



Contact

December 2024
January 2025

University Presbyterian Church Newsletter for church members and friends

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Church Staff

Mamie Broadhurst
Pastor
mbroadhurst@upcbr.org

Caralyn Durham
Office Manager
cdurham@upcbr.org

Ross Cawthon
Choir Director
rcawthon@upcbr.org

Christopher Cunningham
Organist
ccunningham@upcbr.org

Ethel Felder
Day School Director
upcdayschool@upcbr.org

Robert Gourgues
Custodian
rmgourgues@cox.net

Jerry Trahan
Clerk of Session
upc-clerk@upcbr.org

Emily Cogburn
Moderator of Deacons
cogburn83@yahoo.com



A l o n g t h e W a y

During Advent this year, as we have in some others, we are using resources from the creative group A Sanctified Art. This year the theme they have developed is called "Words from the Beginning." Here is some of what they have to say about it:

"Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year begins. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving; and yet, the world as we know it spins madly on...Christ's birth offered a beautiful new beginning for shepherds and Magi alike—all the while, King Herod tried to bring Christ's story to an end. When we ourselves navigate seasons filled with endings and beginnings, we need reminders. We need words that can feel like steady ground, like a path for our feet to find as we step forward into the unknown.

We have crafted an Advent series filled with blessings, with the words we need to hear again and again as we begin a new season. We imagined the words Mary would speak to her newborn son. What scriptures and stories would she impart to him? What lessons would she teach him as he grew? And so, our weekly themes may feel like the lessons we teach to children, but in reality, these are lessons we continue to learn and relearn as adults. They may sound like the messages we impart to loved ones during special ceremonies or sacred rituals. We intentionally selected scriptures that may be frequently used in weddings, ordination services, or baptisms.

And so, we invite you to enter this Advent season as if you are entering a sacred new chapter, holding fast to the reminders that will bolster you for the journey ahead. As you journey through this season, may you find words for belovedness and hope. May you find words for beginning again. For no matter what you are facing, no matter what this new day brings, love is your beginning."

What are some of the stories of faith that keep you going? What are the words you want to make sure your children or grandchildren know? The world is always beginning again; you can always begin again. What helps you find hope, peace, joy, and love, and how can our community accompany you as you seek any or all of it?

I look forward to starting this new year with you, both in December and in January.

Bendiciones,

December...

Meetings times/locations are subject to change.
Please check with your group leader for confirmation and information on how to log into Zoom meetings.

- 1 1st Sunday of Advent Communion**
9:30 a.m. Church School
11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
1:30 p.m. Music Club of Baton Rouge Rehearsal - Choir Room
4:30 p.m. Youth Group (*Nativity Play Practice*)
- 2** 10:45 a.m. Staff Meeting - Library
5:00 p.m. APNC - Zoom
- 3** 10:00 a.m. Day Circle - Parks Wilson Room
11:00 a.m. LSU Chamber Singers Rehearsal - Sanctuary
7:00 p.m. UPC Book Group - 1725 Eugene
7:30 p.m. LSU Chamber Singers Recital - Sanctuary
- 4** 9:30 a.m. Day School Chapel - Sanctuary
10:00 a.m. Day Circle II - 1545 Patrick Drive
6:00 p.m. Taizé - Sanctuary
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 5** 10:30 a.m. Kathy Barry Memorial Service - Sanctuary (*Reception to follow*)
11:00 a.m. "Soul Feast" Small Group - Parks Wilson Room & Zoom
1:00 p.m. Visio Divina - Zoom
7:30 p.m. New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 8 2nd Sunday of Advent**
9:30 a.m. Church School
11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
1:00 p.m. Stated Session Meeting - Conference Room
1:30 p.m. Music Club of Baton Rouge Rehearsal - Choir Room
4:30 p.m. Nativity Play Practice & Youth Group
6:30 p.m. LSU Lab School Singers Recital - Sanctuary
- 9** 11:30 a.m. Membership Committee - Library
5:00 p.m. APNC - Zoom
7:00 p.m. Huntington's Disease Support Group - Parks Wilson Room
- 10** 8:30 a.m. Nurture Committee Christmas Brunch - 3630 Gladiola St.
5:30 p.m. NAMI Christmas Party - Fellowship Hall
6:00 p.m. Mission & Peacemaking Star Party - 256 W Ardenwood Dr
- 11** 9:00 a.m. Faith & Community Small Gfoup - Parks Wilson Room
10:00 a.m. Day Circle II - 1545 Patrick Dr.
5:00 p.m. Property Committee - Zoom
6:00 p.m. Taizé - Sanctuary
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 12** 11:00 a.m. "Soul Feast" Small Group - Parks Wilson Room & Zoom
1:00 p.m. Visio Divina - Zoom
6:00 p.m. Juneau Anniversary Celebration - Courtyard
6:30 p.m. Day School Committee - Zoom
7:30 p.m. New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 14** 3:00 p.m. Nativity Play Practice
7:30 p.m. New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus Concert - Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, 8470 Goodwood
- 15 3rd Sunday of Advent**
9:30 a.m. Church School
11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
Noon Fellowship Chirstmas Dinner - Fellowship Hall
12:30 p.m. Stewardship & Finance Committee - Conference Room
3:00 p.m. Children's Music Studio Violin Recital - Sanctuary
4:30 p.m. Youth Group Wrapping Extravaganza

Office Notes

Day School and Office Closures

The Day School will be closed from December 19 - January 3.
The Church Office will be closed from December 20 - January 1.
The Church Office and Day School will be closed January 20 for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

Bulletin Deadlines

Announcements or prayer requests to appear in the December 29th bulletin are due on Monday, December 16.

