



# Why a Sabbatical?

By PASTOR ERIC O. LEDERMANN

Nearly 20 years ago, the Presbytery of Grand Canyon urged congregations to establish a sabbatical policy for their pastors to provide for a 3 to 4 month time of rest every 6 years. Session then established just such a policy, and in 2019, I was the first UPC pastor to utilize this incredible gift. Technically my sixth year was 2018, but my sabbatical was delayed due to some personnel changes. On Feb. 14, 2024, I will celebrate my 12th year, and in two months, I'll embark on my second sabbatical.

Belief has spread that sabbaticals offer great benefits to both pastor and congregation. Yes, it is a long rest from the daily routines of the job (the root word of sabbatical being "sabbath," from Hebrew meaning to stop or rest). But it's also a time of reflection. A sabbatical is not, as some suggest, an extended vacation. It is an intentional time of spiritual renewal and reconnection.

It is true that most people do not get sabbaticals. But research has increasingly shown the benefits to both employees and companies. Microsoft, Google, and other companies, big and small, are realizing benefits to the overall wellbeing of a workforce, and, thereby to the company.

A particularly and often overlooked benefit for congregations is a rested and renewed pastor. Pastors are called to high standards (at times, maybe unrealistically high). Their work is sacred, but it can also be emotional-

ly, spiritually, and even physically draining. As the late Christian philosopher Dallas Willard once said in support of sabbaticals, "We need our pastors to be morally fit and spiritually healthy!" In his mind, sabbaticals were an important way for a congregation to help care for their pastor's wellbeing.

Sabbaticals also encourage a congregational leadership to step up in ways that might otherwise not be expected when the pastor is around. When I returned from my last sabbatical several UPC leaders shared how they saw a renewed sense of commitment and attention to the inner workings of our congregation. Several said they felt empowered and humbled by the experience. A sabbatical can also help a congregation appreciate some of the gifts of your pastor that may be taken for granted. Maybe something about "absence makes the heart grow fonder"?

I have thought deeply about my 2024 sabbatical. My 2019 sabbatical focused on "Reformed and always being reformed," following the trail of the protestant reformation from Wittenburg, Germany, where Martin Luther sparked reform in the Catholic church, to Geneva, Switzerland, where John Calvin grew the reformation even further. Calvin trained John Knox, who eventually returned to his home in Scotland and sparked what became the Scottish Reformation and the beginnings of what we

See WHY A SABBATICAL? on page 2



The 478 mile (769 km) Camino Frances (French Way) of the Camino de Santiago.

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This issue of the  
UPC NEWS & Current Events

is brought to you by...

the word...

Disciple

Old English *discipul* (fem. *discipula*), "one who follows another for the purpose of learning," especially "the personal followers of Jesus Christ during his life, the twelve Apostles chosen or called by him to be his immediate associates," a Biblical borrowing from Latin *discipulus* "pupil, student, follower," which is of uncertain origin. In OED (1989) and Watkins it is said to be from *discere* "to learn," from a reduplicated form of the PIE root *\*dek-* "to take, accept." But according to Barnhart and Klein, it is from a lost compound *\*discipere* "to grasp intellectually, analyze thoroughly".

## WHY A SABBATICAL?

Continued from page 1

now know as Presbyterianism. So, I followed Knox Scotland and stood in the spaces where he preached and taught. It was truly awe-inspiring!

Then I spent an entire month on the U.S.-Mexico border with Frontera de Cristo Border Ministry and reflected on the ever-changing landscape of religious life in relation to socio-political boundaries.

It was all a truly life-changing and thought-provoking endeavor. It pushed my thinking and my faith toward a truly “reformed and always being reformed” way of thinking that led me far beyond what Luther, Calvin, and Knox wrote. You may have heard some of that effect in my sermons over the past few years.

Since 2019, the idea of “pilgrimage” has emerged. Faith is a pilgrimage – a journey. It isn’t about the destination so much as the journey itself. So, I proposed “pilgrimage” to session as the theme of this year’s sabbatical.

I’ll begin my pilgrimage by walking the 478 mile Camino de Santiago (Walk/Way to Santiago) across the north of Spain — it’ll take 35 days. The Camino has dozens of routes that all lead to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela where the remains (relics) of St. James are believed to be. It is an ancient pilgrimage that began during the Roman Empire, and has been a spiritual journey for millions ever since. As with any pilgrimage, the richness of this journey is not so much its destination as the journey itself.

I heard about the Camino many years ago, before coming to UPC. It has attracted my heart for a long time (maybe connected to my love of hiking and backpacking?). As I’ve heard stories from others who have walked the Camino, like our own Dan Abbott, the call of the Camino has grown ever stronger. It will be difficult, but no journey is worth anything if it does not offer some challenges.

On my way home I’ll swing through the Highlands of Scotland and reunite with some old friends. The rest of the sabbatical will be shaped by several wilderness adventures planned around the U.S., including with my good friend and wilderness partner, the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Malone.

While the root of sabbatical means “to stop” or “rest,” as you might surmise, I won’t be sitting still much. I’ll have rest days between trips, but, for me, taking a break from the routines and ruts that I often sink into will be my sabbath. My hope and prayer is that these adventures will help me step away and discern different perspectives, as happened in 2019.

