



MARCH 2022
EDITION

The Chimes

SHARING STORIES AND NEWS FROM
UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CHAPEL HILL



OBSERVING LENT AT UPC

Worship, education, and
more | p. 3-5

STAFF NEWS AND UPDATES

Hadley Kifner's expanded
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CONGREGATIONAL RETREAT 2022

Sept. 9-11 - Don't forget to
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Volunteer in the Church Office

As the church office is now open five days a week, we are in need of additional volunteers to serve. Openings are some Monday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons from 12:30-4:00. Responsibilities include welcoming visitors to the church office, answering the phone, and simple clerical tasks. Parking is available outside the Campus Ministry entrance. If you're available to volunteer, or if you'd like to volunteer in the office as a substitute, please contact Shelley Adams at shelleyhadams@gmail.com or (919) 942-2525.



Our Staff

Meg Peery McLaughlin, Co-Pastor

Jarrett McLaughlin, Co-Pastor

Kim McNeill, Staff Associate for Youth Ministries

Nancy Myer, Staff Associate for Children's Ministries

Joey Fala, Director of Music Ministry

Berry French, Associate Pastor for Campus Ministry

Hadley Kifner, Pastor for Spiritual Nurture

Erin Collier, Director of Communications and Stewardship

Ellen Parker, Director, UPPS

Sara Richard, Office Administrator

Peter Costa, Financial Manager

Melani Willhite, Financial Assistant

Dennis Dallke, Property Manager

Johnny Clay, Sexton

Find us online!



upcch.org



facebook.com/upcch



[@upc_chapelhill](https://www.instagram.com/upc_chapelhill)



vimeo.com/upcch

Cover Photo: Our confirmation students and mentors at their retreat on Feb. 19. Turn to page 11 for more pictures!

Pastor's Message



Meg Peery McLaughlin
Co-Pastor

Adapted from the Report on the State of the Church delivered at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 22:

Dear Church,

In mid-January, our amazing staff team had a retreat, where we delighted in the trust we share in each other, the joy we feel for the work that is ahead, and the privilege it is to work for this faithful congregation—**you** are the reason we do this. Thank you. Your staff's collective call is to equip and support you in what God is doing through you and in you.

There were lots of new faces around the table at that retreat—a reminder of the many transitions we have endured over these past two years. And wouldn't you know, transitions continue! Our longest standing friend on this staff is Dennis Dallke, our Director of Facilities, who, come July, will have served here for 30 years! With his retirement on the horizon, and with the departure of our Office Manager, Jeanette Schmidt, the Personnel Committee is moving forward with a search for a **Director of Operations**. This one person will combine the executive level functions of both former roles, and other responsibilities will be given to Sara Richard, who will now be called our Office Administrator.

Underneath all this transition, a steady thread of faithfulness runs through it. God's—for sure and yours as well. Your generosity, your careful listening to God's voice, your deep commitment to outreach, your care of one another have **anchored** this church, and I have no doubt who is pulling it forward in justice and joy.

It is with great gratitude and hope that I offer this prayer for our family of faith:

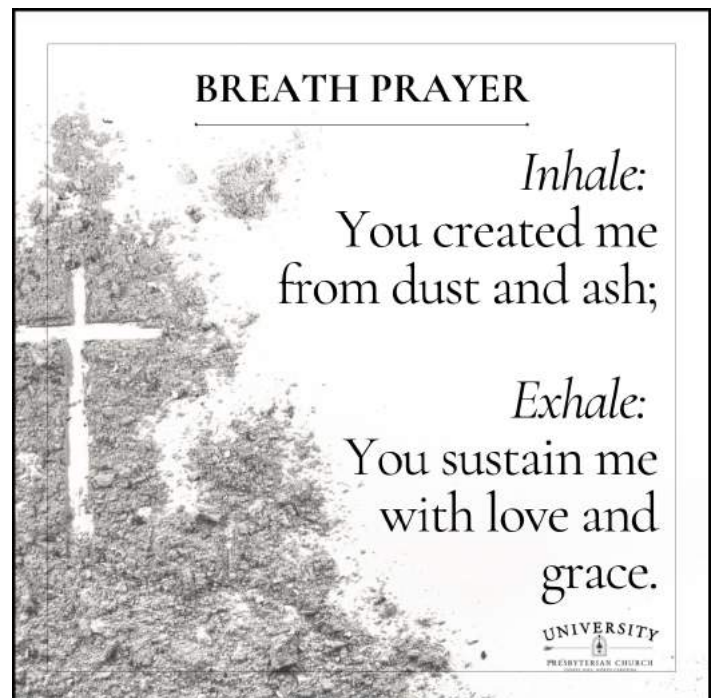
God may this church continue to be
a sanctuary for all people,
a place of strength for the weak of refuge for the troubled,
a place where your truth is taught and learned,
where prayer is fulfilled according to your will.

