

Lent 2023

Volume 14, Issue 2

View more photos from church events via our website: upcbgm.org/programs-and-events/photo-gallery

Our worship services are livestreamed on our YouTube channel: upcbgm.org/youtube

Holy Week: On the Path to Resurrection

Palm Sunday is April 2! At the beginning of Holy Week, Jesus made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem, setting off the events that led to his crucifixion. Matthew's account of the entry includes a female donkey and her colt, cloaks and garments spread on the road, and palm branches cut and waved.

As part of our celebration, we invite you to bring coats and household linens to prepare the way. We will be giving them to those in need after our worship, so they may be gently used, but please make sure that they are clean and ready to share with others. You may put them on the steps at the front of the sanctuary when you arrive, and they will be arranged during the service as part of our preparation.

Also on Palm Sunday, the children's "fish boxes" will be collected and we will receive the PC(USA) One Great Hour of Sharing offering. (*More info about the OGHS offering is on pages 9-10.*)

After worship, everyone is invited to go down to Fellowship Hall, to help decorate Easter eggs. The eggs will be given to our pantry clients and our guests at the community meal during the week, as a special reminder that resurrection is a promise for all people.

Maundy Thursday, April 6, at 7pm: We will gather in the sanctuary for a service of communion and candles, and the service will also be streamed on YouTube. We will retell the story of the Passion in simple language and bless each other as we go into the time of waiting for resurrection.

Easter Sunday, April 9, at 10am: We will have our regular communion service in the sanctuary, as well as streaming on YouTube. (*See the back page for more Easter news!*)



Holy Week

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Our mission is to follow Jesus Christ by doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God.

Everyone is welcome here



UNITED PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON



Pastors' Ponderings



*Kimberly P Chastain,
Pastor*

I am thinking about the 10th anniversary of my relationship with United Presbyterian Church, which we will celebrate on June 4th of this year, when we will also celebrate Pentecost (the birthday of Christianity). There will be another newsletter before that, but it feels like the time is right to start remembering the many turns we have taken on the path from then until now. We have been through seasons of loss and grief; of wild experiments — some successful, some not so much; of joyous fellowship and challenging mission. And always the music, and the stories, and the wandering and the wondering together as we try to follow God's call into a future only God can see.

It is good to remember all that we have been through together: the troubles overcome, the moments of pure beauty when we have been surprised by joy, the wrong turnings that have put us in exactly the right place for the next right thing.

So let's talk about what we want to remember, when we tell the story of ten years together. What are the moments, the changes, the highlights and the lowlights that you want to add to the story as we begin to gather the pieces for a celebration? Are there special photos that you'd like to share, or particular memories you want to lift up?

I don't have a plan yet for how we can build the collection of memories, but I do want to hear from you! I get to tell you what I see every Sunday. But I don't always get to hear from you about what you see, and know, and remember about the first ten years of the great experiment that is United Presbyterian Church.

God isn't finished with us yet, and I am sure that even as we talk about what we remember about our first ten years together, God is preparing the way for something new to happen.

I went back to the newsletter from June of 2013, to the first Pastor's Ponderings I ever wrote for this congregation. Here's what I said then:

...we have to look ahead if we are going to find our bearings in the present.

And when we look ahead, we find our Lord has gone on before us, and that the Spirit is nudging us to follow where he leads. Even death did not stop him, and nothing will separate us from his love. He invites us to walk ever more closely with him — not by fleeing from the future, but by sharing his love with each other as we face the future:

We are pilgrims on a journey, here together on the road

We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.

This congregation has been through so many changes in recent times that we will be taking some time to rest and celebrate even as we get to know each other in this new phase of our ministry, together. Change will come, and with it, new challenges and new life. But we do not have to be afraid, and we do not have to try to stop it. Because the Lord of Life knows what the future holds, and he goes with us on the way. Let's remind ourselves and each other of this promise as often as we need to, so we all share in the blessings together!

Ten years later, all of those words still feel true, about us and about our journey together.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Kimberly

Greetings friends!

It's been a great winter season together. Not quite as cold or snowy as we need, but I know many people found that to be a blessing this year. I am greatly looking forward to spring though with the daffodils, crocus, and tulips all on the verge of blooming.

It's been a great learning season though. Kimberly has taken us through parts of the Bible together in worship that we don't usually get to hear about. We are doing the same thing in Bible Study. And more of the young people have been able to join us in person for worship so we get to see them learning as well. Marilynn Guinanne and I have continued to send home Sunday School packets for the students and it has been a fun season crafting our way through the beginning of Matthew and then Romans. But I think the highlight of my winter was the renewal of baptism we all participated

in and had the kids help us to remember our baptism and the love God has for us by sprinkling us all with water. It's so wonderful to see how this community is truly an intergenerational community that includes all ages and abilities into the life and worship of this congregation.

