



Everyone is welcome here

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON



Congregational Activity Reports

June 2024–May 2025



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Pastor Kimberly Chastain's Report

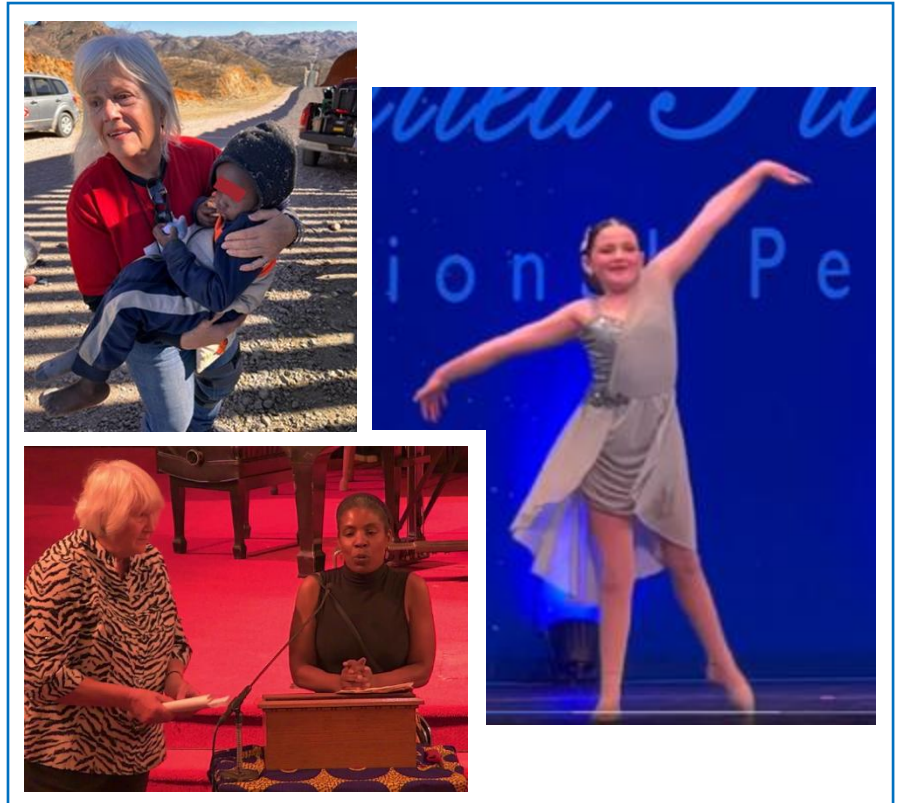


Looking Back, Looking Ahead

There's a kind of privilege and challenge in writing this part of the annual report every year. Every season brings a measure of endings and beginnings, and there are always two challenges before us as a congregation. One is responding to the cascading events in our world in ways that bring hope while refusing chaos and fear. The second is finding ways to support and nurture each other in our journeys of faith, creating opportunities for spiritual development and community. It's complicated, because we are a congregation of people who engage fully with life and the world — all of us are called to ministries both within and without the congregation — and if we aren't paying attention to staying connected, it is far too easy to drift apart.

So we tell the stories: the stories of working with refugees in Arizona, of graduations and awards for dance, of case workers who help people returning from incarceration, of making a place for everyone to feel safe. We tell stories of sickness and healing, of frustration and small victories. And we try to discern the activity of the Holy Spirit in every part of our lives — in the unexpected connections and in the surprising continuities in our life together.

We've had some fun this year, staging a "Come-As-You-Are" Christmas Pageant, challenging each other to memorize some Bible verses, taking a couple of hours on Thursdays in Lent to make beautiful things together. We've deepened our connections to our community by hosting a Gershwin



retrospective with the Tri-Cities Opera, a book launch featuring Rev. Liz Theoharis from the Poor People's Campaign, held community conversations on White Nationalism and Racism, invited dancers and drummers to lead us in new ways of worship. We've grieved the loss of beloved friends and held each other as we've cried. We make and hear many kinds of beautiful music in our worship. We continue to offer our space for community needs and to question how we can best use the space we offer.

And now we are looking again at priorities, and there are questions we should be asking as we plan for the next year:

- What matters most to you about the work we do?
- In what areas do you wish we had a more consistent presence or approach?
- How can we best align our collective gifts so that the work is shared more widely (or effectively)?
- Are there things that you think we're missing completely that you think we should be doing?
- Where are you finding hope, and what stories would like to tell and hear to foster that hope?

All around us are stories about endings and beginnings, and I know that God is not finished with us yet. Sometimes it is easy to see what lies ahead, and sometimes we make plans and then God laughs.

But the most important part of the story is that love that never fails, the light that is never overcome, as we continue to grow and find our place in God's continuing activity. As we celebrate what has been and prepare for what will be, we give thanks to God, our Spirit, Guide and Guardian, who never leaves us alone.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Kimberly



Associate Pastor Becky Kindig's Report



Looking back over this year at UPC brings me joy, which is greatly needed at this time with events in our country being so unsettling. We have accomplished a lot of ministry together bringing the kingdom of God closer to our corner of the world. We continue to have challenging and nourishing worship with great music, ways to learn and play together, and find ways to support each other. We continue to value intergenerational relationships and learning, which bring us closer to each other and to God. And we have expanded our mission to our community as we have seen or heard a need or felt a nudge from the Holy Spirit. I have been especially encouraged by the desire you all have increasingly shown this year to do more things together in person, an energy which feels more and more like the pre-covid activity that we were hoping would return when people were ready.

Here are some of the wonderful things that I have been involved with this past year.

Spiritual Formation

- Sunday School: We got to do a Bible Presentation to the youth, and I continued to send home the monthly Sunday School Packets.
- I helped the older youth do the Souper Bowl of Caring.
- We had fun with our annual Easter Egg Hunt.
- We had several all-church intergenerational events such as our September picnic at Arnold Park, creating Advent banners, Christmas carol sing, Art for the Heart Lenten series, our trip to Union Endicott for OGHs trivia night, and our annual dyeing of Easter eggs.
- And hired new Nursery new staff!



Campus Ministry

- I had a popular prayer board station at UFest for the BU Interfaith Council.
- Doug Jones, Matt Johnson, Kimberly, and I created a Christian Nationalism Conversation event on campus in the fall.
- Kimberly and I offered Ashes to Go for Ash Wednesday to 123 students, faculty, and staff.

Community

- We continued to work with Interfaith Broome County, formerly Children of Abraham.
- We attended the Pride Month People of Blessing Service to bless and celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community.
- And helped with our Lobby Ministry helping connect guests to services.

Worship

- I helped to lead worship most weeks with prayers, Time for the Young at Heart, special services, communion, or by music with the choir or bell choir.
- Preaching several times a year is a joy to get to really study a section of scripture and share it with you all.
- And helping the Worship Team hang the Swag to decorate the sanctuary in meaningful ways is always fun.

Looking Forward

We have already been dreaming up plans for the next program year. We are looking to have one Intergenerational event and one Sunday school type event each month. Charlotte has already expressed a desire to go to a Corn Maze this October so we will make that happen! If anyone else has any suggestions of things to do together, please let me know!



There is also an opportunity to join an ELCA and Episcopalian in starting a mainline protestant campus ministry at BU. There are funding sources from all three denominations and there have been indications that helping students form a more inclusive, progressive Christian group on campus would be welcome. The session has given their blessing to explore this and I am meeting with two other pastors this summer to see what we can offer. I covet your prayers for this new offshoot of the campus ministry work that Kimberly and I have been doing with the BU Interfaith Council already.

While we know that much is uncertain in this world right now, it is a blessing that we have this community that we have all built together to support each other, learn together, worship God together, and show God's love to each other and our neighbors. May we continue to work together to nurture it.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Becky



Our congregation, photographed after worship on May 11, 2025. Pictured (left to right):

Back row: Bill Sands, David Sands, Austin Shadduck, Brooke Shadduck, Sharon Shadduck, Sara Lieberman, Aoife Backus, Ernest Backus, Aimée Backus, Imogen Backus, Suzie Northrop Raboy, Andy Chadwick, Ken Mebert

Middle row: Left side – Chris Burger, Cindy Burger, Linda McDevitt, Lana Ogden, David Berti, Suzy Ogden, Robbie Manners; *Right side –* Elikem Nyamuame, Ethan Nyamuame, Sally Hunt, Star Noll-Long, Lucien Hough-Westcott, Phil Westcott, Eleanor Hough, Kimberly Chastain, Scott Kindig

Front row: Jean Hill, Margaret Sands, Cincy Chadwick, Lou McKeage, Judy Girdwood Westcott, Andrea Gilebarto, Becky Mebert, Sally Menges, Marilynn Guinane, Zander Rwabukwisi, Sharon Landon, Ellis Nyamuame, Sherry Conklin, Becky Kindig, Allison Nyamuame, Jessica Lane, Josiah Rwabukwisi

Session Members — 2024–2025



Left to right:

Class of 2025

Andy Chadwick (5)
Margaret Davis (2)
Sally Hunt (2)
Matt Johnson (3)

Class of 2026

Cindy Burger (1)
Sherry Conklin (1)
Judy Girdwood Westcott (1)

(parenthetical number indicates years served)

Clerk of Session Reports

Report of Session Activities for June 2024–May 2025

The United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton has continued to be a busy place during the past year. We continue to hold hybrid in-person/streamed services. A fair number of people tune in, but not all on Sunday morning. The streaming equipment requires dedicated people to share in the role of operating it; we are always looking for additional helping hands!