And don’t worry, you’ll be in good hands. We’re lining up some wonderful pastors to offer worship and pastoral support in my absence. I’ll be sharing more about that and how you can share in my sabbatical adventures in the coming weeks. You’ll even be able to track my progress on the Camino! I appreciate your prayers as I prepare.

For now, ... ■

*Be of good courage  
and know that you are loved!*



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## MONTHLY DRIVE ‘n’ DROP

**February 4, 2024 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

*Normally First Sunday of each month! Drop off at church!*

Here are the items needed for TCAA and UPC Refugee Ministry



#### TCAA needs

- breakfast items
- towels/washcloths
- baby wipes
- travel snacks
- canned goods

#### REFUGEE needs

- laundry & dish soap
- shampoo
- conditioner
- body wash & lotion
- snack items

Financial contributions may be sent to the office.  
Make checks out to “TCAA” and reference “Food Pantry”  
or to UPC and reference “Refugee” in the memo

UPC NEWS & Current Events is published monthly.  
Submissions of announcements, stories, op-eds,  
and reflections on recent events at UPC are  
welcomed.

#### Requirements:

Announcements: 500 words or less  
Articles/Reflections: 1200 words or less  
Letters to the Editor: 750 words or less  
Submissions may be edited for content,  
grammar, and space available.

**Send submissions  
by the 20th of each month to:**  
newsletter@upctempe.org



# A Mother and Child...

By DAN ABBOTT

Written December 23, 2023

This is a piece I wrote after spending some time putting water out for migrants on the border.

*She slowly came into sight.  
Next to the imposing wall of dull metal  
She trudged forward.  
On her head she carried all her possessions.  
Her body was wrapped in a colorful swath  
Of cloth that stood out on the dull dusty road.  
My partner hailed her...with offers of water and food.  
She slowed down...  
And fastened her gaze on the strangers offering her help.  
Her face was clouded over with distrust,  
With a mix of fear and resistance, her eyes paused...  
Should she trust this group of strangers  
In this unfamiliar wild desert?  
She finally accepted a seat, an upended 5 gallon bucket,  
And slowly drank the cold water offered her.  
Seated on the bucket, two feet, one on each side of her waist  
came into view.  
Strapped to her back, tied on with her colorful west African  
clothing,  
The feet were attached to the body of a small child.  
Fast asleep-guarded by the protective body of his Guinean  
mother,  
The small infant was moving toward an uncertain future. ■*



The U.S.-Mexico border wall at Douglas, Arizona, and Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico.  
PHOTO: ERIC O. LEDERMANN, JULY 9, 2019.

## Deacon Honorary Plant Program

Would you like a flower or plant displayed during worship to recognize a special person, a wedding anniversary, someone who passed away, or a special occasion?

Contact Deacon Jey Young at [JeyYoung@cox.net](mailto:JeyYoung@cox.net), and let him know who you would like to honor or memorialize. Be sure to include:

- the Sunday you prefer for your recognition;
- whether you want to keep the flower or plant, or have it given away; and
- send a check for \$15 paid to the UPC Deacons with "honorary plant fund" in the memo line. You can also pay online at [www.upctempe.org/donate](http://www.upctempe.org/donate) (let Jay know if you plan to pay online)—choose "Deacon Honorary Plants" from the fund options. ■



# Exploring the Language and Imagery of Aging—Words Matter!

By MIKE FERGUSON

*Presbyterian News Service*

The Rev. Dr. Keith Albans, who served 16 years as the Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality at Methodist Homes in the United Kingdom, is something of a wordsmith. His prodigious abilities were on display Thursday during a University of Waterloo's Conrad Grebel University College webinar, "It's How You Say It: Exploring the Language and Imagery of Aging." The hour-long event was carried by the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network and was attended by more than 100 people from around the world.

"Why do you want to work with older people?" Albans was asked more than once when he applied for the position at age 43. "It was the highlight of my ministerial career. I have been to a 110<sup>th</sup> birthday party and thoroughly enjoyed it."

The use of terms like "justers" and

"wasers" describes how many older people speak of themselves, Albans said: "I'm just a housewife" or "I was a chemist" indicates "our entire life is in the past," he said.

"How we speak of who we are and who we were reflects how we are feeling," he said.

Then Albans launched into a study of words containing the consecutive letters "age." He's uncovered more than 600 words formed from 370 word roots. Some have "age" at the beginning of the word, others in the middle and the rest at the end of the word.

Some — "ageism" and "ageing," the British spelling — have a negative value, Albans pointed out, while others, including "agelong" and "ageless," are more affirming.

"Agent" was on the list because "enabling people to be the doer is at the heart of a lot of what we're trying to achieve," he said. "Agency" is also a "significant concept." So is "agenda," Latin for "the things that must be done," which Albans called "a positive way of embracing the process of aging" because we "think about what's important for me and us to do."

"How important," Albans asked, "is the notion of agency for your own hopes about aging or for someone you know? Many of today's older people never expected to live to the age they have. Embracing aging means we can think in a wider and more proactive way."

