

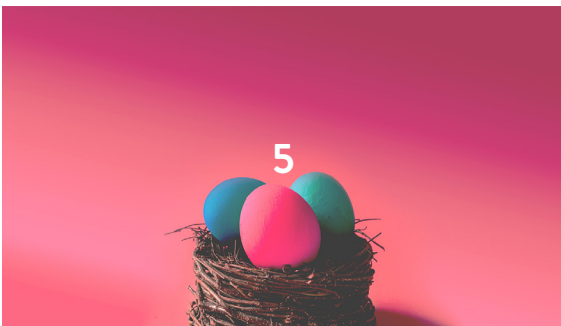


Parish *Life*

UNITED CHRISTIAN PARISH • APRIL 2022



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ON THE COVER

Boy finds egg at annual Easter Egg hunt
photo by: Ashley Aschenbach



EASTER

is APRIL 17

Celebrate Easter with United Christian Parish at 10 AM! Expect powerful music, communion and an inspiring message on living an expansive life that concludes our sermon series, “Full to the Brim.”

[Register](#) to worship onsite or worship [online](#) from wherever you are! If you plan to worship online and live locally, communion cups will be outside door 1 the week leading up to Easter.

Flowers, given in honor or memory of your loved ones, will beautify the sanctuary. Names will be displayed in worship. The Congregational Care Ministry will deliver the flowers to members in need of cheer after worship. Place your flower order by April 7: ucpreston.org/easter-flowers.

FULL TO THE BRIM: UPCOMING SERVICES

Our Lenten sermon series, “Full to the Brim,” disrupts the scarcity mindset so easily adopted in a performative world that has been pierced with pandemic, war and oppression. It reminds us to live fully, to trust—fully—that we belong to God. Join us for worship as we continue on our Lenten journey and into Holy Week.



FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT: BRAZEN ACTS OF BEAUTY

April 3 • 10 AM • communion • John 12:1-8

We are reminded God is brazen in turning tears into joy. Not long after their brother, Lazarus, dies and is raised from the dead, Mary and Martha joyfully welcome Jesus into their home. Mary anoints Jesus with a fragrance that fills the whole room. Mary is boldly celebrating the beauty of life even as death approaches. How can we exhibit brazen faith?



MAUNDY THURSDAY: TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES

April 14 • 7 PM • communion • John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Jesus chose to use his final hours to establish intimate connections with his disciples, stooping low to wash their feet. In the midst of this connection, he offered a new commandment: to love others as he loves us. The service will be interactive, around tables in the sanctuary, and includes a foot (or hand) washing.



PALM SUNDAY: EVEN THE STONES CRY OUT

April 10 • 10 AM • Luke 19:28-40

As Jesus enters Jerusalem, the disciples shout with praise. The Pharisees try to silence them, but Jesus responds: “I tell you, even if these were silent, the stones would shout out.” All of creation cries out with praise—that message rises above the noise, even if the oppressive powers want to silence it. As we begin Holy Week, let us ask: What is bubbling up that we need to give voice to—faith questions, issues of justice, truth-telling?



GOOD FRIDAY: A CUP OF SORROW

April 15 • 12 PM • John 19:1-30

In John’s account of Jesus’ death, Jesus’ final words are: “I am thirsty...it is finished.” He is offered a jar of sour wine as he takes his final breaths. Even here, God’s love is full, poured out, self-emptied. In his last moments, Jesus is overflowing with truth and the fullness of the human experience. God embodies the fullness of pain. In the silence of this day, let us, too, sit in the fullness of this cup of sorrow. The service is with Washington Plaza Baptist Church.

Services are onsite and online. Please register to worship onsite. Registrations are on our Eventbrite page: ucpreston.eventbrite.com.

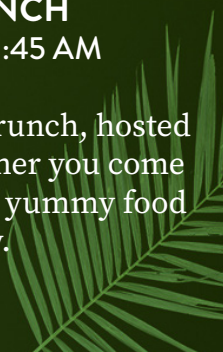
HOLY WEEK EVENTS



PALM SUNDAY BRUNCH

April 10 • 9-9:45 AM & 11-11:45 AM

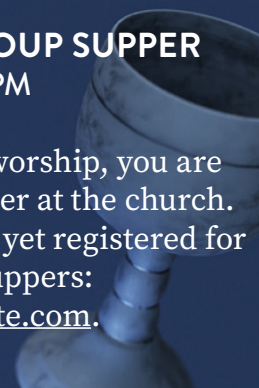
You are invited to an outdoor brunch, hosted by the Fellowship Team. Whether you come before or after worship, expect yummy food and good company.



MAUNDY THURSDAY SOUP SUPPER

April 14 • 6:30 PM

Prior to Maundy Thursday worship, you are invited to a simple soup dinner at the church. Please sign up if you have not yet registered for the Lenten Soup Suppers: ucpreston.eventbrite.com.



HOLY WEEK PRAYER STATIONS

April 11 • 12-9 PM

April 12-15 • 9 AM-9 PM

Holy Week prayer stations are self-guided and are set up in the sanctuary. They are a meaningful way to engage with the last week of Jesus' life on earth in a multi-sensory way. Come as your schedule allows.



EASTER FESTIVAL

April 16 • 10-11 AM

Children of all ages and their families are welcome to our Easter Festival! The Festival includes an outdoor egg hunt, activities and crafts for all ages, and Easter treats for the whole family to enjoy.

Make sure to secure your and your children's tickets by April 15, 4 PM:
ucpreston.eventbrite.com



Sabbatical



Pastor Beth Williams
Co-Pastor

I find it hard to believe, but I have been serving at UCP for seven years! Seven years—that means that I am eligible for a sabbatical. A ministry sabbatical is neither an extended vacation nor is it the same as an academic sabbatical that normally involves extensive study. It is a period of time when ministry leaders and congregations set aside the leader’s normal responsibilities for the purpose of rest and renewal toward sustained excellence in ministry. As such, ministry sabbatical is a release from the routine of the call for the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual well-being of the pastor. The word sabbatical is drawn from Sabbath. The Hebrew word for Sabbath means “to close or rest” and is connected with the last day of Creation when God rested (Genesis 2:3). God both models and commands Sabbath rest for his people. “Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8-11).

Jesus affirmed the importance of rest saying, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27-28).

The Biblical example of Jesus’ own frequent withdrawal to a quiet place to meditate, pray and be renewed is a model. In his ministry, the constant demands of people led Jesus to step away on a regular basis.