While Session continues to oversee the routine operation of UPC, here are a few highlights from the past year:

- The Addiction Center of Broome County (ACBC) continues to operate their overnight comfort station, the UP-Center, and hope to open 7 days a week in the near future.
- We took steps to increase our visibility to the community through the use of outdoor signage on Chenango Street, adding a banner between the brick signposts and posting yard signs for special events. A large “Alleluia!” banner was hung across the front entranceway from Easter until Pentecost.
- We continued dreaming and evaluating our ministry as part of the Presbyterian Foundation’s “Project Regeneration”. This work led to a revision of our mission statement to: “We are a place where everyone is welcome as we support one another to act justly, practice kindness, and walk humbly with God.”



*Andy Chadwick,
Clerk of Session*



- To create safe spaces for those seeking refuge if needed, “Private” signs have been posted on various doors around the building to indicate areas that law enforcement may not enter without an official judicial warrant.
 - We agreed to host the June 2025 assembly meeting and worship service of the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley.
 - We mourned the passing of two members, Maida Thomas and Barbara (Bobbi) Hickling.
- Please keep the pastors and Session members in your prayers.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON
Minutes of the Annual Congregational and Corporate Meeting (Part 2: Program)
June 16, 2024

The Annual Congregational and Corporate Meeting (Part 2: Program) of the United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton, New York, was held on Sunday, June 16, 2024. The Rev. Kimberly Chastain served as Moderator. The meeting was properly called and a quorum was present.

Call to Order and Opening Prayer at 11:15am by Rev. Chastain.

Congregational Activity Reports: Reports from the pastors, the Clerk of the Session, and the various committees and teams were received. The minutes from the Congregational meetings held on 25 June 2023, 24 September 2023, and 4 February 2024 were approved as published.

Rev. Chastain highlighted a few aspects of the Congregational Activity Report by noting that we are a “cottage congregation in a cathedral building” but that our efforts align with the size of our building not the size of our congregation.

The congregation applauded the effort of Scott Kindig for his efforts in creating the Congregational Activity Report.

Nominations and Elections: Three people who were rotating off the session were acknowledged and thanked for their service: Marilynn Guinane, Lou McKeage, and Allison Nyamuame. The following names were presented for election to Session from the nominating committee:

- Cynthia Burger (2-year term)
- Judy Girdwood Westcott (2-year term)

The following nomination was received from the floor:

- Sherry Conklin (2-year term)

All three nominees were unanimously elected and thanked for their willingness to serve. These three join Andy Chadwick, Margaret Davis, Sally Hunt, and Matt Johnson on the Session.

The following members were submitted from the floor for election to the Nominating Committee:

- Margaret Davis
- Sally Hunt
- Suzie Northrop Raboy

The three nominees were unanimously elected to the Nominating Committee.

New Business: None.

Adjournment: Chris Burger made a motion to adjourn (seconded by Cindy Burger). Motion passed. Rev. Chastain closed with a prayer at 11:25am.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew D. Johnson, Clerk pro tem

Moderator: Rev. Kimberly P. Chastain

Approved by Session: May 5, 2025

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON
Minutes of the Annual Congregational and Corporate Meeting (Part 1: Finance)
February 2, 2025

The Annual Congregational and Corporate Meeting (Part 1: Finance) of the United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton, New York, was held on Sunday, February 2, 2025. The Rev. Kimberly Chastain served as Moderator. The meeting was properly called and a quorum was present.

Call to Order and Opening Prayer at 11:15 by Pastor Chastain.

2025 Budget: Andy Chadwick presented the proposed 2025 budget. All staff other than Scott Kindig received a 2.5% cost of living increase. An evaluation of Scott's position resulted in a larger increase to bring his pay in line with his duties. Lou McKeage, Treasurer, made a few comments.

Pastors' Terms of Call: Rev. Chastain reminded the members that a pastoral call involves three groups – the congregation who calls the pastor, the pastor who accepts the call and the Presbytery which oversees the call. Andy Chadwick then reviewed the Terms of Call for the pastors. There was one question, regarding how the Board of Pensions revised its calculations which resulted in a decrease in Pastor Kimberly's contribution as a single person.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Terms of Call for Rev. Chastain and Rev. Kindig were unanimously approved.

Meeting Adjourned and Closing Prayer by Pastor Chastain at 11:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew M. Chadwick, Clerk

Moderator: Rev. Kimberly P. Chastain

Approved by Session: February 10, 2025

June 2024–May 2025 Worship Attendance Record (in person / online)

June 2024		July 2024		August 2024	
2	45 / 36	7	24 / 41	4	40 / 17
9	51 / 47	14	29 / 34	11	37 / 32
16	50 / 49	21	47 / 67	18	28 / 37
23	36 / 36	28	24 / 31	25	41 / 38
30	46 / 41				
<i>Average</i>	<i>46 / 42</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>31 / 43</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>37 / 31</i>
September 2024		October 2024		November 2024	
1	34 / 43	6	44 / 48	3	50 / 56
8	41 / 25	13	41 / 39	10	36 / 47
15	36 / 37	20	44 / 52	17	34 / 48
22	48 / 48	27	32 / 45	24	46 / 38
29	40 / 36				
<i>Average</i>	<i>40 / 38</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>40 / 46</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>42 / 47</i>
December 2024		January 2025		February 2025	
1	38 / 27	5	32 / 44	2	50 / 60
8	52 / 32	12	32 / 36	9	41 / 63
15	48 / 32	19	40 / 54	16 (<i>online only</i>)	nc / 42
22	nc / 59	26	40 / 57	23	33 / 41
24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> : 109 / 70					
29	27 / 35				
<i>Average</i>	<i>41 / 37</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>41 / 52</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>41 / 52</i>
March 2025		April 2025		May 2025	
2	56 / 55	6	41 / 41	4	29 / 42
5 <i>Ash Wed 12:30pm</i> : 16		13 (<i>Palm Sunday</i>)	67 / 43	11	49 / 36
5 <i>Ash Wed 6:00pm</i> : 8		17 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> : 27		18	40 / 35
9	42 / 53	20 (<i>Easter</i>)	78 / 53	25	23 / 44
16	41 / 46	27	39 / 40		
23	31 / 50				
30	48 / 47				
<i>Average</i>	<i>44 / 50</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>56 / 44</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>35 / 32</i>

Averages, 6/24–5/25: **In-person attendance 41** **Online views 43**

“nc” indicates no count was recorded of in-person attendance. Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday worship services were in-person only.

Mid-week services are excluded from calculation of monthly and total averages.

Online figures represent number of “views” on our YouTube channel. There can be multiple people per view, but can also include views by people who attended in person, or multiple views by the same viewer.

UPC Binghamton 2024 Statistical Report

Total Active Members, 12/31/2023:

155

Losses during 2024

Deaths: 4

Marian Palmer
Gary Ayres
Maida Thomas
Barbara (Bobbi) Hickling

Removed: 0

Inactive: 0

Transfer: 1

Total: 5

Additions during 2024

New: 1

Charity Outman

Transfer: 0

Reinstated: 0

Total: 1

Total Active Members, 12/31/2024

151

Nominating Committee Report

We are grateful to Andy Chadwick for his time of service as a member of Session and as our Clerk.

The Nominating Committee places in nomination the following:

For the Session Class of 2026:

Matt Johnson, to be re-elected for a one-year term, having served a one-year term and a two-year term.

For the Session Class of 2027:

Lou McKeage, for his first two-year term.



Lou previously served on UPC's Session for five years, 2019–2024. He is UPC's Treasurer and the chair of our Finance & Investments Team. Having had a year "off", he is now eligible to return to active service on the Session.