It's been a great learning season with our campus ministry as well. We have had several of the Binghamton University Interfaith Council Common Ground Conversations with members of the Interfaith Council and members of the BU community. We have talked

about our different faith practices around the topics of prayer, daily living, and death. The group really enjoys sharing their experiences and learning about what other faiths do and we are all learning a lot.



Ash Wednesday on Campus with Rev. Alicia Dixon Gerrard, Pastor Kimberly, and Pastor Becky



Remembering our Baptism – Children sprinkling the congregation. Above: Pastor Becky with Ellis and Aoife.

Right: Marilynn G. with Ethan, Declan, and Clyde



Becky Kindig, Associate Pastor

The other thing we were able to do on campus this year was Ashes to Go for Ash Wednesday. The Interfaith Council made a way to offer Ashes back in 2020 for the first time for Protestant students, and Kimberly and I participated, along with members of the Lutheran, Episcopal, and Methodist partners. Due to the pandemic, we had not been able to do that again until this year. So this Ash Wednesday, Presbyterian, American Baptist, and Lutheran members of the BU Interfaith Council coordinated and had a station for Ashes to Go again this year for students, faculty, and staff of the University. It was a meaningful time and was well-received.

Thank you all for all you do to foster these intergenerational and educational opportunities for our congregation and our community!

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Becky

Music Notes

Music is an important part of our coming together at United Presbyterian Church. We are excited to make music with every resource that we have, and to use a variety of styles — not all at once, but intermingled. What emerges is a vibrant worship service with music that includes everyone who wishes to participate.

UPC's vocal choir is enjoying the use of our new choir room (next door to the chapel), and we meet **Wednesdays, 6:30–7:30pm**. We provide music for worship most every Sunday. We welcome new members at any time, and would love to have your participation. It would be good to have you with us!



United Ringers handbell choir rehearses **Sundays, 11:30am–12:30pm** in the Sanctuary. Our handbell choir plays 2–4 octaves of Malmark handbells and handchimes, providing music for worship about once a month. If you're interested in learning how to play handbells, please inquire. New members are always welcome! No previous experience needed. No auditions to start. If you can count to 4, you can learn to play!



We also invite instrumentalists and vocalists who'd like to share their gifts to talk with any of our music leaders about providing special music for worship — you can call the church office, email music@upcbgm.org, or speak with them in person after worship. All musicians must be fully vaccinated and boosted.

At United Presbyterian Church, children are included in all aspects of worship. We invite them to start early with participation in hymns and other pieces of music. An in-sanctuary play & learn area for families also gives easy access to the Time for the Young at Heart and hands-on thematic exploration.



Organ Celebrations at Northminster Presbyterian Church

Northminster Presbyterian Church is excited to announce that their "new to Northminster" pipe organ is ready to be celebrated! After over a year of work — removal from the old Ross Memorial Presbyterian Church, rehabilitation and upgrading, and installation at Northminster — they're holding a Service of Dedication and Celebration on **April 15 at 3pm**, with a reception to follow.

There will also be a concert of a few different small ensembles and organ on **May 13 at 3pm**. And on **June 11 at 4pm**, the local American Guild of Organists will hold a members' recital.



All the above events are open to the public and all are welcome. Northminster Presbyterian Church is located at 711 Farm-to-Market Road, Endwell, NY 13760.

Our Church Family

Join Us for Worship — in person, online, or over the phone

We worship together on Sundays at 10:00am, both in person in the sanctuary and online. The service is livestreamed on our public YouTube Channel [upcbgm.org/youtube](https://www.upcbgm.org/youtube), our Zoom room [upcbgm.org/zoom](https://www.upcbgm.org/zoom), and our website, and is also accessible on YouTube any time. Those who can't access the worship videos online can call in on the phone to listen live on Sunday mornings, using the Zoom information listed below. So if you are not ready or able to come "in person", you are welcome to participate as you are able.



Everyone is invited to join us as we pray, hear God's word read and proclaimed, share our joys and concerns, and experience worshipful music. All of our musicians are fully vaccinated, and the singers and instrumentalists at the front of the sanctuary are at least 15 feet away from the first row of pews.

If you're joining us in person, here's what you need to know:

- We wear masks and keep social distance, and the pews are marked to help us sit safely. We keep the inside doors open throughout worship, and air filtration units are deployed throughout the sanctuary to enhance your safety.
- Pastor Kimberly removes her mask while preaching and leading prayers, to accommodate those who rely on lip-reading to assist their auditory processing.
- Printed worship guides are placed by each door for you to pick up on the way in, and the hymns are printed in the worship guide.
- Offering plates are placed by the doors of the sanctuary, but we do not pass them during the offertory. You are still invited and welcome to give online at [upcbgm.org/giving/donate](https://www.upcbgm.org/giving/donate) or to mail a check to the church.

