



UNIVERSITY  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
San Antonio, TX

People and Ministries of University Presbyterian Church

# Multitude

300 Bushnell Ave • San Antonio, TX 78212-5334 • 210-732-9927 • www.upcsa.org

**MAY 2020**

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## WORSHIP AND MINISTRY NEWS

### A NOTE FROM DRIES

Dear Members, Friends, and Sojourners,

University Presbyterian Church will continue to worship and work virtually for at least the month of May and will re-evaluate at our next Session Meeting on May 20th.

This past week, we received the latest directives from the Governor of Texas about re-opening. In the Presbyterian Church (USA), it is the responsibility of Session to determine the time and place of worship, but we do so mindfully of our local and national connections. To help us discern and guided by love of neighbor, the Offices of the General Presbyter and Stated Clerk of Mission Presbytery released guidelines in opening our church buildings. In the document, they state that there are no hard and fast dates by which you can safely re-open; however, they point out, it is vital to stay tuned to your local and regional conditions. In light of this advice, we are collaborating with our Presbytery, other local area churches, and the City of San Antonio.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly or any member of Session you feel comfortable calling. Now, more than ever, it is of the utmost importance for us to be in close contact with one another. As a community of faith, we are thankful for a continued ministry of love, compassion, and creativity, as we redefine how to "be church" while staying true to who we are as the Body of Christ.

Blessings,  
Dries

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## JOIN US FOR SUNDAY ONLINE WORSHIP

### 10:00am - Online Worship

UPC will gather online for worship each Sunday. You are invited to join us for virtual worship via Zoom Phone, Zoom Webinar, or YouTube Live (there's a short delay on this platform). As we find ourselves in unusual times, worship will also be different. However, live-streaming from Dries' home and pre-recorded music in the Sanctuary, we will emphasize God's abiding presence and offer an authentic way of connecting amid physical distancing. As always, the [church website calendar](#) has the most up-to-date information and links. [Contact Anastasia](#) in the church office for the required password.

[CLICK HERE FOR ZOOM WEBINAR](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR YOUTUBE LIVE](#)

### DIAL ONE OF THESE NUMBERS:

346-248-7799, 669-900-6833, 253-215-8782,  
301-715-8592, 312-626-6799, 929-205-6099

ENTER MEETING ID: 427 660 200

You can also watch the service later at your convenience on YouTube [CLICK HERE](#).

### **11:00am - Fellowship, Joys, and Concerns**

We miss the personal connection when we join services online. Not seeing each other in worship takes away a critical connection we have come to love about worshipping at UPC. Join Dries and others after worship for sharing joys and prayer. [CLICK HERE TO JOIN](#) or dial 346-248-7799 and enter Meeting ID 742 807 278.

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## **WORSHIP INFORMATION**

### **May 3 - Fourth Sunday of Easter - Good Shepherd Sunday**

Scripture: *John 10:1-10*

Preaching: Dries Coetzee

Music: Mary Lowder, Keith Martinez, and Scholar Singers

Special Note: We will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

### **May 10 - Fifth Sunday of Easter - Mothering Sunday**

Scripture: *John 14:1-14*

Preaching: Dhawn Martin

Music: Mary Lowder, Keith Martinez, and Scholar Singers

### **May 17 - Sixth Sunday of Easter - Senior Recognition Sunday**

Scripture: *John 14:15-21*

Preaching: Dries Coetzee

Music: Mary Lowder, Keith Martinez, and Scholar Singers

### **May 24 - Seventh Sunday of Easter**

Scripture: *John 17:1-11*

Preaching: Dries Coetzee

Music: Mary Lowder, Keith Martinez, and Scholar Singers

### **May 31 - Eighth Sunday of Easter - Day of Pentecost**

Scripture: *John 20:19-23*

Preaching: Dries Coetzee

Music: Mary Lowder, Keith Martinez, and Scholar Singers

Special Note: We will receive the Pentecost Offering



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## **COMMUNITY NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **I/CAN ONLINE SMALL GROUP MEETING**

On Sunday we sang, "Spirit, open my heart." We prayed, "Jesus, Now lead on." We found transformative grief on the road to Emmaus, and heard this new-found life would lead us on another road: the road to Jericho.

