



The Chimes- May 2021

Pastor's Message

Meg and I had an interesting, seemingly foreign experience a few weeks ago. We walked our three elementary-aged children out of the house at 7:15 in the morning, put them on a bus and watched it whisk them away to school for a whole seven hours. As we watched the clouds of pollen settle back onto the road as the bus pulled away, we felt as if we possessed that rarest of all treasures: time.



I won't mince words. Pastoring during a pandemic is hard, but not for the reasons you might expect. I can (more or less) handle the constancy of little people asking for snacks, and I could adapt to virtual worship - that was pretty easy with the wonderful staff and volunteers who help make it happen each week. The thing that was most difficult was feeling cut off from this congregation that we served all too briefly before COVID significantly altered our capacity to gather.

In short, I miss you.

As we have re-acclimated to something resembling a regular school schedule, we have been thrilled to have the time to simply visit with members of the church family. With more and more of us being fully vaccinated, it has been a delight to sit down together (still outside) and hear your stories. I laughed swapping stories with a fellow runner about the misadventures that inevitably happen in a 200 mile team relay race. I leaned in with fascination to hear the story of how one couple married and landed on Presbyterian as their compromise between a Baptist and Methodist background, but how they knew UPC was the place for their family when a teenage daughter came back from youth group saying "I think that I found my people." I had to pick my jaw up off the table as I heard another talk about being with Coretta Scott King at her home the night that Dr. King was killed in Memphis. I've welcomed opportunities to find common ground with folks in the tangled thicket of race conversations that are still swirling around us over 50 years later.

As a preacher and as one of your pastors, I do enjoy studying Scripture and crafting sermons and leading worship. I delight in casting vision for our life together in committee meetings. But it's the personal connections that make the Church come to life.

In a few short weeks the liturgical season will shift from Eastertide to the season of Pentecost. In a word, Pentecost is the Church's birthday. In a sentence, Pentecost celebrates how the Spirit gathered all kinds of folks who may otherwise never have spoken to one another and called them "the Church." To mark it this year, we are hosting a Pentecost Picnic. You can read below for the "Who, What, When and Where?" details, but I'd like to address the "Why?"

After a year in which "distance" has been the operative word, it is more important than ever to consider the word "gather." Of course, we will do it safely. The event will be outdoors so that all may attend - vaccinated and unvaccinated alike. It's difficult to overestimate the importance of renewing the family of faith; of laughing together and connecting. My hope is that you will come. My hope is that the new members who have joined in the past year will come and finally get to meet you. My hope is that it will feel like a true Pentecost, gathering together all kinds of folks who may otherwise never have occasion to speak to one another.

That is my hope because, after all, I miss you.

-Jarrett McLaughlin

Our Church Family

We grieve with:

- Lee White and Julie Hogue, upon the death of Julie's brother, Stephen Hogue
- Doug and Kathy Lawson, upon the death of Kathy's father, Carl Zorowski
- Barbara Loda, on the death of her husband, Frank Loda
- The family of Nancy Gibson



We pray for:

- Carolyn Karpinos, recovering from knee replacement
- Ann Gibson (Leigh Anderson's mother), recovering from hip surgery
- Linda Plunkett, recovering from knee replacement
- Jim and Gwen Waddell-Schultz's son Thom, recovering from stroke, and daughter in law Tina, in the ICU

We celebrate with

- Jan Mann, upon her retirement from coaching UNC Women's Golf
- Alex and Sonia Coffin, on their 50th wedding anniversary

Welcome New Members!

Alex and Sonia Coffin joined UPC on March 21, 2021, by reaffirmation of faith and letter transfer from Covenant Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC. We're thankful to have the Coffins as a part of our church family!



Parish Associate Update - Thank you, Vanessa, and Welcome, Hadley!



At the beginning of April, Vanessa Hawkins, our Temporary Parish Associate, shared with us the sad news that she was concluding her ministry at UPC. While we are sad to say goodbye after such a short time, we respect Vanessa's personal circumstances and her own discernment. We will miss her calm presence, listening ear, and gentle guidance, and we look forward to partnering with her as she begins a new role as the Interim Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk of The Presbytery of New Hope.