End of the Year Bookkeeping

We are rapidly counting down to the end of 2024. **Please have all check or reimbursement requests for the 2024 budget into the church office by Tuesday, December 17.**

DAY SCHOOL NEWS

On Halloween the Day School went trick-or-treating around the building. The annual Thanksgiving Feast was held on November 20th and 21st and everyone enjoyed the meal and the fellowship. The DS Committee (DSC) is working to establish a budget for next year. The Day School currently has thirteen employees and may need to hire another. The DSC would like to raise everyone's salary to at least \$15/hour and provide a 3% raise for next year.





The **UPC Book Club** meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at 1725 S. Eugene.

Contact Ellen Morgan for info

- Dec 3 The House of the Seven Gables
by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- Jan 7 Little Fires Everywhere
by Celeste Ng



HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

UPC is excited to once again be participating Hope for the Holidays, a program run by Presbyterian Children's Home and Services (PCHAS), to provide holiday gifts for children in our community. If you would like to participate, sign up in the Welcome Center before and after service. Monetary donations in lieu of choosing a name will be accepted. Donations will be used to purchase gifts for any unclaimed names. If all children are claimed, collected funds will be donated to PCHAS to support their work.

Please place your gifts, wrapped or unwrapped, in a single bag, such as a tall garbage bag. Make sure to attach a label with the child's name. You may drop off your gifts either in the Welcome Center before and after services, or contact Samantha Hartmann at 832-387-7343 to arrange drop-off. The Youth Group will be wrapping gifts for those who choose to make use of this service. **The deadline to drop off gifts or make a donation is Sunday, December 15.**



ADVENT DEVOTIONALS AND CALENDARS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE CHURCH. CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE TO RECEIVE A DIGITAL COPY!

December...

- 16 10:45 a.m. Staff Meeting - Library
- 5:00 p.m. APNC - Zoom
- 17 9:30 a.m. Helping Hands - Conference Room
- 6:30 p.m. Fellowship Committee - Zoom
- 18 9:30 a.m. Day School Christmas Program - Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Day Circle II - 1545 Patrick Dr.
- 6:00 p.m. Organ Concert - Sanctuary
- 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 19 11:00 a.m. "Soul Feast" Small Group - Parks Wilson Room & Zoom
- 1:00 p.m. Visio Divina - Zoom
- TBA Staff Christmas Party
- 20 6:30 p.m. Day School Staff Christmas Party - Fellowship Hall
- 21 9:45 a.m. Nativity Play Dress Rehearsal
- 22 4th Sunday of Advent**
- 9:30 a.m. Church School
- 9:45 a.m. Nativity Play Final Rehearsal
- 11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
- Noon Nativity Play
- 1:00 p.m. Najama Food - Fellowship Hall
- 24 Christmas Eve**
- 5:30 p.m. Lessons & Carols - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
- 29 1st Sunday of Christmas (NO CHURCH SCHOOL or NURSERY)**
- 11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT UPC

FELLOWSHIP

December 8 - Deck the UPC Christmas Tree

Wear your most festive holiday sweater or pajamas to worship! We will decorate UPC's outdoor Christmas tree 10:30-11:00 a.m. and after worship. Make or bring a weather-proof ornament which represents something about your self or family. Clear plastic ornaments are available for you to take home and decorate to bring back anytime.

December 15 - Fellowship Christmas Dinner

The Fellowship Committee invites everyone to a UPC Christmas Dinner on Sunday, December 15 following worship. Please let the church office know if you will be attending so we can have enough food. The committee will provide roast turkey and several sides. If you would like to bring a gluten-free side dish, or your favorite rolls or dessert, let Barbara Hoffman know, via text or call, 225-241-2743.

December 22 - Nativity Play

UPC's more energetic members aged 3 to 17 and the Faith Formation Committee request the honor of your presence at UPC's first-that-we-can-remember Nativity play! Sunday, Dec. 22, following the worship service. Yes, that's right—we're doing a Nativity play, complete with shepherds, sheep, wise men, camels, stars, angels, the Holy Family and a donkey. But no lobster¹.

¹See the movie *Love, Actually*.

January...