This was not an easy road. It was long, remote, difficult, and dangerous - not a place to journey alone. But it was a way through the desert. The Jericho Road was trod by many cultures and peoples: thank goodness for that multicultural presence, and thank God for the generosity we learn from Jesus' Good Samaritan. Here was a person with no apparent stake in things, who was even considered unclean and undesirable by the Jewish people, taking on expense and inconvenience to help a stranger in need. Why do such a thing? Was there a deeper wisdom at work? Did they somehow see, even in the midst of unjust, discriminatory, and abusive societal practices, that there is no such thing as 'stranger'? Did they understand we are all on this road together?

How would our world be changed if we cared for everyone with the dignity and respect of a sibling? If we realized that tomorrow, we could easily be the wounded traveler or the Samaritan? What if we not only walked the same road, but actually walked with our neighbors, learning from each other and speaking up for things that made our lives better?

This Cinco de Mayo, the Interfaith Community Action Network (I/CAN) will host the first of many community-wide Small Group Meetings, from 5:30pm - 6:30pm on the University of the Incarnate Word Zoom online meeting account. Siblings from around San Antonio will be there, joining in community and sharing what weighs on their hearts, to continue our work for a more just and equitable city. We need these honest conversations to build community awareness, and to steer us true in the actions we all choose to take. Please contact [Nancy Campbell](#), [Joseph Luedecke](#), [Andy Hull](#), [David King](#), or [Melinda Beckett](#) to get meeting information for this Tuesday, May 5.

This is your movement, and we hope you will add your voice. Come join us as we walk the road together.

Your UPC I/CAN

Website: [www.icansa.org](http://www.icansa.org)

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## OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT DURING THE WEEK

Even though there are still measures in place to ensure social distancing, we will not allow them to create social isolation within our church community. Please see the list below of opportunities to connect with one another via Zoom and help with the lack of personal connection. **Go to the [church website calendar](#) to read more about each of these weekly events and/or click on the links to join.** If a password is needed, please [contact Anastasia](#) in the church office.

### SUNDAYS

#### 10:00am - Worship

Join Pastor Dries, Dhawn Martin, Mary Lowder, Keith Martinez, and others each Sunday as they lead us in worship with scripture, meditation, music, and more.

#### 11:00am - Fellowship, Joys, and Concerns with Beth and Pastor Dries

Join Beth and Pastor Dries after worship for a time of interactive fellowship with other UPC members and sharing of joys and prayers.

### TUESDAYS

#### 10:00am - Meditation Tuesdays: Centering the Week with Dhawn Martin

Together we will breathe in new possibilities for how we shape our days, setting intentions that nurture peace, generosity, and compassion. We will open the hour with centering prayer and wisdom literatures from diverse traditions, and then move into the contemplative.

#### 7:00pm - Contemplating Worship with Pastor Dries

Join Pastor Dries on Tuesday evenings for a virtual gathering and conversation.

### WEDNESDAYS

#### 7:30am - Zoom Knit-In

All knitters and crocheters are welcome to join and help remain a "knitted-together" community creating prayer shawls for those in need. For further information [contact Caryl Gaubatz](#).

#### 9:00am - Midweek Check-In and Prayer with Pastor Dries

These are trying times. Not seeing each other in worship takes away a critical connection with our siblings that many of us need at this time. Join Dries for a midweek check-in and prayer as we cultivate a community of faith that seeks to nurture and support one another.