Grant that we may go forth from this place
to serve you faithfully
for the good of our neighbors
and the glory of your name.

We pray all this in the name of Jesus Christ,
our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Peace be with you all,

Pastor Meg



Observing Lent at UPC: Worship

What is Lent?

Lent is a 40 day season of spiritual discipline and preparation that starts annually with Ash Wednesday—which falls this year on March 2— and anticipates the celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ at Easter (this year, April 17). During this time, individuals will often fast from something, or take on a new discipline as part of their preparation, all with the ultimate hope of deepening their relationship with God.

Ash Wednesday: March 2

The first day of Lent is Ash Wednesday, which falls on March 2 this year. During worship on this day, ashes are used to mark a cross on the forehead or hand of each worshiper as a reminder of our humanity and mortality. We will offer the imposition of ashes in two ways that day:

- Drive-thru/walk-up imposition of ashes from 1-2 pm
- Worship in the Sanctuary at 7:30 pm

All are welcome to join us for Ash Wednesday worship.



New Worship Schedule beginning March 6

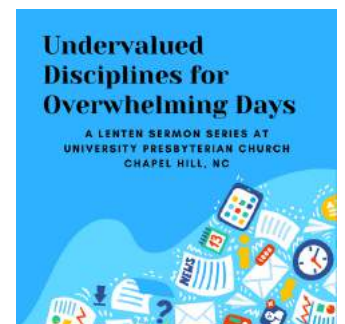
We will resume our two-service worship schedule on Sunday, March 6 - the first Sunday in Lent. Our Sunday morning schedule will be as follows:

- 8:30 am - Worship in the Sanctuary
- 9:45 am - Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00 am - Worship in the Sanctuary and on livestream

March 6 will also mark the return of communion in the Sanctuary. You will receive individually wrapped elements as you enter the sanctuary; at the appropriate time, we will briefly lower our masks to take the elements. All other COVID precautions will remain in place.

Sermon Series: Undervalued Disciplines for Overwhelming Days

The words discipline and disciple are kissing cousins; both connote that we are learning something. To follow Jesus as his disciple is to learn from him and his way of love. To practice a discipline is to learn the art of something---in our case--learn the art of the spiritual life. Often in Lent, Christians focus on familiar spiritual practices like fasting and prayer. But here in 2022, nothing is familiar; we are living in overwhelming days. And yet our call is to continue to learn--continue to deepen our discipleships. Perhaps this Lent, we can endeavor to learn from some off-the-beaten-path-kind-of-teachers. What could we learn from doubt or failure? What do boundaries have to teach us? Join us in worship for a new sermon series: Undervalued Disciplines in Overwhelming Days.



March 6: Boundaries

March 20: Failure

April 3: Improvisation

March 13: Doubt (Youth Sunday)

March 27: Discomfort

April 10: Surrender

Taizé Worship: March 8, 7 pm

Lasting about 30 mins, a Taizé service includes chant-like simple songs sung repeatedly, surrounded by brief periods of silence, Scripture, and prayer. We invite you to come as you are and invite anyone else who may desire a simple evening of singing, praying, and sacred reflection.



Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday: April 14, 7:30 pm

A reflective time of worship as we remember God's love through the story of Jesus' last meal with his disciples.

Good Friday: April 15, 7:30 pm

A tenebrae service of scripture and music as we retell the story of Jesus' crucifixion and death.

Easter Sunday - April 17

8:30 am - Worship

10:15 am - Easter Egg Hunt

11:00 am - Worship

We're watching the COVID trends as we make our Easter plans. Look for more details later this month about our full Easter schedule!

Easter Gifts of Beauty and Bounty

It is the UPC tradition at Easter to honor and remember the people in our lives through Easter Gifts of Beauty and Bounty. Your gift can be used to purchase a lily which will be placed in the chancel, or as a contribution to the Inter-Faith Council for Social Services to support our neighbors in need. (You can also choose to do both with your gift!) The names of those honored and remembered with these gifts will be in the Sunday Worship Bulletin on April 17.

You can give online at upcch.org/easter-beauty-bounty, or paper forms are available in the narthex. The deadline to give is Friday, April 8.



