

# Spring 2023

Volume 14, Issue 3

View more photos from church events via our website: [upcbgm.org/programs-and-events/photo-gallery](http://upcbgm.org/programs-and-events/photo-gallery)

Our worship services are livestreamed on our YouTube channel: [upcbgm.org/youtube](http://upcbgm.org/youtube)

## 10 Years Together: Pentecost Celebration, June 4

We have done a lot of really cool stuff together since Pastor Kimberly arrived in June of 2013! And we're going to celebrate! We're going to gather outside for a Pentecost celebration on June 4, featuring a slide show, a roving microphone during joys and concerns for folks to share their favorite memories and their hopes and dreams for the future, a potluck picnic (featuring Phil's Chicken), a craft table, and vision boards to share ideas about where the Spirit might be leading us into the future. Everyone is invited to join the fun — we've even invited the new presbytery leader, Rev. Greg Garis, to worship with us and get to know the congregation. If you have an idea for something you'd like to add to the worship and the celebration, speak to one of the pastors or to the music staff about getting involved.

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses — here are ten years' worth of memories from our newsletters 2013–2022:

*Pastor Kimberly's first service as our pastor, June 2013*



*Spiritual gifts painting,  
May 2014*



*"Heart of Christianity" conversations, Eastertide 2015*



*Pentecost crafts with the kids,  
May 2016*

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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





*Picnic worship at Otsiningo Park, June 2017*



*The Poor People's Campaign, October 2017*



*Spiritual Formation retreat at Stony Point, fall 2018*



*Sviatovid at the LUMA Festival, September 2019*



*Worship services recorded at home and streamed on Facebook and Zoom, fall 2020*



*Reception of new members recorded outdoors, May 2021*



*The summer of seven baptisms! Summer 2022*

## Pastors' Ponderings



*Kimberly P Chastain,  
Pastor*

Dear Ones,

I have been singing the Thomas A. Dorsey hymn "Take My Hand, Precious Lord" all day:

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn...

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light,  
Take my hand, precious Lord — lead me home!

It's not so much that I am feeling that way personally, but I have been listening to stories. This is the 3rd time I have started to write this letter to you, and every time I get interrupted, I hear more stories about people feeling anxious and afraid. I have heard about financial issues, mental health, physical health, transportation, global problems, local problems... the list goes on and on. We are a community of helpers who are awash in grief for those we cannot help, and afraid because the problems seem so huge and our resources so small.

As it turns out, the interruptions have made the letter I had planned to write seem kind of trite. The theme was (as it still is) about the constant reminder that is a kind of refrain throughout the bible, "Do not be afraid." Those words occur whenever God calls an individual or a people into a new place, ministry, or community. There's a pious myth that they appear 365 times in the bible, once for every day of the year — but like many pious myths, that's an exaggeration. However, it is repeated enough that it's clear both that humans are afraid quite often, and that God's will for us is that we find rest and comfort in God, even when times are hard, even when we are feeling the shockwaves of rapid upheaval in our personal lives and in our world.

There's another phrase that resounds in the stories where God calls to people that might be even more important for these times, and it's the promise that "I will be with you, and I will be your God." No matter how hard things seem, or how helpless we feel, God does not leave us alone.



In one of my favorite stories, when God calls Moses to lead the people out of slavery, Moses argues and pleads and confesses that he doesn't feel adequate to do the work. Finally he asks, "Can't you get someone else?" And God offers him a companion, his brother Aaron, who will work with him and speak for him when Moses finds his words or his courage failing. God does not require that we work alone, or beyond our limits. God calls us to work together, and to be faithful – and God promises to be faithful to us, as well.

In the first letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes, "Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong..." (1 Cor. 1:26)

I believe that the God who calls us knows our strengths and our weaknesses and loves us beyond measure, and does not require us to do it all alone. We have companions on the way, the witness of the church throughout the ages, and the testimony of scripture to give us strength for the journey. And we can rest in those promises even when we can't see the end of the road.

I wish I could give you all complete freedom from fear, and enough rest and assurance to overcome the anxiety and the grief. I'm among the foolish and weak that Paul is writing about, so I don't have the answers that I want to give you. But I will be with you, and more importantly, God will be with you through it all.

