



# UCPC Community Care Line

**JULY 2023**



Isa Smith	7/7
Flora Wiltse	7/7
Phyllis Garrett	7/8
Milt Wiltse	7/11
Ollie Bergh	7/24
Betty Baer	7/28



The Berghs	7/6
The Dursts	7/19
The Bierers	7/28

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

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

### A Note from the Pastor

When I think of July, I think of camping trips, delicious fresh fruits, freedom, and #MURICA. Growing up in Washington State – where the last day of school was routinely after June 22nd – July was THE. BEST. It was our first full month of freedom from school.

And the FREEDOM! Oh, it was glorious. I loved those lazy mornings spent sleeping in, followed by lazy afternoons lounging in the sun in the grass. Summer was heaven on earth. Summer meant freedom to me.

Lately, John O'Donohue's poem "For Freedom" (see page 8 of this newsletter) has been resonating deeply with my soul, particularly the last stanza. I love the imagery of the very existence of a tree as freedom from the tree's former form. A seed is an amazing and powerful thing of potential but it's not all the seed will ever be. It is meant to be so much more, springing up and shooting forth, freed for new ways of existence.

Martin Luther famously wrote an article on "The Freedom of a Christian." In this, Luther wrote about two main themes: "The Christian individual is a completely free lord of all, subject to none. The Christian individual is a completely dutiful servant of all, subject to all." Luther draws these themes from 1 Corinthians 9:19: "For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all," and Romans 13:8: "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another." Luther explains further that "'love' by its very nature is dutiful and serves the one who is loved."

So what are we to make of this?

We, who have been freed by Christ's act on the cross, are freed for service and care of others. This means that whatever we do – cooking, reading, listening, voting, building, studying, healing, walking, etc. – must always be done with the intention of caring for others at the forefront of our minds, words, and actions.

To be freed for service to others flies completely in the face of what I have thought of as freedom since childhood. The freedom of a Christian is not to just lay around and thank God for all the blessings God gave me; it is to get up and serve others as Christ served me. It is an active freedom, one that de-centers self while centering others.

Many of our assigned lectionary texts for the month of July contain seed, planting, and harvesting imagery and parables. We even get one of the rare times when Jesus actually explains what the parable means for his disciples. Jesus explains that the seeds planted are like hearing the Word of God; and where the seeds fall is like the environments within our lives and our hearts that either allow us to hear and be changed by the Word of God, or reject the Word.

-continued

## A Note from the Pastor, continued

We are freed as Christians by hearing the Good News of Jesus Christ that we have been saved and redeemed from all our transgressions by God's love for us. And in return we get to "give way to a deeper generosity" letting "all that holds [us] fall from its hungry ledge into the fecund surge of [our] heart[s]" and burst forth like a tree in springtime.

This month, we remember the birth of our nation and our history, which contains places for both deep pride and deep sorrow. We also hear parables of God's Word being planted among us this month. Therefore, in this context, I encourage us to ponder and explore what it means to be freed in Christ.

Some questions we can ponder:

What seeds are you needing to break forth from? What are you needing to be freed from? Or what seeds have you already sprouted out of? What did you need freeing from?

Into what kind of tree are you yet to grow? What will this freedom allow for in your life and in the world? Or as what kind of tree have you already weathered many seasons? What has this freedom allowed for in your life and in the world?

How does hearing the Word of God transform you and make you more free for service and care of others?

Who do you know (either personally or through stories) who embodies the freedom of a Christian — to be both servant to none and servant to all? What does that freedom look like in their life? Or how do you see it manifested?


Quotes from "For Freedom" in *To Bless the Space Between Us*, by John O'Donohue, copyright 2008 Doubleday, pp. 30-31.

*The Freedom of a Christian, 1520: The Annotated Luther Study Edition*, by Martin Luther, edited by Timothy J. Wengert, copyright 2016 Fortress Press, pg 488.

## Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

New Officers to be ordained and installed at UCPC  
on the 9th day of July, Anno Domini 2023!!

Come help us welcome  
Will Haight as Deacon  
and  
Pat Babcock as Elder



## *Pastor Erika will be out of the office!*

There are a few upcoming dates when Pastor Erika will be out of town.

