

**University Presbyterian Church
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Buffalo, New York 14214-1316
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**www.upcbuffalo.org
office@upcbuffalo.org**



Sunday, April 21, 2024

**The Rev. Dr. Tom Yorty, Interim Pastor
Allan Andrews, Minister of Music & Choral Director
Gregory White, Organist**

Services are live-streamed on YouTube at: <https://tinyurl.com/upcbuffalo>

Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 21, 2024
Service for the Lord's Day
10:30 a. m.

AS YOU PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

In order that people may listen to the music or pray in silence without distraction, please refrain from conversation after the music begins and kindly silence all cell phones. Thank you.

Children of all ages are welcome to remain in worship. A playroom is available near the sanctuary for young children who are accompanied by their parents.

Prayer Requests: If you have a prayer request which you would like the pastor to include in "Prayers of the People," please fill out the yellow prayer request slip found in the pew racks and place it in the offering plate when passed. Ushers will take them from the plate and when the offering is brought forward, hand them to the pastor.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

Prelude Like The Golden Sun Ascending Paul Manz
Werde munter

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship (*please stand, if able*)

Jesus said: I am the good shepherd.
Christ lays down his life for the sheep.

Prayer of the Day

Gracious God, we give thanks today for all those who have faithfully lived and triumphantly died. For all the blessed memories and enduring hopes. For the ties that bind us to one another in the unseen world. For those who lived heroically in service to your church, to their communities, to the cause of justice and well-being. Grant us to so live that all the barriers that divide us today may be transformed from tattered cloth and tumult into the glorious quilt of humanity and peace. **Amen.**

Hymn #305

Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!

John Darwall

Darwall's 148th

Confession and Pardon

The Invitation:

Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the cross,
so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness.
Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

The Prayer:

**Almighty God,
in raising Jesus from the grave,
you shattered the power of sin and death.
We confess that we remain captive to doubt and fear,
bound by the ways that lead to death.
We overlook the poor and the hungry,
and pass by those who mourn;
we are deaf to the cries of the oppressed,
and indifferent to calls for peace;
we despise the weak,
and abuse the earth you made.**

**Forgive us, God of mercy.
Help us to trust your power
to change our lives and make us new,
that we may know the joy of life abundant
given in Jesus Christ, the risen Lord.**

There follows a moment of silent personal confession

The Pardon:

Hear the good news of God's promise:
I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.
Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! **Amen.**

Hymn #583

Glory to God (*sung 3 times*)

Jacques Berthier

Sharing the Peace and Greetings

As God's forgiven people we extend the peace of Christ to one another saying, "the peace of Christ be with you".

Sung response Hymn #822

**Shalom to you now, shalom my friends.
May God's full mercies, bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving,
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.**

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination:

Living God, with joy we celebrate
the presence of your risen Word.
Enliven our hearts by your Holy Spirit
so that we may proclaim the good news
of eternal and abundant life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Genesis 12:1-3 (p. 10 of the OT in pew Bible)

Gospel Lesson: Hebrews 12:1-3 (p. 226 of the NT in pew Bible)

This is the good news we have received,
in which we stand, and by which we are saved.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem This Joyful Eastertide arr. John Ferguson

Sermon "Our Cloud of Witnesses"

Hymn #49 The God of Abraham Praise Jewish Melody
Leoni

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Invitation to the Offering

Voluntary

Pastorale

Louis Lefebure-Wely

Doxology Hymn #606

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly host;
Creator, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Prayer of Dedication

Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us
our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the
kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Hymn #306

Blest Be the Tie That Binds
Dennis

Johann Georg Nageli

Benediction

Postlude

Praeludium und Fuge

Vincent Lubeck

A-723910

Participating in Worship
The Rev. Dr. Tom Yorty, Interim Pastor
Allan Andrews, Minister of Music & Choral Director
Gregory White, Organist
Liturgist: Kathryn Hallborg
Greeters: Scott Horton, Sharon Melius
Live streamer: John Swaine

Next Week:

Liturgist: Vicki Moorhouse

Greeters: Val Macer Sandy Robertson

Live streamer: John Swaine

This Week...

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|----------------------------|
| Sunday, April 21 | 9:30 am | Choir |
| | 10:30 am | Worship |
| | 11:30 am | 1st Congregational Meeting |
| Monday, April 22 | 9:30 am | Zoom Adult Bible Study |
| Tuesday, April 23 | 12:00 pm | Food Pantry Open |
| Wednesday, April 24 | 7:00 pm | Session |
| Thursday, April 25 | 12:00 pm | Food Pantry Open |
| | 7:30 pm | Choir |
| Sunday. April 28 ⁷ | 9:30 am | Choir |
| | 10:30 am | Worship |
| | 11:30 am | New Members Class |

AN INVITATION FROM YOUR INTERIM TEAM
Remembering Our Past

To prepare for the future of our UPC church family, we want to honor our past. We want to cherish our fond memories and acknowledge our times of struggle.

The first of three congregational meetings: Today, April 21: Immediately following our 10:30 worship we will join together in the Fellowship Hall for lunch. Consider which of your stories, recollections and perhaps struggles at UPC you would like to share about:

Christian Education for children, youth, and adults
Mission and Service
Worship and Music
Fellowship

Please join us for prayer, food, laughter, story telling, and music !
You are welcome as a longtime member, new member, student or
“just started worshipping here” !



Re-Scheduled Opportunities

Tuesday, May 14th

Hearts for the Homeless of WNY Inc.

Food Pantry & Cafe

890 Tonawanda St., Buffalo 14207

@ the corner of Riverside Ave.

