

Announcements

October 5, 2025

THIS WEEK AT UPC:

[10/5] Coffee hour, 11:15am in the Sanctuary

United Ringers handbell choir, 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. No previous experience needed. If you can count to 4, you can learn to play!

[10/6] **Bible Study, Mondays, 1–2pm on Zoom.** 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. Right now we're reading the Gospel according to Luke, talking about what it meant for early Christians and what it might mean for us today.

To join UPC's "Zoom Room"
online: upcbgm.org/zoom

To dial as a phone call:

(+1) 646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 865 274 8433

[10/7] **Community Meal, Tuesdays, 5–6pm.** Every week we offer a sit-down meal that is free for anybody. Volunteers are needed; if you'd like to help with this mission, contact Community Kitchen Coordinator Sherry Conklin: meal@upcbgm.org or 607-722-4219.

[10/8] **Sewing Group, Wednesdays, 10am–1pm in the Upper Lounge.** The Sewing Group meets at the church each week to craft quilts, mittens, hats, scarves, pillows, and more. At noon, those who can't come in person are invited to "Zoom in" for their lunchtime social hour. All are welcome; bring a lunch and enjoy the company.

Community Food & Hygiene Pantry, Wednesdays, 12–5pm. Volunteers help staff the pantry, and donations of non-perishable food and personal care items are always welcome. Contact Sherry to help or donate: meal@upcbgm.org or 607-722-4219.

UPC Choir rehearsal, 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!

[10/10] **Zoom Happy hour, Fridays, 5–6:30pm.** Bring your own beverage and join the fun as we catch up on the events of the week and share how we're doing.

LOOKING AHEAD:

[10/12] **Worship, 10am** — Farewell and Godspeed to the Meberts

[10/18] **Corn Maze, 2:30pm at Apple Hills, 131 Brooks Rd., Binghamton.** (see back page)

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 200 meals each week. Volunteers are needed during the day on Monday and Tuesday to help with food preparation, 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: 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 provide support and ideas 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. 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.

We 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.



Our ministry teams are always welcoming new team members. If you'd like to help with or learn 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**, Lou McKeage lmckeage@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; **Worship & Music**, Margaret Davis mdavis.margaret@gmail.com.

Practical Resources for Churches (prcli.org) offers resources on a variety of topics including caring ministries, spiritual practices, small church life, social justice, and environmental stewardship. Check out all they have to offer and take advantage of the abundance of programs and information. Webinars are recorded and can be watched later. Upcoming topics include:



- **Online Presence in 2025 and Beyond** — *Thursday, October 9, 7–8pm*: The digital landscape is changing quickly, but building an effective online presence doesn't have to require a big budget or a tech team. This webinar explores practical, realistic steps small and mid-sized churches can take to reach their communities using websites, social media, and other digital tools. You'll learn strategies to strengthen your church's visibility, connect with people where they are, and support your ministry's mission in a rapidly evolving online world. upcbgm.org/prc100925
- **Resisting Erasure and Isolation as a Pathway to Belonging** — *Thursday, October 23, 2–3pm*: Belonging is not a luxury — it is a matter of life and death. Explore why belonging matters and how churches can counter erasure and isolation by fostering authentic community through singing, language, visual art, and imagination, thus cultivating deeper connection, inclusion, and purpose. upcbgm.org/prc102325
- **Practical AI for Churches** — *Tues. Oct. 28, 2–3pm*: AI may sound complicated, but it doesn't have to be. Explore simple, hands-on ways small and mid-sized churches can use AI to lighten the load of ministry — without big budgets or technical. Discover practical tools that make ministry more effective and sustainable, from supporting volunteers to strengthening outreach. upcbgm.org/prc102825

Other resources from PRC include:

- **Hands to Work, Heart to God online craft group** — *3rd Thursday of the month (next meeting Oct. 16), 7–8pm*: Join us on Zoom as we share our love of crafting and desire to connect with God online. Contact Karen Smith, karen@prcli.org, 631-821-2255.
- **Online book club** — *2nd Saturday, every other month (next meeting Nov. 8), 11am*: The next book is *The Fifth Mountain* by Paulo Coelho. In the ninth century BC, the Phoenician princess Jezebel orders the execution of all the prophets who refuse to worship the pagan god Baal. Commanded by an angel of God to flee Israel, Elijah seeks safety in the land of Zarephath, where he unexpectedly finds true love with a young widow. But this newfound rapture is to be cut short, and Elijah sees all of his hopes and dreams irrevocably erased as he is swept into a whirlwind of events that threatens his very existence. Contact Karen Smith, karen@prcli.org, 631-821-2255.
- **What's Next**: A sharing of timely resources and upcoming webinars. The most recent (9/24/2025) letter is at conta.cc/427QsJl
- **Cultivate: Growing in Faith**: Christian ed and faith formation resources, ideas, and anecdotes for all ages of adults and children. October's letter: bit.ly/476NirV

