



DECEMBER 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

### We Gather — Advent 2023

There is power in gathering. When we gather, our energy is joined with others. We feed off each other and support one another in the task at hand. Whether we are giving space for grief to flow, shouting chants so lawmakers can hear our voice, studying for a test, or singing and dancing and making toasts till the cows come home, gathered people create energy.

Why? Well as Christians, we may recall Jesus promising his disciples that if two people agree on anything then they should ask God for it and it will be done. “For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Matt. 18:20). Wow. That’s a lot of power. All we need is two people agreeing and then asking God and God will do that? That kind of power could make the world an amazing place. That kind of power is proof the Spirit of Christ has come down on us.

During the pandemic, we saw the pain of NOT gathering together. We saw the dysfunction of the world and the demoralizing and de-energizing power of separation. Gathering together these past few months, with our first potlucks and Thanksgiving meal since the pandemic, has shown what a great gift Christ’s Spirit is, and how potent the promise is that Jesus makes in Matthew 18.

In Matthew 18, Jesus promises that where two or three (or more!) are gathered in the name of God, the advent of God is upon us. God, the source of all energy and life, appears there with us. God, the source of all peace and love. God, the source of all goodness and joy. God, the source of all creation. *That* God is there when we gather in His name. There is power in gathering because when we gather, all the little images of God in each of us are combined to create a much larger and more comprehensive image of God at work in the world – lamenting, learning, advocating, celebrating, and much more. We are what St. Augustine calls the *Totus Christus*—the total Christ.

This Advent, we’ll be worshipping under a theme of “We Gather” – celebrating the ways we come together during this season, in particular, to welcome the new-born king, the Prince of Peace, the Immanuel, God with us. For where two or three are gathered in Jesus’ name, there God is, too. So, come and let us gather together, as we both celebrate the God Immanuel with us already *and* await the God incarnate yet to be born.

- Pastor Erika Bergh



- David Staneck (70!) 12/13
- Melissa Bierer (29!) 12/17
- David Dohner 12/20
- Patti Gallagher 12/30
- The Petersons 12/20