- 1 New Year's Day**
Day School and Church Office Closed
- 5 Epiphany** *Epiphany Stars will be distributed, Communion*
9:30 a.m. Church School
11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
1:30 p.m. Music Club of Baton Rouge Rehearsal - Choir Room
No Youth Group
- 6** 10:45 a.m. Staff Meeting - Library
5:00 p.m. APNC - Zoom
- 7** 8:30 a.m. Nurture Committee - Conference Room & Zoom
10:00 a.m. Day Circle - Parks Wilson Room
7:00 p.m. UPC Book Group - 1725 S. Eugene
- 8** 9:00 a.m. Faith & Community Small Group - Parks Wilson Room
10:00 a.m. Day Circle II - 1545 Patrick Drive
5:00 p.m. Property Committee - Zoom
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 9** 11:00 a.m. "Soul Feast" Small Group - Parks Wilson Room & Zoom
6:30 p.m. Day School Committee - Zoom
7:30 p.m. New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 12 Baptism of the Lord**
9:30 a.m. Church School
11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
1:30 p.m. Music Club of Baton Rouge Rehearsal - Choir Room
4:30 p.m. Youth Group
- 13** 5:00 p.m. APNC - Zoom
7:00 p.m. Huntington's Disease Support Group - Conference Room
- 14** 5:30 p.m. Worship Committee - Zoom
7:00 p.m. Mission & Peacemaking Committee - Zoom
7:00 p.m. NAMI - Conference Room & Library
7:00 p.m. LSU Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 15** 9:30 a.m. Day School Chapel - Sanctuary
10:00 a.m. Day Circle II - 1545 Patrick Dr.
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 16** 11:00 a.m. "Soul Feast" Small Group - Parks Wilson Room & Zoom
7:30 p.m. New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 19 2nd Sunday after Epiphany** (*Louisiana Marathon*)
9:30 a.m. Church School
11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
Noon Soup & Pie Luncheon - Fellowship Hall
Noon Youth Group @ Soup & Pie
12:30 p.m. Stewardship & Finance Committee - Conference Room
1:30 p.m. Music Club of Baton Rouge Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Day School & Church Office Closed**
Youth Group Service Event (TBD)
5:00 p.m. APNC - Zoom
- 21** 9:30 a.m. Helping Hands - Conference Room
6:30 p.m. Fellowship Committee - Zoom
- 22** 9:00 a.m. Faith & Community Small Group - Parks Wilson Room
10:00 a.m. Day Circle II - 1545 Patrick Dr.
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary Balcony
- 23** 11:00 a.m. "Soul Feast" Small Group - Parks Wilson Room & Zoom
7:30 p.m. New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 25** 10:00 a.m. Transitions Small Group - Conference Room
- 26 3rd Sunday after Epiphany**
9:30 a.m. Church School
10:30 a.m. Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary (*Live Streamed via Facebook & upcbr.org*)
1:00 p.m. Stated Session Meeting - Conference Room
1:30 p.m. Music Club of Baton Rouge Rehearsal - Choir Room

PEW RACK UPKEEP

Do you have a few spare hours during the month? Have you ever wondered how our sanctuary always looks tidy and inviting? The Membership committee is looking for a few volunteers to help next year with our sanctuary maintenance schedule. This would involve choosing one month out of the year, and then coming in once each week during that month to help with the work.

We already have a list of what we do, such as checking the materials in each pew rack; it takes approximately half an hour per week. You would work with a committee member the first week, and then take care of the remaining three or four weeks at a time that's convenient for you. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Lois Kuyper-Rushing at lkuyper@lsu.edu. Thank you!



ADVENT VISIO DIVINA

We will use the materials of A Sanctified Art, following the Advent theme of Words For The Beginning, to guide the practice of Visio Divina through Advent. If you have never tried out Visio Divina, now is a wonderful opportunity to settle in, reflect quietly, and find some stillness in what can be a busy holiday season. If you have enjoyed Visio Divina, regularly or irregularly, we would love to see you again. It is fine to join one session or for the whole series, or to attend as you are able. All are welcome.

Visio Divina uses the process of lexio divina (a form of meditation listening to a specific biblical text) to fuel reflection and to create a quick art project in response. No artistic skill is needed to join.

For more information, contact Melanie Driscoll at melaniedriscoll3@gmail.com.



TRANSITIONS GOUP

The Transitions Group will meet next on Saturday, January 25, 10-11:30 a.m. Gina Rossi, Clinical Social Worker, will explain how ageism is manifested and how it can contribute to poor mental and physical health, including raising the risk for dementia.

Stewardship & Finance

STEWARDSHIP 2025 UPDATE

We have received 104 pledges for 2025, totaling \$566,800. Happily, this includes 40 pledges that were increased over the current year and 13 new pledges from households that did not pledge last year. That's amazingly good news. Thanks so much to all of you!

We are still a bit below our total for 2024 (\$571,938). So is you meant to pledge but were distracted by personal issues last month, or caught up in national news, we get it. There has been a lot going on. Maybe you are going to continue to give what you did this year and didn't think you needed to tell us. But we do need to know, and it's not too late!

Please contact the UPC office this week to make or confirm your pledge (225-383-0345 or cdurham@upcbr.org) so we are able to finalize our 2025 budget in December.

GIVING REMINDER

If you give electronically through Realm, and you have changed your pledge amount, remember to change your banking information at the beginning of the year. **Realm doesn't automatically adjust the amount for you and the church office can't change it.**

OFFERING ENVELOPES

If you would like monthly envelopes for your 2025 pledge, please let Caralyn know (cdurham@upcbr.org) and she will make some for you.

CONTRIBUTIONS DEADLINE

All contributions including stock transfers must be received on-line or postmarked by 12/31/24 to be reflected on your 2024 Contribution Statement. For more information on contributing stock please contact Edward Peterson. If you have questions about your pledge status, please log into your account at <https://onrealm.org/UniversityPresb15909>.