Bill Gaultiere, co-founder of Soul Shepherding (a website with resources for pastors), writes in *A Sabbatical Guide for Pastors*:

A true Sabbatical is a season of Sabbath for prolonged rest. It’s like stringing together a number of Sabbath days. It’s an extended time in which you do no work. You do no pastoring, no leading, no ministering, no visioning the future of the church, no sermon planning. You don’t try to accomplish anything big. You just do nothing!...Don’t try to make anything happen! Just be with God. But most of us in Christian leadership can’t

rest and BE that freely. So, Christian scholar, Dallas Willard, would say, “First, you need to train in extended solitude and silence with Jesus.”

Eventually, after your body stops jittering, after your thoughts stop flitting about, after you start feeling your emotions, after your ideal self that performs and pleases is dismantled, after you experience your nothingness and nakedness before God, after you experience unconditional love, then you can hopefully begin to really rest in your body and soul.¹

I can imagine that is what it will be like for me. It will be hard for me not to check my email, or my texts, or Slack (how we communicate as a staff). It will be hard for me not to worry whether or not everything will be covered while I am gone. It will be hard for me because I love my service at UCP and the work that I do, but it will be good for me. Good for me to spend dedicated time with my husband as we visit Egypt and Petra, good for me to have time to spend with my hands in the dirt in the garden, good for me to take long walks in the woods and maybe even get the kayaks out of the garage and into the water. It will be good for me to rest in body and soul.

And it will be good to be back. There is so much that I am looking forward to as we move into the future together: our vibrant hybrid worship ministry continuing even as hopefully more faces are able to return to worship, children’s laughter in Vacation Bible School, time to evaluate and reenergize our ministries, and a 50th anniversary of UCP to plan. So, thank you for this sabbatical opportunity. I will be away for a month following Easter doing no pastoring, no leading, no ministering, no visioning the future of the church, no sermon planning, but I will be praying, praying for this congregation and for the unique and precious parish that this is.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Beth

¹Gaultiere, B. *A Sabbatical Guide for Pastors*. Soul Shepherding. <https://www.soulshepherding.org/sabbatical-guide-pastors>



EARTH DAY



Beth Hetzler

Environmental Justice Team

Earth Day, April 22, is a yearly event to focus on and demonstrate support for environmental protection. With the growing number of natural disasters, the alarming predictions of continued climate change effects, and the lack of major progress to address it, it's easy to feel that nothing we can do as individuals will make a difference.

So what can one person do? I like the approach in the October 22, 2021, *Washington Post* article, "You asked: What can I do as a teenager to stop climate change?" ([washingtonpost.com/climate-solutions/2021/10/22/teen-youth-fight-change-ideas](https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-solutions/2021/10/22/teen-youth-fight-change-ideas/)). Find something that calls to you and start there. Then share what you are doing. As we talk about our concerns and our actions, this raises awareness, and encourages others to join. It will take all of us to protect the environment and battle climate change, and sharing what you are doing helps build energy and momentum. Once you look, there are many ideas for actions one person—or one family—can take:

- Use reusable grocery bags and mesh produce bags rather than plastic
- Cut down on food waste
- Shop at consignment and thrift stores rather than buying new
- Reduce the amount of meat you eat, especially beef
- Use wool dryer balls to reduce dryer time and eliminate single use dryer sheets or fabric softener in plastic bottles



Sunset on the Potomac (photo by Beth Hetzler)

- Participate in a cleanup project (see earthday.org)
- Carry a bag and pick up trash whenever you walk or hike
- Read what others at United Christian Parish are doing in "Your Voices" on the following pages

Finally, take time to enjoy what we are working to protect. Revel in the beauty of our natural home, from the small to the grand: the intricacies of a single flower petal, a bird's melody, the glory of a sunset, the sound of waves on a beach. Research shows that spending time in nature has real health benefits, including lower stress, better mental concentration, lower blood pressure, and general feelings of well being. So give yourself time to truly appreciate "the beauty of the earth" and "the glory of the skies."

Your VOICES

WHAT IS ONE THING YOU ARE DOING THIS YEAR TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE OR TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT?



“Taking my plastic bags to the grocery store and opting for paper bags when I can, and taking my glass bottles to the recycling center.”

Menda Ahart



“Besides recycling and limiting use of single use plastics and aluminum foil and unnecessary packaging, I am serving on the Rescue Reston organization committee to try to keep the golf course as open space.”

Sue Beffel



“Always taking reusable grocery bags and reusable mesh produce bags for shopping.”

Beth Hetzler



“Putting organic material from the house into a compost pile rather than down the disposal.”

Bill Jackson



“I am separating my glass from recyclables and taking it to the special containers.”

Mary Jackson



“Shopping at thrift stores.”

Millie Lyons



“Buying a Tesla was an easy decision for me because it creates no polluting by-products, requires almost zero maintenance, is fun to drive, and keeps improving via wi-fi software updates so no trips to the service center. I am proud to be contributing to all of us having a better environment.”

Jim McConnell



“I've starting using shampoo bars and laundry detergent sheets to reduce the number of plastic bottles our household uses.”

Kristy Pullen



“My contribution is to not eat any animal products. Vegetarian and vegan diets are associated with the greatest reductions in greenhouse-gas emissions. The World Health Organization has stated that reducing livestock herds would also reduce the emissions of methane, which is the second largest contribution to global warming, after carbon dioxide. I am making a difference by not contributing to the global need for feed for cattle, chickens and pigs, as well as the overharvesting of fish from our oceans.”

Sylvia Robinson



“Making adjustments to carpool more.”

Al Turner



“Stopping use of plastic bags and water bottles and recycling everything I can.”

Sonja Vaughan



“When I can, such as when I want something from CVS, Whole Foods or Michaels, I walk to Plaza America rather than drive.”

Steve Webb

Let's hear your voice! May's question:
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PARK OR OUTDOOR AREA TO FEEL GOD'S PRESENCE?
 Submit your answer to parishlife1@ucpreston.org by April 15.



APRIL 24 • 10 AM

On Earth Day Sunday, we celebrate God's creation and reflect on our responsibility to steward it through worship, education and action. We are excited to have our Youth lead the Earth Day service.

March Board Report

by Pastor Beth

Ministerial Co-Moderator, Board

COVID POLICY UPDATE

To ensure the safety of children under five, who cannot yet be vaccinated, the following amendment to UCP's policy on mask wearing was approved by consensus:

To maintain masks in the sanctuary for services and other indoor activities where children under 5 years old are present until vaccines are available for these youngest children.

PARISH ASSOCIATE

The Board renewed the Parish Associate relationship with Rev. Lloyd Kinzer. This relationship is an annual contract about which we notify the Presbytery.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

We discussed possible grant opportunities which were referred to the Missions Ministry and the Justice and Peace Ministry Team (JPMT) to see if any of these align with one of their priorities.