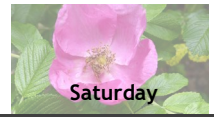
1. 7/7 (a regular day off) - Out of town, but still available by phone (1-907-717-5015), if an urgent pastoral care need arises.
2. 7/10-15—Continuing education training in Juneau. She'll be back for Worship on 7/16. If you are in need of pastoral care during this time, please call or text her.
3. 7/21-26—Camping! Cell coverage may be spotty. If there is an urgent pastoral care need during this time, please contact the church office or a deacon to be connected to a caregiver.



## **Ushers Always Welcome!**

**Help UCPC invite all to faith in Jesus Christ and growth in discipleship ... by welcoming people to worship on Sunday mornings! Handing out bulletins, answering questions and just being a friendly face are all part of this important weekly job. There is a sign up sheet for this and other service opportunities on the Garage Guys workbench in the Narthex.**

# July 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>25</p> <p>10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00PM - 8:00PM 12 Step (MR)</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>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)</p>	<p>28</p> <p>6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</p>	<p>29</p> <p>5:30PM - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 6:00PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR &amp; FH Classrooms) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)</p>	<p>30</p> <p>2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1:00PM - 4:00PM D &amp; D (HS)</p>
<p>2</p> <p>10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00PM - 8:00PM 12 Step (MR)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>1:00 7:00PM Cello Charley (MR) 5:00PM - 6:00PM Sound Team Meeting (S)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>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)</p>	<p>5</p> <p>10:00AM - 11:00AM Mission &amp; Outreach 6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:30PM - 6:30PM 12 Step (HS) 5:30PM - 7:00PM Deacons Meeting (CR) 6:00PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR &amp; FH Classrooms) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step NA (L)</p>	<p>8</p> <p>1:00PM - 4:00PM D &amp; D (HS)</p>
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The following is a summary of the June 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**  
**June 22, 2023, Student Lounge**

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

**Guests:** Rev. Richard Mauer (via Zoom), Deacon Melissa Bierer, Elder-elect Patricia Babcock, and Deacon-elect Will Haight.

Moderator Bergh opened the meeting with prayer at 6:35PM.

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

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

**Consent Calendar:** It was moved and seconded to approve the consent calendar, which includes the docket and minutes of the May 18, 2023 session meeting. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

**Orders of the Day, 7:00PM**

Deacons' Report. Melissa Bierer gave the Deacons' report. Their next meeting will be in August.

Comments from the Congregation. There were no comments from the congregation.

Elder-elect Patricia Babcock and Deacon-elect William Haight were examined. **It was moved and seconded to accept Elder-elect Patricia Babcock and Deacon-elect William Haight as new officers. Motion passed by unanimous consent.**

**New Business:**

**Installation of Elder Patricia Babcock and Deacon William Haight will be during worship on July 9. It was moved and seconded to ratify the email vote to approve the contract between UCPC and Rev. Erika Bergh. Motion passed by unanimous consent.**

**The motion from the Finance Committee to make a payment before the end of the month to the Presbytery in the amount of \$6,000, as a part of UCPC's fair share pledge, passed by unanimous consent.**

**It was moved and seconded to schedule Worship on the Porch on July 30 and to task the worship committee to invite Grace and COGIC churches to worship with us and to explore food options with the Hospitality, Fellowship and Membership Committee. Motion passed by unanimous consent.**

**It was moved and seconded to have a celebration on August 13 to welcome Rev. Bergh as our new pastor. Motion passed by unanimous consent. Session members and deacons will divide up lists of members, people we haven't seen in a while, and guests to personally call them to invite them to this celebration.**

Session briefly discussed attracting new members, including re-starting the children's program, inviting people to church, Bible studies, and other ideas. Rev. Mauer noted that the key to someone attending church is a personal invitation. **It was moved and seconded to table new member discussion to the July meeting when more session members are present. Motion passed by unanimous consent.**

**Old Business**

Proposed rental rates were discussed. **It was moved and seconded to table the new rental rates proposal until Roger and Melissa Bierer (Admin Assistant) can have a discussion about current rates charged, with an eye to a 10% increase in rates. Motion passed by unanimous consent.**

Use of the COVID mitigation plan was reviewed. **It was moved and seconded to suspend use of the COVID mitigation plan but to continue to provide masks and hand sanitizer to those who want to use them. Motion passed by unanimous consent.**



**Meeting Schedule:** Next scheduled meeting: July 20, 6:30PM.

July Devotional and Elder of the Month: Roger Smith

The meeting closed in prayer, at 8:10PM.

