

*The Network... a Publication of
University Presbyterian Church
November 2020*



Message from our Pastor

The season of Thanksgiving is approaching. Giving thanks in the middle of a pandemic may seem like something of a stretch. When over 225,000 people have died in the United States and more keep getting sick, when people are out of work, and as our nation grapples with social and racial injustice and deep political divisions, gratitude may not come easily.

The Apostle Paul wrote “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thess. 5:17-18) Some Christians have misread this passage as “give thanks *for* all circumstances.” But we are *not* instructed to give thanks *for* all circumstances but rather *in* all circumstances. That small word change makes a huge difference. There are many circumstances in life that I could never be thankful for. But even in times of hardship and distress, we can still offer gratitude for the steadfast love of God. We can still offer gratitude for the beauty of the world around us. We can still offer gratitude for people who may be reaching out to care for us. We can still offer gratitude for the way of Jesus Christ—the way of love, compassion, mercy, and justice.

I believe that gratitude is a muscle we have to exercise. The more we focus on giving thanks, the easier it becomes to offer. The more we offer thanks, the easier it becomes to discover reasons for being thankful.

This November, I am thankful for YOU, the community of UPC. I am grateful for the efforts of many to keep our Food Pantry operating, for the individuals who assist in making worship happen—both in-person and on-line, for the people who call one another, for the prayers you offer for one another, for the commitment you continue to show for the welfare of our broader world.

Wherever and however you celebrate Thanksgiving this year, may you discover reasons to be thankful.

Shalom,
Tracy



Online Bible Study Class

The Bible study class will finish its series on spiritual disciplines on Wednesday, Nov. 4 with a session exploring Simplicity as a Spiritual Discipline. The class will then take a break for the remaining weeks in November before resuming on December 2 for Advent.

100 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice

This fall, The Racial Justice Task Group of University and North Presbyterian Churches invites our members to learn more about racial justice.

Our members are encouraged to read the article "100 Things White People Can Do For Racial Justice" and do 3 or more of the suggested tasks. Some of the "100 Things" have links to videos, articles, and other sites for learning and action.

Then, on **Monday, November 16 from 7-8 p.m.** we will hold a virtual Feedback Session for our members to gather over Zoom to discuss the "100 Things" and our insights from this activity.

The link to the article is here:

<https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234>

To register for the Feedback Session go to: Click on this link: [here](#)

Or go to . . .

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/100-things-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-tickets-116219067359>

We hope you will check out the list and join us on November 16.

Worship Column

Sunday, November 1

All Saints' Day

Rev. 7:9-17; Ps. 34:1-10, 22;

1John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12

22nd Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous: Josh. 3:7-17; Ps. 107:1-7, 33-37

Complementary: Mic. 3:5-12; Ps. 43:1; Thess. 2:9-13; Matthew 23:1-12

Sunday, November 8

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Josh. 24:1-3a, 14-25; Pa. 78:1-7;

1Thess. 4:13-18, Matthew 25:1-13

Sunday, November 15

24th Sunday after Pentecost

Judges 4:1-7; Ps. 123; 1 Thess. 5:1-11;

Matthew 25:14-30



Sunday, November 22

Christ the King/Reign of Christ

Ezek. 34:11-16, 20-24; Ps. 100;

Eph. 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

Sunday, November 29

1st Sunday of Advent

Isa. 64:1-9; Ps. 80:1-7, 17-19;

1 Cor. 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

THERE IS
always, always,
ALWAYS
something
to be thankful for

What's Happening in November...

November 1	Sunday	11:00 am	Worship Service
November 2	Monday	5:00 pm	Intergenerational Bible Conversation
November 3	Tuesday	6:00 am	Voting Begins-No Food Pantry
November 4	Wednesday	12:00 pm 1:00 pm	Food Pantry Open Zoom Bible Study
November 5	Thursday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
November 8	Sunday	11:00 am 7:00 pm	Worship Service Zoom Deacon's Meeting
November 10	Tuesday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
November 11	Wednesday		Veteran's Day <i>Church Office Closed</i>
November 12	Thursday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
November 15	Sunday	11:00 am	Worship Service
November 16	Monday	10:30 am	Mobile Food Pantry @ Trinity Methodist Church
November 17	Tuesday	12:00 pm 1:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Zoom Ministry to Community
November 18		1:00 pm 7:00 pm	Zoom Bible Study Zoom Session
November 19	Thursday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
November 22	Sunday	11:00 am	Worship Service
November 23	Monday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
November 24	Tuesday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
November 26-27	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i>		<i>Church Office Closed</i>
November 29	Sunday	11:00 am	Worship Service



Happy November Birthdays to ...