MORE THAN ENOUGH CAMPAIGN

We discussed the invitation to contribute to the More than Enough Campaign of the Christian

Church (Disciples of Christ). The Disciples' goal is to raise \$100,000 each of next three years (and maybe longer) to support a regional minister and make the position more sustainable. We currently have a Disciples interim regional minister. At this time the Board decided that, given our policy to treat our four denominations the same, if we were to give more to the Disciples, we would also need to give more to the other denominations. With a large shortfall forecast, we cannot afford to do more this year.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The Board set the date for the Congregational Meeting to elect a new slate of officers to be held on Pentecost, June 5, at 11:30 AM, and the date for the joint meeting of old and new members of the Board and Parish Ministry Council to be on Tuesday, June 14. This will be a hybrid meeting beginning at 6:30 PM.

CLOSING PRAYERS

We closed with joys and concerns and prayers for the Ukrainian people and for people suffering civil war in Africa.

A Message from Lay Leadership Nominating Committee (LLNC)

Members of the LLNC are carefully discerning nominees for the many opportunities for members to participate in the life and work of our Parish. Eighteen people will be needed to fill openings in various positions for 2-year and 3-year terms. Thankfully, we have had some positive responses since beginning the nomination process. We will continue our work to fill all the positions before the end of May and welcome your suggestions on possible nominees from our church family.

When the LLNC has discerned that someone has the gifts and heart for a particular position, nomination letters are sent via email and a member of the LLNC follows up with a phone call. Duties and responsibilities of each position are made available to the nominees. Even if you have served in the past, we invite you to review these descriptions as many of the positions have changed. For instance, the Board only meets monthly and has streamlined its work thus avoiding lengthy meetings. All of the positions are structured to be part of a team so that no one has to do too much, with each encouraging and supporting one another in that specific ministry.

This year, we will elect two 3-year Board members, one 2-year Board member, three 3-year Human and Administrative Resources Council (HARC) members, one 2-year HARC member, one Finance Council member, one Buildings and Grounds member, two Preschool Advisory Committee (PAC) members, three LLNC members, and three Congregational Care members.

Your suggestions can be sent to Nancy Vollmer, LLNC Chair, at nanwvollmer@gmail.com. The election of the final slate of nominees will be held on Pentecost Sunday, June 5, at the Congregational Meeting. With your help and God's grace we can accomplish our work.

God, We Need Your Archangel – Saint Michael – to Help Again!



Bob Pitulej

Board Member of Ukrainian descent

And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven, and that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan; who seduceth the whole world; and he was cast unto the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

APOCALYPSE 12:7-9

Once again, the world needs the protection of Saint Michael the Archangel—this time for the people of Ukraine. We pray for the people in Ukraine suffering atrocities, brutalities, displacements, and other hardships.

Once again, we search our souls and ask ourselves why do these terrible things happen on this earth? I have no answer—but perhaps a starting point is to discern what Saint Francis de Sales wrote over three hundred years ago, “Veneration of Saint Michael is the great remedy against despising the rights of God, against insubordination, skepticism, and infidelity.”

Why do we turn to Saint Michael the Archangel in these troubling times? In 1917 (when World War I was ending), Padre Pio encouraged his spiritual children to have devotion to the Holy Archangel, because “you will need the help of Saint Michael living in this world!”

Please join me in this prayer for the people of Ukraine.

PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL

(by Padre Pio in 1917)

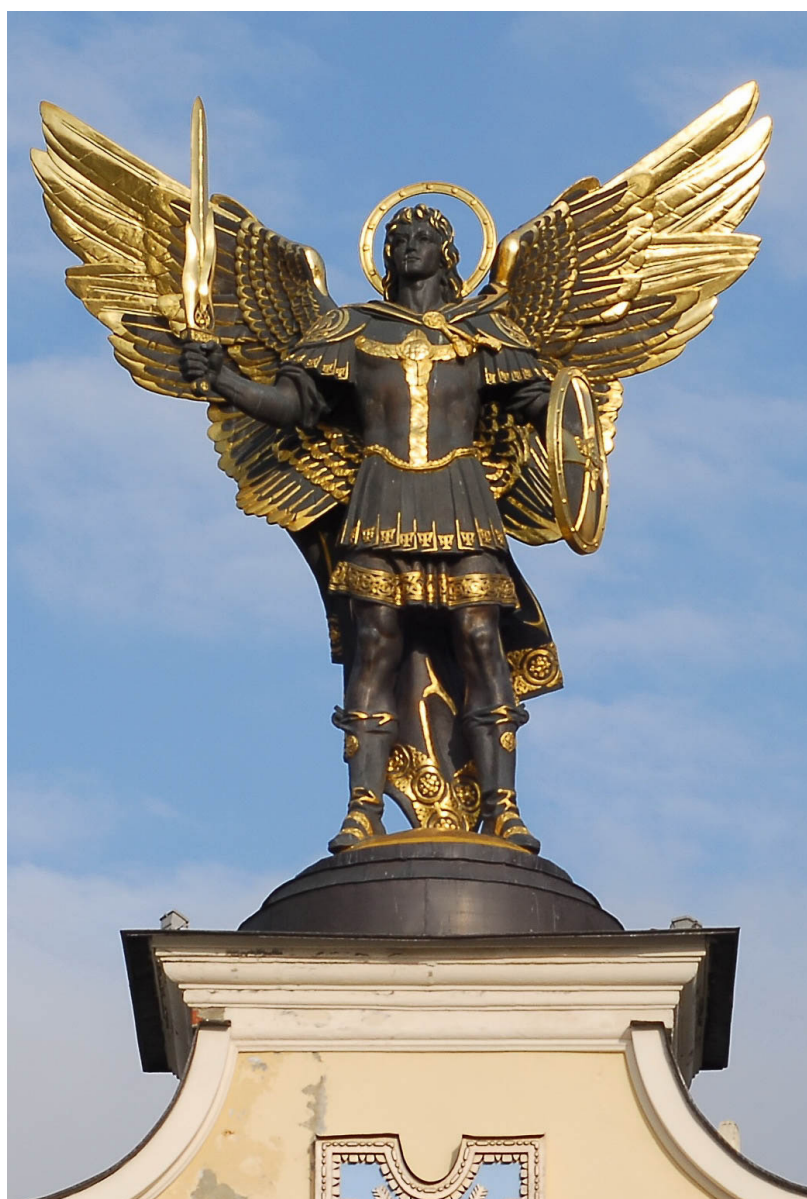
*Saint Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.*

*Be our protection against the wickedness and snares
of the devil.*

*May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou,*

*O Prince of the Heavenly Host,
by the power of God,
cast into hell Satan,
and all evil spirits,*

*who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.*



The St. Michael the Archangel statue is located in Kyiv.