From Vanessa: *"I want to thank all those who attended the Zoom coffee hour and spent time affirming my presence at UPC and those who sent such wonderful cards in the mail. I thank all of you for the blessings and kind reflections on my presence and participation in the life of the community. I will miss you all but am thankful that we are still part of the same family - New Hope Presbytery."*



Support for our pastoral staff, particularly in the area of pastoral care, is still a vital need, and we are thrilled to announce that Rev. Hadley Kifner will be serving as our new Temporary Parish Associate beginning on June 1! Hadley is an ordained United Church of Christ minister and has most recently served as a pediatric chaplain for UNC Health Care. She has a degree in English from UNC-Chapel Hill and completed the Master of Divinity degree at Duke University's Divinity School.

From Hadley: *"UPC has been a place of spiritual grounding, meaningful connection, and fun, faithful fellowship for my family and me for the past handful of years. Our oldest daughter Hannan (12) has experienced a sense of belonging and deepened faith with peers through church activities like choir, Sunday School, and PYC. Our youngest daughter Ruby (6) was baptized here and cannot wait for VBS soon. And my partner Drew and I cherish the memories we have made in Montreat during annual congregational retreats.*

To have an opportunity to serve, lead, care for, and love a group of people with whom I already feel connected is a true and graceful gift. Also, while I have actively discerned next steps in my vocation over the last couple of years, UPC has been a most steadfast listening partner and encourager. Both the congregation as a whole as well as sincere individuals within and connected to it have nurtured my call to ministry while also listening deeply with me about how I might live more fully into my ordination in new ways.

It is with deep gratitude, humility, and excitement that I join the pastoral team soon. My hopes for what lies ahead are in God's hands. I am up for the adventure, ready to work hard, and give thanks that we shall be in it all together, focusing on a creative, spontaneous, and ever-present God – to God be the glory!"

Celebrating Easter Together

It was wonderful to gather outdoors to celebrate Easter! We are grateful to all who helped make our socially distanced worship services such a safe and meaningful experience.

Photo Credits: Jack Benjamin, Julia Buckner, Chip Sudderth





Pentecost Picnic (May 23)



Save the date for an outdoor, socially distanced Pentecost Picnic on May 23! We've missed getting to spend time with each other during the pandemic, and this will be a great way to catch up, have fun together, and meet our new members and new staff in person.

Date: Sunday, May 23, 12-3 pm

Location: Camp New Hope

For: All ages!

What to bring: picnic lunch, chairs/blankets, yard games, mask

What to expect: games, conversation, an ice cream truck, and lots of FUN!

COVID-19 Protocols: All protocols and regulations will be followed. If you are interested in attending, please [fill out this Google form](#) to help us plan within those regulations.

Returning to In-Person Gatherings - an Update

As we shared last month, conversations and planning are ongoing as we consider the best and safest way to regather. We have missed being together in person, and yet we want to make sure that we continue to be responsible in how we gather and look out for the health and safety of our whole congregation.

The Session has named a team to help guide this process, as well as to help us think through as a congregation what church life looks like in a post-pandemic world. Members of this team are:

- Sarah Bozymski
- Anne Bryan
- Greg Crawford
- Jeff Howard
- David Lane
- Amy McEntee
- Taylor Morris
- Mary Ellen Olson
- Than Powell



Our goal is for the next issue of *The Chimes* to announce plans and details for the fall.

Help us celebrate the Class of 2021!



If you'd like to join in the joy for this group of youth, we invite you to send cards to them all ON THE SAME DAY. They'll be on the receiving end of a mailbox full of love from their UPC family. Contact Kim McNeill, Staff Associate for Youth Ministries, at kim@upcch.org to get an updated address list for our grads. Then, drop all your cards in the mail ON May 20th. It's a fun way to help these youth remember that they go out into what's next with our prayers and support.

Youth Mental Health Zoom (May 2)

The challenges of the past year have had a significant impact on mental health for everyone, but sometimes, we overlook the unique challenges that teens and their families have faced as they have navigated school, social lives, and growing up during this time. Youth Faith Connections for Mental Health is offering a safe space via Zoom on May 2 from 3-4:30pm for teens and their families to ask questions about anything and everything related to mental health, whether connected to the pandemic or just in general. [Click here](#) to register and submit questions in advance.