Thanks be to God.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Kimberly

Greetings friends!

We've had a wonderful Easter and it has been a great spring. It was so good to see so many of you at Easter worship and our annual Easter Egg hunt with the kids was such fun! I hope you all are doing well and enjoying what springtime brings for you.

This spring I traveled on a plane for the first time since Covid and with a wheelchair. Being home for so long, I was very nervous of all the things I have been hearing on the news or on social media, or from friends and colleagues about all the negative interactions they have had with people while flying. I heard horror stories about people who feel more emboldened to want their own way instead of understanding that their actions impact other people. Plus I know that many employees are stressed from the understaffing and from some people's bad behavior. I also read that many many wheelchairs get damaged on airplanes due to mishandling. So I was nervous.

But I also knew that it was time to get further out into the world again and reconnect with people. I've been a little slower to get back out there because the doctors wanted me to be careful with my immune-compromised status. But the precautions I take seem to be working well, so seeing Scott's family in North Carolina seemed like a good way to start. Phone calls and Zoom sessions are nice, but actually being in the same room with people, playing with my niece and



Becky Kindig,  
Associate Pastor



nephew, and spending more time than a phone call gives is so important. Spending time with people you love is good for you.

And it seems that reconnecting with people is becoming more important. Just this past week, the Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy released a new advisory on the epidemic of loneliness in this country and is calling for all of us to find ways to prioritize building social connections.<sup>1</sup> And while Covid certainly didn't help, he points out that the trend of loneliness and isolation was building before the pandemic. So it is important that we take care of ourselves and others in our family and community by finding ways to connect with others and strengthen relationships.



So we took the plunge, took our masks and hand sanitizer and we went. We had a lovely visit! It was good to check on how my mother-in-law was healing from her rotator cuff surgery and to gently remind her that it is very important to continue her physical therapy. It was good to chat with my father-in-law and it was so fun to get to take my niece and nephew to the North Carolina Zoo.

But what surprised me was how many nice people I encountered on the way. All of the horror stories about entitled people yelling at others, grumpy airline staff, and uncaring crowds were not to be found in my travels. In fact, it was just the opposite. People seemed to be making an extra effort to be kind. And at first I thought that maybe the airlines had put in some extra training and this was just a staff thing. But I seemed to find it everywhere. People in line at security, people waiting for their flight, people on the plane. So then I thought, oh well maybe it is the wheelchair. Maybe people are being nice to me because of that. Which is lovely, we need to be nice to people who are differently abled in this country. But as I waited for a flight, or as we walked around at the zoo, or when we were waiting in line at a store, I began to people-watch and I noticed people being nice to each other, not just me. Someone dropped their ticket walking in the airport and someone behind them took the time to pick it up and catch them to give it back. People holding doors for someone with a stroller. People overhearing someone having trouble with the zoo map and offering directions. It seemed to be everywhere and I was pleasantly surprised. After being stuck home for so long, and hearing about what an angry world it was becoming, it was refreshing to see that kindness is still alive and well in the world. It just doesn't make the news.



So I'm glad that I can travel again, even with my new challenges. And I am refreshed by my visit and by what I experienced along the way. And I hope that as we move into summer that we can all find ways to reconnect with friends and family or make new connections and relationships that will be life giving for everyone. Call a friend you haven't talked with in while. Send a note to someone you haven't seen in church for a while. Invite someone on a walk to to get ice cream who hasn't been out of the house much. Or take that trip to see family. God created us to thrive in community, we need each other. And as people of God, we need to be in the world spreading love as we go so the whole world can feel it because it is desperately needed right now.

Grace and Peace,  
*Pastor Becky*

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, May 3, 2023 "New Surgeon General Advisory Raises Alarm about the Devastating Impact of the Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation in the United States" <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/05/03/new-surgeon-general-advisory-raises-alarm-about-devastating-impact-epidemic-loneliness-isolation-united-states.html>



## Music Notes

by Rebecca Mebert, Music Coordinator/Accompanist

Music is such a critical component of worship together. As we all begin to emerge from the COVID crisis which changed us all forever, the questions come from music colleagues, friends from other congregations, and choirs as to what we do about masking for safety. It is great to know that we have just engaged with it as a normal part of life for the protection of the most vulnerable among us. Singing, at the beginning of the pandemic, was responsible for the rapid spread of the virus for obvious reasons. So, we continue and have learned to still sing with feeling, production, and spirit!



