



JUNE 2022
EDITION

The Chimes

SHARING STORIES AND NEWS FROM
UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CHAPEL HILL



WHAT TO EXPECT THIS SUMMER

Worship, repair work,
classes, and more | p. 3-4

REFLECTING ON THE PAST YEAR AT PCM

From Kim Rubish, PCM
Pastoral Resident | p. 6

LOVE IN ACTION

Stephen Ministry
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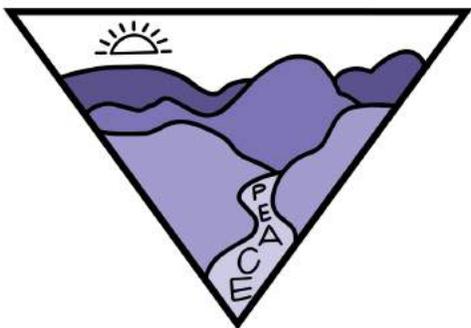


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Cover Photo: A scene from the Youth Musical, presented on May 25.

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**, Dir. of Communications & Stewardship
- Ellen Parker**, Director, UPPS
- Ryan Byrnes**, Director of Operations
- Sara Richard**, Office Administrator
- Peter Costa**, Financial Manager
- Melani Willhite**, Financial Assistant
- Dennis Dallke**, Property Manager
- Johnny Clay**, Sexton



Congregational Retreat Update

Housing in Assembly Inn is now full! If you want to attend but haven't signed up yet, we'll help you look for alternate housing. Visit upcch.org/retreat for details and to sign up.

Welcome, Confirmands!



On May 1, we welcomed 28 confirmands to our faith community. We're proud of these students, and grateful for the leaders and confirmation mentors who walked through this process with them!

Pastor's Message



Meg Peery McLaughlin
Co-Pastor

Dear Church Family,

Having a clergy couple in your pulpit means you have a front row seat to our very different strengths. In case it hasn't become clear already, Jarrett is the one with the sharp memory (in addition to a pathological need to drop music references into sermons).

Though that is true, when I learned of Columbine and Sandy Hook, I remember exactly where I was, and what the light looked like as it fell on my surroundings, and how the ache in my heart seeped into places I was scared to access.

For our now 30th school shooting in 2022 alone, at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, I received the news as I was sitting at our kitchen table ticking away at my inbox. I had just told the twins to take a shower, and as they went to fetch their towels, I could hear them singing upstairs. The song was *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

I know this must sound like some saccharine preacher-kid fantasy. I'm not going to say they weren't whining and fighting minutes earlier, but at this moment, as they reluctantly went to attend to their hygiene (why is it always a surprise that they need to bathe themselves), they were singing a song they'd learned in children's choir on Sunday afternoons. Caroline often mispronounces it. *Pacet*, she sings; I have no idea what that would be in Latin. But *Dona Nobis Pacem* means *Grant us Peace*.

The juxtaposition was too much. Children singing about peace. Children shot dead at school.

In a typical year, there are more preschoolers shot dead in America than police officers. Our country, including those who own guns, has near unanimous consensus on universal background checks, and yet, common sense gun safety legislation has been stalled for decades. It's maddening.

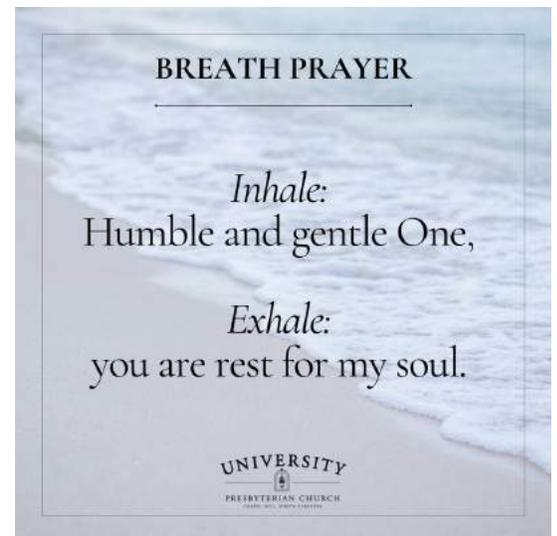
I hear the voices of those I love in this congregation who say the church should not talk about politics.

I get what they mean. It's not my job as your pastor to tell you who to vote for. It's not my role to sow seeds of further division in a country that is hanging together by a thread. It's not my work to proclaim NPR, but the good news of the gospel. That gospel, though, teaches me that faith without works is dead; that Jesus is Lord of all aspects of my life—yes, the spiritual, but the social as well; that God can use even imperfect groups of people—like governments and churches—to partner in kingdom work.

As I write this, I am preparing for Sunday (May 29) where we'll name this grief in worship, for we do not come to God with blinders on, but we come with the weight of the world on our shoulders. We'll gather in the Fellowship Hall after worship to write letters to our elected representatives, for prayers aren't only whispered but also enacted. And we'll respectfully, authentically, talk—as parents, attorneys, teachers, retirees, scientists, bankers—disciples all—each and every one of us committed to peace.