Observing Lent at UPC: Spiritual Formation

NEW Lent 2022 Sunday School Class Offering: "Exploring Spiritual Practices: A Journey Through Lent"

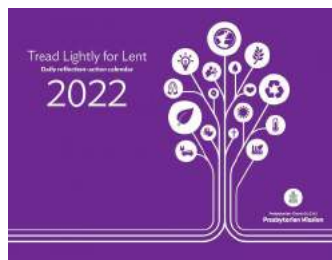
"Lent is a double journey – a journey together (and alone) toward the mystery of God's redemptive embrace in the death and resurrection of Christ. At the same time, it is a journey into the depths of our humanity." – Don E Saliers

The phrase *spiritual practice* can sound intimidating or assumed to be applicable for those who seek to live a monk-like life. And the word *discipline* may feel restrictive when we are leaning hard into grace and flexibility during these difficult days. Yet spiritual practices and daily disciplines are ancient practices that have grounded and blessed faithful followers of Christ throughout the ages. They are creative and sacred, contemplative and exploratory experiences that can be incorporated into our daily lives. Spiritual practices are not meant to be mastered skillfully; they are meant to be engaged authentically.

You are invited to a Sunday School class during Lent that will explore different spiritual practices – a different one each week. You can come to each and all, or to the ones which interest you most. Each class will begin with a basic overview of one particular spiritual discipline, then time devoted to practice the discipline with guidance, and finally ending with small group reflection and resource sharing. Beginning March 6 and ending on April 10, sessions will cover practices such as contemplative prayer; the Daily Examen, *Lectio Divina*, Creation Reflection, and Silence + Solitude.

This class will be offered in-person only, in the Terrace Room. No experience is needed. Come to connect with others, learn something new, and experience God's presence. All are welcome! Contact Hadley Kifner: hadley@upcch.org or 919.929.2102.

Lenten Devotional Resources



Tread Lightly for Lent

A daily reflection/action calendar centered around earth care

Available at:

[presbyterianmission.org/
resource/tread-lightly-for-lent](https://presbyterianmission.org/resource/tread-lightly-for-lent)



Journey to the Cross

A daily online devotional offered by [d365.org](https://www.d365.org), an ecumenical devotional for students and adults



God is Still With Us

A printed devotional for families created by Illustrated Ministry – copies are available in the parlor



Return to Me

Daily thoughts and reflections created by Vibrant Church Communications - copies are available in the parlor

PW Groups

All women of the church are welcome to attend monthly PW circles:

Circle 2: Mon., March 7 at 9:45 am by Zoom *Contact:* Rachel Harshaw (919 928-4514 or rachel@jehars.com)

Circle 3: Tues., March 1 at 10:00 am by Zoom *Contact:* Mary Ann Klomp maker (919 270-0657 or maryann6543@gmail.com)

Circle 4: Tues., March 1 at 11:00 am by Zoom *Contact:* Susie Smith (757 274-2551 or snyacks@gmail.com)

Circle 5: Wed., March 9 at 7:00 pm by Zoom *Contact:* Mary Ellen Olson (919 302-1426 or maryeolson27@gmail.com)

The Miracle of Leftovers



Hadley Kifner
Pastor for Spiritual Nurture

During the summer of 2018, I preached in the UPC sanctuary for the very first time. Margaret LaMotte Torrence was serving as the interim pastor at the time and in the midst of loving us through the transitions of Bob Dunham's retirement, Anna Pickney Straight's move to Virginia, and a handful of other significant changes in the life of this church family, she found time to nurture the gifts among us. Assessing our gifts and graces, and then encouraging us to live into them, was a focused part of Margaret's ministry here. And I think it is quite possible that our willingness to be seen and known, to let go, to trust and take risks, to grieve the past and to hold fast to what might still yet be helped us forge a new identity as a congregation. 2018 feels like an era ago and at the same time, in many ways, we are still living into a new identity. Even more transitions - personnel, pandemic, and otherwise - have come our way since then. We have lost much. We feel disconnected from each other. We yearn for stability and routine. And, just like then, perhaps now more than ever, there are gifts and graces among us to be nurtured...

The short and simple title of that summer sermon was "Leftovers" and it explored the Gospel text of Jesus feeding the gathered people from basically scratch - some salty fish and crusty loaves of bread. As we know this miracle story well, we know that God's people were fed fully and that, in astonishing fact, there were enough fishes and loaves remaining to have leftovers. Bellies were filled, and so too were baskets with what remained. Those who came hungry, tired, and skeptical experienced the lavish love of a generous God and left changed. What was among them, when blessed, was more than enough.

What do we do with the random bits and pieces of our lives that add up to be more than enough because of God's grace and generosity?