A Practical Way to Help Ukrainian Refugees

Annerieke Owen
Missions Ministry Chair

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGION LAUNCHES AID EFFORT

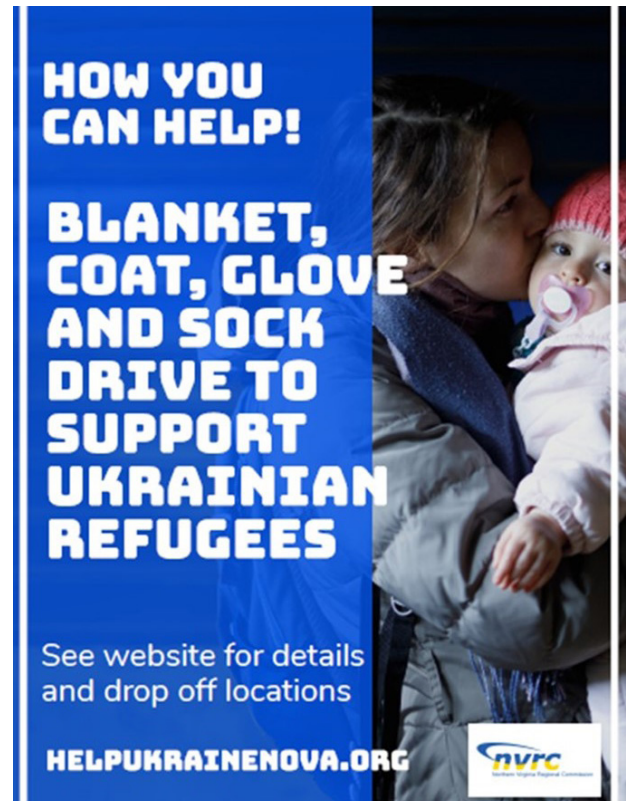
Local leaders and community members, organized by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, have launched a donation drive for Ukrainian refugees. Needed donations:

- New/gently used coats
- New blankets
- New pairs of sweat/heavy socks
- New pairs of gloves

There are over 40 locations to drop off donations. For a full list of locations, visit: helpukrainenova.org. If you live in the Reston/Herndon area, here are two nearby locations:

- Reston: Office of Hunter Mill District Supervisor Walter Alcorn (1801 Cameron Glen Drive)
- Herndon: Northwest Credit Union lobby (200 Spring Street); Monday-Friday, 9 AM-6 PM, or Saturday, 9 AM-1 PM

You can also drop off your donation at UCP on Wednesdays at the food drop off or on Sundays outside the sanctuary in the boxes marked “Donations for Ukraine.” Goods can be donated



no later than April 14 as the items must then be boxed and secured for shipping. Two moving companies will donate their staff and boxes to pack the donations and ship the boxes at no cost to Poland, where they will make their way to those in need in Poland and Ukraine.

SUPPORT THE CITIZENS OF UKRAINE FINANCIALLY

Looking to support the citizens of Ukraine financially? Consider donating through our denominations.

Presbyterian Mission: Donate to the Presbyterian (U.S.A.) Disaster Relief-International Refugee Programs (DR000156): pma.pcusa.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/DR000156

United Church of Christ (UCC) Ukraine Relief Fund: Gifts to UCC Ukraine Relief Fund provide shelter, food, and other care to refugees: support.ucc.org/global-h-o-p-e/ukraine-emergency-appeal

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR): Provide assistance to those in Ukraine and to Ukrainians fleeing to neighboring countries by contributing to Advance #982450, UMCOR International Disaster Response and Recovery: umcmmission.org/umcor/ukraine

Week of Compassion of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): When designated for International Emergency Response, 100% of your gift serves those impacted by this crisis: weekofcompassion.org/donate.html

Looking to give through another organization? Charity Navigator lists highly-rated nonprofits engaged in relief and recovery efforts in Ukraine and the surrounding region: charitynavigator.org.

Prayers for Ukraine

Submitted by Pastor Beth Williams

Gracious and Merciful God,
We pray today for the Ukrainian people and ask for Your intervention in this senseless war levied against them by Russia. We pray, O God, for protection and that there would be peace. We pray for restoration and renewed hope.

We pray for the families, especially, the children living through the horrors of war and all the upheaval and tribulation it brings.

We also pray for those protesting in Russia against these violent acts by their government. We ask that you would protect, cover and keep these protesters as they put their bodies on the line in the name of what is just and righteous.

We pray for the entire world community, including the leaders in our own country. Give them wisdom and ingenuity to respond in ways that ends this war and moves us all to a world where Your peace abides. Hear the cries of Your people, O God. Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Amen.

-From Dr. Tony Kireopoulos, Associate General Secretary, Faith and Order and Interfaith Relations

Lord God,
We ask you to hold the people of Ukraine deep in your heart.

Protect them, we pray;
from violence,

from political gamesmanship,
from being used and abused.

Give, we pray,
the nations of the world the courage
and the wisdom

to stand up for justice
and the courage too,
to dare to care—generously.

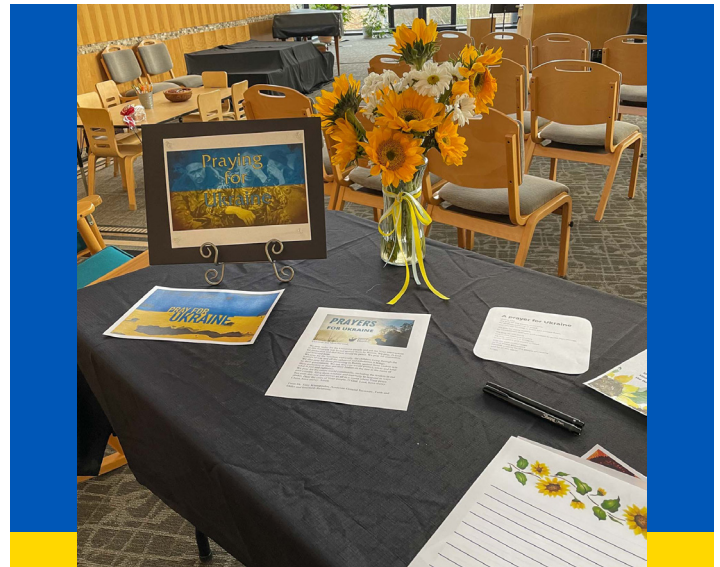
Lord, in your mercy,
take from us all

the tendencies in us
that seek to lord it over others:

take from us those traits
that see us pursuing our own needs and wants
before those of others.

Teach us how to live in love
and dignity and respect—following your example.
In your name and for your sake, Amen.

-Issued by Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland & Rev. Dr. Susan Brown, convener of the Faith Impact Forum, Church of Scotland



Prayers written by UCP adults and youth at the Ash Wednesday prayer station designated for Ukraine:

God, be with the people of Ukraine. May the people of Ukraine demonstrate that love can drive out hate. Bless those who are fleeing the country to save their children.