**FEBRUARY
CONTACT
DEADLINE
JANUARY 20**

January...

- 27 10:45 a.m. Staff Meeting - Library
- 5:00 p.m. APNC - Zoom
- 28 7:00 p.m. NAMI - Conference Room & Library
- 29 10:00 a.m. Day Circle II - 1454 Patrick Dr.
- 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 30 11:00 a.m. "Soul Feast" Small Group - Parks Wilson Room & Zoom
- 7:30 p.m. New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus Rehearsal - Choir Room

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT UPC

WORSHIP

December 1 - First Sunday in Advent

11:00 a.m. Worship *(a nursery is provided)*

December 4 - Taizé

6:00 p.m. - Sanctuary

December 8 - Second Sunday in Advent

11:00 a.m. Worship *(a nursery is provided)*

December 11 - Taizé

6:00 p.m. - Sanctuary

December 15 - Third Sunday in Advent

11:00 Worship *(a nursery is provided)*

December 18 - Organ Concert

6:00 p.m. - Sanctuary

December 22 - Fourth Sunday in Advent

11:00 Worship *(a nursery is provided)*
Christmas Joy Offering will be collected.

December 24 - Christmas Eve

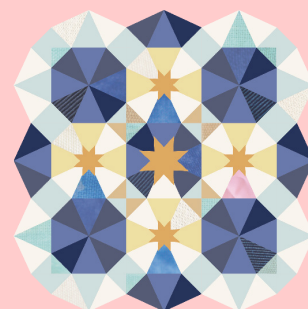
5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols
Traditional service of lessons and carols. This service will be live-streamed.

December 29 - 1st Sunday of Christmas

11:00 Worship *(No church school)*

January 5 - Epiphany Sunday

11:00 Worship *(a nursery is provided)*
Come for our annual distribution of Epiphany Stars




EDUCATION

Digging Deeper Church School Class *(meets in Parks Willson Room)*

Dec. 3: Gaines Foster will wrap up his series of classes on the history of religion in the American public square. Thanks so much to Gaines for this very informative set of classes!

Dec. 8, 15, 22: With the Advent series "Words for the Beginning" as our guide, we'll use works of art, music, and poetry to explore the experience of waiting for and welcoming Christmas.

Dec. 29 and Jan. 5: No class



SPOTLIGHT on FAITH FORMATION AT HOME

Use the Advent calendar by the folks from Sanctified Art (included in this Contact, or there are copies at church). Take a moment together to sit, color, and talk about the words you find there. You can do it at the beginning of the day, when kids get home from school, or at the end of the day. If you or your kids have cell phones with cameras, you can also take a photo of something that reminds you of that word (or which brings it to mind) and post it on our Facebook group and/or tag us on Instagram (@universitypresbr).

You don't have to do this every day, but it might be a way to slow down a little in what can be a very hectic time of year. And, we'd love to put your page up on a bulletin board in the Welcome Center once Advent is over (finished or unfinished!) so that we can enjoy it all Christmas and beyond.

Nativity Play



Sunday, December 22

following worship

UPC's more energetic members aged 3 to 17 and the Faith Formation Committee request the honor of your presence at UPC's first-that-we-can-remember Nativity play!

Yes, that's right—we're doing a Nativity play, complete with shepherds, sheep, wise men, camels, stars, angels, the Holy Family and a donkey.

We'll be designing costumes, building sets, and rehearsing during December. If you're willing to help out, we'd love to have you join us at one or more of our sessions:

Sunday, Dec. 1	4:30-6:00 pm (usual Youth Group time—just the 6th-12th graders for this session)
Sunday, Dec. 8	4:30-6:00 pm (usual Youth Group time—younger kids please come this time!)
Saturday, Dec. 14	3-5 pm (everyone that can come)
Sunday, Dec. 15	9:45-10:45 am (church school hour, after 1st-5th grade choir)—if needed
Saturday, Dec. 21	1-3 pm (everyone that can come)
Sunday Dec. 22	9:45-10:45 am (FINAL REHEARSAL!)
Sunday, Dec. 22,	12:15 pm: THE PLAY

CHRISTMAS DINNER



Sunday, December 15
Following Worship
Fellowship Hall

Merry Christmas

The Fellowship Committee invites everyone to a UPC Christmas Dinner on Sunday, December 15 following worship. Please let the church office know if you will be attending so we can have enough food.


The committee will provide roast turkey and several sides. If you would like to bring a gluten-free side dish, or your favorite rolls or dessert, let Barbara Hoffman know, via text or call, 225-241-2743.