### THURSDAYS

#### 7:00pm - Theology 101 with Dhawn Martin

Deepen your faith with Dhawn Martin as we engage in a theological conversation. Dhawn has taught courses in Philosophy and Theology, Civil Engagement, Peace and Power, and Utopias and Dystopias, at Drew University, St. Mary's University, and Hanover College. Her areas of academic study include political theology and peace-making.

### SATURDAYS

#### 2:00pm - COVID-19 Bereavement Support Group

This weekly online support group is for those who have lost loved ones to COVID-19. This informal group will be held one hour a week and is limited to 20 people. [Contact Joseph Luedecke](#), LMSW for more information and to sign up.

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## LOAVES & FISHES

Loaves & Fishes is the first Sunday of each month with the items collected rotating each quarter. Since we are unable to collect physical items, please consider sending a check to the church marked "Loaves & Fishes" to help buy monthly items.

For May, we are collecting money for toilet paper, tissues, hand soap, toothpaste, and toothbrushes.

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## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

A recent article in the *Express-News* highlighted the devastating effects of loneliness as one of the results of a pandemic that forces us to sequester at home. While nothing takes the place of a hug and a warm (unmasked) smile, the Shawl Ministry is offering a cuddly substitute. If you or someone you know is struggling in isolation, we invite you to consider the positive effect of being wrapped in a shawl or lap robe that represents the prayer and loving concern of the church. Our members are willing to make driveway deliveries or mail shawls to anyone. To request shawl or lap robe, [contact Caryl Gaubatz](#).

The regular Wednesday meetings and the monthly Friday meetings will continue via zoom. [CLICK HERE](#) to join the weekly Wednesday 7:30am group and/or [CLICK HERE](#) to join the monthly first Friday 12:00pm group.



Melody Hull safely delivers and mails Prayer Shawls.

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## GOT MASKS?

Several UPC members are keeping busy helping others by making masks and now that it is necessary to wear a mask in public, there is a larger need.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a request form/questionnaire to have masks made for you and your family.

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## WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

UPC Women's Book Group will meet via Zoom on Monday, May 25 at 7:00pm. We will discuss *Manhattan Beach* by Jennifer Egan moderated will be Helen Tellegen. Please [contact Bonnie Bartlett](#) or [the church office](#) to receive information on the virtual meeting.

Please see the following review from GOODREADS:

*Anna Kerrigan, nearly twelve years old, accompanies her father to visit Dexter Styles, a man who, she gleans, is crucial to the survival of her father and her family. She is mesmerized by the sea beyond the house and by some charged mystery between the two men.*

*Years later, her father has disappeared and the country is at war. Anna works at the Brooklyn Naval Yard, where women are allowed to hold jobs that once belonged to men, now soldiers abroad. She becomes the first female diver, the most dangerous and exclusive of occupations, repairing the ships that will help America win the war. One evening at a nightclub, she meets Dexter Styles again, and begins to understand the complexity of her father's life, the reasons he might have vanished.*

*With the atmosphere of a noir thriller, Egan's first historical novel follows Anna and Styles into a world populated by gangsters, sailors, divers, bankers, and union men. Manhattan Beach is a deft, dazzling, propulsive exploration of a transformative moment in the lives and identities of women and men, of America and the world.*

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## PENTECOST OFFERING

It's amazing what happens when we join together. Presbyterians are part of a remarkable tradition and the PC(USA)'s four church-wide Special Offerings help share Christ's love with millions of people around the world.

A gift to the Pentecost Offering helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, and also address the needs of at-risk children. 40% of the Pentecost offering can be retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

This year, UPC's percentage of the offering will go to the UPCC Scholarship Fund to help children attending the University Presbyterian Children's Center who need tuition assistance.

Please consider donating generously on Sunday, May 31. Make checks payable to UPC with Pentecost Offering in the memo line.

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## PC (USA) MISSIONARIES NEWS

[CLICK HERE](#) to read a letter from Charles and Melissa Johnson, PCUSA Missionaries serving in Zambia.