Margaret Davis, to be re-elected for her second two-year term.

Sally Hunt, to be re-elected for her second two-year term.

For the Nominating Committee, 2025–2026, we are seeking nomination of 2–4 members from the floor at the congregational meeting.

Two Session members will be selected at the next regular Session meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Burger, Sherry Conklin, Margaret Davis, and Sally Hunt

Our Life Together: An Overview

Our Sunday morning worship life and practice is the heart and center of United Presbyterian Church, and increasingly, it is the time during the week when we “make time” for our common life. We have integrated most of our Spiritual Formation practices, our potlucks, our birthday celebrations, and even some of our book discussions into the time we spend together on Sundays. And in many ways, this works pretty well, because in a world which places increasing demands on everyone, it is good to feel that there is one dedicated time and space where we can explore our life together.



Our Sunday morning worship services are the focal point of our life together as a congregation.

In 2024, we spent the worship hour reflecting on the basics of Christian faith and understanding, and on being together as Christ's Body in the 21st century. In 2025, we have read the Gospel according to Luke through the Passion and Resurrection, and this summer we are reading the first half of the Acts of the



We turned the communion table into a “pasture” during the scripture memorization challenge. A sheep was added to the pasture for each Bible verse recited to one of the pastors.

Apostles. Along the way we have had a scripture memorization challenge, a “Good Shepherd” celebration, interactive reflections on the symbols of Lent and Easter, and an “Art for the Heart” midweek series during Lent when we explored pottery, fiber arts, watercolor painting, Lithuanian Easter Egg decoration, and drumming as means of spiritual expression.

During the week, we gather in smaller groups:

- on Mondays at 1:00pm for Bible Study. We have been reading through the New Testament in the order that it was written (we’re finishing Luke, heading into the book of Acts, and then we’ll run through the pastoral epistles).
- on Wednesday mornings for our Sewing Group. This small but intrepid crew created over 40 quilts this year, which we share with nursing homes, congregants who are managing long-term conditions, Mom’s House, and Camp Sunshine. We give a quilt to each newborn in the congregation, and the pastors keep a few on hand in their offices in case we learn of someone who needs a special gift from the church. This year we have been joined regularly on



Jean Hill and Cindy Chadwick set up a display of the Sewing Group’s work to be blessed in worship before distribution.

Zoom by friends who are traveling or have moved away and by a young disabled man named Alan, who calls in faithfully each Wednesday at noon and seems to enjoy the fellowship.

- on Wednesdays at 6:30pm for Choir practice. We have an amazing range of talent in our congregation, supported by section leaders and instrumentalists, and the choir supports and enhances our congregational worship and helps us to sing praises to God every Sunday. Choir members and friends provide special music during the summer while the choir is on hiatus.



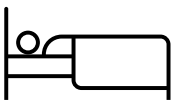
The vocal choir provides music for our worship services nearly every week from mid-September through mid-June.

- on Fridays at 5:00 on Zoom for a “virtual cocktail hour.” Started during the pandemic, this is a small gathering of friends who meet every Friday evening to talk about the week, share information, and stay connected to folks who can’t get here in person.

We provide space for community gatherings and concerts, recitals and workshops, and we enjoy the variety of opportunities to offer hospitality and support to organizations that make a difference to our members. This year we were part of a Lyceum class called “A Tour of 3 Binghamton Churches.” The class was a guided tour of three impressive, historic churches in downtown Binghamton, each having its own architectural glory and distinctive history. Pastor Becky gave the tour of our beautiful sanctuary and was asked to highlight the Romanesque Revival architecture. The other two churches were Christ Episcopal Church and St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, both of which are Gothic style architecture. About 12 people came on the tour and enjoyed seeing the space, hearing the history, and some even went up to ring the bell.

The work that we support reaches far beyond our congregation, in ministry and service that members do with community organizations and groups, in the work that goes on in our building during the week, and in the ministries and efforts that we support financially here and around the world.

Inside the building...

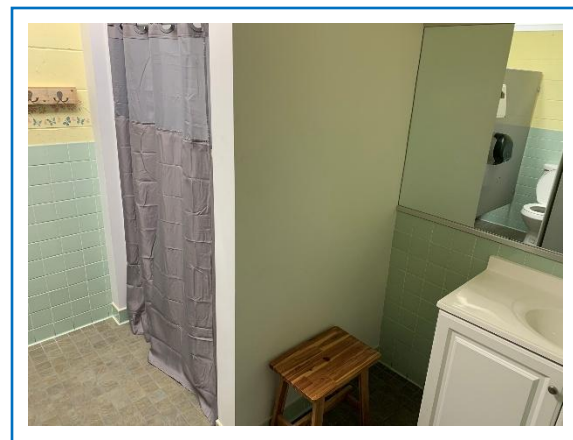


The UP-Center is our newest collaborative project to build up our community. In 2023, we converted our Library Lounge, Terrace Room, and Chapel into a 42-bed warming station, providing overnight accommodation to unhoused people 5 nights per week in partnership



The ACBC UP-Center provides overnight accommodation to unhoused adults year-round, five nights a week. There are enough cots for 29 men and 13 women each night.

with the Addiction Center of Broome County. Guests arrive at 7:00pm and are given a meal, an opportunity to get clean and a bed to sleep in, then are given breakfast and sent on their way by 7:00am. The Center staff does a minimum of 8 loads of laundry every night in dedicated laundry machines (installed in a former Sunday school room), and the shower in one of the first-floor bathrooms is available two evenings a week and for emergency needs. Guests of the shelter are able to use the church mailing address to get a sheriff's ID card, which is a necessary step toward finding permanent housing. The UP-Center is looking to expand to 7 nights per week this summer if they can get the staffing in place.



The Binghamton City School District's GED (General Education Development) Adult Education program has been housed at 42 Chenango Street since 2011; they occupy most of the 2nd floor of the education building. In recent years, they have added a testing center for three counties and a self-contained class for students 18 and under who were not successful in a traditional classroom. We see about 20 students daily and enjoy supporting their efforts to better themselves. Church staff and members have been invited to the graduation ceremony each year; one of our staff is a graduate of the program.



A4TD (Associates for Training and Development) is an agency that works with older adults returning to the workforce. They have maintained an office in the education building since 2019; the program funds people in training programs at community service and other 501(c)3 organizations. The benefits work two ways: the interns gain work experience and their placement gains from the energy and assistance the intern provides.



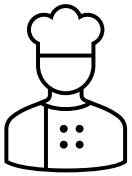
The Church in the Wild is now using one of our office spaces to operate a program called Broome Creative ReUse. The goal of this project is to divert usable materials from the waste stream and return them to the community through art supply thrifting as part of a "circular economy". Proceeds from sales enable them to grow and continue providing these services in the community.



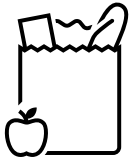
JUST (Justice and Unity for the Southern Tier) advocates for change in social conditions and institutions that contribute to mass incarceration. They have had an office with us since 2019, and offer training programs and information services onsite, as well as offering direct support to people who are incarcerated and their families and legal actions to correct abuses of the system.



The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley is the regional body that resources the 42 PC(USA) congregations in this part of New York state. United Presbyterian Church provides storage space and receives mail for our "office-less" presbytery. Pastor Becky and Chris Burger share the position of Stated Clerk for the Presbytery, and they work with churches around the presbytery, with our Transitional Lead Presbyter Rev. Greg Garis, and with various commissions and committees to keep Presbyterians connected both locally and nationally. The pastors as well as the congregation are considered members of the presbytery, and we support the work of the presbytery and are supported by the presbytery in many ways.



We have served a community meal to all comers every Tuesday night for more than 20 years. This was the first shared ministry of the two churches that joined to become United Presbyterian Church. Over the years, we have partnered with Texas Roadhouse, Rescue Mission, VINES, BU students, and Culinary Institute students to provide nourishing meals and a respite for the weary and offer a deeper understanding of the needs of those we serve to our volunteers.



In the spring of 2020, we expanded our program to include a pantry. Partnering with the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, CHOW, and Panera Bread, we offer community members a chance to come and “shop” every Wednesday for food, hygiene products, diapers, clothes, and basic household items like linens and tableware.

Our food and hospitality program is staffed by Sherry Conklin, a member of the congregation, and provides part-time employment to a young man with autism a few hours every week. We rely on volunteers from within and without the church community to keep these programs running, and on contributions from the congregation and community to help offset the costs of the program.

The congregation supports the program in a variety of ways, including making Christmas ornaments and dyeing Easter eggs to share with guests of the meal and pantry, and knitting hats, scarves, and mittens, and providing cotton tube socks to add warmth and comfort to our guests.