This month marks the passing of two full years of life with a pandemic thriving among us. It has not gone away and it likely will not disappear fully any time soon. We recognize that our spirits might feel a bit like stale breadcrumbs or limp fish - in need of nurture, sustenance, and renewal. This anniversary gives us occasion to remember all that has transpired and how it has transformed us. We can normalize that part of being a child of God is hurting for the world, yearning for peace, and crying out for mercy. We can remember the miracle of leftovers, trusting that what we have, when shared together and blessed, when appreciated and nurtured, is enough. More than enough.

Women's Retreat: Saturday, April 9

...I will put breath into you, and you will come to life... - from Ezekiel 37

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for *Breath for the Bone-Tired: A Women's Retreat* on Saturday, April 9, 1:00-6:00pm. The scriptural focus will be on Ezekiel 37. Pastor Meg Peery McLaughlin will serve as the keynote speaker. Throughout the afternoon, there will be large group listening, small groups for discussion, and creative and contemplative activity offerings. The retreat will end with a worship service and a walk to dinner on Franklin Street. All UPC women are invited - and others (friends, neighbors, colleagues, strangers) are welcome, too!

Stay tuned for more details. Registration (via Realm) opens on March 6! Contact Hadley Kifner with questions.



A New Title and Role for Hadley Kifner

At the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, the Session voted in December to change Hadley Kifner's position from part time to full time. Hadley is ordained in the UCC church, which shares full communion with the PCUSA. The Session also voted to keep her as a Parish Associate, in accordance with the pastoral relationship described in the Book of Order (G.2.0504). Hadley's role does not carry with it a formal installation, but is required to be reviewed by the Presbytery of New Hope each year. Her title will be **Pastor for Spiritual Nurture** with the primary role of pastoral care through Stephen Ministry, the Mental Health Taskforce, and Presbyterian Women. She will seek to imbue contemplative and creative ministry into the full life of the church as witnessed by the examples of the Longest Night Service and the Taizé services in which she worked closely with Joey, our Director of Music Ministry. We are grateful for Hadley's presence on our staff and look forward to the ways in which she will lead our congregation in this expanded role!



Installation of Berry French

On January 30, 2022, Berry French was officially installed as our Associate Pastor for Campus Ministry. It was a wonderful time of worship and celebration, complete with confetti!



Meet our New Members



**Robert & Beverly
Gackenbach**

*Transfer of letter from First
Presbyterian Church, Hilton
Head, SC*



**Scott & Catherine
Hauser (Ella & Chloe)**

*Transfer of letter from Fifth
Avenue Presbyterian Church,
New York City*



Don & Lisa Fuquay

*Transfer of letter from
Brownson Memorial
Presbyterian, Southern
Pines, NC*

Kat Bell
*UNC Student
Profession of faith*

Connor & Corinne Crews
*Reaffirmation of faith/Transfer of letter
from New York Avenue Presbyterian
Church, Washington DC*

David & Barbara Stewart

*Transfer of letter from United
Presbyterian Church of Middletown,
Middletown, NY*

Notes from Presby 101: Reading Scripture

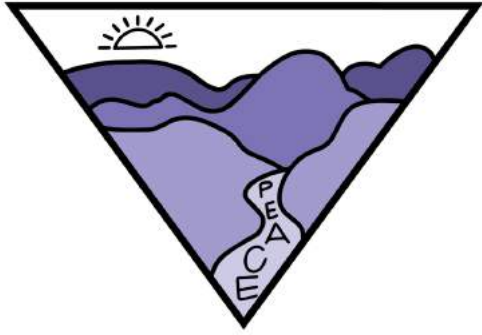
Long gone are the days when Presbyterian churches are filled with cradle Presbyterians. More likely a person will be drawn to the Church that feels right and then figure out the theological underpinnings from there. For that reason, UPC will continue to offer periodic classes exploring a certain corner of Presbyterian practice and belief. On February 6, we hosted our first such class on the topic of Scripture; an excerpt from this class is below.

The historic Presbyterian Church divided in 1861, right along the fault line of the American Civil War. We remained separate for over a century, finally reuniting in 1983 to form the PC(USA). To help facilitate this reunion, the Church commissioned the creation of a document called "Presbyterian Understanding and Use of Holy Scripture," with commonly agreed-upon rules for how we will interpret Scripture together to shape the life of our church. At the risk of oversimplifying it, here are our five main considerations as we interpret Scripture together:

1. **Centrality of Jesus Christ** – Every single passage from the Bible is subordinate to Jesus Christ. If an interpretation seems like it pulls in the opposite direction of Jesus, then perhaps it's worth a second look.
2. **Scripture Interprets Scripture** – Any one passage of Scripture must be seen in the context of the whole Bible. No proof-texting allowed.
3. **The Rule of Love** – If an interpretation of Scripture invites us to do something that is not loving, then maybe that interpretation is not valid as God is consistently revealed as loving in the whole of the Bible.
4. **The Rule of Faith** – People have been interpreting Scripture for a long time and we owe it to our spiritual forbears to consider how they have understood a certain text. This rule anchors us to the tradition when we might be tempted to float off into untethered innovation.
5. **The Fallibility of all Interpretation** – There are plenty of times when our forebears have erred in their own understanding and use of Scripture. Recognizing this frees us to reject the parts of our tradition that have been harmfully inaccurate and to seek out fresh and more faithful understandings.