Dona Nobis Pacem.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Meg".



Summer 2022 at UPC



Summer Worship Schedule

We have officially transitioned to our summer worship schedule, with **one worship service at 10 am in the Sanctuary** (in person and livestream). We're also declaring the balcony a masks required zone, to provide a space for those who feel more comfortable sitting with others who are masked. Of course, you're welcome to mask in other areas of the sanctuary, too.

Beginning on June 5, Punch on the Porch will return - and we need your help! Sign up to host this wonderful fellowship opportunity after worship on the portico during the summer months. All supplies are provided; simply add your smile and hospitality! This is a great way to get to know our members during the summer.

Visit upcch.org/summer-worship to sign up.

Repair Project to Temporarily Close Garden

It all started with paint peeling off the block walls in the youth center. Then some floor tiles began popping up. The signs were clear - we had some water infiltration in the basement level of the church building. With some investigation, the Property Committee determined that we have a drainage problem and that the slab underneath the youth building is saturated. We have contracted with Lindsley Waterproofing to address this problem.

The solution will require some excavation in both the memorial garden as well as by the stairwell leading down to the youth center on Robertson Lane. Beginning sometime in June (exact date TBD), this work will disrupt our access to the garden for approximately 8 weeks, but it will not disturb the wall where the remains of so many of our saints have been committed over the years. UPC is committed to preserving the integrity of the space.

This project is an unplanned expense but the Session authorized using money from the General Reserve in order to fund it and ensure that our building remains a healthy and safe environment for housing the vital ministry that takes place within these halls. We ask for your patience as we deal with the inevitable disruption that accompanies a project of this scope.



Adult Education Opportunities This Summer

Crossroads Class

Sundays at 8:45 am through June 26, in Vance Barron Hall

Crossroads Class will continue their study through June, doing an overview of books of the Bible and using videos from *The Bible Project*.

Studying and Praying the Gospel of John

July 17, 24, 31, and August 7 at 8:45 am, in Dunham Hall

Reading and studying Scripture deepens our understanding of the story of God's people. Using Scripture to pray provides us with images and words to communicate with and grow closer to God. This series will focus on studying and praying the Gospel of John.

This class will be led by Rick and Sally Osmer. Sally Osmer is a Stephen Minister in our church. She has degrees in clinical social work and ministry. For 25 years, she was the director of two nonprofits in Trenton and Princeton, NJ. Rick Osmer taught practical theology at Princeton Theological Seminary for 30 years in the areas of Christian education, spirituality, and evangelism. He is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Rick and Sally met while students at UNC.

Where in the World is UPC This Summer?

We're grateful to be resuming a more typical summer activity schedule this year, with VBS, trips, and more! Curious about where everyone will be? Here's the quick run-down:

Montreat Youth Conference (high school youth)

June 12-18 in Montreat, NC

Montreat Music & Worship (children and youth)

June 19-25 in Montreat, NC

Vacation Bible School (children)

June 27-30 at New Hope Camp & Conference Center

Massanetta Middle School Conference (middle school youth)

July 12-15 in Harrisonburg, VA

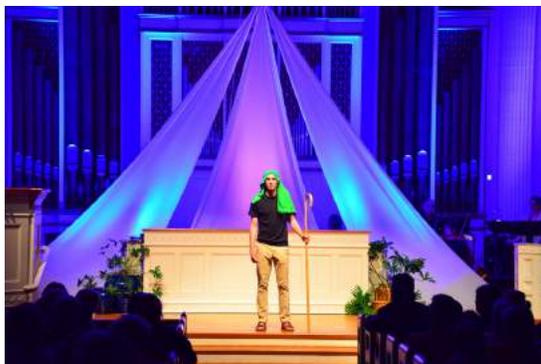
Appalachia Service Project (older youth & adults)

July 17-23 in rural Appalachia



Please pray for all of our participants in these trips and activities, as well as for the leaders and chaperones. We look forward to sharing stories and pictures in future editions of *The Chimes*!

Recent Pictures from UPC Life



PCM End of Year Reflections



Kim Rubish
PCM Pastoral Resident

The halls and couches of PCM are quiet, the fridges are emptier than ever, and we've said "see you later" to an incredible class of graduated seniors. After a full year of bustling, exciting PCM energy, it's strange to sit back and take a breath, and to reflect on an incredible first ten months as a Pastoral Resident.

This year has been full of so much growth and so many opportunities, but there have certainly been a few stand-out experiences. One of the most fruitful, life-giving experience of my residency has been leaning into vocation with graduating seniors. We spent the year together in a weekly small group, focusing on all of the scary, exciting, "what the heck happens after graduation" feelings that were coming up for the group, and dove into where God exists in all of those feelings. We also drank plenty of coffee and made an occasional Sup Dogs run, as all outgoing seniors must. Walking alongside this group has been a personal highlight of my time, and I'm thrilled to get to experience it with a new class of seniors next year.