ANXIETY DEPRESSION LONELINESS

ASK QUESTIONS, GET ANSWERS:

A free Zoom program for tweens, teens, & parents

SUNDAY, MAY 2
3-4:30 PM

This Zoom program for tweens, teens and parents will feature a panel of two therapists with expertise in adolescence who will answer questions you want answered - questions on anxiety, depression, loneliness, worry about exams, whatever is on your mind. You can submit questions during registration and in the Zoom chat.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION LINKED IN BIO.

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM! @YFC4MENTALHEALTH

Reflecting on the Youth Race Equity Intensive

Our youth have engaged in a Race Equity Intensive this semester, meeting bimonthly on zoom to learn from voices of color and one another. Our youth and adult leaders have learned about implicit and explicit bias, the history of race in our country, how to spot racism in our systems, white privilege, micro-aggressions, and more. Our young people are faced with conversations about race in most areas of their lives. This intensive gave them an opportunity to learn about race through the lens of our shared faith and helped them learn more about how to live in this world as people of faith.



Here's what our youth are saying about this experience:

"One thing that I have learned from the Race Equity talk is that everyone has a bias in this world whether they know it or not." Ada Stewart, 9th Grade

"Personally, learning about race in the context of church has been very challenging. These sessions have ignited the desire to learn more and created a safe environment to do so. I have seen God at work through these meetings and have never felt closer to him than now." Thomas Normand, 11th Grade (now serving on UPC's Racial Equity Team)

"I have enjoyed the chance to be in the Race Equity Intensive. It allows us to learn about the history of racism in America and the continued racism in America. It allows us to learn about the things we can do to fix it and is fun as well." Charles Kavanaugh, 7th Grade

"Having the opportunity to do the race equity intensive this year has been so great! I think that it is such an important topic for us to learn about, especially with everything that has been going on in our country. It is our job to make change in society so that our generation and generations to come can live in a racism-free, overall better world, and I think that this intensive is the perfect way for us to hold ourselves and each other accountable. We have to start somewhere, so I am very grateful for the chance to become better educated." Sarah Bozyski, 10th grade

"I have really enjoyed doing these racial equity zoom calls. It has helped me see and understand other perspectives and helped educate me, continue my journey of education and becoming an ally." Sara Ross Burns, 8th grade

"The Race Equity meeting has been really nice. It has allowed me to learn more about Race, and different ways that you can respond to racist terms. I would recommend it for anyone wanting to learn more, or open up about personal experiences." Carter Lovelady, 6th Grade

Faith @ Home with Families

Each month, our children's ministry offers Faith @ Home bags for families to learn about spiritual disciplines, liturgical seasons, and other aspects of faith development. Here are some of the creative and hands-on ways the UPC families explored the themes and stories of Holy Week at home.



Montreat Worship and Music 2021

As a new staff member in the Fall of 2019, I spent much of my first contract year preparing for our annual trip to Montreat Worship and Music. The preparations were daunting, but I was so excited to spend the summer making music with our children and youth. As it turned out, the Summer of 2020 held an online conference for us, and we made some joyful noise over Zoom.

As you may know, Montreat Worship and Music is holding an in-person conference this year. While we are not able to attend as a large group, out of respect for our youngest members who are not yet eligible for a vaccine, you are certainly welcome to attend with your family, and may well see some familiar faces while you're there! If your family is interested in attending Montreat Worship and Music in person, I encourage you to check out all of the offerings at presbymusic.org/2021conference-schedule



The online conference this year is limited to adult music, and you are certainly welcome to register for it as well. Please note that the online schedule will only take place in week **two** of the conference, which is the same week as our annual Vacation Bible School. presbymusic.org/2021-online-conference

It is my sincere hope that we can have a wonderful trip to Montreat Worship and Music together in 2022, and I know that the Presbyterian Association of Musicians would very much appreciate your support to make that happen. Please consider making a gift to the PAM Annual Fund here: presbymusic.org/donate

-Kathleen Jasinskas

PCM Gathering at Jordan Lake

The Presbyterian Campus Ministry had an outdoor gathering at Jordan Lake on Saturday, April 17, with 25 students in attendance. In this season of social distancing and limited gathering, it was a fun and safe way for our students to spend time together as the semester draws to a close.

