

The Unifier



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October 2023

“That day about three thousand took him at his word, were baptized and were signed up. They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers. Everyone around was in awe — all those wonders and signs done through the apostles! And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common. They sold whatever they owned and pooled their resources so that each person’s need was met. They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God. People in general liked what they saw. Every day their number grew as God added those who were saved.” - Acts 2:41-47 (The Message)

Grace to You and Peace,

By now you have no doubt received your stewardship letter. I am praying that it is received in a spirit of hope and gratitude. Our leadership has a large task before them in working to present a balanced budget. It is my hope that we will see significant growth among our members. I am hopeful in large part due to the inspiring ministry of Carol Roselli-Rasmussen and the reinvigorated stewardship team.

As we pray and discern our way through this season, I do not want anyone to lose track or the right track and spirit. Our biggest area of growth is increasing the percentage of members who pledge. Last year, less than a third of our members pledged. However, the other side of that statistic is that of those who did pledge, they gave generously! What is more, as Carol will outline in her article this month, the generosity of volunteer hours, those who gave time and talents, is remarkably generous!

All of this is to say, that this is a congregation worth being part of. UPC is a church with a DNA of healthy piety, and Christ-centered hearts. There is reason for hope, and for renewed commitment and generosity!

Please be encouraged to consider doubling and tripling down on your overall commitment in the coming year. What I mean by overall is your time, talents, and treasures. We want to see everyone in our congregation on a regular basis. We want to gather for events like Cider Sunday, Fall Fest, and the Tree Lighting in order to share the news of our God of Grace, Love, Peace and Hope!

I want to share a little piece of personal stretching as a part of this season and effort. It is little, but I think it counts. I have always and only shied away from social media and online content creation as a part of my ministry. I don’t like social media. I feel a little scared of the time commitment. Ultimately, I have a feeling that pastors who are prolific on social media are all about themselves and their brands, and I don’t want to be that pastor. But the truth is: not only is the social medium not going away, it is likely only gaining in prominence. So, I am committing to posting daily posts that I hope will build up UPC and contribute to sowing peace in the digital world. I know it’s a little thing, but it feels significant to me.

It is my prayer that every member of UPC will make a serious recommitment to your church. It is my hope that we can recommit to being a Christian presence here in the heart of Grayslake. Whatever your life is like right now, please consider making real changes to prioritize UPC and our communal calling to be the Body of Christ in this place.

In Christ,

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Dear Church Family,

I want to thank you all for our wonderful beginning to a new Sunday School year. It is always wonderful to see everyone again and to take time each week to explore God's Word. If you are interested in joining our educational opportunities, our Children's and Adult Education meet at 9:00 am Sunday mornings, and our Adult class also meets on Tuesday nights on Zoom for those unable to attend Sunday mornings.

October is here, and with it comes some of our annual activities. First, Fall Fest is October 28th from Noon to 3 pm. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to be out and to interact with our community. We will be offering the usual popcorn, coffee, lemonade, pumpkin decorating, and, weather permitting, our bounce house. This year, we are starting later so that we can be open longer after the Chamber of Commerce's downtown trick-or-treating. We are also planning on offering a Ga-Ga ball tournament organized and hosted by our youth. So, I encourage you to invite people and families you might now to come and enjoy our front lawn and activities.

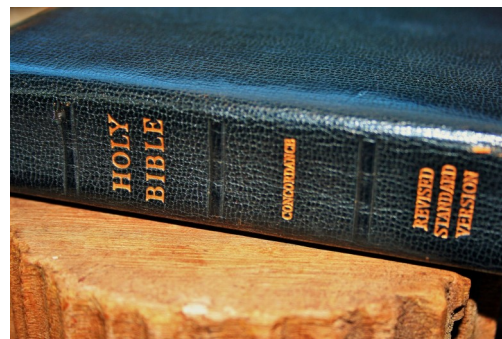
Our Second main activity this month is giving Bibles to our 4th graders. This is one of UPC's four major milestones in the life and spiritual development of the children in our church. It is powerful to put God's Word into the hands of people. Our prayers and hopes are that by placing His word into the hands of our 4th graders, they will take the opportunity to read and to study God's Word. It is then our goal to train them to read Scripture well, so that they can begin to see God for who He is and to see that God has a plan for their lives.