7	Mary Jean Conibear	18	Gary Melius
10	Molly Anthony	22	Grace Burkner
11	Sarah Smith	23	Doug Harbison
11	Elizabeth Harbison	26	Nicholas Harbison
11	Brian Belus	28	Alma Kelly
16	Jim Whitefield	29	Elizabeth Johnson
17	Joysline Chia	30	Alma Safulko





Getting to know your “pew buddy” ...

This is a new feature of the UPC newsletter. Amy Erickson is going to be interviewing some of the individuals who regularly attend worship. Often we know what the individual is involved with in the church, but not what his/her life is outside the church. Some of the questions asked are: Can you give a short background of your life and facts such as where you were born and raised? How long have you been attending UPC? How has your faith helped you in your life? April's featured “pew buddy” is Debby Ludwig ~ here's what she responded:

“I was born and raised in Rochester, NY. I am an only child of wonderful, loving parents. I graduated with an undergrad degree in education and sociology from Russell Sage College in Troy, NY and went on years later to get a Masters in education from SUNY Binghamton. I have 2 daughters, one of whom is a writer and lecturer and one who is a pediatrician. I also have 5 grandchildren who range in age from 4 to 21. I grew up in the Presbyterian church and was married there. I raised my family in the Methodist church because of proximity and friendships. I am still a member. I taught fourth grade for many years, in both Rochester and Binghamton, also working in the field of parent education. Now that I am retired I read to children in both Williamsville and School 17 in Buffalo. I love this volunteer job as it keeps me in education and close contact with young students.

When I moved to Buffalo 9 years ago I was looking for a church home. When I visited UPC Marietta came right over, introduced herself and made me feel at home. From then on I have tried to attend weekly services. The friendliness and kindness of the people keep me coming back. I recently lost my good friend Joe and the outreach from Kathy Hallborg was so wonderful and comforting. We shared many stories and ideas and I can never thank her enough. Faith has always been an important part of my life. My mother was very ill during much of my growing up and I got much of my strength from faith. The hardest part of my life was the end of my 42 year marriage. I was broken and constantly relied on the Lord for comfort and the courage to go on. He was with me every step of the way. I am so very grateful to see 75 years and speak with Him every night with great gratitude for all my blessings, and the prayer for healing for those who need His help. How grateful I am to live a life of faith and gratitude.”



Ministry to Community
Alternative Gift Giving
This year's alternative gift is for
RIP MEDICAL DEBT
Collecting to Forgive

Should I pay my medical bill or buy groceries? What about my mortgage or rent? About a third of working Americans have medical debt with almost a third owing at least \$10,000.

You can be part of the cure for crushing medical debt!

Working in the debt-buying industry, Craig Antico and Jerry Ashton were moved by compassion when they met thousands of Americans burdened by un-payable medical bills. They created a unique solution. They used donations to buy large bundles of medical debt and then forgave that debt. Founded in 2014 by these two former debt collections executives, RIP Medical Debt has forgiven more than \$1 Billion in medical debt for almost 2 million people.

Beginning Sunday November 29 and throughout Advent you may make your gift to help cure medical debt. With your donation you will receive a card to give to your loved one or friend letting them know you have honored them this holiday with this Alternative Christmas gift of hope. Cards will be available through the church office or you may print a card online.

Every \$1 relieves \$100 in un-payable medical debt- really!

\$10 relieves \$1,000

\$100 relieves \$10,000

\$1,000 relieves \$100,000

Please make checks payable to *University Presbyterian Church, memo: Alternative Gift*



We invite you to learn more at: <https://ripmedicaldebt.org>



Remembrance of the Saints

All Saints Sunday, November 1

On All Saints Sunday we will give thanks for those individuals who have died whose lives were meaningful to us. If there is someone whose life you would like to remember with thanksgiving, you may call or email the Church office with their name **before October 29**. We will list their name on a bulletin insert (which will also be shared with those worshipping at home) and there will be a flower on our Memorial Table in remembrance of them.

Also on that day we will observe our tradition of the Litany of Saints in which we give thanks for those of our church family who have died this past year.

Chancel Flower Placements

We are again going to beautify our sanctuary with chancel flower placements as of the beginning of November. If there is someone you would like to dedicate a placement to, on a specific Sunday, please contact the church office as soon as possible.

Thanksgiving Prayer

By Ralph Waldo Emerson

For each new morning with its light,
For rest and shelter of the night,
For health and food,
For love and friends,
For everything Thy goodness sends.

For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet;
For song of bird, and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!

