



UCPC Community Care Line

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

SEPTEMBER 2023

A Note from the Pastor



Laura Morton	9/1
Pat Babcock	9/12
Judy Martsof	9/18
Carol Nielsen	9/19
Eric Solie	9/25

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



Contents

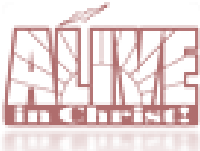
1. Pastor’s Note, Birthdays, Anniversaries
2. Pastor’s Note, cont.; Announcements
3. Calendar
4. Session Minutes
5. Session Minutes, cont.; Finance, Officers of the Month
6. Little Free Pantry update; Animal Blessing
7. Shout out; Boiler project update; Pray Ground
8. Youth Group; Stewardship
9. Helping AK Personal Needs Closet
10. Contacts page

In Matthew 16:24-25, Jesus tells his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.” The followers of Jesus were asked to do some hard things. But they were not asked to do anything that Jesus hadn’t already done first.

“Deny yourself.” Jesus showed true self-denial over and over in the Gospels. He denied the privilege of his divinity by becoming incarnate. He denied himself in the wilderness for 40 days. He denied himself the stability of a consistent home and a steady job. When Jesus asked the same of his disciples, he expected them to imitate his rigorous self-denial. They had to say goodbye to family and friends, leave possessions behind, sleep on hard ground, go hungry, and much more. Denying themselves was not convenient. One person asked Jesus if he could bury his father first and then follow Jesus. Jesus replied, “Let the dead bury their dead.” (Luke 9:59-60) Yikes. That’s pretty unequivocal. The message was clear from Jesus: Personal agendas have no room in my dust cloud.

The same request is made of us: deny yourself! Denying ourselves is inconvenient. It requires deep self-awareness. It requires giving, sharing, hospitality, and noticing others. When you deny yourself, you have room for your neighbor. Are you willing to deny your professional self to help someone struggling on the road if it means being late for your meeting? Are you willing to deny your free time to spare your coats and help a new family get moved in and adjusted to Fairbanks? Are you willing to deny your personal space to allow a struggling friend to live on your couch for a couple months? Are you willing to deny your financial self by tithing and offering, despite all the monetary demands of this life? Are you willing to deny your material self by choosing a different store over Amazon because of their mistreatment of their employees?

Perhaps these kinds of things are what we are called to do. Yet Jesus doesn’t only say to deny ourselves if we want to follow him: he also says, “Take up your cross.” The cross in Jesus’ day was only ever used as a torture and execution device. When Jesus asks his disciples to pick up their cross, Jesus is asking us to literally take up a means of public execution in broad daylight. Yikes. Again. What is your cross? Discerning that will require some imagination, but we have to remember: the cross wasn’t secret. It was an execution where the people named why you were being executed. So we can surmise that, likewise, learning what our cross is will have some social participation as well. However, Jesus’ death on the cross was not the final piece of the story. His resurrection shows us that inconveniences and death no longer get