"Age" at the end of words is a much more common location. Albans divided them into six categories:

Aggregate, such as "courage"

Quantity or measure, such as "charge," "vintage" and "sage"

Process, such as "pilgrimage"

Outcome, such as "foliage"

A place of living or business, such as "cottage" or "garage"

Social standing or relationship, such as "heritage"

There are negative examples for each

category as well: "sewage," "shortage," "rampage" "wreckage," "orphanage," and "bondage."

Albans had about 45 examples of "age" found in the middle of words ranging, as he put it, "from the sublime to the ridiculous": "cagey," "magenta," "pageant," "dowager," "wager" and "suffragette."

Others included "eager," "menagerie," "outrageous," "voyageur," "tragedy" and "unmanageable." Many have connections with aging. Eager is keen interest, which "a lot of older people lose without encouragement," according to Albans. One definition of "menagerie" is "an unusual and varied group of people. I visited a lot of care homes" in his time with Methodist Homes, "and it's a wonderful word."

"What do we affirm and what do we reject thinking about how we speak about and depict ageism?" he asked. "Embracing aging means we can be agents of our own aging by having a plan or agenda. The choice is ours, and how we use it is up to us."

During a question-and-answer session following his talk, Albans was asked what people can do to combat language that's ageist.

"If we look at ways society has addressed issues around racism, sexism and homophobia, change has only come by calling it out for what it is," he said. "The difference, of course, is we are talking about ourselves."

"Some ageism," he said, "is actually a way of saying, 'I'm not there yet.' We have to be honest if we're calling it out. We may be as guilty ourselves as other people are. That's why talking about it is helpful. We can plot our own course into later life."

Citing something she once heard, one person on the call said it this way: "Age is simply the number of years the world has been enjoying you." ■



The Rev. Dr. Keith Albans



# Eleanor Reed Receives “Jesus and Me” Patch

## An Award Earned in Girl Scout Troop 2188

By SADA REED

Eleanor Reed is a member of Daisy Girl Scout Troop 2188 and earned the “Jesus and Me” emblem by completing a four-week course sponsored by the Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.). In the course, kindergarten and first graders were introduced to Jesus as the Son of God through four characteristics Christ displayed: as a storyteller, teacher, friend, and healer.

This curriculum uses the “Jesus Scroll Craft” as a hands-on component. After every lesson, children will create a new page to extend their scroll. The scroll will be an interactive way to not only retell the stories of Jesus, but to enter into the story and relate to Jesus

She read Bible stories that showed Jesus being a storyteller, teacher, friend, and healer, respectively; identified people in her life who also display such characteristics, and explored how she could put each of the four characteristics into practice.

She completed the program December 16.

Pastor Eric presented her with the “Jesus and Me” medallion during the Dec. 31 church service. She will wear the medallion on her Daisy Girl Scout vest. ■



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[pcusa.org/matthew25](http://pcusa.org/matthew25)

# Hymn Laments Deaths of Children in the Middle Eastern War

By MIKE FERGUSON

Editor, Presbyterian News Service

Presbyterian hymn writer and pastor the Rev. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette has written “Now There Is War” to help Presbyterians as they sing, pray and act for peace. The new

hymn is set to the melody “O WALY WALY,” which is also the tune for “Though I May Speak.”

“This hymn laments the deaths of children in the current Middle Eastern war,” Gillette says on her website.

She grants permission for free use of the hymn, adding she would appreciate hearing (even afterward) that you used it. ■



## Now There Is War

By CAROLYN WINFREY GILLETTE

*Now there is war and children die,  
but theirs is not the battle cry.  
This is their time to live and grow —  
to think of things the young should know.*

*This is their time to open doors —  
to read new books, to do their chores,  
to make new friends, to share their bread.  
The world gives pain and death instead.*

*This is their time for soccer teams,  
for watching clouds, for dreaming dreams.  
They long for peace; they're told to “Wait!”  
They long for love; they're taught to hate.*

*O God, your reign belongs to these  
who make up songs and skin their knees.  
May we seek peace and daily strive  
to build a world where they may thrive.*

O WALY WALY 8.8.8.8 (“Though I May Speak”)



# Food and Water Used as Weapons of War in Palestine

By ANDREW KANG BARTLETT

*Presbyterian Hunger Program*

*Special to Presbyterian News Service*

When a crowd was gathered on the hill to hear Jesus preach and the crowd was hungry, the disciples wanted to send them away. Instead, Jesus instructs them in Mark's gospel, "you give them something to eat."

In the last part of Matthew 25, Jesus' listeners were astonished when he told them they had failed him by not providing food when he was hungry or drink when he was thirsty. They tried to defend themselves saying, "When did we see you, Lord?" He answered that whenever they failed to do it to one of the oppressed members of his family, they were failing him. Throughout scripture, we are called by God to care for one another, to feed the hungry, to protect the vulnerable, and to meet the needs of any who are suffering. The time is now to understand what is happening in front of us and to act as God calls.

"As we speak, at least one million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, half of whom are children, are starving, not because of a natural disaster or because of the lack of generous aid waiting at the border," said Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki, according to GE-OTV News. "No, they are starving because Israel is deliberately using starvation as a weapon of war against the people it occupies."