Connection to Transformation: Building a

Saturday, October 25, 9am – 5pm at Ithaca First

The Synod of the Northeast, in collaboration with the New York State Council of Churches, is pleased to invite you to this one-day, ecumenical and interfaith conference designed to inspire and equip faith leaders for transformational collaboration.

This regional gathering will bring together pastors, lay leaders, organizers, and community advocates from Central and Western New York to explore how deeper connection and mutuality can empower faith communities to address complex challenges and foster community well-being.

Through strategic dialogue, storytelling, social advocacy, interactive workshops, and keynote conversations, participants will reflect on how innovative partnerships can be a powerful tool for justice, vitality, and faithful public witness.

Conference Themes and Goals:

- To showcase how faith-based and interfaith partnerships can drive meaningful community transformation.
- To explore strategies for engaging community organizations and creatively repurposing shared spaces.
- To provide practical guidance on securing public grant funding to sustain collaborative efforts.
- To share approaches for building partnerships with local government, civic groups, and interfaith networks.
- To equip leaders to access state-funded resources and navigate relevant public policies.
- To highlight advocacy for rural and migrant ministries.
- To offer actionable strategies for delivering community-centered services that promote justice and equity.

Pastors and congregational leadership are encouraged to join us for this important event. Your presence and perspective will help shape the conversation and strengthen the network of leaders committed to faithful, justice-rooted transformation.

The registration fee is \$55, which includes all conference materials and lunch.

Register at the Synod of the Northeast website at synodne.org.

Partnership Culture in Faith Communities

Presbyterian Church, 315 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca, NY 14850

Conference Schedule:

9:30 Plenary Session I: Public Ministry — Dr. Kathrine Threadgill, *Columbia Seminary*

10:45 Plenary II: Fiscal Policy — Ron Deutsch, *New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness*

11:45 Workshops

- **Immigration: What You Should Know About Legal Advocacy** — Juana Cortes de Torres
- **Grant Writing** — Eileen Linder
- **Social Justice for Churches and Mid-Level Judicatories** — Peter Cook, *Executive Director, NY State Council of Churches*, and Rashida Tyler, *Deputy Executive Director, NY State Council of Churches*
- **Building Connections with Community Partners** — Larry Beasley, *Presbytery Leader and Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Utica*

12:45 Lunch & Table Conversations

1:30 Prayer for Peace — Rev. Dr. Greg Garis, *Lead Presbyter for Transformation, Presbyteries of Susquehanna Valley and Cayuga Syracuse*

1:45 Plenary III: Community Redevelopment — Henry-Louis Taylor, Jr., *Professor of Urban & Regional Planning, University of Buffalo, and Founding Director of the UB Center for Urban Studies*

2:45 Afternoon Workshops

- **Rural & Migrant Ministry** — Rev. Richard Witt, *Executive Director of Rural and Migrant Ministry, Inc.*
- **Community Mapping** — Rev. Dr. Rose Niles, *Presbyterian Foundation*
- **Rural Housing** — Michael Borges, *Executive Director of Rural Housing Coalition*

3:45 Break

4:00 Plenary IV: TBA

5:00 Closing Remarks — Rev. Dr. SanDawna Gaulman Ashley, *Transitional Synod Leader, Synod of the Northeast*

What's Happening Around the Synod of the Northeast

The Synod's September 2025 newsletter is full of compelling information. Read it at upcbgm.org/SNEwh2509. Highlights:



- Transitional Synod Leader Rev. SanDawna Ashley's message: "Say Amen, Somebody!"
- **Matthew 25 in Action:** "We Will Keep Showing Up", Coastlands Presbytery stands with families at Delaney Hall, ICE detention facility in Newark
- **Summary of the September Synod Mission & Ministries Commission Meeting**
- **Discernment Team's final vision report to be released on October 15**
- **New York State Advocacy Day & Connection to Transformation Conference, October 24–25 at Ithaca FPC**
- **A Statement on the National Moment** from the Albany Presbytery
- Upcoming events, resources, grants, and job postings around the Synod

Understanding Hunger (a.k.a. "Hunger 101") — *Tues. Oct. 21, 1–2:30pm*
at Koffman Southern Tier Incubator, 120 Hawley St.