New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus

Cedric Bridges, Artistic Director
Kelly Cuppett, Collaborative Pianist

presents

Making the Yuletide



GAY

Friday, Dec. 13, 2024 University of New Orleans Performing Arts Center 7:30pm	Saturday, Dec. 14, 2024 Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge 8470 Goodwood Blvd. 7:30pm
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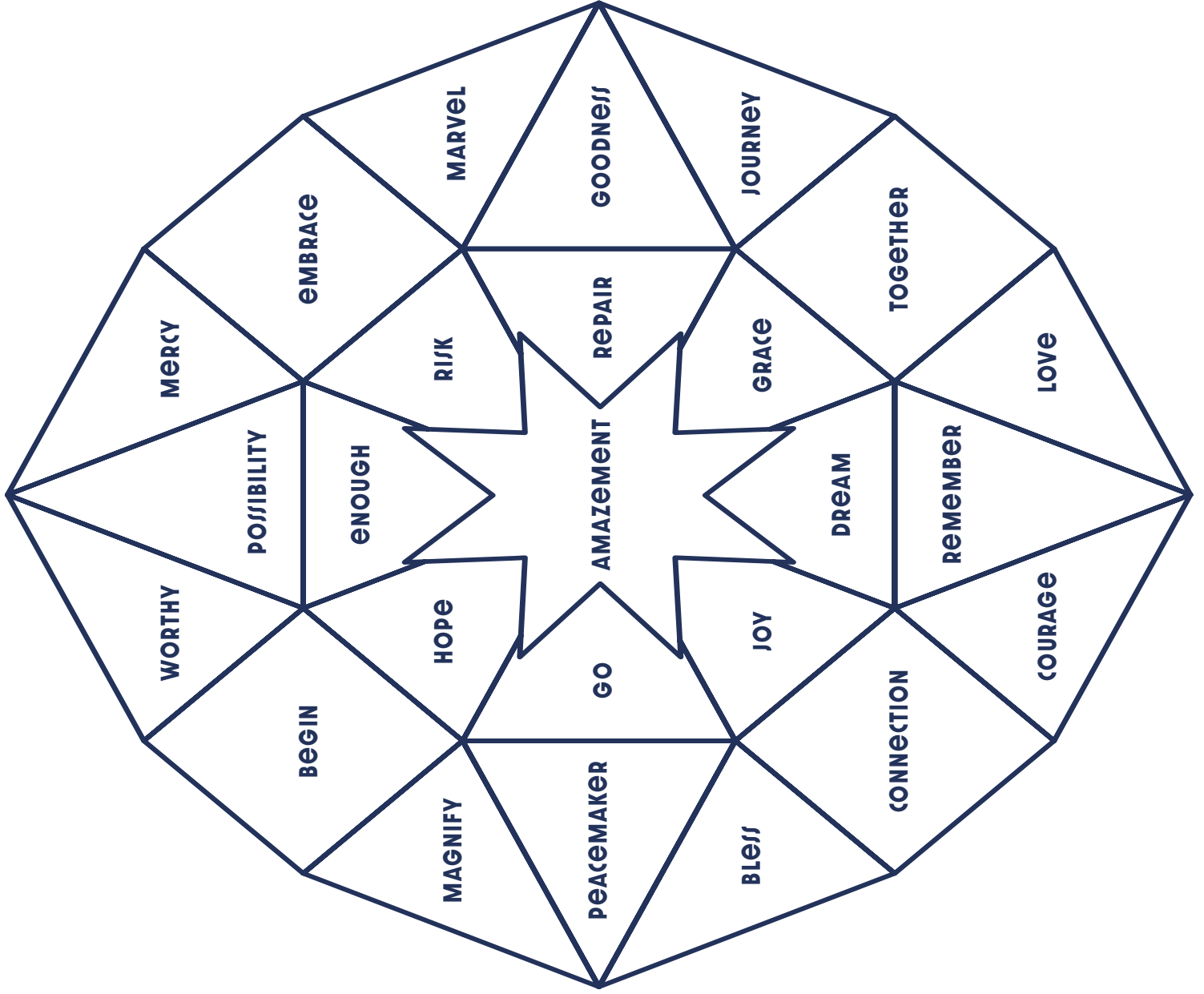


FOR THE BEGINNING

ADVENT CALENDAR

Find the daily word in the quilt design. When you find it, color in that shape. With an adult, talk about what the word means and try to use it throughout your day!

DEC. 1 ST	BEGIN	DEC. 14 TH	GOODNESS
DEC. 2 ND	BLESS	DEC. 15 TH	WORTHY
DEC. 3 RD	COURAGE	DEC. 16 TH	REPAIR
DEC. 4 TH	POSSIBILITY	DEC. 17 TH	MAGNIFY
DEC. 5 TH	REMEMBER	DEC. 18 TH	MERCY
DEC. 6 TH	MARVEL	DEC. 19 TH	DREAM
DEC. 7 TH	GO	DEC. 20 TH	HOPE
DEC. 8 TH	TOGETHER	DEC. 21 ST	RISK
DEC. 9 TH	EMBRACE	DEC. 22 ND	GRACE
DEC. 10 TH	JOURNEY	DEC. 23 RD	JOY
DEC. 11 TH	PEACEMAKER	DEC. 24 TH	LOVE
DEC. 12 TH	CONNECTION	DEC. 25 TH	AMAZEMENT
DEC. 13 TH	ENOUGH		



Youth Group

At the end of October we joined the Fellowship Committee to provide fun and games at the Halloween Extravaganza and as November got underway we provided lunch for everyone teaming up with the Property Committee to clean up inside and outside the church. After the election we had the chance to talk about some of our worries and how to deal with them, and then got to just have fun playing kickball at the church-wide picnic

This next month there's going to be a lot of Nativity Play practice during the regular youth group time (Sundays, 4:30-6pm), although we'll be wrapping gifts for Presbyterian Homes as well. Keep an eye out in the bulletin for caroling and other chances to get in the Christmas spirit!

