



AUGUST 2023

UCPC Community Care Line

“We invite all to faith in Jesus Christ and growth in Discipleship through Word, Prayer, and Service.”

A Note from the Pastor

John 15:1-5 Jesus said: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ... Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”

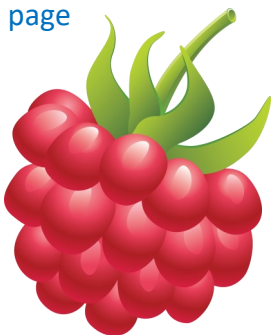


Diana Solie	8/5
Curtis McNeill	8/20
Ruth Knapman	8/24
Larry Peterson	8/24
Doreen McNeill	8/31

If your Birthday or Anniversary are missing, or if you do not wish to have them posted in the Newsletter please contact UCPC Office.

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I *LOVE* raspberries. They are so great! ...*Except* when they’re trying to grow up among my tomatoes, cabbages, and beets. Ugh! Right next to our garden plot is a raspberry bush that has started to try and shoot up in the garden. Every day it seems I’m out there digging up new stems before they get the chance to become too comfy.

As annoying as it is (and trust me, it’s very annoying), I’m impressed by their determination and I also find myself softening in my anger when I turn around from digging up those shoots and there on the established bush are countless fresh and tasty berries. Those berries make the five minutes of being annoyed totally worth it.

Sometimes I wonder if Jesus ever feels annoyed with us — like he’s trying to direct the raspberry bush that is us but we keep trying to go every-which-way. I can see Jesus being so excited to see us bearing fruit in the world but then we get overly excited and try to do something else or go somewhere else and Jesus says: “whoa whoa whoa whoa. Nah friend, I’ve space for you to thrive right here. That’s someone else’s space. Let’s prune your branches back so this other child of mine can also thrive.” And dang, does that stink. To be the one being pruned must feel like when an open door of opportunity gets slammed shut in our face. It hurts. And it can be so discouraging. But whenever that has happened to me, I always force myself to remember that if God is behind it then it must be for my or another’s health and wellbeing.

Jesus says that apart from him we can bear no fruit and so we are encouraged to abide in Christ always and in all ways. But it can be

A Note from the Pastor, continued

hard to hear of branches being removed from the Divine Vine, because it makes me think of my friends and family who don't believe in God. Is Jesus talking about them? Are they the branches being removed?

And while I don't have first-hand knowledge of who or what Jesus may have been referring to, I'd like to offer another perspective. We may never know who's been pruned and who hasn't, but what we do know is whether *we* are trying to bear fruit for God. We know if we are trying to abide in God and draw on God's strength and help to serve God in the world. And that is what we can focus on. If we think of ourselves as a giant raspberry bush sprouting from God, some of our branches *are* going to be trimmed and pruned and dug up so that we can keep bearing good and helpful fruit for God. That's not going to be a pain-free way of existing with the Divine. But it *will* mean that for years to come we can keep serving and relying on God until the day when we are held in God's hands in eternity without pain. Apart from God we can do nothing. And sometimes that means that God has to pull out the Divine Pruning Shears and use them on us to redirect us down the best pathway.

This summer and fall as you, too, prune bushes around your homes, dead-head flowers so they keep blooming, or discard wilted bouquets, I pray that you can reflect on the ways that God is guiding you – through a Divine Pruning Process – to bear the best fruit you possibly can.



Grace and Peace,
Rev. Erika Bergh

Back-to-School Blessing Proclamation!

The UCPC Session has dedicated the August 13th Time with Young Disciples to a back-to-school blessing. Pastor Erika will make back-pack/briefcase tags to remind people that God goes with them, and that they are blessed.