September 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00PM - 8:00PM 12-Step (MR)	28 12:00PM - 6:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 6:00PM - 7:00PM Cub Scouts Pack 1092 (CE)	29 6:30AM - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 12:00PM - 4:00PM 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)	30 6:00PM - 7:00PM Girl Scouts (L) 6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE)	31 12:00PM - 4:00PM 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)	1 2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12-Step NA (L)	2 1:00PM - 4:00PM D & D (HS)
3 10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00PM - 8:00PM 12-Step (MR)	4 Office Closed for Labor Day 1:00PM - 2:00PM Women's Bible Study 5:00PM - 6:00PM Sound Team Meeting (S) 6:00PM - 7:00PM Cub Scouts Pack 1092 (CE)	5 6:30AM - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 12:00PM - 4:00PM 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)	6 11:00AM - 12:00AM Mission & Outreach 6:00PM - 7:00PM Girl Scouts (L) 6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE) 5:30PM - 6:30PM Choir Practice (MR)	7 12:00PM - 4:00PM 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)	8 2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12-Step NA (L)	9 10:00AM - 4:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement) (FH) 1:00PM - 4:00PM D & D (HS)
10 10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00PM - 8:00PM 12-Step (MR)	11 6:00PM - 7:00PM Cub Scouts Pack 1092 (CE)	12 6:30AM - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 12:00PM - 4:00PM 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)	13 6:00PM - 7:00PM Girl Scouts (L) 6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE) 5:30PM - 6:30PM Choir Practice (MR)	14 12:00PM - 4:00PM 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) 7:00PM - 8:00PM Worship Committee (CR)	15 2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12-Step NA (L)	16 1:00PM - 4:00PM D & D (HS)
17 10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00PM - 8:00PM 12-Step (MR)	18 1:00PM - 2:00PM Women's Bible Study 5:15PM Finance (N) 6:00PM - 7:00PM Cub Scouts Pack 1092 (CE)	19 6:30AM - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 12:00PM - 4:00PM 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)	20 6:00PM - 7:00PM Girl Scouts (L) 6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE) 5:30PM - 6:30PM Choir Practice (MR)	21 12:00PM - 4:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 5:30PM - 6:30PM 12-Step (HS) 6:00PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR & FH Classrooms) 6:30PM Session (SL) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Sweet Adelines (CE Basement)	22 2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12-Step NA (L)	23 1:00PM - 4:00PM D & D (HS)
24 10:30AM - 11:30AM Worship Service (S) 2:00PM - 4:00PM Grace Church (S) 7:00PM - 8:00PM 12-Step (MR)	25 6:00PM - 7:00PM Cub Scouts Pack 1092 (CE)	26 6:30AM - 7:30AM Men's Bible Study (N) 12:00PM - 4:00PM Cello Charly (MR) 6:30PM - 8:00PM Boy Scouts (CE) 6:30PM - 9:00PM Great Land Sound (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12 Step AA (L)	27 6:00PM - 7:00PM Girl Scouts (L) 6:00PM - 9:00PM Red Hackle Pipe Band (CE) 5:30PM - 6:30PM Choir Practice (MR)	28 12:00PM - 4:00PM 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)	29 2:00PM - 4:00PM Four Winds (MR) 6:30PM - 9:30PM Grace Church (MR) 8:00PM - 10:00PM 12-Step NA (L)	30 1:00PM - 4:00PM D & D (HS)

The following is a summary of the August 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
August 17, 2023, Student Lounge

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

Guest: Deacon Donita Lawhead.

Moderator, Rev. Erika Bergh opened the meeting at 6:33PM and led the opening prayer.

Scripture and Devotion: Larry presented a devotion on 1 Corinthians 12:4-5, 7-9 and 2 Corinthians 12:7-9a.

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 July 20, 2023 session meeting. Motion was amended by unanimous consent to remove the July 20 minutes. Amended motion passed by unanimous consent.

Minutes: It was moved and seconded to approve the July 20, 2023 minutes, as amended. Amended motion passed by unanimous consent.

Orders of the Day (7:00PM)

Deacons' report: Donita Lawhead gave the deacons' report. Deacons were thanked for their excellent service. Conversation ensued regarding liability when transporting members to church. We concluded that it depends on the individual's personal insurance policy when taking a friend to church and that driver's comfort level regarding risk.

Comments from the Congregation: No comments from the congregation were received in writing or in person.

Clerk's Report: There was nothing new to add to the written report, below.

New Business:

Updating the church roll book: Kouadios' transfer to Utqiagvik, Illingworths' transfer to UCPC, confirmation of Frederich Bierer. Paula Long will ensure that the roll book is updated.

Motion from Worship committee and Personnel committee: **that the position of Choir Director be offered to Theresa Reed for one year (renewable for following years by agreement) beginning the last Wednesday in August. Motion passed by unanimous consent.** See committee report for details.

Motion from Building Stewards: **To pay the Beckley Mechanical invoice of \$27,392.50 (50% down payment for gas boiler installation). Motion passed by unanimous consent.** See committee report for details.

