

# The Chimes- March 2021



## Theology Out Loud: Responding in Real Time



*The following article is co-authored by Rev. Jarrett McLaughlin and two other theologically trained friends in the UPC family of faith. The first is Rev. Molly Morgan who started attending UPC with her husband in 2019. The second is Don Boulton who answered his Christian calling by serving as Dean of Students across the street at UNC across three different decades. The ideas contained herein are the product of an admittedly nerdy theology talk they shared one Friday afternoon in late January. Proceed at your own risk.*

It all started when the name “Pelagius” appeared in the title of a *New York Times* article. It’s not every day that you see a church history deep-cut like that in modern print media. The article was published in the immediate aftermath of the January 6th insurrection. When Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri signaled his support for the insurgents, both liberal and conservative news outlets alike did a little digging on the 41-year-old politician. What emerged was a commencement address he delivered to the graduating class of the King’s College in New York City in 2019. If this example of “doing theology out loud” is a window into the young senator’s mind, Hawley believes that much of our society’s ills can be traced to a lingering attachment to Pelagianism.

First things first - who is Pelagius?

These days, the name is more often invoked in the form of a faux-insult (“You Semi-Pelagian”) hurled in seminary classrooms towards those voicing anything remotely close to works-righteousness. In a Reformed seminary, any inkling that we are capable of willing what’s good is quickly swatted down, but to be fair, Pelagius lived more than a thousand years before Reformers like John Calvin or Martin Luther were in diapers, so perhaps we should situate Pelagius in his proper context.

To read the full article, [click here](#).

## Our Church Family

### We grieve with

The family of UPC member Pat McDonald, upon her death.  
 Joe Buckner, upon the death of his mother.  
 Marla Dunham, upon the death of her cousin.  
 John D. Wilson, upon the death of his brother.

### We pray for

Eleanor Huske Alexander, Sandy's mother, in hospice care.  
 Alan Swendiman, recovering from surgery.  
 Elinor Basnight, upon her move to assisted living.  
 Dianne Frazier, battling cancer.

### We celebrate with

John Wilson, for being named Chair of the NC Land and Water Fund.



## Ash Wednesday 2021

The weather was nice and clear for our drive-thru Ash Wednesday observance. While it was a different way to observe the day, it was still just as meaningful. Thank you to all who drove, walked, or biked through our parking lot to receive ashes and mark the beginning of Lent.

*Photo credit: Joey Fala and Tracy Lovelady*





## Observing Lent at UPC



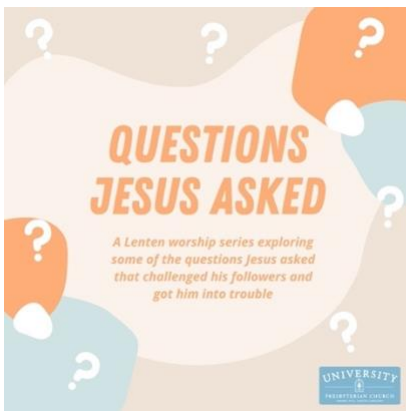
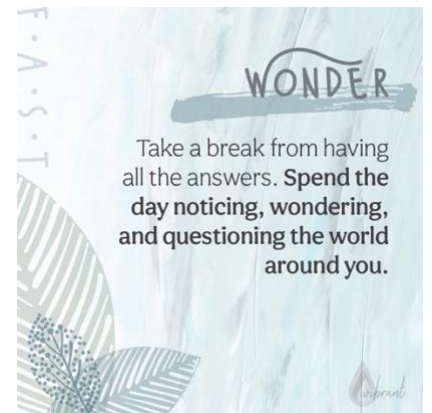
### UPC Walk to Jerusalem

We are "walking to Jerusalem" during Lent this year! We're tracking the time we spend doing physical, spiritual, and volunteer activities (20 minutes = 1 mile) and adding it to our congregational mileage, hoping to reach 6112 by Easter. If you haven't signed up to participate, it's not too late! Visit [upcch.org/walk](http://upcch.org/walk) to sign up and check our progress.

Do you have pictures or stories to share about this emphasis? We'd love to see and celebrate and share them with the congregation. Email Erin ([communications@upcch.org](mailto:communications@upcch.org)) to share!

### PYC Lenten Micropractices

You're invited to join PYC as they explore different micropractices every day during Lent. What's a micropractice you ask? A micropractice is a small spiritual practice. Instead of engaging the same spiritual practice throughout Lent, the micropractices are meant to give a sample across many different styles of practices. Some are active; some are reflective. They will make you think, take action, connect with God and others, and live into your Christian life. Follow the PYC Instagram ([@upcpyc](https://www.instagram.com/upcpyc)) to join in.