Water too is a life-threatening concern. The water crisis was decades in the making, and the Gazan water infrastructure has further deteriorated. Gazans are dependent on desalinated water plants run by electricity, and since the main power plant was bombed, the plants have shut down throughout Gaza. Water mains have been damaged or destroyed by Israel's bombardments and Israeli forces control the area around Gaza City's only



PHOTO: COURTESY OF PALESTINIAN HYDROLOGY GROUP

desalination plant. United Nations Relief and Works Agency, the UN agency providing relief to Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip, says 70% of the population is drinking salty and contaminated water.

The World Food Program has reported that there are only 1.5-1.8 liters of water available per person per day for drinking and all uses in Gaza, far below the "emergency threshold" of 15 liters per day for "war or famine-like conditions" or the "survival threshold" of 3 liters per day.

With the shortages of food and water, experts are now predicting that more Palestinians in Gaza will die from starvation, thirst, and disease than from airstrikes.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has called on the U.S. government to "exhort the government of Israel to end the siege of Gaza that restricts its access to adequate water and electricity and the entrance of food, medicine, and fuel to Palestinians in Gaza so as to alleviate and end the humanitarian and environmental crises caused by the siege and provide

the material resources necessary for economic prosperity, human health and safety, and environmental protection."

This urgent plea was added to the 2018 call for an end to Israeli occupation of Gaza and the 2016 General Assembly Resolution, which stated:

"Appropriate agencies of the General Assembly and all Presbyterians urge the Israeli government, as a matter of policy and practice, to stop the collective punishment and isolation of broad sections of the Palestinian population — the blockade of Gaza, the demolition of Palestinian homes and the administrative detention, the torture and forced feeding of Palestinian detainees — and to restore the ID documents and citizenship status that have been stripped from Palestinians in East Jerusalem and elsewhere."

We value the life of every person, and our call is for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, along with the return of hostages, and the release of prisoners. Until this happens, the death and maiming continue unabated. May it be so. And may we help it be so! ■

# Session Update—December 2023

By BRIGITTA KUIPER

*Clerk of Session*

The December Session meeting was held on December 19, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with prayer by Ruling Elder Molly Winkler. Two Ruling Elders-elect joined the meeting as guests: Jim Hershauer, Stewardship Committee, and Sue Schnebel, Worship Committee.

- Highlights from the December Session meeting include:
- Approved changes to UPC position descriptions, as recommended by the Administration Committee.
- Appointed Andrea White to the position of UPC Treasurer for 2024.
- Received the Monthly Finance Summary for November. The 2023 budget is on target for year end.
- Discussed membership status changes for several individuals. Session moved to refer the list of individuals to the

Congregational Involvement and Outreach Committee for review and recommendation.

- Session suspended the rules to allow the current chair of the Finance Committee to continue to serve as the liaison to the Board of Trustees. Background information: It was brought to Session's attention that an unintentional conflict was created when the UPC Operations Manual was previously updated. The motion allows Ruling Elder Molly Winkler to continue to serve as liaison to the Board of Trustees during her existing term as Finance Committee chair.
- Moderator Eric Ledermann and Session thanked Ruling Elders Vicki Jacobs, Katie Ranes and Sara Trower for their talents and work accomplished

during their three-year term on Session. The meeting closed with prayer by Ruling Elder Vicki Jacobs. ■

## 2024 Session Members

**RE Paul Green**, *Administration Ctte/ Nominating Ctte/*

**RE Joan Grey**, *Worship Ctte*

**RE Lawn Griffiths**, *Congregational Involvement and Outreach Ctte*

**RE Sue Schnebel**, *Christian Education Ctte*

**RE Catherine May**, *Mission, Social Justice and Peacemaking Ctte*

**RE Jim Hershauer**, *Stewardship Ctte*

**RE Alan Sweeney**, *Administration Ctte/ Personnel Ctte*

**RE Faye Gardner**, *Worship Ctte*

**RE Molly Winkler**, *Finance Ctte*

**TE Eric Ledermann**, *Moderator*

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# A Shipment to Haiti

By HELEN GRIFFIN

While many people helped take down Christmas décor on December 31, another group very efficiently packed 100 feminine hygiene kits for shipment to Haiti. The boxes arrived January 9<sup>th</sup>. The need is tremendous and the appreciation is boundless.

Within the past eight months, we have shipped 200 kits to our fellow Christians in Haiti. Our goal is another set of 100 kits by February. Three hundred kits per year is certainly well beyond the 10 kits we sent our first year of this project! Ideally, Pastor Luc and his wife Ronide will be visiting Arizona in February, as has been their habit. If so, they can take some or all of the kits with them on their Southwest Airlines return. While I have asked Ronide if this will happen, I have not yet received a reply from her. If they do not come, we will need to ship the boxes for about \$215.

To date, we have made great progress on this next set of 100 kits. We still need

to construct 150 more shields and 19 sets of flannel pads. Donations we could use are 100 washcloths, 200 pairs of panties, 190 gallon sized Ziploc bags (no sliders)

and 100 small bars of soap. See, we are almost there!

