

EPIPHANY 2025
EDITION



The Chimes

SHARING STORIES AND NEWS FROM
UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CHAPEL HILL



RE-SHAPING OUR STAFF STRUCTURE

A few changes to position us for
future health | p. 2-3

PICTURES FROM ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

From the Craft Festival,
worship, and more! | p. 5-8

MLK SERVICE DAY OPPORTUNITY

Join us on Jan. 20 as we serve
our community | p. 14

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Our Staff

- Meg Peery McLaughlin**, Co-Pastor
- Jarrett McLaughlin**, Co-Pastor
- Dallin Baldwin**, Director of Music
- Ryan Byrnes**, Director of Operations
- Johnny Clay**, Sexton
- Erin Collier**, Dir. of Communications & Stewardship
- Peter Costa**, Financial Manager
- Dennis Dallke**, Operations Assistant
- Bob Dunham**, Pastor Emeritus
- Berry French**, Associate Pastor for Campus Ministry
- Hadley Kifner**, Associate Pastor for Spiritual Nurture
- Nancy Myer**, Associate Pastor for Family Ministry
- Ellen Parker**, Director, UPPS
- Sara Richard**, Office Administrator
- Tristan Wall**, Director of Youth Ministry
- Melani Willhite**, Financial Assistant

Find us online!

-  upcch.org
-  facebook.com/upcch
-  vimeo.com/upcch
-  [@upc_chapelhill](https://instagram.com/upc_chapelhill)

The next edition of *The Chimes* will be published on Feb. 25
Submission deadline is Feb. 11.
Contact: Erin Collier
(communications@upcch.org)

UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2025 PLEDGE UPDATE



Total Amount Pledged
(as of Jan. 5):
\$2,132,841

Number of Pledges:
365

Average Amount Pledged:
\$5,843

TOTAL PLEDGE NEED: \$2.15M

It's not too late to pledge! The Administration Committee will be setting the 2025 budget very soon and relies on an accurate pledge total for their work. We strongly encourage you to submit your pledges by January 12 to assist them in their work. Visit upcch.org/stewardship to learn how to pledge,



Catherine Duncan, known at UPC for being an alto in the choir and an incoming Elder, is also a brilliant physical therapist. I've been seeing her this year because of my shoulder. My rotator cuff was mad at me. What was striking to me was that in **every single visit** with Catherine she was not just telling me to do certain exercises (which she did do), but she was re-teaching me how to move. She'd have to explain it fully, but how I was positioning my body needed to be adjusted in order for the exercises to help and in order to keep my rotator cuff intact. I needed some tweaks to help my body move.

This church staff has been moving right along with the leading of God's Spirit, and this fall we have been paying attention to where tweaks are needed. Included in this Chimes (p. 3) is the Organizational Chart approved by the Personnel Committee which reflects how we are positioning ourselves for future health.

The main changes:

- Hadley Kifner takes over leadership of the Deacons, for the purpose of aligning her pastoral care gifts with the important work of that Board. Her Spiritual Nurture work already includes Stephen Ministry, Grief Group, Retreats, and this means she will step away from Adult Spiritual Growth, and Meg will step fully into that role. Hadley will continue to staff Presbyterian Women, though in a different capacity.
- Jarrett McLaughlin takes over leadership of Congregational Life, for the purpose of giving it the energy it deserves as this community seeks new ways to connect. Berry French relinquishes leadership of Congregational Life because of the good news that Presbyterian Campus Ministry has been growing gangbusters! Berry will continue to lead UPC Young Adults and provide worship leadership.
- Dallin Baldwin will provide staff leadership for Worship and Music; and Erin Collier will take the lead in Stewardship and assist with Membership.

Many thanks to the Personnel Committee for their ongoing work of support and accountability, to the leaders of all these ministry teams for their openness to these adjustments, and to this staff for both their skills and passion for ministry among the good people of University Presbyterian Church.