If you're worshipping with us online, all of the hymn music and prayer words are shown on the screen, and live captioning is used for other parts of the service such as the sermon and the announcements. If you watch on a small screen and need the printed version of the worship guide, it is available for download from our website each week, or it can be mailed to you upon request if downloading & printing is not an option.

If you have been missing the time of shared prayer, join us at 9:30 before worship — either at church in the Study (Room 102, next door to the Nursery), or on Zoom — for a time of sharing and praying for the needs of our community. To join Zoom online, go to [upcbgm.org/zoom](https://www.upcbgm.org/zoom). To call in: Dial 1-646-558-8656, then enter Meeting ID: 865 274 8433 #

It would be good to have you with us.

Spring Preaching Plans — Continuing in the Gospel According to Matthew

Starting after Easter Sunday, we will pick up the story of Jesus's earthly ministry and teaching in the gospel according to Matthew, beginning with chapter 4. After we celebrate Pentecost (on June 4), we will continue through the gospel according to Matthew for the rest of the church year, so that by Reign of Christ Sunday (November 26), we will have heard and deepened our acquaintance with the whole gospel as Matthew wrote it.

Matthew was composed in the last decades of the first century; the author seems to have been writing for a Jewish-Christian community that understood itself to be in tension with other Jewish associations and groups at the time. For the Matthean community, Jesus is both the new Law-Giver (like Moses) and the new King of Israel (like David). For Matthew, the faithfulness of God is shown in Jesus, and Jesus calls humanity to respond by living faithfully according to God's commands.

April 23 – Jesus is Tempted in the Wilderness

Focus Text: [Matthew 4:1-11](#)

Immediately after his baptism, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he remains for 40 days being “tested” or tempted by the devil. The testing comes after 40 days of fasting, and there are three tests: to turn stones into bread when he is hungry, to throw himself off of the temple so God's power can be shown by saving him, and to compromise God's claim on Jesus by worshiping the devil, who claims to be in charge of all of the empires of the world.

The Spirit is in charge of the process, and Jesus's authority is shown to be complete when he banishes the devil and angels minister to him. This story is a kind of theme-setting interlude, showing the main themes that Matthew will continue to develop in the rest of the gospel. God's claim on our lives does not come with immunity from hardship or conflict or struggle. In fact, living in this new realm brought by Jesus will bring us tests and temptations, but we know that his authority is secure and his victory is already won.

April 30 – Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee

Focus Text: [Matthew 4:12-17](#)

For Matthew, the arrest of John the Baptizer marks the beginning of Jesus's ministry. Alone among the gospel writers, Matthew places the seat of Jesus's ministry in Capernaum, a fishing village at the northern end of the Sea of Galilee (renamed Lake Tiberias under Roman occupation). He links this change in residence to a promise from Isaiah 9, but is careful to end the quotation before its promise to the nations beyond Israel. For Matthew, Jesus is a distinctly Jewish Messiah, and his promises come first to the Judean people, even in a relatively cosmopolitan part of Galilee.

In verse 17, Matthew uses a phrase that will only occur in one other place in his telling: “From that time...” The second time will come when Jesus sets his face toward Jerusalem and begins the road to the passion. Here at the beginning, Jesus repeats John's message, “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near.”

May 7 – Jesus Calls the First Disciples

Focus Text: [Matthew 4:18-22](#)

Matthew puts the calling of these first disciples at the beginning of Jesus's ministry, without any particular context for why he has called them or why they follow. He is emphasizing the regal authority of Jesus, who first establishes the seat of his ministry, and then summons his court. He reverses the usual custom of the time, when students would seek out a teacher to follow and learn from.

Jesus summons four fishermen with irresistible authority, in Matthew's telling, and the four named disciples respond with radical obedience. They seem to stand for all future believers who will hear the call; not everyone will leave professions and possessions behind, but all will leave their familiar world behind and enter the new world that Jesus invites them into.

May 14 – Jesus the Teacher and Healer

Focus Text: [Matthew 4:23-25](#)

Establishing himself as a teacher and a healer, Jesus travels around Galilee, teaching in synagogues and announcing that the kingdom of heaven has come near. His teaching was reinforced by the healings he

performed, and Matthew lists particular ailments that Jesus cured. Matthew's geography seems a bit uncertain, but he wants us to understand that Jewish people from all across the region were hearing and being drawn to Jesus's message, as far south as the province of Judea, and as far north as the province of Syria. This is not a universal message yet, but it is a gathering of the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" as Matthew says in chapter 10. Jesus's new kingdom is to be gathered from the margins, and found in the crowds of ordinary people at the edges of the empire.