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

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# December



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

|   |   |   |  |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>26</b><br/>9:30 - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH)<br/><u>10:30 - 11:30AM Worship Service (S)</u><br/>2 - 4PM Grace Church (S)<br/>7 - 8PM 12 Step (MR)</p>   | <p><b>27</b><br/>1:30 - 7:00PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)</p>                                       | <p><b>28</b><br/>6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N)<br/>12 - 5PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>6:30 - 8PM Boy Scouts (CE)<br/>6:30 - 9PM Great Land Sounds (MR)<br/>8 - 10PM 12 Step AA (L)</p>                      | <p><b>29</b><br/>2:30 - 6:30PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/>5:30 - 6:45PM Choir Practice (MR)<br/>6:00PM - 7:00PM Girl Scouts (L)<br/>6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</p>  | <p><b>30</b><br/>11:30AM - 4PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS)<br/>6 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR &amp; FH Classrooms)<br/>6:30 - 9PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)</p>  | <p><b>1</b><br/>2PM - 4PM Four Winds (MR)<br/>6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR)<br/>8 - 10PM 12 Step NA (L)</p>                                   | <p><b>2</b><br/>1 - 4PM D &amp; D (HS)</p>   |
| <p><b>3</b><br/><b>Advent</b><br/>9:30 - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH)<br/><u>10:30 - 11:30AM Worship Service (S)</u><br/>11:30AM - 1:30PM Mission committee breakfast burrito work party (FH)<br/>2 - 4PM Grace Church (S)<br/>7 - 8PM 12 Step (MR)</p>   | <p><b>4</b><br/>1:30 - 7PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/><u>5 - 6PM Sound Team Meeting (S)</u></p> | <p><b>5</b><br/><b>6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N)</b><br/>12 - 5PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 8PM Boy Scouts (CE)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Great Land Sounds (MR)<br/><b>8 - 10PM 12 Step AA (L)</b></p>  | <p><b>6</b><br/>2:30 - 6:30PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/><b>5:30 - 6:45PM Choir Practice (MR)</b><br/><b>6 - 7PM Girl Scouts (L)</b><br/><b>6 - 9PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</b></p>  | <p><b>7</b><br/>11:30AM - 4PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS)</b><br/><b>5:30 - 7:00PM Deacons Meeting (CR)</b><br/><b>6 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR &amp; FH Classrooms)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)</p>   | <p><b>8</b><br/>2 - 4PM Four Winds (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR)</b><br/>8 - 10PM 12 Step NA (L)</p>                              | <p><b>9</b><br/>1 - 4PM D &amp; D (HS)<br/>3 - 7PM Grace Church (FH)<br/>6 - 10PM CG Jung Society (SL)</p> |
| <p><b>10</b><br/>9:30 - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH)<br/><u>10:30 - 11:30AM Worship Service (S)</u><br/><u>12-3PM Elder&amp;Deacon Training</u><br/>2 - 4PM Grace Church (S)<br/>3-5PM Youth Group @Lord of Life, North Pole<br/>4 - 8PM Beaver Sports Christmas Party (SL and HS)<br/>7 - 8PM 12 Step (MR)</p> | <p><b>11</b><br/>1:30 - 7PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)</p>  | <p><b>12</b><br/><b>6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N)</b><br/>12 - 5PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 8PM Boy Scouts (CE)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Great Land Sounds (MR)<br/><b>8 - 10PM 12 Step AA (L)</b></p> | <p><b>13</b><br/><b>10 - 11AM Mission &amp; Outreach</b><br/>2:30 - 6:30PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/>4:30 - 5:30PM Worship Committee (CR)<br/>5:30 - 6:45PM Choir Practice (MR)<br/><b>6 - 7PM Girl Scouts (L)</b><br/><b>6 - 9PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</b></p> | <p><b>14</b><br/>All Day - PHH Christmas Party (FH &amp; K)<br/>11:30AM - 4PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS)</b><br/><b>6 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR &amp; FH Classrooms)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)</p> | <p><b>15</b><br/>12 - 4PM Cyberlynx (FH)<br/>2 - 4PM Four Winds (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR)</b><br/>8 - 10PM 12 Step NA (L)</p> | <p><b>16</b><br/>1 - 4PM Cello Charly (S)<br/>1 - 4PM D &amp; D (HS)</p>                                   |
| <p><b>17</b><br/>9:30 - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH)<br/><u>10:30 - 11:30AM Worship Service (S)</u><br/>2 - 4PM Grace Church (S)<br/>7 - 8PM 12 Step (MR)<br/>7 - 10PM Great Land Sounds (S)</p>  | <p><b>18</b><br/>1:30 - 7PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/><b>5:15PM Finance (CR)</b></p>           | <p><b>19</b><br/><b>6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N)</b><br/>12 - 5PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 8PM Boy Scouts (CE)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Great Land Sounds (MR)<br/><b>8 - 10PM 12 Step AA (L)</b></p> | <p><b>20</b><br/>2:30 - 6:30PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/>5:30 - 6:45PM Choir Practice (MR)<br/><b>6 - 7PM Girl Scouts (L)</b><br/><b>6 - 9PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</b></p>  | <p><b>21</b><br/>11:30AM - 4PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS)</b><br/><b>6 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR &amp; FH Classrooms)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)<br/><b>6:30PM Session (SL)</b></p>                 | <p><b>22</b><br/>2 - 4PM Four Winds (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR)</b><br/>8 - 10PM 12 Step NA (L)</p>                             | <p><b>23</b><br/>1 - 4PM D &amp; D (HS)</p>  |
| <p><b>24</b><br/>9:30 - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH)<br/><u>10:30 - 11:30AM Worship Service (S)</u><br/>2 - 4PM Grace Church (S)<br/>5-6PM Family and Kids Christmas Eve Service (S)<br/>7 - 8PM 12 Step (MR)<br/>9-10PM Candlelight Christmas Eve Service (S)</p>  | <p><b>25</b><br/><b>Christmas Day</b></p>   | <p><b>26</b><br/><b>6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N)</b><br/>12 - 5PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 8PM Boy Scouts (CE)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Great Land Sounds (MR)<br/><b>8 - 10PM 12 Step AA (L)</b></p> | <p><b>27</b><br/>2:30 - 6:30PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/>5:30 - 6:45PM Choir Practice (MR)<br/><b>6 - 7PM Girl Scouts (L)</b><br/><b>6 - 9PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</b></p>  | <p><b>28</b><br/>11:30AM - 4PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS)</b><br/><b>6 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR &amp; FH Classrooms)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)</p>  | <p><b>29</b><br/>2 - 4PM Four Winds (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR)</b><br/>8 - 10PM 12 Step NA (L)</p>                             | <p><b>30</b><br/>1 - 4PM D &amp; D (HS)</p>  |
| <p><b>31</b><br/>9:30 - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH)<br/><u>10:30 - 11:30AM Worship Service (S)</u><br/>2 - 4PM Grace Church (S)<br/>7 - 8PM 12 Step (MR)</p>   | <p><b>1</b><br/>1:30 - 7PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/><u>5 - 6PM Sound Team Meeting (S)</u></p> | <p><b>2</b><br/><b>6:30 - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N)</b><br/>12 - 5PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 8PM Boy Scouts (CE)</b><br/>6:30 - 9PM Great Land Sounds (MR)<br/>8 - 10PM 12 Step AA (L)</p>         | <p><b>3</b><br/>2:30 - 6:30PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>4 - 6PM Laurie Long (HS)<br/>5:30 - 6:45PM Choir Practice (MR)<br/><b>6 - 7PM Girl Scouts (L)</b><br/><b>6 - 9PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</b></p>   | <p><b>4</b><br/>11:30AM - 4PM Cello Charly (MR)<br/>5:30 - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS)<br/><b>5:30 - 7PM Deacons Meeting (CR)</b><br/><b>6 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR &amp; FH Classrooms)</b><br/>6 - 9PM Sweet Adelines</p>                              | <p><b>5</b><br/>2 - 4PM Four Winds (MR)<br/><b>6:30 - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR)</b><br/>8 - 10PM 12 Step NA (L)</p>                              | <p><b>6</b><br/>1 - 4PM D &amp; D (HS)</p>   |