DEAR GOD, HEAR OUR PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE. KEEP THEM SAFE AND TURN BACK THE AGGRESSORS TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY. HELP OUR LEADERS TO MAKE WISE DECISIONS REGARDING THIS HORRIBLE WAR!



God, I come to you for the people of Ukraine. They are amazing and you are our savior. Please bless each of them. They need you God. In Jesus name, I pray, help them. Amen.



Lord God, Please lend the people of Ukraine strength, courage, and resilience against all that they may face in this difficult time. I'm keeping you in my prayers.

Welcoming Afghans to Virginia



By Marilyn Silvey

It's rare that a volunteer activity brings me to tears, but welcoming four large busloads of Afghans to the United States on March 22 did just that. Watching them enter the National Conference Center in Leesburg shortly after they arrived at Dulles Airport was very emotional for the nearly 50 of us who greeted them, clapped, handed them small American flags, and called "Welcome!" as they entered the registration building. Most were families, with babies and young children, and there were some single men and older women. All had big smiles and thanked us as they accepted the flags.

I had read in a county newspaper that volunteers were sought to welcome the Afghans and signed up. A return email told me when and where to go, asked for ID information, and said I would have a Covid test on arrival. Once there, I learned that this group would be the third to arrive in two weeks, that most groups are between 100 and 300 in size, that they have spent time in countries other than Afghanistan before coming here, and they spend 30 days or less at this center before being divided and sent to communities throughout the United States. While here, they are supplied with clothes, shoes, and other necessities, and have classes and activities for adults and children, to include English lessons for those who need them—some do not, as they have worked with Americans in Afghanistan.

I volunteered after reading in the paper that some Loudoun County residents opposed the Afghans being placed in the conference center, formerly the Xerox Training Center, which I was told has some 900 rooms. While it is in a residential area near a large high school, there are high fences and extensive security. I wanted to show our visitors that Americans welcome them, and I met about a dozen other community

volunteers who had the same reason for coming. The other greeters were employees of the participating organizations.

We had no briefing while there as those in charge were so busy, but talking with some as we waited for the buses to arrive I learned a little about the overall program, Operation Allies Welcome, that has relocated more than 80 thousand Afghan evacuees in the United States since last August.

Chief participants include the International Refugee Commission (IRC), Department of Homeland Security, the Coast Guard, Army, and Public Health Service. The International Organization for Migration works to find homes in communities across the US in every state except Wyoming (no reason given—maybe just that Wyoming has so few people, and communities where some Afghans are already living are sought.) The USCCB—Conference of Catholic Bishops—also has a large role. And there are many others involved.

According to available statistics, Virginia is one of eight states where over half of the Afghan evacuees processed at domestic sites have been resettled. Technically, they are not "refugees" because they were admitted by a special process called "humanitarian parole." In November, a bill was introduced in Congress which the IRC says "would provide a pathway to lawful permanent status for the evacuees giving them the same legal status they could have had if they had been admitted as refugees." This would be similar to previous legislation passed following America's withdrawal from Vietnam.

If you would like more information about greeting future Afghans, contact the Operation Allies Welcome volunteer coordinator at the Leesburg site: naomi.bullock@fema.dhs.gov.



MISSIONS MINISTRY'S SPRINGS ETERNAL

Joellyn Kinzer
Missions Ministry

After the January Annual Church Meeting, the missions team received its budget. The Missions Ministry will continue to disperse the funds according to the mandate given to the Mission Ministry team by UCP. For 2022, we received \$51,505, which is \$1,630 more than last year. This year already has many claims on our budget. Our Lenten offering, One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) will continue until April 15. Donate by mail/check or [online using Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly). Learn more about OGHS: ucpreston.org/one-great-hour.

Children's books for Lake Anne Elementary School's summer reading program are being collected in boxes at the narthex and the lounge area outside room 107 until June. Food donations for Cornerstones' Pantry continue on Wednesdays and first Saturday of the month.

There are many other programs that Missions Ministry gives to throughout the year. One of them holds a special place in UCP's history. In the first decade of this century immigrants were struggling to survive in Northern Virginia. In the early mornings immigrant workers gathered in shopping center storefronts hoping to be hired for the day. Employers took advantage of their unskilled labor, their language skills, and business knowledge. Former UCP Pastor Joan Bell-Hanes related how one key issue facing the workers was wage theft.



One laborer shared his experience of not being paid for several weeks and, finally, when he received a check from the employer, it bounced. This action compromised for years the laborer's relationship with the business owner who cashed his check.

Wage theft is difficult to prosecute for many reasons, but in 2011, Well Springs UCC and other churches in the Centreville area worked together through the Centreville Immigration Forum (CIF) to establish the Centreville Labor Resource Center (CLRC) to strategize with laborers, business owners, and the community to address their problems in positive ways.

Supported by UCP, the mission of the CIF and CLRC is to provide a safe, organized center where residents and contractors can negotiate work arrangements with day laborers. CLRC has worked successfully to reduce wage theft. They also provide ongoing educational (like ESL) and vocational training workshops (like in remodeling and construction). Their vision is an inclusive community that accepts and provides opportunity for all immigrants.

Their programs include members in leadership and decision-making, building community power, and supporting the stability and self-sufficiency of immigrants with very low income and residents who seek employment as day laborers. During the pandemic, CIF organized food assistance for families in need. Because many workers do not have cars, CIF volunteers provide rides to medical and immigration appointments. UCP will continue to support them through volunteers' time and the much-appreciated donations of its members and friends.

In addition to giving to UCP, you can support the work of CIF and CLRC by making a personal donation or by volunteering. Donations can be made [online](https://www.tithe.ly) or by mailing a check payable to Centreville Immigration Forum to P.O. Box 81 Centreville, VA 20122. Opportunities to volunteer with the CLRC are detailed on CIF's website: centrevilleimmigrationforum.org. CLRC is located at 5944 Centreville Crest Ln., Centreville, VA 20121.

SEXUAL DIVERSITY WEBINAR DEBRIEF



Larry Pullen
Justice & Peace Ministry Team co-chair

The Justice & Peace Ministry Team (JPMT) sponsored a highly informative webinar on “Educating Ourselves on Sexual Diversity to Become Better Allies” led by Dr. Landi Turner on February 26.

If you are like me I suspect that you have heard reference to “orders of creation” or that God created human nature and that nature doesn’t change. Much of the time these references have been made to justify some oppressive status quo. Of course, as we become more aware of the configuration of human nature our perspectives change. This webinar in articulating the vast diversity of sexual identity and orientation certainly challenged the participants. Dr. Turner defined a variety of terms such as sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex, cisgender, and transgender to name just a few of the concepts addressed. For the approximately thirty participants the event seemed to be highly valuable. Subsequently, Dr. Turner has given JPMT notes and definitions upon which she based the webinar. Those documents are available on UCP’s website: ucpreston.org/open-and-affirming.