December

- 1 Nativity Play practice
- 8 Nativity Play Practice
- 14 Nativity Play Practice (Saturday 3-5pm)
- 15 Christmas Wrapping Extravaganza
- 21 Nativity Play Practice (Saturday 1-3pm)
- 22 Nativity Play - immediately following worship!
- 29 NO YOUTH

January - Keep your eye on your emails...!



Mission & Peacemaking

Like many of you, your Mission and Peacemaking committee spent time considering the results of the presidential election and what they mean for our way forward. To borrow from author and researcher Brene Brown, we talked about the experience of despair, and the role of hope, which is not an emotion but “a cognitive behavioral process. It’s about having a goal, a pathway to achieve that goal, and a sense of ‘I can do this.’” She went on to say, “Right now, the thing that is helping the most is micro-dosing hope. I have no access to big hope right now, however, I am asking myself how I can support the people around me. How can I make sure that...I stay committed to courage, kindness, and caring for others.” So UPC, how are you micro-dosing hope in these times? Here are a few things on the minds of your M&P Committee:

We are grateful to share our kindness and caring with our neighbors in need - many immigrants and refugees in our community feel very anxious right now, and we know that our partner organization LORI is working hard to support them. Stay tuned for the opportunity to share our support and fellowship with our immigrant and refugee neighbors, at LORI's end of the year banquet on Dec. 20th.

We are hopeful to be a part of the PCUSA's Matthew 25 movement, joining with many congregations in our commitments to eradicate systemic poverty and dismantle structural racism. We see now more than ever how these structures are poison to our democracy and to God's desire for our world, and so we are glad to keep learning how to become better tools for dismantling them. Look out for a fellowship activity next year where we will participate in the “Racial Wealth Gap Simulation,” helping us to better understand and talk about policies that perpetuate inequity in our country.

We are hopeful in our support for the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, which engages in the deep work of building power and fully engaging Louisianans- especially communities of color- in all aspects of civic life. We were glad to direct 25% of UPC's Peace and Global Witness offering to the Power Coalition to support their ongoing work.

And, many of us were blessed with the opportunity to join with Habitat for Humanity on a beautiful sunny Saturday, bringing Ms. Shelah and her family one step closer to a home they can call their own. Alleluia!



Presbyterian Women

Join our Facebook group PW of UPC, Baton Rouge

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/340272321019732>

PW at UPC has expanded beyond women only to include ALL!

2 CIRCLE MEETINGS to choose from

DECEMBER MEETINGS:

Presbyterian Women Circle will meet Tuesday, December 3 in the Parks Wilson Room at 10:00 a.m. We will discuss Lesson 4 from "Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation".

Peggy Carroll's carport group will also meet on Wednesday morning, December 4, at 10:00 a.m., to study the bible lesson.

JANUARY MEETINGS:

Presbyterian Women Circle will meet Tuesday, January 7 in the Parks Wilson Room at 10:00 a.m. We will discuss Lesson 5 from "Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation".

Peggy Carroll's carport group will also meet on Wednesday morning, December 8, at 10:00 a.m., to study the bible lesson.

Helping Hands

Helping Hands meets on the third Tuesday of each month, 9:30, UPC Conference Room. Join us for fun and fellowship on December 17 and January 21. We will sort supplies and plan new projects. Sewing skills are not required.



Fall Retreat

FELICIANA Women's Retreat
RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER
January 31-February 1, 2025

Spend three days (Friday-Sunday) in intentional community. There will be teaching sessions, small groups, music, reflective time, great food, activities and much more! Sign yourself, your women's group, or just a couple of friends for time hearing what God wants to share!

Weekend Offerings:
Teaching Sessions • Small Group Discussions • Great Food
Reflective Time • Home Cooked Meals • Fellowship Activities
COST: \$210

To register or get more information please visit our website at frccenter.org

FELICIANA RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER
Feliciana Retreat and Conference Center
10274 LA-422, Norwood, LA 70761
(225) 683-6824

What child is this?

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

The PCUSA Christmas Joy Offering will be collected December 22. Donations may be made via check and mailed to UPC with Joy Offering in the memo line or made on-line through Realm. (see instructions on how to give in the bulletin under OFFERING) The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

LINK LOVE

Here are some fun, funny, inspirational, or thought-provoking links for you this month. (If you open this online there are hotlinks embedded, but links you can type in are just below in case the hotlinks don't work or you are receiving this on paper!)

