

DECEMBER 2024



DECEMBER



Melissa Bierer 12/17
David Dohner 12/20

If your Birthday or Anniversary is missing, incorrect, or if you do not wish to have it posted in the



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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

A blessed December to you all!

I don't know about you, but I am coming into the Advent and Christmas seasons with a little less pep and joy that I usually do. I'm feeling weary! In the last two months, our community has had three very unexpected deaths, plus another death that was fairly anticipated; our country has gone through a difficult election cycle; devastating wars which we wish had ended long ago, are now going into their second and third years; and its winter in Fairbanks! As much as I love winter (it's my favorite season), it does bring its own unique set of challenges: driveways to shovel ...and then re-shovel, less daylight, car batteries dying, and with a toddler, all the time spent putting on and taking off winter gear takes the same amount of time as we'll be spending outside sometimes. All of these events and circumstances are very wearying!

So, when I discovered that Kate Bowler had created an Advent Devotional called *The Weary World Rejoices*, I couldn't help but think of our congregation specifically. We have come out of a busy Fall with hosting Presbytery and several other big and fun Sundays, only to land in a winter season beginning with grief and unexpected loss. We're weary! Whether we feel it or not.

As such, I am grateful that Bowler has created this devotional! She's a best-selling author, a Professor of Religious History at Duke University, a mom of two, and at the age of 35 she was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer with a gruelling treatment plan and recovery. In the aftermath of her cancer, Kate has been rethinking "pretty much everything she thought she knew about life, loss, grief, and even joy." Because of this, she approaches this season of Advent and Christmas, not with a false joy or false hope, but with eyes wide open and searching for Christ amid a messy existence. Through this devotional, she invites us along that journey with her, and my hope is that this guide will help us find moments of hope, peace, love, joy, and connection as we journey towards Christ's birth together.

Because the reality is that the season of Advent is here! "It's a season that invites us into the tension of 'already' and 'not yet,' where we hold the fragile hope that everything broken will be made whole, that every sorrow will be met with joy, and that every deep longing will be filled with love. It's about finding a way to sit with

the messiness of life while still holding on to the promise of what's to come."

So "this year, we invite you to embrace the Advent and Christmas season as it is – imperfect, beautiful, and real." During this season, we'll journey through this free, individual, four-week, daily devotional together. You can access it online two ways: (1) there's a downloadable interactive PDF to read and use on your computer, tablet, or phone; or (2) there's an "online course page" (which makes it sound more intense than it actually is!) where you can access each day's devotion (you just have to "register" [with your name and email address], then "log in" each time using those same credentials). (There's also a printable PDF – it's 96 [single-sided] pages though, so if you'd like the church to print you a copy, let us know!)