On the family front, the fall soccer season began in the past few weeks. Both kids are enjoying their time playing. This past weekend, William's team played a very competitive game. There was a lot of running and sliding on the ground. For some reason, this year he has really taken to the idea of sliding across the ground to try and stop the ball from going in the goal. Which I guess is an improvement over last year's practice of trying to slide kick the ball into the net every time he tried to score a goal. Either way, it is fun to watch both kids playing soccer.

Thank you for reading, and I hope that you will take the time to join us this October for Fall Fest and to celebrate our 4th Graders as they continue in their faith journey. As always, if you have any questions or need any resources feel free to reach out. I want to be a resource for you as you seek to grow in your faith.

Blessings,

Ryan Aubrey
Director of Christian Education



STEWARDSHIP NEWS



Dear Members and Friends,

Risk-Taking Mission and Service is a primary focus of the United Protestant Church. It is estimated that in 2023 our volunteers in service to the church and the mission fields have donated 10,000 hours of work on behalf of Jesus Christ! For a church of our size, that number is simply astounding! Hands on mission and service changes the lives of both the givers and receivers as "God strengthens the body of Christ through mission and service" (R. Schnase). Our volunteers, after spending time in worship and Bible study learning that Scripture inevitably links the love of God to love of our neighbors, have learned that serving Christ in this world takes a personal sacrifice of time, talent and labor.

In-house service at the UPC, among many activities, may consist of teaching Sunday School, serving on a committee, pulling weeds in a garden bed, driving someone to a doctor's appointment, washing windows, writing a cheerful note to a shut-in, being a greeter or usher during a worship service, singing in a choir, being a Nursery assistant, chaperoning a youth event, and participating in intercessory prayer. It is a prayer of the Stewardship and Mission Committees that all members donate at least one hour of their time each week in service to the Lord.

Christian mission takes many forms at the UPC. Our Mission Committee reaches out to our community, our country and the world as they focus on changing lives for Christ through missions including: Soles For Jesus, Feed My Starving Children, INK 180, gleaning, Northern Illinois Food Bank, recycling projects, Operation Christmas Child, the Haven, PADS, and adult mission trips. Will you take the time to learn about the various missions the UPC supports and back at least one with your time and/or treasure?

"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40).

Trusting Our God Who Provides,

Carol Roselli-Rasmussen
Stewardship Chairwoman



STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONIAL

Presented by Jerry Wessale on September 17th

When I was asked to give a testimonial to UPC, I had little hesitation and I soon consented. However, a couple of days later, I thought to myself “Oh my God, what have I done?” I felt like that man portrayed in the famous painting by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch, entitled “The Scream”. It is a semi-abstract image of a man who appears to be in a state of utter fear and despair. That’s a bit of an exaggeration, but I quickly overcame my trepidation.

My testimonial is a little different than those presented before. I became a member of UPC on March 24, 2019. In relative terms, I am a newbie. There is no doubt in my mind that being a part of this congregation has served as a super recharge, a realignment of my Christian faith and of my feelings towards my fellow man. This church – truly a church family -- demonstrates faith through action, a real trust in God, the power of prayer, compassion for our fellow man, extraordinary generosity, the expressing of gratitude, and the necessity of communal worship and fellowship. It makes lemonade out of lemons. I continue to be amazed by the loyalty and dedication shown by many of its long-time members. But before I expand on how the ministry of this church has impacted my faith, I need to explain some aspects of my faith journey, which at times has been a rocky one.

