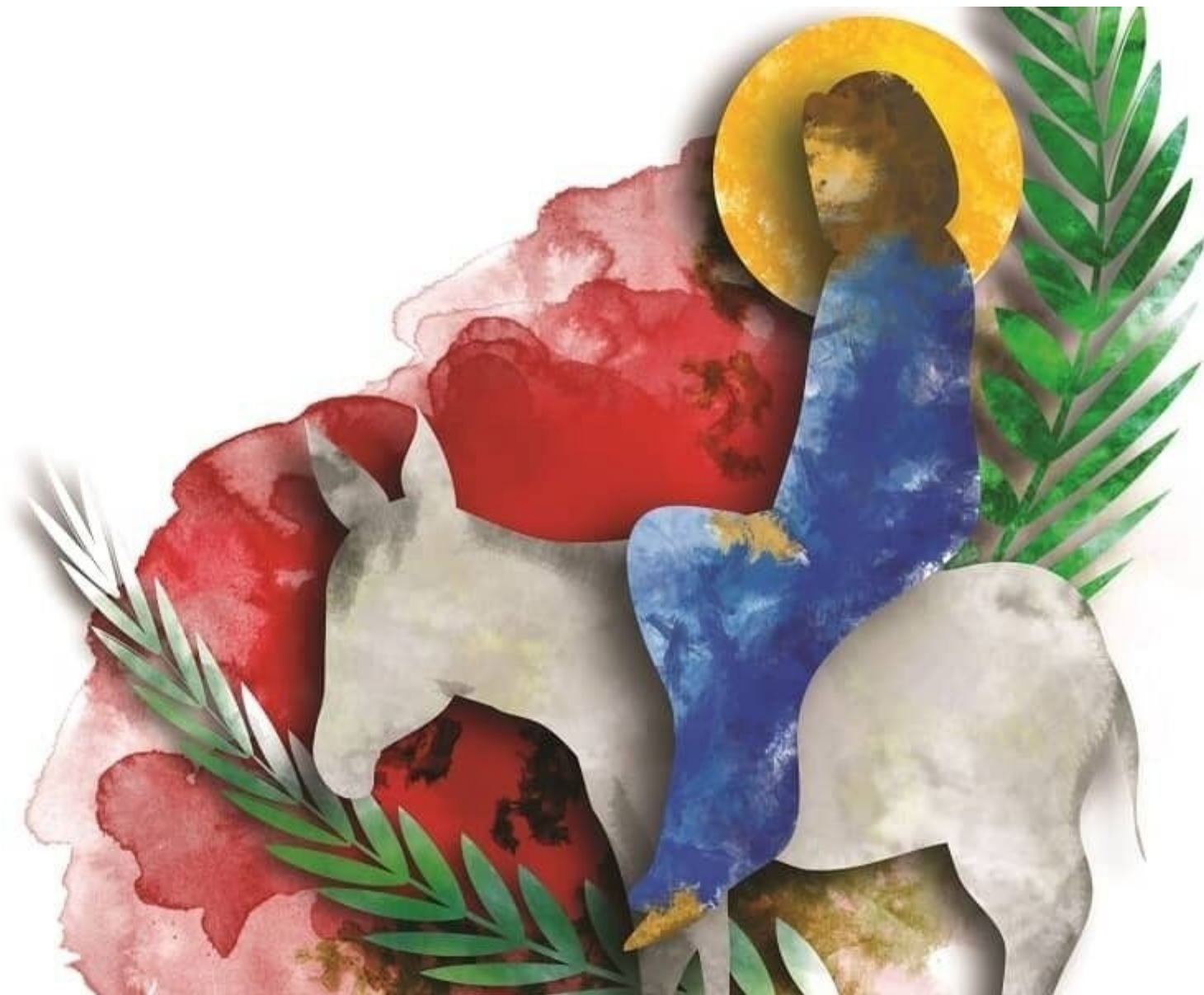




Everyone is welcome here
**UNITED PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON**
DO JUSTICE • LOVE KINDNESS • WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD



Sunday, March 24, 2024 • 10:00am
Palm/Passion Sunday

📺 Our worship service is livestreaming on our YouTube Channel: upcbgm.org/youtube

Join via phone call on Zoom: (+1) 646-558-8656, Meeting ID 865 274 8433

42 Chenango Street, Binghamton, NY 13901 • ☎ 607-722-4219 • 🔗 upcbgm.org
✉ office@upcbgm.org • 💖 upcbgm.org/giving/donate • 📘 @UPCBinghamton

Welcome to the Celebration!