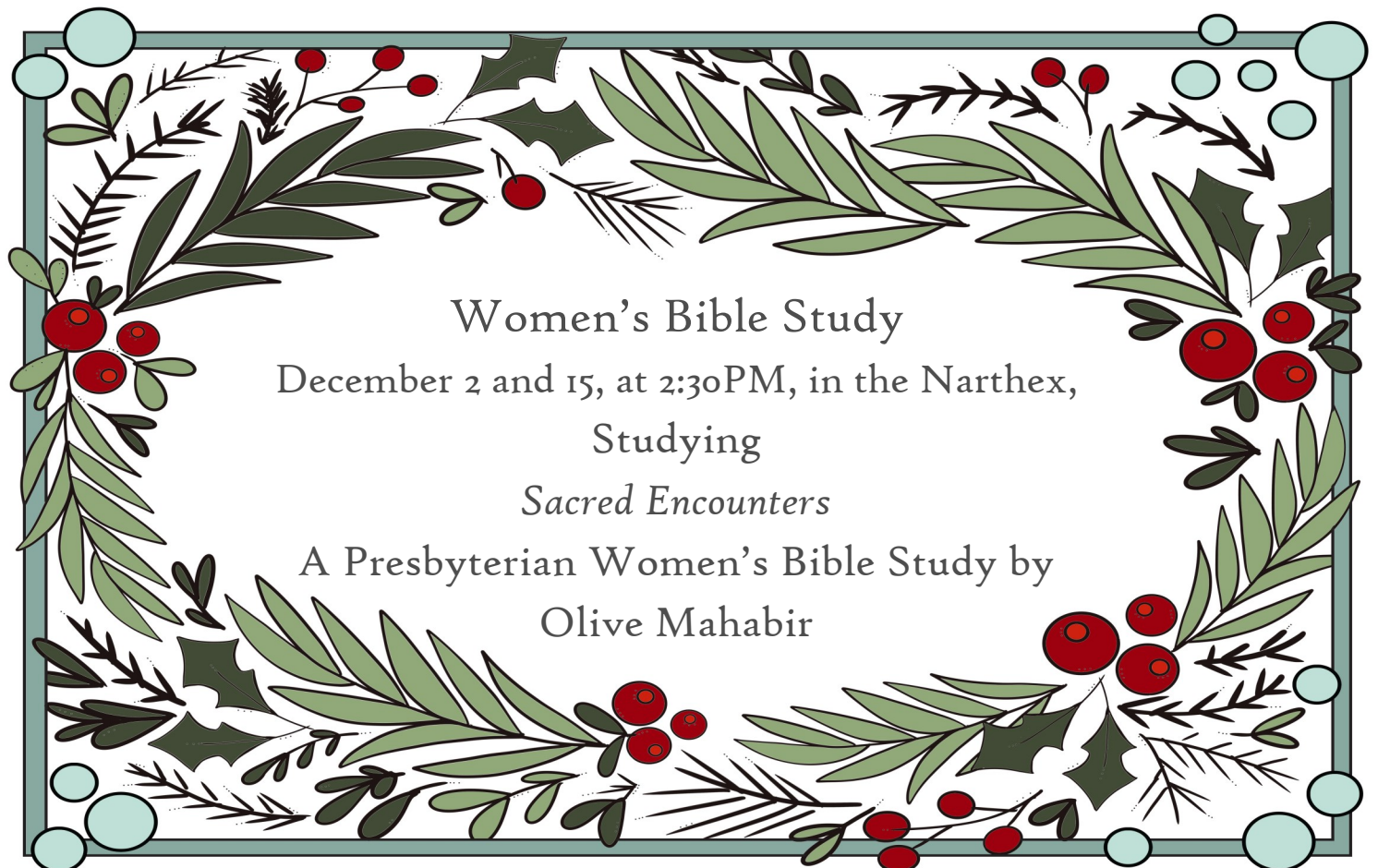
This individual devotional "is made to use solo or with your family, best friend, co-worker, or partner. Each entry should take around 20 minutes, including time to read scripture, read a short devotional, reflect on thoughtful questions, and close with a blessing. Each Sunday's entry is meant to be All-Play to use with family or friends (FaceTime counts!), including time to light the Advent candle and reflect together on what you are learning."

May we, in our weary world, find ways to authentically rejoice in this season of preparation for Christ's coming. I hope you will journey with us and *The Weary World Rejoices!*

Pastor Erika Bergh

Access the devotional's "Individual Guide" at: https://katebowler.com/seasonal_devotional/the-weary-world-rejoices/#guides

(All quotes come from various pages within <https://katebowler.com/>)





December 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Advent 9:30AM - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH) 10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 6:00PM - 7:00PM 12 Step (MR)	2 11:00AM - 5:00PM Laurie Long (HS) 12:00PM - 6:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 5:00PM - 6:00PM Sound Team Meeting (S)	3 6:30AM - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 12:00PM - 6:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 6:30PM - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Great Land Sounds (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L)	4 11:00AM - 5:00PM Laurie Long (HS) 12:00PM - 6:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 5:30PM - 6:45PM Choir Practice (MR) 6:00PM - 7:00PM Girl Scouts (L) 6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)	5 11:00AM - 4:30PM Cello Charly (MR) 5:30PM - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 5:30PM - 7:00PM Deacons Meeting (CR) 6:00PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	6 2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)	7 1:00PM - 4:00PM D & D (FH Classroom)
8 9:30AM - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH) 10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 6:00PM - 7:00PM 12 Step (MR)	9 11:00AM - 5:00PM Laurie Long (HS) 12:00PM - 6:00PM Cello Charly (MR)	10 6:30AM - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 12:00PM - 6:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 6:30PM - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Great Land Sounds (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L)	11 10:00AM - 4:30PM Cyberlynx (FH&K) 10:00AM - 11:00AM Mission & Outreach 11:00AM - 5:00PM Laurie Long (HS) 12:00PM - 6:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 4:00PM - 5:00PM Worship Committee (CR) 5:30PM - 6:45PM Choir Practice (MR) 6:00PM - 7:00PM Girl Scouts (L) 6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)	12 11:00AM - 4:30PM Cello Charly (MR) 5:30PM - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 6:00PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	13 2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:00PM - 10:00PM Christian Motorcyclists (FH & K) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)	14 1:00PM - 4:00PM D & D (FH Classroom) 1:30PM - 4:30PM Cello Recital (S)
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29 9:30AM - 10:15AM Adult Bible Study (FH) 10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 6:00PM - 7:00PM 12 Step (MR)	30 11:00AM - 5:00PM Laurie Long (HS) 12:00PM - 6:00PM Cello Charly (MR)	31 6:30AM - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 6:30PM - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Great Land Sounds (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L) 11:00PM - 11:59PM Grace Church (FH and K)	1 12:00AM - 5:06AM Grace Church (FH and K) New Year's Day	2 11:00AM - 4:30PM Cello Charly (MR) 5:30PM - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 5:30PM - 7:00PM Deacons Meeting (CR) 6:00PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	3 2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)	4 1:00PM - 4:00PM D & D (FH Classroom)

