THE UNIFIER

United Protestant Church of Grayslake

54 South Whitney Street, Grayslake, Illinois 60030 | (847) 223-8131 | upc@upcgl.org | www.upcgl.org November 2026

Grace to You and Peace,

Sunday, November 8, our new Church Board led those assembled at home and online in the “Big Question” which we will wrestle with over the next year. If you could not attend, the question(s) they have selected and are prayerfully guiding us through are:

“What is our Brand? How do we wish to be known in our community?”

It is hard for me to believe this now, but there was a fair amount of concern that this first conversation would not go well. I am praising God because that was simply not the case. I stayed out of the conversations in order not to influence them, which gave me the opportunity to observe from afar. It was evident to me that the Holy Spirit was present and moving amongst the congregation. The gathered community was passionately and honestly engaged with the questions and each other. There were clear and consistent themes expressed. Most important, there was a sense of energy and openness to moving together into God’s future.

As mentioned, this is the first step towards building a long-range plan. There is, of course, much more to come. The Board will continue to wrestle deeply with these questions and draw them forward towards a vision. The goal is to keep the collective voice(s) of our members as the source of the emerging vision. The Board will thus host regular opportunities like Sunday’s to focus their work on the insights and desires of our members. Sunday, February 14, we plan to have our next churchwide conversation; please plan to stay after church for food and more work together in the Spirit. The intent is that these conversations will move us towards a long-range vision, and the implantations of these visions in churchwide action. Under the leadership of our Board, all this will come in good time. For today, it is sufficient and essential that we enjoy this moment: The Holy Spirt did show up amongst the gathered members of United Protestant Church, and together, we again took a step forward in ministry and mission as UPC is seemingly always more than ready to do!

Finally, I want to celebrate our tremendous Board: Moderator Drew Madden and board members Cinda Bartz, Ruth Gheysen, Ken Gipple, and Dale Message. Their diligent work made Sunday’s gathering possible. Last spring, the Board stepped into its work without a clear path, moving forward one faithful step at a time. Ken’s early leadership helped guide the Board through unfamiliar territory, and we are grateful for his time, service, and wisdom. Although life’s demands unexpectedly required him to resign in late summer, the Board has continued laying the groundwork for this new model of governance. I look forward to seeing how the Holy Spirit uses Sunday’s conversation to further energize their work. We will soon bring a nomination to the congregation to fill the remaining Board seat. For now, I give thanks for the outstanding leadership God has brought together!

In Christ,

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD



Adult Education participants will conclude their study of 1st and 2nd Samuel on November 22. The adult Advent study will begin November 29 through December 20. We will be reading The *Carols of Christmas* by Alan Vermilye. If you would like to purchase a book, please contact Sue Schmidt at churchsec@upcgl.org or 847-223-8131. The cost of the book is $9 payable to UPC. Christian education classes meet every Sunday at 8:45 a.m. Children meet in room 102 and adults meet in room 106. There will be no Sunday School class for children on Sunday, November 29.

UPC YOUTH NEWS FOR NOVEMBER & DECEMBER





UPC Youth Group members will be participating in the OCC packing party on Saturday, November 21. Members will be delivering Veterans' gifts on Sunday, December 6 and attending the Annual Youth Christmas Party at the Parsonage on Sunday, December 20. Watch for exact times for the Veterans' Gift Delivery and the December 20 Christmas Party in Tuesday Newsday emails. We are still waiting for confirmation from the new management regarding Christmas Caroling at Library Lane Senior Residence.

FUNDRAISER UPDATE



Back by request for the Christmas holidays: Beginning on November 15, the Mission Team will be holding a **Kringle fundraiser.** Kringles are a sweet pastry made of layers of flaky, buttery dough, with a filling and toppings in a wide variety of flavors. Orders will be taken from November 15 through November 29. There are 15 flavors to choose from (or choose them all; they freeze well for 6 months.) The Kringles will be available for pick-up on December 18 – just in time to take to all your holiday parties. Each Kringle is 22 oz. and will cost $12. Funds raised will help cover Operation Christmas Child shipping costs.



Mark your calendars now for **Hanging of the Greens**, scheduled for Sunday, **November 22** following the worship service. Help decorate our church building for the upcoming Advent season. Many hands make light work, so stay after the service and help us prepare for the birth of Jesus. Pizza will be served afterwards to those who participate.