Photo credit: Hank Snyder



PCM Alumni E-Newsletter

Introducing...[the inaugural PCM Alumni E-Newsletter](#)! The Presbyterian Campus Ministry has been an important part of college life for countless students throughout the years, and a team of current PCM students have put together a newsletter to keep alumni and friends updated on the latest happenings. If you're an alumnus or alumna, be sure to click the button at the end to share your updated contact information!



Facing Racism: An Adult Education Virtual Summer Series

Together with the Adult Education Committee, UPC's Racial Equity Team presents:



Facing Racism: An Adult Education Virtual Summer Series

Please join us for any or all of these conversations as your summer schedule allows

- June 20, 11am - 12pm: A Christian perspective on racial justice
- July (exact date TBA): UPC perspectives on race and racial equity
- August (exact date TBA): Where do we go from here?

Endowment Report - Spring Projects

Your Endowment Committee has six spring projects that the UPC Session approved at its April meeting. These projects are as follows:

- Local Outreach recommended that **TABLE**, a long standing organization addressing food insecurity in Orange County, be funded \$10,000 toward their capital campaign.
- Global Outreach recommended that the **St. Joseph Family (SJF)**, a long term partner of UPC located in Jacmel, Haiti, be funded \$4,000 to upgrade their security wall.
- **PCM of North Carolina**, a new statewide initiative headed up by John Rogers to replicate the UPC Presbyterian College Ministry across the state, was funded \$5,000.
- UPC's Congregational Committee, along with the Membership Committee, requested \$6,500 for a variety of **projects for the Narthex** including an upgrade of the name tag system that calls for storage boards to be installed in the Narthex and in the Henderson Street entrance for our new UPC name tags.
- **UPC's preschool program** was funded \$1,500 for 10 units of HEPA filtration for both classrooms and bathrooms to address the COVID-19 impact on the preschoolers.
- Lastly, in a continuation of UPC's strong commitment to the **Service Learning Center**, a \$15,000 funding was approved for the Spring Semester of this program.

Piglet and Stephen Ministry



It occurred to Pooh and Piglet that they hadn't heard from Eeyore for several days, so they put on their hats and coats and trotted across the Hundred Acre Wood to Eeyore's stick house. Inside the house was Eeyore.

"Hello Eeyore," said Pooh.

"Hello Pooh. Hello Piglet," said Eeyore in a glum sounding voice.

"We just thought we'd check in on you," said Piglet, "because we hadn't heard from you, and so we wanted to know if you were okay."

Eeyore was silent for a moment. "Am I okay?" he asked, eventually. "Well, I don't know, to be honest. Are any of us really okay? That's what I ask myself. All I can tell you, Pooh and Piglet, is that right now I feel really rather Sad, and Alone, and Not Much Fun To Be Around At All.

Which is why I haven't bothered you. Because you wouldn't want to waste your time hanging out with someone who is Sad, and Alone, and Not Much Fun To Be Around At All, would you now."

Pooh looked and Piglet, and Piglet looked at Pooh, and they both sat down, one on either side of Eeyore in his stick house.

Eeyore looked at them in surprise. "What are you doing?"

"We're sitting here with you," said Pooh, "because we are your friends. And true friends don't care if someone is feeling Sad, or Alone, or Not Much Fun To Be Around At All. True friends are there for you anyway. And so here we are."

"Oh," said Eeyore. "Oh." And the three of them sat there in silence, and while Pooh and Piglet said nothing at all; somehow, almost imperceptibly, Eeyore started to feel a very tiny little bit better.

Because Pooh and Piglet were There. No more; no less.

(A.A.Milne, E.H.Shepard)

Check on your friends. I am reminded in Job how we can just be there. "Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was." (Job 2:13 NIV)

Let's remember that well done is better than well said. Sometimes it's not your prose, but your presence that makes all the difference.

"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." (1 John 3:18)

Whether you're Eeyore, Piglet or Pooh, we NEED each other! Let Meg know if you would like a Stephen Minister to "just be there." We do need each other.

-Shared by a UPC Stephen Minister

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. The deadline for the bulletin announcements is each Wednesday at 2 pm, and the deadline for the June edition of *The Chimes* is Saturday, May 15, at noon.