A New Permanent Fund—for UCPC!

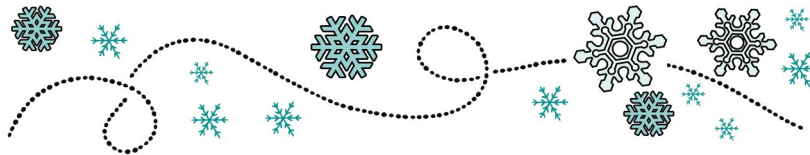
Generous donors (who can out themselves as they see fit) have made a gift of over \$25,000 to the Presbyterian Foundation to establish a Permanent Fund with income benefitting UCPC! The fund name is UCPC Fairbanks Endowment.

From the Presbyterian Foundation:

To grow the fund and ensure it provides stable and maximum funding for your ministry today and into the future, the Presbyterian Foundation will reinvest the first four quarters of net income back into principal of the account. At the end of the fifth Quarter period, March 31, 2026, the net income will be calculated based on the Spending Formula adopted by the Foundation and sent directly to [UCPC's] bank account around April 20, 2026. There are no restrictions on how to use the income.

Additional donations of *any* amount will help this Permanent Fund grow, thereby generating larger income distributions. Additions can be made online at www.presbyterianfoundation.org, under the Endowments section. If you'd like to donate to the Fund by check, please include the Fund ID # (102241000103) on the memo line and mail it to

Presbyterian Foundation
200 E 12th Street
Jeffersonville, IN 47130



Building and Grounds Update

Lots of miscellaneous info from the Building Stewards this month!

- Saturday, Nov-16, four building stewards removed the frozen snow piles from the church concrete deck/patio.
- Russ from Grace church has agreed to help plow the church parking lot.
- Annual gas boiler clean and tune was completed Friday, Nov-1.
- Annual Fire Alarm test and inspection completed on Monday, Nov-25
- Annual Elevator test and inspection is scheduled for December.

Winter Events

(Save the Dates!)

12/1—First Sunday of Advent

12/8—Worship Service with Communion

12/24—Christmas Eve service with Communion—8:30PM

Christmas Joy offering received

1/5/25—Install/Ordain new Elders and Deacons

1/11—Undecorate Christmas (?)

1/12—Worship Service with Communion

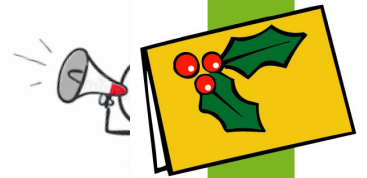
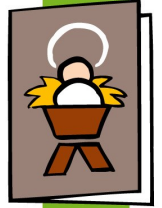
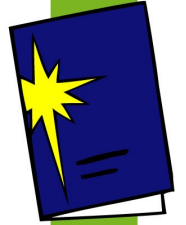
February-May—Pastor Erika on maternity leave

Some of these events have more information elsewhere in this newsletter, others will be explained further in the newsletter for the month they will occur.



SHOUT OUT

**A special thank you from the
Presbytery to all the UCPC folks who helped
make the October meeting run so smoothly
and for the amazing
hospitality offered**



in Loveland CO, at his request. Motion was **APPROVED** with no opposition.

Worship Committee moves that **the UCPC guest preacher honorarium rate be increased to \$250 per sermon, or \$1,200 for a contiguous four-week block.** Motion was **APPROVED** with no opposition.