Submitted by Doreen McNeill, Clerk of Session

### DEACONS' REPORT

The deacons held their June meeting on the first of the month. Deacons Janet Johnson, Donita Lawhead, Sarah Lanstra, Melissa Bierer, Carol Nielsen were present. Also present were Elder Doreen McNeill and Deacon-to-be Will Haight. President Donita opened the meeting with prayer at 5:35. Secretary Melissa read a devotion from *Jesus Calling*, about recognizing that crazy days are the norm in our lives, but if we expect them and rely on Christ, we will be prepared.

The minutes from the prior meeting were adopted with one minor correction.

Doreen gave the Session report, letting us know: the status of the hiring process for Rev. Erika Bergh; that Lois Hildenbrand will be providing Deacon and Elder training; that the membership rolls will be updated; and that the mechanical room has been rekeyed. Melissa suggested that the Session review the COVID policy.

**Meals** this month were brought following Muffie's surgery. **Transportation** for Stephen is being provided, but new arrangements will need to be made if/when the transporters go east. **Care List** assignments need to be redistributed, since we will soon have another official deacon (yay, Will!). Janet shared that several of her Care List assignees have left, so her list is not as big as it was and may not need any adjustment. Possible recipients of **traveling Communion** were identified, and we discussed who would call them and wondered if Pastor Erika would be involved with that service.

Other business included welcoming Will (!), discussing whether or not to have a graduation celebration this year (with only one graduate who would hate being the center of attention), and which type of cups to use for Communion, glass or plastic. The consensus was generally in favor of glass, though the advantages of plastic on heavily attended services like Christmas and Easter was acknowledged.

We also assigned tasks for June Communion prep (and July, since the deacons will not meet next month). Carol brought up concerns about a member who may be facing some mental and/or physical health challenges. Donita shared some information about that member.

Members of the congregation who are owed thank-yous were identified and assignments made as to which deacons would send them. The volume of cards we send and congregational ambivalence towards them was discussed.

The prayer concerns of a number of congregants were discussed.

Donita closed the meeting at 6:45; Melissa gave a prayer.

There is no July deacon meeting. The July deacon of the month is Donita.

-Respectfully submitted by Melissa Bierer

## Finance Committee Meets Monday, July 17, from 5:15 to 6:30PM in the Conference Room.

### UCPC Finance Report

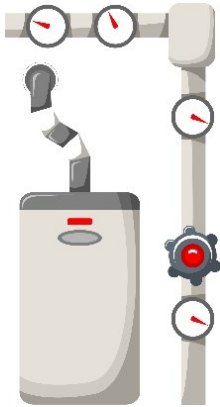
June 2023 as of 6/17

2023 Year-to-Date through 6/17

<b>Income</b>	\$8,721	\$156,553
<b>Expense</b>	\$2,807	\$92,025
<b>Net</b>	\$5,914	\$64,528

**July Elder of the month is: Roger Smith**  
**July Deacon of the month is: Donita Lawhead**

**Summer Projects at UCPC**



**Boiler upgrade:**

Replace one of 2 oil-fired boilers with a gas-fired boiler.

Affected areas will be - West driveway and parking lot for IGU gas line installation, mechanical contractor staging area and boiler condensate drain.