Join us for Understanding Hunger (formerly Hunger 101) — the Food Bank of the Southern Tier's food insecurity simulation! Participants will leave with a better understanding of both what it's like to experience food insecurity, and what anti-hunger organizations throughout the community are doing to address hunger.

Please note: Because this training simulates what real-life hunger is like, it may be triggering for those who have experienced food insecurity personally. This training is best suited to those who have not personally experienced food insecurity, but all are welcome.

Register at bit.ly/4nU4qHg. Registration will be capped at 35 participants.

Polity "Back to the Basics": Investing in Ruling Elders and Deacons

Thursday, October 23, 7–8:30pm

a webinar from the PC(USA) Office of Leader Formation

Focused specifically on the continued formation of deacons and ruling elders, this webinar will provide an overview of how the PC(USA) is structured, the who, when, and how of decision-making, and the role of membership and ordination in the life of the church. The discussion will center on the polity framework that supports the work of councils within the broader community of faith, as well as the foundational theological convictions that underpin the polity.

Registration closes on October 15, 2025. Registration and more information available at bit.ly/4gG2JKS.



Book Study: “The Bible from Scratch: The New Testament for Beginners”

Mondays, 1–2pm via Zoom led by Pastors Bruce & Carolyn Gillette, Owego Presbyterian

The Bible from Scratch: The New Testament for Beginners is an accessible and easy-to-understand overview of the Bible for adults who have, or think they have, little or no Bible knowledge. It is also an overview in which long-time Bible study participants will gain new insights into the most important, bestselling book of all time.

This 7-week class presents basic themes, histories, personalities, and meanings of the New Testament in order to help our literacy of the Bible and encourage faithful discipleship. Beyond head knowledge, this class will encourage praying the scriptures that nurture one’s spirituality. You can get the book at a 50% discount on Amazon.

Well-known Presbyterian educator and author Don Griggs has written this wonderful introduction to the Bible. Griggs guides us through the New Testament and introduces basic tools and skills for Bible study. The first half of the book gives an overview of the New Testament while the second half provides questions for study. Questions, email pastorbrucegillette@gmail.com.

Zoom Meeting ID: 867 2171 7382 Passcode: FPUC Meeting link: bit.ly/46R1xB7

Sunday, November 2 — The Feast of All Saints: The Bouquet of Remembrance



One of our cherished traditions at United Pres is the Bouquet of Remembrance, which we will build together to remember and honor the cloud of witnesses that surround us in the communion of saints. We will place a flower and read the name of each member of our faith community who has died in the past year, and their photos will be projected on the screen and shown on the livestream. If someone you love has died since

November 2024, please send their name and photo to the church office by October 24.

If there is someone from years past that you would like to remember, please send us the name and photo (if possible) of the person you are remembering. During the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, you will have the opportunity to speak their name and place a flower in the bouquet for them, and we will have a slide show featuring our communion of saints. The Bouquet of Remembrance will be the centerpiece of the table on which the elements are consecrated. Everyone is invited to bring flowers to place in the bouquet when we gather at the table for communion. Extra flowers will be available if you are unable to bring your own.

To assist us in making this remembrance, please send the names of all of those you would like to remember to the church office by **Friday, October 24**. If you need help sending a photo, please contact the church office and let us know.

Corn Maze Fun! Saturday, October 18, 2:30pm at Apple Hills, 131 Brooks Rd., Binghamton

All ages are invited to join us at Apple Hills to go through their Corn Maze. Come enjoy some outdoor fall activities as a group.

Prices are:

12 yrs and up \$10

5–11 yrs \$5

4 and younger are free

There are also wagon rides, a food stand, and U-Pick apples for additional costs.

There is a discount if we have a group of 20 or more, so let us know if you would like to come since we have to set that up ahead of time.

Apple Hills is located at 131 Brooks Road, Binghamton, NY 13905.

More information about the activities at Apple Hills can be found on their website

applehills.com/farm-fun and Facebook [facebook.com/HowDoYouLikeThemAppleHills](https://www.facebook.com/HowDoYouLikeThemAppleHills).