The following is a summary of the November 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](mailto:admin@ucpcfairbanks.org) or call 907-479-6728.

**Minutes  
Stated Meeting of Session  
University Community Presbyterian Church  
November 16, 2023, Student Lounge**

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

**Absent:** Paula Long.

**Guest:** Deacon Donita Lawhead.

Moderator Bergh opened the meeting with prayer at 6:32PM.

**Scripture and Devotion:** Matthew presented a devotion on Matthew 7:5-6.

**Quorum:** The clerk declared a quorum. A quorum of session is the Pastor and 1/3 of the active elders.

**Adoption of Consent Agenda, consisting of:**

Docket

Minutes of the October 26, 2023, stated meeting of the Session

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| Pastor                                 | Mission and Outreach |
| Deacons                                | Personnel            |
| Clerk of Session                       | Nominating           |
| Finance, Treasurer, & Stewardship      | Worship              |
| Building Stewards                      |                      |
| Interim Pastor Search Ad Hoc Committee |                      |

**Reports:** No reports were discussed further.

**New Business:**

Plan for By-laws updating and special congregational meeting. Doreen McNeill and Jim Durst (after he comes on the session in January) volunteered to guide updates. Joe and Jerry have comments regarding the by-laws and will send them to Jim and Doreen.

Finance committee recommends a plaque be made thanking UCPC donors to the boiler replacement campaign, listing names of donors as well as respecting those who preferred to remain anonymous, for the approximate cost of \$500. It was decided that Jerry will find out which donors want their names on the plaque.

The Finance committee seeks guidance of session on whether: to develop an independent capital cam-

campaign starting in 2024 to reduce the UCPC mortgage (the single largest monthly expense of the church) and/or to increase non-cash contributions to the church through encouraging gifting of property, CDs, IRAs, etc. It was decided that before this is done, we need to have a clear vision for what mission this money should go to when the mortgage is paid off, and that will be part of the campaign.

### **Old Business**

Annual Meeting was discussed. Consensus was that it went well.

Transitional consulting update. The Search committee has a meeting scheduled for Nov. 28.

### **Orders of the Day (7PM)**

Deacons' report. Donita Lawhead gave the deacons' report. Deacons were thanked for their outstanding service.

Comments from the Congregation. No in-person comments were received from the congregation.

Discussion: *The Invitational Christian*. Pastor Erika led the discussion of this book. Members agreed to continue the discussion, as this is a worthwhile book, with clear ideas that could be implemented at UCPC.