While the webinar was particularly helpful in addressing the biological, psychological, social, and emotional dimensions of sexual diversity, several members of United Christian Parish have expressed an interest in looking further into the theological and biblical understanding and resources needed to be an effective ally. As a result of this expressed interest, look for additional JPMT sponsored programming in the near future.

I’M GONNA WASH THAT SCAM(MER) RIGHT OUTA’ MY HAIR!



Ginny Johnson

Who, me? Yes. But I was sure I had this covered. I helped rescue a friend years ago who got a call that they were coming to her house for more money after she had stopped sending checks.

However, when I received an email two weeks ago from a trusted friend asking me for a favor, I gladly responded, “Of course! What is it?”

“Well, I’m in a late meeting; first thing tomorrow I want to surprise staff with a couple of gift cards for their hard work and dedication. Would you purchase them for me? I’ll reimburse you promptly.”

I thought, “What a lovely idea, and aren’t you generous?”...*until* much, much later, when I learned that this was *not* my friend asking, and by that time, the cards had already been cashed.

Meanwhile, my feelings for this friend changed from admiration, to guilt for wondering about their sanity, to being embarrassed for even thinking they had been responsible for this scam, to feeling so humiliated, so downright stupid that I myself was completely duped.

If you can relate to any of this, such as having been approached for a large amount of money (for example, a \$500 gift card) and want to know more of what I did, or just talk about your own experience, let me know via the newsletter editor. Now I want to do whatever I can to stop this scammer and others from continuing to make their living fraudulently.

Good news is, God forgives me, over and over again, and I am grateful. Please pray with me for persons who prey upon vulnerable and trusting folks like me, and maybe you. Let us all pray for prey-ers!

PACODC CONCERT IS APRIL 2



Lois McMahon

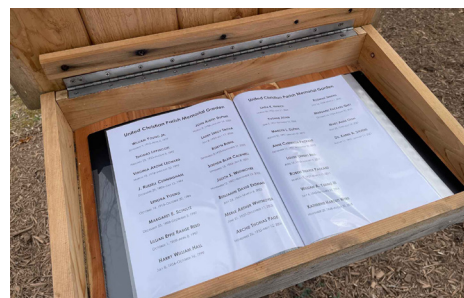
This Saturday, April 2, the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Greater Washington (PACODc) will hold its third concert of the season in our sanctuary at 7:30 PM. The featured artist will be Misha Tumanov playing Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20. The orchestra will also perform Hayden's Overture in D and Schubert's Symphony No. 9. Come hear UCP's talented music director showcase his amazing talent. Tickets can be purchased at PACODc's website: pacodc.org. Concert attendees will follow UCP's guidelines concerning masks and COVID protocol.



VISIT THE MEMORIAL GARDEN



Spring and summer days are lovely times to visit UCP's Memorial Garden for quiet meditation and prayer. It is down the hill from the sanctuary, near the dogwood tree along the driveway that is a memorial to Jimmy Vollmer. The just-updated Memorial Garden registry has the names of 28 church members, relatives and friends whose ashes have been scattered there. We are one of two Reston churches which have such places, designed for easy accessibility, remembrance, and peaceful times for visitors. For more information about the Memorial Garden, ask our pastors.



NEW PODCAST EPISODE WITH KERRIE WILSON

Conversations in Color, UCP's podcast, released its fifth episode this week. In this episode, Pastor Marcus sits down with Kerrie Wilson, Chief Executive Officer of Cornerstones. For 50 years, Cornerstones has been helping Northern Virginia neighbors overcome tough economic times. Kerrie and Pastor Marcus engage in conversation around how we can respond and love our neighbor. Listeners can expect to learn more about Kerrie, her work as Cornerstones CEO, and the mission of Cornerstones, which is "Hope for Tomorrow Today." Pastor Marcus concludes the episode discussing the Gospel of Matthew in light of his conversation with Kerrie and the situation in Ukraine. Listen on [Apple Podcasts](https://applepodcasts.com) or on our website: ucpreston.org/podcast.

CONVERSATIONS IN COLOR



United Christian Parish Blood Drive

WHEN:

Saturday, April 30, 2022

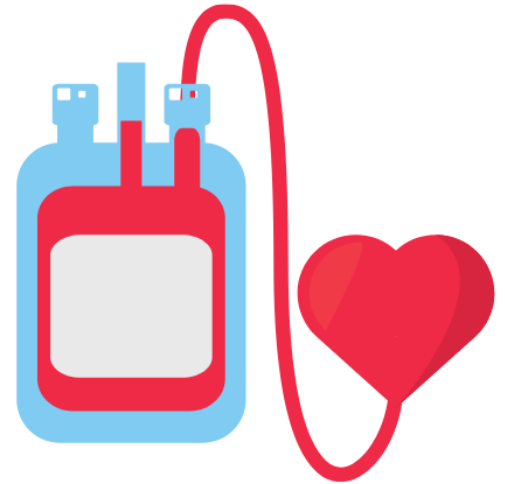
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

WHERE:

11508 North Shore Dr.

Reston, VA

The Inova Blood Donor Services Bloodmobile will be located in the parking lot.



**Every Drop Counts.
Donate Blood.**

Book Your Appointment Today

- Visit <https://bit.ly/ucp0430>
- Call 1(866) 256-6372, use Sponsor Code 8632
- Contact Deborah Aschenbach - deborah.aschenbach58@gmail.com



inovablood.org

Photo ID and surgical face masks required. Surgical face masks will be provided if needed. Allow one hour for your donation.

Prayer List

Submitted this month:

Sue Beffel & Family

Amy Day
(Beth Hetzler's niece)

Mary & Joel Keiler

Jack Moore

Cassandra Partridge

Sylvia Robinson

Judy Roe

Lillian Whipple
(Millie Lyons' sister)

The Ukrainian people

Continued prayers for:

Omilara Badou

Barbara Bonner

De Brown
(Diane Truman's sister)

Sharon Castelda

Cecilia Collins
(Beverly Cosham's sister)

Amanda Dance
(Tammi Leathers' friend)

Eleanor Dickey

Ruth Dove, Fred & Mary Dove
(Debra Bailey's colleague & Ruth's parents)

Joyce Duke

Keith Elder
(Kathleen Elder's brother)

Aiden Espinoza
(Rhonda Savage's nephew)

Pauline Fields
(Cheryl Fields' mother)

Jeff Flood

Keith Gercke
(Larry Gsellman's nephew)

Patty Gehring

Larry Gsellman

Amy Haseltine
(Suzanne Rudiselle's niece)

Betty Jones
(Joan Braxton's friend)

Jamie Kauffman
(Yvonne Kauffman's granddaughter)