Through the Easter Season, Ernest Backus led us as interim Choir Director. Aimée Backus took a planned 6-week maternity leave and has now returned to lead us through the rest of the choir year that will end in June. We welcome Imogen Ines Backus, born March 24, into our choir and church family!

One of the joys in our church life is the acceptance of children in our worship service in whatever way the parents find helpful. Aoife, now 4, began being a part of mom's work as director, snuggled in a wrap as Aimée directed. She has continued to be a part of our music as mom and dad led us in singing hymns and anthems. Creative motion & dance is now a natural part of music in worship with Aoife's joyful dance.

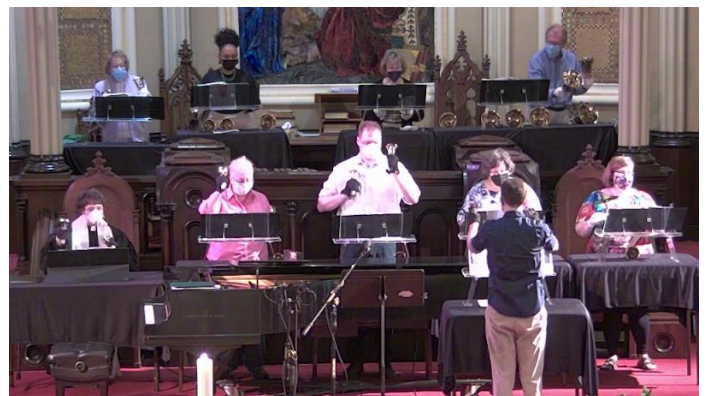


We often hand out rhythm instruments to anyone who wants to use them as we sing songs that invite this sound. Including children and their families in ringing chimes for hymns from time to time invites them to be a part of our worship without extra rehearsals that become so challenging for already-packed family lives.

Easter Sunday, the children's area was full of families with young children and we hope they will always feel welcome and included. We want to invite any suggestions for how we can include and encourage your families in our music. We welcome your volunteering to do something musical by just speaking to one of our directors or me as coordinator.



On Pentecost Sunday, June 4, we will celebrate Pastor Kimberly's 10-year anniversary with an outdoor service/picnic (next to our building) with lots of opportunities for joining in our music with rhythm instruments on some of the hymns! We will also have vocal choir and handchimes. IT IS NOT TOO LATE to join in one of our choirs in the next few weeks. Voice choir rehearsal: Wednesdays 6:30-7:30 pm in the choir room at the end of the hall on the main floor. Bell choir rehearsal: Sundays following worship in the sanctuary. No prior experience necessary. Directors: Aimée Backus, Voice; Austin Shadduck, Bells.



### A Small Step Toward Justice

The session and the music leadership of our congregation has been wrestling for a while with the question of how to acknowledge the creators of the Negro spiritual tradition. As a predominantly white congregation who benefits from and makes regular use of their compositions, we are beginning to reckon with the knowledge the enslaved people who composed this music were never paid for their art, and looking for ways to offer compensation to Black inheritors of this musical tradition.

To make a beginning, the session has voted to commit \$250, approximately what we pay each year to copyright managers for our worship music, to an organization or a cause that supports the ongoing work of the Black church and its musical traditions. This year we will send the money to the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc. (SDPC), a national organization known to and supported by Pastor Kimberly. The mission of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc. (SDPC) is to nurture, sustain, and mobilize the African-American faith community in collaboration with civic, corporate, and philanthropic leaders to address critical needs of human rights and social justice within local, national, and global communities. SDPC seeks to strengthen the individual and collective capacity of thought leaders and activists in the church, academy, and community through education, advocacy, and activism.

Matt Johnson has reached out to Professor Anne Bailey, Director of the Harriet Tubman Center for Freedom and Equality at Binghamton University, about other opportunities closer to home for us to support with future contributions, and about how we can better educate ourselves to work for justice between Black and white Christians in Binghamton and in our nation. We look forward to the next steps on this important journey.