August 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 10:30 - 11:30AM <u>Worship Service (S)</u> 2:00 - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00 - 8:00PM 12 Step (MR)	31 1:00 - 7:00PM Cello Charly (MR)	1 6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 6:30 - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30 - 9:00PM Great Land Sound(MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L)	2 5:30 - 7:00PM Deacons Meeting (CR) 6:00 - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)	3 5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 6:00 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30 - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	4 2:00 - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)	5 1:00 - 4:00PM D & D (HS)
6 10:30 - 11:30AM <u>Worship Service (S)</u> 2:00 - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00 - 8:00PM 12 Step (MR)	7 1:00 - 2:00PM Women's Bible Study (N) 1:00 - 7:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 5:00 - 6:00PM <u>Sound Team Meeting (S)</u>	8 6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 6:30 - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30 - 9:00PM Great Land Sound(MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L)	9 11:00 - 12:00AM Mission & Outreach 6:00 - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)	10 5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 6:00 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30 - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement) 7:00 - 8:00PM <u>Worship Committee (CR)</u>	11 2:00 - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)	12 1:00 - 4:00PM D & D (HS)
13 10:30 - 11:30AM <u>Worship Service (S)</u> 2:00 - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00 - 8:00PM 12 Step (MR)	14 1:00 - 7:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 5:15PM Finance (N)	15 6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 6:30 - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30 - 9:00PM Great Land Sound(MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L)	16 6:00 - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)	17 5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 6:00 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30PM Session (SL) 6:30 - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	18 2:00 - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)	19 1:00 - 4:00PM D & D (HS)
20 10:30 - 11:30AM <u>Worship Service (S)</u> 2:00 - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00 - 8:00PM 12 Step (MR)	21 1:00 - 7:00PM Cello Charly (MR)	22 6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 6:30 - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30 - 9:00PM Great Land Sound(MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L)	23 6:00 - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)	24 5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 6:00 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30 - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	25 2:00 - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)	26 1:00 - 4:00PM D & D (HS)
27 10:30 - 11:30AM <u>Worship Service (S)</u> 2:00 - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00 - 8:00PM 12 Step (MR)	28 1:00 - 7:00PM Cello Charly (MR)	29 6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 6:30 - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30 - 9:00PM Great Land Sound(MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L)	30 6:00 - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)	31 5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 6:00 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30 - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	1 2:00 - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00 - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)	2 1:00 - 4:00PM D & D (HS)

The following is a summary of the July 2023 UCPC Session meeting minutes. If you would like to read the minutes in their entirety, including the various committee reports, they are available in the Church Office, or by request via email. Contact admin@ucpcfairbanks.org or call 907-479-6728.

Minutes
Stated Meeting of Session
University Community Presbyterian Church
July 20, 2023, Student Lounge

Present: Moderator Rev. Erika Bergh; elders Roger Smith, Matthew Bierer, Joe Krizek, Jerry McBeath, Pat Babcock, Larry Johnson, and Doreen McNeill (Clerk).

Absent: Paula Long.

Guest: Deacon Sarah Lanstra.

Moderator Bergh opened the meeting with prayer at 6:33PM.

Scripture and Devotion: Roger presented a devotion on Psalm 50:7–15

Quorum: The clerk declared a quorum.

Consent Calendar: It was moved and seconded to approve the consent calendar, which includes the docket and minutes of the June 22, 2023 session meeting. Motion was amended by unanimous consent to add 1 item to new business. Amended motion passed by unanimous consent.

Orders of the Day (7:00PM)

Deacons' report. Sarah Lanstra gave the deacons' report. Deacons were thanked for their wonderful service, including bringing a family to church who had not been able to come because their car broke down. Sarah passed around a sign-up sheet to help serve communion. Some elders noted that they could serve communion if they did not have to stand. Deacons and Rev. Bergh will discuss the logistics of accommodations for this and other barriers.

Comments from the Congregation. No comments from the congregation were received.

Clerk's Report. In addition to the written report, below, Doreen reported that she and Pat Babcock had talked about several ideas for faith development. Pat has agreed to chair this committee and will be working on scheduling a meeting date and inviting people to attend. Related to this, the Garage Guys offer to help finance using Right Now Media resources for faith development was discussed. Although no conclusions were made, Pat Babcock will take this resource into consideration for the Faith Development Committee.

Old Business

- Details of the July 30 worship on the porch were discussed. **It was moved and seconded to hold worship on the porch (weather permitting) on July 30, as previously planned, with the usual fellowship drinks and snacks in the narthex. Motion passed 5 to 3.** We plan to have seating outdoors, with the electric piano, and the peavy sound system.

Details of August 13 worship and celebration to welcome Rev. Bergh. This motion was passed at the June meeting. Doreen will work with Melissa and others to craft a reminder in the newsletter. Sarah Lanstra will send Doreen a list of members and attendees that we haven't seen in a while and divide up the list between deacons and elders to personally call. Sarah was asked to invite deacons and other fellowship committee members to create a special fellowship time.

New Business:

- **It was moved and seconded to lovingly and tenderly transfer membership for Theresa and Charla Kouadio from UCPC to Utqiagvik Presbyterian Church, effective immediately, as requested by Kouadios and Utqiagvik PC. Motion approved by unanimous consent.**

- **It was moved and seconded to transfer membership of Ron and Margi Illingworth from New Hope Presbyterian Church to UCPC effective immediately. Motion approved by unanimous consent.** Rev. Bergh will work with Illingworths to find a good date to present them to the congregation.
- **It was moved and seconded to hold a Back to School blessing on August 13 in place of the children’s sermon. Motion approved by unanimous consent.** Rev. Bergh will purchase supplies paid through the Miscellaneous pastoral expense account to make backpack/brief case tags to remind people that God goes with them and they are blessed.