Many of these are called rules, but we prefer to think of them as lenses. As we struggle to understand this Book that we gather around each week, we can try on different sets of glasses to further define what we are seeing. In this way, Presbyterians take Scripture very seriously, even if we may not always take every word literally.

The Congregational Retreat is Back!



September 9-11 in Montreat, NC

Are you ready to rest, relax, and retreat from your busy lives? Join your church family for a weekend in beautiful Montreat as we experience scripture, keynote speakers, workshops, pottery, hiking, and much more!

Don't miss this opportunity to live in community with UPC as we explore the theme Path of Peace. We'll explore the ways God calls us to experience peace and pursue it in the world. To register online and for more information about our schedule and workshop options, go to upcch.org/retreat. Registration opens March 1!

Retreat FAQ

Q: Is this retreat for families only?

A: No! UPC members of all ages and stages of life attend the congregational retreat. This event is a chance for all in our church to spend time in community together. We have options that everyone can enjoy no matter your age, and we've found that unique bonds are created across many generations during this weekend.

Q: How are the accommodations?

A: We sleep in the Assembly Inn hotel, which was recently renovated. It's a beautiful stone building at Montreat Conference Center, where they cater to all ages and have all the creature comforts we're used to.

Q: How's the food?

A: Montreat's Galax Dining Room offers a variety of options at meals. There's always a bountiful salad bar. Plus, our UPC BBQ on Saturday night is a tasty church tradition not to miss! If you have concerns about allergies, please note it in your registration, and we'll make sure you have specific allergen information.

Q: I'm not sure we can afford to attend. Is there financial assistance?

A: We have a retreat scholarship fund to help with costs. We will work with you to determine how we can best meet your family's needs when covering lodging and retreat costs; there's no special formula. A scholarship application form is available on the retreat website (upcch.org/retreat), or you may email a church staff member. We will communicate with each family on an individual, confidential basis.

About our Keynote Speaker, David LaMotte



David LaMotte is an award-winning songwriter, speaker and writer. He has performed over 3000 concerts and released twelve full-length CDs of primarily original music, touring in all of the fifty states, and five of the seven continents. LaMotte suspended his eighteen-year music career at its peak in 2008 to pursue his other primary vocation by accepting a Rotary World Peace Fellowship to study International Relations, Peace and Conflict Resolution at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. As part of that study, he also spent time in rural Andhra Pradesh, India working with a Gandhian development organization. David has published three books and founded a non-profit organization, PEG Partners, that focuses on literacy, critical thought, and artistic expression in Guatemala. Read more about David and his work on his website: davidlamotte.com.

Register Today for Vacation Bible School!

Plan to join us June 27-30, 2022, at New Hope Camp and Conference Center for Vacation Bible School! We will gather each morning and end our time together at noon. Children age 4 (as of 9/1/2022) through rising 5th graders (in fall 2022) are welcome to join us. All children must be potty-trained and able to wear a mask all day. A decision about whether masks will be required will be made closer to the date.

Registration is NOW OPEN for members of UPC and New Hope Presbyterian Church, as well as UPPS families; visit upcch.org/vbs for details and to register today.



VBS Volunteers Needed

If you'd like to volunteer at VBS this summer, please visit upcch.org/vbs-volunteers. Youth (rising 6th grade and up) and adult volunteers are needed and welcome!

Kids' Shift at TABLE

On Feb. 21, several UPC families spent the afternoon helping at TABLE, helping sort and pack bags of food. TABLE is a non-profit organization that provides hunger relief and nutrition education services to children living in Orange County, North Carolina, and currently serves 756 children.



Thank you to everyone who gave to this year's Souper Bowl of Caring emphasis! We received \$2681.50, all of which will go to TABLE to support their food program.

Confirmation & Mentor Retreat

This past weekend, our confirmation students had a day retreat with their mentors! It was a day of conversation, laughter, and learning together. We are grateful for these students as they continue to learn and grow in their faith, and for the adults who are walking beside them and encouraging them along the way.



A PC(U.S.A.) Congregation

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