In the Binghamton Community



United Presbyterian Church partners with the Family Enrichment Network to offer a program called “Walk With Me,” which provides critical services to those returning to the community from Broome County Jail. Our congregation supports a part-time case manager who works with people to help them get back on their feet and find their way. The services offered by Walk With Me include assistance with housing, obtaining valid identification, transportation, job applications, employment, support groups, peer advocacy and mentoring.

On the Borderlands

David Ruston and Greg Patinka travel regularly to Arizona to minister with Salvavision and the Tucson Samaritans at the United States/Mexico border. This program searches for travelers in the desert in an effort to save lives at the Mexico-US border. Dave and Greg learned about the migrants who come to our borders seeking refuge and safety, and participated in the humanitarian missions that offer water and other life-



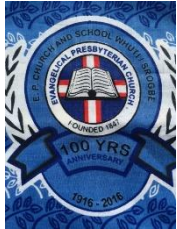
Alex Hayes and Sherry Conklin get ready to transfer the Friday morning food delivery downstairs to the pantry.



Dyeing Easter eggs for our community kitchen guests is always a popular activity after worship on Palm Sunday.

conserving services to the people who are in desperate need. We now have a dedicated space in our sanctuary, the Esquina de la Esperanza, that keeps us mindful of the needs and gives us space to pray for and learn about the work and the needs.

In Ghana



We are grateful that our congregation includes a family connected to the Whuti-Srogboe Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana, an Ewe-language worshipping community that supports the local school and music programs for its community. We support their ministry with a contribution every year, and have sent musical instruments and other items to further their work.

Greg Patinka (pictured) and David Ruston work with Salvavision.

Here they are providing people being deported to Nogales, Mexico, with shoelaces, socks, hats, and jackets. Migrants are also given cab fare so the women and children can get safely to a shelter once they are deported.



Our friends in the Whuti-Srogboe Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ghana made a lectern-cover and matching tablecloth for our communion table at the front of the sanctuary.

Ministry Reports

The following pages contain the reports from all of our ministry projects, teams, and committees doing the work of the church. Many thanks to all who serve on a team or who have helped a team with what God is calling us to do!

These reports are written by the ministries and include a brief description of what each ministry is, some highlights



from the past 12 months, what they hope to accomplish in the coming year, and the names of those involved in the ministry.

If you feel God is calling you to join in any of the work being done by these ministries, talk with any of the people who are named in the report, or to one of the pastors. We'd love to have your help!

Card Committee

The Card Committee continues its mission to support and strengthen our network of church family and friends by acknowledging special events, milestones, joys, and concerns. This includes births, baptisms, birthdays, deaths, illness and injuries, surgeries, challenges, travels, graduations, new jobs, retirements, thanks yous, moves, anniversaries, and other occasions and situations.

From June 2024 through May 2025, the card committee sent 402 cards to church family and friends. In addition, the committee:

- sent special holiday cards (Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas) to our homebound members, those who worship with us from afar, and Sunday School-aged children and youth;
- updated address and birthday lists (do we have yours?);
- provided monthly reports of committee activity to the pastors, Session, and the UPC office;
- welcomed Cindy Burger and Sharon Landon to the committee.



The Card Committee relies on old-fashioned snail mail to recognize special occasions.



The committee welcomes additional “card senders” and encourages anyone wishing to join the group to contact the church office or one of the members listed below. Also, we encourage church family and friends to let the committee know of any special occasions or concerns, milestone events, and birthdays.

CARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Cindy Burger, Cindy Chadwick, Margaret Davis, Sharon Landon, Lana Ogden, Suzie Northrop Raboy, Margaret Sands.

Community Kitchen

Our Community Kitchen ministry celebrated its 20th anniversary this year. We started serving a free weekly dinner in 2005. In 2020 during the pandemic we expanded our operations to offer a free food pantry, integrating our monthly hygiene products “Care & Share” project into the new food pantry. We partner with the Broome County Council of Churches’ CHOW (Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse) program, the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, and the United Way of Broome County to help those in our community who grapple with food insecurity.

Each Tuesday evening, we serve a free community meal to anybody who wants to sit down and enjoy some good food and good company. Between June 2024 and May 2025 there have been 5,703 meals served at the community meal on Tuesdays, which looks like an average of about 110 meals a week. However, at the beginning of 2025 we added a take-out meals option in addition to our eat-in meals, allowing guests who ate the meal to also take meals home after they ate. The number of take-out meals taken are almost equal to the eat-in meals, and in recent weeks we’ve been serving over 200 meals a week.

Our food pantry is open on Wednesdays from noon to 5pm. In the last 12 months, the pantry has served 2,748 families, which are 6,166 individuals. We now give out food for 5 days of supplemental food. Our guests may come every week; no ID and no referrals are required. People start showing up at 11am, we give out numbers at 11:30, and we start allowing people to shop at noon. With assistance from the Health Department, we reorganized our pantry layout this year, making healthy foods more prominent and easily accessible. Now it’s set up so people see healthy foods first and snack foods last.

Most Thursdays we get a delivery of about 800 pounds of food from CHOW. In addition to these deliveries, Community Kitchen Coordinator Sherry Conklin also goes to their warehouse to shop the “bounty” for extra food. All this food is provided to us at no cost to the church budget.

Most Fridays we get a delivery of about 2,000 pounds of food from the Food Bank of the Southern Tier. Some of this food is provided at no cost and the rest is bought at wholesale prices. The Food Bank gives us various grants which cover a lot of wholesale purchases. The rest of the purchases are covered in the church budget. This year we have spent \$10,664 from the budget and used \$40,247 in grants and gifts. The total cost of food supplies was \$50,938; this does not include any hygiene items.

Although we don’t officially have a community “clothing closet,” we do make donated clothing items, linens, and blankets available during our weekly pantry hours. We accept donations of new or gently used items — please don’t donate items that have holes in them, broken zippers, or other damage. You can bring donations to the church office weekdays between 9am and 3pm, or contact Sherry to make other arrangements.

Last fall the Good Neighbors Community Food Connection installed a Blessing Box on the front lawn of the church. This box is



And here’s what a thousand pounds of food looks like when it arrives from the Food Bank! Once we get it downstairs to the pantry, it all needs to be unwrapped and stocked onto our shelves.



owned and operated by ACBC with donations of food such as fresh bread. Our Food Bank and CHOW food is not allowed to be distributed through the Blessing Box, so having it stocked by ACBC ensures that our pantry food does not get mixed in with this project. The box is emptied quite quickly and often.

Over the winter our pantry received two free refrigerators. One came from the Health Department and the other from Cornell Cooperative Extension. This helps out greatly for our guests' shopping needs. We can store more dairy and produce when available.



We saw a big increase in hungry people showing up asking for food this spring after the Salvation Army Mission on Washington Street was closed. We started making sandwiches and quick meals daily for anyone that wanted food. We continued this for about two weeks until the Salvation Army was able to provide meals again from a mobile kitchen.

We continue to have the “emergency food bags” available at the desk and in the pantry. About five bags are given out weekly.

Three volunteers went with Sherry to the “Binghamton Move Out” project at the university to collect things to give out to anyone in need. We have small appliances, clothing, linens, blankets and pillows, pots and pans, and dishes. All of this is available on request.

Panera Bread at the Oakdale Commons donates their leftovers every Monday night, about 100–200 pounds of bread items per week. These donations are picked up and delivered by a rotation of five different volunteers.



VINES continues to cook a meal on 5th Tuesdays four times a year. We also receive donations of extra produce from them when available. Two chefs from the Lost Dog Café have prepared food in our kitchen also.

We have about 15 volunteers that help with the programs. There are always openings for new volunteers on any Tuesday for serving from 4:30 to 7pm. We especially need a regular volunteer for the pantry on Wednesdays from 2 to 5pm. And we can always use help on Thursdays and Fridays to transport food from the deliveries to the storage areas downstairs, and to then put the food away.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN MINISTRY MEMBERS: Regular volunteers include Dave Beers, David Berti, Andy & Cindy Chadwick, Kay & Ed Corcoran, George Cummings, Dave & Margaret Davis, Lisa Dolphin, Tori Douglas, Ann Garcia, Marilyn Guinane, Lauren, Aeden, Grace, & Gabe Hickey, David Jones, Sharon & Shawn Landon, Karen Mayonie, Bob McCarthy, Ken Mebert, Julie Njoroge, Charity Outman, Suzanne Northrop Raboy, Jeff Rake, Ann Scala, Sharon & Keith Solomon, and Lillian Webb. Staff support: Sherry Conklin, Community Kitchen Coordinator; Alex Hayes, Kitchen Staff.