### Sermon Series: Questions Jesus Asked

During worship and our small group ministry during this holy Lenten season, UPC will be considering some of the questions that Jesus asks. In the Gospels, Jesus asks many more questions than he answers. To be precise, Jesus asks 307 questions (and only answers 3!). Questions are central to Jesus' teaching. Perhaps we would have preferred something easier, because questions are an invitation into further reflection; they are not opportunities for direct answers. Questions ask the listener to participate in the process of understanding. Information is not the goal; transformation is. *Do you want to be made well? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? Why have you forsaken me?* These are some of the questions that we will consider as we walk the way to Jerusalem this Lent. Join us on the journey.

## Holy Week and Easter Plans



### Holy Week Prayer Experience

During Holy Week, you are invited to help create a visual representation of our Walk to Jerusalem using purple fabric and our loom. We invite you to come by the front porch to tie fabric to the loom, filling in the road, and say a four-part prayer as you contemplate your own Lenten journey:

- Pray for the world.
- Pray for our front-line workers.
- Pray for those in need of healing.
- Pray for yourself as we draw near to Jerusalem.

The loom and fabric supplies will be available on the porch each day from 1pm - 8pm, Palm Sunday through Holy Saturday (March 28-April 3).

### Holy Week Worship Schedule

Virtual services for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday will be recorded and posted on Facebook, Vimeo, and our website. In addition to these virtual services, we will offer some socially distanced, in person opportunities:

On **Maundy Thursday (April 1)** we will host Drive-Thru Communion from 5:30-6:30pm.

On **Good Friday (April 2)** we will offer an intimate in person, outdoor, masked Tenebrae Service at 7:30pm. Along with members of the UPC choir, we will remember the story of Jesus's crucifixion. For more details and to sign up, visit [tinyurl.com/UPCGoodFriday](https://tinyurl.com/UPCGoodFriday).



### Easter Sunday (April 4)

In addition to a virtual service, we will offer brief, socially distanced Easter Sunday worship experiences on the front lawn. Social distancing and mask wearing will be required. To help us maintain our protocols, attendance will be limited, and sign-ups will be mandatory. For more details and to sign up, visit [upcch.org/easter](https://upcch.org/easter).

As you come to worship on Easter Sunday morning, you are also invited to bring cut flowers to add to the cross on the UPC front lawn as a reminder of the new life made known to us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Bring them from your yard, pick up your favorite Trader Joe's special, or stop at Harris Teeter on your way to church. Any flower or plants of beauty will do to help bring this cross to life! If you are unable to attend worship that morning, please bring your flowers in the afternoon and maintain all social distancing and masking protocols.

### Gifts of Beauty and Bounty

Although we will not be worshipping indoors for Easter, we still plan to continue our Easter tradition of decorating with lilies - this year, on the front porch. If you would like to honor or memorialize a loved one by giving an Easter Lily or donating to the Inter-Faith Council for Social Services (or both), please visit [upcch.org/easter-beauty-bounty](https://upcch.org/easter-beauty-bounty). A video listing all names honored and remembered will be posted on our website on Easter Sunday. The deadline for online gifts is March 29.



## Exciting Staff News!



### **Permanent Director of Music Ministry - Joey Fala**

Great news! After discernment and an official interview, the Search Committee has chosen Joey Fala as our next Director of Music Ministry, and Joey has accepted. We could not be more thrilled to no longer call Joey "Temporary!"

Originally from Honolulu, Hawaii, Joey most recently served as associate organist across the street at Chapel of the Cross and as organ scholar at "the other place" (Duke University Chapel). Joey is a graduate of the Yale School of Music where he received his MM in organ, studying with Martin Jean and Thomas Murray. He previously served as Director of Music at First United Presbyterian Church in downtown Troy, NY, through his undergraduate career at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute where he received a bachelor's degree in architecture and masters in lighting. Joey also serves as carillonneur at Duke University, performing the weekday 5:00 pm recitals. Joey and his wife Sarah, a Duke Divinity student, live in Chapel Hill.

### **New Director of Communications and Development - Erin Collier**

We are excited to welcome Erin Collier as our new Director of Communications and Development! Erin began her work with us on February 1, 2021. A native of Richmond, Virginia, she earned her bachelor's degree in English Literature from the University of Mary Washington and a Master of Divinity degree from Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. Erin is an ordained Baptist minister who has served in several congregations, most recently as an associate pastor at First Baptist Church of Lumberton, North Carolina. At UPC, she is thrilled to be serving in a new capacity through the ministry of communications and storytelling. Erin and her family look forward to relocating to the Chapel Hill/Durham area in the next few months.



## Children's Music - Now on Vimeo



Children of the church are invited to join us anytime it's convenient for our "Listen and Learn" video series. Each video is less than 10 minutes long and includes a conversation about the things that make music fun to listen to and an opportunity to sing along with some of our favorite children's anthems. Check your weekly "Children's and Youth Ministries" email for a new video link every week, or use this link to catch up anytime:

[vimeo.com/showcase/7995552](https://vimeo.com/showcase/7995552)



## Zooming into Choir

In a recent message to the choir, I recounted how we spent 2020 with the "let's just make it through Christmas!" mentality. While the past six months may not have brought us to where we hoped to be with the pandemic in the spring, we are now six months closer to whenever it is that we will be back together in-person. We, the choir and leaders in worship, are committed to using these months ahead of us to continue growing our skills and building community through finding creative ways of making, sharing, and being fed by music.

