

SEPTEMBER 2025



UCPC Community Care Line

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



Laura Morton 9/1
Pat Babcock 9/12
Carol Nielsen 9/19
Eric Solie 9/25

Doreen and Curtis 9/1
Susan and Mark 9/9
Janet and Larry 9/11

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



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A Note from the Pastor

You all are rubbing off on me. :) In a good way. As most of you know (but for the random person that might read this on the website), I am an ELCA Lutheran pastor serving in a PCUSA congregation. As such, I've been learning a lot about the nuances of Presby theology as opposed to Lutheran, as well as ecclesial and polity differences between the two.

On August 20th, the Presbyterian Outlook published an Opinion (aka "Voices") piece titled "No Kings' should include Jesus." Right off the bat, my response to the headline was "uh oh. I don't think I'm going to agree with this." But I read it anyway. And I was surprised by what surprised me! What stood out to me most was that the PC(USA)'s emphasis on Jesus Christ as the head of the church wasn't mentioned or addressed in this article, and I believe it should have been. I was surprised by this noticing though, because prior to working with you all, I never would have thought about this.

This consistent emphasis about Christ as the head of the church is definitely a big difference between the ELCA and PCUSA. Sure, the ELCA believes this as well, and it's included in our constitution, but we don't name it as much as you all do. And I actually think that this is a strength of the PCUSA which the ELCA is lacking. In the ELCA, we think of the head of our church as the Presiding Bishop, but you all have moderators and a clerk – which at first was really disarming to me: "Who's in charge?? Who's the main point person? Sure, it's Jesus, I get that, but like... who's *the* human who's running the show *for* Christ?"

Now, I kinda love it. The strength of not having one central and prominent human being as a leader, is that it forces us to keep central in our minds that it's Christ who's at the center and at the head. I suppose some might argue that "the head" and "the king" are different concepts, but to me, they are the same. I am someone who likes "Reign of Christ" Sunday more than "Christ the King," yet I still talk about Christ as a king because he *is* our King – just a completely different model than the one the Roman Emperor or modern political leaders might offer.

As such, I think it's essential to not just chuck out a model of kingship that shows how community-oriented and focused God is, simply because we have poor human models of kingship in our midst. If anything, we need to cling to the divine model of kingship so that those in power can see and be reminded of a better way to lead. Because I agree with this opinion article! Jesus was so deeply focused on righting relationships, offering justice, and healing communities from within, and that's the powerful message of the Gospel and the kingship of Christ. He didn't come with military might and political prestige like people anticipated; instead, he came from humble beginnings and from within a regular and imperfect family and

community. And if he can lead and change the world from a place of humbleness and people-first focus, then that's a model we should look to and follow!

By continuing to refer to Christ as our King, we still offer a subversive kingship model of leadership for those progressives in our midst who are worried about leaders who try to demand loyalty or who lead from a place of greed and self-righteousness. The subversive nature of claiming Christ as our King helps us ALL to see when anyone in power has missed the mark of Christ-like, holy, and good leadership. Like a mirror held in front of our faces, Christ as King guides us and asks us to keep central the command to love and serve all as mini-Christ's in our midst; and when we fail, Christ is there to redirect us because as Ethiopian Lutheran Gudina Tumsa would say, Jesus is not only the King of Kings but also President of Presidents and Prime Minister of Prime Ministers.

<https://pres-outlook.org/2025/08/no-kings-should-include-jesus/>

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Erika

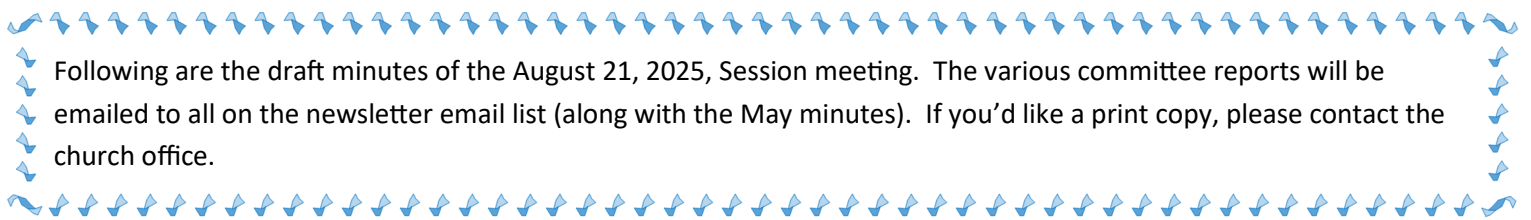


Sunday School Opportunities

Fall is here and Sunday School classes begin September 7. We all should be life-long learners when it comes to our faith. We hope you can join one of the classes offered!