UPC Financial Update as of October 31, 2026:	
Year-to-date Income:	$188,157.92
Year-to-date Expenses:	$204,208.72
Year-to-date Deficit:	$ -16,050.80



NOVEMBER 2026

United Protestant Church

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:45am Children's Sunday School Class (102) 8:45am Adult Education Class (106) 10:00am Worship Service	**2** 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	**3** 6:30pm Pack 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:15pm Feed My Starving Children (Libertyville)	**4** 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	**5** 11:30am-4:30pm PADS Dinner Prep (Kitchen/FH) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes Bell Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	**6**	**7**
8 8:45am Children's Sunday School Class (102) 8:45am Adult Education Class (106) 10:00am Worship Service	9 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	**10** 5:30pm Circle 9 (Mrs. V's) 6:30pm Pack 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	**11** 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm PUSH (Parlor)	**12** 11:30am-4:30pm PADS Dinner Prep (Kitchen/FH) 3:00pm Budget & Finance (MR) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes Bell Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	**13**	**14** 10:00-11:30am Visitation for Marlene Badgerow 11:30am Marlene Badgerow Memorial Service
15 8:45am Children's Sunday School Class (102) 8:45am Adult Education Class (106) 10:00am Worship Service	**16** 7:00pm UPC Board Meeting (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	**17** 6:30pm Pack 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Nami Family Support Group (MR)	**18** 6:30pm North Star District Commissioner Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	**19** 11:30am-4:30pm PADS Dinner Prep (Kitchen/FH) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes Bell Rehearsal (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	**20** OCC Packing Party Setup (FH-All day)	**21** 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Parsonage) 10:00am-2:00pm OCC Packing Party (FH)
22 8:45am Children's Sunday School Class (102) 8:45am Adult Education Class (106) 10:00am Worship Service 11:15am Hanging of the Greens	**23** 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	**24** 6:30pm Pack 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service at St. Andrew's Church 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	**25** 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	**26** HAPPY THANKSGIVING 11:30am-4:30pm PADS Dinner Prep (Kitchen/FH) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	**27**	**28**
29 8:45am Adult Advent Study (106) 10:00am Worship Service 11:20am Staff Parish (MR) 11:30am Circle 2 (103)	**30** 6:30pm Worship Team (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)					

MISSIONS UPDATE

The December UPC packing session at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville is scheduled for Tuesday, **December 1** 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)

The 2026 goal has been set at 200 shoebox gifts to help spread the Gospel to children and their families. Last year, UPC provided 216 shoebox gifts to children around the world, including Zambia and Malawi. There are still a few items we need to provide well-rounded boxes. Any of the following that you can provide will be greatly appreciated (all items must be new): scissors, balls, and pencil sharpeners. The **2026 UPC Packing Party** is scheduled for **Saturday, November 21 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Please mark your calendar and plan to attend for all or part of the time. Guests are welcome too. God ALWAYS puts the right box in the hands of the right child! Pack and pray!

JOY SHARING FOR NOVEMBER



The Mission Team is proud to once again highlight the Veterans' Giving Tree for **November's Joy Sharing.** We will be providing Christmas gifts for so many deserving veterans at the VA Hospital in North Chicago. Gift tags for the veterans are now available on the Christmas tree in the parlor. These tags are created from lists that the VA provides from the veterans' "wish lists". You are encouraged to select one or more gift tags and shop for one or more items requested on the tags. **Gifts must be wrapped and brought to UPC to be delivered to the VA facility on Sunday, December 6 at 1:30 p.m.** The tag must be attached to the wrapped package. **The deadline for the gifts to be dropped off at UPC is Sunday, November 29.** Thank you for your continued and generous giving to show gratitude to those who have given so much for our country.

UPC SHOPPER



When buying your Thanksgiving turkey and all the fixings, don't forget to plan ahead and use some UPC Shopper gift cards. We carry many grocery stores like Jewel, Meijer's, Sunset Foods, Target and Walmart. If you're heading out for some early Christmas shopping or hitting those Black Friday sales, pick up some UPC Shopper gift cards for your purchases. Don't see cards for a store you shop at, ask the salesperson to request a special order. Many more stores are available than just what we keep in stock. Special orders are usually available in two weeks and do not cost extra. Want those cards even faster? Ask the salesperson about using the app on your phone and getting the cards immediately. Profits from the UPC Shopper helps pay for the shipping costs for our Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.

AVON TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY NIGHT OF GIVING

Both the November and December sessions for our Avon Township mission have been cancelled for this year. The fourth Tuesday night in November is the date for the Grayslake Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service, which will be hosted by St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on Lake Street. The fourth Tuesday of December is Christmas week with other conflicts. Regular fourth Tuesday sessions will resume on January 26, 2027.