Cost = estimated \$91,000.00

Amount raised = approximately \$73,000.00



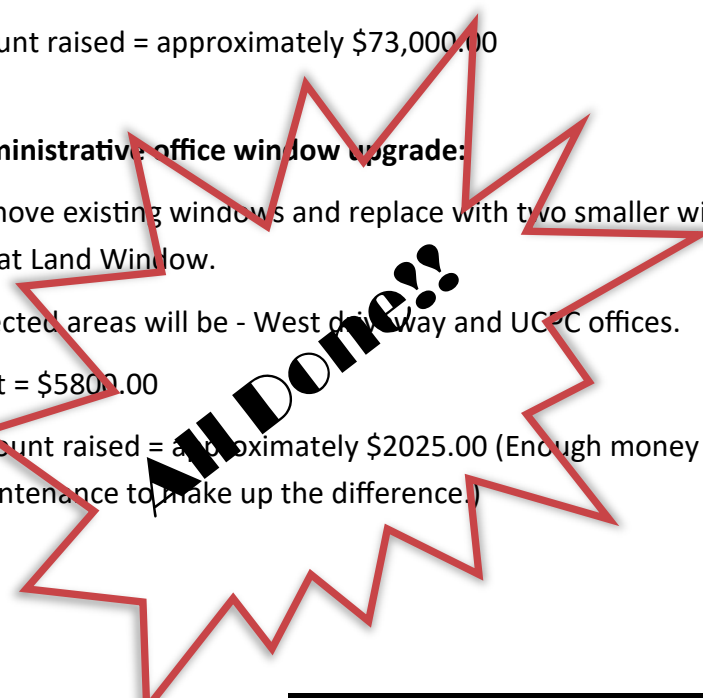
**Administrative office window upgrade:**

Remove existing windows and replace with two smaller windows from Great Land Window.

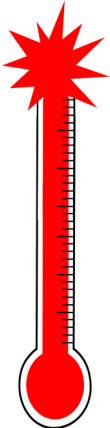
Affected areas will be - West driveway and UCPC offices.

Cost = \$5800.00

Amount raised = approximately \$2025.00 (Enough money is in major maintenance to make up the difference.)



**BOILER PROJECT UPDATE**



We're almost there!!

Thanks to a couple of recent anonymous donations, we are very close to having the entire cost of the project covered, and we are confident we will reach the goal by August.





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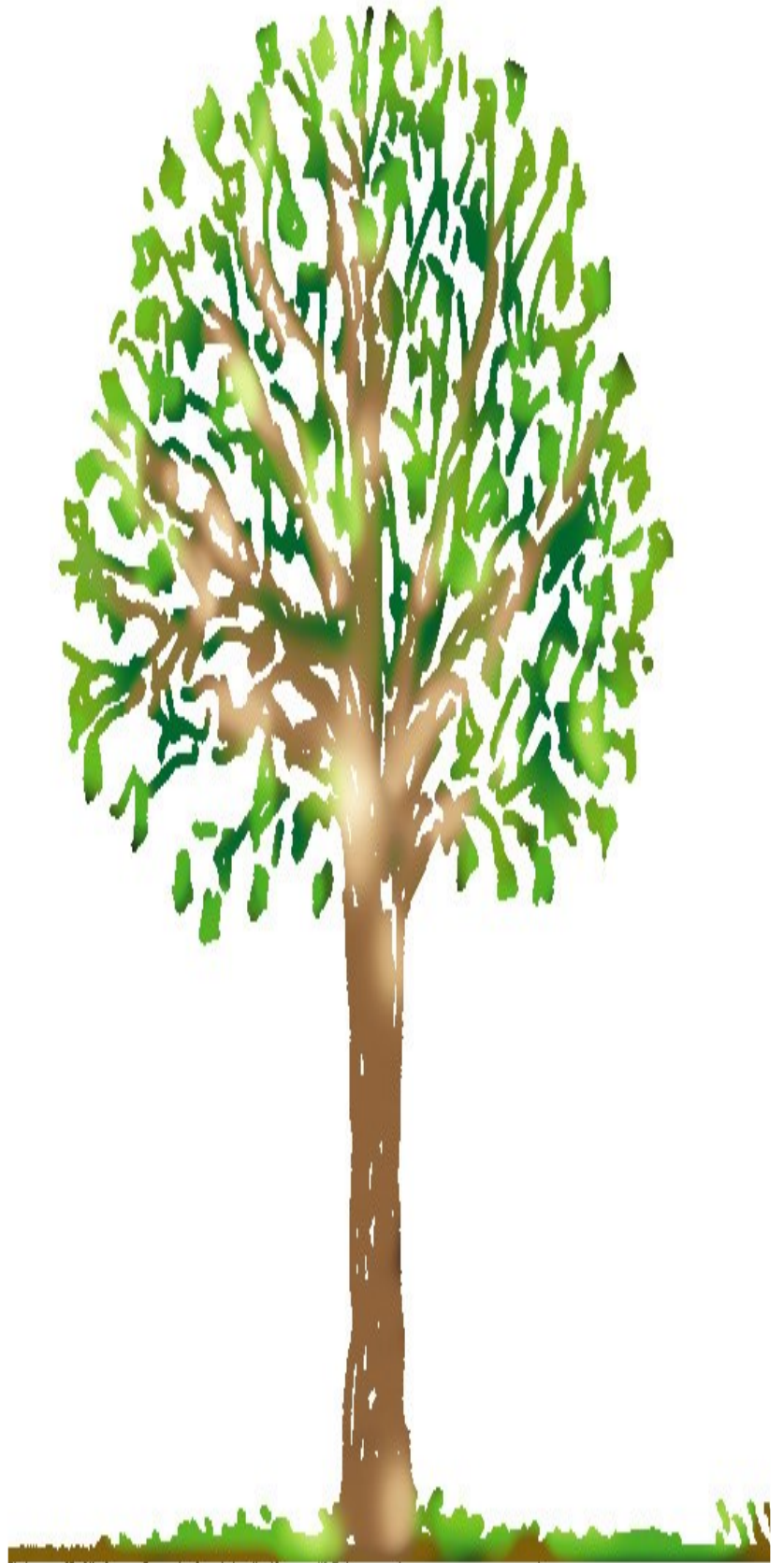
“For Freedom”  
by John O’Donohue

