

*The Network... a Publication of
University Presbyterian Church
February 2022*



Message from our Pastor

UPC is not a large congregation. Yet I am continually impressed by the size of our members' hearts. A review of our Annual Report will reveal the wide variety of mission activities and donations offered by our members in 2021. Our members responded to natural disasters, supported a sustainable coffee business on the U.S./Mexico border, helped families in our region facing homelessness, and contributed to land conservation efforts here in Western New York.

Each week our church volunteers, along with others from the community, ensure that our food pantry continues to meet the essential food needs for people in our community. This year the pantry has seen an increase of university students coming for food assistance. The presence of this pantry is helping the next generation complete their education and fulfill their dreams and potential.

I am especially impressed with the generous contributions given by our members this past holiday season in our annual Alternative Christmas Giving Opportunity. Our members gave more than \$2,000 to help resettle Afghan refugees in our community—an impressive sum given the size of our membership. However, what impresses me more than any specific dollar amount raised, is the impulse found within our members' hearts to respond to circumstances of need.

I believe that generosity is contagious. When we surround ourselves with generous people, we find our own hearts growing larger and more willing to share. That is the value of being part of the Body of Christ, the community of believers. Through our example we help one another walk the path to the realm of God.

Shalom,

Tracy

Meeting

Call to the Annual Congregational Meeting:

University Presbyterian Church will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, February 6 at 12:30 p.m. **via Zoom**

Formal members of the congregation are expected to attend.

In order to ensure all members can participate, the meeting will be conducted via Zoom. A link to this meeting will be emailed to you a few days beforehand.

The Annual Report will be emailed to you. Hard copies will also be available at the church.

A ballot will be mailed to you in the upcoming days for those matters requiring a congregational vote. A stamped envelope will be included for you to return your ballot to the church office.

The agenda includes:

- receiving the annual reports from the committees and ministries of UPC
- reviewing the budget report for 2022
- voting on the Pastor's compensation
- election of church officers

Worship Column

Sunday, February 6

5th Sunday after Epiphany

Isa. 6:1-8 (9-13); Psalm 138;
1 Cor. 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

Sunday, February 13

6th Sunday after Epiphany

Jer. 17:5-10; Psalm 1;
1 Cor. 15:12-20;
Luke 6:17-26

Sunday, February 20

7th Sunday after Epiphany

Gen. 45:3-11, 15; Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40;
1 Cor. 15:35-38, 42-50;
Luke 6:27-38

Sunday, February 27

Transfiguration of the Lord

Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99;
2 Cor. 3:12-4:2; Luke 9:28-36 (37-43a)



Be kind...share a smile...offer a hug...help when you can.
Be kind...your presence may be exactly what
Someone else needs at that moment.
Be kind...God loves you, God loves the people you encounter
On this journey through life.
Be kind...we are all children of God!
Peace, Love, Hope, Unity

What's Happening in February

February 1	Tuesday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 3	Thursday	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Choir
February 4	Friday	5:30 pm	Taize
February 6	Sunday	9:30 am 10:30 am 12:30 pm	Choir Worship Service Annual Meeting
February 8	Tuesday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 10	Thursday	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Choir
February 13	Sunday	9:30 am 10:30 am	Choir Worship Service Youth Group Chili Cook Off at North Presbyterian
February 15	Tuesday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 16	Wednesday	7:00 pm	Zoom Session Meeting
February 17	Thursday	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Choir
February 20	Sunday	9:30 am 10:30 am	Choir Worship Service
February 21	Monday	<i>Presidents' Day Church Office Closed</i>	
February 22	Tuesday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 24	Thursday	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Choir
February 27	Sunday	9:30 am 10:30 am	Choir Worship Service Youth Group Event—TBD



February wishes go out to...



- 1 Connie Michael
- 1 Derek Fisher
- 2 Andrew Safulko
- 6 Linda Moorhouse
- 8 Jim Smyton
- 12 Grace Agbemenu
- 17 Barbara Lyons
- 24 John Schimminger



Heartfelt thanks to everyone who donated to this year's Alternate Gift Campaign. UPC raised \$2,380 for Buffalo United for Afghan Evacuees, a group of local charities that are helping over 300 Afghan evacuee families that are resettling in Buffalo. Thanks also to everyone who donated toiletries, linens and other items to this cause in the Fall. Your compassion and generosity mean so much.



Bob Dewitz – Memories of University Presbyterian Church

In 1931 when my twin sister Esther and I were four years old, my mother put us in kindergarten in School 63. She also put us in the Sunday School kindergarten at University Presbyterian Church. The thirties were the Depression years, but we were too young to know the hardships around us. I remember [the main Sunday School teacher] Carrie Holzwarth and Mr. Seeger, a very mild man and a great teacher, and Mr. Forbes [the Sunday School superintendent]. My mother would give us a penny to put in the church school collection. We had a chart on the wall with all the children's names and stars after the things we learned in Sunday School. I think I had one star at the most.