Adult Spiritual Growth - An Update

Another contributing factor to the staff transition has been the flourishing of Adult Spiritual Growth at University Presbyterian. The leaders of what was formerly known as the Adult Education Committee recognized that Adult Sunday School is not the only avenue that UPC uses to deepen our faith—and yet many of the other offerings were not under the authority/leadership of the Session. Thus in 2024, the Adult Spiritual Growth Committee started talking about what was “under their umbrella.” things like the Racial Equity Team, the Earth Care Team, and Mental Health Taskforce.

An early fall conversation about the church's role in politics, followed by deep spiritual discernment amongst the Session and committee led to the formation of some guiding principles for this work (p. 12). This discernment also changed our language from talking about what is under the Adult Spiritual Growth Committee's umbrella, to talking about what is on our trampoline. Rather than seeing the committee as a tight space under which to huddle, we see ourselves as a trampoline for launching and celebrating the work of faith development at UPC. The Adult Spiritual Growth Committee helps guide, collaborate, and coordinate the multiplicity of ways this congregation loves God with all its heart, soul, mind and strength.

Meg

2025 UPC Staff Organizational Chart

(As referenced in Meg's article on p. 2)

MEG PEERY MCLAUGHLIN, Co-Pastor/Head of Staff

Session Committees: Personnel, Administration, Adult Spiritual Growth, Membership

Other: Campaign Readiness Team, Memorial Garden

JARRETT MCLAUGHLIN, Co-Pastor/Head of Staff

Session Committees: Local & Global Outreach, Property, Nominating, Stewardship, Congregational Life

Other: Endowment, Men's Breakfast, Racial Equity, Earth Care, Campaign Construction Team (if the way be clear)

DALLIN BALDWIN, Director of Music Ministry

Session Committee: Worship and Music

Supervises:

Organ Scholar/Church Resident
4 Choral Scholars

ERIN COLLIER, Dir. of Communications & Stewardship

Session Committees: Stewardship, Administration, Membership

Other: Campaign Readiness Team

RYAN BYRNES, Director of Operations

Session Committees: Property, Administration

Supervises:

Sara Richard, *Office Manager*
Johnny Clay, *Sexton*
Dennis Dallke, *PT Sexton*
Organ Scholar/Church Resident

BERRY FRENCH, Associate Pastor for Campus Ministry

Presbyterian Campus Ministry Board

Supervises:

PCM Pastoral Resident
PCM Fellow in Campus Ministry
Peter Costa, *for PCM portion*

PETER COSTA, Director of Finance

Session Committees: Administration

Supervises:

Melani Willhite, *Finance Admin*

NANCY MYER, Associate Pastor for Family Ministry

Session Committees: Children's Ministry

Other: UPPS, Retreats & Pilgrimages, Congregational Retreat, Montreat Music & Worship

Supervises:

Ellen Parker, *Preschool Director*
Childcare Staff
Tristan Wall, *Director of Youth Ministry*

Session Committee: Youth Ministry

HADLEY KIFNER, Associate Pastor for Spiritual Nurture

Deacons

Other: Stephen Ministry, Grief Group, Mental Health Taskforce, Taize Worship, Presbyterian Women, Retreats & Pilgrimages, Community Arts

Adult Spiritual Growth:

- Adult Sunday School
- Racial Equity Team
- Earth Care Team
- Mental Health Taskforce
- Small Groups
- Presbyterian Women

Congregational Life:

- Second Sunday Lunch
- Congregational Retreat
- Community Arts Groups
 - Knitting, Chrismon Guild
- Men's Breakfast
- Retreats & Pilgrimages

Discerning a Capital Campaign Update

Current Stage: Feasibility Study

For 18 months, the Vision Team spent time dreaming, researching, and discerning potential project scopes for a capital campaign. Now, it's time for the congregation to share their thoughts via a feasibility study! A feasibility study is a process by which we determine what parts of the campaign vision resonate with the congregation, and what a realistic fundraising goal is for the campaign. Conversations within the congregation are a crucial part of this process.

