

United
Presbyterian
Church
of Peoria, Illinois

The Chimes



Volume.16 Issue.11 November 20, 2019

December 2019 Worship Schedule

December 1 – First Sunday of Advent - Communion
Blue Christmas Service at 3:00 p.m.

December 8 – Second Sunday of Advent – a Celtic Christmas
Walk with Randy

VIVID Christingle Service at 4:00 p.m.

December 15 – Christmas Festival – led by all ages at 10:00
Christmas Festival Funland during Fellowship

December 22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent – Lessons and Carols

December 24 – Services at 4:00 and 11:00 p.m.

December 29 - Service at 10:00 am
"Tell Me the Old, Old Story"
Sunday School on Break

*Please note: the Office will be open December
23, 30 and 31st.*



Looking Ahead:
January 5, 2019
Communion
Ordination/Installation of Church Officers
Distribution of Star Gifts

In this issue:**Page 2**

Church Leadership

Page 3

Letter from Rev. Laura

Page 4

Worship & the Arts

Page 5

Nature Connections

Page 6

Church Life

Thank You

Library

Page 7

Faith Community Nurse

Christmas Card Bags

Mission

Page 8

Prayer Corner

News and Notes

Page 9

Hospitality & Growth

Page 10

Hospitality and Growth

Congregational Meeting

Page 11New CHIMES Deadlines &
Publication Dates**Insert**

Calendar

Christmas Flowers

Church Leadership**Session****Laurie Hartshorn, Clerk of Session****Class of 2019**

Charlotte Cronin

Mary Jo Mays

Kathy Nordvall

Betty Pugh

Class of 2020

Tim Cole

Deb Hanson

Don Hartshorn

Pam Madden

Alexis Maloof

Class of 2021

Christie Cook

Ellen Grohovena

Judy Helm

Jerry Randall

Jim Sullivan

Board of Deacons**Class of 2019**

Theresa Bender

Ken Krancher

John Madden

Sue McGill

Rick Noetzel

Deb Paul

Nancy Pogue

Bev Ranson

Myrna Schwarz

Class of 2020

Judi Beck

Pat Bensing

Theresa Buley

Ann Gropp

Megan Marsh

Kathy Nixon

Nancy Thompson

Class of 2021

Alice Bremner

Eva Grubbs

Erin Heilman

Rich Lansdowne

Jan Mooberry

Kim Murray

Stephanie Randall

Mary Vetter

Julie Watson

Session Committee Moderators & Liaisons*

Church Life

Charlotte Cronin*

Hospitality & Growth

Ellen Grohovena*

Christian Education

Pam Scranton/Betty Pugh*

Human Resources

Pam Madden*/Deb Sullivan

Member Care

Mary Jo Mays*/Deb Hanson*

Mission

Christie Cook*/Jenna Hague

Properties

Bob McDowell/Don Hartshorn*

Stewardship & Finance

Megan McKeighan /Tim Cole*

Worship & the Arts

Mark Hanson /Jerry Randall*

Preschool

Pam Scranton/Kathy Nordvall*

Nature Connections

Judy Helm*

Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)

Les Boswell, Mark Hanson, Sean Jennings*, Nicole Livsey, Alexis Maloof*,
Sally Maubach, Stan Strickler; *Co-Moderators

Foundation

2019-Ellen Grohovena, Richard Kern

2020-Theresa Bender, Fred Roland

2021-Evan Hague, Rich Helm

The Pastor Nominating Committee is hard at work searching for who God will call to our ministry here at UPC.

For updates, check the Chimes or Weekly Ringer.

Interested in joining United Presbyterian Church?
Contact the pastor or visit our website at: www.unitedpc.org.

