



CIRCLE TIMES

March 2023

United Protestant Church Newsletter

Silver Bay, Minnesota

The United Protestant Church Mission Statement

*We are an open-minded Christian fellowship. We seek to follow
the Word of God and to pass God's love on to others
as we actively welcome them into our church family.*

Rev. Paul Scaringi, Ph.D.

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Dedie Moore, Church Council Chair

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March Text & Titles

March 5 – 2nd Sunday in Lent

1st Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

2nd Reading: John 3:1-17

Title: *Blown About*

March 19 – 4th Sunday in Lent

1st Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

2nd Reading: John 9:1-41

Title: *Comedy or Gospel or Both?*

March 12 – 3rd Sunday in Lent

1st Reading: Romans 5:1-11

2nd Reading: John 4:5-42

Title: *In Plain Sight*

March 26 – 5th Sunday in Lent

1st Reading: Romans 8:6-11

2nd Reading: John 11:1-45

Title: *III, III, & III*



We chose the name "Circle Times" for our first U.P. newsletter 62 years ago.

It was a way of reminding ourselves that we are a united group of several denominations.

This is a much needed witness in our world filled with diversities.



From the Pastor

*Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

- Henry Francis Lyte (d. 1847)

The stanza above is from one of my favorite hymns, *Abide with Me*. While others may also appreciate this hymn, more often than not when I've talked with people about it, there is a common response that goes something along the line of, "Yeah, nice hymn, but it's really just for funerals."

This response can be a bit challenging for me. On the one hand I can easily reply that this hymn can be sung at other times (for instance, it was the opening hymn for our Ash Wednesday service this year) – this is the first thought that springs to mind. Yet there is another element to this tepid response that makes me wonder, and hence my challenge. I wonder what is running through the person's mind when they offer up the familiar 'it's a funeral hymn' statement. Do they not want to sing anything that might remind them of their own mortality (the 5th stanza begins with the phrase, "Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes . . ."). Or, is it because it is a hymn often played in a subdued style since we're singing lines such as ". . . the darkness deepens . . .," or maybe some other reason?

I've known folks rail against 'blood' hymns and some are uncomfortable singing patriotic hymns. I once (not at UPC – don't worry) was almost accosted after a service by a woman because during the service we sang, *Onward Christian Soldiers* (I was a participant in the service, I had nothing to do with the planning or leading it as I tried to explain). All of which is to say people can be pretty animated when they do not appreciate a hymn. Yet with this hymn all I get is the proverbial shoulder shrug and some vague statement about funerals.

Now I realize you may be rolling your eyes at this point and thinking "C'mon, Paul, this is no big deal." Well, you may be right, we're certainly entitled to our opinions about hymns. But (there's always a 'but' isn't there?) when I consider that so much of our understanding of God and our thoughts about the faith are formed and shaped by what we sing (even if you do not appreciate singing), then I think there is something here.

While this hymn is chosen for funerals because of its comforting reassurance of our life to come, it also proclaims a truth that is meant to flow through our entire lives – the truth of our need for God's presence in our lives each day. How easy it is to lose sight of the fact that we need our Lord to abide with us amid all our responsibilities, to be present among the things we need to take care of each day, week, or month. This is one of the reasons I so appreciate the hymn. It is a melodic reminder of this truth.

Then there is the promise we find within these stanzas – a bitter-sweet promise. The promise is sweet – our Lord is always ready to be our helper, no matter where we are in life or what our troubles be. The bitter part of it is the acknowledgment that at times our 'helpers' – be they an actual person or some other thing we rely on – can and will fail us. It is God's steadfast love and presence, made possible by the grace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, that will guide us through our dark valleys.

As we go through these days of Lent, as we examine our lives and reflect on where we have turned our backs on God either by sins of action or apathy, let us remember that this season is, ultimately, a season meant to lead us to the promise of God's presence. This promise is the gift offered to us because of the life Jesus offered to the world – the promise of a life where God abides with us. I pray in this Lenten season you find our Lord abiding with you.

Blessings, Paul

House of Love update

The House of Love (HoL) is our partnered mission. It is a Christian orphanage in Chiang Mai, Thailand that is a home for women and children affected by HIV/AIDS. Its mission is to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of each resident. Mark and Alise Juanes are American Baptist missionaries working with the local administrators and staff to further this ministry.