Our consultants will lead these conversations, taking note of all that is said and shared, and will offer their analysis in a report that details our readiness for a campaign and the suggested size and scope we should pursue.

What should we expect?

The Campaign Readiness Committee has worked on a case for support that outlines the projects that might be included in a potential capital campaign. Expect to see it in your inbox in the weeks ahead and please set aside some time to read it.

Everyone in the congregation will have a chance to review the draft case for support and offer input. **Be on the lookout for an invitation to attend a conversation** about these prospective projects in the first quarter. Your input will help us determine if all projects or a subset of projects will be included if we move forward with a campaign.

Who are our consultants?

Conversations will be led by our consultants from Armstrong McGuire: Mendi Nieters and Shannon Williams. They are a delight to talk to; we think you'll enjoy the conversations!



How Can I Help?

Pray. Prayer is crucial to every step of this campaign! In particular, we ask that you pray for:

- our Readiness Committee and consultants as they lead us through this process
- our congregation as we begin to discern the shape of the campaign
- ways in which you might be led to participate in this campaign (volunteering, giving, etc.)

Participate in the feasibility study. Please be sure to respond to your invitations to a conversation and participate so that your voice can be heard.

Stay tuned. We'll share more as the process continues, including volunteer opportunities, and all information will be available at upcch.org/capital-campaign.

Pictures from the 2025 Advent Craft Festival



Advent Pictures: Worship



Advent Pictures: Fun & Fellowship



Christmas Eve at UPC



What to Expect on Sundays in January

January Sermon Series: A Life Worth Living

It's the new year. Many folks will be making resolutions about their lives. But what is a life worth living? As one philosopher said: *He who has a **why** to live can bear any how.* Loosely referencing the *Life Worth Living* course at Yale, co-taught by theologian Miroslav Volf, and the accompanying book of the same name, this January sermon series will examine what it means to be alive as a person of faith.

- *Jan. 5: Finding your Life (John 12:20-26) *10 am/communion service
- Jan. 12: What are we doing here? (1 Kings 19:9-13)
- Jan. 19: How will we know we're really living? (Mark 1:9-11)
- Jan. 26: The Truth Will Make You Odd (Luke 4:16-30)

Full Schedule Resumes (Jan. 12)

- 8:30 am - Worship
- 9:45 am - Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00 am - Worship
- 4:00-4:25 pm - Alleluia Choir (preK-5th grade)
- 4:30-5:15 pm - Choristers (3rd-5th grade)
- 5:15-6:00 pm - Youth Choir (6th-12th grade)
- 6:00 pm - Youth Group (6th-12th grade)



Officer Installation (Jan. 12)

Join us for worship on Jan. 12 as we ordain and install our new Deacons and Elders, blessing them as they begin their terms as elected officers who lead and care for our congregation. Those to be ordained/installed are:

Elders:

John Blythe	Carter Lovelady	John Wallace
Catherine Duncan	Whitney Martin	Amy Wilson
Kristin Hiemstra	Lawrence Sizemore II	Ken Younts

Deacons:

Allie Broman-Fulks	Joe Deese	Frances Hess
Gary Crunkleton	Katie Edmiston	Billy Parks
Becky Dallke	Bob Greenwood	JoAnna Younts



Second Sunday Lunch (Jan. 12)

Join us for a potluck fellowship lunch in the Fellowship Hall on the second Sunday of the month! Please bring a side dish, salad, or dessert for approximately 12 people. Please be generous! If your contribution contains allergens or is suitable for those with special dietary needs, please add labels such as "gluten-free," "contains peanuts/tree nuts," or "vegetarian."

Are you a student, visitor, or living with a disability? No need to bring anything — just join us for the food and fellowship!