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## Our Church Family

### In Memoriam



**Charlotte Mattison Smith**, aka Beauty, aka Gamma Char, 94, passed away on Monday evening, May 1, 2023. She is now reunited with her beloved husband, Duane.

She was born May 30, 1928, in Richmondville, NY, and mostly grew up on Wallace Road in Nimmonsburg. She graduated from Binghamton North High School and married her best friend, Duane, and joined him for 70 years of love, family, and adventures. She was a homemaker in the fullest sense of the word, creating and maintaining a loving home for her husband and children. She worked hard and played hard. She loved to cook and bake; she painted, mowed, gardened, built stone walls, and cut down trees; she hiked and skied and traveled across the country with her husband in search of new places and new stories to tell; she was the master of many crafts and usually had at least 50 projects going at the same time; she made hundreds of rag rugs to share with family and friends; she built and decorated doll houses and collected anything and everything. She was a long-time member of First Presbyterian Church, now known as United Presbyterian Church, on Chenango Street in Binghamton, where she served for many years as usher, Deacon, and head cook for church events.

She will be remembered for her sugar cookies, and her Grand Junction Spanish Rice.

She will be remembered for her ability to transform roadside finds into useful and (sometimes) beautiful objects.

She will be remembered for her oft-spoken aphorisms: "Things will work out the way they were meant to," "Every part strengthens a part," and, "If you act as good as you look, you'll be okay."

She will be remembered.

She is survived by her daughter Amy Smith of Binghamton; daughter and son-in-law, Jenny and Joe Fanelli of Syracuse, NY; grandson, David Fanelli, his wife Grace Hammond and their daughters Rosemary Ann and Mae Jeannette Fanelli of Columbus, OH; grandson Peter Fanelli, and his wife Danielle Myers of Somerville, MA; grandson Joey Fanelli and Heather Rinder of Revere, MA; daughter-in-law Patricia Smith of St. Marys, PA; granddaughter Margaret Watson and her husband John of Kempner, TX; grandson James "Mac" Smith and his wife Ann of St. Marys; sister-in-law Alice Mattison; nephew Carl Mattison, and niece and nephews Beth, Matthew, and Mark Greenley. She was predeceased by her beloved husband of 70 years Duane, her son Daniel Smith, and her grandson Andrew Smith.

The family would especially like to thank all the staff at Elizabeth Church Manor for their love and support throughout the years and during this time.

At Charlotte's request, there was no memorial service. Good memories will be her memorial. Cremation services were provided by Hopler & Eschbach Funeral Home.

## 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.youtube.com/channel/UCpCbGm), 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:

- Masks are optional while our community's reported Covid rates remain low. Air filtration units are deployed throughout the sanctuary to enhance your safety.
- We will continue to have masks available, and if you have any symptoms of a potentially contagious illness, we ask that you put on a mask to protect those in our congregation who have compromised immune systems.
- 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.





## 8 ≡ UP-Beat Newsletter

If you have been missing the time of shared prayer, join us before worship at 9:30 — 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://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.

### 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).

### Supporting Our Mission and Ministry

#### Let's Fill Some Baskets on June 4!

As part of Pentecost Sunday (celebrating the “birthday” of the church) and our 10 years of being together with Pastor Kimberly, a food and hygiene products drive is being held. Please help fill the baskets we'll have on hand by providing some “birthday gifts” to stock our food pantry and hygiene closet. Sherry Conklin, our Community Meal and Pantry Coordinator, suggests that the following items would be extremely helpful contributions:

- Can openers (crank-style; these can be inexpensive ones)
- Laundry pods (these are easier to carry than large, heavy bottles of liquid)
- Bars of soap
- Other toiletries (smaller sizes for ease in carrying)
- Non-perishable food items (pop-top cans that don't need openers are especially helpful)

Any and all donations would be much appreciated to assist our guests from the community. So, as you're shopping in the next few weeks, please consider adding a contribution to your cart that you can share on June 4. If you're unable to join us in person on Pentecost Sunday, please feel free to drop off your donation at the church office in advance of or after June 4. Contributions are always welcome. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, please note that your donation is for the Food Pantry.

Thank you!