Letter From Laura

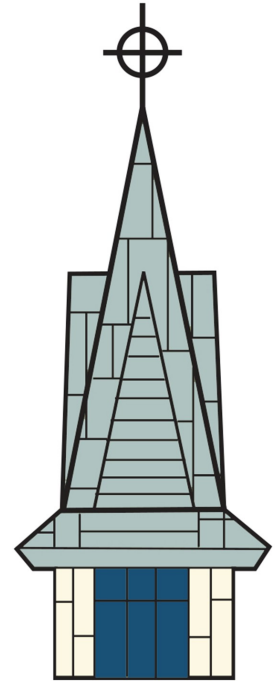
Thomas Long, in his book *Testimony*, writes of making a final visit to an old friend the weekend before Christmas. His friend lay in an upstairs bedroom, attended by friends and folks from hospice. Tom went in and sat beside his friend. They did not have much to say. Both of them knew it would be his friend's last Christmas. His friend could do nothing without help, and death, only a few weeks away from claiming him, was already an intruder in the room. His friend was in constant pain, his face grey and taut and ravaged by disease. They sat in the stillness of old friends content with silence, saying farewell with quietness.

Suddenly there was movement downstairs, the sounds of muffled voices, the shuffle of feet. It was a choir from his church come to sing Christmas carols. They could hear them whispering about what to sing to a dying man. Their voices started softly, "Lo how a rose e'er blooming..." Tom and his friend looked at each other and waited as the choir slowly climbed the stairs, their voices growing nearer and stronger – "to show God's love aright." The choir stood in the doorway, continuing the verses. Tom's friend, deep into the darkness of dying and still agonizing hours away from the dawn, turned away so they would not see his tears as he listened to them as they sang. "She bore for us a savior, when half spent was the night."

What Tom marveled about as he listened to this mournful yet hopeful song was how the choir, having spent countless Wednesday nights mastering the lyrics and the tunes, the meters and the meanings of hundreds of choral expressions of the faith, had chosen just right for this moment. They knew, as people schooled in the language of faith, that the "night is dark and we are far from home." They knew they needed to sing both truthfully and hopefully, to lament as well as to rejoice, with their fellow congregant and so they sang of God's love coming "when half-spent was the night." (directly from *Testimony*, Jossey-Bass, 2004, 33-4)

As the days shorten and winter begins, as we huddle in more and venture out less, we also draw closer and closer to Bethlehem. As we journey with Joseph and Mary this year, let us remember that "Christianity is a way of life learned in the midst of others." (ibid, 35) It is not just about belonging and believing, but pursuing a certain way of life. Come home for Christmas at UPC this year. From Blue Christmas to the Family Christmas Shop to a Celtic Christmas to the Christmas Festival to Lessons and Carols, to leaving the church at midnight on Christmas Eve, to the telling of the old, old story again on the last Sunday of the year, there is much here "to show God's love aright." See you soon.

Blessings,
Rev. Laura



Worship & the Arts

Dear Church Family,

As I reflect on these past ten weeks of work I have much I would like to share with you. I must say thank you for the support and patience I have been given. The congregation and Worship and the Arts Committee have made me feel nothing but welcomed and valued. I need to thank Reverend Laura for her continued guidance and kindness. Trish Deppermann has gone above and beyond to teach me and guide me. Finally, I want to thank Sue Hulin and all of the musicians and singers for their warm welcome and grace they continue to give me.

I have many dreams and aspirations for our church. I pray daily that God will bring us a new pastor that has a strong vision. I look forward to working in making that vision come to pass. I also pray that during this time of waiting we would grow as a fellowship.

Having a new Worship and the Arts director can be very difficult. I am praying that our numbers will rise and we will be able to offer a variety of musical and artistic experiences to our congregation and Almighty God.

Many of you may know that I am extremely active in Peoria's music and theater scenes. I find as I am at rehearsals I long to be back at the church. I truly enjoy UPC and all of its members. My hope is that someday I won't have to go outside of the church for these musical and theatrical experiences. My prayer is that UPC will be a church known for the way it worships God through art and music.

As 2019 comes to an end I encourage you to pray for our Worship and the Arts Department. Pray that God would bless us with more participants. Ask God if you should think about dusting off your old band instrument or encouraging the young people in your family and around you to use their talents to glorify God.

Please pray for me to be a support to Rev. Laura and our future pastor. I can sense that God is about to do wonderful things at UPC in 2020. I am thrilled that I get to be part of it!