- ◇ Milt is leading a class that will study the book of Hebrews. His class will meet at 9:30AM, before worship.
- ◇ Ron is leading a class addressing the many aspects of Reading the Bible with an emphasis on understanding the many aspects that lead to understanding. His class will meet at 11:45AM, after worship.
- ◇ Marji will have a Children's Sunday School in the sanctuary during Fellowship Hour. The focus this fall will be the Old Testament stories





Following are the draft minutes of the August 21, 2025, Session meeting. The various committee reports will be emailed to all on the newsletter email list (along with the May minutes). If you'd like a print copy, please contact the church office.

August 21 at 6:30 pm, 2nd floor Student Lounge

6:30 pm Opening prayer — Rev. Erika Bergh opened the meeting with prayer at 6:37 pm.

Scripture and Devotion — Marji Illingworth presented a devotion about faith development, referencing several scriptures.

A quorum was declared.

Present: Rev. Erika Bergh, Doreen McNeill, Paula Long, Roger Smith, Pat Babcock, Marji Illingworth, Matthew Bierer

Absent: Jim Durst,

Guests: Deacon President Judy Fowler-Morris

It was moved and seconded to **approve the Consent Agenda, consisting of:**

Docket, as amended

Approve the Minutes of the July 17, 2025 meeting of the Session, as amended

Acknowledge receipt of Written Reports (if received):

Deacons

Clerk of Session

Building Stewards

Elder Commissioner Report

Faith Development

Finance & Stewardship

Hospitality, Fellowship & Membership

Mission and Outreach

Personnel

Nominating

Worship

Order of the Day (7 p.m.)

Deacons' report. Judy Fowler-Morris presented the deacons' report. There are a number of needs in our congregation. Deacons were thanked for their tireless good work.

Comments from the Congregation – Doreen received a note from a woman who was looking for information about her mother's funeral, conducted at UCPC in 1984. Doreen continues to chase down leads. Session members gave good ideas on who to ask.

Clerk's Report. Doreen highlighted the written clerk's report. Doreen and Matthew traded Elder of the Month schedules, with Matthew now scheduled for October and Doreen scheduled for November.

New Business:

The session **AGREED** by consensus to **charge ½ price for the facility and full price for sound support for the Mary Ehrlander funeral.** Her brother, Randy Franke is a former member. Total price will be \$500.

Motion from Mission Committee: **That UCPC's 25% of the Peace and Global Witness offering go to the Literacy Council of Alaska, English Language Learner Program.** Motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 to 0. The Peace and Global Witness offering will be received on World Communion Sunday, October 5.

It was moved and seconded to allow **Randy and Stephanie to hold their wedding on September 6 in the UCPC Prayer Garden or in the Sanctuary.** Motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 to 0.

It was moved and seconded to **request that the Ministry Commission recommission Lois Hildenbrand as a Commissioned Lay Pastor during the part of the year that she resides within the bounds of the**

Presbytery of Yukon. Motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 to 0.

It was moved and seconded to **direct the Mission Committee to come to the session with a way forward to distribute the personal needs items that UCPC has to give to people who used to be referred by Helping Alaska (Formerly Love In The Name of Christ),** which has shut its doors. The session **AGREED** to this by consensus.

Old Business

Erika, Doreen, and Marji will get together to brainstorm ideas to plan the PC(USA) co-moderators trip to Fairbanks on October 8. Input from the congregation is welcome!

It was moved and seconded to **approve a 10% raise for the Administrative Assistant.** Motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5 to 0, with member Bierer leaving the room during the discussion and vote. Pay will increase to \$19 per hour.

It was moved and seconded to **approve a 10% raise for the Organist/Pianist.** Motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 to 0. Pay will increase to \$110 per Sunday.

Pastor and People, Making Mutual Ministry Work. Roger, Paula, Pat and Doreen have the book and should finish as soon as possible so that Jim, Matthew, and Marji can read it. Pat was applauded for having finished the book.