I am a true Midwestern boy. My mother’s family was from Iowa (and Canada), and all of my father’s European ancestors settled in or around a small town southwest of Minneapolis called Waconia. I have discovered that their denominational affiliations included Lutheran, German Baptist, Moravian, and Roman Catholic. I was born and raised in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and baptized and confirmed as a Presbyterian. My family were members of Westminster Presbyterian church.

First and foremost, I am a Christian and a husband. But I also consider myself a scientist. I am a very curious person. I believe that if one stops learning, you stop living. My training and my entire working career has been focused on biomedical research. It has always been very rewarding but challenging. As a scientist I was trained to think analytically and critically. Evidence-based reasoning was and is essential. Consequently, for years, I succumbed to an issue many scientists feel a need to resolve: the apparent conflict or dichotomy between religion (Christianity in particular) and science. After college, I stopped attending church services except for occasional attendance with my grandparents or a friend. Faith drift took over, or more like faith drought; the reservoir was drying up. I felt that I didn’t need communal worship. There was even a time period where I questioned the divinity of Christ and the existence of God. However, I just barely remained grounded thanks to my relationships with three notable people. In retrospect, I now realize how incredibly blessed I have been to have had these people in my life.

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STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONIAL (continued)

First, there was my paternal grandfather, Grampa George Wessale, a deacon and an elder at Westminster for many years. He and I had a very special relationship. He was an electrical engineer educated at the University of Minnesota. I spent many summers fishing with him at their cottage in the northern part of the state. We had many serious discussions out there on Birch Lake. Moreover, he was persistent in encouraging me to attend graduate school.

And so I did. I ended up spending nearly 13 years at Purdue University, first as a graduate student, during which I received masters and Ph.D. degrees in pharmacology and physiology. That was followed by a post-doctoral fellowship, followed by an appointment on the research faculty. For the latter half of that period, my mentor and boss was a remarkable man, Leslie Geddes. He was the Showalter Distinguished Professor of Biomedical Engineering and the director of the Hillenbrand Biomedical Engineering Center, an interdisciplinary medical research group made up of biologists, physician/researchers, and engineers, and administered through the Schools of Engineering. It was one of the first centers to research development of an automatic, fully implantable, cardiac defibrillator as well as a portable external defibrillator usable in public settings. I was privileged to participate in some of that research. Geddes himself was a brilliant and innovative electrical engineer and physiologist. But most importantly, he was kind, very generous with his time and with sharing credit, an excellent listener, certainly not arrogant (given that he had every reason to be), humble (for a scientist, that is), and oh so charming. He ingrained in me that a commitment made is a commitment kept. He took in many students, engineers and biologists, under his wing, and I was fortunate to be one of those. I was never quite certain about his religious affiliations; he rarely spoke of that. Nevertheless, his actions suggested a belief in what Francis Collins has referred to as “moral” law. Despite my ongoing faith drift, and because of the influence of Leslie Geddes and my grandfather, I learned how to treat people with respect, patience, and compassion. Coincidences? I don’t think so.

But above all else, the most important outcome from my time at West Lafayette, Indiana, was my meeting a lovely woman, who became my wife of over 38 years and still going. I like to say that we may not have it all together, but together we have it all. Our life together a coincidence? Absolutely not.

As I transitioned from full-time work into retirement, which by the way, was not an easy process for me, I had more time to consider as to how to reconcile my perceived contradictions between religion and science. I came to the realization that my waning faith was based more on ignorance than on knowledge. So I read several books on the subject, including Mere Christianity, by C.S. Lewis, and The Language of God, by Francis Collins. I always wanted to read the entire Bible on my own, but never “had the time,” or so I thought. I now had the time. No excuses, so I took up the task. I was forewarned by a good friend and former colleague to NOT follow the traditional, published order of Scriptures. “You’ll likely get bogged down by either Leviticus or Numbers, and quit. Start with the New Testament.” So I did just that over a span of about 9 months. It was a transforming experience. I was reacquainted with our Helper/

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STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONIAL (continued)

Counselor, that is to say, the Holy Spirit. I relearned that all men are God's children. Perhaps most importantly, the Gospels and Pauline Epistles convinced me that communal worship and fellowship was essential for maintaining a loving and productive relationship with God. The Book of James became one of my favorites; I like to think of it as "Jim's practical guide to everyday Christian living."

