

*The Network... a Publication of
University Presbyterian Church
February, 2025*



Dear Friends,

February is a month of Epiphany Sundays. The word refers first to the three wise men following the star to the manger in Bethlehem and presenting their gifts to the Christ child—the first “manifestation” of the Christ, the Divine son of God to the wide world represented in the three travelers from other distant cultures. But the word has come to mean in our language the manifestation of the divine or the revelation of deep insight or blessing in ordinary, daily life.

We say, “I had an epiphany” and then something like: ‘if we build a one-room school house they will come’ or ‘if the children come to the party the parents will follow.’ Sometimes I recognize an epiphany when it’s happening, sometimes I see it upon reflection looking back over the events of the day, then seeing the hand of God—a door opening, or one closing that made all the difference.

How about starting the day this month in honor of the epiphany Sundays ahead by expecting to see an epiphany anywhere, any time; to be on the lookout for those moments that are ‘thin places’ in which we stand so close to the holy, the divine.

It is Black History Month and for adult education at UPC Craig Steger, a member of the Colored Musician’s Club board will present two sessions after church on 2/9 and 2/16 on Black History in Buffalo. Craig is writing a book on Buffalo history and has uncovered some important, fascinating things about the city. My guess is that he’ll share more than a few epiphany’s regarding Buffalo’s history.

Please also circle your calendar for worship/communion on Sunday February 2 which will be followed by the annual meeting of University Presbyterian Church in the sanctuary, then lunch downstairs.

See you in worship,

Pastor Tom

Worship Column

Sunday, February 2

4th Sunday after Epiphany

Jeremiah 1:-10; Psalm 71:1-6;

1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

Sunday, February 9

5th Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13); Psalm 138;

1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

Sunday, February 16

6th Sunday after Epiphany

Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1;

1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26

Sunday, February 23

7th Sunday after Epiphany

Genesis 45:3-11, 15; Psalm 37:1-11;

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50;

Luke 6:27-38



February Birthday Wishes Go Out to.....

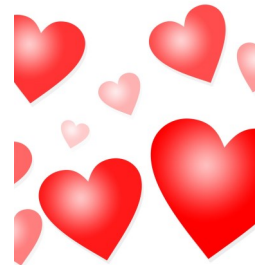
**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!**

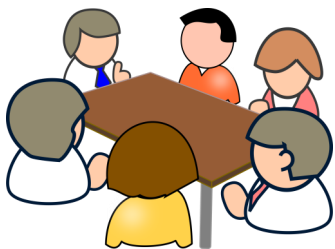
- 1 Connie Michael
- 1 Derek Fisher
- 2 Andrew Safulko
- 6 Linda Moorhouse
- 8 Jim Smyton
- 12 Grace Agbemenu
- 17 Barbara Lyons
- 24 John Schimminger
- 24 Jim Bartlett



What's Happening in February

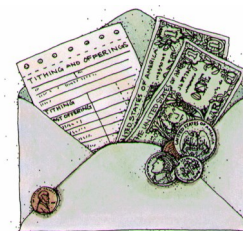
February 1	Saturday	10:00 am	Breakfast with Friends
February 2	Sunday	9:00 am 10:30 am 11:30 am	Choir Worship Service Annual Meeting & Lunch
February 3	Monday	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	PNC Meeting Zoom Deacon Meeting
February 4	Tuesday	9:30 am 12:00 pm	Stewardship Food Pantry Open
February 6	Thursday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 8	Saturday	5:00 pm	Valentine's Day Party
February 9	Sunday	9:00 am 10:30 am 11:30 am 11:45 am	Choir Worship Service Fellowship Sunday Adult Ed.
February 10	Monday	9:30 am 7:00 pm	Zoom Adult Bible Study PNC Meeting
February 11	Tuesday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 13	Thursday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 16	Sunday	9:00 am 10:30 am 1:30 am 11:45 am	Choir Worship Service Fellowship Adult Ed.
February 17	Monday	9:30 am 7:00 pm	Zoom Adult Bible Study PNC Meeting
February 18	Tuesday	12:00 pm	12:00 pm Food Pantry Open
February 19	Wednesday	7:00 pm	Session
February 20	Thursday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 23	Sunday	9:00 am 10:30 am 11:30 am	Choir Worship Service Fellowship & Birthday Cake
February 24	Monday	9:30 am 7:00 pm	Zoom Adult Bible Study PNC Meeting
February 25	Tuesday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
February 27	Thursday	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open





Annual Meeting: February 2nd is an important day. We will conduct the annual business of UPC after the morning worship service. This will include updates and reports on the process that will lead to a new permanent pastor, finances, building and grounds concerns, mission and outreach. In the Presbyterian Church we have the same right and responsibility (as well as privilege) that we do as citizens. We get to express our opinions and vote. Please circle your calendar and be sure to be here on February 2 to help UPC close out 2024 and welcome 2025.

Remember to take your church envelopes home. They are on the table in the back of the sanctuary.



