

The Unifier



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

October 2025

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

The next three weeks mark our annual stewardship drive. It has already been said (by yours truly no less) that at its most basic level, stewardship is how we as a church covenant to pay our bills and create a budget for the next year. This is simple enough. Of course, things are rarely that simple.

Our relationship to our money and our church involves our personal histories and a long list of values, priorities, and judgment all come into our individual processing of what we are able to willingly pledge to our congregation. I thought it might be helpful to share some wider theological thoughts on the wider concept of stewardship as we enter into this month of stewardship.

The idea of stewardship is a foundational concept to the vision revealed in The Holy Bible. The first chapter of Genesis opens with a long poetic discourse on the creation of the cosmos and the ordering of the world. The principle word our sacred scriptures speak to us is that God gave us everything that exists; everything that we depend upon for our existence.

You only need to make it to the second chapter of Genesis to encounter an even more complicated story about stewardship. In Genesis 2:15, it says that God puts Adam in the Garden to nurture and protect it. The assignment God gives Adam here is the very definition of stewardship; it is being entrusted with something with the expectation that you will care for it and make the best and most appropriate use of it.

It is not overkill to interpret the entirety of the rest of scripture through this lens. In creating, God has given a good gift. God gives all gifts with generosity, joy, and the best of intentions. God does this out of grace alone. Nonetheless, the only faithful response to all we have and all we are is to seek to receive and use them in ways that honor God. The Bible is clear and repetitious that this means using our time, talents, and treasure in ways that reflect the intentions and desires of God as revealed throughout the sacred scriptures.

As it turns out, stewardship is the beating heart of the Biblical witness.

It does not end there, however. United Protestant Church was a gift established in this place by the Holy Spirit. We, the members of this church, are the contemporary stewards of UPC's past, present, and future. I am confident that the vast majority of current members give very generously and faithfully from year to year. This is good news. I am equally confident that our committees have sought nothing but to be good and faithful stewards of this church and her future as they prepare the budget proposal for this coming year. I can also promise that when the pledges are in, and a final budget is crafted, our members and committees will act as good and faithful stewards of the finances our members pledge for the coming year.

May we pray and ponder in these coming weeks for God's care and guidance as we work together to steward the many gifts we have as individuals and as a united congregation.

In Christ,

Rev. Jason Okrzynski, PhD
Senior Pastor

News from the Director of Music

Sunday, November 9, promises to be an exciting morning of music. A friend of mine from high school (we were in concert band and orchestra) will be with us that morning. She will be playing a movement from Bach's *Flute Sonata in Eb* for the prelude (with yours truly accompanying her on digital harpsichord). She will also join the choir on their anthem. Additionally, our bell sextet will ring a 12-bell arrangement of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* for the offertory. We hope to see you in church that day.



The Agape Ringers, the semi-professional, auditioned handbell ensemble that Kurt rings with, will present their annual holiday concert, *Sounds of the Season*, on Saturday, December 13, at 4:00 p.m. at Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church in Elmhurst. Our guest artist this year is Bird x Butterfly. Tickets are \$22.00 until October 31; they go up to \$27.00 after that (hint: if you think you might attend, purchase early to save some money!). There is a poster about this event on the stairway from the parking lot's bulletin board...or ask Kurt. For more info about The Agape Ringers (and this event), please visit www.AgapeRingers.org.

Grayslake Car Show 2025

On September 6, UPC participated in the Grayslake Car Show by selling home-baked muffins, popcorn, and beverages to car show enthusiasts. We also entered our parade car which is a replica 1901 Oldsmobile. We won third place in the 1929 and older division and profited \$407 in sales. Thank you to Rick Burg for organizing our participation in this event, and for everyone who baked muffins, donated popcorn, lemonade, coffee, and all the extra items, and worked at this event. We plan to do this again next year so come join us.





As members of the Stewardship Committee, it is our privilege to announce this year's Stewardship Campaign in support of our 2026 operating budget.

I Peter 4:10 says: "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace."

We are thankful for everyone who has used a gift you have received in service to others through United Protestant Church this past year. In this past year we have celebrated our 75th anniversary as a congregation. We have upgraded our audio visual equipment and online worship ministry. We have gained the contributions and talent of a new Music Director. We have spent countless hours in volunteer hours, well over 6,400. We have gathered for education, prayer, worship, and fellowship. We have given witness to our presence in Grayslake through Chamber of Commerce membership and community events.

As we look toward 2026, we want to celebrate 2025 and thank everyone who made and is completing a pledge for 2025's operating budget. In 2025, we had 49 pledges made to support our budget. Thank you for your generosity.

Our operating budget allows us to compensate our staff, care for our building, offer Christian formation for our children, youth, and adults, extend Christian witness and hospitality to those in Grayslake and beyond, and give joyfully in support of those missional organizations we support as a church.