A special thank you to all those that helped put these kits together. ■





# Christmas Gifts For Our Guests

PHOTOS: LAWN GRIFFITHS



*The gift of a bike to three young Afghan girls might seem small compared to the chaos and uncertainty these girls have experienced in their young life, but it made a huge difference. It was a symbol of hope, freedom, and joy. They may have been refugees, but now they feel like kids again..*





### Monday Meditation with Vasu Bandhu

Mondays 12:00 pm—12:45 pm, Virtual on Zoom

Start your week with some guided meditation led by Vasu Bandhu, AFN's Interfaith Manager. He serves the Buddhist community as Bhikkhu (monk) in the Dhammapada Sangha (Zen Buddhism), assisting in the practice and teaching of the principles, ceremonies and rituals. RSVP: <https://form-usa.keela.co/monday-meditation>



### URI Global Prayer Gathering

Every Friday Morning 7:15 am—7:45 am (Zoom)

Participants are invited to offer brief described prayer intentions, either aloud or using the chat box, which will be read aloud near the end of the session. Respecting the various paths, all are encouraged to offer prayer intentions in the language of faith or spiritual expression that is most comfortable for them. If you would like the Zoom link, have questions, or would like to suggest a participant, please contact Sally at [smahe@uri.org](mailto:smahe@uri.org).

### SolidariTea for Interfaith Peace



### An Evening of Interfaith Unity

### SolidariTea for Interfaith Peace

Franciscan Renewal Center, Wed, Feb 7, 5:00 pm  
5802 E Lincoln Dr., Scottsdale AZ 85253

You are invited to an evening of interreligious/interfaith unity. "Francis greeted Sultan [Malek al-Kamil] with the greeting, 'May the Lord give you peace,' similar to the traditional Muslim greeting of, 'Assalam o alaikum' or 'Peace be upon you.'... They [then] spoke together of the spiritual life and reflected on each other's traditions." - Philip Kosloski, Aleteia magazine. Fair Trade-certified tea and light snacks will be provided. Discussion to follow. [Click here to register.](#)

### Interfaith Leaders Breakfast

"Creating Communities of Belonging"

February 22, 8 am - 11 am

Central United Methodist Church  
1875 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ

### Interfaith Leaders Breakfast— "Creating Communities of Belonging"

Thursday, Feb 22, 8:00 am—11:00 am

Central United Methodist Church

1875 N. Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004

Join people from diverse religions for breakfast as we share about the trauma informed care training, the "Creating Communities of Belonging" Project. [Registration](#)

Learn more about the Arizona Faith Network by  
subscribing to the newsletter at:

# Mission Month 2024

## GREENING OUR FAITH:

### New challenges on UPC's Path Toward a Healthy Planet

“The Earth is God’s, and everything in it...” Psalm 24:1

By CATHERINE MAY

*Chairperson, Mission, Social Justice & Peacemaking Committee  
Mission Month 2024 Planning Team Leader*

February and Mission Month are coming! This year, we are tackling a big topic: the environment and sustainability. We will be checking in with each other, our community, our national church, and our world about how we are caring for the earth and how we can care for the earth.

Our faith compels us to protect and love all of creation, but how can we possibly do that? Where do we begin? Why bother? How can little ol’ UPC make a difference? It is time to tackle these questions and challenge ourselves to learn, to act, to advocate, and to commit to 1) being individual stewards for our planet and 2) together, becoming environmental influencers for our church and the denomination, as well as for our city, state, nation, and world.

**WEEK ONE** we will meet with Jessica Maudlin, PC(USA) Associate for Sustainable Living and Earth Care Concerns with the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

**WEEK TWO** our guests will be the Rev. Doug Bland and Melanie Beikman with Arizona Interfaith Power and Light speaking on “Sacred Earth: Common Ground.”

**WEEK THREE** we will welcome the very energetic Lauren Kuby, ASU Sr. Global Futures Scientist, former Tempe vice mayor and councilmember, former Corporation Commission candidate, Salt River Project Agriculture Improvement and Power District (SRPAIPD) candidate. As faith-driven people, we will further develop our understanding of government engagement and the power of advocacy.

**WEEK FOUR** our own Helen Griffin and Catherine May will take the lead as we discuss individual and congregational actions. Our future is looking green!

Sue Schnebel will lead the children’s moment each week – an energized look at plastic. Sunday School for children and youth will carry on with the theme. Watch for some plastic reuse activity coming from our youth.

The Mission Month 2024 Planning Team includes: Catherine



May (team leader), Helen Griffen, Linda Risseuw, Linda Ritland, Pastor Eric Ledermann, Sue Schnebel, Chris Casanova, Ted Gibson, and Jon Sywassink.

Special thanks to Jan Felton, Larry Seubert, the Rev. Bev Philips, Chris Trella, Suzanne Neimann, and the UPC Choir. ■

*God, show us your people how to honor  
your gift of Creation. Let us not be selfish  
with our gift, rather allow us to share as  
generously with each other as you have  
shared with us. Amen.*



# Worship Volunteer Schedule

Below is the schedule of worship volunteers for the next month. If you are listed and have a conflict, you are asked to please find a replacement and then contact Ruling Elder Sada Reed, co-chair of the Worship Committee.

To volunteer or get on one of the rotations, contact Joan Grey! Thank you!