The choir has resumed meeting regularly again for rehearsals, but a typical Wednesday Zoom rehearsal may look a little different from what we're used to. We begin at 7pm with casual check-in time followed by an informal presentation on a church music-related topic. After some vocal warmups, we rehearse two to three pieces, learning parts individually by voice part first, then singing together along with a recording. As making ensemble music over Zoom is nothing like actually singing together, once a month we will meet in person for outdoor, distanced music-making in the parking garage. While unconventional and perhaps a little less glamorous than our sanctuary, this space with its generous acoustics is perfectly suited for choral music. We look forward to sharing some of the recordings we make in worship.

If you have ever wondered what being a part of the choir is like, now is your chance to "sit in" from the comfort of your own home. We would love to have you as a guest in rehearsal (no matter your experience level) and talk with you more about joining the choir if you are interested. I'd love to hear from you at [fala@upcch.org](mailto:fala@upcch.org).

-Joey Fala, Director of Music and Organist



## Youth Sunday is Coming



*Recording last year's Youth Sunday, our first virtual Sunday (and before we knew masks were important!)*

Youth Sunday is March 14th, marking one year of online worship for UPC. Prayers are welcome for our senior preachers Ann MacAllister Alexander, Evan Aycock, Zoe Hiemstra, Virginia Pridgen, Josh Singleton, and Clive Stevens as they discern how to interpret the scripture for us. They'll continue the series "Questions Jesus Asks" with the question: Who of you by worrying can add a single day to your life? Join us online for this meaningful Sunday in the faith journey of our young people.

## Thank You, PCM Students!

On February 21, the Presbyterian Campus Ministry led our worship service. While planning and preparation looked a little different this year due to COVID restrictions, these students rose to the challenge and put together a beautiful time of worship! Be sure to watch the video on our [Vimeo channel](#) (and check out worship from other weeks, too).



## Your Generosity in Action

Your gifts to our regular and special offerings help fund our ongoing ministries and provide care for our neighbors both near and far. Here are some of the recent ways your special offerings have made a difference:

### Souper Bowl of Caring

In February, we collected \$3091 for TABLE, a local non-profit organization that provides hunger relief and nutrition education services to children in Orange County. A special thank you to our fifth grade friends who helped collect the offering at our Drive-Thru Communion!



### Pastoral Assistance

Our annual Christmas Eve offering supports our Pastors Discretionary Fund, which is used to assist our neighbors who need help with outstanding bills. In 2020, a year marked by significant hardship, many people in our community found themselves in need of extra help when shut-off restrictions were lifted and bills were suddenly due. Your generosity empowered us to respond to 104 requests for assistance, distributing a total of \$18,000.

Thank you for your care for UPC and for our community!

## Stephen Ministry- Tears: Are They Healthy?



Recently I got similar comments from two friends that had lost spouses within the last few months. One was a male and the other was female, but the comment was almost the same: "When will the tears end? I am so embarrassed when I cry in public." I hope the following information helps you feel more positive about tears.

Dr. Judith Orloff says, "Crying makes us feel better, even when a problem persists. In addition to physical detoxification, emotional tears heal the heart. You don't want to hold tears back. Patients sometimes say, 'Please excuse me for crying. I was trying hard not to. It makes me

feel weak.' My heart goes out to them when I hear this. I know where that sentiment comes from: parents who were uncomfortable around tears, a society that tells us we're weak for crying--in particular that 'powerful men don't cry.' I reject these notions. The new enlightened paradigm of what constitutes a powerful man and woman is someone who has the strength and self-awareness to cry. These are the people who impress me, not those who put up some macho front of faux-bravado."

Researchers have found that emotional tears contain two important chemicals, and the one chemical, leucine-enkephalin, is thought to be related to the body's natural pain-relieving substances. Tears are, they tell us, an exocrine substance, like sweat, or exhaled air, and one of the functions of such processes is to help cleanse the body of toxic substances that accumulate under stress. It's healthy to let those tears flow. Stephen Ministers are trained to sit quietly and listen as you shed healthy tears and work through challenging issues. Call Meg and discuss a partnership with a Stephen Minister.

For more information on tears, see the online article: ["The Health Benefits of Tears" by Dr. Judith Orloff.](#)

## Content Submission for Future Publications

UPC members are welcome to submit content for Sunday's bulletin announcements or for *The Chimes*, UPC's monthly newsletter.

Please submit content to our Director of Communications and Development, Erin Collier, at [communications@upcch.org](mailto:communications@upcch.org). The content deadline for the bulletin announcements is each Wednesday at 2 pm, and the content deadline for the April edition of *The Chimes* is Monday, March 15, at noon.