.

### 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 Lori Rische  
6/23 Spencer Craig  
6/23 Gavin Fries  
6/30 Catherine Vick

### June Anniversaries

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



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

**Members:** Alam family, Jerry Badgerow, Bill Churchill, Craig Fischel, Marie Frandsen, Gregg Helm, David Holliman, Wendy Holliman, Jan Kendrick, Joanne Lawrence, Mary Ann McDowell, Joyce Norton, Terry Norton, John Porteous, Cathy Vick, Dan Watkins, Bobbie Weichman, and Jeff Ziegler.

**Tyler, Brittany, Danielle & Joanna:** give praise for time spent with family and friends and opportunities to meet with church congregations and other potential supporters. Challenges: being cold and only packing one checked bag for six weeks. Special continued prayer requests: **Mission Critical to find Kid Helper!** (April 2027-July 2028) and Wisdom in decision making because negotiations with **African landlord** over the situation is still not resolved. Pray for peace. Other prayer requests include **Scheduling Wisdom:** balancing visiting friends, work, time with girls, connecting with Shovel and Team Kon.

**Relatives & Friends:** Bruce Baird, Mark Becker, Kathy Behm, Betty Bournes, Mary Brase, Barry Burgett, Don & Tina Busch, Lorine Cooper, Daniel Dorman, Brad Fuller, Judy Hendrickson, Jennifer Hitch, Trish Jelinek, Rick Juern, Ben Kelly-Fuller, Mary Mason, Hubert & Sharon Maston, Albert Meier, Gloria Meier, Nancy Message, Pat Mielke, Marilyn Mockenhaupt, Tommy Nellesen, Melissa Norton, Gail Russell, Gary Sadlack, Eric Schmidt & family, Ray Sisco, Stephan, Erik and Kacie Stanley, their son and Erik's mother, Diane, and Bri Walters, Sue (PADS friend), Wendy, and Michelle.

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

### UPC STAFF:

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

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD  
Kurt Mockenhaupt  
Sue Schmidt  
Lynn Hallen  
Cinda Bartz & Ruth Gheysen

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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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