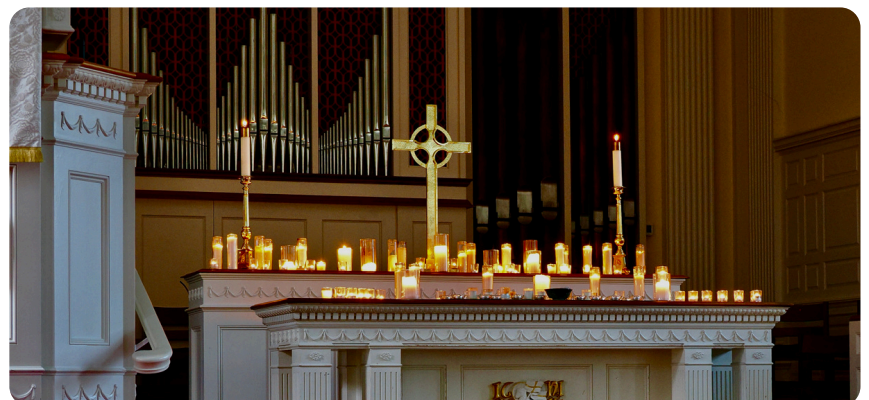
Congregational Meeting (Jan. 26)

Our annual Congregational Meeting will be on Sunday, January 26, after the 11:00 am worship service to receive the 2024 Annual Report to the Congregation, to hear a report on the State of the Church, and to act on proposed changes in the installed pastors' terms of call. The Annual Report will be distributed electronically prior to the meeting.



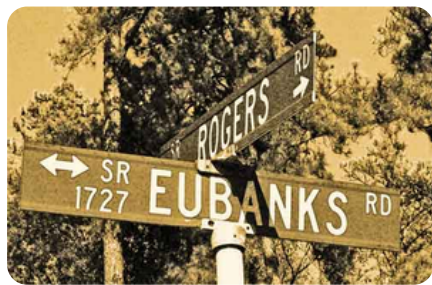
Taizé Worship (Jan. 21 & Feb. 18)

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 in the UPC Sanctuary.



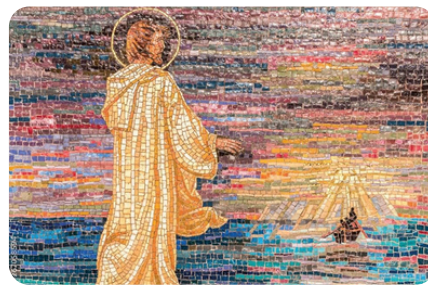
Opportunities to Learn

Adult Sunday School, Session 1: Jan. 12-Feb. 2 (9:45 am)



Environmental Justice Today (Dunham Hall)

In this series, we will explore the environmental justice movement and how people of faith in NC have played important roles in this movement. We will take a close look at environmental justice issues in NC counties of Warren and Sampson as well as in our own backyard—Chapel Hill's Rogers Road neighborhood. We will hear from people who have studied and led these justice movements. As people of faith, we will consider how we respond to ongoing inequities in this arena.



Signs and Wonders: A Beginners Guide to Jesus' Miracles (Vance Barron Hall)

Based on the scholarship of Amy Jill Levine, New Testament Professor at Vanderbilt, Kathy and Scott Culley will facilitate a four week exploration of how past witnesses would have understood the events, but also how today's readers can draw meaning from Jesus' words and actions.

Adult Sunday School, Session 2: Feb. 9-March 2 (9:45 am)



The Anxious Generation (Dunham Hall)

The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness by Jonathan Haidt argues that the spread of smartphones, social media and overprotective parenting have led to a "rewiring" of childhood and a rise in mental illness. Join us for an exploration of this book, learning about how technology impacts our mental wellness, especially preteens, youth, and those who make up the next generation. This class will center around conversations based on the book chapters and small group discussion. Copies of the book are available in the church office for \$15 each (place payment in Meg's box).



Faith and Life (Vance Barron Hall)

Led by Gary Crunkleton and Rick Osmer, this class will explore the meaning of four important biblical concepts in relation to real life situations: grace, judgment, holiness, and eternal life.

UPC's Racial Equity Team invites you to save the date!

Saturday, March 1 between 8 am and 5 pm

"Legacies of Lynching: An Inaugural Gathering"

The day will include talks, interactive workshops, networking opportunities, cross-generational discussions of histories of racial violence and pathways toward healing and reconciliation. More details (and sign-up information) to come soon!