Many Blessings,
Alison

Blue Christmas Service

Hosted by Worship and the Arts, this service to be held on Sunday, December 1 at 3:00 pm isn't just for UPC folks, but a wonderful way for you to reach out to friends, relatives and neighbors who are grieving and provide you the opportunity to show your compassion as we move towards Christmas. A Blue Christmas service is especially for those for whom Christmas is a difficult time, which can happen for many reasons, including a recent personal loss; depression; an association with painful Christmases past; separation from loved ones; or a feeling of intense disconnection from the prevailing secularism of Christmas. This service gives space and time away from the hype of Christmas and an opportunity to experience a sacred presence amidst our lives which are sometimes awkward, uncomfortable, and messy.

Christingle Service Returns to the December VIVID service

A Christingle Service is a service of light and ceremony, of song and symbol, and familiar stories of Jesus' birth. Christingle means "Christ light," and the service focuses our attention on the hope and joy that light brings to a dark world. In the dark of winter, the coming of Christ, the light of the world, is a powerful message of hope. A Christingle is made from an orange, which represents the world that God made, and a candle, which represents Jesus, the light of the world. Together, we will begin the evening by each of us making our own Christingles, and then using them as the central part of the evening's worship. As always at a VIVID service, our time of worship ends with a community meal. You will especially delight in this old Moravian traditional Christmas Eve service if you will be traveling over Christmas this year. This is a wonderful opportunity to join your UPC church family in candlelit worship early, during the Advent season. **Join us at 4:00 pm on Sunday, December 8th for the VIVID Christingle Service. Enter through the south patio doors into a beautiful, creative, intimate inter-generational worship service unlike any other worship service we have at UPC.**

Worship & the Arts

Nature Connections Sponsors Christmas Bird Blessing Bags at the Christmas Festival December 15



You may remember several years ago Nature Connections provided materials and equipment to make Bird Blessing Bags to take home and give as gifts.

It is a Scandinavian tradition to share the joy of Christmas morning with the little birds that brighten our days through the cold, dark part of the year. Their winter calls remind us we are part of God's Natural World and that the light and warmth of spring will come again. Some believe spreading birdseed near your doorstep will even bring luck in the coming year.

We have had many requests to offer this again so at the Christmas Festival on December 15 we again have bird blessing bags for you to make. Color your poems, make your tags and fill the gift bags with bird seed. Of course, no charge!

Spread the joy of Christmas to God's natural world.



Nature Connections

Walk with Randy December 8 After Church

Join Nature Connections Committee on December 8 as we premier the new video *"Walk with Randy: God's Natural World at UPC Campus"*.

An Introduction to the Natural World and History of UPC Campus"

We will be celebrating the legacy of Randy Saxon, Nature Ranger, in securing and developing the master plan for our wonderful natural environment at UPC. This summer Nature Connections created a new website video from footage of Randy guiding us on a tour. Mark your calendars to not miss church that day!



Monarch Day 2019 Update

Nature Connections is pleased to announce the receipt of two grants for funding Monarch Day, 2019. Our first proposal was for a competitive grant funded by the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to support initiatives which combined *advocacy for the environment and evangelism*. Our proposal was selected by all the reviewing committees from our own session all the way up to the General Assembly. We were partially funded for \$1000.



The Presbytery of Great Rivers, however, liked our mission and plan when they reviewed it and decided to provide additional funds of \$2640 to fully fund our request. Nature Connections feels blessed by the interest

and support of the Presbytery and General Assembly of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in our mission throughout this process and are so thankful for the financial trust given to us to make this dream come true.

Church Life

Ladies Night Out

Place: Steak n Shake

East Peoria, IL

Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019

Time: 6:00 pm

Any lady is invited and bring a friend too. RSVP to Eunice Andrews @ 688-8458 or Betty Pugh @ 822-8500. This is our annual while elephant gift exchange. Come enjoy the evening of fun, food, and fellowship

Dining Tour Books Are Available

Dining Tour Books are now available. They will be for sale in Fellowship Hall on December 1st and 15th. They can also be purchased in the church office until the end of the year. The cost is \$30 and UPC receives \$10 from the proceeds of each book sold to support the Share the Warmth Blanket Ministry of Anna Circle. The books make great gifts. Get yours today.