Parking lot in between two of the buildings (870 and 890)

Street parking on Tonawanda St., Riverside Ave., and Royal Ave.

Contact Person: Kelsey Jeff (Chief of Staff & Executive Assistant)
1(585)689-4771

Arrival Time: 10:30 am – 10:45 am

Maximum Number of Volunteers: 20 – 25



Saturday, May 18th

Jericho Road's VIVE Shelter

1500 Main St., Buffalo 14209

(Former Bristol Home)

Parking in Rear / Side door entrance

Arrival Time: 11:00 am

*Number of Residents/Staff will be received a week prior

Contact Person: Rachel Wood/Kitchen Manager (716) 940-7374

Activities:

Bingo Game/Prizes / Arts & Crafts / Clean Dining Room

Provide Lunch: Pizza & Wings for Residents/Staff

*No picture taking



Contact Marietta Bratton if you are interested in participating, 716-913-7628.

**University Presbyterian elder, Jim Smyton
to be installed as
Moderator of the Presbytery of Western New York
Tuesday, May 28, 2024**

UPC will host this stated meeting of the Presbytery of Western New York at which, our own Jim Smyton will be installed as Moderator. The position is recognized as the leader of Presbytery and requires moderating Presbytery meetings and serving on the Executive Council of Presbytery which meets between stated meetings to make important decisions for the life and ministry of the presbytery.

We look forward to having the clergy and lay representatives here for the business meeting, dinner and a worship service. UPC members Howard Henry and Lee Ann Grace will be the preachers for the worship service. Their theme will be immigration/refugee ministry. They will draw on their decades of experience serving as volunteers at Frontera de Cristo in Douglas, AZ—a PCUSA mission program providing safe transportation and housing for legal immigrants and asylum seekers as they await processing. Howard and Lee Ann will also speak to the immigration/refugee ministries here in Buffalo and raise the possibility, the vision, for coordinated education and outreach to this disenfranchised, vulnerable community of people starting a new life in the US. There are more displaced people from war, political persecution and natural disaster than ever before. Immigration will be a major issue in this year's national election. Howard and Lee Ann's message will be timely for this important meeting and start of Jim Smyton's moderatorial term.

I encourage all UPC members to join us for part of all of the meeting (if you've never been to a presbytery meeting this will be a great way to watch our regional governing body at work). Come to dinner (we need an rsvp in the church office) to welcome presbytery reps to UPC, join us for worship in what will be an uplifting day of fellowship.

Dr. Tom Yorty, Interim Pastor

The Resurrection

from *The Alphabet of Grace* by Fred Buechner

WE CAN SAY THAT the story of the Resurrection means simply that the teachings of Jesus are immortal like the plays of Shakespeare or the music of Beethoven and that their wisdom and truth will live on forever. Or we can say that the Resurrection means that the spirit of Jesus is undying, that he himself lives on among us, the way that Socrates does, for instance, in the good that he left behind him, in the lives of all who follow his great example. Or we can say that the language in which the Gospels describe the Resurrection of Jesus is the language of poetry and that, as such, it is not to be taken literally but as pointing to a truth more profound than the literal. Very often, I think, this is the way that the Bible is written, and I would point to some of the stories about the birth of Jesus, for instance, as examples; but in the case of the Resurrection, this simply does not apply because there really is no story about the Resurrection in the New Testament. Except in the most fragmentary way, it is not described at all. There is no poetry about it. Instead, it is simply proclaimed as a fact. Christ is risen! In fact, the very existence of the New Testament itself proclaims it. Unless something very real indeed took place on that strange, confused morning, there would be no New Testament, no Church, no Christianity.

Yet we try to reduce it to poetry anyway: the coming of spring with the return of life to the dead earth, the rebirth of hope in the

despairing soul. We try to suggest that these are the miracles that the Resurrection is all about, but they are not. In their way they are all miracles, but they are not this miracle, this central one to which the whole Christian faith points.

Unlike the chief priests and the Pharisees, who tried with soldiers and a great stone to make themselves as secure as they could against the terrible possibility of Christ's really rising again from the dead, we are considerably more subtle. We tend in our age to say, "Of course, it was bound to happen. Nothing could stop it." But when we are pressed to say what it was that actually did happen, what we are apt to come out with is something pretty meager: this "miracle" of truth that never dies, the "miracle" of a life so beautiful that two thousand years have left the memory of it undimmed, the "miracle" of doubt turning into faith, fear into hope. If I believed that this or something like this was all that the Resurrection meant, then I would turn in my certificate of ordination and take up some other profession. Or at least I hope that I would have the courage to.

Welcome Visitors

University Presbyterian Church (UPC), the members and officers, welcomes you today. Your presence strengthens our faith and our commitment as Christ's disciples.

University Presbyterian Church welcomes all who seek to follow the Way of Jesus—the way of compassion and justice—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identification. UPC does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in celebrating the rites of marriage.

University Presbyterian Church Officers and Staff

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| The Rev. Dr. Tom Yorty | Interim Pastor |
| Minister of Music & Choral Director | Allan Andrews |
| Organist | Gregory White |
| Treasurer | James W. Smyton |
| Clerk of Session | Pat Cookfair-Casseri |
| Financial Secretary | Barbara C. Lyons |
| Stephen Ministry Referral Coordinator | Kathryn F. Hallborg |
| Administrative Assistant | Peg Kovach |
| Custodian | David Winiarski |

Mission Statement of University Presbyterian Church

We are a hungry people who receive Christ, the Bread of Life, who sustains us on our journey. We strive to feed as we are fed, sharing the Bread to nourish others in body, mind and spirit.

“Let Us Be Bread”