**Meeting Schedule**      Next meeting: December 21, 6:30PM

December Devotional and Elder of the Month: Patricia Babcock

**Adjourn** Closing prayer was led by Rev. Bergh and the meeting adjourned at 8:40PM.



**December Elder of the month is:  
Pat Babcock**

**December Deacon of the month is:  
Will Haight**



UCPC  
FAITH & FELLOWSHIP  
**THANKSGIVING  
POTLUCK**

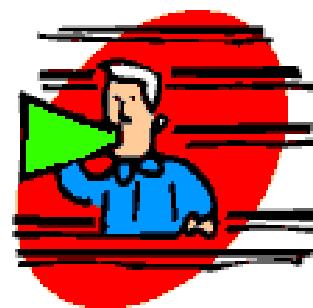
NOV. 19, 2023 | 3:30-5:30 PM

Thanks to all who contributed to the Thanksgiving potluck, and to all who attended! It was a lovely time of fellowship with a *lot* of fabulous food.

No Faith and Fellowship event in December—ain't nobody got time for that!

## **Shout Out (and opportunity)!**

**Thank you to Kathy Dohner for so wonderfully providing the piano and organ music for our worship services!**



**Kathy will be away for several weeks in January, so if you know of anyone willing and able to fill in for her (admittedly, no easy task!), contact the office and/or a member of the Worship committee.**

## *ADOPT-A-FAMILY*



We have received a family from Helping Alaska. They are a family of six, including a newborn. The angel tree has been set up in the narthex. If you want to give, but are not coming to worship services on Sunday morning, you can come by the church during office hours to pick out an item. Please wrap the gifts when you return them, with the ornament attached. Gifts need to be at the church by ***Sunday, December 17.*** Thank you for your generosity in this project we have been doing for the last few years.



# CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Why is the Christmas carol “What Child Is This” so meaningful to us? Yes, it links a beautiful tune with inspiring words. But it is more than that. It is in the vision behind and beyond the tune and text where we find the deeper truths.

When we sing “What Child Is This,” we sing of a flesh-and-blood human, born under the most vulnerable of conditions. We sing of Emmanuel, “God with us.”

When we sing “What Child Is This,” we are reminded of infants born in our own life stories, our congregational communities and beyond, down the street and around the world.

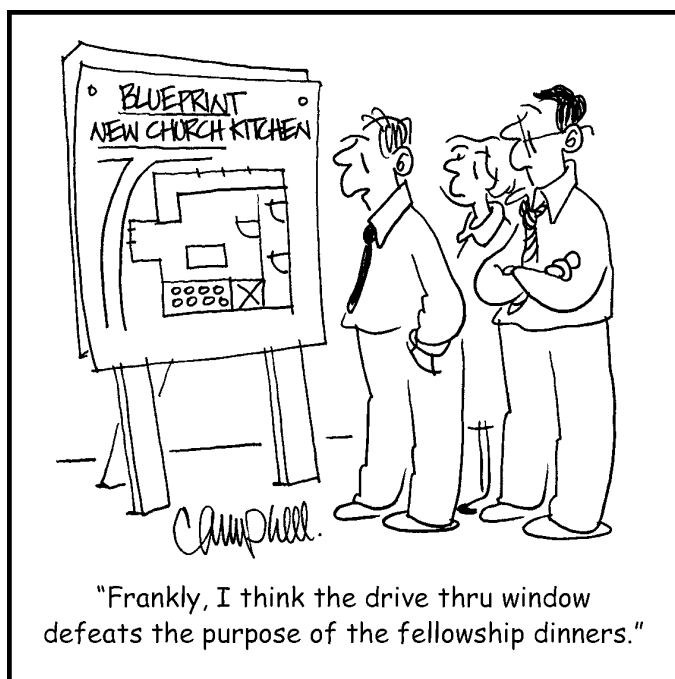
The words “so bring him incense, gold and myrrh” remind us not only of the gifts the Magi offered to the baby Jesus – the perfect gift – but also how we can support those whom God loves with our own gifts.

With the words “the babe, the Son of Mary,” we sing of all those who are vulnerable and in need, which includes those who receive support from the Christmas Joy Offering. Emergency and health assistance and educational opportunities are real, human needs – needs that we can help meet.