Adult Spiritual Growth Guiding Principles

Adult Spiritual Growth serves as the “trampoline” for launching and celebrating the work of faith development at UPC.

As written in the Book of Order, the six great ends of the church are:

- the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;
- the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;
- the maintenance of divine worship;
- the preservation of the truth;
- the promotion of social righteousness;
- and, the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

Shaped by these ends, we uphold these principles:

- Adult spiritual growth has its foundation in proclaiming the gospel. We seek to provide opportunities rooted in biblical and theological study. That study reveals an incarnate God who came down into this messy world for the salvation of humankind.
- Adult spiritual growth is crucial. Faith journeys are not static or fixed, but need both nurture and challenge. We seek ways to console our brokenness, challenge our complacencies, and inspire our faith.
- Adult spiritual growth takes many forms. We seek to provide opportunities for discerning God’s message through Bible study and theology as well as discerning where God is active in the world so we can join in the work.
- Adult spiritual growth can thrive in community, and it is individual. God alone is Lord of the conscience. No offering can bind the freedom of conscience for the individual disciple.
- Adult spiritual growth is broad. Since Jesus is Lord of all of life– spiritual, social, financial, political lives all together– our following in his way will necessarily put us in the path of hard topics. We do not shy away from such issues, but address them humbly and faithfully.
- Adult spiritual growth is a matter of faith, not partisanship. No political party captures the fullness of the justice and mercy of God. Only God is sovereign. The church’s role is not to stump for candidates or direct particular votes. Neither should the church neglect its role by ignoring issues that affect the lives of God’s children, especially the most vulnerable.
- Adult spiritual growth in community requires mutual forbearance. Our study and work may lead disciples to different paths on how best to live out God’s command to love God and love neighbor.

Ministries/Programs on the Adult Spiritual Growth “trampoline” include:

- Adult Sunday School
- Racial Equity Team
- Earth Care Team
- Mental Health Taskforce
- Small Groups
- Presbyterian Women

What to Expect on Sundays in February

February Sermon Series: Stories Jesus Told

Biblical Scholar C.H. Dodd says, "At its simplest, the parable is a metaphor drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to tease it into active thought."

Strangeness. Doubt. Teasing.

"Come on, Jesus," one might say, "why not just tell us how it is instead of spinning these surprising stories?" Perhaps this kind of one-dimensional thinking about God is precisely what Jesus seeks to undermine. Join us this February as we pursue the parables and excavate what lessons lie within them.

- Feb. 2: The One about Yeast and Flour
- Feb. 9: The One about Dirt
- Feb. 16: PCM Sunday
- Feb. 23: The One about Praying in Public
- March 2: Youth Sunday

Second Sunday Lunch (Feb. 9)

Join us for a potluck fellowship lunch in the Fellowship Hall on the second Sunday of the month! *See p. 10 for details.*

PCM Sunday (Feb. 16)

Join us for worship on Feb. 16 as our Presbyterian Campus Ministry leads worship! Our PCM students will lead in all aspects of both worship services, including preaching. Please come support and encourage these students as they lead us! To read more about what PCM has been up to, check out their Fall 2024 newsletter (tinyurl.com/PCMfall2024)



Home Communion (Feb. 2)

On Sunday, February 2, UPC Elders and Deacons will be visiting members of the church at home to share the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper together. If you or someone you know would like to be visited on that day to receive communion, please contact Hadley Kifner (hadley@upcch.org). To learn more about home communion, visit upcch.org/home-communion.



Opportunities to Serve



MLK Community Service Day (Jan. 20)

In the United States, we celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday on the third Monday of January.

In the United States, we inaugurate Presidents on January 20.

In 2025 those happen to be on the same day, and the Local Outreach Committee has already been planning to hold an intergenerational service day in our community.