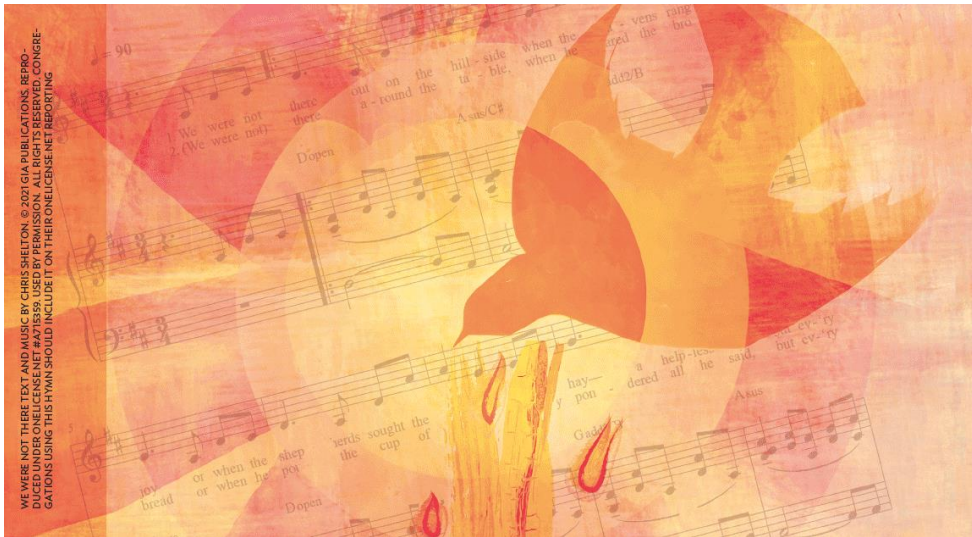
#### Online Giving to UPC

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

### 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**, Marilynn Guinane; **Property**, Pastor Becky; **Worship & Music**, Suzie Raboy or Andy Chadwick.





*We are there*

The Pentecost Offering helps our youth build a solid foundation of faith to last a lifetime.



**PENTECOST**  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

APRIL 10-MAY 28, 2023



No matter how much time we spend making plans, doing our very best for our children every day, we can never truly know what God's plan is for them. At Pentecost, we celebrate that God offers more than we can plan by joining in ministries that connect young people with one another and with caring communities, helping them shape a life and a future beyond even the one we could plan alone. Through our gifts, we help inspire young people to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world, and in so doing, bring hope to others.

**40%** of the Pentecost Offering stays with our congregation to develop and support programs for young people in our own church and community.

**25%** supports Young Adult Volunteers (YAVs) serving in communities around the world and growing as leaders through transformative service.

**25%** supports Ministries with Youth, including events like the Presbyterian Youth Triennium.

**10%** is devoted to children at risk and supports to improve education and provide safe havens through the Educate a Child, Transform the World initiative.



**PENTECOST**  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS



The Pentecost Offering supports our ministries with young people.

*join us!*

WHEN WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!  
April 10 – May 28, 2023

PHOTOS: ANCHORAGE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEERS, GOOD SUCCESS ACADEMIES, BRYANNA DONALD

You can contribute to the PC(USA)'s Pentecost special offering online at [pcusa.org/pentecost](https://pcusa.org/pentecost) or text PENTECOST to 91999, or send a check to the church office marked with "special offering" in the memo line.

### Programs & Events

#### Discover Our Sacred Sites: Experience the architecture, culture, and history of our community

**Sunday, May 21, 11am–4pm (at various locations)**

Come out for this year's Sacred Sites Open House, co-sponsored by the Preservation Association of the Southern Tier (PAST) and The New York Landmarks Conservancy. This statewide event is free and open to the public. To obtain a listing of the 21 sacred sites open in the Southern Tier, Binghamton, Johnson City, Endwell, and Endicott, go to [pastny.org](http://pastny.org), or check at your local libraries, history centers, and religious sites. This is an opportunity for the public to be a tourist in their own neighborhood and view the interiors of these magnificent buildings.