- The Man and the Birds. A story in a confirmation curriculum years ago that tries to illustrate an answer to that great question: Why did God become human? <https://christmastories.org/the-man-and-the-birds/>
- Sometimes it helps to consider time a different way - like beginning a new year in December. Here is a song from artist David Wilcox about starting life at the end. <https://youtu.be/o2GopSqhXRc?si=4WBIB3WpQtkThcvF>
- The Work of Christmas, a poem by theologian Howard Thurman, is set to music here by Dan Forrest and the Beckenhorst Singers. As we enter 2025, may we all undertake the work of Christmas. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvc4BzYBpEA>
- Some names are really hard to find when you go to the gift shops. Luckily, this site will find your name in nature from places all over the world! Pretty cool... <https://landsat.gsfc.nasa.gov/apps/YourNameInLandsat-main/>
- Who knew there was a Milky Way Photographer of the Year? Here's to being glad we know now! The photos included for 2024 are just gorgeous. It's almost hard to wait until 2025... <https://capturetheatlas.com/milky-way-photographer-of-the-year/>
- In Baton Rouge we have Front Yard Bikes. In Chicago there is Working Bikes. Working Bikes gives donated bicycles new life by redistributing them as tools of empowerment in local and global communities. <https://bit.ly/3DthObB> (You can check out their website as well - <https://workingbikes.org/>)
- Everyone makes lots of lists at the end and the beginning of the year. But have you ever made a "happy list"? Do you live primarily in your head? Remembering the past or imagining the future? Solving problems that don't even exist yet? This video is for you (and me). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syR_NinJ2B0&list=PLnTHV8ZielDbsGRZOz9ZfMDdeOnqpsolX
- You want to talk random, but pretty funny? It's these photos of dogs by Christian Vieller who takes pictures of dogs who just caught a dog biscuit someone threw them. This must be at least part of what is meant by the joy of Christmas. <https://www.instagram.com/vieller.photography/>

MENU

Soup and Pie

1-19-25
Following Worship
Fellowship Hall

Bring your best soup. Bring your best pie. Compete for the golden prize and bragging rights! Everyone is invited to partake in this beloved annual UPC tradition.

The UPC Society for the Expansion of Grudge Matches (or Fellowship Committee) has decided that the Fall Picnic Kickball Game isn't the only place for healthy competition. There's also the...

2025 Soup and Pie Competition!!!

You're going down, Linda!

In your dreams, Vic!

Come to our Annual Soup & Pie Fest on Sunday, January 19 after the 11:00 service and see if last year's winners remain on top or are brought down by contenders. Bring your own entries and you too can be contender for the esteemed Golden Ladle and Golden Pie Pan awards.

It's my turn this year, Ms. Jill!

Youthful idealism is so cute.

The Back Fence

- Congratulations to **Violet Stroope** who was selected for the all state orchestra
- It's a girl! Congratulations to **Cynthia and Edward Peterson** upon the birth of their first granddaughter, **Annie Elizabeth O'Hare**, on November 4, 2024

IDENTIFIED GIVING STATUS 2024
(as of 11/26/2024 we are 84% through the year)

Received Pledged giving: \$494,529
(86% of \$573,738 pledged)

Received Unpledged giving \$29,888
TOTAL GIVING RECEIVED: \$524,417
Thank you for your generous contributions!

Prayer Requests

To add a name, remove a name, or update information on our prayer list, please contact the church office by noon on Wednesday at cdurham@upcbr.org.

Lois Liggett • Gary Meise • Ruth Bivins • Gerard Klein
 Alan Williams • Kathy Poché • Cheryl Whitting • Kathy Rossman
 Mickey Rose Braud Zaitoon • Fay Coco • Melanie Driscoll
 Our Cuba Partners • Lynn Nichols Dull

- **Gabrielle Clune**, friend of Barbara and Paul Hoffman, who has completed her treatment for non-Hodgkins Lymphoma. She and her family are very grateful for UPC prayers on her behalf
- **George Gullett**, friend of the Hoffmans, undergoing cancer treatment
- **Cody Lucero**, as he recovers from surgery
- **Jan Risher and family**, upon the death of her uncle, Mac Greer
- **The United States of America** as we transition after the election
- **Vanessa Harris**, sister-in-law of Jonathan Hubchen, undergoing chemotherapy for liver cancer
- **Doug Toothman**, brother-in-law of Jerry and Sarah Kennedy, with liver cancer
- **Lee Wirth**, brother of Karen Paterson, as he continues treatment for lymphoma
- **Suzanne E.**, friend of Kathie Pohlman, at home recovering from a stroke
- **Frances McGraw** (95), grandmother of Matthew McGraw, in the hospital with gallstones and possible onset of dementia
- **Brian Babin**, recovering at home from back surgery
- **Lillian Magruder**, aunt of Leslie Green, in hospice, and Leslie's cousin, Tad, her caretaker
- **Patti Aldrich**, neighbor of Patti Snyder, diagnosed with cancer
- **Betty Nelson**, aunt of Bizza Britton, with congestive heart failure and a move at age 96
- **Faye Beroth**, Bizza Britton's aunt with Alzheimer's, and her son, Tom, her sole caretaker
- **Josh Rosenberg and Angelle Bradford** as Josh undergoes radiation and chemotherapy
- **Bill Benton**, uncle of Mamie Broadhurst, in hospice
- **Kathy Kennedy**, Jerry's sister, undergoing chemotherapy
- **Julio Piña**, nephew of Jan Risher and Julio Naudin, with multiple brain tumors
- **Corrie Hale's Dad, Conrad**, with inoperable cancer on his spine
- **Joellen Hawkins**, Aunt of Emily Cogburn, with Alzheimer's
- **Craig Fisher**, Anita Melon's brother in law, with Lewy-Body dementia
- **Hugh Huffman**, friend of Rosemary John, undergoing treatment for cancer
- **Rev. Adelaida Jiménez and the efforts toward peace in Colombia**
- **All those affected by war - Ukraine, Middle East, and beyond**
- **All those affected by gun violence**
- **All families affected by Huntington's Disease**
- **All hospice patients and their families**
- **All those who suffer with mental illness and emotional disorders**
- **Those who are affected by alcoholism and addiction**
- **Men and women serving in the armed forces**
- **Those who are going through separation or divorce**
- **Those who are affected by domestic violence**
- **All those recovering from hurricanes Helene and Milton**

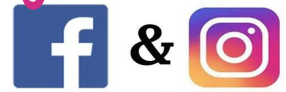


The Pastor's Discretionary Fund is currently low on funds. Please consider a donation.