In 1939 I joined Troop Six of the Boy Scouts of America. Troop Six was well known. Our Scout Leader, Mr. Horace F. Prince, was a wonderful man. He had a stutter. We met in the original church house on Main Street. In the '40s church life was a big part of our lives. We had a great young peoples group led by Bill Castle, Sue [Castle] and Margie MacLeod. In the late '40s we formed a Young Adult Group led by students from UB, /1950s State Teachers College, ECC and others. Alma Horn [now Kelly], Norma Wagner and Ray Smith were members. We used to have a youth group meeting and then go to a tavern and drink beer and have a good time.

Alma's dad, Mr. Horn, was a wonderful man in the church. Back then, for pledge drives, people visited members' homes seeking the pledges. Mr. Horn came to our [the Dewitz] home and my dad thought he [Mr. Horn] was a wonderful man. Mrs. Horn was quite strict. Once she learned about the tavern visits, she didn't allow Alma to go anymore. There are three of us still here from the 1940s / '50s: Alma Kelly, Alvin Schuster and myself.

In 1953 Rev. Reid married Margie MacLeod and me. Five years later we adopted four children, two girls and two boys, from Father Baker orphanage. We adopted a little girl and later we adopted another and then another and then another. Thus began a new generation of Dewitzes in UPC Sunday School.

Through the years I've been active in the church as a deacon and an elder, working in the Food Pantry, painting, being on committees and the like. When we were deacons, we had to wear a dark suit with a carnation and had to escort people to the pews. It was very formal.

We were afraid of Rev. Kuhen. He didn't use notes; he used to memorize his sermons, but one day he got interrupted by something and he went all to pieces. We had two different hymnals in those days and my brother, and I thought it would be a good trick to substitute one of the hymnals at the pulpit for the other and see how Rev. Kuhen would react. We never did though.

Running around the halls in the church when I was little was so much fun!

(Transcribed from Bob's written notes and personal interview by Howard Henry, October 10, 2021)

Report from Howard Henry and Lee Ann Grace:

Howard and Lee Ann spend every winter at the U.S./Mexico border, offering their talents to the Presbyterian (USA) ministry, Frontera de Cristo. Below is a report they share from Arizona.

Frontera de Cristo Volunteer Work

January/February 2022

We arrived in Douglas, AZ late on Wednesday evening, January 12, and took a few days to set up. We are staying in the house / office (Frontera de Cristo) at 826 11th Street in Douglas, AZ, about 11 blocks north of the border



We attend worship at the First Presbyterian Church in Douglas, only a block's walk away.

On Saturday we shadowed a couple at the Migrant Resource Center in Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico to see what the work would be like. The MRC is located just west of the entry point into Mexico on Calle 1 (1st Street). We started our first shift on Monday, January 17. Our schedule has us working 4 hour shifts five days a week: Monday 12 - 4 pm, Tuesday 4 - 8 pm, Wednesday off, Thursday and Friday 4 -8, Saturday 8 am to 12 noon. We drive to the border and leave the van in a parking lot on the US side and walk across through the Mexican Aduana. At the end of our shift we walk back through US customs.

We are on our feet for most of the time on a hard tile floor, making / serving Just Coffee, ham and cheese sandwiches (tortas), and sweeping and washing floors and cleaning the bathroom and tables and straightening beds at the end of our shift, and trying to resolve sometimes complex health and immigration issues.

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On Wednesdays at 8:30 am we drive across the border to participate in the Frontera de Cristo devotional in the coffee house (Cafe Justo y Mas) in Agua Prieta, SONORA, Mexico. Driving back into the US means sitting in an automobile line that can take anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour to longer to get up to the US customs gate. A sign, surrounded by 18 feet high metal walls and razor wire and cameras and speed humps, says "Welcome to the United States."

Elevation is 4000 feet (Buffalo is 600) and requires an adjustment to the thinner air. It affects our stamina. Also, we are not used to such an active working routine. Bed looks very good at the end of the day.

On the other hand, it is very, very good to connect up with old friends as well as meet brand new ones on both sides of the border. That is indeed a blessing, as is the opportunity to be doing this work.

Church and neighborhood friends make this effort possible. Jerilyn Hickey visits the house weekly to check the mail and see that nothing is amiss. Other neighborhood friends keep an eye on the house, too.

Lee Ann is uploading photos from our volunteer work at the Migrant Resource Center to the UPC Facebook page and is working on a video, too. Keep all of us here on the border in your prayers.

Here is a link to the Frontera de Cristo ministries; scroll down to find the Migrant Resource Center: <http://fronteradecristo.org/ministries/>

Howard and Lee Ann





Too many of us lead hectic lives.

Our communities are filled with violence and suffering.

Our personal pain and struggles can overwhelm us.

How do we respond? How can we cope?

University Presbyterian Church welcomes Christians from all traditions to unite in a special contemplative worship experience as we seek spiritual strength for the living of our days. Based on the style of worship practiced in the Taizé Christian community in France, these services offered on the First Friday of each month provide an oasis at the end of the week for all who are weary, troubled, or rushed. Special music from guest musicians, meditative songs, prayers, candles, and scripture readings allow each of us to find a quiet place of prayer and spiritual centering.

Please join us on **Friday, February 4th from 5:30 to 6:00 PM.**

A Taizé Service of Prayer, Music, and Meditation

www.upcbuffalo.org

(The Taize' Service in March is scheduled for Friday, March 4, 2022)