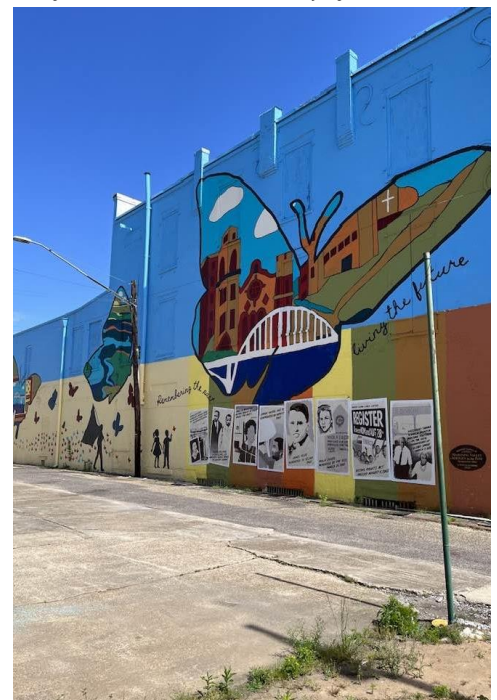
UPC will be open next Sunday from 2pm to 4pm, and we're looking for a few volunteers to help greet visitors and show them our space. We especially need a volunteer or two who are willing and able to lead the climbs of 100+ stairs to the top of the bell tower. If you're interested in helping us welcome the public for this event, please contact the church office.

#### Juneteenth Celebration on June 17 and 18

Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States. Although the Emancipation Proclamation was official on January 1, 1863, it was not enforced in Texas until after the surrender of the Confederate army and Union troops arrived in Galveston on June 19, 1865. For generations in the African American community, it has remained a day of remembrance, joyous celebration, and hope: remembrance of the hardships and pain of enslavement; joyous celebration of survival; and hope for the opportunity and peace that freedom ought to bring. For white Americans, it has become a day to celebrate with Black Americans, but also to recognize that the struggle for justice and equality continues.

Becky and Ken Mebert visited some key sites on the Civil Rights trail in Georgia and Alabama this spring, and Becky will reflect on their experience during the worship service on June 18. We will sing "Lift Every Voice," considered the African-American National Anthem, and pray that together, we will see the day when the struggle is over and freedom and peace prevail.

The community celebration will kick off at noon on Saturday, June 17 in the park at 50 Carroll Street (called "Assata Shakur Park" in the Black community and "Columbus Park" in the white community. Our congregation has been a sponsor for the celebration since 2018, and everyone is invited to join in a fun-filled day of food, music, fellowship, remembrance, liberation, and education.



#### Annual Congregational Meeting, Sunday, June 25

Our annual Congregational Meeting (Part 2) will be on Sunday, June 25, immediately following the worship service. After having celebrated 10 years together on June 4, we will gather on this Sunday to conduct the ongoing business of the church for this year, knowing that the Lord of love and light goes





# *Sacred Sites Open House Sunday*

May 21, 2023

Tour 21 Houses of Worship  
In Binghamton, Johnson City, Endwell & Endicott



Saint Andrew's Church



Kilmer Mansion -  
Temple Concord



Boulevard United Methodist Church



Saint Patrick's Church



Landmark Church

*Free and Open to the Public*

Visit [pastny.org](http://pastny.org) for complete list of sites

Sponsored by PAST and the NY Landmarks Conservancy



with us every step of the way! We will elect the session class of 2025 and the Nominating Committee for 2023–2024, and receive the team and project reports for the program year.

This will be a “hybrid” meeting, both in the Zoom room [upcbgm.org/zoom](https://upcbgm.org/zoom) and in person at the church. It would be good to have you with us, either in person or online.

### News from the Kitchen

*by Sherry Conklin, Kitchen Coordinator*

We have received a grant that has enabled us to partner with the outreach people from the Stakeholders of Broome County group and get food delivered to the unhoused in the area. We will use this grant to supply these volunteers with food, can openers, basic hygiene products, and drinks for people. This will also be used to give the volunteers gas cards to help with the delivery expenses. This process is working out very well and may develop into deliveries to the motels.

The Easter egg dyeing event was a big hit again this year. It was well attended by young and old. The guests at the community meal and at the pantry appreciated being remembered this way.