Here are some recent pictures from the House of Love ministry:



Working with some of the college students on a financial workshop. Budgeting doesn't have to be boring and is a reflection of your values and interests.



Several families attended our first family strengthening seminar. This first module was several activities on "What is Family?"



Even when kids are not able to live with their families, it is important that they have an understanding of "What is Family?" and the different roles family members play. Someday they all hope to have their own families.



Taking 5

Below you will find the Taking 5 scripture and prayers for this month. I encourage you to take 5 minutes each day to read the scripture closely, pray the prayer attentively, and spend the remaining time in prayerful silence, seeking out God's presence and prompting in that time. Thank you for being part of this important discipline for our church and for you.

Peace,
Paul

The week of March 5th

Scripture: John 4:10-15

Prayer: Dear Lord-who-sits-by-wells, reveal the living water you offer to me and to the world this day and lead me to drink freely from your gushing stream. Amen.

The week of March 12th

Scripture: I Samuel 16:4-7

Prayer: All Wise God, I struggle to see others and myself as you do. Shape my heart so I may see the wonder of your grace and beauty in the lives around me. Amen.

The week of March 19th

Scripture: John 11:43-44

Prayer: Break the bonds that bind me, Gentle Savior, that I may be freed for your kingdom. Amen.

The week of March 26th

Scripture: Matthew 21:6-10

Prayer: Almighty Love, as you humbly rode to your calling, lead me this day to humbly know your presence and rejoice that you have come to us. Amen.

UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

February 14, 2023 6:00 pm

ATTENDEES: Dedie Moore, Mike Osmundson, Philip Christman, Peg Osmundson, Alis Stevens, Shirley Whiteford and Pastor Paul; by Zoom—Angie Goutermont, Ben Goutermont, Lynn Anderson, Eileen Scaringi, Allison Packard, Terry Eggum and Ruth Eggum.

Council Chair Dedie Moore called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. Pastor Paul opened in prayer.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None

M/M/S by Mike Osmundson/Philip Christman to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2023 meeting. Motion carried.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: M/M/S by Mike Osmundson/Alis Stevens to elect Terry Eggum as Financial Secretary. Motion Carried. M/M/S by Ruth Eggum/Peg Osmundson to elect Mike Osmundson as Treasurer. Motion carried. M/M/S by Mike Osmundson/Alis Stevens to elect Ruth Eggum as Council Secretary. Motion carried. The appointment of the Chair-Elect was tabled until the March meeting.

STANDING COMMITTEES: See attached document.

TREASURERS'S REPORT: M/M/S by Peg Osmundson/Alis Stevens to approve the Treasurer's report from January, 2023 for audit. Motion carried.

Checking Account: \$24,972.58	Memorial Fund: \$29,808.13	
Ministry Fund: \$72,274.33	House of Love: \$7,498.45	AmazonSmile: \$389.37
Checking SS: \$3,066.99	YTD Food Shelf: \$60.00	
YTD Income: \$7,440.77		
YTD Expense: (\$9,467.87)		
YTD Net: (\$2,027.10)		

DIACONATE REPORT: Peg Osmundson reported she was re-elected Chair and Ruth Eggum was re-elected Secretary.

TRUSTEE REPORT: Philip Christman reported that there will be a workday in May (date to be determined) and that highway clean-up will also be in May. Other items discussed were: outside concrete work with VanHouse; trim and window replacement in the back of the church (Mike Tarolli will do the bulk of the work); someone from Lutsen may be redoing the back parking lot; continued conversation about a security doorbell which would allow Lynn Anderson and Sharon Searls to keep the doors locked when they are in the church alone; and contacting Jules Salveson about stripping and waxing the floors. Peg Osmundson asked the trustees to meet with Jules, possibly at the March meeting to get an estimate. No decision has been made on what will be done to the floors yet, but nothing would be done till the spring. Lynn Anderson and Philip Christman will meet to check into who has church keys assigned to them.

CHRISTIAN ED REPORT: Pastor Paul reported that Faith@8th will meet until he goes on Sabbatical in April. He and the kids will meet at the church rather than the school due to space issues at the school.