Hospitality Team

TEAM PURPOSE: The Hospitality Team was developed in May 2024, in part to help organize and facilitate our church family and friends' gatherings that include a meal and/or refreshments and desserts. This includes planning and hosting memorial services/funerals/celebrations of life, a "Birthday Sunday" each month, and special events. These activities are part of UPC's mission to connect with each other and provide opportunities for conversation and growth.

ACTIVITIES: For the June 2024 to May 2025 reporting period, the Hospitality Team:

- developed a checklist for use in planning and implementing gatherings and events;
- hosted 12 Birthday Sundays, ensuring that each celebration provided gluten-free and other options so all could participate, and ensured all leftovers were used to decrease food waste;
- assisted with a potluck in conjunction with Birthday Sunday after worship service featuring guest speaker Gail Kocourek (October 2024);
- hosted two celebrations of life (Bobbie Hickling, and Pastor Henry from the Hands of Hope Church);
- planned and hosted breakfast and a luncheon for a meeting of the Presbytery (planning done in May 2025; event hosted in June 2025);
- hosted a reception following worship in March 2025 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Pastor Kimberly's ordination;
- hosted refreshments in the "green room" for presenters at the "You Only Get What You're Organized to Take" Book Tour in April 2025, in coordination with UPC's Friday night Happy Hour;
- provided food for some of the 2025 Lenten meals held during the "Arts for the Heart" series.



Cake, anyone? Both regular and gluten-free options are always available on Birthday Sunday.



We celebrated Pastor Kimberly's 40th "ordiversary" in March of this year.

FUTURE PLANS: The Team will continue to coordinate and implement Birthday Sundays and special events as they arise. The group welcomes new members who are willing to assist with hospitality planning, set up, clean up and/or providing food and baked goods.

HOSPITALITY TEAM MEMBERS: Cindy Chadwick, Sherry Conklin, Sally Hunt, Suzie Northrop Raboy, and Margaret Sands.

Personnel Team

TEAM PURPOSE: To select and support paid personnel and provide fair treatment for all staff

STAFF: Our staff is our face to the community and multiplies the effectiveness of the congregation's ministry and mission, including hosting several partner organizations in our building. Office and building employees are indispensable to this community outreach.

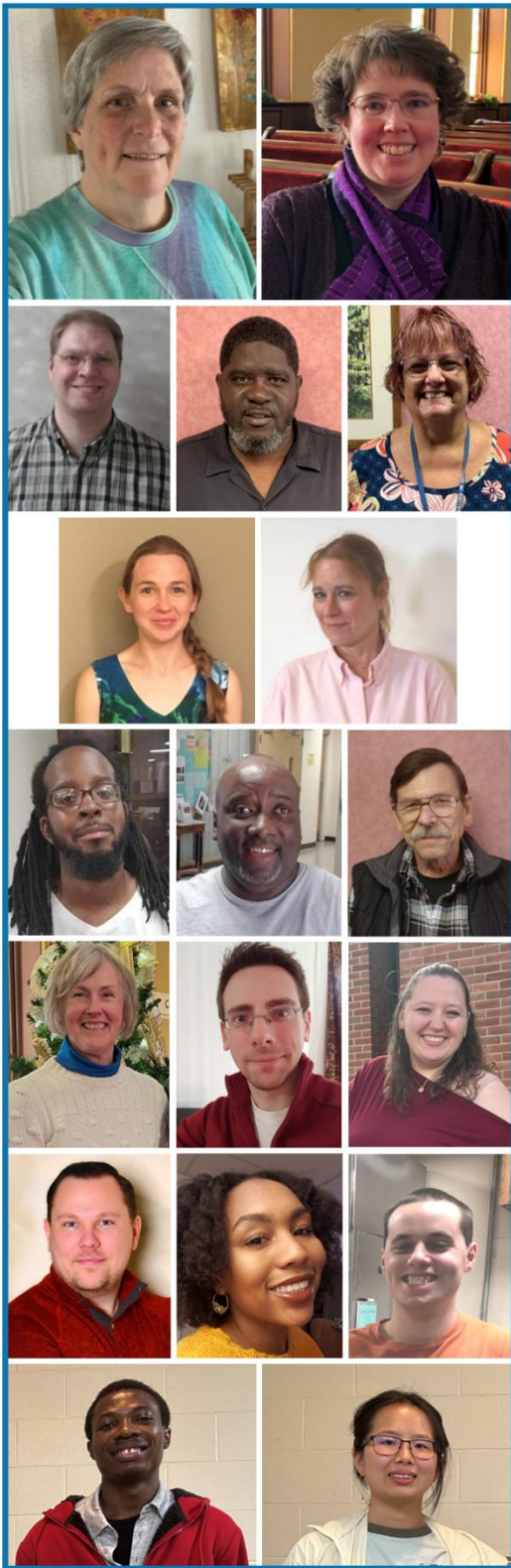
From June 2024 to May 2025, the number of UPC staff members totaled 16, including music section leaders. The position of Front Desk Receptionist had been filled in May 2024 in partnership with Associates for Training & Development (A4TD), a private, non-profit workforce development organization located in our building, but the agreement was terminated in January 2025.

ACTIVITIES: During the last year, the Personnel Team:

- recommended an annual increase in salaries/wages for staff members to assist with cost-of-living increases, and made a market adjustment to the Office & Technology Coordinator position;
- continued reviewing position descriptions, most recently the Nursery Attendant position;
- interviewed and hired two Nursery Attendants for Sunday mornings (Zoe Dong and Emmanuel Asante);
- conducted annual check-in meetings with all staff in November 2024.

FUTURE PLANS: The Team will continue to review job descriptions to ensure that they reflect current duties and responsibilities of each position and work on updates to the Employee Handbook.

PERSONNEL TEAM MEMBERS: Cindy Burger, Cindy Chadwick, Pastor Kimberly Chastain.



OUR STAFF (*left to right, top to bottom*):

Rev. Kimberly P Chastain (she/her), *Pastor/Head of Ministry*

Rev. Becky Kindig (she/her), *Associate Pastor*

Scott Kindig (he/him), *Office & Technology Coordinator*

Eugene Favor (he/him), *Building Manager*

Sherry Conklin (she/her), *Community Kitchen Coordinator*

Aimée Backus (she/her), *Music Coordinator*

Vanessa Warren (she/her), *Finance Administrator*

Mark Barnes (he/him), *custodian*

James Favor (he/him), *custodian*

Dave Schneider (he/him), *custodian*

Rebecca Mebert (she/her), *accompanist*

Austin Shadduck (he/him), *United Ringers director and tenor section leader*

Andrea Gilebarto (she/her), *soprano section leader*

Robert Manners (he/him), *baritone section leader*

Starletta Noll-Long (she/her), *alto section leader*

Alex Hayes (he/him), *kitchen staff*

Emmanuel Asante (he/him), *nursery attendant*

Zoe Dong (she/her), *nursery attendant*

Property Team Report

The Property Team strives to have us be good stewards of the physical resources that we have so that we can continue to be a place for God's mission in this community. That job entails:

- Making sure the building is welcoming, clean, and safe — for worship, programs, and mission that takes place here.
- Being consciously ecologically-minded in the ways in which we manage the building.
- Working to keep what we have in good working order, making repairs as necessary, and upgrading what does not meet new standards.

Here are the major projects that were accomplished this year, or have been identified and have a plan in place to repair in the coming year, to help our building become more functional and welcoming for our members, mission, and guests.