May 21 — Jesus the Law-Giver

Focus Text: [Matthew 5:1-20](#)

When Jesus sees the crowds who are coming together, he goes up on a mountain and begins to offer a new constitution for living in the kingdom of heaven. He begins with the Beatitudes, which are perhaps the best-known verses of Matthew's gospel. There are other examples of beatitudes in apocalyptic literature of the time; they describe oppressive conditions that will be corrected by God's future transformation of the world.

There are two groups of four beatitudes. The first four describe those who are crushed by the conditions of the empire, ending with those who "hunger and thirst for righteousness (or justice)". The remaining four describe the human actors that will bring about the transformation through their actions. The last one is expanded to elaborate on the persecutions that followers of Jesus will experience, and reminds the listeners that they are not alone and they join with earlier witnesses in suffering to bring about God's justice.

In Matthew's telling, Jesus then moves to very specific challenges to his followers. We are to shine with God's justice, living according to God's law and by our faithfulness in doing more than the law requires, showing the kingdom even as it is being created.

May 28 — Heavenly Living in Earthly Conditions

Focus Text: [Matthew 5:18-48](#)

This part of the Sermon on the Mount offers six examples of Jesus's teaching. It is structured in a style that would have been familiar to those who listened to rabbinic teaching. Each teaching opens with a verse from scripture "You have heard that it is said..." and then follows with commentary, "but (or and) I say..." Traditionally, these have been called the "antitheses", and have been presented as if they are replacing the commands of the Torah with new understandings that "fulfill" the Torah. As Christian scholars have become more familiar with the Mishnah, Jewish writings from about the same time, the traditional understanding has been challenged. The examples here are consistent with other teachings in style and in the challenge that they bring to the hearer. They are a curious mix of how believers are supposed to treat each other in the community and of how believers are supposed to respond to oppressive behaviors by the Roman occupiers. He closes the section by showing that the goal for believers is to imitate God in wholeness of heart, offering love even to enemies because it aligns believers with God's nature, bringing the kingdom of heaven close to earth.

June 4 — Pentecost

Focus Text: [Acts 2](#)

This year, we are celebrating Pentecost on June 4, a week later than most of western Christendom, so that we can celebrate our 10th anniversary together at the same time! (*Pastor Kimberly started working at UPC on June 4, 2013.*) The Eastern Orthodox branch of Christianity follows a different calendar than the Western tradition, so we will be celebrating with our Eastern siblings in the faith.

The writer of Luke-Acts gives us a glorious spectacle for the coming of the Holy Spirit, with people from many nations able to hear the disciples telling God's good news in their own languages, and walls disappearing as tongues "as of fire" appear among the gathered saints. Peter preaches a sermon that so

moves and convicts the hearers that “about 3,000” were added to the community of faith. He finishes off the story with a quick portrait of the gathered believers living together, holding everything in common, and “having the good will of all the people”.

It seems likely that the spectacle composed by the author of Luke-Acts drew heavily on metaphor and hyperbole. But as we reflect on ten years of ministry together, how shall we tell the story of our origins and of our present witness? What is the story that we want to carry with us into the future?

Special Day Coming Your Way?

Members and friends of our congregation are encouraged to provide the church office with birth dates (if not already on file) so that we can be sure folks receive celebration greetings from our church family. No need to provide us with the year if you’d rather keep that to yourself!

Please let us know of any other special occasions, and also about difficult times and prayer needs where a card or supportive message may be appreciated.

You may contact the church office or a member of the Card Committee (Margaret Davis, Suzie Northrop Raboy, Jenni McKeage, Lana Ogden, and Cindy Chadwick).

Session Highlights

by Andy Chadwick, Clerk of Session

Here are some of the actions Session has taken since the last newsletter. While this is a short list, Session has also been busy taking care of the normal operation of the church.

- UPC received another \$5,000 gift from the Put God First Foundation for housing the homeless during cold weather.
- Work is progressing on preparing the Library Lounge, Terrace Room, and Chapel for use as a nightly warming center for those with no shelter for protection from the cold. The Addiction Center of Broome County is paying for modifications. While it had been hoped that it would be ready at the beginning of February, the warming center should now be operational in early April.
- While not exactly Session-related, Pastors Kimberly and Becky, along with fellow pastors Lisa Heckman and Pat Raube (calling themselves “The Weird Sisters”) recorded a “Per Capita” song for the February 11 Presbytery assembly meeting. Having attended the meeting, it was very entertaining and well done!

Please don’t hesitate to ask any member of Session about what we’ve been doing!



The carpeting in the Library Lounge has been replaced with laminate flooring, and the kitchenette has been refurbished with new counters, a new sink, and a full-size refrigerator.