Our operating budget is built on a foundation of faithful pledges from you, our members and friends. A pledge for the coming year helps us plan our budget accordingly, forecast our expenditures, and plan for staffing, programs, and support of our missions.

Our pledge income goal for 2026 is \$296,559 which represents a 12% increase over 2025. With that increase, we can faithfully care for our staff and building, continue Christian education, evangelism, and mission initiatives, and this increase would allow us to add a Children, Youth & Family Ministry staff member.

As a reminder, we approved our 2025 budget of \$264,020 with a projected deficit of \$-48,000. Through careful spending and your generosity, this has been greatly reduced to \$18,000 as of the end of August.

Stewardship Materials are arriving in your mailboxes and are available in the parlor. Sue Schmidt, Stephanie Perdew, Linda Rambo, and Pastor Jason, members of the Stewardship Committee are glad to answer questions. We hope that you will prayerfully consider your pledge for 2026 as we seek to continue as faithful stewards of God's grace at United Protestant Church. **Consecration Sunday is October 19.**



OCTOBER 2025

United Protestant Church CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9:00am Grayslake Clergy Meeting at UPC (Parlor) 11:30am Circle 4/5 (Culver's) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	2 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	3	4
5 World Communion Sunday 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	6 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	7 2:00pm Budget & Finance (MR) 6:00pm Staff Parish (MR) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	8 7:00pm PUSH (Parlor) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	9 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	10	11
12 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Circle 2 (Sacred Grounds/Parlor) 1:00pm CROP Walk (Antioch)	13 7:00pm Children's Ministry (MR) 7:30pm AA (106, 105) 8:00pm Christian Ed. Commission (MR)	14 5:30pm Circle 9 (Mrs. V's) 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Troop 451 PLC (101)	15 6:30pm North Star District Commissioner Meeting (MR) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	16 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	17 TBD—Pretzel Fund-raiser Pickup (FH)	18 2:00pm Troop 451 Spaghetti Dinner Setup (FH/Kitchen) 5:30-7:30pm Troop 451 Spaghetti Dinner (FH/Kitchen)
19 Consecration Sunday 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service	20 7:00pm Ad Council (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	21 6:30pm Governance Task Force (Parlor) 6:30pm Pack 451 Pack Meeting (FH) 7:00pm Troop 451 Committee Meeting (101) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105) 7:00pm Nami Family Support Group (MR)	22 1:30pm Stewardship Committee (MR) 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	23 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	24	25 11:00am-1:30pm Fall Fest (Front Lawn; weather permitting)
26 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship Service 11:30am Governance Task Force Informational Meeting to Committees & Commissions	27 6:30pm Worship Committee (MR) 7:00pm Mission Committee (103) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	28 6:30pm Pack 451 Den Meetings (FH) 7:00pm AA Ladies (106, 105)	29 7:00pm Alanon (106, 105)	30 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Grace Notes (Choir Room) 7:00pm Troop 451 Meeting (FH) 7:30pm AA (106, 105)	31	

UPC FALL FEST – OCTOBER 25



Kids and Adults — Join us for **Fall Fest** on Saturday, October 25 from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the UPC front lawn (weather permitting). We will set up our bouncy house, hand out candy, and serve popcorn and lemonade. Coffee will also be available for the adults. This event is held in conjunction with Grayslake's downtown trick-or-treating event. Wear your Halloween costumes and come join the fun.



Adults — we can use your help in setting up, serving food and beverages, and cleaning up. If you are interested and available, please contact Sue Schmidt at churchsec@upcgl.org or sign up on the sheet located in the parlor.



Boy Scout Troop 451 invites you to attend their Spaghetti Dinner and Bake Sale fundraiser on Saturday, October 18 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at UPC in Fellowship Hall. Tickets will be available for sale at the door. General admission is \$10 per person, \$5 for seniors and children (4-10 years old), and free for children under 4. If anyone is interested in donating a baked item for their bake sale, please contact Sue Schmidt at churchsec@upcgl.org.

UPC Financial Update as of 8/31/25:

YTD Income: \$149,964.55
YTD Expenses: \$168,847.01
YTD Deficit: **\$-18,882.46**

\$75K for 75 Campaign Update as of 9/30/25:

\$ 7,805.00	Cash received to be matched
407.21	Fundraisers
<u>4,100.00</u>	Pledges received to be matched
\$12,312.21	
41.0%	Completed towards \$30,000 goal
\$30,000.00	Committed to be matched

It's CROP Hunger Walk time again! Our UPC team will be walking in 1-2 mile Northern Lake County Churches CROP Hunger Walk in Antioch at 1:00 p.m. on **October 12**. Please join our team or sponsor one of our walkers online at [2025 CROP Hunger Walk - United Protestant Church of Grayslake](#). We also have sponsor sheets on the Mission Table in the Narthex.