PASTOR'S REPORT: There is no one in the hospital at present. Continued prayers are needed for Phyllis Pearrow, the Burges, Irene Johnson and Chuckie Knudson. Thanks for all the suggestions for the new website. A thank you was received from Avon Presbyterian for the altar flowers. The Special Olympics gathering that was to be held at the church February 18 has been cancelled.

Continued from page 5

OLD BUSINESS: Alis Stevens and Pastor Paul continue to work on our Period Poverty project. It has been named the “Tabitha Ministry of UPC” and there will be labels made with the church name and logo that will be placed on the products distributed. Distribution sites are still being discussed. M/M/S by Mike Osmundson/Philip Christman to designate \$2,500 from the Memorial Fund (\$5,000 has been designated for Outreach purposes) for the initial purchase of the products. Motion carried. Terry Eggum asked for discussion on whether we should continue with highway clean-ups. This will be discussed at the March meeting. Pastor Paul said he wants to meet with people who want to be involved with getting a Thanksgiving meal planned for 2023. This could also involve people from the community as well as the church. The first meeting will be held in March before he goes on Sabbatical.

NEW BUSINESS: Peg Osmundson reported that the Personnel Committee met and approved Pastor Paul’s Sabbatical from April 11-July 11. M/M/S by Peg Osmundson/Alis Stevens to approve Reverend Kathryn Bell as interim pastor during Paul’s absence. Motion carried. Peg Osmundson will make the offer to Pastor Bell and Mike Osmundson will draw up a contract. (See interim pastor’s responsibilities on attached document). M/M/S by Mike Osmundson/Alis Stevens that \$3,000 for Pastor Bell’s salary be taken from the Ministry Fund rather than the General Fund. Motion carried.

The next Council meeting will be March 14, 2023 at 6:00 pm.



WOMEN'S GUILD :

*All ladies of the church are welcomed as Guild members.
The Guild meets at 1:00 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday of each month.*

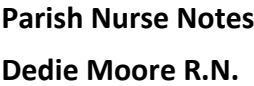
Note: There will be no Guild Meeting in March

The UPC Noon Luncheons are cancelled until further notice.



**PRAYER SHAWL MISSION MEETS ON
SECOND AND FOURTH WEDNESDAYS.**

2:00 PM



We are being renewed day by day, both spiritually and physically. We incorporate elements into our bodies, and we get rid of elements that we do not need or are toxic to us. This also can apply to loving, life affirming thoughts, or destructive thoughts. These thoughts and beliefs affect our physical wellbeing. Our emotions produce chemicals which circulate throughout our bodies and can have wide ranging effects.

So, what do we do each day to be renewed? Prayer and worship, of course, renew and sustain us. Learning something new, reading a book, doing a new craft, participating in Bible study, are good ways to keep our minds active.

We need to not lose heart though outwardly we are wasting away. We are being constantly renewed. We need to be mindful about how we renew by eating healthy foods, getting some fresh air and exercise, getting together with people and nourishing our spirits. This can be especially important in late winter. The March doldrums can bring anyone down. We can all make extra effort to support, gather with each other and share our varied gifts in renewing.



OUR CIRCLE

“OUR CIRCLE” is a news article that features a member or friend of U.P. Church. The article is based on conversations and written answers to questions. We hope you will enjoy learning about the folks who are familiar participants in our church life.



Alis Stevens

Alis was born in Istanbul, Turkey into her Armenian Christian family. She was a child of strong, stubborn and kind parents both being survivors of the Armenian genocide. As a little boy, her father survived the assault on his home. His father and brothers had been killed by the Turkish military. Rescued from the rubble of his home, a Muslim family took the boy in and raised him as their own son. From her survivor parents came the love of garlic and children. One of Alis' fondest childhood memories is of arguing with her sister, Tata, over who would light the candles on the Christmas tree. Apparently, both sisters lost for they accidentally set the tree on fire.

First, Alis attended an Armenian school and then a German school where she learned to speak French, English, Turkish, Armenian and German. She chose the German school over the French school because they only had to go half days and she did not have to wear a uniform. She loved math and music but, unfortunately, her music teacher would not tolerate her exuberance and sent her to the principal's office more than once. For her higher education, Alis attended the University of Turkey where she studied child psychology and later obtained her master's degree in psychological counseling and guidance at the American University in Istanbul. Her studies were carried on during the civil war in Turkey. She learned the difference between a Kalishnikov (used by the left) and an AK47 (used by the right) because both sides would round up students for indoctrination sessions. There was always a danger of being held and tortured and it was even dangerous to go out and have tea in a public place because you could be shot.