From Worship Committee: **Following up on a suggestion from the Faith Committee, we supported the idea that a special area be set up at the front of the church to the left of the pulpit where chairs could be removed so that an area for young children could be created and supervised by Marji Illingworth and others during the service.** See committee report for details. Discussion centered on disruption and noise. No vote was taken, but session members concluded that a "Pray

Ground” area will be tested for quiet activities, with a rug delineating the boundary.

Motion from Personnel Committee: **Approve four days of bereavement time for Pastor Bergh. Motion passed by unanimous consent.** See committee report for details.

Session quorum in the bylaws – Currently, a quorum for a session meeting is only 1/3 of members serving on session. After discussion, it was moved and seconded to present the following change to the UCPC bylaws to the congregation at the November annual meeting: **The last sentence in lines 153 and 154 of the bylaws shall read as follows:**

A quorum of the session shall be the Pastor or other presiding officer and at least 50% of the active elders. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

Newsletter items were discussed. A system is needed whereby the administrative assistant is not put into a position which requires her to choose which items are most important to go into the newsletter.

The subject was tabled to the September meeting so that session members could consider options.

Session decided to order 5 PCUSA planning calendars (\$11.50 each) through the Presbytery.

Old Business

- Attracting new members.
- Rev. Bergh will order the book *The Invitational Christian* for session members to read.
- Roger and Pastor Erika will have conversations with Grace church about cooperative issues that both churches could work on, as we share the building.
- Proposed building rental rates were tabled to September.

Meeting Schedule Next meeting: September 21, 6:30PM, in the second floor student lounge.

September Devotional and Elder of the Month: Jerry McBeath

Adjourn Closing prayer was led by Elder Larry Johnson

UCPC Finance Report

	August 2023 as of 8/15	2023 Year-to-Date through 8/15
Income	\$4,136	\$178,379
Expense	\$8,309	\$232,536
Net	(\$4,173)	\$56,833

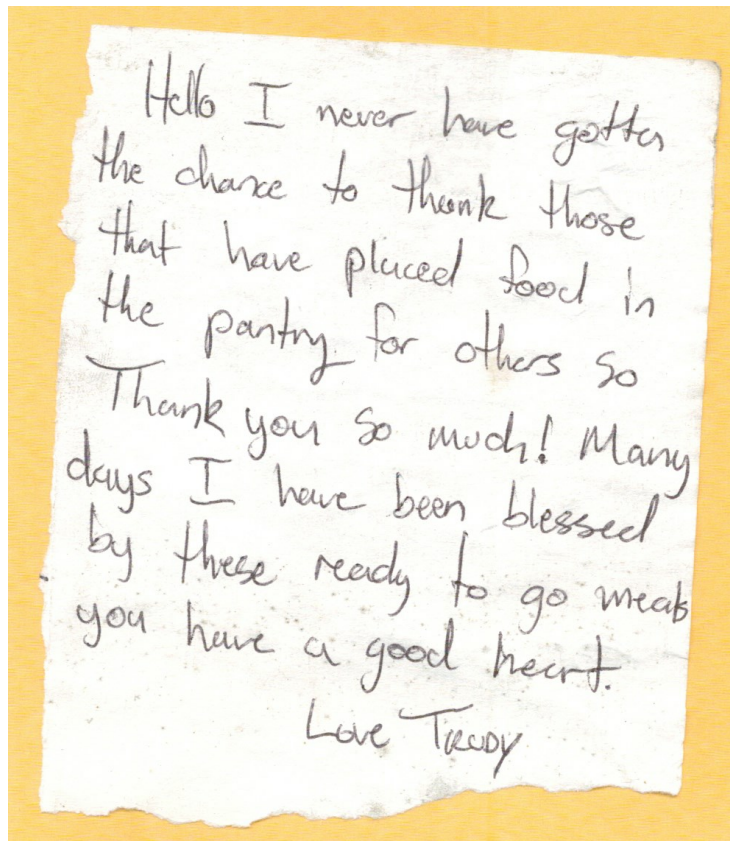
September Elder of the month is: Jerry McBeath
September Deacon of the month is: Janet Johnson