Marji reported that work is progressing on the bulletin board updates. **Pictures are needed from the congregation that show what we do to further God's kingdom in the world.**

Meeting Schedule Next meetings:

Sept 3 at 4:00 to 5:30 pm, Session planning meeting

Sept. 5 at 5:15 pm, Deacon meeting Pat Babcock attending

September 18, at 6:30 pm, Regular Session Meeting

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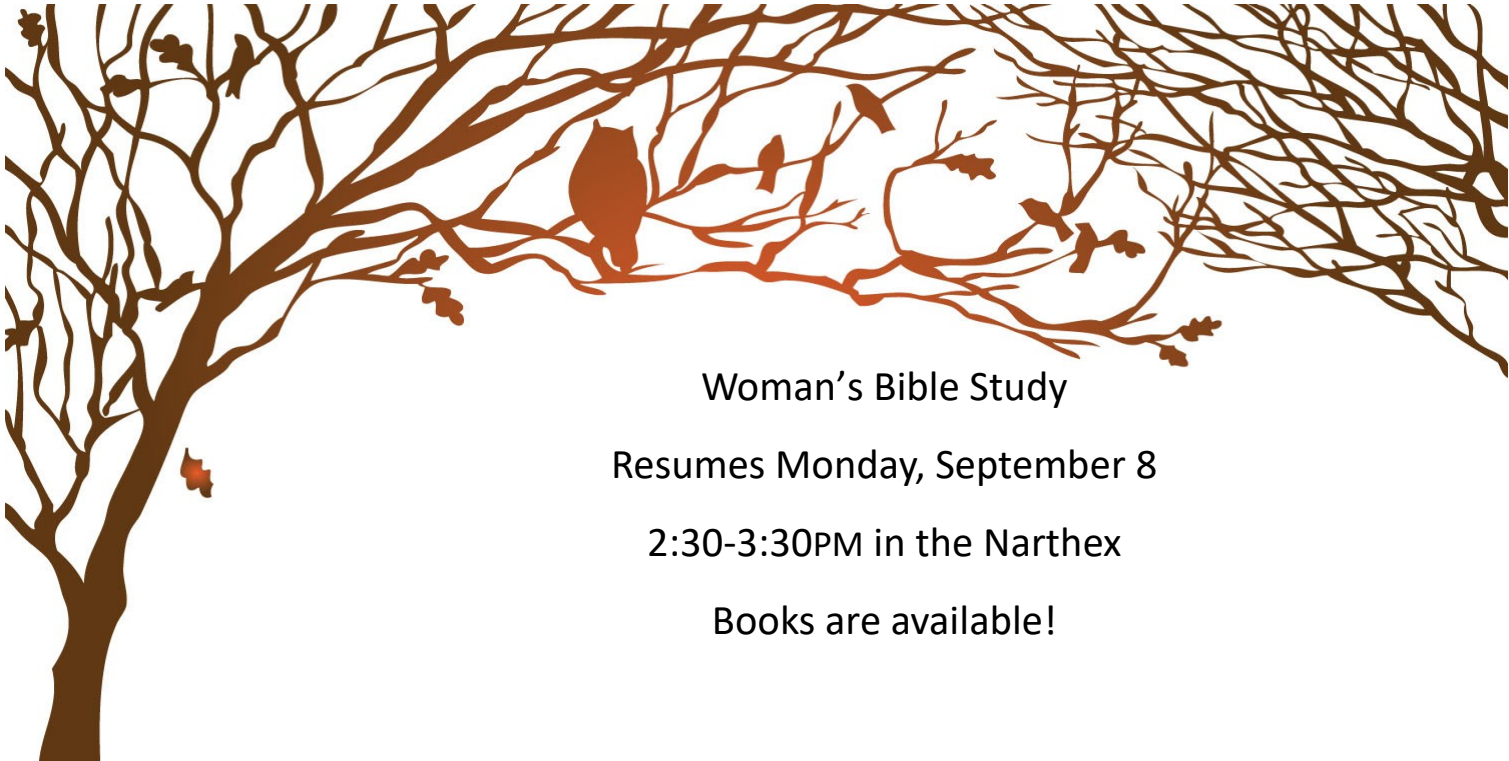
Sept 3 at 4:00 to 5:30 pm, Session planning meeting

Sept. 4 at 5:15 pm, Deacon meeting. Pat Babcock attending

September 18, at 6:30 pm, Regular Session Meeting

September Devotional and Elder of the Month: Pat Babcock

It was Moved to ADJOURN at 8:06 pm. Pastor Erika led the closing prayer.