Sanctuary Exterior Repair

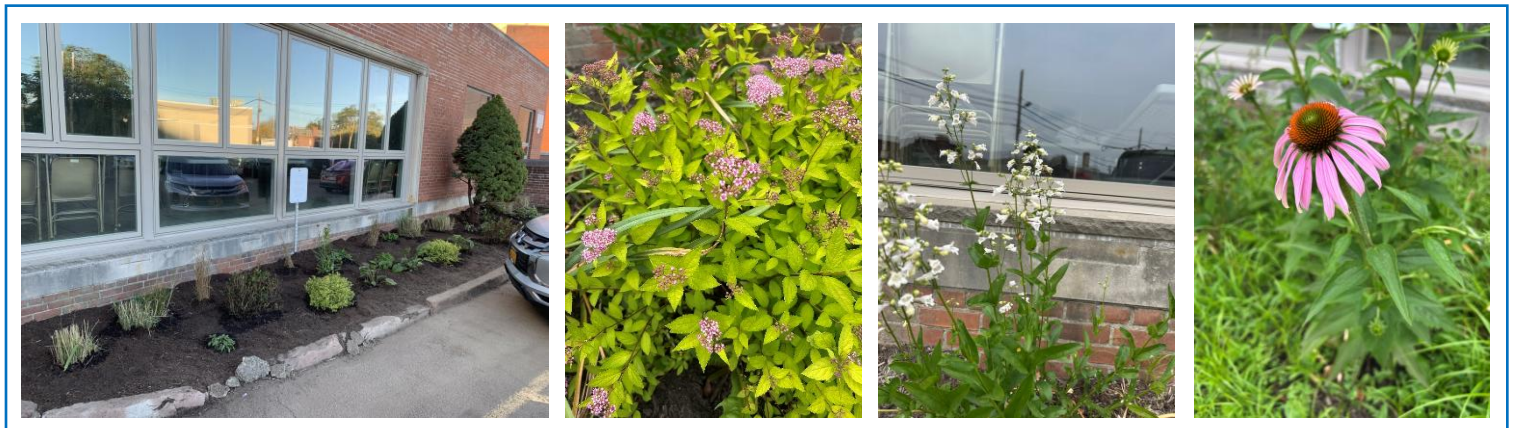
Last summer we had noticed some new water damage along the top of the sanctuary south wall, so over the summer we had one of our contractors come to clean out the drain lines from the sanctuary roof gutters. In the process, they discovered that the stained glass window covers were leaking, so we had all of those re-caulked. They brought in a big crane to do that work!

The crane offered an excellent vantage point to assess the condition of the sanctuary roof — and we learned that there are many missing/broken shingles on the south roof. It has been recommended that it be replaced. After many phone calls and consults, Session decided to move forward and we contracted with a roofing company that could put us on the schedule for this summer. So more cranes on the front lawn are in our future!



Parking Lot Garden

Last fall, VINES offered to replant our overgrown garden bed under the windows in the parking lot as a thank you and goodbye gift. So a crew of VINES members came over in October and dug up the weeds, added new soil, re-arranged some of the plants that were good, and added many new perennial plants that will fill in the area, be low maintenance, and be good for the local environment. It looked great last fall, but this spring has been even better as the plants have blossomed. Besides the daffodils, tulips, and irises that we had already, we have seen additions of stonecrop, foxglove, and purple coneflower so far. We are thankful to VINES for this gift that keeps on giving.



Water Issues

This winter with all the rain we had, we had leaks in the roof over the emergency stairwell behind the kitchen. That small roof off the deck had a blue tarp on it for months waiting for the weather to be good enough to have it repaired. Both the roof tiles and the brickwork were fixed to stop that leak. Other areas on the brickwork were identified that have mortar failing, so we will have those repaired in stages over the course of this coming year.

Holey Moly!



This spring we had a large hole develop in the first floor hallway by the elevators. An expansion joint in the concrete foundation did its job and moved, but the tile floor on top of it didn't. The gap in the floor goes way down. Ken Mebert, Bill Sands, and Chris Burger checked it out and noticed other places where the first floor hallway tile was failing along other expansion joints. So Session received an estimate from Endwell Rug to lay down new flooring and include expansion joints in the floor as well so if the earth shifts again, the tile won't crack.



Spring Yard Clean-Up

A team of people helped in June to clean up our outdoor spaces in preparation for hosting the Presbytery assembly meeting. Many people came over two weeks to help out. Ken Mebert, Andy Chadwick, Chris Burger, and Doug Hill helped to patch potholes in the parking lot. Sally Hunt and her granddaughter Hannah, Sherry Conklin, Suzie Raboy, and Andy Chadwick all helped to trim bushes, pull up weeds, remove the giant grapevine on the exit driveway fence, and remove fallen debris from the winter. The grounds looked great! Thank you to all who helped out.

PROPERTY TEAM MEMBERS: Ken Mebert, Chris Burger, Pastor Becky Kindig. Consultant: Bill Sands.

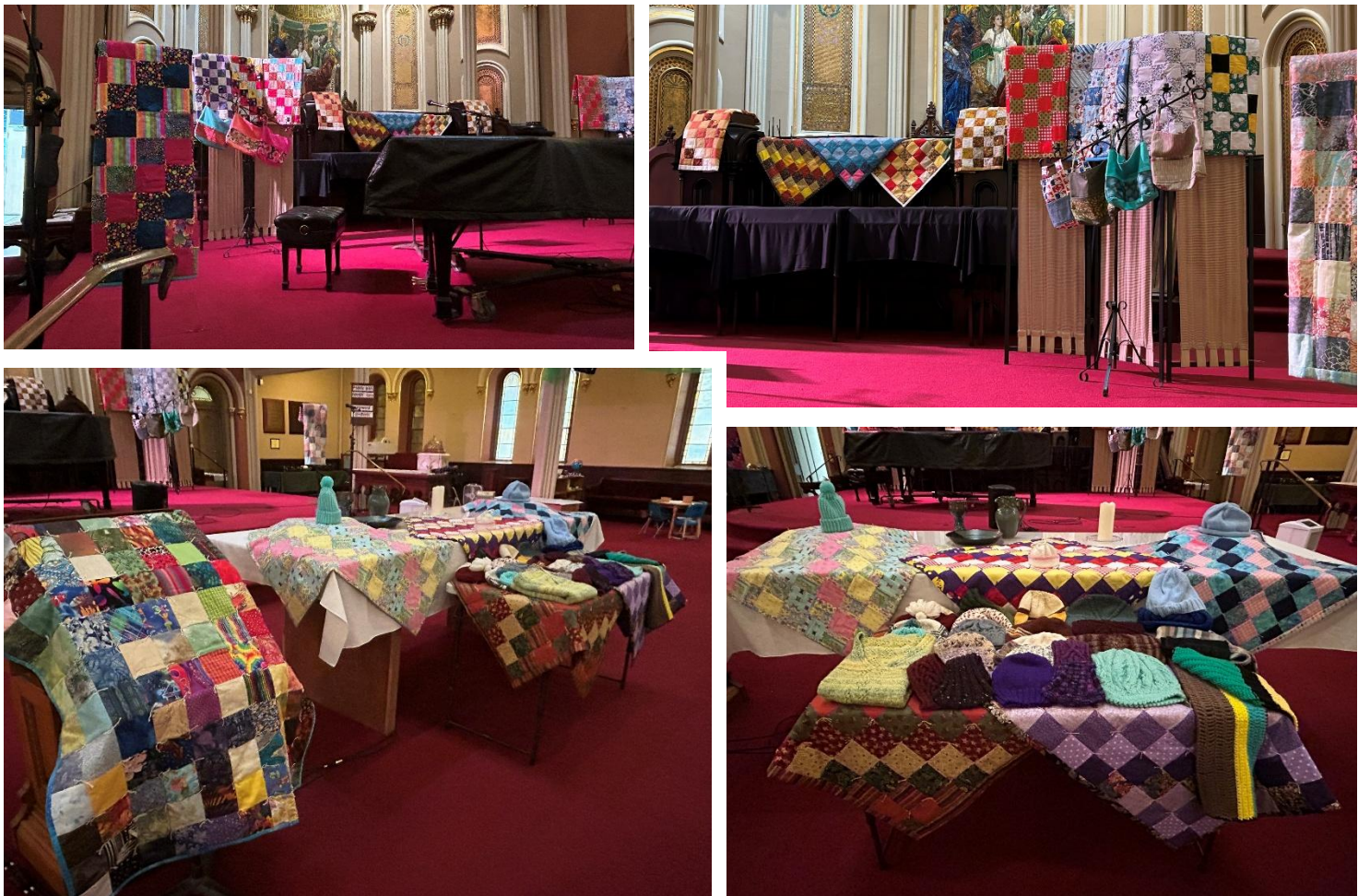
Sewing Group

During the annual reporting period of June 2024 to May 2025, members of the UPC Wednesday Sewing Group continued to meet weekly, even during the summer months when many groups are on hiatus. Major activities continue to be designing and sewing quilts and “carry bags” for use on walkers.

In 2024, the group distributed quilts, walker bags, hats, scarves, and mittens to area community groups, focusing donations on three local organizations: the YWCA of Binghamton, UHS Neonatal Unit, and NoMa (“North of Main”). NoMa is a partnership of local residents, small business owners, community organizations, and local leaders invested in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life on the west side of Binghamton between Front, Jarvis, and Main Streets.

Throughout the year, quilts were given to new babies, Camp Sunshine in the state of Maine (a retreat center for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families), and members of the congregation and friends of the church who were in need of a quilt for emotional warmth.