March 24, 2024 • 10:00am

Today's worship service tells the story of what happened to Jesus during Holy Week — from Palm Sunday to Good Friday. We tell this story each year so we can remember how much Jesus loves us.

We Gather as a Community of Faith

OPENING BELL *The bell tolls to center our hearts and minds for worship.*

GATHERING MUSIC “Hosanna”

UPC Choir; Robert Manners, *vocal solo*; Ernest Backus, *percussion*

Hosanna! Blessed is he that comes. Hosanna!

Hosanna! Blessed is he that comes, he that comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna! Blessed is he that comes. Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!

Words and Music: Christian Gregor; arr. Roberta Bitgood, © 1935, ren. 1963 The H.W. Gray Company.

WORDS OF WELCOME

READING *John 12:12-16*

¹² The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord — the King of Israel!” ¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: ¹⁵ “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!” ¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.



Gathering at the Lord's Table — Our Communion Elements:

We are celebrating communion during our worship service today. Our communion bread is gluten-free, and our shared cup is cherry juice, so that all may partake of the same elements during our communion. Please speak to one of the technicians at the back of the sanctuary if this creates any difficulties for you.

Caring for Creation — Our Communion Glasses: We are no longer using plastic communion cups. We've switched back to the glasses to reduce our use of disposable plastics. After worship, you can either leave your glass in the cup-holders in your pews, or you can return your glass to one of the baskets near the sanctuary entrances. Thanks!



* = *Please rise in body or in spirit.*

HEARING ASSISTANCE devices are available; please inquire with one of our technicians at the back of the sanctuary.

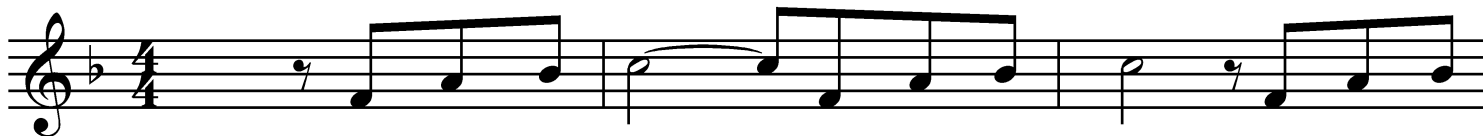
THE PALM PARADE "When the Lord Came Riding In"

Adrian Finney, *tuba*;

Sara Lieberman, *trumpet*; Zeke Merlis, *cello*; Elikem Nyamuame, *drums*;

Nathan Raboy, *trombone*; Ethan Nyamuame and Phil Westcott, *saxophones*

*Those who are able are invited to gather by the Communion table for the parade.
We'll march down the left aisle of the sanctuary, then back up the right aisle to the
front of the Sanctuary for the responsive Call to Worship and the Opening Prayer.*



1. O when the Lord _____ came rid - ing in, O when the
2. O how they sang, _____ and how they called, ♪ when the
3. We praise him now _____ and call his name, we shout Ho -



Lord came rid - ing in— How they waved their palms and
Lord came rid - ing in— Shout - ing out their hal - le -
san - na in the high - est, for we know he came to



praised him, when the Lord came rid - ing in.
lu - jahs when the Lord came rid - ing in.
save us, when the Lord came rid - ing in.

Music: African-American spiritual (WHEN THE SAINTS).

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

excerpts from Psalm 24

One: Lift up your heads, O gates! Be lifted up, ancient doors!
So that the King of glory may come in!

**All: Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty.
The Lord, mighty in battle!**

One: Lift up your heads, O you gates. Lift up, everlasting doors!

All: The King of glory shall come in.

One: Who is the King of glory?

**All: The Lord of hosts! He is the King of glory! Hosanna!
Hosanna in the highest!**

OPENING PRAYER *(together)*

Hosanna, Savior! We wave our palms and sing our praise as we remember your triumphal entry into Jerusalem. May your Spirit enter the heart of our worship this day, giving us the strength to endure the journey which is ahead. Amen!

(Everyone is invited to return to your seats.)

WE OFFER TO GOD OUR GIFTS AND OUR LIVES

You are invited to support the ministry of this congregation through online giving at upcbgm.org/give, or by sending a check to the church office or putting an offering in the plates by the door.