Coming soon: The UP-Warming Center

Hello, my name is Jeff Pryor. I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself to you. Some of you may know me already, so I appreciate your time in sharing more about who I am. For those of you that do not know me, I first moved to Broome County to obtain my master's degree in social work. I was in corporate America for quite some time, and I was yearning for something more meaningful.

In June of 2010, I designed what you know today as the Broome County Reentry Program. This program was designed for individuals returning to Broome County from a NYS Correctional Facility, to assist them in overcoming barriers which inhibited their successful (re)integration. January 2018, I took my mission further and created the Broome County Jail Reentry Program. This program assists those currently incarcerated inside the BC Sheriff's Correctional Facility. The program's mission is the same. We look to put services and assistance in place so folks can move forward with their lives and not end up returning to incarceration. Both reentry programs are currently funded by the Division of Criminal Justice Services. Over the past 13 years, we have assisted over 2,500 returning citizens. These folks are our neighbors, friends, and loved ones, and assisting them to make better decisions through programming is what we do.

Broome County and practically every county around us is experiencing a housing crisis. As a resident of Binghamton, it's part of my responsibility to take care of my community. I believe there is work to be done and I have decided to further my calling to step into a brand-new position with the Addiction Center of Broome County. Just this month I was brought on to develop and grow what we are calling our UP-Warming Center. In partnership with the United Presbyterian Church, we are planning to open a 40-bed overnight warming center for individuals who have found themselves homeless. Our intention is to partner with critical agencies in town to ensure no one sleeps outside during the colder months. We are all human and we are all connected. I am so thankful for the support received and I am excited about the possibilities of our future growth and potential.

Please feel free to reach out to me with thoughts and ideas as we move forward. It will be my pleasure to meet you and listen to your thoughts. My direct email is JPryor@acbcservices.org. Until then, thank you for your support and God Bless!

– Jeff

Supporting Our Mission and Ministry

We are able to receive tax-deductible contributions online through our website (upcbgm.org/giving/donate). Contributions can be made by E-check or credit card, and can also be set up as a recurring gift.

We encourage you to lift up in prayer how God will use you to bless UPC in fulfilling our mission to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.



During the season of Lent, we celebrate that God connects with us through Jesus's resurrection and connects us with "those who have least" — that's how Matthew 25 puts it — and that's what One Great Hour of Sharing is all about. Connecting.

In Isaiah 58, the prophet exclaims, "Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of





PHOTO © SCOTT CLAUDE - USA TODAY NETWORK



or in need. The people about whom Isaiah and Jesus spoke. The people we are invited to connect with, today. One Great Hour of Sharing is the single largest way that Presbyterians connect every year to work for justice, resilience, and sustainability — providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

We invite you to visit the OGHS website (pcusa.org/oghs) to find out more information on how your gift helps people all over the world, and to offer prayers for the people and projects who receive this support.

We are the church, together. Let's connect! Join with Presbyterians worldwide in answering God's call. This Lenten season, please give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing. If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!

Mission Report from the Mexico-US Border

by David Ruston

Hi all, Sorry to not have gotten a report in sooner than this, but we have been much busier this year than last.

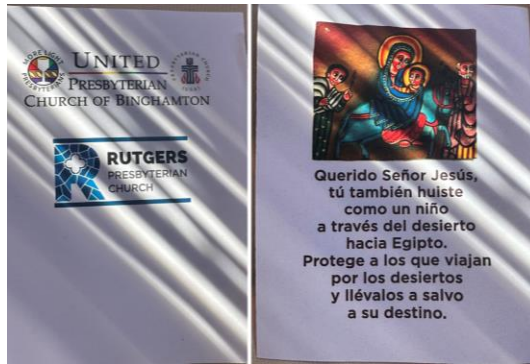
We are continuing to work with the Tucson Samaritans as well as helping to get supplies to Casa de la Esperanza. Along with the delegation from Rutgers Presbyterian Church, we assembled 100 hygiene kits for shelters on the Mexican side of the border, since many travelers who get deported try to cross again. Each kit contains a toothbrush, toothpaste, chap-stick, wipes, comb (for removing cactus barbs from your skin), and an emergency blanket. These can be used for keeping warm by wrapping with the dark side out, for keeping cool by helping to reflect the heat when turned around, and also can be used as an SOS signal when spread out. Also included is a prayer card in Spanish, thanks to Pastor Andrew Stehlik.

streets to live in" (Isaiah 58:12). As the people of Israel returned from the cloud of exile and struggled to rebuild their lives, Isaiah questioned their efforts: [Are you not called] "to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them?" (Isaiah 58:7).

Then in Matthew 25, we hear Jesus calling to us, "For I was hungry and you gave me food ... I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing. ... As you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:35-40). Matthew 25 teaches us that, in every time and season, the Church finds itself and its Savior through relationships with those in need. We are the church, together.