Worship Committee moves that **a single worship service be held on Christmas Eve (Tue Dec 24) this year, beginning at 8:30 p.m.** Motion was **APPROVED** with no opposition.

Finance Committee moves that UCPC **sign the engagement letter with Yukon Accounting and Consulting to continue with preparation and submission of federal tax forms relating to taxes withheld.** Motion was **APPROVED** with no opposition.

We discussed an Epiphany party with New Hope & Korean Presbyterian churches. We agreed that **Doreen will contact First Korean and Erika will contact New Hope** to find out if there is interest and whether they have ideas about what such a party would look like.

West Valley High School's request to use facilities for overnight use. It was moved and seconded to **approve overnight use of church facilities by visiting school groups -- if the schedule works for UCPC and its current renters. UCPC requires that all groups be closely supervised and certain areas (including the sanctuary, conference room, office, music room, mechanical room, and electrical room) are off-limits.** Motion was **APPROVED** with no opposition.

Training date for New Elders and Deacons. It was agreed to **TABLE** this item.

Procedures to notify members when there's a death in our church family. After much discussion, **Roger agreed to make a small card asking congregants to fill in the method by which they prefer to be notified in case of an urgent church event, such as cancellation of worship due to weather or the death of a church family member.**

Old Business

General Assembly (GA) booklets. It was moved and seconded to **provide to the congregation a brief paper created by another Presbytery that lists the proposed Constitutional Amendments, with a link to the full booklet of the exact wording and discussion of each proposed amendment.** Motion was **APPROVED** with no opposition.

Parking Lot

Training date for New Elders and Deacons.

Meeting Schedule Next meetings:

December 5?? Deacon Meeting: Jim Durst

December 19 at 6:30 pm: in-person regular session meeting

January 5, Installation of incoming deacons and elders

January 22, Quarterly planning meeting

December Devotional and Elder of the Month: **Jim Durst**

The meeting **ADJOURNED** at 8:37 and Pastor Erika led the closing prayer.





If you are able and willing to shovel snow, please sign up for a week or two on the sign up sheet in the Narthex (on the Garage Guys table).

Your help is greatly appreciated!

Our Presbytery is Seeking Volunteer Grant Writers

From Executive Presbyter Elizabeth Schultz:

I have an opportunity for you! In my role as the Executive Presbyter of Yukon Presbytery (think: “executive pastor to the 20 amazing and diverse PCUSA churches from Anchorage to Utqiagvik”) I need to develop a small grant writing team

At the same time that I am learning about the incredible assets and needs in some of our churches, I am learning about a variety of state and national grants (both within and outside of the PCUSA) that could directly improve the lives and communities where we work. However, our small staff...just doesn't have the current capacity to take advantage of these opportunities.

If you have grant writing experience, and some time to give to a really worthy cause, please consider reaching out to me. If I could find a few people to help us get started, I know we can do amazing things for amazing people, helping to empower them to offer community, shelter, food security, emotional and spiritual support, and so much more to their communities!

THE WEARY WORLD

Rejoices!

YOU'RE
INVITED!

Christmas 2024

at University Community
Presbyterian Church

Tuesday, December 24:

8:30 pm

Christmas Eve Candlelit Worship
with Holy Communion



University Community
Presbyterian Church

3510 College Road,
Fairbanks, Alaska
907. 479. 6728
UCPCfairbanks.org

University Community Presbyterian Church



3510 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709

Website: www.ucpcfairbanks.org

Phone: (907) 479-6728

Office Hours

9:00AM to 2:00PM, Monday - Thursday

Pastor Erika is in the office Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10AM-2PM



Contacts

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

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

Session Elders and Committee Leaders

Doreen McNeill ('24)	388-0544	Clerk of Session
Joe Krizek ('24)	460-4294	
Pat Babcock ('25)	978-7187	
Matthew Bierer ('25)	474-0106	
Jim Durst ('26)	590-9024	
Paula Long ('26)	687-7444	
Roger Smith ('26)	322-2595	

Board of Deacons

Judy Fowler-Morris ('26)	388-5629	President
Carol Nielsen ('25)	388-8154	
Sarah Lanstra ('25)	378-3929	
Melissa Bierer ('24)	474-0106	
Janet Johnson ('24)	687-7148	
Marijo Larson ('26)	322-9425	

Worship Service Leaders

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