## February 2024

Sanctuary Readiness Team.....Larry Seubert

### Feb 4—5th Sunday in OT/5th Sunday after Epiphany

Liturgist ..... Helen Griffin  
Children's Moment ..... Sue Schnebel  
Worship Tech..... Jim Niemann, Chris Trella

### Feb 11 —Transfiguration Sunday

Liturgist ..... Dan Abbott  
Children's Moment ..... Sue Schnebel  
Worship Tech..... Jim Niemann, Sada Reed

### Feb 14—Ash Wednesday

Liturgist ..... VACANT  
Children's Moment ..... VACANT  
Worship Tech..... VACANT, VACANT

### Feb 18—1st Sunday in Lent

Liturgist ..... VACANT  
Children's Moment ..... Sue Schnebel  
Worship Tech..... Chris Trella, VACANT

### Feb 25—2nd Sunday in Lent

Liturgist ..... Catherine May & Helen Griffin  
Children's Moment ..... Sue Schnebel  
Worship Tech..... Sada Reed, VACANT

## March 2024

Sanctuary Readiness Team.....Larry Seubert

### Mar 3—3rd Sunday in Lent

Liturgist ..... Chris Casanova  
Children's Moment ..... Chris Casanova  
Worship Tech..... VACANT, Chris Trella

### Mar 10 —4th Sunday in Lent

Liturgist ..... Nob Ichishita  
Children's Moment ..... VACANT  
Worship Tech..... VACANT, Sada Reed

### Mar 17—5th Sunday in Lent

Liturgist ..... Jim Hershauer  
Children's Moment ..... VACANT  
Worship Tech..... Chris Trella, VACANT

### Mar 24—Palm Sunday

Liturgist ..... Faye Gardner  
Children's Moment ..... Faye Gardner  
Worship Tech..... VACANT, Sada Reed

### Mar 28—Maundy Thursday (at Gilbert Presbyterian)

Liturgist ..... VACANT  
Children's Moment ..... VACANT  
Worship Tech..... VACANT, VACANT

## UPC Book Club — Feb. 9 at 7pm

### *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride

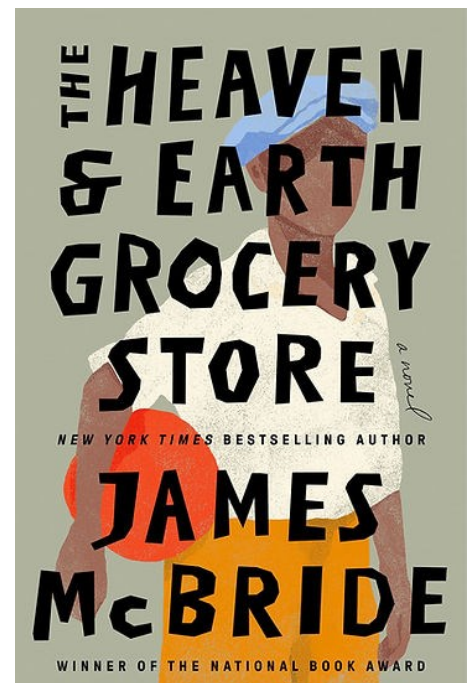
"A murder mystery locked inside a Great American Novel...Charming, smart, heart-blistering, and heart-healing." — Danez Smith, *The New York Times Book Review*

James McBride's novel follows a community as they work together to save a young deaf Black boy, Dodo, from unjust institutionalization in 1930s America.

In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, were digging the foundations for a new development, the last thing they expected to find was a skeleton at the bottom of a well. Who the skeleton was and how it got there were two of the long-held secrets kept by the residents of Chicken Hill, the dilapidated neighborhood where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side and shared ambitions and sorrows. Chicken Hill was where

Moshe and Chona Ludlow lived when Moshe integrated his theater and where Chona ran the Heaven & Earth Grocery Store. When the state came looking for a deaf boy to institutionalize him, it was Chona and Nate Timblin, the Black janitor at Moshe's theater and the unofficial leader of the Black community on Chicken Hill, who worked together to keep the boy safe.

As these characters' stories overlap and deepen, it becomes clear how much the people who live on the margins of white, Christian America struggle and what they must do to survive. When the truth is finally revealed about what happened on Chicken Hill and the part the town's white establishment played in it, McBride shows us that even in dark times, it is love and community—heaven and earth—that sustain us. ■





2 Rick Casanova  
Jo Fancher  
3 Lance Winslow  
4 Lawn Griffiths  
6 Betsy Gephart  
8 Helen Alderson  
13 Doyle Burke  
Rev. Al Gephart  
Kendric Knorr

19 Kathy Wagner  
21 Phil Witherspoon  
24 Mikki Gallagher  
26 Joan Grey  
Chet Henry  
27 Pete Godfrey  
Pat Armstrong  
28 Sharlan Pierce

*If you see a birthday is missing or we have the wrong date,  
please let the office know as soon as possible.*

## Stay Informed on All-Things-Presby!

### PC(USA) News

Available in a daily or weekly digest format. [www.pcusa.org/newsupdates](http://www.pcusa.org/newsupdates)

### Presbytery of Grand Canyon Weekly E-focus Newsletter

News and views from our presbytery.  
[pbygrandcanyon.org/subscribe-to-efocus](http://pbygrandcanyon.org/subscribe-to-efocus).