Little Free Pantry Update

UCPC started their little free pantry almost three years ago when during Covid, Pastor Neill was getting many requests as people knocked on the church door asking for food. It has been a learning experience! Once in a while, one of us is at the pantry at the same time as one of our recipients, who tells us thank you. Recently, the note at right was left in the pantry. In November, we started asking people who donate how much they've spent. When we last added it up, there was over \$1600 listed, but we think this is on the low end of what is being spent. Some people have donated money for which we are grateful. Others have provided food which also has been appreciated. Suggested foods include

canned meals (such as chili, spaghetti, etc.), tuna or sardines, crackers, peanut butter, snack bars, cheese, fruits (until it freezes). We could use one or two more people to fill up the pantry for a week at a time, or split a week with someone. It is great that UCPC is helping feed people near our church. Thank you.

Muffie Durst



October 4th is the commemoration of Saint Francis of Assisi, a man who cherished God's creation. There are stories that he walked amongst the trees in the forest, preaching to them God's good news of salvation because of Christ's death and resurrection. Saint Francis is known as the protector of animals, therefore many churches will follow his example by (on a Sunday close to October 4th) blessing their pets and animals. UCPC will be holding an Animal Blessing Service on Sunday, October 8th on the church porch at 12:30pm. The service should last about 20 minutes and you'll

receive individual blessings for any and all animals you may bring with.

If you are unable to transport your pet or animal but still want them blessed, please bring a photo of them!

Pastor Erika will also bless any pets that have passed on and are no longer living. Bring a photo or keepsake that reminds you of them and Pastor Erika will bless the love, memories, and time you shared together.

Shout Out!



**Thank you, Joe Krizek, for overseeing
the occasionally very frustrating
boiler upgrade!!**

Building and Grounds Update

Fairbanks Pumping and Thawing has completed the boiler condensate drain to the sewer. The handicap parking lot is now open. Beckley Mechanical is waiting for an outside air intake flange adaptor for the gas boiler. IGU has received a permit from DOT to drill under College road and expects to have the installation complete by 9/15. UAF Grounds crew has a work order to clean up all the trash on the west side of UCPC property.



UCPC is creating a Pray Ground in the sanctuary near the pulpit. Over the next couple of weeks, you'll see some chairs moved and a rug installed. Each week, a volunteer will have an activity for young children to work on during the sermon. All kids are invited to come up for the Children's Sermon, and then go to the Pray Ground to color, play with play dough, do stamps, beading, coloring, and more. Parents are welcome (and encouraged, if your child is shy) to come with!

The goal of a Pray Ground is to create a space where children can wiggle and move but still see what is happening, so they can learn about what

church is and become accustomed to the routines of liturgy. Children absorb much more of what is happening around them than we realize. Offering them a space to quietly play and watch has been transformative for many churches with children and we are hopeful to experience this at UCPC as well! The Faith Development Team suggested trying out a Pray Ground, and the Worship Team concurred. Please let us know if you have any excitements, concerns, or questions. We want to know!

Youth Group!

Join us this fall and early winter for youth group! 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! UCPC is hosting the first event on October 8th from 3-5pm. Come join us as we explore what God has to say about justice for the earth and care of creation.

YOUTH GROUP!
2nd Sundays / 3 - 5pm
Grades 8 through 12
Service, Learning, and Fun!

OCTOBER 8
EARTH & FAITH
@ UCPC

NOVEMBER 12
FOOD & FAITH
@ CLC

DECEMBER 10
HOUSING & FAITH
@ LOL

JANUARY 14
VISIONING & FAITH
@ FLC

University Community Presbyterian Church
Christ Lutheran Church
Lord of Life Lutheran Church
FAIRBANKS LUTHERAN CHURCH