After we moved to Grayslake in February of 1994, we were aware of UPC and did attend some services, but only sporadically. (By the way, don't ever try moving during the first week of February!). I realized that I needed to become a part of a church congregation, and subsequently I made a commitment to myself (not a bargain with God) that when I do join a church, I would become an active member.

In the movie version of Wizard of Oz, there is a scene where the heroine Dorothy is preparing to leave the Land of Oz and return to Kansas. The scarecrow asks her "What have you learned, Dorothy?" Part of her reply is "If I ever go looking for my heart's desire again, I won't look any further than my own back yard." Low and behold, UPC was very nearly in my own back yard. So, for this and far more important reasons, I became a member. Coincidence? Absolutely not.

Soon thereafter, I was approached to participate in a number of different activities. I became vice-chair of the Building and Operations Commission, working alongside the incredible Rick Burg, as well as a member of the Operations Committee. I joined the Home Team, helping to provide transportation for members to/from medical appointments and church services, and am now its "Chief", as my dear friend and team colleague, Kim Lenzen, likes to call me. Since the fall of 2019, I have volunteered in UPC's PADS program for the Lake County homeless (PADS being an acronym for Providing Advocacy, Dignity, and Shelter), a totally eye-opening, mind-expanding, compassion-elevating experience. Then there is Feed My Starving Children. I joined the Grace Notes, UPC's hand bell choir. I am also serving on the Adult Education committee. Ryan and Emily Aubrey have led a remarkable series of adult study groups; subjects have included the books of Nehemiah and James, and the character of God. We have just begun a study about the book of Hebrews. I attend a men's group that meets weekly. And lastly, as another way to serve the broader community, since 2020 I have been an unpaid volunteer tax-preparer for the AARP Tax Aide program, which provides free tax preparation for seniors and low-income families. I cannot put into words the satisfaction I receive from participating in these activities. Thank you UPC. You have changed my life for the better.

In closing, I strive to be an instrument of giving and blessings to other people, as I was blessed in so many ways by special people throughout my life – and am blessed by being a part this loving UPC congregation – all because of God's amazing grace and love for me. Through the remarkable fellowship and ministries of UPC, I am becoming "grounded in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, transformed by God."



OCTOBER 2023

UPC CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	2 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	3 9:00am Park District Pre-school (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 All Dens Meeting (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	4 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Board of Review (101) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft)	5 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:00pm Staff Parish (MR) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	6	7
8 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	9 7:00pm Children's Ministry Committee (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	10 9:00am Park District Pre-school (202) 5:30pm Circle 9 (Hillside Restaurant) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 PLC (101)	11 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm PUSH (Parlor) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft)	12 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 7:00pm Budget & Finance (MR) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	13	14 1:00pm BUNCO (FH)
15 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service 11:30am Circle 2 (MR)	16 7:00pm Ad Council (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	17 9:00am Park District Pre-school (202) 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)	18 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft)	19 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	20	21 12:30pm Bridal Shower (Parlor)
22 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	23 7:00pm Membership & Outreach (FH) 7:00pm Mission Committee (Parlor) 7:00pm Worship Committee (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	24 9:00am Park District Pre-school (202) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	25 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Membership Cultivation Committee (MR) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft)	26 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	27	28 11:00am Fall Fest (front lawn)
29 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	30 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	31 9:00am Park District Pre-school (202) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	1 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 6:00pm Confirmation Class (Loft) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 Board of Review (101) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Youth Group (Loft)	2 9:00am Park District Preschool (202) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:00pm Staff Parish (MR) 7:30pm AA (106,105)	3	4