Conrad Kilinski & family
(Jane & Ken Plum's grandson)

Bud Leatherwood
(Kathy Leatherwood's father-in-law)

Lily
(Cheryl & Jeff Smith's great-granddaughter)

Sarah Lovell

Donald Lowell
(Debbie Aschenbach's father)

Joyce Mahan & Nancy Embry
(Steve Webb's sisters)

Joe McGregor
(Karen Young's father)

Loreen Mnyulwa & family

Ann Moore
(Cheryl Fields' brother's mother-in-law)

Vivian Nixon

Elsa Nygard

Pam Olmes

Staci Partridge
(Cassandra Partridge's sister)

Ben Pogue
(Suzanne Rudiselle's brother)

Rev. Melinda Reed

Juliana Roe
(Judy Roe's granddaughter)

Dale & Barbara Rogers
(Melinda Reed's friends)

Rev. Suzanne Rudiselle

Janet Ruhan
(Sheila & Richard Allen's daughter)

Martha Safstrom
(Rev. Melinda Reed's aunt)

Mary Steinmann
(Rich Steinmann's mother)

Craig Stevens
(Al Stevens' son)

Ron Strapel
(Trudy McCrea's father)

Swanger family
(Trudy McCrea's mother & step-father)

Rebecca Turner

Jack Vandenberg
(Cynthia Luck Shearer's friend)

Joe & Patrick Waugh
(Debra Bailey's brothers)

Sarah Webb
(Steve Webb's daughter-in-law)

Dudley Williams
(Cynthia Luck Shearer's friend)

Kelly Zimmerman
(Jeff & Gail Flood's daughter)

SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST:
ucpreston.org/prayer

REMOVE A PRAYER REQUEST:
heidi@ucpreston.org

THANK YOU FROM THE PELZNER

Thank you for the cards, emails, and texts we received on the death of our son, Carl. We appreciated your sentiments and caring.
~Barbara and Adrian Pelzner



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 10
 Normal Sunday schedule
onsite & online
 brunch before and after service

PRAYER STATIONS, APRIL 11-15
sanctuary

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 14
 7 PM Communion Service
onsite & online

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 15
 12 PM Community Service
onsite & online

EASTER FESTIVAL, APRIL 16
 10 AM
onsite

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 17
 10 AM Communion Service
onsite & online
 no Sunday School

for more info:
ucpreston.org/holy-week
ucpreston.org/easter

onsite worship registration info:
ucpreston.eventbrite.com

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP NOTES

Onsite Registration
 Registration for Holy Week and Easter worship is open. Registration for Sunday services closes at 4 PM on the Saturday before. Registration for Maundy Thursday worship closes April 14 at 12 PM. Registration for Good Friday closes April 14 at 4 PM.

Online
 All services are livestreamed on Church Online, YouTube and Facebook and are available for later viewing.

LENT & HOLY WEEK DEVOTIONS

Devotions are based on our Lenten sermon series, “Full to the Brim” and are designed to help you draw near to Jesus through scripture, prayer and reflection. Four devotions are posted each Sunday of Lent, on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and on Easter. Go through them at your own pace during the week: ucpreston.org/lent-devotions.



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL DURING LENT

Sundays, 11:15 AM
 We offer two Adult Sunday School classes, Bible 101 and Living Your Faith. During Lent, Bible 101 journeys through the Gospel of John. The Living Your Faith class is themed “Enough: God’s Blessings in Abundance.” This study encourages you to look at what is most important to have in life-God’s blessings, which are in abundance, for us. Readings are written by well-known scholars and feature Scripture, prayer, commentary, and reflection questions.

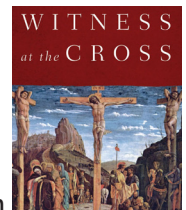
Upcoming topics:
 April 3: Enough Is Good for the Body
 April 10: How Much Is Enough to Leave Our Children?
 Join Bible 101 or Living Your Faith are online ([Zoom](https://zoom.us)) or onsite (register weekly using the link in the Weekly Connection). Sunday School does not meet on Easter Sunday.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Collected through April 15
 This Lent, you are invited to give to the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering. OGHS donations support the ministries of our four denominations that respond to disaster, provide refugee assistance, and lead community development efforts around the world. In 2021, \$11,540 was given to One Great Hour of Sharing. Give to OGHS [online](#) (select OGHS in the give to menu) or by check with OGHS in the memo line.

BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays, 10 AM
 Grow in your knowledge of God’s Word in ways that make a difference in your life. Whether you’re a new believer or a long-time follower of Christ, you are invited to join Bible Study! Now through April 13, Bible Study is guided by *Witness at the Cross: A Beginners Guide to Holy Friday*, by Amy-Jill Levine. Join online ([Zoom](https://zoom.us)) or onsite (room 117).



CHURCH WORK DAY

April 2, 9 AM-12 PM
 The Building & Grounds Team invites you to help with yard work around the building. Many hands make the work go much faster (it’s more fun too!). There will be jobs for all ages and abilities. Contact Debbie Aschenbach, deborah.aschenbach58@gmail.com, with any questions.

NOTES

RENTAL OPPORTUNITY

A UCP female member is seeking a female roommate to share her two-bedroom Reston townhouse. Quiet neighborhood, great neighbors, plenty of parking. Must like cats. For more information, contact Pastor Marcus, marc@ucpreston.org.

WE ARE HIRING

We are seeking applicants for the Director of our NAEYC-accredited, VA licensed preschool. The Preschool is a part-day program which is inclusive and focuses on the nurture of the whole child. The Preschool uses Creative Curriculum and Conscious Discipline. We are seeking someone with a degree and experience in Early Childhood Education and administrative skills. Send cover letters and resumes to jobs@ucpreston.org. Closing date: April 22.

CARE & PRAYER

SAMARITAN OF THE MONTH

Have a need for transportation, prayer or assistance? Contact the April Samaritan of the Month, Marilyn Silvey, by email marilynsilvey@comcast.net or by phone, 571-918-0317.



INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Fridays, 11:30 AM

Share prayer concerns and pray for others through intercessory prayer led by Pastor Marcus. Drop in on any Friday on [Zoom](#).



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

July 11-15

Join us for a week of fun at On the Case Vacation Bible School! On the Case is filled with Bible-learning investigations, team-building games, unforgettable songs, yummy snacks and more. VBS is for children 4 years-incoming 4th grade and is from 9:30-12:30. Our Vacation Bible Adventure is for incoming 5th and 6th graders and is from 9:30-4:30 every day. Learn more about cost, registration and how to volunteer: ucpreston.org/vbs.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Bring an empty stomach and a friend to breakfast on the third Saturday of the month. Meet at 8 AM at Silver Diner (11951 Killingsworth Ave, Reston, VA 20194). Contact Jim Vollmer, jamesvollmerjv@gmail.com or 703-964-6402, for more information.