Rooted in Love: Fall 2023 Stewardship Focus

Our Stewardship Focus draws inspiration from Psalm 1, "They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season." The Psalmist invites us to imagine all the good things we can bear when well-planted. What might we give away when rooted in love? But the Psalmist also meant something deeper. The word we translate as 'planted' in English means 'transplanted' in Hebrew. This translation speaks to the power of love to move us from one place to another, the power to convert us from one way of life to another. What would need to change in our lives for us to be fully rooted in love? We might need to make a move from a 'mindset of scarcity' to a 'mindset of abundance.' A scarcity mindset makes us think there will never be enough - we must compete, one against another, because there is not enough to go around. Scarcity thinking names all the things we cannot do, all the things we cannot share. But a mindset of abundance sees the fullness of God's love. Martin Luther King Jr. saw the world abundantly - despite all the injustice he confronted, King knew God's Spirit moved through history, creating and renewing community. King once described the force of love that animated the Civil Rights Movement. "Agape is not a weak, passive love. It is love in action. Agape is love seeking to preserve and create community. It is insistence on community even when one seeks to break it. Agape is a willingness to go to any length to restore broken community."

What would it mean for our lives to be rooted in such love?

Starting this month, you'll be receiving a letter in the mail with pledge information and be hearing about financial stewardship that is rooted in love from Pastor Erika, members of the Finance Team and others. We invite you to pray with us and ponder how God's love overflows in abundance onto us who can in turn overflow in abundance to others.

Helping Alaska Personal Needs Closet

This month (since I unexpectedly had a whole empty page!), I thought I'd talk a bit about our own Helping Alaska closet, which provides hygiene items to people in need. Here's how it works: Helping Alaska sends us a referral via email. I call the client, confirm what they are looking for, then arrange a time when they can come pick up their request. Then I go down to the fondly nicknamed "smelly closet" and fill a bag with shampoo, soap, toothbrushes, toilet paper, diapers...whatever they need that we have. Sometimes the people come in right away to get their stuff. Sometimes life intervenes and you may see filled bags sitting in the office for a while, until a family can recover from whatever illness is going around, or until a person without wheels can find a ride. The recipients are *always* pleased and grateful. Sometimes there are hugs, sometimes there are tears. Since starting work in March, I've filled, maybe, one request a month. This week, I got 3 referrals. The needs will continue to pick up as cold weather approaches, and unfortunately, some of our supplies are getting a little depleted!

If you would like to contribute to this ministry, ***thank you!*** Remember that the supplies we provide are meant to help people with an immediate, acute need. We're taking care of the basics to help folks free up a little cash for something else until the next check. We don't give out large amounts of anything at once—so bulk packages of items that can be separated (like toilet paper or laundry pods) are fine, but gigantic bottles of shampoo are a bit of a problem, since we can't really break them down into smaller amounts.

Things we need: Kids' toothbrushes; shampoo & conditioner, and lotion (travel size, unopened hotel freebies or regular size); small packages of tissues; toilet paper; combs and brushes; *women's* shaving cream; baby wipes; BandAids (or generic); powdered laundry detergent or laundry pods; feminine hygiene products (pads and/or tampons), barrettes; toothpaste (regular or travel size; we have some for adults and none for kids at the moment). We can also use sandwich and snack size zipper bags for divvying up laundry soap and pods.

Things we DON'T need (we have plenty right now): Adult toothbrushes; deodorant; *men's* shaving cream; large gauze bandages; hair picks; diapers; bladder control underwear; bar soap.

Things we don't take: OTC medicine, socks, partially used bottles of anything

If you choose to donate to the Personal Needs Closet, you may drop items off at the church office or near the Mission board in the narthex, near the Foodbank wagon. If you have any questions, call me at 479-6728 or email me at admin@ucpcfairbanks.org. And thank you again, to everyone who has donated in the past, or worked with the Closet for years (I'm looking at you, Trish Stark), and to everyone who will donate and work with the Closet in the future. It make a difference!! -Melissa Bierer

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~ Theresa Reed
Sound Manager ~ Curtis McNeill

Committee leaders

Worship: Roger Smith
Finance and Stewardship: Jerry McBeath
Mission and Outreach: Larry Johnson
Faith Development: Pat Babcock
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 (907) 479-6728

Email: admin@ucpcfairbanks.org

Office Hours

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

Pastor Erika is in the office Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

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	978-7817	Class of 2025
Matthew Bierer	474-0106	Class of 2025
Larry Johnson	479-4766	Class of 2025