You can contribute to the PC(USA)'s One Great Hour of Sharing special offering at pcusa.org/give-oghs or text OGHS to 91999, or use a Special Offering envelope found near the offering plates by the door, or send a check to the church office marked with "special offering" in the memo line.

OFFERTORY "Affirmation"

United Ringers handbell choir

Music: Eugene Butler. © 1981 Agape (a div. of Hope Publishing Company).

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(together)*

We bring a wide variety of gifts to the table, oh God: gifts that we have received by your grace. Take all that we offer — our money, our talent, our time; our dreams, our hands, our hearts — and use them to make your Spirit's presence felt in all the world. Amen!

READING: THE LAST SUPPER *(paraphrasing Luke 22:14-20)*

Because he knew the end was near, Jesus gathered with his closest friends to celebrate a special meal.

They ate bread and wine, and remembered how God was with them always.

Then Jesus did something very special. He took the bread and the wine, and he told the disciples these were like his body and his blood. Whenever they ate them again, they could remember that Jesus was with them.

Ever since this time, Christians have gathered to share bread and a cup of wine or juice, and to remember that wherever we are, Jesus is with us.

We Gather at the Lord's Table, Where All Are Welcome

INVITATION

It doesn't matter whether or not you can have faith;
whether or not you are cynical or despairing,
hope-filled or hope-less:
what matters to God is simply that you are here.

The bread and the fruit of the vine we share
joins us to the people throughout history and across the world
who have come to this meal in search of life.

And in our sharing,
we find ourselves connected to
the story of exodus and exile,
the story of redemption and restoration,
the story of God's amazing love, made known to us in covenant and cross,
in resurrection and new beginnings.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

We remember the witness of Jesus to challenge the empires of the world, to stop at nothing to declare God's love for all people.

We remember how the world responded to Jesus's ministry and teaching, by killing him.

And we remember God's bold challenge to the world in bringing Jesus back to life.
And because of all this, we dare to remember the night when Christ was betrayed.

Gathered at table with his closest followers, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take this. Eat this. It is my body, given for you. Do this — and remember me."

After supper he took a cup, gave thanks, and offered it also, saying, "This is the cup of a new and everlasting covenant, poured out willingly and lovingly. Drink this — and remember me."

And so we remember, and we reconnect with one another in this season, and as we invite Christ anew into our hearts, so we rededicate ourselves to proclaiming in word and deed Christ's realm. Amen!

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION *(together)*

Lead us, O God, in the way of Christ.

Give us courage to take up the cross, and in full reliance upon your grace, to follow him.

Help us to love you above all else, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

Give us strength to serve you faithfully until the promised day of resurrection, when with the redeemed of all the ages,

we will feast with you at your table in glory. Amen!

And now, with the confidence of the children of God, let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(together)*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen!

WE SHARE THE FEAST (*responsive*)

If your elements of Communion are with you, rest your hands lightly upon them. If they are in the front of the sanctuary, open your hands to be sacramental, filled with the power to change your heart and the world. We ask God's grace on us and on all those who are in our prayers this morning, and God's blessing on our elements and our hands.

One: We are welcome to this gift of God, the Bread of Heaven.

All: We are Christ's family in the Bread we share.

One: We are welcome to this gift of God, the Cup of Blessing.

All: We are Christ's family in the Cup we share.

COMMUNION MUSIC "Jesus Christ"

Phil Westcott, *vocals & guitar*

Jesus Christ was a man that traveled through the land, a hard-working man and brave.
He said to the rich, "Give your money to the poor," but they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

Chorus: Yes, Jesus was a man, a carpenter by hand; his followers true and brave.

One dirty little coward called Judas Iscariot has laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

He went to the preacher, he went to the sheriff, he told them all the same:

"Sell all of your jewelry and give it to the poor," and they laid Jesus Christ in his grave. [*Chorus*]

When Jesus come to town, all the working folks around believed what he did say,
but the bankers and the preachers, they nailed him on the cross, and they laid Jesus Christ
in his grave. [*Chorus*]

And the people held their breath when they heard about his death; everybody wondered why.
It was the big landlord and the soldiers that they hired to nail Jesus Christ in the sky. [*Chorus*]

This song was written in New York City of rich man, preacher, and slave.

If Jesus was to preach what he preached in Galilee, they would lay Jesus Christ in his grave.