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As a bird soars high  
In the free holding of the wind,  
Clear of the certainty of ground,  
Opening the imagination of wings  
Into the grace of emptiness  
To fulfill new voyagings,  
May your life awaken  
To the call of its freedom.

As the ocean absolves itself  
Of the expectation of land,  
Approaching only  
In the form of waves  
That fill and pleat and fall  
With such gradual elegance  
As to make of the limit  
A sonorous threshold  
Whose music echoes back along  
The give and strain of memory,  
Thus may your heart know the patience  
That can draw infinity from limitation.

As the embrace of the earth  
Welcomes all we call death,  
Taking deep into itself  
The tight solitude of a seed,  
Allowing it time  
To shed the grip of former form  
And give way to a deeper generosity  
That will one day send it forth,  
A tree into springtime,  
May all that holds you  
Fall from its hungry ledge  
Into the fecund surge of your heart.







# Worship in the Porch

**ON THE PORCH!**

**This year's July outdoor worship will be here at UCPC! We're going to make use of our nice big porch of a worship service and gathering on July 30. Watch for further details!!**

Save the Date!

We will have a joyful welcome celebration of our wonderful new temporary pastor on August 13.

Further details will be announced in next month's newsletter

## Helping Alaska's Closets

As you may know, UCPC houses Helping Alaska's (formerly Love INC's)

*Personal Needs* closet (sometimes lovingly referred to as the "smelly closet.")

Other helpful closets are housed in other churches in the area. Helping Alaska refers people in need to:

New Beginnings Church for *clothing*,

South Fairbanks Assembly of God for *cleaning products*,

Zion Lutheran for *kitchen goods (dishes, pots & pans, etc.)*,

The Lighthouse for *blankets, bedding, sheets, etc.*,

Fairhill Christian for *towels*, and

Community Covenant Church for *children's clothing*.

In addition, Shannon Park Baptist offers *winter clothing* each Friday during their food box distribution, from 2-3PM.

In the coming months, this newsletter will include a focus on each of these closets in turn, and what specific items they might need.

# University Community Presbyterian Church

3510 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709

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

Phone: 907-479-6728

Organist ~	Kathy Dohner
Pianist ~	Kathy Dohner
Choir~	Patti Gallagher
Sound Manager ~	Curtis McNeill
<u>Committee leaders</u>	
Worship:	Roger Smith
Finance and Stewardship:	Jerry McBeath
Mission and Outreach:	Larry Johnson
Faith Development:	
Building Stewards:	Doreen McNeill
Personnel:	Matthew Bierer
Nominating:	Jerry McBeath

## Deacons

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

## Supply Pastor .

Rev. Erika Bergh 1-907-717-5015

Email: [reverikabergh@gmail.com](mailto:reverikabergh@gmail.com)

## Admin Assistant

Melissa Bierer

Office: (907) 479-6728

Email: [admin@ucpcfairbanks.org](mailto: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
Matthew Bierer	474-0106	Class of 2025
Larry Johnson	479-4766	Class of 2025