United Protestant Church's Annual

Fall Fest

Saturday, October 28th

Noon-3pm

Bouncy House

(weather permitting)

Lemonade

PUMPKIN DECORATING

Coffee

Trunk-r-Treat

Popcorn

GA-GA BALL PIT



**United
Protestant
Church**
of Grayslake

54 S. Whitney
(847)223-8131
upcgl.org

MISSIONS

UPC Joy Sharing for October

Most of us are at least somewhat familiar with Feed My Starving Children, as the organization has benefited from our Joy Sharing offerings in previous years, and many of us have volunteered there. But did you know that in June, FMSC packed meal number 4,000,000,000 — yes, that is 4 billion, since their founding in 1987! This feat was accomplished at the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Shakopee, Minnesota by inmates and staff at their MobilePack event.

Mark Crea, FMSC CEO stated “While 4 billion meals merits celebration, we also grieve the depth of need it represents. Supply shortages sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic and exacerbated by the Russo-Ukrainian war have sent world hunger soaring over the last couple years. **This is no time to get distracted — it is truly the greatest hunger crisis in our lifetime. We’ll keep going until all are fed.**”

Here at UPC, we have the opportunity to support the mission of Feed My Starving Children with October’s Joy Sharing offering. Please prayerfully consider what financial contribution you might make, and donate your time as a volunteer at one of the sessions. Contact Cinda Bartz at bartzc@sbcglobal.net. Thank you.

Feed My Starving Children

The next UPC packing session at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 3** from **7:00-8:45 p.m.** If you are interested in participating, please contact Cinda Bartz at bartzc@sbcglobal.net.

CROP Hunger Walk

The prolonged war in Ukraine, on top of the pandemic and other disasters is causing a global food crisis. The funds raised through the CROP Hunger Walk will feed the hungry through Church World Services. When you walk and/or donate funds, you will provide life-saving food along with seeds, tools and programs that will help families feed themselves in the future. Please join our team, UPC of Grayslake, for this year’s CROP Hunger Walk or sponsor one of our team members. The walk is planned on or around October 15 but will depend on the team. Sponsor sheets will be placed on the Mission table in the Narthex. If you have any questions, contact Linda Rambo at rambo.lindad@gmail.com.

Operation Christmas Child

For October, we continue to need toys to fill our shoeboxes with an emphasis on balls, dolls, and small stuffed animals.

UPC Shopper

Before you know it, Halloween will be upon us. Please consider using UPC shopper cards to purchase your Halloween needs like candy, costumes, pumpkins, or other decorations. As fall leaves begin to come down, admire the beauty and pick up shopper cards to purchase rakes and yard waste bags as well. We sell cards for most grocery stores as well as craft stores, Kohl's, and hardware stores. All proceeds from the shopper cards benefit Operation Christmas Child.

SAVE THESE DATES

- Sunday, October 1: World Communion and Cider Sunday
- Saturday, October 14: BUNCO hosted by WCF 1-3 PM
- Sunday, October 22: Consecration Sunday 10 AM
- Saturday, October 28: Fall Fest Noon-3 PM
- Sunday, October 29: Bibles presented to 4th grade students 10 AM
- Sunday, November 5: All Saints Sunday 10 AM
- Sunday, November 12: Holy Land Trip Interest Meeting 11:30 AM
- Saturday, November 18: Operation Christmas Child Packing Party 10 AM-Noon
- Sunday, November 19: Thanksgiving Potluck 11 AM
- Tuesday, November 21: Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service at UPC 7 PM
- Friday, November 24: Grayslake Christmas Tree Lighting 3-7 PM

LADIES BUNCO OCTOBER 14:

Ladies, mark your calendars now for another afternoon of BUNCO, scheduled for Saturday, October 14 from 1-3 PM in Fellowship Hall. Join us for fun, fellowship, food, and prizes! Never played before? It's an easy game to learn. If you know how to roll dice and count to 21, you're already an expert. For more information, contact Sue Schmidt at schmidt6134@comcast.net or 847-529-9326.





WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



OUR FALL SCHEDULE WITH CIRCLES & BUNCO FOR ALL WOMEN!

Our WCF members welcome all women to bring friends and join us for BUNCO at 1 PM on Saturday, October 14. Come for fun, fellowship, food, and prizes!

WCF CIRCLES: VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

We hope those of you who haven't yet visited one of our circles will do so either at an October meeting or at one of our other monthly meetings. (See the chart near the end of this article for details.) Watch the church bulletin, Tuesday Newsday emails, and the UNIFIER newsletters for more information.

Circle 2 meets at 11:30 AM in the Meeting Room one Sunday a month, except for the months of January and February, after visiting with others following worship. The next dates are October 15 and November 5. Contact Catherine Vick.

Circle 4/5 meets on the first Wednesday of the month, except for January, at 11:30 AM at Culver's in Grayslake. The next lunch meeting will be October 4. Contact Sue Schmidt.

Circle 9 meets most months year-round at 5:30 PM on the second Tuesday of each month at Hillside Restaurant on Rt. 83 in Grayslake. Occasionally, a meeting must be cancelled so please check with Ruth Gheysen or one of the Circle 9 members prior to going to Hillside. The next meeting is October 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.

See this chart to find out which day and time work for you!

Circle	Day/Date	Time	Place	Contact
2	Sun., Oct. 15	11:30 AM	UPC Meeting Room	Catherine Vick
4/5	Wed., Oct. 4	11:30 AM	Culver's in Grayslake	Sue Schmidt
9	Tues., Oct. 10	5:30 PM	Hillside Restaurant	Ruth Gheysen
10	TBD	TBD	TBD	Jasmine Walker

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: To contact the chairpersons, see the church directory or contact Rose Pech at rose4nonna@hotmail.com or 847-682-2837.

Blessings, Rose Pech



PADS EMERGENCY SHELTER SITES WILL NOT OPEN FOR 2023-2024:

The month of September brought information that many new changes are being made in some of the PADS Lake County programs, among these is that PADS clients will be housed in hotels for this emergency shelter site season.

We've welcomed the new Executive Director, Allen Swilley, who has sent site leaders emails introducing himself and explaining the changes, reasons for them, and "what's next." A copy of this email with current detailed information sent by Executive Director Swilley is included in this UNIFIER for your information as part of our PADS faith community. This email has already been shared with the UPC Administrative Council and Membership Committee and with active UPC PADS Site volunteers.

Director Swilley has scheduled a meeting with site leaders on Thursday, September 28 at 6 PM to discuss ways in which the churches and volunteers will be needed to continue providing services and necessary assistance to those experiencing homelessness in Lake County. Information received on September 28 will be shared at the October meetings of the Ad Council and Mission Committee and with the congregation in Tuesday Newsday emails and the November UNIFIER.

PADS MISSION AT UPC IN COOPERATION WITH ST. GILBERT CHURCH:

People experiencing homelessness in Lake County continue to need our help. Our site will continue to deliver needed items to the main office using the PADS funds we have available to purchase clothing, food, gift cards, and other necessities as we have in the past. Our PADS leaders from UPC, St. Gilbert, and others intend to continue working together in whatever ways we can to serve in this common ministry. We plan for St. Gilbert students to continue donating food items which will be delivered by our food coordinators from St. Gilbert to the main office for hotel guests. Our clothing coordinator and I will continue to communicate regularly with PADS staff to be kept abreast of the needs of clients which require our assistance and will purchase/procure and deliver these items as needed.