Words and Music: Woody Guthrie. © 1961 (ren.), 1963 (ren.) Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc. & TRO-Ludlow Music, Inc. (BMI).

PRAYER AFTER THE MEAL (*together*)

**O Christ, you entered the city as a poor man, not in style but simply,
yet still you caused an uproar, and questions everywhere.**

**You drew the expectations of a hungry crowd,
and brought buried conflicts to the light.**

**May we, who are sometimes swayed by the crowd's approval,
and who often avoid conflict for fear of its cost to us,
hold fast to the gospel of peace and justice,**

**and follow faithfully in your way of compassion and solidarity
with those who are poor and excluded, wherever it may lead us.**

Amen!

The Story Continues

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE (*paraphrasing Matthew 26:36-46*)

Jesus went to spend some time in prayer. He knew the next few hours of his life were going to be very hard.

Jesus was by himself, and he prayed to God. “If there’s any way I can get out of this,” Jesus prayed, “I wish I could. But I will do whatever you want.”

When Jesus went back to the disciples, he found they had fallen asleep. Jesus was sad. He went and prayed again.

Again, when he was done, he found the disciples still sleeping. He prayed once more, and then went back. “It’s time to go,” he said gently. And the disciples woke up.

SPECIAL MUSIC “Were You There?”

Starletta Noll-Long, *vocals*

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? ...

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? ...

Words and Music: African-American spiritual.

JESUS IS ARRESTED (*paraphrasing Mark 14:53–61a*)

The biggest problem the people in charge had was that they didn’t have any real complaints about Jesus, because he hadn’t done anything wrong.

Jesus had spent all his time helping people who felt lost and alone, and people who were sick and hurting. He made them feel special, and reminded them that God loved everyone, no matter what.

The people in charge knew that wasn’t a crime; they just didn’t like Jesus. They had him arrested, and they had people make up stories to accuse Jesus.

But Jesus didn’t say anything. He knew they wouldn’t believe him anyway. He knew that they were angry and frightened because he helped people feel better. Jesus kept telling people about God’s love, and the people in charge were worried that people might not listen to them anymore.

PETER DENIES JESUS (*paraphrasing Mark 14:66–72, John 21:15–19*)

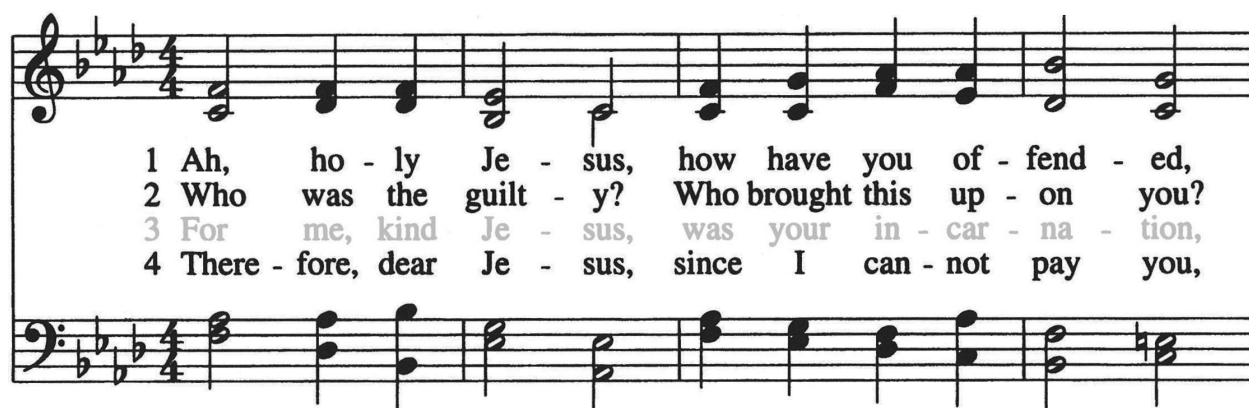
Peter was one of Jesus’s closest friends. He loved the stories Jesus told, and the things Jesus did. But Peter got scared easily, too. He found it hard to trust that God would always be with him, no matter what.

Some people had a fire going and Peter joined them so he could warm his hands. One of them said, “You were with Jesus.” But Peter got scared, so he said, “No — it wasn’t me. I don’t know anyone called Jesus.”