CROP Hunger walks were created to support the global mission of Church World Services, a faith-based organization transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement, and disaster. Remember that 25% of the funds that are raised will be donated to PADS this year. Non-perishable food is also being collected. Please contact Cinda Bartz, bartzc@sbcglobal.net, with any questions. Thank you for your continuing support!



Don't forget to check out the Stewardship Wish List Tree by the elevator. Special requests are posted on Post-it notes. If you are able to donate any requested items, please bring them to the office. Your generosity is appreciated as this helps offset our deficit budget. Thank you!

MISSIONS



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

We are collecting the following items for Operation Christmas Child during the month of October: **kaleidoscopes, puzzles, games, toy cars, trucks, boats and stuffed animals.**



JOY SHARING FOR OCTOBER

UPC's October Joy Sharing recipient will be Feed My Starving Children, with Joy Sharing Sunday being October 19. We are familiar with the organization, whose mission is to end world hunger by distributing scientifically formulated nutritional meals to starving children around the world. The food is donated to partner organizations that are already in place in 100 or so countries around the world. The partner organizations pay for the shipping. These partners see the need firsthand. Did you know that they also often tithe some of the Manna-Pack meals to smaller groups of people and/or individuals who are in need and can't afford to pay the shipping? The Libertyville facility provides us with an opportunity to physically help by packing the food. Thank you to all of you who faithfully commit to helping, as you represent United Protestant Church. Please prayerfully consider how you can financially support FMSC through UPC's October Joy Sharing. Thank you.

COMPANIONS JOURNEYING TOGETHER

All card donations are needed in just **3 weeks (by October 19)** in order to be sorted and packed on Monday, October 20. It would be great to have more Christmas cards signed and ready to be sent. Card packets with a list of suggested messages are always available on the mission table in the Narthex. Put completed cards in the marked container on the mission table. Help bring Christmas joy to an inmate or their family. Contact Cinda Bartz if you have any questions or want more information.

UPC SHOPPER

Do you ever wish that you could donate to a mission, but don't have any extra funds? UPC Shopper can help. The profits we earn from selling shopping cards that you use to purchase everyday items like groceries, clothing, meals, or gas go to support Operation Christmas Child. The best part is you don't pay anything extra when buying your cards at the shopper table. Don't remember to buy cards on Sunday morning? Just sign up on the app and you can get your e-gift cards sent to your phone—even while you wait in line at the store. Lynn Hallen has earned over \$100 of OCC just by doing her regular shopping. Sound too good to be true or you're not quite sure how this all works? Stop by the shopper table in the narthex any Sunday morning and talk to the sales people. There are also informational videos at Raiseright.com. Want to sign up? Follow this link [Enrollment](#). Donations at no extra cost to you.

PLEASE NOTE: *UPC will no longer be collecting Bimbo bread bags for recycling. We suggest that you return them to your local grocery store in the plastic recycle bins located in the entryways. We will continue to collect the plastic tab closures. Thank you for your efforts to recycle whenever possible.*



PADS Lake County Info & Needs: PADS staff again thank members of United Protestant Church, St. Gilbert Church, and all other groups and individuals in and around the Grayslake community who continue to provide support for the programs which enable them to help clients who are having a housing crisis. Additional thanks to those of you who have helped meet the ongoing needs of specific clients. These requests have been made directly to UPC PADS leaders who have delivered the items to the case managers so they can be given directly to the clients who need clothing or shoes for every day or for a new job, diapers, formula, and toddler meals for infants and young children, and other essential items. As in the past, thanks to those who respond to the needs published weekly in the Tuesday Newsday paragraph and in the monthly UNIFIER articles sent from the PADS Food Hub at First Presbyterian Church in Libertyville. Many of you have brought food items to UPC, to First Presbyterian Church, or helped with your direct online donations. Money has also been used from the UPC PADS Fund to purchase UPC Shopper gift cards to buy needed items. As was published last month, our UPC PADS Fund is at the lowest level ever. We are also low on gift cards to purchase food and other necessities. Therefore, **please consider giving Walmart gift cards or monetary donations directly to UPC PADS.** Also, **please continue watching Tuesday Newsday emails for case managers' specific need requests.** These donations should be brought to UPC so deliveries can be made directly to the case manager who has made the request.