Woman's Bible Study

Resumes Monday, September 8

2:30-3:30PM in the Narthex

Books are available!



September 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9:30am - 10:15am Adult Bible Study (FH) <u>10:30am - 11:30am Worship Service (S)</u> 2:00pm - 4:00pm Grace Church (S) 4:00pm - 8:00pm Grace Church (FH) 6:00pm - 7:00pm 12 Step (MR)	1 Labor Day Office Close	2 <u>6:30am - 7:30am Men's Bible Study (N)</u> 12:00pm - 6:00pm Cello Charly (MR) <u>6:30pm - 8:00pm Boy Scouts (CE)</u> 6:30pm - 9:00pm Great Land Sounds (MR) <u>8:00pm - 10:00pm 12 Step AA (L)</u>	3 11:00am - 5:00pm Laurie Long (HS) 12:00pm - 8:00pm Cello Charly (MR) <u>6:00pm - 7:00pm Girl Scouts (L)</u> <u>6:00pm - 9:00pm Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</u>	4 12:00pm - 6:00pm Cello Charly (MR) <u>5:15pm - 7:00pm Deacons Meeting (CR)</u> <u>5:30pm - 6:30pm 12 Step (HS)</u> <u>6:00pm - 9:30pm Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms)</u> <u>6:30pm - 9:00pm Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)</u>	5 <u>2:00pm - 4:00pm Four Winds (MR)</u> <u>6:30pm - 9:30pm Grace Church (MR)</u> <u>8:00pm - 10:00pm 12 Step NA (L)</u>	6 1:30PM Wedding Rehearsal (S) 3PM Wedding (S)
7 9:30am - 10:15am Adult Bible Study (FH) <u>10:30am - 11:30am Worship Service (S)</u> <u>11:45-12:45PM Adult Bible Study (SL)</u> <u>11:45-12:45 Children's Sunday School (S)</u> <u>2:00pm - 4:00pm Grace Church (S)</u> <u>6:00pm - 7:00pm 12 Step (MR)</u>	8 11:00am - 5:00pm Laurie Long (HS) 12:00pm - 8:00pm Cello Charly (MR) <u>2:30-3:30PM Women's Bible Study (N)</u> 6:00pm - 9:30pm Grace Church (HS)	9 <u>6:30am - 7:30am Men's Bible Study (N)</u> 12:00pm - 6:00pm Cello Charly (MR) <u>6:30pm - 8:00pm Boy Scouts (CE)</u> 6:30pm - 9:00pm Great Land Sounds (MR) <u>8:00pm - 10:00pm 12 Step AA (L)</u>	10 <u>10:00am - 11:00am Mission & Outreach</u> 11:00am - 5:00pm Laurie Long (HS) 12:00pm - 8:00pm Cello Charly (MR) 4:00pm - 5:30pm Worship Committee (CR) <u>5:30pm - 6:45pm Choir Practice (MR)</u> <u>6:00pm - 7:00pm Girl Scouts (L)</u> <u>6:00pm - 9:00pm Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)</u>	11 12:00pm - 6:00pm Cello Charly (MR) <u>5:30pm - 6:30pm 12 Step (HS)</u> <u>6:00pm - 9:30pm Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms)</u> <u>6:30pm - 9:00pm Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)</u>	12 <u>2:00pm - 4:00pm Four Winds (MR)</u> <u>6:30pm - 9:30pm Grace Church (MR)</u> <u>8:00pm - 10:00pm 12 Step NA (L)</u>	13
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28 9:30am - 10:15am Adult Bible Study (FH) <u>10:30am - 11:30am Worship Service (S)</u> <u>11:45-12:45PM Adult Bible Study (SL)</u> <u>11:45-12:45 Children's Sunday School (S)</u> <u>2:00pm - 4:00pm Grace Church (S)</u> <u>6:00pm - 7:00pm 12 Step (MR)</u>	29 11:00am - 5:00pm Laurie Long (HS) 12:00pm - 8:00pm Cello Charly (MR) 6:00pm - 9:30pm Grace Church (HS)	30 <u>6:30am - 7:30am Men's Bible Study (N)</u> 12:00pm - 6:00pm Cello Charly (MR) <u>6:30pm - 8:00pm Boy Scouts (CE)</u> 6:30pm - 9:00pm Great Land Sounds (MR) <u>8:00pm - 10:00pm 12 Step AA (L)</u>	1 11:00am - 5:00pm Laurie Long (HS) 12:00pm - 8:00pm 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)	2 12:00pm - 6:00pm Cello Charly (MR) 5:15pm - 7:00pm Deacons Meeting (CR) 5:30pm - 6:30pm 12 Step (HS) <u>6:00pm - 9:30pm Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms)</u> 6:30pm - 9:00pm Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	3 <u>2:00pm - 4:00pm Four Winds (MR)</u> <u>6:30pm - 9:30pm Grace Church (MR)</u> <u>8:00pm - 10:00pm 12 Step NA (L)</u>	4 2:00am - 2:00am Sweet Adelines (CE)