This happened a few more times, and then a rooster crowed. Peter remembered Jesus saying, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times,” and Peter felt badly that he had not supported his friend. He went outside and cried.

That’s not the end of his story, though. After Jesus rose from the dead, he talked to Peter, and forgave him, and told him to go and continue the work Jesus had begun.

WE SING "Ah, Holy Jesus" verses 1, 2, 4



1 Ah, ho - ly Je - sus, how have you of - fend - ed,
 2 Who was the guilt - y? Who brought this up - on you?
 3 For me, kind Je - sus, was your in - car - na - tion,
 4 There - fore, dear Je - sus, since I can - not pay you,



that mor - tal judg - ment has on you de - scend - ed? By foes de -
 It is my trea - son, Lord, that has un - done you. 'Twas I, Lord
 your mor - tal sor - row, and your life's ob - la - tion, your death of
 I do a - dore you, and will ev - er pray you, think on your



rid - ed, by your own re - ject - ed, O most af - flict - ed!
 Je - sus, I it was de - nied you; I cru - ci - fied you.
 an - guish and your bit - ter pas - sion, for my sal - va - tion.
 pit - y and your love un - swerv - ing, not my de - serv - ing.

Words: Johann Heermann; tr. Robert Bridges, alt. Music: Johann Crüger (HERZLIEBSTER JESU). Used by Permission. CCLI License #11598067

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED (*paraphrasing Luke 23:1-49*)

The people in charge knew they had to get rid of Jesus — they didn't want everyone to know that God loved them. So they arranged to have him put to death.

But before they did that, they beat him, and laughed at him. The crowd got excited and shouted for Jesus to be killed. Some of the people in charge were not so sure, but they didn't want to upset the crowd, and so they went along with it.

The soldiers led Jesus to the top of a hill and placed him on a cross to die. A crowd followed, but only a few women who followed Jesus stood close to him.

About noon, the sky became very dark, like a night without stars. Then Jesus died. Some of the guards who had hurt Jesus were amazed by how quiet he had been, and how he did not fight back. His disciples and followers were sad and scared. What would they do without Jesus?

WE SING "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the
 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and
 4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were an

Prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I
 death of Christ, my God; all the vain things that
 love flow min - gled down. Did e'er such love and
 of - fering far too small; love so a - maz - ing,

count but loss, and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
 sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

Words: Isaac Watts. Music: Lowell Mason (HAMBURG). Used by Permission. CCLI License #11598067

THE SUFFERING SERVANT (Isaiah 53:3,5)

- ³ He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him of no account.
- ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.

The Christ Candle is carried out.

SENDING MUSIC “How Long, O Lord”

Robert Manners, *vocals*; Zeke Merlis, *cello*; Rebecca Mebert, *piano*

How long, O Lord, will you quite forget me? How long, O Lord, will you turn your face
from me? How long, O Lord, must I suffer in my soul? How long, how long, O Lord?

How long, O Lord, must this grief possess my heart? How long, O Lord, must I languish
night and day? How long, O Lord, shall my enemy oppress? How long, how long, O Lord?

Look now, look now, and answer me, my God; give light, give light lest I sleep the sleep
of death. Lest my enemies rejoice at my downfall, look now, look now, O Lord.

Words and Music: John L. Bell (NEW 13TH), para. Psalm 13. © 1987, arr. © 1996 Wild Goose Resource Group, The Iona
Community (admin. GIA Publications).

*After the service, you are invited to join us for refreshments. If you are worshiping with
us via our livestream and would like to visit with us on Zoom, please post a message in
chat before the worship service ends, then go to our Zoom room upcbgm.org/zoom.
To dial in as a phone call: 646-558-8656, Meeting ID: 865 274 8433*

Get Involved! Without any doubt, the ministry of our congregation depends largely on the dedication and selfless contributions of volunteers — the incredible individuals who give generously of their time, energy, and unique talents. Here are some ways you can help us do Christ's work in our community:

Community Meal & Pantry: Each Tuesday at 5pm, we offer a sit-down meal that is free for anybody, serving about 120 people a week. (Last week's meal was lasagna, Caesar salad, carrots, garlic bread, and peach cobbler.) Volunteers are needed during the day on Monday and Tuesday to help with food preparation, and on Tuesday evening to serve the meal and clean up afterwards.