Isaiah and Jesus are making an important theological point: Faithfulness to God leads to fixing things that are broken — broken lives, broken spirits, broken hearts, broken relationships, and broken breaches of faith and trust.

When we give to the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering, we are helping repair peoples' lives — people who are hurting, broken, oppressed, lost,



When translated, it says: “Dear Lord Jesus, you too fled as a child through the desert of Egypt. Protect those who travel through the desert and take them safely to their destination.” Rutgers also had t-shirts and sweatshirts made up with this prayer on the back. UPC provided the materials for the kits with Rutgers assembling.

We have been on numerous Samaritan trips and have encountered travelers young and old frequently. Most recent report from a trip of another Samaritan: “We continued along the wall for about a mile when we encountered two small boys standing at a gap by themselves. They were a 12-year-old and his 11-year-old brother from Guatemala, and they were both scared to death. We assured them that we would not leave them.”

Sadly, this is a daily occurrence — while heartbreaking, routine.

Muchas gracias from The Samaritans and Casa de la Esperanza for the donations from our friends at United Presbyterian Church. We will be presenting checks to both organizations on behalf of UPC as well as the carloads of supplies we will be taking to the borderland shelters.

We will be ordering Casa de la Esperanza t-shirts with the intention of selling them as a fund-raiser soon. Hopefully I will bring the t-shirts home with me to avoid shipping costs.

With peace, *David and Greg*

Get Involved!

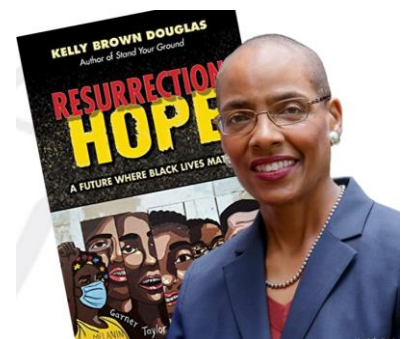
Our church teams are always welcoming new team members. If you’d like to help with or learn more about the workings of the church, talk to one of the pastors or the elders on Session: **Card Committee**, Suzie Raboy; **Finance**, Lou McKeage or Andy Chadwick; **Personnel**, Marilyn Guinane; **Property**, Pastor Becky; **Worship & Music**, Suzie Raboy or Andy Chadwick.

Programs & Events

Resurrection Hope: A Future Where Black Lives Matter

Thursday, March 30, 7pm, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary’s 2023 Grawemeyer Lecture, on YouTube

Kelly Brown Douglas, dean of Union Theological Seminary’s Episcopal Divinity School in New York City and a canon theologian at Washington Cathedral, is one of the first Black female Episcopal priests in the United States and the first Black person to head an Episcopal Church-affiliated educational institution. Douglas will speak on her award-winning book, *Resurrection Hope: A Future Where Black Lives Matter*. She wrote the book in response to her son asking, “How do we really know God cares when Black people are still getting killed?” and seeing Black Lives Matter protests erupt nationwide after George Floyd’s death. Watch live at lpts.edu/watchlive or pre-register at lpts.wufoo.com/forms/s8z67yq0sv935q



Our Presbytery & Churches Countering Climate Change NOW!

Saturday, April 1, 10am on Zoom, hosted by the Presbytery JIMM Team

The March 20 IPCC report by the top scientists in the world is warning all of humanity that we all need to do more quickly to counter climate crisis before it's too late. We need every church in the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley to help care for God's creation. We hope each church can have people participate in these needed efforts.

Please join the presbytery's Justice in Mission and Ministry Team for a meeting to organize ideas for individuals and families, churches and our Presbytery on Saturday, April 1, 10am.

Zoom Meeting ID: 817 689 1196 Passcode: FPUC

Looking for ideas for what you can do now? See the Presbyterian Hunger Program's *Tread Lightly for Lent: Daily Reflection-Action Guide for 2023*, the copy of Rebecca Barnes' book, *50 Ways to Help Save the Earth: How You and Your Church Can Make a Difference*, that was given to each church last fall, and the free issue of Christian Century's *Responding to Climate Change with 40 Ideas for Congregations*. Owego Pastor Bruce Gillette, PSV JIMM Team chair and Presbyterians for Earth Care Moderator, will be coordinating this meeting on the most important moral challenge facing humanity today. Please contact him for further information at pastorbrucegillette@gmail.com or cell phone: 607-744-0761. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1).

Workshop on Worship service design and PC(USA) Polity

Saturday, April 29, 9am-3pm at Bainbridge First Presbyterian Church

Save the date for this two-part workshop, geared for ruling elders but open to anybody.