The Sewing Group’s mission hasn’t changed in the more than half-century that the group has been active: to help others by providing items of comfort throughout Greater Binghamton and beyond. Members worked on projects at home and met every Wednesday in person at the church or via Zoom to keep in touch with each other and provide updates on current happenings within the church family. Even when some of our sewing group members relocated during the winter months or moved, they stayed in close contact with the Binghamton group via Zoom.



The Sewing Group’s many creations were displayed in the sanctuary and blessed during worship in November.

JUNE 2024 – MAY 2025 ACTIVITIES:

- Members worked at home or met in person at the church, creating dozens of quilts and walker “carry bags”.
- Items were displayed in the sanctuary and blessed on November 24, 2024, during the Sunday worship service.
- In December 2024, quilts, walker “carry bags,” scarves, hats, and other items were distributed to the YWCA, UHS Neonatal Unit, and NoMa (North of Main).
- Quilts were provided to Camp Sunshine in the State of Maine, delivered by Chris and Cindy Burger.
- Participated in the 2025 Lenten “Arts for the Heart” series, providing a presentation on Sewing Group activities and fiber art demonstrations (crocheting and knitting).
- Hats and scarves were provided to our UPC guests at the Food Pantry.
- Numerous donations of fabric, yarn, knitting needles, and other supplies were sorted and organized for future use; items not suitable for the Sewing Group were recycled or offered to church family and friends.
- The group welcomed new members Betsy Perry, Marion Dice, and Anntanette.

FUTURE PLANS: The group will continue its mission of crafting comforting and functional items for those throughout the community, in addition to accepting and sorting fabric and yarn donations. Gratitude from recipients continues to be strong as witnessed by the thank you notes received. The group is always seeking new members, regardless of prior experience or skill level. For more information, please contact the church office or one of the group’s members.

SEWING GROUP MEMBERS: Anntanette, Cindy Burger, Cindy Chadwick, Ann Cobb, Marion Dice, Ellen Hancock-Berti, Jean Hill, Betsy Perry, Nancy Walter; Pastor Kimberly Chastain and Pastor Becky Kindig. We are joined most weeks by Alan, a friend of the church who participates via Zoom.



Like all the members of our Sewing Group, (clockwise from top left) Jean Hill, Marion Dice, Cindy Chadwick, and Betsy Perry share their talents and their love with those in need of both comfort and hope.

Worship & Music Team

TEAM PURPOSE: To oversee and coordinate all aspects of United Presbyterian Church's worship services. We try to include as many people as possible from our congregation in our worship services through musical offerings, as liturgists, and as participants in the services.

Our congregation has worshiped both in-person and online throughout this year. We still have a healthy online presence, so we have continued to offer this important avenue for people to connect by joining us in our Zoom room or on our YouTube channel. This past year UPC has furthered our social time together with our after-service Coffee Hour, which also included a "Birthday Sunday" once a month, celebrating all of that month's birthdays in our congregation.

WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS OF JUNE 2024 – MAY 2025:

Summer 2024: On several Sundays, we heard from some of the people we have partnered with or supported as part of our mission work: VINES, the "Walk With Me" program, and the UP-Center.

- **August 11th:** Dr. Rose Niles from the Presbyterian Foundation was here to preach, helping us continue our work with Project Regeneration, and envisioning the future of our church.

September through November, 2024: Pastor Kimberly began a sermon series on "Repentance and Repair," followed by a series on "Forgiveness." Both series were helpful and well-received.

- **October 20th:** We heard a very informative update from Dave Ruston and Gail Kocourek of the Tucson Samaritans about the work they are doing there, and the current situation there, politically.



Gail Kocourek and Dave Ruston reflected on Gail's work with Salvavision and the Tucson Samaritans. We showed photos on the big screen in the sanctuary and next to the video feed on our live stream; this one shows workers cutting through the border wall to provide emergency first aid to a migrant on the other side of the wall who had broken his leg.



- **November 3rd:** We celebrated the Feast of all Saints. We continued our tradition of remembering those who had died this year, and in the past, with flowers for a big bouquet in the front of the sanctuary.

Advent 2024: We used a curriculum from A Sanctified Art called "Words for the Beginning." This theme incorporated a quilt theme, which involved the congregation in an after-worship activity making banners with quilt-like pieces that beautified the sanctuary during Advent. Throughout Advent/Christmas, we focused on the Gospel according to Luke.

- **Dec. 22nd:** We had our "Come-As-You-Are Christmas" Pageant, a no-rehearsal Christmas pageant, which involved all ages of the congregation in a fun adaptation of the Christmas story.
- **December 24th, Christmas Eve:** We had a 4:00 pm service, which was a beautiful, traditional one of lessons and carols. The lovely musical offerings were given by The United Bell Ringers, The UPC Choir,

and Margaret Davis (violin), Riya Bolander (vocals), Phil Westcott (vocals & guitar), and Becky Mebert (organ).

Epiphany through Eastertide, 2025: We continued with our exploration of the Gospel according to Luke; then to be followed by the Acts of the Apostles.

- ***February 14th, Ash Wednesday:*** Early in the day (10:00–noon), the pastors offered “Ashes To Go” at the university. Then in the sanctuary, at 12:30 and 6:00 pm, we had deeply reflective services, involving six interactive stations to guide us to understand different meanings of ashes in the life of faith: Loss, Mortality, Emptiness, Weakness, Repentance, and Purification.

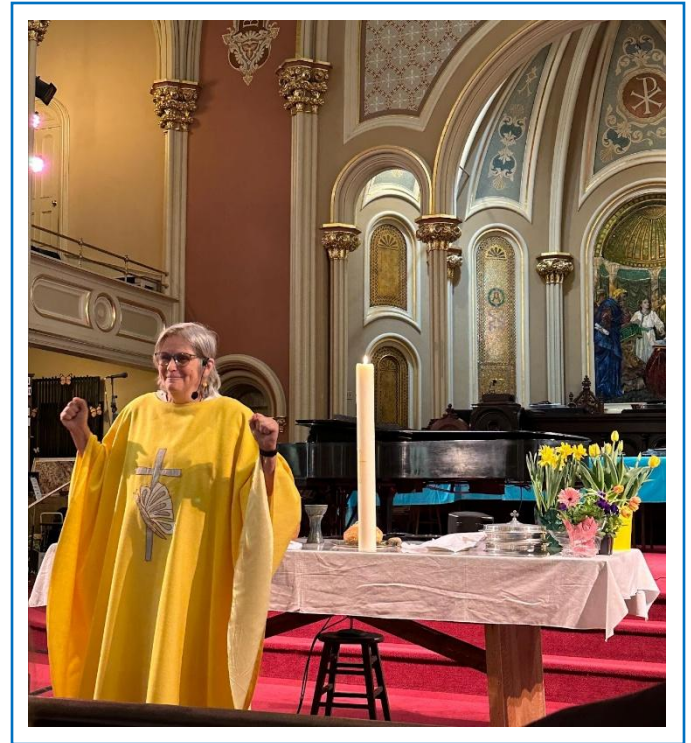


- ***During Lent:*** After a shared soup-and-bread meal, we had a wonderful series on “Art for The Heart” where we worked with pottery, watercolors, fiber arts, wax egg decoration, and drumming.
- ***March 2nd, Transfiguration of the Lord:*** “The Angels of Praise” dance team, from the House of Worship on Riverside Drive, presented their interpretation of the song “Stand Up” from the movie “Harriet”.
- ***April 13th, Palm/Passion Sunday:*** We celebrated the Palm Sunday half of the service with our yearly palm parade, and observed the Holy Week Passion for the latter half of the service. Our congregation offered hats, gloves, and socks for our Community Pantry to commemorate Jesus’s entry into Jerusalem (in lieu of cloaks strewn along Jesus’s path). After the service, the children decorated Easter eggs for our Community Meal.





- **April 17th, Maundy Thursday:** We gathered in the upper lounge for a service, which included a potluck, communion, and reflective music offered by Margaret Davis, violin; Lana Ogden, recorder; and Becky Mebert, piano. We reflected on the “Witnesses to the Cross” through a series of questions that engaged us, as we broke up into pairs to discuss these. In these challenging times, it was a safe place to discuss our feelings.