On Wednesdays from noon to 5pm, we run a free food pantry that also offers personal care & hygiene items when they're available. Volunteers help staff the pantry, and donations of non-perishable food and personal care items are always welcome.

Contact Kitchen Coordinator Sherry Conklin for more info: meal@upcbgm.org

Worship services: You may not have noticed how many people are involved in our Sunday morning worship services, but most weeks there are at least a dozen of us, and often there are more than 20: folks who read prayers and scripture, greet visitors, share musical talents, operate technology, set up refreshments, help serve communion, or contribute their ideas and support behind the scenes. If you'd like to take part, contact Worship Team chair Suzie Raboy: sraboy54@stny.rr.com

Music at UPC: Music is an important part of our coming together at United Presbyterian Church. We are excited to make music with every resource that we have, and to use a variety of styles, not all at once but intermingled. What emerges is a vibrant worship service with music that includes everyone who wishes to participate.



UPC Choir: Wednesdays, 6:30–7:30pm in the Music Room (next to the Chapel). The vocal choir provides music for worship most every Sunday. We welcome new members at any time, and we would love to have your participation. It would be good to have you with us!

United Ringers handbell choir: Sundays, 11:30am–12:30pm in the Sanctuary. Our handbell choir plays 2–4 octaves of Malmark handbells and handchimes, providing music for worship about once a month. If you're interested in learning how to play handbells, please inquire. New members are always welcome! No previous experience needed. No auditions to start. If you can count to 4, you can learn to play!

We also invite instrumentalists and vocalists who'd like to share their gifts to talk with any of our music leaders about providing special music for worship — you can call the church office, email music@upcbgm.org, or speak with them in person after worship.

Other ministry teams: Our church teams are always welcoming new team members. If you'd like to help with or learn more about the workings of the church, talk to one of the pastors or the elders on Session: **Card Committee**, Margaret Davis mdavis.margaret@gmail.com; **Finance**, Lou McKeage lmckeage@stny.rr.com or Andy Chadwick cchadwick1@stny.rr.com; **Mission**, Pastor Kimberly pastor@upcbgm.org; **Personnel**, Marilyn Guinane mguinane@frontiernet.net; **Property**, Pastor Becky bkindig@upcbgm.org.

Today after worship — Decorating Easter Eggs

After the service today, everyone is invited to come down to Fellowship Hall and help dye Easter Eggs for our Community Meal and Pantry guests.



Maundy Thursday, March 28, 6:00pm — Soup Supper in the Upper Room



Everyone is invited to join us in the Upper Lounge for soup and bread and a time of fellowship. Soup and bread will be provided — bring your appetite and an open heart!

Starting at 6:30 after the meal, we will share in the Lord's Supper and remember Jesus's passion and death. The worship service will also be streamed on YouTube and Zoom.

After worship, we will depart in silence, returning to the sanctuary on Easter morning.

Easter Sunday, March 31, 10:00am — Resurrection Day!

The bell rings. The Christ Candle is brought into the sanctuary. We gather again at the Lord's Table, where the Last Supper is transformed into the Feast of Victory and we tell the good news once more: Christ is Risen! Risen indeed!



After worship, we will share a time of fellowship and our annual Easter Egg hunt will take place in the garden.

Children in Worship: *"Let the little children come to me..."* —Matthew 19:14

We are glad that your children are here today, and we hope that you know that they are welcome and encouraged to be in worship with you. We truly believe that a community of faith is made up of people of ALL ages. There is a Pray-Ground space with coloring sheets and quiet toys in the front of the sanctuary to use there or can be taken to another pew, if that suits your family's needs. Sunday school materials are mailed to our families once a month to do together at home.



There is also a nursery space at the end of the hall at the front of the sanctuary that is open for use with a parent or guardian. It has a changing table, a rocking chair, and some toys appropriate for age two and under. There is a speaker in the room so you can listen to the service. Please let us know if you have questions.