### PC(USA) Office of Public Witness

Housed across the street from the U.S. Supreme Court in what is referred to as "the God Box," the OPW is the PC (USA)'s advocacy and information center in Washington, D.C. Sign up for OPW Alerts and be an advocate!  
[www.votervoice.net/pcusa/home](http://www.votervoice.net/pcusa/home). Learn

more about the OPW at:

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/washington](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/washington).

### Presbyterian Historical Society

Organized in 1852, the PHS is the oldest denominational archives in the U.S. and serves as the national archives for the PC (USA) and its predecessor denominations. PHS exists to collect, preserve, and share the story of the American Presbyterian and Reformed experience.  
[www.history.pcusa.org](http://www.history.pcusa.org).

### The Presbyterian Outlook

An independent magazine covering all things Presbyterian — \$19.95/year, 18 issues ([pres-outlook.org](http://pres-outlook.org)).

### Presbyterians Today

Award-winning denominational magazine published by the PC(USA). Also available in a free twice monthly e-newsletter. Get a free 1 year subscription!

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today)



## Monthly prayer guide...

- ✱ All of creation, and for the strength of our leaders to stand up for environmental conservation.
- ✱ Those affected by natural disasters around the world.
- ✱ Communities bearing the weight of poverty, prejudice, and violence in their streets and neighborhoods.
- ✱ Those struggling with mental and physical illness.
- ✱ Migrants, especially those separated from families and those dying in the desert in a desperate search for a better way of life.
- ✱ LGBTQIA+ persons who continue to

- suffer from prejudice, marginalization, and discrimination.
- ✱ Elected & community leaders, that they can bring peace to our nation and world.
- ✱ The people of Ukraine.
- ✱ The people of Israel and Palestine, that peace make break out instead of war, that hostilities may end and understanding begin, that people and leaders may see one another as fellow creations of God rather than enemies.
- ✱ Religious leaders of all kinds, that they may have the courage to preach and teach love, compassion, and restorative

justice.

- ✱ UPC Officers: elders, deacons, trustees (see a full list at [www.upctempe.org/leadership](http://www.upctempe.org/leadership)).

*Prayer requests may be sent to your neighborhood deacon or Pastor Eric at [pastoreric@upctempe.org](mailto:pastoreric@upctempe.org).*

*If you have a prayer request you would like shared during Sunday worship, text it to (480) 256-8216 on Sunday morning.*



# UPC Calendar

Submit corrections, additions, or deletions to the church office at  
(480) 966-6267 or [upc@upctempe.org](mailto:upc@upctempe.org).

Check online for updates or to subscribe on your computer or device:

[www.upctempe.org/calendar](http://www.upctempe.org/calendar)

## February 2024

### Thu, Feb 1

8:00 am TOPS (MR, COR)  
7:00 pm CE Committee (ZU)

### Fri, Feb 2

3:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K) Meal:  
8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sat, Feb 3

8:00 am I-HELP Guests Depart  
9:00 am Baseball Card Show (FH)  
10:00 am Migrant Trail Walk Organizing Committee (ZP)

### Sun, Feb 4

9:30 am Worship Service (S, ZU, YouTube)  
11:00 am Children's Bible Time (Rm 3)  
11:00 am Youth Fellowship (Rm 9)  
11:00 am Adult Christian Education (Z)  
6:00 pm UPC Leader Dropbox Training (Z)

### Mon, Feb 5

4:30 pm ACE Team (ZP)  
7:00 pm Administration Committee  
8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tues, Feb 6

10:00 am Mission Month Planning (CR)  
11:00 am Worship Planning Meeting (CR)

### Wed, Feb 7

9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (ZU)  
10:15 am Office Calendaring Meeting (CR)  
3:45 pm Worship Planning Team (ZU)  
5:15 pm Wednesday Night Dinner (FH)  
6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (S)  
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal (S)

### Thu, Feb 8

8:00 am TOPS (MR, COR)  
7:00 pm MSJP Committee (ZU)

### Fri, Feb 9

3:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)  
8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sat, Feb 10

8:00 am I-HELP Guests Depart  
8:00 am Men's Breakfast (MR)

10:00 am Migrant Trail Walk Organizing Committee (ZP)

### Sun, Feb 11

9:30 am Worship Service (S, ZU, YouTube)  
11:00 am Children's Bible Time (Rm 3)  
11:00 am Youth Fellowship (Rm 9)  
11:00 am Adult Christian Education (Z)

### Mon, Feb 12

8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Feb 13

10:00 am Mission Month Planning (CR)  
11:00 am Worship Planning Meeting (CR)  
7:00 pm Finance Committee (ZU)  
7:00 pm Worship Committee (ZP)

### Wed, Feb 14

9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (ZU)  
3:45 pm Worship Planning Team (ZU)  
5:15 pm Wednesday Night Dinner (FH)  
6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (S)  
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal (S)  
7:00 pm ASH Wednesday Service (S)

### Thu, Feb 15

8:00 am TOPS (MR, COR)  
11:00 am Tempe Interfaith Fellowship (Z)

### Fri, Feb 16

3:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K) Meal: TBD  
7:00 pm Friday Night Book Club (Z)  
8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sat, Feb 17

8:00 am I-HELP Guests Depart  
10:00 am Migrant Trail Walk Organizing Committee (ZP)