The Christmas Joy Offering supports retired ministers and church workers and their families through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions as they face medical and emergency costs. The Offering also supports students in Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color, as they pursue their education and prepare to bring their gifts in service to the church and world. We are receiving it on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent (Dec. 17) or anytime during the Advent season.

Thank you for your generous gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering, and your ongoing prayers for all those it supports. Your gifts make a difference, and bring praise to the babe, the son of Mary.

Reprinted from the Leader’s Guide for Christmas Joy from PCUSA



## Building and Grounds Update

Saturday, Nov. 18, the building stewards installed 17 new emergency lights and relamped fixtures in the CE building. Additionally a new Presbytery of the Yukon wall map was hung on the wall opposite the choir room. Thank you to Curtis and Brian for coordinating this work.



# Christmas Eve Services

10:30AM Regular Sunday Worship Service

5PM Kids and Families Service

9PM Traditional Candlelight Service



## Great Land Sounds Concert

Great Land Sounds is a barbershop chorus which will sing acapella songs for your enjoyment Sunday evening December 17th at 7PM.

The group has been in existence for over 40 years, varying in size and membership. For this concert, conducted by Dr. Kirsten Blair, Willa Watts, Mike Ferguson and Wayne Heimer will sing lead, Dick Holm and Niles Carr bass, Terry McCarthy and Ted Sponsel baritone and Roger Smith tenor. The 45 minute program will include a set of Advent sacred songs and a set of secular Christmas carols.

*Women's Bible Study*

*December 4 and 18, at  
2:30PM, in the Narthex.*

*Beginning the study of*

*The Invitational*

*Christian*

## Sewing/Knitting/Crafting Circle?

Would anyone might be interested in a monthly or fortnightly gathering of crafty types to work on our "UFOs" (UnFinished Objects) starting after the new year? Contact me, Melissa, at [admin@ucpcfairbanks.org](mailto:admin@ucpcfairbanks.org) or call (or text) me @ 907-687-5037, if you're interested!