CONTACT FOR INFORMATION:

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding any of this or if you wish to be more involved in the ongoing discussions and plans for UPC PADS. Rose Pech: pads_at_upc@hotmail.com or 847-682-2837.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT! – THE UPC SITE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Email sent to PADS Lake County Emergency Shelter Site Leaders by PADS Lake County Executive Director Allen Swilley:

Dear Faith Community Partners,

It is with full humility and a deep appreciation for your dedicated support to PADS that I draft this email. My name is Allen, and I am the new Executive Director at PADS Lake County. As valued partners in the fight to end homelessness I wanted to introduce myself and follow-up on phone calls and emails sent by my colleague, Eric Foote. For fifty years (50) our Faith community has answered the call as the backbone of support for addressing shelter needs in Lake County. For fifty years your relentless compassion and selfless volunteerism has ensured that our clients have a warm and safe place to be, especially in the winter months. For fifty years you have met our clients where they were, served them warm meals, and leaned into their experience with an empathetic ear. It is with this understanding that I know how potentially challenging and perplexing it was to hear that we were not going to re-start our rotating church program this year, so please allow me to give a little context.

Capacity and Operations Challenges

- We are serving more families than ever before. Of the 200 clients we currently have in our hotel shelter half are children. As an agency, we have decided that no matter what our funding challenges are, we will not allow children to go unsheltered.
- Prior to COVID there was a slow drip of decline in church participation that was then exacerbated by COVID. Over the last 12 months we have lost six church shelter sites who tried their best to pull together volunteers and make space for the shelter season but were unable to do so. We recognize this as a growing trend as our volunteer population ages and volunteer motivation shifts to identifying safer engagement opportunities due to COVID.
- While PADS undergoes a process of adjusting our internal systems and practices to serve more clients at our day site and funnel them into our hotel shelter, we weighed the operational and logistical challenge of supporting our church sites vs. expanding hotel sites where we can centralize operations and have better access to our clients to engage them in ongoing case management for the purpose of ending their homelessness.

What Happens Next?

- We have developed a new intake and assessment system that will allow us to serve more clients and assess their needs immediately as opposed to scheduling appointments for them to return later, allowing us to prioritize our clients' needs. Additionally, beginning the middle of October, we will have hours at our Day Resource Center that extend into the night hours (9pm) to accommodate any police drop-offs of individuals presenting with literal homelessness.
- We calculated the average nightly capacity of our church shelters to be approximately 50 beds. Because of recent and unexpected resources from the state, we can offer 40 additional rooms/80 additional beds, exceeding our church capacity by 30 beds. While we have added extra capacity, just like church shelter, we anticipate delicately managing this capacity and potentially not being able to meet everyone's shelter needs, but we recognize that this approach drastically reduces the need for an unpredictable lottery system.
- Our faith community is the life blood of our work, and we cannot effectively serve our clients without you. We intend to offer multiple volunteer opportunities that we believe will enhance our service delivery. These opportunities include daily warm meal deliveries to our hotel shelters, weekly food bags drop-offs to ensure our families do not go hungry in the interim, volunteer hours at our day site, and more. I would like to invite everyone to a virtual check-in meeting on **Thursday, September 28th, from 6pm to 7pm**. During this time, we will answer any questions you all may have to the best of our ability. Invitation to follow.

We at PADS immensely appreciate our partnership with our Faith community. Thank you for your continued and dedicated response to the call to serve our neighbors in need as we do all we can to cultivate an ecosystem of resources, systems, and opportunities for our clients to thrive in.

In Community Spirit,

Allen Swilley, MBA, MSC
Executive Director, PADS Lake County

VOLUNTEERS ARE NOW NEEDED TO WRITE MESSAGES on 10 or more Christmas cards to be sent to prisoners and jail inmates in Illinois by Companions Journeying Together (CJT). The cards with messages must be returned to UPC by October 23. Packets of 10 cards are available at the end of the Mission Table or from Rose Pech 847-682-2837. October 25 is our mailing deadline.

Companions Journeying Together sends Birthday, Mother's Day, Thinking of You and Christmas cards to prisoners and to some county jail inmates in Illinois.