Thank You

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for the lovely red rose. It lasted a long time! Also for the cards, call, visits, messages and prayers following my recent surgery. They are so appreciated. You are the best!

Virleen Mach

I want to thank the Session and Congregation of United Presbyterian for remembering me during Pastor Appreciation Month in October with your lovely card and gift certificates for Long Horn and Barnes and Noble. Not only have I enjoyed the evenings out to dinner, I am a book junkie and will go shopping soon for some new books. I especially appreciated your personal notes you also sent during the month – this has truly been a delightful oasis of church life here at UPC and I will treasure you all in my heart for the rest of my life.
Blessings and joy, Rev. Laura

Library

Mitten Tree

It's that time of year again to decorate our Mitten Tree with warm outerwear accessories (gloves, caps, mittens, scarves). Please consider helping us gather these items for those in need. We will be delivering the donated items to local charities in mid-December.



Also, please stop by the library and check out a book or two (or more). We have some outstanding books for both adults and children. You may be interested in one of our many cookbooks for the upcoming holidays! Remember, we will be putting out a lot of Christmas books for both adults and children right after Thanksgiving. Watch for them! We have quite a variety of stories.

Thank you for your support of our outstanding church library.

A Request From the Library Staff

We are approaching the end of the year and perhaps many of you are going through the house and cleaning out some "stuff." If this is true of your household, would you see if you find some books from the church library that perhaps got overlooked to return?

In cleaning the library files, we find quite a few books have not been returned. Could one of these books be at your house (or in your car)? If so, we would love to have you return it to its home!

Have a wonderful holiday season.



Faith Community Nurse

Holidays and Stress Management

As we approach the holiday season, it may be a good time to plan ways to manage stress. Depression and stress can ruin the holidays and take a toll on health. The holidays can create stress related to entertaining, parties, shopping, baking, and cleaning to name a few. However, following some practical tips may help minimize this stress. It is important to acknowledge your feelings of sadness or grief during the holidays. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it is the holiday season. If you are feeling isolated or lonely, reach out for community support. There may be religious or social events that can offer support and companionship. Another way to lift your spirits and make new friends may be to volunteer.

Another tip to consider is being realistic with holiday expectations. The holiday celebrations don't have to be perfect or the same year after year. As families grow and change, so can traditions and rituals of the past. It may be helpful to set aside grievances during the holidays, and to accept friends and family members as they are. Sticking with a budget during the holiday season may also help decrease stress. Deciding how much money you plan to spend before going shopping may help.

Setting aside specific days for different holiday activities such as shopping and baking may be helpful in combating stress. Other things to consider in decreasing stress include saying no to projects or activities if you are feeling overwhelmed, continuing health habits for yourself with respect to nutrition, exercise, and sleep; taking the time to do something that helps you relax such as taking a walk or reading a book; and seeking professional help if necessary. Take some time to plan ahead and enjoy the upcoming holiday season!
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544?p=1>

Keli Briggs, MSN, RN
Faith Community Nurse

Christmas Card Bags

Christmas card bags for our church members not easily able to come to church will be ready to fill through 10:00 a.m. on December 8th, when they will be picked up by the Deacons for delivery. Some cards are available here or make or bring your own. Please take a few minutes to participate in this annual blessing for this part of our church family.



Mission

Gifts for the Forgotten

Gifts for the Forgotten is a wonderful opportunity for us to provide gifts to those residents of Heddington Oaks who otherwise might not receive a gift on Christmas. You can call or email Erin (309) 231 7015 or eecole86@gmail.com to see the list or just commit to donating a monetary amount to help buy the gifts and I'll do the shopping. Each gift can easily be purchased for \$15-20. Thank you so much for your help for those at Heddington Oaks.