SPRING REVIVAL

April 6-8, daily at 7:30 PM

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Christian Church invites you to its Annual Fires Of Revival Spring Service on Zoom. Pastor Marcus preaches at the Friday evening service (April 8). Learn more: mlkchristianchurch.org.

Zoom Information

[Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 488 078 4920

Password: 261215

TOILETRY DRIVE

April 3-10

Persons experiencing homelessness face significant barriers to self-care and personal hygiene. After watching a YouTube interview with an unhoused person who describes his greatest challenge to living on the streets is the lack of access to personal hygiene items, UCP Youth Evan Melnick felt inspired to make a difference. He came up with the idea to collect toiletries for the unhoused in Reston. List of needed items:

- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Feminine Products
- Body Wash
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Shaving Cream
- Razors
- Hand Sanitizer
- Floss
- Diapers

Drop off donations in the box outside the sanctuary or in the lobby, where food donations are collected.

WOMEN IN THE SPIRIT (WITS) BOOK CLUB

WITS welcomes women at their monthly gatherings on [Zoom](#) at 7 PM.

APRIL 28

The Vanishing Half, by Britt Bennet

MAY 26

A Woman of No Importance, by Sonia Purnell

JUNE 23

American Dirt, by Jeanine Cummins

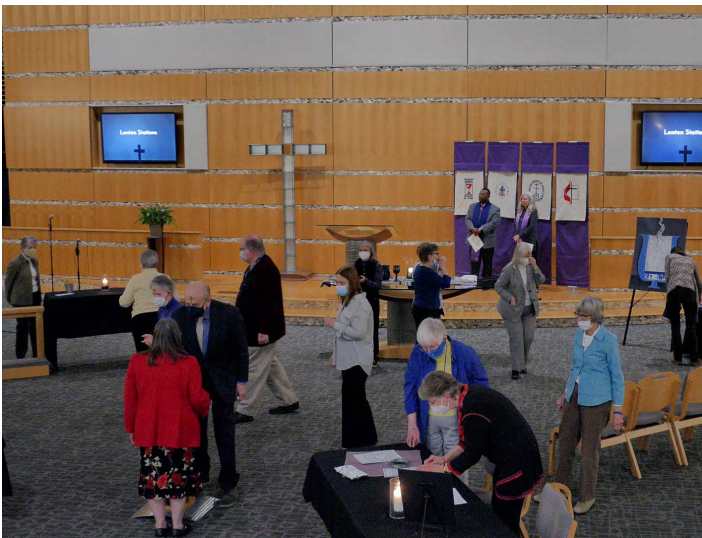




ASH WEDNESDAY PRAYER STATIONS



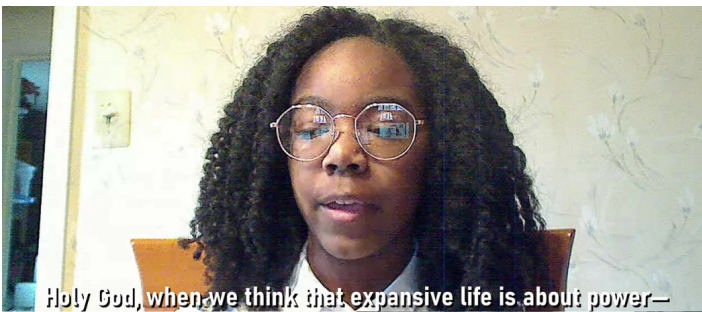
ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE



THE PRESCHOOL CELEBRATED HOLI, A HINDU FESTIVAL CELEBRATING SPRING, LOVE, AND NEW LIFE



GIRL SCOUT SUNDAY LED BY GIRL SCOUTS, INDIRA AND KELLY. GIRL SCOUT TROOP 5112 MEETS AT UCP.



“FULL TO THE BRIM” LENT

UNITED CHRISTIAN PARISH

The United Christian Parish is an open and affirming church united in ministry: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Presbyterian (USA), United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church.

MINISTERIAL

REV. DR. MARCUS LEATHERS	CO-PASTOR FOR CONGREGATIONAL CARE & DEVELOPMENT
REV. ELISABETH WILLIAMS	CO-PASTOR FOR FAITH FORMATION
REV. LLOYD KINZER	PARISH ASSOCIATE
REV. SUZANNE RUDISELLE	PASTOR EMERITA

STAFF

BISSI BADOU	BUILDING USE COORDINATOR
AMELIA CLARK	PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR
MICAELA HANNEY	BOOKKEEPER
KATE HOING	COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
YVONNE KAUFFMAN	GENESIS CHOIR DIRECTOR
HEIDI KHARBANDA	ADMINISTRATOR
ADAMA SILLAH	CHILD CARE
SONALI SILVA	CHILD CARE
DAVE TILLER	HANDBELL CHOIR DIRECTOR
MISHA TUMANOV	MUSIC DIRECTOR

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CHERYL FIELDS	LAY MEMBER
JO FRANKLIN	FINANCE
CHUCK GRITTON	LAY MEMBER
SHELLY JOHNSON	LAY CO-MODERATOR
REV. MARCUS LEATHERS	MINISTERIAL CO-CHAIR OF PMC
BOB PITULEJ	LAY MEMBER
CLAUDIA STALLINGS	LAY MEMBER
LEAH STEINBRONN	LAY MEMBER CO-CHAIR OF PMC
REV. ELISABETH WILLIAMS	MINISTERIAL CO-MODERATOR
KAREN YOUNG	HUMAN & ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES COUNCIL

MINISTRIES COUNCIL

MATT AGUIRRE	TECHNOLOGY
DEBBIE ASCHENBACH	BUILDING & GROUNDS
DEBBY BAILEY	WITNESS
REV. DR. MARCUS LEATHERS	MINISTERIAL CO-CHAIR
BRENDA MEYER	WORSHIP
ANNERIEKE OWEN	MISSIONS
JANE PLUM	FAITH FORMATION
KRISTY PULLEN	JUSTICE & PEACE MINISTRY
LARRY PULLEN	JUSTICE & PEACE MINISTRY
ANNERIEKE OWEN	MISSIONS
LEAH STEINBRONN	LAY CO-CHAIR
DAVE TILLER	WORSHIP
NANCY VOLLMER	FELLOWSHIP

OTHER

ART BANKS	ECUMENICAL ADVISORY GROUP
KRISTINA BELCOURT	TRUSTEE
GERRY HAVRAN	TREASURER
JOHN MELNICK	TRUSTEE
LORRIE-ANNE MELNICK	PRESCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ANNETTE REED	TRUSTEE
MARILYN SILVEY	CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY

ParishLife

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