The meal and pantry have many needs so donations are always welcome. We're specifically looking for old T-shirts (stained or with holes is okay) to make into grocery bags for our shoppers. These bags work out better for our "walking" shoppers. We could use some more can openers from the dollar store. Does anyone have spare booster seats or highchairs for our dining room? We usually serve about 3 to 5 children at our meal on Tuesdays and we only have 2 highchairs.

Sherry would like to organize a team to participate in the CHOW hunger walk this September. The walk is being held at Oakdale Commons on September 24 from 12 until 3. The Beer Tree Factory will have a room set aside and will donate a portion of the food sales to CHOW. This should be a fun event. We would love to have a large representation from United Presbyterian Church participate since CHOW does so much for our pantry and the community. Anyone interested may contact Sherry by email [meal@upcbgm.org](mailto:meal@upcbgm.org). This is CHOW's largest fund raiser for the year.

## 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](https://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 #**

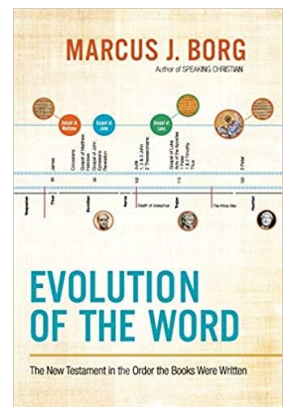
If you have questions or need help using Zoom, feel free to call the church office for assistance.

## Bible Study

### Mondays, 1-2pm, 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)

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.

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.



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

### Joys and Concerns



#### Welcome to the World!

Imogen Ines Backus, 3/24/23 to Aimee, Ernest, and Aoife.  
Hannah Ann Hunt, 5/3/23 to Katie and CJ.





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

**Gratitude:** Warming station has opened



**New Beginnings:** Cynthia retiring; graduates; people getting divorced; Rabbi Barbara, moving to Florida after 14 years, Willem and Miranda, newlywed

**Grieving – Friends & Family of:** Char Smith; Donna Willis; Pat Thomas; Bob Piper; Ann Vertovek

**For Healing:** Sister Kathy; Gary; Linda; Pat; Leah; Holly; Becky; Antanette

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

**Ongoing:** Kristie; 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.; Marian

**Other Concerns:** We pray for

- people struggling with addiction
- unhoused people and people facing eviction
- gun violence around the country
- Turkey & Syria
- Ukraine & Russia
- Israel/Palestine

## Recent & Upcoming Birthdays

### May

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  
31 Cindy Chadwick

12 Sydney Brauer  
Jean Hill  
Sally Hunt  
Darlene Ward  
13 Madelyn Parsons  
14 Taylor Chadwick  
Jazmine Meade  
20 Sharon Landon  
Lou McKeage  
21 Victoria Barics  
Marilynn Guinane  
22 Eleanor Hough  
Dylan Pelton  
23 Sara Lieberman  
Austin Shaddock  
25 Lucien Westcott  
26 Bill Donohue  
27 Jacalyn Westcott

### June

1 Matt Johnson  
5 Alex Westcott



### July

1 Linda McDevitt  
9 Ramona Auchinachie  
11 Evan Kindig  
14 Sarah Willis  
19 George Cummings  
Joyce Donohue  
Roger Westgate  
21 Doug Jones  
Kayla Pelton  
22 Ann Garcia  
28 Bobbie Hickling  
Cleo Pelton



*Everyone is welcome here*

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON



42 Chenango Street • Binghamton, NY 13901 • [www.upcbgm.org](http://www.upcbgm.org)

☎ 607-722-4219 • ✉ [office@upcbgm.org](mailto:office@upcbgm.org) • 📘 UPCBinghamton

*Address Service Requested*

## **We've Suspended Mandatory Masking for Sunday Worship Starting May 14**

The session voted on May 9 to ease the requirement to wear a mask on Sunday mornings, recognizing that the CDC tracker has reported low risk and low hospitalization rates since April 2. If the reported rates move back to “high”, we will revisit the question and may ask you to return to masking.

We recognize that many in our community will continue to wear masks and we fully support those who are choosing this way to protect themselves and others.

We will continue to have masks available, and if you have any symptoms of a potentially contagious illness, we ask that you put on a mask to protect those in our congregation who have compromised immune systems.

You can monitor the CDC reports at <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#datatracker-home>. It is currently updated weekly.