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## SESSION AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

### SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Cindi Catlin Gaskins, director of the UPC Children's Center (UPCC) updated the Session about pay decisions being made for teaching staff. While UPCC recently applied for a Payroll Protection Program loan, it wasn't able to get funds on the first attempt and is uncertain about receiving the funds under the second relief bill. In the meantime, the UPCC Board has made a decision to reduce pay for staff during this time.

The Mission Outreach and Justice Committee provided updates on a COVID-19 relief fund, which has already received more than \$11,000 from church members. The committee has already made \$2,500 in contributions to five local non-profits dealing with the pandemic from existing budgeted funds and is determining how best to allocate these additional special funds.

The Session approved one worship service on Sundays at 10am between Memorial Day (05/24/20) and Labor Day (09/06/20) if allowed to re-open the church and sanctuary, as it has done in past summers. The approval included a caveat to continue virtual worship during this time if needed.

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## NEW ONLINE GIVING

UPC has changed the online donation platform. We are using the same credit card processor, Vanco, but we are eliminating the interim step of going through the Presbyterian Foundation. Anyone who had set up a recurring transaction before April 2020 will need to go to our donation page and scroll down to the **Cancel Your Old Recurring Gift** button in order to cancel that old arrangement and can then set up a new arrangement on the **Donate Now** button. If you have questions, [please contact Anastasia at the church office](#).

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## TREASURER'S REPORT

### COVID-19

In the month of March, things changed very quickly for our church and community as a state of emergency was declared and shelter in place orders. The church closed the office and the facilities. Staff began working from home and the church shifted to online worship services.

Church leaders have been seeking out ways to help the community through setting up a two-pronged approach to help the community at large and UPC/UPCC families and staff on an adhoc basis. (See the next two articles for full details.) Committee chairs have also looked at the budgets with an eye to shifting around funds and prioritizing people first. UPC appreciates those who can keep their pledges current to help sustain church operations and those who may have some extra funds to donate for the COVID-19 relief efforts of the church. Pledges can be mailed to the church office or made online at the link below.

### Overview

Thanks to all who have kept up with their pledges in 2020 and to the many new members and visitors who have made contributions. Expenses were generally a bit lower than planned and there is currently a surplus of \$41,081. There is a healthy balance in most of the special funds which are non-operating funds, usually designated for a particular purpose. The overall balance in the special funds account is \$342,935. There was a very generous anonymous donation of \$125,000 which will be used to seed some campus improvements or capital campaign. The SoL Center offers interfaith adult education and has an operating budget of \$34,825 and separate endowment accounts. A lot of the spring course offerings were cancelled as of mid-March, but look to emails on what the SoL Center plans for late Spring and Summer virtual classes.

Financial Report for March 2020 - Operating Budget				
	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Difference	Annual Budget
<b>Revenues</b>				
Pledge Income	\$146,429	\$135,873	\$10,556	\$543,493
Reimbursements	\$17,396	\$17,201	\$195	\$68,804
Other	\$19,835	\$5,475	\$14,360	\$54,349
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$183,660</b>	<b>\$158,549</b>	<b>\$25,111</b>	<b>\$666,647</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Mission, Outreach & Justice	\$18,549	\$18,400	-\$149	\$63,500
Stewardship & Finance	\$182	\$250	\$68	\$1,000
Personnel	\$95,727	\$102,406	\$6,679	\$411,622
Christian Education	\$2,932	\$2,063	-\$869	\$8,250
Worship & Arts	\$846	\$1,925	\$1,079	\$7,700
Facilities & Operations	\$22,050	\$33,567	\$11,517	\$134,270
Welcome & Fellowship	\$983	\$1,112	\$129	\$4,450
Session	\$1,310	\$1,301	-\$9	\$5,255
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$142,579</b>	<b>\$161,024</b>	<b>\$18,445</b>	<b>\$636,047</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>\$41,081</b>	<b>-\$2,475</b>	<b>\$43,556</b>	

In addition to operating funds and special purpose funds, we also have Endowment Funds which are long term funds that help support programs of the church and The SoL Center. The current market value of UPC Endowments is \$503,536 and the book value is \$414,773. The current market value of SoL Endowments is \$116,989 and the book value is \$105,061. Endowments are invested and only the earnings or a percentage of the current value may be used regularly.