The morning session starts at 9:00. We'll cover some of the basics of our governance, with a look at the Book of Order and how it shapes our lives as Presbyterians together. This training will be helpful for anybody who wants to know more about the role and responsibilities of the Session — especially newly elected ruling elders, new Clerks of Session, or those who are considering serving on Session — but will also be a great refresher for anyone involved in guiding the ministry of their congregation.

We'll break for lunch at 11:30. Beverages will be provided, and sandwiches will be ordered from Pine Ridge Grocery store, with a free-will offering to cover the cost.

The afternoon session starts at 12:30, focusing on how to design a worship service. It's being offered as part of the training for people who are considering becoming a Certified Preacher to provide pulpit supply in the presbytery, but it will also be useful for anybody who is involved or interested in planning worship, such as members of a Worship Committee/Team.

You can come for just the morning, just the afternoon, or the whole workshop. If you have questions or are interested in attending, please contact Scott Kindig at cclefchair@susvalpresby.org. RSVP requested by Wednesday, April 26.

This workshop is being provided by the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley's Commission on Christian Leadership Formation.

Read more news from around the presbytery at susvalpresby.org/thursday-thoughts

UPC's "Zoom room"

Modern technology is marvelous! Thanks to the Zoom meetings system, we can gather virtually even though we can't be together in person. We've used our "Zoom room" for worship but also for prayer groups, book studies, hymn sings, and social times.

You can join our meetings and worship services online via your computer, tablet, or mobile device by going to upcbgm.org/zoom. If you've never used Zoom before, you'll be prompted to download the Zoom meetings app, which will ask for permission to use your microphone and your camera. We use our "Personal Meeting ID" for worship and most of our programs, so they're always in the same familiar place.

You can also call in over the phone, if you don't have a microphone on your device or you can't join online. To join as a phone call, dial **1-646-558-8656**, then enter our Meeting ID: **865 274 8433 #**

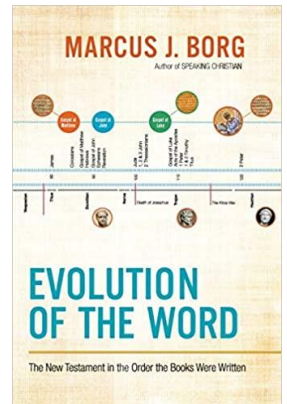
If you have questions or need help using Zoom, feel free to call the church office for assistance.

Bible Study

Mondays, 12:30–1:30pm, in the Study or the Zoom room

We're reading from Marcus Borg's *Evolution of the Word: The New Testament in the Order the Books Were Written*, and everyone is welcome to join us in person or on Zoom. Those who gather at the church meet in our new "Study" (Room 102, next door to the Nursery).

The general format is to read the introductory material for each section, then to read through the Biblical texts and talk about what it meant for early Christians and what it might mean for us today. We try to discipline ourselves to keeping the conversation to an hour every week.



Sewing Group

Wednesdays, 10am–1pm (with Zoom lunch hour, 12pm–1pm)

by Cindy Chadwick

We're not sure who counted them all, but statistics indicate there are between 9 and 11 million quilters in the country. Our bet is that very few have been together as a group for more than a half-century like the Wednesday Sewing Group! Gathering each week to craft crib- and lap-sized quilts for the community, the group also makes "carry bags" for use on walkers, mittens, hats, scarves, pillows, and more.

The group's creations are donated to the following charities and care facilities:

- Willow Point Rehabilitation and Nursing Center
- Hilltop
- Elizabeth Church Manor
- Good Shepherd Fairview Home
- YWCA
- Bridgewater Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing
- Ideal Senior Living Center
- NoMa (North of Main)
- Camp Sunshine (for families affected by life-threatening childhood illness)



Sewing Group members Janet Hoover, Jean Hill, Ellen Hancock-Berti, and Ann Cobb.

Quilts are also given to newborns and other special people in our congregation. Hats and mittens are provided to our Food Pantry and Community Meal guests as needed.

We received a lovely thank-you note from Camp Sunshine this month:

On behalf of Camp Sunshine's Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and most importantly our camp families, I sincerely thank you for your contribution of two quilts in honor of Ellen Hancock-Berti and in memory of Jeanne Marie Voos.

It was such a pleasure to meet Cindy Burger, who kindly delivered the quilts to our Camp Sunshine Campus in Casco, Maine. Your wonderful Sewing Group at United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton is so talented! We will put them to great use as we open up our program to 21 full settings this season. We are so grateful to your group and welcome anyone to visit Camp Sunshine should their travels bring them to Maine.

Your support will keep Camp Sunshine's mission moving forward and will positively impact more families from across the country and around the world. Your generosity and caring support allows Camp Sunshine to continue providing joy, hope, and support to families when they need it most.