Prayer Corner

Please keep the following people in your thoughts:

Eunice Andrews
 Marilyn Bain
 Theresa Bender
 Jack Bensing
 Karen Black
 Marlene Boeker
 Mary Buesing
 Penny Brower
 Chris (Bender)
 Dana (Jones)
 Betty Downard
 A'Miyah Eakle
 Mary Everett
 Friends of Jeni Freidman
 Carol Fuller
 Carolyn Gnepper
 Scott Grubbs
 Pat Hagenbuch
 Geneva Hall (Gulley)
 Jes Hall
 Mary Etta Hanson
 Pauline Harris
 Harrison & Ryleigh
 Carol Hicks
 Doug Jackson
 Mary Jermac
 Michelle & Terry Johnson (Kelley)
 Ann Jones
 Dwight Jones
 Larry Kamrath
 Betty Keller
 Mike & Linda Kelley
 Debbie Kutter
 Virleen Mach
 David McDowell
 Megan & Alicia's newborn
 Diane Morrill (Hultgren)
 Christy & Jeff Presseau (Maloof)
 Projeto Amar I and II
 Jerry Prusak (Bender)
 Toni Redlingshafer
 Jeff Rickett
 Kathleen Ross
 Janet Shepler
 Veronica Shumaker



Dave Smith
 Jacquie Spaulding
 Carol Stalnaker
 Larry & Sara Stotts
 Stan Strickler
 Jack Umdenstock
 Felicia Vallosio
 Parker Waldschmidt
 Jim Weinkauf
 Richard West
 Jon Wrigley
 Ruthie Yingling

Prayers of Christian sympathy to Mike & Linda Kelley and family on the death of Mike's Mother, Rosemary Kelley, on November 2, 2019.

News and Notes

Tai Chi Open House

House You are invited to join The Taoist Tai Chi Society of the USA on Wednesday evening January 22, 2020 at United Presbyterian church, 2400 W. Northmoor Dr, Peoria from 6:15-7:30 pm for an open house in Room 100. We will have demonstrations of the tai chi set and serve tea. Come check out this graceful and gentle form of exercise with its series of slow movements. Tai chi has many health benefits -mind, body and spirit. The benefits include stillness, decreased stress and anxiety, improvement of energy and stamina, flexibility, balance and strength, concentration, circulation, posture, the central and nervous systems of the body, rhythm of movement, quality of sleep, and joint pain. It is low impact and appropriate for any age and fitness level. TTCS is a non profit charitable organization. Guests are always welcome to observe classes held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in the fellowship hall from 1:30-2:30 pm, or on Monday and Wednesday evenings in Room 100 from 6:00-7:30 pm.

Hospitality and Growth

A Christmas Pageant Casting Call?

This article was written by Susan Davis Krummel, who grew up in First Presbyterian of Peoria and currently serves as the Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Chicago, reprinted from 11/10/2019 of Presbytery Connect, the eletter of the Presbytery of Chicago.

During the year before I came to Chicago Presbytery, I was serving a small church as interim pastor and lived full time in Peoria. I have always loved theater of all kinds and, in fact, my undergraduate degree is a performance degree in Speech Communications from Illinois. There were only about 100 of us in that major while I was there and most of the other people were heading toward television. In any case, during 2017 I had enough free evenings to be able to try out for a show and was cast with a very small part in the chorus. It was fun to see the show from the backstage end of it and to help out with all of the kids who were in it.

I also discovered that the community theater groups in Peoria all operate on Facebook. That is how you find out that you made the show; how you are informed about the rehearsal schedule and on and on. Now that I do not have time to be in a show, I still keep in touch with the two theater groups on Facebook since that is also where they ask for volunteers. I saw a few shows for free this summer under the tent in Bradley Park where summer productions are done by volunteering to be an usher.

Because of the Facebook connections, I also see some of the announcements for the very active children's community theater groups in Peoria. I have noticed that one of the ways both the indoor and outdoor theaters help to fill their seats is by choosing shows that have lots of kids in them. If all of their family members pay for tickets (and some of them, of course, come almost every night) it helps to keep the theater afloat. Many of these kids take acting and singing and dancing classes all year round. They are always on the lookout for places to audition to show off their budding talents.

I know that this time of year is crunch time for those involved with children's ministry in churches. I was a youth pastor in one of my calls and was involved in youth ministry in almost every church I served. I have directed children's pageants where no one really learned their lines and our Sunday morning pageant looked more like a bad rehearsal. I have had the lead (who knew all of his lines) walk up to me about 30 minutes before the pageant was to begin and tell me that he thought he was going to throw up. (I told him to go find his mother. Someone read from a script to fill in for him.) I have had kids get microphone cords so twisted around someone else's legs that we had to stop for a minute to right the ship.