Click to make your pledge online or to donate extra to the COVID-19 effort:

[▶ Donate Now](#)

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## COVID-19 AND UPC/UPCC/SOL FINANCIALS

Pursuant to the City of San Antonio and Bexar County's "Stay Home, Work Safe" orders, all in person meetings of the UPC congregation, SoL Center classes, and all outside groups gatherings were stopped in mid-March. The Children's Center follows the San Antonio Independent School District's orders for emergency closures and as such has been closed as well for the health and safety of the families with young children and the staff of 20+, most of whom are in at-risk categories for COVID-19. The Church closed its offices on March 18 and all staff have been working from home. Online worship services began March 22.

During the March meeting, the session discussed how to respond to both internal and external challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was quickly determined that the church wanted to set up a two-pronged approach for helping the community. The church wanted to help the San Antonio community at large by supporting organizations who were on the front line helping families with basic needs such as the San Antonio Food Bank, Christian Assistance Ministry, San Antonio Metropolitan Ministries, the Thrive Center, and others. The church also wanted to help individual members of the UPC and UPCC communities specifically who might be suffering due to job loss or reduction in work.

The MOJ committee is responsible for overseeing this two-pronged response.

In addition, the session discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting the Church and the Children's Center financially. The impact is particularly acute for the Children's Center since they depend on tuition payments for services rendered in order to pay their employees and to cover Health Insurance Premiums. The Church depends on donations and pledges as well as building use fees as income to help with operating costs and payroll/insurance. The Session recommended that we apply for the SBA Paycheck Protection Program loan to support the UPC and UPCC staff during this time of closure. Initially we applied for a joint loan, but then were told that we needed to apply separately due to having separate taxpayer identification numbers. On April 28, we were informed that both of the loans were approved and we should be getting the loan documents within the next 10 days. The loans will provide two months of paycheck protection and will be forgiven if they are used for the designated purpose.

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## COVID-19 RELIEF FUND

Our church community has contributed over \$11,000 to UPC's COVID-19 Response Fund to date. Thank you! We stand ready to offer support to those individuals in our own UPC and UPCC communities who have been impacted by the crisis. If you or someone you know needs some extra help with rent, utilities/internet, groceries, healthcare expenses, transportation expenses, childcare expenses, or other essentials, please reach out to [Pastor Dries Coetzee](#) (UPC) or to [Cindi Catlin Gaskins](#) (UPCC). A subcommittee will review and respond to these requests confidentially and as quickly as possible.

The MOJ Committee thanks you for all you have done - and all you will continue to do - to help UPC respond to this crisis quickly, with compassion and in alignment with our Mission and Welcome Statement. Your generosity to the COVID-19 Response Fund and by maintaining your UPC pledge makes that possible.

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## UPDATE ON YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERSHIP PLANS

We're getting close! Following the Zoom meeting of the Personnel team working with the Center for Youth Ministry Training affiliated with Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in mid-March, we were told that UPC has been accepted into the program and the process of matching accepted churches with accepted candidates had begun. The challenges of no in-person meetings and limited travel have slowed that process slightly, but the latest word is that

- We'll learn who will be working and training with us May 1
- We were a great applicant church because of our organization and enthusiasm
- Those who have been making the decisions are very excited about the quality and "matchability" of the candidate they've selected for us!

As our lives begin to open again, we'll look forward to meeting this new and important member of our staff whose main responsibilities will be with our youth in grades 6 through 12. We see this as good news as it gives us the opportunity to work with leadership in a program which has demonstrated strength in helping churches and youth ministers develop and sustain ongoing successful relationships.