You are Welcome to Attend!

Session is planning on attending an Immigration information zoom training from Alaska's ACLU on September 18th from 5:30 to 7PM prior to our Session meeting (the time of which has been changed to 7pm). We are planning on attending out of care for members of Grace Church, knowing that ICE is present in Fairbanks and has detained at least one person from our town. We are simply seeking to know more and gain information, not to make a politically partisan statement. Here is the description of the event from the ACLU:

Join the ACLU of Alaska and congregations across Alaska for a "Know Your Responsibilities" training on interacting with immigration enforcement. We're prepared to share what places of worship can do to protect Alaskans who are targeted by immigration enforcement. This training will teach you what to do if ICE comes to your door; how to advocate and protect individuals who are at your place of worship, and potential risks of harboring; and the power individuals have to push back against unlawful enforcement actions. This virtual event is open to all, but pre-registration is required.

Please submit questions to efalcon@acluak.org

If you would like to attend this training as a group, with the Session members, join them in the Student Lounge at 5:30PM on 9/18. If you'd prefer to join from home, contact the office for the link to preregister!



Let mutual
love continue.

*Do not neglect to
show hospitality to
strangers, for by
doing that some
have entertained
angels without
knowing it.*

Hebrews 13:1-2

Building and Grounds Update

New gravel was added and compacted to improve the parking lot. This work was accomplished with the remainder of the \$6000 approved for use in tree removal and parking lot work, plus some money donated to the church to cover the expense.

The boiler inspection will be delayed slightly in order that the inspector can perform the work while in the area on other business, thus saving us the cost of his travel expenses. The new inspection date is in mid-September. ~ Matthew Bierer

Upcoming Events

September 1—Labor Day. Office closed.

September 8 and 22—Women's Bible Study

September 7—Adult and Youth Sunday School begins (see Marji's article elsewhere in this newsletter)

September 10—Choir begins

September 18—ACLU "Know Your Responsibilities" Training, 5:30-7PM

September 18—Session, 7PM

September 19—Newsletter content deadline!!

October 5—World Communion Sunday

October 10-11—Presbytery meeting in Anchorage

November 3 or 9—Annual Meeting



The office will be closed Fridays through September.

Melissa will be in the office from

8-1, Monday—Thursday.

- The American Foundation For Suicide Prevention Out of Darkness Walk will happen Sept. 20, 2025.
- Join Kathy Dohner to support Suicide Prevention education and research, either by walking, or by donating. There are several ways to donate; contact Kathy to find out how.



Shout out to



All the wonderful elves who have been helping Cyndee P. pack and move for the last few weeks!

(You know who you are, and we love you!)

University Community Presbyterian Church



3510 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709

Website: www.ucpcfairbanks.org

Phone: (907) 479-6728

Office Hours

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

Pastor Erika is in the office MWR from 10-2.



Contacts

Supply Pastor . Rev. Erika Bergh (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 ('27)	388-0544	Clerk of Session
Pat Babcock ('25)	978-7187	Hospitality, Fellowship and Membership
Matthew Bierer ('25)	474-0106	Building Stewards; Mission and Outreach
Jim Durst ('26)	590-9024	Worship
Paula Long ('26)	687-7444	Personnel
Roger Smith ('26)	322-2595	Finance; Nominating
Marji Illingworth ('27)	378-2138	Faith Development

Board of Deacons

Judy Fowler-Morris ('26)	388-5629	President
Carol Nielsen ('25)	388-8154	
Sarah Lanstra ('25)	378-3929	
Marijo Larson ('26)	322-9425	
Janet Johnson ('27)	687-7148	
Lynn Krizek ('27)	460-4293	

Worship Service Leaders

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