While it's no secret that I love pastoral care and spending intentional time with students, this year also gave me the opportunity to grow in new ways, leaning into planning and carrying out larger events like PCM Student Sunday, and as part of the planning team for Spring Break. From listening to our seniors preach on PCM Sunday to backpacking in the freezing cold Montreat wilderness, I got to experience incredible, unforgettable moments after better understanding what it takes behind the scenes to make them possible.

Every day in this role has come with new gifts and challenges, and I couldn't be more grateful and excited for another year to keep growing and learning in ministry alongside so many exceptional mentors and students.

From the Students...



There have been quite a few Thursday nights where the pressure of school was really weighing on me, and I felt like my focus needed to be on my work. But every time I put my work aside and went to PCM, I was so glad that I did. Whether it is singing beautiful songs led by the music team, pondering about what being a college student means in our faith, or just talking with other students after program, it is truly beautiful to see all the ways in which God moves through PCM.

-Sarah Ramsey, Class of 2024

PCM offered me a place of acceptance and love. They gave me familiar faces around campus and meaningful friendships. Most importantly PCM gave me a place to ground my faith through the ups and downs of figuring out who I was and what I am doing here.

-Brett Bolton, Class of 2025



Love in Action



Hadley Kifner
Pastor for Spiritual Nurture

1 John 3:18 encourages, "Let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth."

Have you heard about Stephen Ministry? It is a practical embodiment of this scripture. Kenneth Haugk, a pastor and clinical psychologist, created this program in 1975 as a way to multiply the caregiving in his St. Louis congregation. He realized that, as one single pastor, he could not assess and meet the spiritual needs of everyone in his large congregation - but, together, they could learn how to care for each other and trust that God's love in action among them could be curative in many ways.

Stephen Ministry is based on matching a caregiver and a care receiver, and then nurturing that holy friendship with confidentiality, trust, empathy, listening, and grace-based acceptance. The caregivers (Stephen Ministers) are lay members trained to offer one-to-one care to care receivers: those experiencing a significant life transition such as grief, divorce, unemployment, chronic or terminal illness, a new baby, vocational discernment, or loneliness. The ministry is named for Saint Stephen, who was the first lay person commissioned by the apostles to provide caring ministry to those in need (Acts 6).

Did you know that UPC has been a Stephen Ministry congregation for 30 years? In 1992, interim Associate Pastor Fran Olson began the program here. As an ordained minister and a trained Stephen Minister married to a psychiatrist, Fran knew firsthand that this kind of lay-led pastoral care is an invaluable resource. The first class of UPC Stephen Ministers had 15 members, planting seeds that would continue to bear fruit: UPC faithfully invested in Stephen Ministry, training new caregivers every two years for the next 28 years. As of today, 114 people have trained to be Stephen Ministers at UPC.

Do you know our Stephen Ministers? Ann Henschel has served as co-chair of the UPC group for more than 20 years and will be passing on the leadership baton to new co-chairs next year. Tom Warburton trained in 2001, served as a supervision group leader for decades, and retired from active caregiving last year. Winnie Morgan trained in 2008, organized bi-monthly continuing education opportunities for leaders, and still represents our congregation as a liaison on the Triangle Area Stephen Ministry Network. Beloved, now deceased, Jim Schultz trained in 2019, and his Stephen Ministry involvement inspired the idea behind the "Love is Never Cancelled" signs that we placed in our yards during the pandemic.

Judy Taft, who just completed 50 hours of leadership training with the Stephen Ministry headquarters team, trained along with Winnie Morgan. They, and the four others in their original training cohort, named themselves "the 6 Pack." Judy shares: "The 6 Pack group has met for dinner every few months ever since we trained. We are a close-knit group and continue to share our ups and downs with one another, praying together....One of our 6 Pack members was Priscilla Bevin, Biff Bevin's wife. Priscilla died of breast cancer about two or three years after we were trained. When we meet for dinner, we continue to this day to have an empty chair at our table in memory of Priscilla Bevin."

These saints - and many others! - paved the way for more recently trained caregivers like Nora Holley, Ken Krzyzewski, John Stow, Janet McDowell, Betsy Edwards, Madeline Mitchell, and Sally Osmer. They have held steady during the pandemic when meeting with care receivers in person was difficult. And they have been prayerfully waiting for the right time to re-engage their calls to love in action and deed with new fervor and focus. That time is now.

On Sunday, June 12, the Stephen Ministry group will lead worship and host Punch on the Porch afterward. We will be there, together with you, to remind each other that God's love in action among us is the most beautiful and authentic way to help heal each other - and the world. May the strong legacy of Stephen Ministry caregiving and receiving at UPC continue for another three decades. May it be so!



A PC(U.S.A.) Congregation



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