This ministry, which Pat Curnow introduced to WCF many years ago, **has been adopted as a UPC churchwide mission.** Each card must be inside a plain envelope that is NOT sealed. You can donate blank cards or write notes in the provided Christmas cards. The cards are used in one of two ways:

- Signed cards are given to the inmates to encourage and cheer them--signed with first name only, including words of encouragement and UPC's name.
- Blank cards, unsigned cards or stationery are given to the inmates so that they can stay in touch with their families and/or friends.

Messages should be friendly, NOT "preachy." Sample messages to use as ideas are at the lower part of this page and can be signed using your first name only or by adding United Protestant Church.

- Crayons or markers cannot be used.
- Only PLAIN cards are allowed.
- Musical cards; cards that have multiple layers; and cards with glitter, tape, glued items, stickers, other substances or added decorations are NOT allowed.
- Each card must be inside a plain envelope that is NOT sealed.

Sample messages for writing Christmas cards to prison/jail inmates:

- Warmest thoughts are with you at this very special time of the year.
- The spirit of Christmas starts in the heart. We hope yours is filled with tinsel and bells, wherever the season might find you.
- It has to be hard to be away from your family and friends at this time of year. I want you to know you're in my thoughts.
- Thinking of you and wishing you nothing but goodness and joy in 2024.
- Sending Christmas wishes and peace for the New Year as I hold you in prayer.
- Holding you in my thoughts during the Christmas Season and wishing all good things for you in 2024.
- May the Spirit of Christmas be with you now and throughout the coming year.
- Wishing you the blessings of Christmas—Love, Joy, Peace, and Hope—now and throughout the year.



October Birthdays

10/1 Kevin Meyer
10/1 Dylan Okrzynski
10/1 Carol Roselli-Rasmussen
10/2 Bill Churchill
10/5 Dennis Craig
10/5 Judy Ziegler
10/8 Sam Cooper
10/9 James Taylor
10/12 Greyson Madden
10/16 Sarah Grubbs
10/16 Rose Pech
10/17 Chuck Trowitch
10/18 Ken Craig
10/20 Laurie Bethmann
10/20 Cynthia Floral
10/20 Dian Weinkauf
10/22 Jody Gerzel
10/22 Blake Kutsin
10/26 Abigail Floral
10/26 Grace Floral
10/27 Bonnie Bjerning
10/28 Megan Berkey
10/30 Ava Henne
10/31 Tracy Celeslie
10/31 Mark Rasmussen

**Happy
Birthday!**



October Anniversaries

10/9 Lexie & Spencer Craig
10/9 Sue & Dave Schmidt
10/11 Candi & Ted Becker
10/16 Ruth & Todd Gheysen



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

Members: Bill Churchill, Marie Frandsen, Susan Green, Joan Hendricks, David Holliman, Joanne Lawrence, Marjorie Miller, John Porteous, Ann Thompson, Pat Wackerlin, Dan Watkins, Bobbie Weichman, and Dian Weinkauf.

Tyler, Brittany & Danielle, & Joanna: Prayers for a nanny and 5 strategic donors to give \$100 per month for a total of \$500. Farm workers are still needed, and all of this help would make their return to West Africa safer and more productive. Continued prayers for Tyler's dad as he has been diagnosed with liver cancer and is in need of a liver transplant. Donors with blood type O or A who live within a day's drive of Chicago are needed. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a donor, please contact brittanyd@ongoingchange.org for more information.

Relatives & Friends: Allen Anglin, Joann Baraksa, Kathy Behm, Joe Boccaleoni, Kathy Weichman Bradley, Megan Brown, Lorine Cooper, Patricia Davis, Judy Hendrickson, Mary Mason, Gloria Meier, Pat Mielke, Tommy Nellessen, Sohail Rana, Gary Sadlack, Leslie Stahl, Stephan, Erik & Kacie Stanley, their son & Erik's mother, Diane; and Kevin Stelton & family.

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).

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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Church Office Hours:
Tuesday & Thursday
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Grounded | Empowered | Transformed

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