After college, Alis worked for Mercedes Corporation in Istanbul teaching Turkish and German to their executives. Later, she moved to the United States where she almost worked for a sausage company stuffing sausages. She then worked for Freightliner beginning in the copy center and working her way to purchasing agent. Loving Portland, Oregon, Alis settled on earning an MBA from University of Portland and had her daughter, Niki, who attended Alis' graduation on her mother's lap. Sister Tata and their mother moved to America to be together. The family then moved to South Bend, Indiana where Alis work for Bosch. All went well until her department was shuttered during a restructuring. Finding another job with PACCAR the family moved to Seattle, Washington. She worked there for four years when she was recruited by Northshore Mining Company. During her interview, she was asked if she was aware of the north shore winters. She responded, "Of course, I have seen the movie Fargo!" Alis worked for Northshore Mining and Cleveland Cliffs for 12 years before retiring

Alis continues to stay active by teaching business and supply chain management for University of Wisconsin-Superior and taking care of her adorable grandchildren, Lulu and Simon. She loves the house they built overlooking Lake Superior and watching quirky old movies. She started coming to UPC after attending the Bay Days service to "interview" the churches. Beth Smuk told her she had to come in our church and she was literally pulled in by Leah Williamson as soon as she walked in and never had a chance to "interview" the other churches in town. She enjoys arguing with Pastor Paul as part of her faith journey. She feels like she has to be active and looks forward to being involved in projects that reach out to the community. Looking back through all she has been through, the advice Alis offers is : "Never give up, remember we are all in the ongoing process of life. Don't worry too much, and enjoy life."

What's up now with U.P. folks!!!

Keep these folks in your thoughts and prayers:

Pat Viola is at home in the Silver Bay, MN Veteran's Home (56 Outer Drive).

Ellen and Karsten Hogenson, Phyllis Pearrow, Ray Burge, Dave and Kay Colby, Irene Johnson, David Prestidge, Mary Aijala, Mary Carroll, Chuckie Knutson, Ed Maki and David Gustafson of our congregation as they deal with health-related changes and recoveries.

All the caregivers.

March Birthdays

Ed Maki	2
Bruce Small	4
Paula Fenstad	6
Cindy Maki	8
Phil Goutermont	10
Serine Ege	14
Jean Williams	21
David Kolojeski	24



March Anniversaries

Ben and Angie Goutermont	17
David and Kay Colby	31

An Irish Blessing

May you always be blessed
with walls for the wind,
a roof for the rain,
a warm cup of tea by the fire,
laughter to cheer you,



Ecumenical Palm Sunday Service

April 2, 2023 at 6:00pm

Sychar Lutheran Church

Please join us as we gather with our brothers and sisters from the community to worship and mark the beginning of Holy Week.

If you shop on Amazon.com, you can donate 0.5% of your purchase to United Protestant Church.

Go to www.smile.amazon.com and sign up with your Amazon password or create a new account with a new password. You can choose our church as your charity. After you sign up, when you shop on www.smile.amazon.com you will be set up to automatically donate 0.5% to our church. The donations can really add up.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR


WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

9:30 AM EVERY WEDNESDAY

On March 1st we began our Lenten study:

Lenten Meditations, which will be aided
by the artwork of James Janknegt

March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 WMBS 9:30 am	2	3	4
5 Sunday Worship 10:30 am Communion	6	7	8 WMBS 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 2:00 pm	9	10	11
12 Sunday Worship 10:30 am Daylight Svgs	13 GLAD 6:30 pm Zoom	14 Boards Meet 5:00 pm Council Meets 6:00 pm	15 WMBS 9:30 am Faith @ 8th 2:30 pm	16	17 	18
19 Sunday Worship 10:30 am	20	21	22 WMBS 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 2:00 pm	23	24	25 Game Night 6:00 pm
26 Sunday Worship 10:30 am Carefree Service 2:00 pm	27 GLAD 6:30 pm Zoom	28	29	30	31	
<div> Pastor Paul in office-Tue-Wed - 9:00-5:00. Lynn in office Wed & Thurs 1:30 -4:00 pm </div>						

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