There is never a charge for families to attend Camp Sunshine. Gifts from people like you make it all possible. Thank you for helping us spread sunshine and unforgettable smiles! Please extend our heartfelt thanks!

With gratitude,
Joanne Bean, RN, BSN, MBA
Chief Executive Officer



THANK YOU!

Want to help spread warmth and hope? Join the Sewing Group on Wednesdays from 10am to 1pm in UPC's Upper Lounge. No extensive sewing experience is necessary. Projects can be worked on at home if you can't attend on Wednesdays. (You'll miss the cookies, chips, pickles, and tea, though!) No special sewing skills are needed for cutting squares, design layout, pinning, tying, setting the table for lunch, or heating water for tea. Sewing machine and hand hemming skills are a plus.

Even if sewing isn't your thing, everybody is invited to join us at noon for our social lunch hour. Those who can't come to the church in person can join us in the Zoom room. Bring your own lunch and enjoy the company!

Sincere in its mission to provide warmth, comfort, and care to others, Sewing Group members gain much in return. As aptly said by Ann Cobb, a 50-plus-year member of the Sewing Group, "Where there is love, there is hope, and we love what we do." Pardon the puns, but the cohesiveness of this group mends their souls and keeps them in stitches as they work to help others. Please join! Reach out to the church office if you'd like more information.

Zoom Happy hour

Friday evenings, 5-6pm

Bring your own beverage, "Zoom in", and join the fun as we catch up on the events of the week and share how we're doing. It's a great way to keep in touch while we it remains complicated to see one another in person.

Joys and Concerns



Expecting: CJ & Katie Hunt; Aimée & Ernest Backus

Preparing to Wed: Mary & Kolin; Christina & Evan; Aaron & Steve

New Beginnings: Leah; Laura & Jessica; Stefan; students getting admissions info & making decisions

Gratitude: Dave S. return to work; Sands celebrating 40th wedding anniversary

Grieving – Friends & Family of: Swift L., Rev. John DeBack, Fraser, Shiko (Betty & Julie), Miguel (Connie & Abby Stone); and people going through anniversaries of loss

For Healing: Margaret D.; Marty D.; Pat; Kathy; Matt; Alice D.

Preparing for Surgery: Bob P.; Gary A.

Recovering: Scott R.; Maria K.; Margaret S.; Fred; David; Willem; John; Cathy; Ernest; Sheila; Scott's mom

Living with Cancer: Mary Ann; Molly; Carl; Frank; Leah

Hospice: Pat T.

Ongoing: Scott N.; Michael; Nateka; Rachmani family; Larry & Ethel; Chynna; Lynnlee; Kathiss; Charisse; Darry; Travis; Jerome; Janai; Melchi; Leah; Curtis & family; Jen; Carlos; Richard C. & Deloris M. & family; Rupee J.

Homebound/Managed Care: Kristie P., Marian P., Char S., Jim S.

Other Concerns: We pray for

- people struggling with addiction
- Dave & Greg – working with migrants at Mexico–Arizona border
- gun violence around the country
- Turkey & Syria
- Ukraine & Russia
- Israel/Palestine

Recent & Upcoming Birthdays

April

- 1 Aeden Hickey
- 2 Matt Livingston
- 7 Chloe Brauer
- 8 Kathy Kopp
- 9 Laurie White
Amanda Licht Jones
- 12 Tyson Brunson
- 14 Janet Hoover
- 20 Angela Garcia-Meade
- 21 James Stehli
Suzy Ogden
Dominic Ruston-Patinka
- 22 Maria Kutz
Charlotte Livingston

- 23 Dick Aswad
- 24 Pastor Becky
- 26 Zander Rwabukwisi
Greg Patinka
- 28 Jim Menges

May

- 7 Adana Brauer
Norma Stehli
- 8 Gary Ayres
- 13 Ellis Nyamuame
- 15 Eugene Favor
- 16 Matthew Johnson
- 17 Shawn Landon
Betty Wambui



- 19 Nate Raboy
- 23 Barbara Geiser
- 27 Felix Rwabukwisi
- 28 David Berti
Ernest Backus
- 30 Char Smith
- 31 Cindy Chadwick



Everyone is welcome here

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON



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Address Service Requested

Easter Sunday, April 9

Flowers for Easter!

Do you have early flowers blooming in your garden? We would love to have you bring a bouquet on Easter to help decorate the sanctuary, and then take them back home after worship to brighten your Easter table. There will be a few from the church garden, but we love the idea of a shared flower display to celebrate the season, but no one has to find homes for afterward.

Bring whatever you are able, and we will find a place for it! We have several folks who are allergic to lilies, so if you want to share lilies, please remove the stamens before you bring them.

Easter Egg Hunt!

Following the worship service, children and youth are invited to participate in the Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn. Young children are asked to please bring a parent or guardian to help supervise.

