



Everyone is welcome here

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON

ACT JUSTLY • PRACTICE KINDNESS • WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD



Sunday, March 9, 2025 • 10:00am

First Sunday of Lent

📺 Our worship service is livestreaming on our YouTube Channel: [upcbgm.org/youtube](https://www.upcbgm.org/youtube)

Join via phone call on Zoom: (+1) 646-558-8656, Meeting ID 865 274 8433

42 Chenango Street, Binghamton, NY 13901 • ☎ 607-722-4219 • 🔗 [upcbgm.org](https://www.upcbgm.org)
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Welcome to the Celebration!

March 9, 2025 • 10:00am

In today's lesson, Jesus sends out twelve of his followers. First gives them instructions that make clear that this work is not accompanied by special favors or status; they are to carry only the message, and to accept hospitality from any who offer it. If hospitality is not offered, they are to "shake the dust off" and continue their journey, not to fight or impose their vision on those they encounter.

When the apostles return, followed by crowds, Jesus continues the ministry of teaching and healing until the hour grows late. The disciples express concern about the crowds growing hungry, and Jesus replies "You give them something to eat." In another anticipation of the coming kingdom, everyone eats their fill, with more than enough for all. Leading them away from the crowds, Jesus asks them who they think he is, and Peter makes his bold declaration "You are the anointed of God." Jesus reiterates that this anointing does not bring power in earthly terms, but service and suffering.

We Gather as a Community of Faith

OPENING BELL *The bell tolls to center our hearts and minds for worship.*

GATHERING MUSIC "Prepare the Way of the Lord"

UPC Choir

Prepare the way of the Lord! Prepare the way of the Lord!

Make a straight path for him, make a straight path; prepare the way of the Lord!

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WORDS OF WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)

One: The prophets of old spoke of God's justice,
even when it was unwelcome.

Who will hear their message?

All: We will listen and we will hear!

One: Responding to God's call, Jesus traveled,
preaching and teaching all who would listen.

Who will hear his message?

All: We will listen and we will hear!

* = *Please rise in body or in spirit.*

One: Christ sent out disciples two by two,
to spread the good news in any place
that would welcome them.

Who will hear their message?

All: We will listen and we will hear!

One: God's prophets are among us still,
around the world and in these pews.

Who will hear their message?

All: We will listen and we will hear!

***SONG OF GATHERING** "Lord, You Give the Great Commission" (see page 4)

GATHERING PRAYER (*together*)

by Bruce Prewer

**We thank you, loving God,
for the surprises which you spring on us!
You take the unlovely and cherish them,
the mediocre and make them gifted,
the mere nobodies and ordain them your apostles.**

**You entrust us with authority and ministry
far beyond our own strength.**

We are reticent.

**Yet under your patient care
we discover that all things are possible to those who love you.**

Surprise us again, loving Friend.

**Surprise us with the Christ who believes in us
and the grace which is made perfect in human weakness.**

Through Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen!

TIME FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

We Tell and Hear the Word

BREATH PRAYER *inhale:* in dark times
exhale: illuminate the truth

FOCUS LESSON *Luke 9:1–27, 52b–62, CEB*

¹ Jesus called the Twelve together and he gave them power and authority over all demons and to heal sicknesses. ² He sent them out to proclaim God's kingdom and to heal the sick. ³ He told them, "Take nothing for the journey — no walking stick, no bag, no bread, no money, not even an extra shirt. ⁴ Whatever house you enter, remain there until you leave that place. ⁵ Wherever they don't welcome you, as you leave that city, shake the dust off your feet as a witness against them." ⁶ They departed and went through the villages proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

Lord, You Give the Great Commission

1 Lord, you give the great com - mis - sion: "Heal the sick and preach the word."
 2 Lord, you call us to your ser - vice: "In my name bap - tize and teach."
 3 Lord, you make the com - mon ho - ly: "This my bod - y, this my blood."
 4 Lord, you show us love's true meas - ure: "Fa - ther, what they do, for - give."
 5 Lord, you bless with words as - sur - ing: "I am with you to the end."