WORLD RELIEF

Our Fifth Sunday Mission on November 29 benefits World Relief and their winter coat drive. For 80 years across 100 countries, World Relief's mission is to boldly engage the world's greatest crises in partnership with the church. We will be collecting winter coats for men, women, girls, and boys (all sizes, new or used in clean and like-new condition). Please bring your donations to UPC. Thank you.

PRETZEL DELIVERY

Our pretzel fundraiser was a huge success. Below are pictures of Milwaukee Pretzel Company delivering our orders to UPC on October 15. Thank you to all who purchased pretzels for our fundraiser!







REMINDER: When putting up and taking down your Christmas lights, remember to bring any unwanted or non-working light strands to UPC to donate to SCARCE for recycling.

United Protestant Church of Grayslake



PADS LAKE COUNTY
Helping the Homeless Find a Way



Saint Gilbert Catholic Church
Reaching Out With Servant Hearts

PADS Lake County PATHWAYS FAMILY CENTER:



Families continue to move into Pathways, and more help is needed as the numbers grow. Thanks to our five UPC PADS "Dinner for 60" Teams, family members are receiving delicious hot meals cooked in our UPC kitchen and delivered to Pathways every Thursday. Families are served cafeteria style and may eat in the cafeteria or take the food to eat in their rooms. Pictured serving families on our first Thursday, October 1, are volunteers Bob & Mary Zorc, Tina Busch (Rose Pech's niece who helped cook and serve the meal while visiting from downstate Illinois), and Tim Rossi. Rose helped the children and families as they were served and served them dessert when they'd finished the main meal.

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner on each night of the week and can sign up online. Contact Susan Squires at ssquires@padslakecounty.org to get the information for the signup and to learn about other volunteer opportunities. **Volunteers from Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Libertyville** have contacted our UPC PADS Team 2 to partner by preparing 40 sloppy joes meals to go with our 60 meals for November 11 and December 8. The Holy Cross volunteers will also serve the meals at Pathways Family Shelter on those two evenings.

UPC PADS Teams Need to help Support Pathways Family Shelter: *An individual or group is still needed to provide dessert for 60 on the second Thursday of each month.
Contact Rose Pech to **schedule a date for fall or winter** if you'd like to volunteer **to help prepare the meal at UPC on one Thursday afternoon or more.** Some teams could use a new member, substitutes may be needed at times, and volunteers will be needed for various **Thursdays during the months from May through September 2027** when some volunteers will have other obligations. If you'd like to help regularly on either the 2nd or 4th Thursday of the month, people who are volunteering twice a month wouldn't have to help as often. You can volunteer regularly, occasionally, or just once to see if it's something you'd enjoy doing. If you're interested in doing this or would like more information of other ways to volunteer with "Dinner for 60," please contact Rose Pech rose4nonna@hotmail.com or pads_at_upc@hotmail.com; text or call 847-682-2837. Give your name and contact information (name, home address, email address, and phone number).

Our UPC PADS "Dinner for 60" current wish list for meal items, supplies, and other needs will be updated regularly as more information and donations are received**:** Egg noodles, angel hair pasta, penne pasta, dinner rolls, rice, bottles of gravy for Swedish meatballs, marinara sauce, salad dressings, vegetable dip, potato chips, large cans of green beans, corn, baked beans, and other vegetables. **Donations of Walmart shopper gift cards and money for buying food and supplies are, and will continue to be, an ongoing need.** Please pray for God to continue providing what is needed for UPC PADS "Dinner for 60," PADS Lake County programs, and other PADS partners to provide the resources that meet the needs of families at Pathways.

PADS Lake County will be hosting a **Holiday Party in December. Watch for** details in the Tuesday Newsday **for the date and how to volunteer** when plans are finalized. PADS continues to need **sack lunches at both** the **Day Resource Center** at 1800 Grand Avenue, Waukegan, IL, **and** at **Pathways Family Shelter** at 3633 North Lewis Avenue, Waukegan, IL.

NOVEMBER



WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

DECEMBER



HAPPY THANKSGIVING & MERRY CHRISTMAS!

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT WCF?

Contact Sue Schmidt, Catherine Vick, Ruth Gheysen, Rose Pech, or call the church office at 847-223-8131 for more info! See the church bulletin, Tuesday Newsday, and UNIFIER for updates.

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 a.m.** Sundays vary monthly based on UPC events. Members were blessed with devotions presented by Bobbie Weichman at their October meeting which was held in the Parlor following the members serving treats for Sacred Grounds. Members donated money to purchase a gift for a Veteran whose name will be chosen from the Veterans' Giving Tree. November's meeting has been moved to **November 29 in Room 103** so that members can volunteer to help with Hanging of the Greens on Sunday, November 22. **December's meeting will be on Sunday, December 13** when members will plan for the coming year. Contact Catherine Vick for more info.