We discussed a petition opposing the ore haul from the Manh Choh gold mine near Tetlin to the Fort Knox gold mine ore milling facility northeast of Fairbanks. While there are ethical considerations, this is a highly political issue for which Christians (including UCPC members) have many different points of view. No action by the session will be taken.

Old Business

- Ways to attract new members were discussed. What Spiritual gifts can we offer to people? We noted that positives include UCPC’s deacons who are good at caring and praying for our members, children’s sermons, that children are in the service. While many ideas were posed, Rev. Bergh suggested reading the book *the Invitational Christian* and possibly having a separate committee or focus group work on intentional outreach, with a facilitator to guide us in a plan of action. This could be done in a session retreat in which we write up a strategic plan.
- Action item: Roger and Pastor Erika will approach Grace Church about cooperative issues that both churches could work on, as we share the building.
- Proposed building rental rates were discussed. Roger has not yet been able to work with Melissa to come up with an equitable increase in fees.

Meeting Schedule - Next meeting: August 17, 6:30PM in the student lounge.

August Devotional and Elder of the Month: Larry Johnson

Adjourn: The meeting closed in prayer at 8:45PM, led by Rev. Bergh.



UCPC Finance Report		
	July 2023 as of 7/20	2023 Year-to-Date through 7/20
Income	\$6,717	\$168,044
Expense	\$7,885	\$112,871
Net	(\$1,168)	\$55,174

PLEASE JOIN US!!

We will have a welcome celebration of our wonderful new contracted pastor, Rev. Erika Bergh, on August 13. UCPC has contracted with Pastor Erika to be our part-time pastor, while we continue to search for an interim pastor. Her duties include leading worship and providing pastoral care. Her office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10AM to 2PM.

Worship service begins at 10:30AM as usual, and we'll have a joyful extended fellowship hour afterward. *We'd love to see you here!!*

Care Closet Profile

This month's Helping Alaska care closet is the Community Covenant Church's Children's Clothing Closet (wow, that's a lot of Cs).

According to C3's admin assistant, what the Children's Clothing Closet needs most is ADVERTISING! They don't get as many requests as they could handle. The closet is well-stocked, though they *could* use some boys' pants and shorts, sizes 2 through 7. If you know of a family who is in need of new clothing for their young ones, put them in touch with the C3 Children's Clothing Closet Coordinator, Lisa Scott, at 907-374-7199, or the Helping Alaska community helpline at 907 452-5683. Lisa's hours at the church are Mondays and Thursdays, from 11AM to 3PM, for folks who would like to "shop" the Closet.

Donations can be dropped off anytime.

August Elder of the month is: **Larry Johnson**

August Deacon of the month is: **Donita Lawhead**

Shout Out!

**Thank you, Donna Davidson,
for arranging the
Prayer Person schedule!!**



Volunteers Always Needed!

If you are willing and able to push a lawn mower, UCPC needs you! The sign up sheet is on the Garage Guys table in the Narthex.



BOILER PROJECT UPDATE

Interior Gas Utility is waiting for DOT permit approval to drill under College Rd. The permit was applied for in May, but IGU has other permits pending with DOT since April. IGU is calling DOT weekly.

Fairbanks Pumping and Thawing is scheduled to install the boiler condensate drain from the boiler building to the parking lot sewer cleanout Monday, July 31.

The front of the boiler building was painted and when the drain to sewer work is complete we will paint the parking lot side of the building.

Don't even think about it!



University Community Presbyterian Church

3510 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709

Website: www.ucpcfairbanks.org

Phone: 907-479-6728

Organist ~ Kathy Dohner
Pianist ~ Kathy Dohner
Choir~ Patti Gallagher
Sound Manager ~ Curtis McNeill

Committee leaders

Worship: Roger Smith
Finance and Stewardship: Jerry McBeath
Mission and Outreach: Larry Johnson
Faith Development:
Building Stewards: Joe Krizek
Personnel: Matthew Bierer
Nominating: Jerry McBeath

Deacons

Donita Lawhead 455-6849
Carol Nielsen 388-8154
Melissa Bierer 687-5037
Sarah Lanstra 378-3929
Janet Johnson 687-7148
Will Haight 978-9679

Supply Pastor .

Rev. Erika Bergh 1-907-717-5015

Email: rev.erikabergh@gmail.com

Admin Assistant

Melissa Bierer

Office: (907) 479-6728

Email: admin@ucpcfairbanks.org

Office Hours

9:00AM to 1:00PM, Monday - Friday

Session Elders

Doreen McNeill	388-0544	Clerk of Session
Jerry McBeath	479-2870	Class of 2023
Paula Long	687-7444	Class of 2023
Roger Smith	322-2595	Class of 2023
Joe Krizek	460-4294	Class of 2024
Pat Babcock		Class of 2025
Matthew Bierer	474-0106	Class of 2025
Larry Johnson	479-4766	Class of 2025