Lest the church ne - glect its mis - sion and the gos - pel go un - heard,
 That the world may trust your prom - ise, life a - bun - dant meant for each,
 Let us all, for earth's true glo - ry, dai - ly lift life heav - en - ward,
 Yet we hoard as pri - vate treas - ure all that you so free - ly give.
 Faith and hope and love re - stor - ing, may we serve as you in - tend,

help us wit - ness to your pur - pose with re - newed in - teg - ri - ty:
 give us all new fer - vor, draw us clos - er in com - mu - ni - ty:
 ask - ing that the world a - round us share your chil - dren's lib - er - ty:
 May your care and mer - cy lead us to a just so - ci - e - ty:
 and, a - mid the cares that claim us, hold in mind e - ter - ni - ty:

With the Spir - it's gifts em - power us for the work of min - is - try.

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⁷ Herod the ruler heard about everything that was happening. He was confused because some people were saying that John had been raised from the dead, ⁸ others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the ancient prophets had come back to life. ⁹ Herod said, “I beheaded John, so now who am I hearing about?” Herod wanted to see him.

¹⁰ When the apostles returned, they described for Jesus what they had done. Taking them with him, Jesus withdrew privately to a city called Bethsaida. ¹¹ When the crowds figured it out, they followed him. He welcomed them, spoke to them about God’s kingdom, and healed those who were sick.

¹² When the day was almost over, the Twelve came to him and said, “Send the crowd away so that they can go to the nearby villages and countryside and find lodging and food, because we are in a deserted place.”

¹³ He replied, “You give them something to eat.”

But they said, “We have no more than five loaves of bread and two fish — unless we go and buy food for all these people.” ¹⁴ (They said this because about five thousand men were present.)

Jesus said to his disciples, “Seat them in groups of about fifty.” ¹⁵ They did so, and everyone was seated. ¹⁶ He took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them, and broke them and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷ Everyone ate until they were full, and the disciples filled twelve baskets with the leftovers.

¹⁸ Once when Jesus was praying by himself, the disciples joined him, and he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?”

¹⁹ They answered, “John the Baptist, others Elijah, and still others that one of the ancient prophets has come back to life.”

²⁰ He asked them, “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?”

Peter answered, “The Christ sent from God.”

²¹ Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell this to anyone. ²² He said, “The Human One must suffer many things and be rejected — by the elders, chief priests, and the legal experts — and be killed and be raised on the third day.”

²³ Jesus said to everyone, “All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me will save them. ²⁵ What advantage do people have if they gain the whole world for themselves yet perish or lose their lives? ²⁶ Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Human One will be ashamed of that person when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. ²⁷ I assure you that some standing here won’t die before they see God’s kingdom.”

^{52b} Along the way, they entered a Samaritan village to prepare for his arrival, ⁵³ but the Samaritan villagers refused to welcome him because he was determined to go to Jerusalem.

⁵⁴ When the disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to consume them?” ⁵⁵ But Jesus turned and spoke sternly to them, ⁵⁶ and they went on to another village.

⁵⁷ As Jesus and his disciples traveled along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

⁵⁸ Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and the birds in the sky have nests, but the Human One has no place to lay his head.”

⁵⁹ Then Jesus said to someone else, “Follow me.”

He replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead. But you go and spread the news of God’s kingdom.”

⁶¹ Someone else said to Jesus, “I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say good-bye to those in my house.”

⁶² Jesus said to him, “No one who puts a hand on the plow and looks back is fit for God’s kingdom.”

REFLECTIONS “Blessed, Broken, and Given Away”

Rev. Kimberly P Chastain

BREATH PRAYER *inhale:* compassion and mercy
exhale: are never the wrong choice

We Respond to the Word

***SONG OF RESPONSE** “Will You Let Me Be Your Servant” (see page 7)

WE SAY WHAT WE BELIEVE (*together*) *by Noel Palsma, for the World Communion of Reformed Churches*

**We share one faith,
have one calling,
are of one soul and one mind;
have one God and Father,
are filled with one Spirit,
are baptized with one baptism,
eat of one bread and drink of one cup,
confess one Name,
are obedient to one Lord,
work for one cause,
and share one hope.**

**Together we come to know
the height and the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ;
are built up to the stature of Christ, to the new humanity;
know and bear one another’s burdens,
thereby fulfilling the law of Christ
that we need one another and up build one another,
admonishing and comforting one another;
that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness.
Together we pray; together we serve God in this world.**

Will You Let Me Be Your Servant



1. Will you let me be your ser-vant, let me be as Christ to you?
2. We are pil - grims on a jour-ney, here to - geth - er on the road;
3. I will hold the Christ-light for you, in the night-time of your fear;
4. I will weep when you are weep-ing; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you;
5. When we sing to God and heav-en, we shall find such har - mo - ny,



Pray that I might have the grace to let you be my ser-vant too.
we are here to help each oth - er walk the mile and bear the load.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
I will share your joy and sor-row till we've seen this jour-ney through.
born of all we've known to - geth - er of Christ's love and ag - o - ny.