Youth Valentine's Day Party February 8

5 - 8 PM

The young people of University Presbyterian Church are invited to a night of pizza and games in the Fellowship Room. We will start the evening with pizza and snack items, and then have fun playing games and frosting and decorating homemade sugar cookies. Ginna Coon has agreed to bake them and then we'll provide icing and decorations to create the ultimate sugar cookie.

After eating, we'll start the night with some group games and then if they bring in a favorite game we could break off into individual groups and play those. This is an opportunity for the children of the church to get to know each other, and form new friendships. Each child is encouraged to bring a friend along for the festivities. Grandparents and parents of UPC are asked to invite their young ones as we begin our youth program. We hope to build a youth group in UPC.

If you have any questions please contact Amy Erickson at 716 480-4591 or email amyhoechst@yahoo.com. We will need a head count to make sure we have enough food, so please RSVP to Amy Erickson or the church office and tell Peg if you plan on attending. Email: office@upcbuffalo.org or call 716 836-7660.

MANY THANKS!

Members and friends of UPC raised \$1620 for the Alternative Christmas Gift Campaign for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Thank you to all who donated for your compassion and generosity.



Saturday Basketball

42 years ago, Craig Steger started our basketball program. His weekly sign-in books have the names of over 1,000 players, some of whom have been playing in our gym for over 35 years.



Most of the players have met here. There is no other program like it in Buffalo. After the games, the program had a pizza celebration and showed a video of some of the games from the last few decades.

Just Coffee / Café Justo – UPC sold 339 pounds in 2024.

Dear Friends,

Thanks to your dedicated buying (and obvious good taste), since 2007—over the past 18 years—you have helped Lee Ann and Howard sell over TWO TONS of Just Coffee. 4214 pounds, to be exact. Your purchasing has helped create decent paying employment for Mexican coffee cooperative farmers in the state of Chiapas and elsewhere, plus auxiliary work on the Mexico/US border for those who roast, grind, package, ship and manage the coffee business. The Just Coffee Cooperative then created the Café Justo y Mas coffee shop in Agua Prieta, SONORA, Mexico, on the border across from Douglas, Arizona, creating yet more employment for baristas and a coffee shop manager as well as serving as a site for re-entry work training for persons in recovery from alcohol and substance dependence. Thanks go to Frontera de Cristo, the Presbyterian Border Region Outreach ministry in Douglas and Agua Prieta, which has been an active partner every step of the way.

Good jobs in Mexico mean that people do not have to risk leaving home to seek work elsewhere. After 18 years, the effort is no longer manageable for us—BUT you can still buy this fabulous Just Coffee! We recommend that you avail yourselves of the “Coffee and Compassion” program recently established by Frontera de Cristo. This program keeps the Just Coffee growers in business, continues the auxiliary jobs, allows you (the Just Coffee drinker) to continue to enjoy the fruits of such labor, and now provides Just Coffee to migrant shelters in Mexico along the Mexico/US border. Think win-win-win. A just way of just drinking Just Coffee!

Lee Ann and Howard have successfully used the “Coffee and Compassion” program to buy Just Coffee and will continue to do so in the future. You may order at the following link <https://fronteradecristo.networkforgood.com/events/40433-coffee-and-compassion> and have Just Coffee shipped directly to you via UPS for only \$12 per pound (shipping cost included). A 2-pound minimum is required.

Please share this information freely with all your coffee drinking friends and relations! Contact us if you need help with the ordering link.

Lee Ann Grace & Howard Henry

justcoffeehh@gmail.com



What's Going On Around the Church

Monthly Facilities Report



Dear Friends,

Each month a facilities update will be provided to keep the congregation informed of the work Western New York Facilities Solutions is doing.

Boiler repairs: We have made several heating repairs to the church since October, the heating system is approximately 20 years old and is generally in good repair. We had several parts that needed replacement due to age and have since acquired spare parts to help expedite future repairs. We have replaced the boiler feed pump, zone pump, ignitor and a boiler circuit board.

Tower work: The tower work is complete for the season; we will need to resume with some final masonry repairs this spring as these could not be completed due to weather concerns in the fall. In addition to the tower work we will replace a portion of the concrete sidewalks in front of the church that have been damaged over time and due to the high-lift.

Sanctuary Lift fix: The original installation company has since gone out of business, and we have contacted the manufacturer of the lift in Canada and they have referred us to a dealer in Syracuse. We are working on having this company come out to service and repair the lift moving forward.

LED lighting: The project currently stands at about 80% completion; we are working on completing this project in late January/early February. There have been some delays in obtaining some parts needed to finish the project as there are specialized components involved due to the age of the facility. The contractor National Grid hired for the work will remove all old lighting fixtures stacked near the parking lot dumpster when the job is completed.

Dumpster: We have switched service providers from Waste Management to Modern, we have changed the dumpster to a larger unit with less frequent pickups to achieve almost a \$500 a month savings to both the church and Best Self. We will attempt to sell the old dumpster which the former contract required that we purchase and is in perfectly good condition.