If you are looking for a positive outlet to serve your local community on that day off from school or work, consider joining us. We have projects for people of most any age. We'll gather here at UPC at 9:00 am to enjoy some morning treats and then receive assignments and locations.



You may find yourself working at the Interfaith Council for Social Services or TABLE in Carrboro or perhaps at the Iglesia Emanuel in Durham, a Spanish-speaking Presbyterian congregation that hosts a food pantry serving 600 families each Wednesday.

Sign up at upcch.org/mlk-service-day, and we will be in touch with all who RSVP with more details closer to the time.

Note: There are some more skilled projects that the IFC has, but those need to happen in the afternoon following their lunch service. If you are comfortable painting or hanging protective paneling, please sign up for the afternoon session.



Assisting the Cold Weather Shelter at University Baptist (on-call)

This winter our friends at University Baptist Church just down Franklin Street are hosting what is called the "White Flag" emergency cold-weather shelter. Up to 20 residents who cannot or typically choose not to stay in the community's homeless shelters are invited to seek shelter indoors when temperatures dip below freezing. They could use help with 6:30 pm set-up, 7:00 am breakdown and laundry detail for the blankets. Since this is contingent on the temperature, it's more a matter of being on-call. If you are interested in being on the list when sign-ups are posted, please email their pastor Paul Burgess at paul@ubc-ch.org.

Opportunities to Connect

Grief Group (beginning Jan. 22)

Grief has a way of cracking us open. It is normal to feel disoriented after a deep loss, to wonder why, and to search for meaning. This is important, human, and holy work - and it does not have to be done alone. If you have experienced a loss recently, please consider joining us for our annual UPC grief support group. Equal parts peer support, grief education, reflection and discussion, and creative healing activities, this 6-week group aims to nurture your spirit along your journey. Facilitated by Hadley Kifner, this group will meet at the church on Wednesdays for six weeks in a row: Jan. 22, Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Feb. 12, Feb. 19, Feb. 26, and March 5. (Exact meeting time is TBD, based on participants' schedules.) This group is free and open to all. Commitment to attend each week's session is required. Contact Hadley Kifner with questions or to sign-up: hadley@upcch.org.



Women's Retreat (Feb. 14-16)

In a world that is full of challenge and joy and everything in between, the gifts of friendship and connection help us stay grounded in our identity as beloved daughters of God. Come, join other women to celebrate these gifts and share encouragement and wisdom with each other along our spiritual journeys. This year's keynote speaker Rev. Carrie Tuttle will help us explore the gifts of connection and friendship.



In Carrie's words, "We come as different women of faith--some who are lonely, some who are overwhelmed by the world, some who long to be known and to truly know each other. Let's wonder together: How does the Spirit move in our relationships? How can we nurture new and longer friendships?" As always, there will be unhurried time for small group conversations, creative activities, holy happy hours, walks on the beach, spiritual reflection, naps, singing and praying, and laughing. ALL women are welcome! We have rented an additional house this year and have plenty of room so please plan to join us!

Visit upcch.org/womens-retreat for details and to register.

Ongoing Group Opportunities

Presbyterian Women

PW Circles gather monthly for fellowship and Bible study. Contact Hadley Kifner (hadley@upcch.org) to connect with a circle. All women are welcome!

Men's Breakfast

Our Men's Breakfast offers a time of fellowship and conversation on first and third Monday mornings. Email Dan Redwine (danredwine@gmail.com) to be added to the email list.

Young Adults

Young adults gather for lunch twice a month after 11:00 worship. Contact Berry French (berry@upcch.org) to learn more.

Knitting Group

Knitters of all experience levels are invited to join this group every Wednesday at 2 pm in Dunham Hall. Email Marsha Krzyzewski: marshakrzyzewski@yahoo.com

Opportunities to Give

Diaper Drive for the Refugee Support Center

Presbyterian Women (PW) requests your support for their annual fund drive to provide diapers for the Refugee Support Center (RSC). Please make checks payable to University Presbyterian Church, noting "PW Diaper Drive" in the memo line. Checks can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to University Presbyterian Church, PO Box 509, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. If giving online, please select "PW Diaper Drive" as the fund. Deadline to give is January 15.



