

Announcements

January 4, 2026

THIS WEEK AT UPC:

[1/4] 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!

[1/5] 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 Acts of the Apostles, 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

[1/6] 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.

[1/7] 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 invited; bring a lunch and enjoy the company.

Community Food & Hygiene Pantry, Wednesdays, 12–5pm. Volunteers help staff the pantry on Wednesdays, and help is also needed when we get deliveries on Thursday & Friday mornings. Contact Sherry to help: 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!

[1/9] 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:

[1/11] Worship, 10am: Matthew 1:1–11, Baptism of the Lord

[1/12] Session meeting, 6:30pm

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 on Wednesdays, and help is also needed when we get deliveries on Thursday & Friday mornings. Donations of nonperishable 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 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. 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.

What's Happening Around the Synod of the Northeast

The Synod's December 2025 newsletter is full of compelling information. Read it at upcbgm.org/SNEwh2512. Highlights:

- **Transitional Synod Leader Rev. SanDawna Ashley's message: "Step Softly into the New Year"**
- **Best Wishes to Rev. Nancy Talbot:** The Rev. Nancy Talbot concluded her service as Stated Clerk of the Synod on December 17, following twelve years of service. Rev. T.J. DeMarco, pastor of Providence Presbyterian (R.I.) and Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Northern New England, will serve as Temporary Stated Clerk starting January 5.
- **Matthew 25 in Action:** "Responding to Gun Violence with Prayer, Presence, and Practical Tools"
- **Cohort Goals for Church Leaders Engaging in Community Organizing**
- **Church Treasurer Training Webinar — Thursday, January 27, 6:45pm:** Designed for church treasurers and financial leaders seeking practical guidance, clarity, and confidence in managing congregational finances, this session will provide hands-on instruction and dedicated time for questions and discussion.
- Upcoming events, resources, grants, and job postings around the Synod



SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Meet and welcome Rev. Mary Anderson, Assistant to the Lead Presbyter

Greetings! I've been serving as an ordained pastor since 2003, and my pastoral journey began alongside my husband, Garrett, when we served together as co-pastors at Brick Presbyterian Church in Perry, New York. Since 2011, I've been a member of the Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery, and one of my most formative calls was as pastor of Weedsport Presbyterian Church, where I served until 2020.

I live in Liverpool with Garrett and our son, Sam, who's a music education major at Syracuse University. Outside of ministry, I find deep joy and renewal in the outdoors. Hiking, kayaking, birdwatching, and gardening are among my favorite pastimes. Along with my pastoral education, I also received training in Spiritual Direction and Retreat Leadership during seminary through the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Center for Spirituality. My M.Div. included a concentration in Spiritual Direction, which reflects my deep desire to walk alongside others as they listen for where God is moving in their lives.

I am excited to begin my new role as Assistant to the Lead Presbyter for Transformation. I look forward to collaborating with Greg and working alongside the churches and work groups within our Presbyteries as we seek faithful and imaginative ways forward together.

I welcome your prayers as I learn, grow, and step into this new season of ministry.

Practical Resources for Churches (precli.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:



- **Cross-Cultural Ministries** — *Tue., Jan. 20, 7–8pm*: Beginning a ministry with people who do not speak the same language as you and have vastly different cultural roots can be intimidating and feel impossible, but God can do the impossible! Hear stories of Spanish-speaking, Korean, and Ukrainian church plants. Let's explore what you see in your own neighborhood and what God might be stirring in your heart. This seminar includes different models to explore best practices. upcbgm.org/prc012026
- **Resisting Erasure and Isolation as Pathway to Belonging** — *Thursday, January 29, 2–3pm*: Belonging is not a luxury — it is a matter of life and death. Learn how faith communities can counter erasure and isolation by fostering community through singing, language, visual art, and imagination. Explore why belonging matters and how we can cultivate connection, inclusion, and purpose. upcbgm.org/prc012926

Other resources from PRC include:

- **What's Next**: A sharing of timely resources and upcoming webinars. The most recent (12/30/2025) letter is at conta.cc/4qqYIO1 (12/30/25)
- **Cultivate: Growing in Faith**: Christian ed and faith formation resources, ideas, and anecdotes for all ages of adults and children. January's letter: bit.ly/4py2nck

*More news from around the presbytery and across the denomination
can be found at susvalpresby.org/thursday-thoughts*