Clean out crew—a team of UPC members inventoried various items the church no longer needs or wants stored in the hall and rooms on the lower level. Everything has been identified to be thrown away, given away, or sold.

Per Capita

Most of us may be unfamiliar with the phrase "Per Capita". Per Capita is the amount each church in the Presbytery of Western New York pays into the Presbytery each year to help fund the expenses of the Presbytery. The amount University pays the Presbytery is the number of its members (125) times \$40.00 for this year 2025. This is why each of us members are asked to pay the sum of \$40.00 using the envelope in your envelope packets. If you haven't already done so, please do so in the short term and place in the collection plates. Thank you.

Highlights from the January Session Meeting

1. The PNC is meeting every Monday evening to continue the search for a permanent pastor. If you have questions, you can ask any of the committee members: Chinomnso Awazie, Pat Cookfair-Casseri, Gladys Gifford, Howard Henry, Cindy Hickey, Priscilla Maddock, Amy Maundrell, Matt Smith, Craig Steger.
2. The Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, Feb 2, following the service. There will be lunch following the meeting.
3. Led lights are being installed throughout the church. The project is 80% completed and once completed, will lower expenses.
4. An edited bereavement brochure was approved by Session and will be made available to members upon request.
5. There will be a Valentine's Party held for the children of the church between 5-12 years old and their friends...lots of fun activities on Feb. 8 from 5-8. If your child or grandchild are interested, call Amy Erickson.

"Counting Our Blessings" (Helping the Counters)

A group of six church members have taken on the role of counting the offerings and donations to University Presbyterian Church. Barbara Lyons, our past Financial Secretary, did this job by herself until she passed away last year. As novices at this job, we're recreating the process, developing the skills and experience needed to efficiently keep track of your donations.



We have two requests of the congregation:

1. We would benefit from more volunteers to assist with the counting process. We have written instructions and will provide mentoring. Counting generally takes about an hour, although this depends upon the amount of donations, and it is typically done either Sunday after the service or Monday morning. **If you would like to learn more about participating in this important ministry, please contact Sandy Robertson (716-256-9048 or sandyibti@gmail.com), Sandy Boag ((716-228-0838 or sboagey@yahoo.com), or Val Macer (716-605-9471 or 13vmacer@gmail.com).**
2. When making a donation, the following will simplify the process and increase the accuracy for the counters:
 - A. If possible, **use the numbered envelopes assigned to you** and located at the back of the Sanctuary. If you did not receive envelopes, notify Sandy, Sandy, or Val and we will provide them for you. However, if you forget your assignment envelope, please feel free to use the pew envelopes instead.
 - B. Write **a separate check for each item**- sometimes we miss notes and get confused!



BACK TO BASICS

OUTREACH MINISTRIES, INC.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH FAITH AND LOVE

December 13, 2024

Rev James E. Giles
President and CEO

Board of Directors

Dennis Walczyk, Chair
Retired President and
CEO, Catholic Charities

Hon. James McLeod,
Vice-Chair
Retired City Court
Judge

Ada Deans, Secretary
Retired Teacher

Peter Goergen,
Treasurer
Risk Manager, M&T
Bank

Pamela Deans
Administrator

Chris DelPrince
Management
Consultant

Steven Nichols, Retired
Buffalo Police Captain

Rev. Daniel Schifeling
Chair, Buffalo
Peacemakers
Advisory Committee

Lamont Singletary
Owner, ABC Cleaning
Services

Dennis Wilson
Buffalo Public School
Teacher, Business
Owner

Faren Gault Wilson
University of Buffalo

Elaine Swaine, Ministry to Community Committee
University Presbyterian Church
3330 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14214-1316

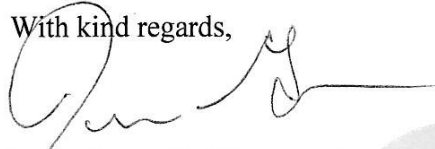
Dear Elaine,

On behalf of **Back to Basics Outreach Ministries**, I extend a heartfelt thank you for the very generous donation of \$200.00 from the University Presbyterian Church.

Your generosity enables the ministry to operate many programs, including the Buffalo Peacemakers program that prevents violence amongst our youth through mentoring on the streets, our Street Engagement Team that responds to violent conflicts to draw at-risk young people into supportive services and mentoring towards more healthy, positive life directions, our Adult Re-Entry Program for men returning from prison, our Emergency and Transitional Housing Shelters, and our H.E.A.T. (Health Empowerment Attitude Teamwork) Youth Program for at-risk teens, as well as all the outreach work we do for individuals and families with critical basic needs.

Thank you for your important support.

With kind regards,


Pastor James E. Giles
President/ CEO

BUFFALO PEACEMAKERS DONATION RECEIPT – Keep for your records

Date: December 13, 2024

Amount of Donation: \$200.00

Back to Basics' Tax ID: 16-1509888

No goods or services were provided in exchange for this donation.