Souper Bowl of Caring (Feb. 9)

On Sunday, February 11, Kirk Club youth will take part in this national effort to love our neighbors. They will hold soup pots at the sanctuary doors following worship to collect money for those who are hungry and hurting. Since 1990, over \$193 million in dollars and food has been generated while benefiting thousands of soup kitchens, food banks, meal programs and other hunger-relief charities in local communities. 100% of the money we collect at UPC will go to TABLE. Look for more details about how to give in February!

Fall Endowment Report

In November 2024, the Endowment Committee recommended and the Session approved the following Endowment disbursements:

- **\$5,000 to Natema Learning School, Zambia:** This money would be used for drilling a bore hole to improve the water supply to the Natema Learning School founded in 2002 and home to 301 children and 24 staff. The increased water would help a new gardening program for students (to sell produce), expanded number of children, and help counteract a severe recent drought.
- **\$5,000 to Beirut Presbyterian Church:** Because of Israeli army invasions, tens of thousands of Lebanese families have flooded into Beirut. There are 1 million displaced people across Lebanon. These funds will go towards buying blankets, socks, and underwear as well as transportation costs.
- **\$10,000 to Presbyterian Campus Ministries:** This money would fund a trip for 12 people to the US-Mexico border in conjunction with Border Service Corps and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.
- **\$1,000 for the Developing a Christian Mind Conference:** UPC member Kyle Beardsley is helping put this conference together at Duke for graduate students.
- **\$2,500 for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund**

A Spring Sabbatical for Nancy Myer

From Nancy:

If you had told me when I first arrived at UPC in 2014 that I would be here more than a decade, I think I might have laughed. And yet, here we are! On October 1, I hit the 10-year mark as a member of your program staff. In some ways it feels like I blinked, and the time passed. In other ways, especially when I consider the laughter, joys, and grief shared, it feels like we have spent a lifetime together. In every way, the time has been a gift, and my gratitude overflows. The session and congregation of this church make it an absolute joy to work here, and your care for the staff in this place is unmatched. Thank you.

And so it goes that I am preparing for my second sabbatical during my time at UPC. The Session has approved for me to be away March 3 – May 26, 2025. Yes, this is a departure from the “normal” timing! It occurred to me last summer during Vacation Bible School and Montreat Worship & Music that I do not want to be away for those weeks. I do not have the opportunity to spend intentional, lengthy periods of time with the children (and families) of UPC at any other time of year, and I do not want to miss it! When Meg and Jarrett returned from their sabbaticals, I spoke with each of them about the possibility of taking my time earlier than usual.

The focus of my sabbatical will be on sabbath and sacraments. I'm looking forward to the time away - not so much because I need a break as because the brain works differently without a constant to-do list! Sabbath time will allow me more space to be creative and to think about the bigger picture of children's ministry in this place. During my time at UPC, one of the things that has always been on my list (and never made it to the top!) is to implement a workshop for children and their trusted adults about baptism and communion. These are both integral parts of our faith, and we know that all are welcome to participate. And yet I think the sacramental experiences for children might be made richer with a bit more exploration into what each one means. And so I will spend time reading about table and font, considering how the mystery of it all might best be conveyed to children. I hope to have a class crafted by the time I return so it can be implemented beginning next program year!

The travel part is not yet set in stone, though plans are being made! I'll carry the sacrament theme through in my own travels as well. I hope to spend some time on water and gathered around tables enjoying good food and conversation with family and friends. I have been invited by the Presbyterian Foundation to travel to Arlington, VA, in mid-March to gather with a small group of Millennial and Gen X pastors to talk about ministry and think creatively about the future. Over Memorial Day weekend, I will have the chance to attend my first Indy 500 with my three nephews, something that has been on my bucket list for some time as somebody from Indianapolis!

The details about coverage in my absence are being worked out and will be communicated before I leave.