However. . . we also have some not-really-unexpected bittersweet news about Dakota and Tanner, who have provided leadership for our children's and college ministries (as well as some youth events) during these last several months. We have learned that Tanner has been accepted to law school in Colorado, and they will be leaving us later in the summer. Their presence and guidance has been a blessing for us in so many ways, and we wish them our very best. More on that later as well!

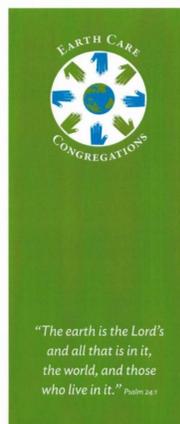
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## UPC IS NAMED AN EARTHCARE CONGREGATION

Thanks to the steps that our congregation took during 2019 and our application, University Presbyterian Church has been named an Earth Care Congregation for 2020.

We had to make a pledge to "be careful, humble stewards of this earth, and to protect and restore it for its own sake, and for the future use and enjoyment of the human family" and to complete activities and projects in the fields of worship, education, facilities and outreach.

We will need to reapply each year with activities and projects that we worked on during the previous year such as the solar panel project that we have planned for this year.



  
PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM  
*certifies*

**University Presbyterian Church**

*as an*  
**EARTH CARE CONGREGATION**

for its environmental stewardship achievements in worship, education, facilities and outreach actions in the life of the church.

Signature Isaac Mauldin Date MARCH 15, 2020  
Association for Sustainable Living and Earth Care Congregations

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## SOLAR PANEL FUNDRAISER UPDATE

The Session approved for the Earthcare Taskforce to lead a short term fundraiser with the congregation to raise part of the funds for the proposed 266 Solar Panel Array which will be mounted in the parking lot on a carport. The carport will cover the middle parking area and will not only provide a place for generating enough electricity for an average of 94% of UPC's monthly electricity bill, but it will also provide covered parking for those many warm days!

We were hoping to raise \$30,000 from this fundraiser held in March and April. To date we have received \$11,957.50 which is not as much as hoped but represents a strong interest. We are still accepting donations towards the project. The cost to sponsor one solar panel is \$585, one half of a solar panel is \$292.50, but any amount will be gladly received. All monies raised by this fundraiser will be held in a special fund until it is spent on this project.

At the next Stewardship & Finance committee meeting, we will be exploring whether to continue the fundraiser or whether to recommend other financing options, but we hope to move the project along quickly. For more information [contact Sandy Nicholson](#) or other members of the Earthcare Task Force.

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## VIRTUAL EARTH DAY FAIR

UPC's planned Earth Fair on April 19 didn't happen due to the Stay Home, Work Safe orders, so the Earthcare Taskforce decided to have a Virtual Earth Fair with shared photos of activities of us being good stewards of the Earth.

The scattered wildflower seeds in the fall at UPC are now flowering. Many of us have been gardening and working in the yards. We are trying new recipes, creating face masks, exercising outdoors, refurbishing and recycling items -- and so much more!



Virtual Earthday Slideshow

We would love to see more and receive additional photos. Please send pictures [to Anastasia](#) so she can publish them in future online communications (In Touch and Multitude.)

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## UPC CHILDREN/YOUTH/COLLEGE, UPCC, AND SOL CENTER INFO

### CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND COLLEGE MINISTRY

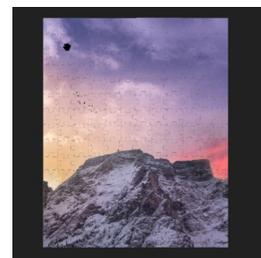
**Graduating Seniors:** Please keep in your thoughts and prayers the high school and college seniors whose graduations will look and feel a bit different this spring. We will recognize our seniors in worship on May 17.