This fund allows our Pastor to respond quickly to particular needs of folks within the congregation and in the wider community.

Contributions may be made in Realm, but there is a 10 day delay in processing.

Stay Connected!



Facebook Instagram

See us Sundays on Facebook for a live broadcast of our worship service!

www.facebook.com/universitypresbyterian
<https://www.instagram.com/universitypresbr/>

The University Presbyterian Church CONTACT is printed monthly. Articles may be submitted via email to cdurham@upcbr.org or turned in to the church office no later than the 20th of each month. To be removed from the mailing list, please contact the church office.

UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 3240 Dalrymple Drive
 Baton Rouge, LA 70802
 (225)383-0345
 (225)383-3495 Fax
www.upcbr.org

5 WAYS TO GIVE



IN PERSON

Drop your gift into the offering plate on Sunday



MAIL

Mail your gift to:
 University Presbyterian Church
 3240 Dalrymple Drive
 Baton Rouge, LA 70802



ONLINE

Give online at:
<https://onrealm.org/UniversityPresb15909/give/now>
 or through your REALM portal under GIVING/+GIVE



MOBLIE APP

Realm Connect is available for download at iTunes and Google Play (uses your onrealm login)

UPC BR 75

TEXT

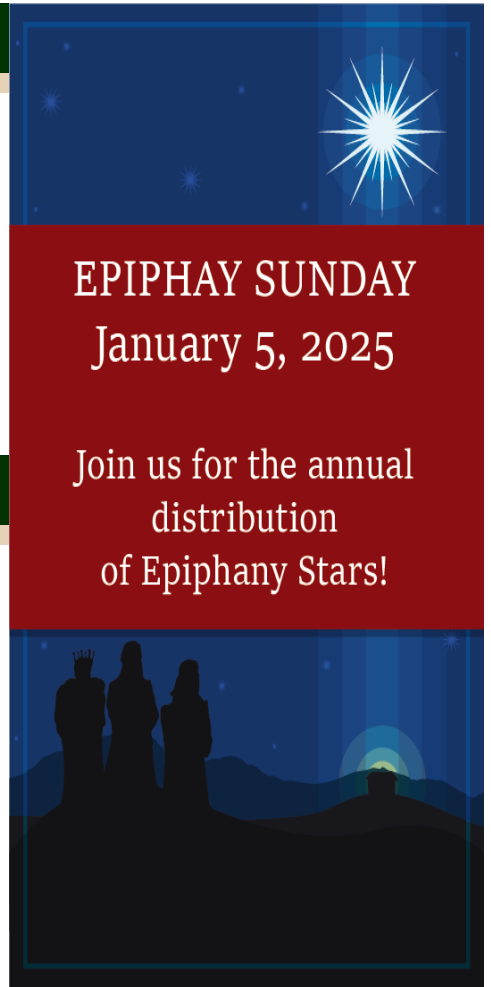
Text UPCBR and your amount to 73256 (as shown above)

December Birthdays

3	Kathy Perry	10	Dorothy Jones	25	Leslie Green
6	Beverly Tipton Mona Truluck	20	Mike O'Donnell Steve Whitting	26	Cindy Rice Anna-Karin Skillen
7	Gina Costello Friedrich Pilly	21	Pat Strain	28	Eleanor Canon Audrey Cogburn
8	Bunny Heroman Hattie Knapp	22	Mamie Broadhurst Elijah Fontenot Stafford	31	Darla O'Connor

January Birthdays

2	Dawn Simpson	10	Suzanne Trahan	16	Forest Benedict Lori Hyatt Pilley Darlene Rowland
3	Mary Clinkenbeard	12	Cordell Haymon Gerard Klein	22	Griffin Campbell
6	Kathleen Richey Ben Stoker		Carl Motsenbocker Jeff Perry	25	Lynne Wallace
7	Betty Shelton	13	Rivière Juneau	29	Kathy Poché
8	Paul Nguyen	15	Deanna Black Jennifer Bravinder	30	Mitch Patty
9	Emilia Hartmann			31	Mary Stevens



Mission Statement
 In response to God's grace, University Presbyterian Church of Baton Rouge seeks creatively – through nurture, education, worship and community outreach – to sustain an inclusive, compassionate family of faith; it seeks to promote spiritual growth by awakening souls to God's infinite mercy embodied in the reconciling love of Christ.
 --Adopted by the Session December 1995

University Presbyterian Church
 3240 Dalrymple Drive
 Baton Rouge, LA 70802



Change Service Requested