Future UPC PADS Support for PADS Lake County:

We are requesting volunteers to be a part of UPC PADS as we plan to provide a weekly dinner to 60 of the clients at the coming fixed Family Shelter Site in Waukegan in the spring of 2026. UPC PADS coordinators will be needed and now have more time to get ready for the site opening. We need to know who the members of our team will be! Adults and youth who would like more information or want to volunteer can have your name and contact information put on our PADS Fixed Site contact list for Rose Pech to contact you when plans start being made. Send your contact information, questions, concerns, and/or ways in which you would like to volunteer to: United Protestant Church, Attention: Rose Pech, 54 S. Whitney St., Grayslake, IL 60030 or email Rose at rose4nonna@hotmail.com. Help will be needed in several ways: contacting restaurants or other donors to provide food or items to be prepared, providing some of these food items yourself, helping to prepare a meal, delivering a meal to the site once it opens, and scheduling kitchen and/or delivery volunteers. More information will be provided in November's UNIFIER.

AVON TOWNSHIP

Join us for our next session: 6:30 to 8:00 PM Tuesday, October 28. Volunteers are encouraged to come at 7:00 if 6:30 PM is too early. Those who need to leave sooner are also welcome to do so. Meet at Avon Township Center, **433 W. Washington St., Round Lake Park.** Contact Rose Pech at rose4nonna@hotmail.com or 847-682-2837 for more information.



WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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 information. Updates are in the church bulletin, Tuesday Newsday, and UNIFIER.

USE INFORMATION AND THE TABLE BELOW. *We would love to have you join us!*

PLEASE NOTE: Due to scheduling conflicts, there will be NO Ladies BUNCO this fall. We will try to schedule BUNCO on a Saturday afternoon in early March 2026.

Circle 2 members gather in the UPC Meeting Room on a Sunday once a month at 11:30 AM. Sundays vary monthly based on other UPC events. Circle members will be serving in Sacred Grounds during their meeting on October 12. 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. Their next lunch meeting will be on October 1. Contact Sue Schmidt.

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 October 14.

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., Oct. 12	11:00 AM	UPC Sacred Grounds	Catherine Vick
4/5	Wed., Oct. 1	11:30 AM	Culver's in Grayslake	Sue Schmidt
9	Tues., Oct. 14	5:30 PM	Mrs. V's in Round Lake Beach	Ruth Gheysen

Tyler, Brittany, Danielle, & Joanna give praise for purchases made for container items and for access to the internet using Starlink's roaming system despite the \$250/month cost. Prayer requests for a Nanny (now through April 2026 and 6+ months starting October 2026), for a balance in Brittany's schedule until a nanny arrives, for the arrival of Starlink for the internet, and to identify an African Christian for farm and brick machine. Donations are always needed and may be made at www.ilad.ngo/D2002 or to their UPC fund or at any time. Remember to check out the flyer lists for available container item purchases.

October Birthdays

10/1 Kevin Meyer
10/1 Dylan Okrzynski
10/2 Bill Churchill
10/5 Judy Ziegler
10/8 Sam Cooper
10/12 Greyson Madden
10/14 Andrew Friesema
10/16 Sarah Grubbs
10/16 Rose Pech
10/17 Chuck Trowitch
10/18 Ken Craig
10/20 Laurie Bethmann
10/20 Cynthia Floral
10/22 Blake Kutsin
10/26 Abigail Floral
10/26 Grace Floral
10/28 Megan Berkey
10/30 Ava Henne



October Anniversars

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

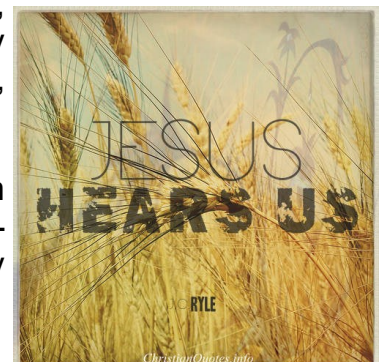
UPC's Continued Prayers for Members, Relatives, and Friends:

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

Tyler, Brittany & Danielle, & Joanna: give praise for the \$5,365 received of the \$12,420 needed. Brittany started her French Homeschooling Blog; Tyler is finishing brick-breaking tests to determine best soil/sand/cement mixes; Brittany found green bean seeds that Danielle helped plant. Requests include wisdom in when to implement pay-by-the-hour for national translators Solo and Luke to combat no-shows and lateness, and prayers for the internet to become more reliable. Prayers are still needed for a nanny to come and help, and for an African Christian for farm/brick machine. Please consider purchasing a container item to help reach 100% support of their fruit tree farm.

Relatives & Friends: Allen Anglin, Kathy Behm, Lorine Cooper, Patricia Davis, Daniel Dorman, Judy Hendrickson, Jennifer Hitch, Mary Mason, Hubert & Sharon Maston, Albert Meier, Gloria Meier, Pat Mielke, Tommy Nellesen, Melissa Norton, Sohail Rana and the Alam family, Gail Russell, 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, Barry Burgett, David Novak, 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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