- **April 20th, Easter:** We had a joyous service together, hearing and affirming the resurrection message, with communion, wonderful music from the UPC Choir, the United Ringers handbell choir, and accompaniment with organ and piano (Becky Mebert) trumpet (Sara Lieberman), trombone (Nate Raboy), flute (Aimée Backus) and two saxophones (Austin Shadduck and Phil Westcott). The children exited at the end of the service to enjoy their annual Easter Egg hunt out on the front lawn.
- **April 25th:** We heard from Dr. Liz Theoharis and Noam Sandweiss-Back, from The Poor People’s Campaign, about their book, “You Only Get What You’re Organized To Take”.
- **May 11th, Good Shepherd Sunday:** This was a creative service, enjoyed particularly by the young members (and “the young at heart”) of our congregation. This service was the culmination of a period of Bible memorization, and included games, prizes, celebration, and over 100 little sheep pieces on the communion table (a sheep was earned for each Bible verse learned).

Thank you from the Worship & Music Team to the following:

- Pastor Kimberly and Pastor Becky, for your guidance in our worship throughout the year!
- UPC’s technicians for 2024–25: Scott Kindig, Ken Mebert, Sara Lieberman, Chris Burger, Andy Chadwick, Emily Hugenbruch, Matt Johnson, and Shawn Landon, with extra help from Jackie Westcott, Phil Westcott, and Lou McKeage. Worship services would not have been the quality they were without their skills and their ability!
- Aimée Backus (Music Coordinator, Choir Director, flutist), Austin Shadduck (Bell Choir Director, saxophone, shakuhachi flute, and vocals), and Becky Mebert (accompanist on piano and organ), and all of the musicians listed below!

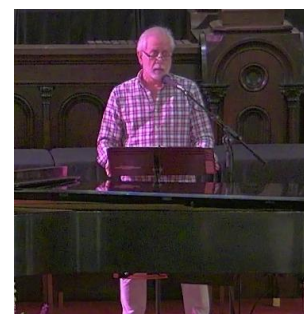
Musicians for worship services: We are blessed to have the talented and dedicated UPC Choir under the leadership of Music Coordinator Aimée Backus, supported by accompanist Becky Mebert and section leaders Riya Bolander (soprano, who with us until October 2024 and returned to fill in on Christmas Eve), Andrea Gilebart (soprano), Robert Manners (baritone), Starletta Noll-Long (alto), and Austin Shadduck (tenor).

In addition to the section leaders, UPC choir members have included: David Berti, Rev. Kimberly Chastain, Cathy Ciganek, Sally Hunt, Rev. Becky Kindig, Scott Kindig, Sharon Landon, Sara Lieberman, Ken Mebert, Lana Ogden, Judy Westcott, and Phil Westcott.

The United Ringers handbell choir continues to flourish under the direction of Austin Shadduck. In 2024–25, we had participation from: Andy Chadwick, Cathy Ciganek, Sally Hunt, Rev. Becky Kindig, Scott Kindig, Sharon Landon, Sara Lieberman, Ellis Nyamuame, Ethan Nyamuame, Starletta Noll-Long, Alex Westcott, Judy Westcott, Jackie Westcott, Phil Westcott, and Arianna Windsong.

And our congregational singing has been enhanced throughout the year by many talented people from our congregation and community. Among them have been:

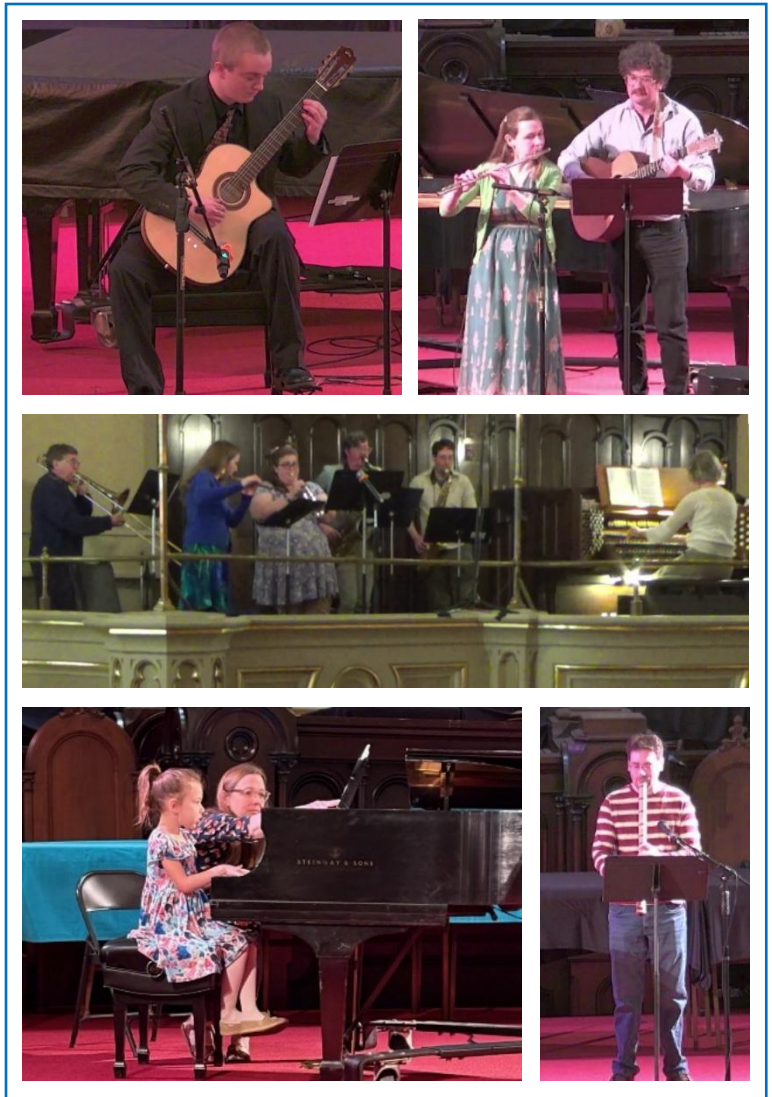
- Musical offerings by children in our congregation (participation with handchimes, drums, and hand-held percussion instruments).
- Special vocal contributions from all of our section leaders (listed above), along with David Berti, Ken Mebert, Victoria Barics, Aimée and Ernest Backus, Phil Westcott, Rev. Kimberly Chastain, and Valerie Lasser.
- Instrumental solos, ensembles, or accompaniment including Nate Knipscher (guitar), Rev. Kimberly Chastain (guitar), Phil Westcott (guitar,



saxophone), Margaret Davis (violin), Lana Ogden (recorder), Peggy Snizek (bass recorder), Austin Shadduck (shakuhachi, saxophone), Aoife Backus (piano), Sara Lieberman (trumpet), Elikem Nyamuame (drums), Nathan Raboy (trombone), Alex Westcott (drums), and Ariana Windsong (flute).

- The Angels of Praise dance team
- We also welcomed substitute accompanists on several occasions when Becky Mebert was away: Andy Chadwick (organ & piano), Sean Stafford (piano), Nate Knipscher (guitar), Ernest Backus (piano), and Phil Westcott (guitar).

WORSHIP & MUSIC TEAM MEMBERS: Andy Chadwick, Margaret Davis, Scott Kindig, Music Coordinator Aimée Backus, Becky Mebert, Pastors Kimberly Chastain and Becky Kindig, Suzie Northrop Raboy, chair.



The Big Ask

Do you believe that God is calling us into the future? What do you think that future will look like?

Our nation and our world have been rocked by changes this year, and some of them are pointing the way to a future that seems stark and frightening. We have always understood our work to be lighting a way for dark times, offering resources and hope to people who are in need of hope. The leadership of our congregation believes that this work we do is important, and never more so than in a world where fear seems to be overcoming sense.

This year, as we are crafting a response to the changes we see all around us, we are asking for a concrete sign that you believe in the future. We need to know that you believe in the work and the mission enough to offer regular support—we need for you to pledge to the future. Not because our financial situation is desperate, but because we need to know that there is congregational buy-in — literally — for the work that is ours to do.

As we have been seeking creative ways to fund the work, developing partnerships and applying for grants, we have learned that a first question is “How many people support your work?” Not “How much money does each one give?” but “How many believe enough to give something?” Even a small commitment on your part — a dollar each week or five dollars per month — would give us the signal that you want to see our work continue.

We are thinking about the future, and we hope that you are thinking with us. We believe that God has called us into this time and this place together, and we are seeking God’s guidance about how we will respond to that call. It is a Presbyterian belief that God’s call comes to both individuals and to communities of faith, and each year we ask the congregation to affirm God’s call to the pastors. This year, we would like to ask individuals to affirm God’s call to our church. As the session and the leadership of the church are crafting a new vision for what lies ahead, are you willing to say “yes” to God’s calling?

Are you willing to step out in faith and support our journey to the future?



We are a place where everyone is welcome as we support one another to act justly, practice kindness, and walk humbly with God.