### Sun, Feb 18

9:30 am Worship Service (S, ZU, YouTube)  
11:00 am Children's Bible Time (Rm 3)  
11:00 am Youth Fellowship (Rm 9)  
11:00 am Adult Christian Education (Z)

### Mon, Feb 19

*President's Day*

*Full-time Staff Holiday*

7:00 pm Board of Deacons (ZU)  
8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Feb 20

10:00 am Mission Month Planning (CR)  
11:00 am Worship Planning Meeting (CR)  
6:30 pm CIO Committee (ZP)  
7:00 pm Board of Trustees (ZU)

### Wed, Feb 21

9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (ZU)  
12:30 pm Chinle Circle (MR)  
3:45 pm Worship Planning Team (ZU)  
5:15 pm Wednesday Night Dinner (FH)  
6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (S)  
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal (S)

### Thu, Feb 22

8:00 am TOPS (MR, COR)  
1:00 pm PW Online Bible Study (Z)

### Fri, Feb 23

3:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K) Meal:  
8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sat, Feb 24

8:00 am I-HELP Guests Depart  
10:00 am Migrant Trail Walk Organizing Committee (ZP)

### Sun, Feb 25

*Las Vegas Youth Group Mission (FH, K)*  
9:30 am Worship Service (S, ZU, YouTube)  
11:00 am Children's Bible Time (Rm 3)  
11:00 am Youth Fellowship (Rm 9)  
11:00 am Adult Christian Education (Z)

### Mon, Feb 26

*Las Vegas Youth Group Mission (FH, K)*  
6:30 pm Kayenta Circle (MR)  
8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Feb 27

*Las Vegas Youth Group Mission (FH, K)*  
7:00 pm Stated Session (S, ZU)

### Wed, Feb 28

*Las Vegas Youth Group Mission (FH, K)*  
9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (ZU)  
3:45 pm Worship Planning Team (ZU)  
5:15 pm Wednesday Night Dinner (FH)  
6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (S)  
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal (S)

### Thu, Feb 29

*Las Vegas Youth Group Mission (FH, K)*

See CALENDAR on page 16

#### Location/Room References:

(CH)-Choir Room (CR)-Conference Room/Office (COR/Rm7)-Community Room (FH)-Fellowship Hall (HSR)-High School Room (MSR)-Middle School Room (K)-Fellowship Hall Kitchen (L)-Lounge (MG)-Memorial Garden (MR)-Meeting Room (N)-Nursery (PO)-Pastor's Office (Rm#)-Room Number Indicated (S)-Sanctuary (Z)-On Zoom

# UPC NEWS & Current Events

University Presbyterian Church  
139 E Alameda Drive  
Tempe, AZ 85282

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## CALENDAR

Continued from page 15

8:00 am TOPS (MR, COR)

## March 2024

### Fri, Mar 1

*Las Vegas Youth Group Mission (FH, K)*

3:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K) Meal:

8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sat, Mar 2

8:00 am I-HELP Guests Depart

9:00 am Baseball Card Show (FH)

10:00 am Migrant Trail Walk Organizing Committee (ZP)

### Sun, Mar 3

9:30 am Worship Service (S, ZU,  
YouTube)

11:00 am Children's Bible Time (Rm 3)

11:00 am Youth Fellowship (Rm 9)

11:00 am Adult Christian Education (Z)

2:00 pm Membership Inquiry Class (ZP)

### Mon, Mar 4

4:30 pm ACE Team (ZP)

7:00 pm Administration Committee

8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Wed, Mar 6

9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (ZU)

10:15 am Office Calendaring Meeting (CR)

3:45 pm Worship Planning Team (ZU)

5:15 pm Wednesday Night Dinner (FH)

6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (S)

7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal (S)

### Thu, Mar 7

8:00 am TOPS (MR, COR)

7:00 pm CE Committee (ZU)

### Fri, Mar 8

3:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)

8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sat, Mar 9

8:00 am I-HELP Guests Depart

8:00 am Men's Breakfast (MR)

10:00 am Migrant Trail Walk Organizing Committee (ZP)

### Sun, Mar 10

*Family Promise (MR, K, L, Rm 2-3)*

9:30 am Worship Service (S, ZU,  
YouTube)

11:00 am Children's Bible Time (Rm 3)

11:00 am Youth Fellowship (Rm 9)

11:00 am Adult Christian Education (Z)

2:00 pm Membership Inquiry Class (ZP)

### Mon, Mar 11

*Family Promise (MR, K, L, Rm 2-3)*

8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Mar 12

*Family Promise (MR, K, L, Rm 2-3)*

7:00 pm Finance Committee (ZU)

7:00 pm Worship Committee (ZP)

### Wed, Mar 13

*Family Promise (MR, K, L, Rm 2-3)*

9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (ZU)

3:45 pm Worship Planning Team (ZU)

5:15 pm Wednesday Night Dinner (FH)

6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (S)

7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal (S)

### Thu, Mar 14

*Family Promise (MR, K, L, Rm 2-3)*

8:00 am TOPS (MR, COR)

7:00 pm MSJP Committee (ZU)

### Fri, Mar 14

*Family Promise (MR, K, L, Rm 2-3)*

3:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K) Meal: UPC

7:00 pm Friday Book Club (ZU)

8:30 pm AA Meeting (Rm 7)