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Pastors Rev. Kimberly P Chastain and Rev. Becky Kindig

Readers Cindy Burger, Aeden Hickey, Doug Jones, Linda McDevitt, Charity Outman

Musicians Aimée Backus, *Music Coordinator*; Rebecca Mebert, *accompanist*; Austin Shadduck, *United Ringers director*; Ernest Backus, Victoria Barics, Adrian Finney, Sara Lieberman, Robert Manners, Zeke Merlis, Starletta Noll-Long, Elikem Nyamuame, Ethan Nyamuame, Nathan Raboy, Phil Westcott, Arianna Windsong, the United Ringers handbell choir, and the UPC choir

Technicians Chris Burger, Andy Chadwick, Scott Kindig, Ken Mebert

Announcements

March 24, 2024

Bible Study – Mondays, 1pm, on Zoom or in Pastor Kimberly's office. We're reading from Marcus Borg's *Evolution of the Word: The New Testament in the Order the Books Were Written*, and everyone is welcome to join us in person or on Zoom. Our general format is to read the introductory material for each section, then read through the Biblical texts and talk about what it meant for early Christians and what it might mean for us today.

Sewing Group – Wednesdays, 10am–1pm. The Sewing Group meets at the church each week to craft crib- and lap-sized quilts, plus mittens, hats, scarves, pillows, and more. At noon, those who can't join them in person are welcome to "Zoom in" for their lunchtime social

How to get to UPC's "Zoom Room": We use the same "Meeting ID" for all of our programs and worship services. You can join online or call in on your phone.

To join online: upcbgm.org/zoom

To dial as a phone call: 1-646-558-8656
Meeting ID: 865 274 8433

hour. Everyone is welcome; bring your lunch and enjoy the company.

Zoom Happy hour – Fridays, 5–6pm.

After nearly four years of "Zooming" together, our weekly social-distance gathering is still going strong. Bring your own beverage, Zoom in, and join the fun as we catch up on the events of the week and share how we're doing. It's a great way to keep in touch with friends near and far.

Celebration of the Life of Marian Palmer – Saturday, April 13



Worship service at 10:00am

Luncheon to follow in Fellowship Hall

Everyone is invited to join in the celebration of Marian Palmer's life and the completion of her baptism, when we gather on April 13. We will gather in the sanctuary for a service of worship and remembrance, then continue to Fellowship Hall to share food and fellowship. The basics for a meal will be provided; you are invited to bring a special side dish or dessert if you have one you'd really like to share in her honor.

The service will be livestreamed on YouTube and recorded for later watching for those who are unable attend in person, and can be accessed from our website or on our YouTube Channel upcbgm.org/youtube.

Practical Resources for Churches (prcli.org) is a resource that the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley's Commission on Ministry subscribes to so all congregations in our presbytery can access their programs.



You're encouraged to check out all they have to offer and take advantage of the abundance of programs and information. Many of their programs and webinars are available at no charge to you through our paid subscription. Upcoming webinars:

- **Managing Investments and Endowments for Churches – Thursday, April 18, 2-3pm:** Pastors and other people without a financial management background or education still have fiduciary duties. In addition, endowment and investment management can be a source of conflict within congregations. This webinar will help people navigate in what may be a foreign land for them. What are the right questions to ask? How do you evaluate the answers to these questions? What are common pitfalls and how do we avoid them? How do you bring theology into the conversation? Where can you find resources and allies? Our goal is to equip and encourage people to engage in oversight of endowments and investments. This often leads to opportunities to strengthen the mission and ministries of the congregation. bit.ly/49SjEFB
- **Raising Kids Beyond the Binary in Church – Tuesday, May 7, 2-3pm:** The church is a better, more faithful place when transgender, non-binary, and gender-expansive young people are a part of it. The debate around transgender children rages, making it more important than ever for people of faith to understand God's call to love and affirm young people in who God created them to be. In this workshop, we will talk about what it looks like to boldly, loudly, and joyfully celebrate the young people in our midst, how to advocate for them in our ministry settings and beyond, and how to create reasonably safe spaces where they can grow in their connection to God and all of God's children. We're not always going to get this right, but workshop leader Jamie Bruesehoff will help participants understand how we can show up in faith and grace for ourselves and our communities while protecting the vulnerable. bit.ly/49Rg52X
- **How to Create Transformative Ministries Through Theological Innovation – Thursday, May 9, 2-3:15pm:** In this interactive workshop, you'll be guided through the Innovation Lab's five-phase Theological Innovation Process as a pathway for designing creative and transformative ministries in your unique context. We'll apply the innovation process to a case study of a challenge facing people nationwide – the epidemic of loneliness in America. Together we'll brainstorm innovative ministries that could address this challenge in a theologically-grounded way. You'll learn a new framework for developing ministries that authentically meet the needs and engage the assets of people in your own community. You'll also receive a resource you can use to develop transformative ministries in the future. bit.ly/4chk9ea

PRC also offers resources on a wide variety of topics including caring ministries, spiritual practices, small church life, social justice, and environmental stewardship.