The best one may have been the program with about 100 children and teen-agers all standing at the front of the sanctuary while someone was videotaping. (This was a long time ago so it really was taped.) You could see that something happened that made children and teens alike react by stepping back and then giggling uncontrollably. It was really funny to watch on the video. Apparently one of the little ones had (ahem) had a few too many beans for dinner, if you know what I mean, and the result set off a mini-riot in the program we had been rehearsing for weeks.

Hospitality and Growth Continued

With the way that even active church members attend worship only about once a month now, I cannot imagine trying to put on one of these extravaganzas. How can you rehearse during Sunday School if kids are only there occasionally? How can you choose the day for the pageant? And, for those churches with a handful of children or no children, do you have to abandon the tradition altogether?

I wonder. . . what if you advertised in the community theater groups near your church that there will be auditions for kids for this production, that rehearsals will be held at set times, and that the production will be held on a particular date? I wonder if children from your community who like to perform might be part of your pageant as a part of their performance life for the year.

Does that seem like sacrilege to you? Think about it. What is the purpose of the Christmas pageant? Is it to provide a place to show off Christmas dresses and ties; a time to do what we have always done; one more thing to add stress to the lives of the families in your congregation and your paid and volunteer staff? Or is the purpose to help those involved to understand the great gift we receive at Christmas in a new way? Is a part of the purpose to introduce this story to those who have never heard anything about Christmas except that it is a time to ask for something?

For our congregations to survive and thrive, we need to be creative in the ways we reach beyond our current members and friends. Does that mean inviting strangers to be part of the Christmas pageant? That is for you to decide. But it might be an interesting conversation to have. Why have Christmas pageants been important in the past? What is their true purpose? How do they remind us of our purpose as a church: to bring hope in the name of Jesus Christ every hour of every day?

Rev. Sue Krummel, Executive Presbyter
Presbytery of Chicago
312.488.3015
skrummel@chicagopresbytery.org

News and Notes

Call to Congregational Meeting

A Congregational meeting has been called for Sunday, December 1, immediately following worship, for the purpose of conducting elections.

PLEASE NOTE: Kenton Bowles, our Treasurer, should be contacted ONLY at Finance@unitedpc.org. Please delete any other email addresses you may have for him.

New Chimes Deadlines and Publication Dates

The Chimes is becoming a bi monthly publication. This issue covers both November and December highlights. Our next issue, published on November 20, will cover December and two weeks later, on December 4, we will cover December and January.

Here's what the new schedule looks like:

Deadline: Sunday, November 24, mailed Wed, December 4

Covers: December and January

Deadline: Sunday, January 19, 2020, mailed Wed, January 29

Covers: February and March

Deadline: Sunday, March 15, mailed Wed, March 25

Covers: April and May

Deadline: Sunday, May 17, mailed Wed, May 27

Covers: June and July

Deadline: Sunday, July 19 , mailed Wed, July 29

Covers: August and September

Deadline: Sunday, September 13, mailed Wed, Sept 23

Covers: October and November

Deadline: Sunday, November 15, mailed Wed, November 25

Covers: December and January

The deadline for all information for the bulletin and Ringer will continue to be the Tuesday before publication (we print the bulletin and prepare the Ringer on Thursdays).

Published Monthly by
United Presbyterian Church
2400 W Northmoor Rd
Peoria, IL 61614-3343

THE CHIMES

POSTAGE
PAID
AT
PEORIA, IL
USPS 198-140
PERIODICAL

309-693-2002
FAX: 309-693-7290
E-mail: UPC@unitedpc.org
www.unitedpc.org

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Postmaster: Send address changes to:
CHIMES
United Presbyterian Church
2400 W Northmoor Rd
Peoria IL 61614-3343

ATTENTION POSTMASTER: DATED MATERIAL, PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

Education Hour 9:00 am (Sept-May)
Worship Service: 10:00 am



We grow and nurture followers of Christ in a welcoming community.