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WE OFFER OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

You are invited to support the ministry of this congregation through online giving at upcbgm.org/give, or by sending a check to the church office or putting an offering in the plates by the door.



MUSICAL OFFERING “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

UPC Choir

O God! our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,
from everlasting thou art God, to endless years the same.
A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away;
they fly, forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come:
be thou our guard while life shall last, and our perpetual home.

Words: Isaak Watts. Music: Alan Hovhaness (op. 137), © 1964 C.F. Peters Corporation. All rights reserved.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(together)*

by Thandiwe Dale-Ferguson

Holy God,

**Grant us a heart full of grace,
and a soul generated by love,**

that we may serve you and your world.

**Thank you for all those who have shown us the way
and all those who are showing us the way. Amen!**

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS *(responsive)*

As each petition is concluded, the prayer leader and congregation respond:

One: Lord, in your loving kindness,

All: hear our prayer.

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

Merciful God, we praise you for your unfailing love.

We praise you for feeding our hunger for bread and for “the bread of life.”

We praise you for taking our little baskets and tentative offerings
and using them to feed others.

Lord, we ask you for your care and healing touch for those who are sick.

Fill our hearts with your compassion for those who are suffering in our world.

We ask for your comfort for those who are grieving.

We thank you for your daily tender mercies.

We thank you for your daily love.

We thank you for your daily grace.

Empower us with courage and understanding
as we declare who you are to a world who needs you.

Inspire us as we seek to inspire others.

Strengthen us in our weakness.

Grant us wisdom and discernment to do your will.

And now, with the confidence of the children of God,
we pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying...

THE LORD’S PRAYER *(together)*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen!

We Go Forth in Gratitude to Serve

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INVITATIONS

***SONG OF SENDING** “So Send I You” verses 1, 3, 4 (see page 10)

BLESSING

adapted from a poem by Christine Sine

Do not be overwhelmed
by the enormity of the world’s grief.
We do not carry this burden alone.

Hold onto the ways of Jesus.
Act justly now,
Be merciful now,
Be compassionate now.

Do not be paralyzed
by what you cannot change.
Do what you can
for your anxious soul,
towards each battered person
for our devastated planet.

Stretch your arms wide
Find healing in the chaos.
Find strength in togetherness.
Find peace in God’s love.

SHARING OF CHRIST’S PEACE

One: And may the peace that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of God’s son, Jesus Christ, and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you and abide with you today and always.

Peace be with you.

All: And also with you.

SENDING MUSIC (*together*) “So Send I You” verse 4 (see page 10)

(Please exchange a greeting of peace with those around you as our worship concludes.)

*After the service, everyone is invited to join us downstairs
for a time of fellowship and refreshments.*

So Send I You

578

F $\frac{F}{A}$ Abdim7 Gm7 C7

1 So send I you— by grace made strong to tri - umph o'er hosts of
 2 So send I you— to take to souls in bond - age the Word of
 3 So send I you— my strength to know in weak - ness, my joy in
 4 So send I you— to bear my cross with pa - tience, and then one

Gm7 $\frac{Gm7(b5)}{Bb}$ C7 Dm $\frac{C}{E}$ F F7 $\frac{Eb}{F}$ F7

hell, o'er dark - ness, death, and sin, my name to bear and in that name to
 truth that sets the cap - tive free, to break the bonds of sin, to loose death's
 grief, my per - fect peace in pain, to prove my power, my grace, my prom - ised
 day with joy to lay it down, to hear my voice, "Well done, my faith - ful

Bbmaj7 $\frac{Gm}{Bb}$ $\frac{D}{A}$ Gm7(b5) $\frac{F}{C}$ C7

1-3
F

4
F

con - quer— so send I you, my vic - to - ry to win.
 fet - ters— so send I you, to bring the lost to me.
 pres - ence— so send I you, e - ter - nal fruit to gain.
 ser - vant— come, share my throne, my king - dom, and my crown!"