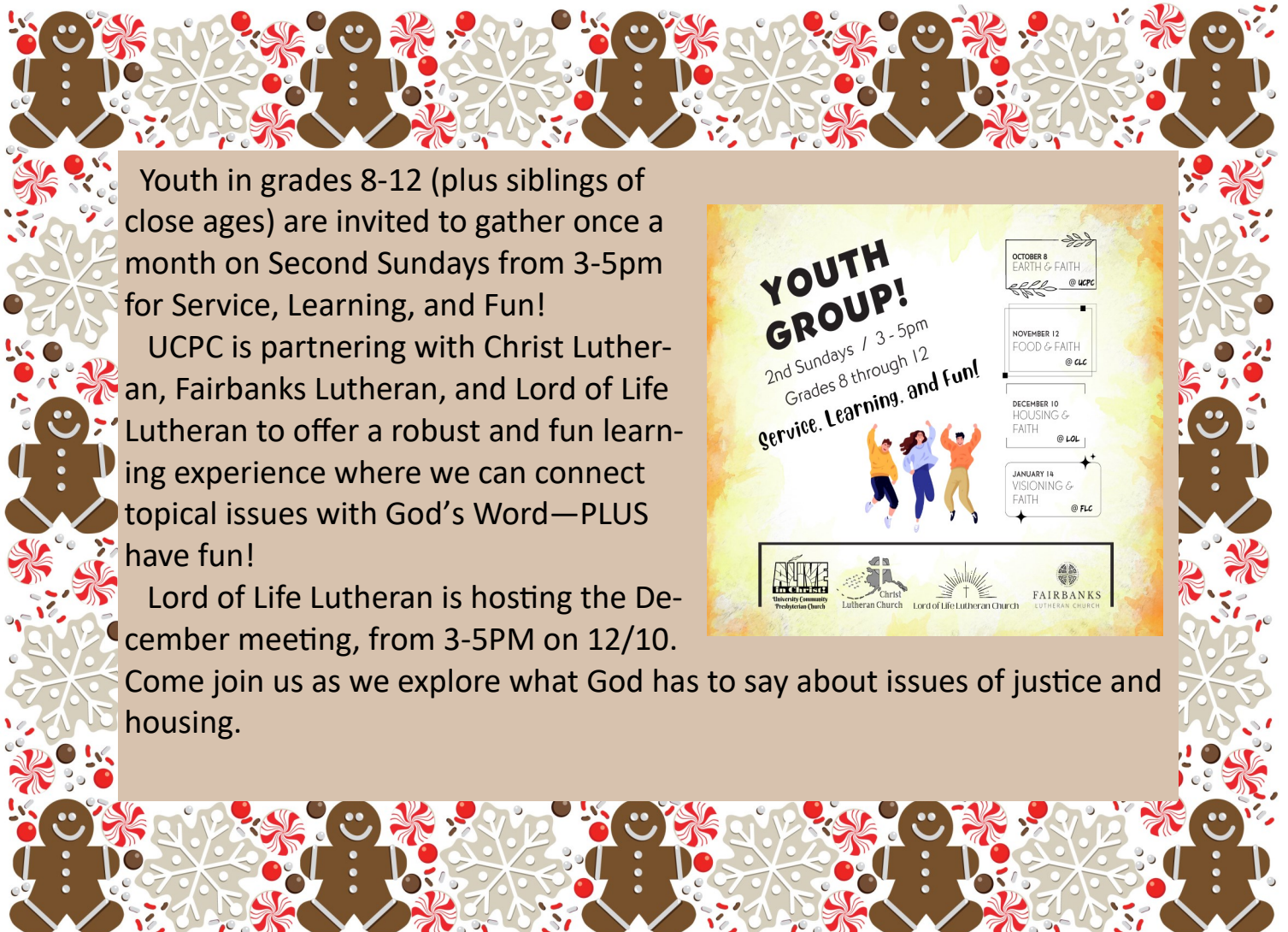


# Rooted in LOVE

"They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season"  
— Psalm 1:3

## Rooted in Love: Fall 2023 Stewardship Update

Thanks to the members and friends who have turned in their pledge cards—so far we have received 29 cards, totaling \$181,260 in pledges.



Youth in grades 8-12 (plus siblings of close ages) are invited to gather once a month on Second Sundays from 3-5pm for Service, Learning, and Fun!

UCPC is partnering with Christ Lutheran, Fairbanks Lutheran, and Lord of Life Lutheran to offer a robust and fun learning experience where we can connect topical issues with God's Word—PLUS have fun!

Lord of Life Lutheran is hosting the December meeting, from 3-5PM on 12/10. Come join us as we explore what God has to say about issues of justice and housing.

# University Community Presbyterian Church



3510 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709

Website: [www.ucpcfairbanks.org](http://www.ucpcfairbanks.org)

Phone: (907) 479-6728

## Office Hours

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

*Pastor Erika is in the office Monday, Wednesday and Thursday*

## Contacts

**Supply Pastor** . Rev. Erika Bergh      1-(907)-717-5015      Email: [rev.erikabergh@gmail.com](mailto:rev.erikabergh@gmail.com)

**Admin Assistant:** Melissa Bierer      (907) 479-6728      Email: [admin@ucpcfairbanks.org](mailto:admin@ucpcfairbanks.org)

## Session Elders and Committee Leaders

|                      |          |  |
|----------------------|----------|--|
| Doreen McNeill       | 388-0544 | Clerk of Session                       |
| Jerry McBeath ('23)  | 479-2870 | Finance and Stewardship; Nominating    |
| Paula Long ('23)     | 687-7444 | Fellowship; Hospitality and Membership |
| Roger Smith ('23)    | 322-2595 | Worship                                |
| Joe Krizek ('24)     | 460-4294 | Building Stewards                      |
| Pat Babcock ('25)    | 978-7187 | Faith Development                      |
| Matthew Bierer ('25) | 474-0106 | Personnel                              |

## Board of Deacons

|                      |          |                |
|----------------------|----------|----------------|
| Donita Lawhead ('23) | 388-4106 | President      |
| Carol Nielsen ('25)  | 388-8154 | Vice President |
| Sarah Lanstra ('25)  | 378-3929 | Treasurer      |
| Melissa Bierer ('24) | 687-5037 | Secretary      |
| Janet Johnson ('24)  | 687-7148 | At-large       |
| Will Haight ('25)    | 978-9679 | At-large       |

## Worship Service Leaders

|                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| Matthew Bierer | Video Manager    |
| Kathy Dohner   | Organist/Pianist |
| Curtis McNeill | Sound Manager    |
| Theresa Reed   | Choir Director   |