A sabbatical will be a wonderful time for me to reflect, dream, grow professionally, and gear up for what is to come. I eagerly anticipate having that opportunity and coming back to you refreshed and ready to move forward in ministry together.



Sabbatical Love Gift: To recognize longevity, it has been this congregation's practice to collect monetary love gifts for staff ahead of their second sabbatical, after ten years of service. To give toward Nancy's sabbatical love gift, please write "Sabbatical love gift" in the memo line of your check, or select "Sabbatical love gift" as the online fund option.

Meet our New Members



Erin Bergstrom & Laura Fieselman

Laura & Erin live on the lane across from UPC's playground. Laura works with a Boston-based climate tech startup and Erin manages a small real estate business. They value UPC's focus on love, gratitude, and community.



Grayson Elliott

Grayson is from Boone, North Carolina, and is a freshman at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



Lew Graham

Lew grew up in Pennsylvania but has moved many times with her husband and two children. She has been an artist all her life, and she is a retired computer analyst.



Tony & Julie Lindsey

Tony is a long time UNC faculty member, and Julie is a physician. They have two young adult children (Mia and Garrett) and enjoy running and spending time outdoors.



Nick Nguyen and Amy Poe (Catharine)

Amy is a lawyer (focus on health care), and Nick is the Chief Administrator for Cardiology at the Duke Medical School. They are parents to Catharine, a beautifully spirited 2 year old.



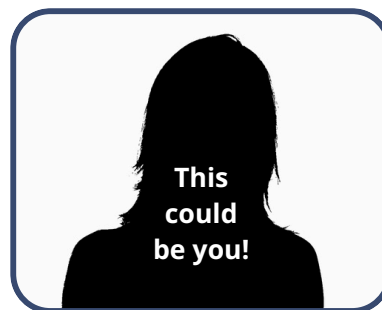
Richard Taylor

Richard and his wife moved here from San Diego in May 2024. They raised all four children in California, two of whom now live in the Triangle.



Betty & John Watson

Betty is a retired speech language pathologist and John is a retired CPA. They moved to Chapel Hill when they retired to be close to their daughter, Tracy, and their granddaughter, Hannah.



Interested in joining UPC?

Our next new member lunch will be Sunday, Feb. 2. Contact Meg Peery McLaughlin (meg@upcch.org) for more information.

Call for Officer Nominations

The congregation is invited to nominate members of UPC for the office of Elder and Deacon for the Nominating Committee to consider as they prepare a slate for the next three-year term (2026-2028). You can submit names online (upcch.org/nominating) or contact any member of the committee: Nancy Oates (chair), John Blythe, Mark Bozyski, Greg Crawford, Heather Hutchins, Caroline Jones, Steve Kennedy, Vicki Lotz, Elizabeth Moshier, Chuck Osborne, and staff liaison Jarrett McLaughlin.

Nominating FAQ:

Who may be suggested as a candidate?

All members are eligible for nomination.

Who may recommend a candidate?

Any member of UPC may recommend candidates.

Do I need permission from the candidate before I submit his or her name?

No, the Nominating Committee will verify candidates' willingness to serve before they are nominated. (You need prior permission only if you choose to make a nomination from the floor during a congregational meeting.)

May I submit my own name?

Yes.

Session Report

In November and December 2024, the UPC Session:

- Examined and welcomed the new incoming class of Elders and Deacons
- Welcomed 10 new members
- Approved revisions to the Personnel Manual
- Approved the 2025 Session Calendar
- Approved the endorsement of Alli Buikema in her Candidacy for Ordination
- Approved the Sabbatical request of Nancy Myer and the collection of a Love Gift.
- Approved the purchase of a chiller from Dail Mechanical
- Heard a report from Local Outreach on the volunteer opportunities for MLK Day
- Approved the 2025 UPPS budget and tuition and fees for 2025/26
- Received a report from the Stewardship Committee
- Received a report on the 2023 Church audit and preliminary 2025 budget
- Received an update from Berry French on the state of PCM



A PC(U.S.A.) Congregation



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