$\frac{Bb}{C}$ $\frac{Am}{C}$ Bbdim7 $\frac{F}{A}$ Gm7 C7 $\frac{Bb}{C}$ F

"As the Fa - ther has sent me, so send I you."

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Get Involved! Without any doubt, the ministry of our congregation depends largely on the dedication and selfless contributions of volunteers — the incredible individuals who give generously of their time, energy, and unique talents. Here are some ways you can help us do Christ's work in our community:

Community Meal & Pantry: Each Tuesday at 5pm, we offer a sit-down meal that is free for anybody, serving about 100 people a week. Volunteers are needed during the day on Monday and Tuesday to help with food prep, and on Tuesday evening to serve the meal and clean up afterwards.

On Wednesdays from noon to 5pm, we run a free food pantry that also offers personal care & hygiene items when they're available. Volunteers help staff the pantry, and donations of non-perishable food and personal care items are always welcome.

Contact Kitchen Coordinator Sherry Conklin for more info: meal@upcbgm.org

Worship services: You may not have noticed how many people are involved in our Sunday morning worship services, but most weeks there are at least a dozen of us, and often there are more than 20: folks who read prayers and scripture, greet visitors, share musical talents, operate technology, set up refreshments, help serve communion, or contribute their ideas and support behind the scenes. If you'd like to take part, contact Worship Team chair Suzie Raboy: sraboy54@stny.rr.com

Music at UPC: 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 Choir: *Wednesdays, 6:30–7:30pm in the Music Room.* The vocal choir provides music for worship most every Sunday. We welcome new members at any time, and we would love to have your participation. It would be good to have you with us!

United Ringers handbell choir: *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.



Other ministries: Our ministry 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: **Campus Ministry**, Pastor Becky bkindig@upcbgm.org; **Card Committee**, Margaret Davis mdavis.margaret@gmail.com; **Community Outreach**, Pastor Kimberly pastor@upcbgm.org or Sherry Conklin meal@upcbgm.org; **Finance**, Andy Chadwick cchadwick1@stny.rr.com; **Hospitality**, Sally Hunt shunt1@stny.rr.com or Sherry Conklin meal@upcbgm.org; **Personnel**, Cindy Burger csburger@frontiernet.net; **Property**, Pastor Becky bkindig@upcbgm.org; **Sewing Group**, Cindy Burger csburger@frontiernet.net.

Coffee hour: We have transitioned our coffee hour after worship to the Fellowship Hall downstairs. This offers us all a place to sit at tables and visit, while giving the younger ones a place to relax and play. Games and activities will be provided, and if anybody wants to bring in games they are welcome also.



Children in Worship: “Let the little children come to me...” —Matthew 19:14

We are glad that your children are here today, and we hope that you know that they are welcome and encouraged to be in worship with you. We truly believe that a community of faith is made up of people of ALL ages. There is a PrayGround space with coloring sheets and quiet toys in the front of the sanctuary to use there or can be taken to another pew, if that suits your family’s needs. Sunday school materials are mailed to our families once a month to do together at home.



There is also a nursery space at the end of the hall at the front of the sanctuary that is open for use with a parent or guardian. It has a changing table, a rocking chair, and some toys appropriate for age two and under. There is a speaker in the room so you can listen to the service. Please let us know if you have questions.

COVER IMAGE: “The Five Thousand” by Eularia Clarke, 1962. Oil on canvas laid down on board, 65 x 62 cm.
From the Methodist Modern Art Collection.

PRAYER CREDITS: **Gathering Prayer** by Bruce Prewer, posted on bruceprewer.com. **We Say What We Believe:** “Affirmation of Unity” by Noel Palsma, from *Prayerful Preparation: Living God, Renew Us* published by the World Communion of Reformed Churches, posted on re:Worship re-worship.blogspot.com. **Prayer of Dedication** by Thandiwe Dale-Ferguson, posted on Worship Words worshipwords.co.uk. **Blessing** adapted from a poem by Christine Sine, from her Walking in Wonder substack, substack.com/@chrisine.

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Pastors Rev. Kimberly P Chastain and Rev. Becky Kindig ~ **Reader** Shawn Landon
Musicians Aimée Backus, *Music Coordinator*; Rebecca Mebert, *accompanist*; Austin Shadduck, *United Ringers director*; Valerie Lasser, Starletta Noll-Long, Phil Westcott, and the UPC Choir
Technicians Chris Burger, Andy Chadwick, Scott Kindig, Sara Lieberman, Ken Mebert