Life Beyond Death – starting Monday, April 1, 7pm on Zoom

The hope for some existence beyond death has been central to the Christian faith for two millennia. However, there has never been a consensus about what this life is like, nor are there any clear descriptions of it in the Bible. Join this series to consider the various views concerning the object of our faith. Those often antagonistic speculations include a post-mortem family reunion, continuing heavenly service to God, rapt adoration of God's glory, the absorption of individual consciousness into the life of God, the continuing impact of an individual's life on future generations, and present experiences of transcending time and space. We will also consider why mainline Christians (including Presbyterians) tend to shy away from this question much more than evangelicals and Roman Catholics do. This series is presented by Lee Barrett, the Mary B. and Henry P. Stager Chair in Theology, Professor of Systematic Theology at Lancaster Theological Seminary.



Pastors Bruce & Carolyn Gillette of the First Presbyterian Union Church of Owego will coordinate the conversations after the video presentations.

Zoom Meeting ID: **895 1270 7535**, Passcode: **FPUC**, or bit.ly/3RfLMvO

Workshop on the Gospel of Mark: a consideration of Mark's major themes – Saturday, April 20, 9:30am-12pm on Zoom

Here's a free workshop for lay pastors and preachers and anyone else with an interest in Mark's gospel, led by Rev. Allen L. Presby. The Gospel of Mark is our primary gospel focus for the current lectionary B cycle. The workshop will provide an introduction to Mark, considered by most scholars to be the earliest of the four gospels. In particular, we will concentrate on the half-dozen themes that repeatedly emerge in any careful reading of Mark's gospel.

Please register at susvalpresby.org/register

To attend via Zoom: bit.ly/3Hy1flg or phone (+1) 646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 835 2997 0546 Passcode: PSV

Questions? cclcfchair@susvalpresby.org or call 607-323-4477

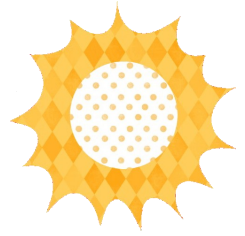


Pastor Allen Presby retired in 2011 after six years serving the First Presbyterian Church in Delhi and this year celebrated 50th anniversary of his ordination. Since "retiring," he has served three part-time contracts with churches in our presbytery and is currently serving as pastor of the Nineveh Presbyterian Church. Allen recently concluded the three-year cycle of Vice-Moderator, Moderator, and Chair of Cabinet for our presbytery. Home for Allen and wife Carol is up in the hills above Unadilla.

Presbytery Camperships – Apply March 1 – July 31

Every year, the presbytery provides camperships for children and youth up through 12th grade to attend church camp.

We do this not only to help with the cost of summer camp, but because we believe that the experiences young people have at church camp are meaningful and significant to their Christian faith journeys. Since our presbytery doesn't operate a church camp of our own, we instead provide funds to encourage kids to go to a church camp operated by another presbytery or another Christian denomination.



Campership funds can be used for programs of any length up to one week. These may be overnight/residential programs, day camps, or virtual programs. Camperships may also be available for adults with developmental disabilities.

The presbytery's camperships are not allocated based on financial need; they are available to everybody regardless of family income. The presbytery will pay three-fourths of the cost at any Presbyterian PC(USA) camp, up to \$575, or two-thirds of the cost at a camp operated by the American Baptist Church, the Reformed Church of America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or any of our fellow "Churches Uniting in Christ", up to \$500. Other Christian camps must be approved by the Christian Nurture Team; those that are approved will be funded at half the cost, up to \$375. A list of nearby qualifying camps can be found at susvalpresby.org/Camp-List.

Apply now through July 31 on the presbytery's website, susvalpresby.org/Camperships

Let's work together to encourage our children and youth to grow in God's love!

Calling for a Stop to the Destruction of Gaza

This month the Rev. Bronwen Boswell, Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) General Assembly, joined other church heads of communion in the nation's capital to call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

The leaders also pressed U.S. government officials to renew funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and to work for the release of all hostages in Gaza in exchange for Palestinian prisoners in Israel.

Read the full article: bit.ly/4afxWjU



*More news from around the presbytery and across the denomination
can be found at susvalpresby.org/thursday-thoughts*