Circle 4/5 meets on the **first Wednesday** of the month **at 11:30 a.m. at Culver's** in Grayslake. Join us for friendly conversation and good food. The next lunch meeting will be **Wednesday, December 2**. Contact Sue Schmidt.

Circle 9 meets at **5:30 p.m.** on the **2nd Tuesday** of each month **at Mrs. V's on Rollins Road in Round Lake Beach.** Join us for dinner and interesting conversation. 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, December 8.**

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., Nov. 29 Sun., Dec. 13	11:30 AM	UPC Room 103	Catherine Vick
4/5	Wed., Dec. 2	11:30 AM	Culver's in Grayslake	Sue Schmidt
9	Tues., Dec. 8	5:30 PM	Mrs. V's in Round Lake Beach	Ruth Gheysen
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	Jasmine Walker

November Birthdays

11/7 Sofia Henne
11/8 Doreen Churchill
11/9 Candi Becker
11/14 James Bethmann
11/17 Cheyenne Grubbs
11/18 Jerry Badgerow
11/18 Lynn Hallen
11/19 Barbara Weichman
11/22 Sue Schmidt
11/25 Craig Fischel



December Birthdays

12/3 Emma Henne
12/4 Katie Gheysen
12/5 Reese Divis
12/9 Charlie Grubbs
12/9 Jackson Grubbs
12/9 Nancy Johannsen
12/13 Kenneth Madden
12/15 Suzanne Harvey
12/20 Jackie Ianson
12/26 Darlene George Craig
12/31 John Porteous

November Anniversaries

11/6 Dick & Linda Dzwonkiewicz
11/12 Amoon & Sehar Alam
11/24 Gregg & Jill Helm

December Anniversaries

12/13 Felix & Shelly Kutsin
12/14 Aimee Divis & Dennis Wong
12/16 Richard & Nancy Johannsen

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

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

Tyler, Brittany, Danielle, & Joanna: give praise for everyone's prayers and support with special thanks to the people who registered for **ILAD's Annual Virtual Fundraising Event: Unfolding Stories** which was held on Sunday, November 8. As we write this, the event has not yet taken place. Those who register each year hear directly from some of the amazing people ILAD has met. They tell their stories in their own words - stories that are heartbreaking and hopeful and are still UNFOLDING. We hope names of UPC members and other friends will be called with their replying and winning $1,000 for our farm. In 2025, two friends from UPC did just that! Watch for more info next year and possibly a "Watch Party" at UPC during out 2027 Event. Our praises are also for Tyler having several **opportunities to talk with Shovel about Jesus**, the successful trip to HOPE **to get ALL of our trunks**, Peter's getting our **brakes fixed** so we have **two vehicles**, Shovel's offering for us to **store a lot of our belongings at his house** which will **eliminate a double move** since they will end up needing to be there. Our prayer requests are for the **new rental house to be completed within a 2-month** time frame following our emotional roller coaster with housing changes bringing new choices and dates, for **good sleep** without worrying, for God's provision of **a Nanny for Fall 2027**, favor as Tyler **plans electric/plumbing set up** of new house and **restarts brick crew** to make specialty bricks. We are grateful for all the prayers and financial support we receive! Donations may be made by giving to the UPC fund or online at this link http://www.ilad.ngo/D2002.

Relatives & Friends: Bruce Baird, Mark Becker, Kathy Behm, Betty Bournes, Mary Brase, 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, Melissa Norton, Sami Paris, Gary Sadlack, Eric Schmidt & family, Chris Shields, Ray Sisco, Stephan, Diane Stanley, Bri Walters, Sue (PADS friend), Wendy, and Michelle.



Join us for the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service on Tuesday, November 24 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church at Lake Street and Park Avenue in Grayslake. Our handbell sextet will be playing during the prelude of the service. Please bring a food item or more to the service to donate to a local food pantry, and join our Grayslake community in celebrating the season of Thanksgiving.

UPC STAFF:

SENIOR PASTOR	Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD
MUSIC DIRECTOR/ORGANIST	Kurt Mockenhaupt
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Sue Schmidt
TREASURER	Lynn Hallen
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Cinda Bartz & Ruth Gheysen

To Access UPC's Calendar On-Line

http://www.mychurchevents.com
/calendar/calendar.aspx?ci=L6F0H2O9G1F0O9L6I3

CONTACT US

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Email: upc@upcgl.org

Pastor: Rev. Jason Okrzynski
seniorpastor@upcgl.org

Church Office Hours:
Tuesdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Thursdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Grounded | Empowered | Transformed

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