**Families on Zoom:** In the month of April, UPC hosted various opportunities for UPC families to connect. Cindi Catlin Gaskins and Dakota Kohfield hosted a meeting for parents. The Andersons and Tingles arranged Zoom hangouts for the middle-school youth, and Dakota organized a Kids Connect for elementary-aged children. These will continue to be arranged on an as-needed basis. Dakota wants to provide opportunities for families, but does not want to overwhelm them. If you have ideas or feedback, [please share with Dakota](#).

**Elementary Sunday School:** For years, UPC Sunday school classes have used the Growing in Grace and Gratitude curriculum published by the Presbyterian Church (USA). The Growing in Grace activities and an audio recording of each week's story are available online. These resources are shared with families every week via email or the In-Touch. The class was using a very hands-on curriculum based on Matthew 25 during Lent, but stopped those lessons when church activities were suspended. Teachers plan to return to those lessons when we can be physically together again.

**Children's Moments:** Are you or your family interested in recording a Children's Moment to be included as part of worship? We welcome readings of children books, craft tutorials, kid-friendly interpretations of the week's scripture lesson, or your own creative ideas. [Please let Dakota know](#) if you're interested.

**College Group:** The UPC college group (that includes and is open to non-students who are of similar age), has been hanging out on Zoom. In March, they started meeting every other week, but recently decided to change to a gathering on a weekly-basis. They chat, vent, play games, and do puzzles! Meeting are on Thursday nights at 8:30pm. If you would like to join, please [contact Dakota Kohfield](#) for the Zoom login information.



A puzzle completed collaboratively by the college group.

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### CHILDREN'S CENTER

This spring has offered the UPCC staff the challenge of how does one continue to engage and connect with infants, toddlers and preschoolers and their families. The staff has had to literally redefine what it means to be an early childhood educator in a few short weeks. Through the rest of this spring and likely into the summer, the UPCC teachers will continue to create videos of activities, songs, dancing activities for the families to use with their children at home while also hosting "lunch bunch groups" and "Friday afternoon dance times" by zoom for individual classrooms. The school has also offered 2 - 3 Zoom sessions a month for parents, grandparents and guardians on topics such as "Facing Fears and Finding Optimism" and "Signs of Stress in Young Children."

As the school year draws to a close after suddenly shuttering the UPCC classroom doors and playground gates last March, the UPCC staff are looking for ways to celebrate the end of the year while honoring social distancing. As an alternative to a Fiesta Parade, the two teachers in the Pre-K class decorated their cars and drove to each child's house to leave a special yard sign and wave to the child at their door step.

In May, there will be "UPCC Curbside Service" for the families to have their child's personal belongings and portfolios the document the child's learning over the year delivered to the car by the child's classroom teaching team. While the UPCC staff seem to have figured out this new means of

teaching and connecting, we all are very eager to return to the days of teaching children in the classrooms and on the outdoor spaces!

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## SOL CENTER

In an effort to respond to our current moment, SoL has developed an online series, *Crises and Suffering: Perspectives from World Religions*, that will begin at the end of May. The series will run for several weeks and discussion leaders include, Dr. Rajam Ramamurthy, Thomas Bruner, Rabbi Mara Nathan, Rev.Dr. Cindy Rigby, Vance Blackfox, and Imam Mustafa Safak. More details coming soon!

We will also offer an online book group with our friends at the Raindrop Foundation San Antonio. In August, Rev. Dr. San Williams will lead an online discussion of the Presbyterian Women's Bible Study, *Into the Light: Finding Hope through Prayers of Lament*.

The SoL Board continues to meet (via zoom) and to brainstorm about what adult education might look like now and in the future. If you have some ideas or suggestions, [please contact Dawn Martin](#). Be well and take care.

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## CONGREGATIONAL UPDATES

### NEW MEMBER INTRODUCTION

I met Karen five years ago when I sat in a job interview with her. I was applying for a position as a tour guide and she was the Director of Road Scholar (once known as Elder Hostel) Tour Co. for the San Antonio area. It is a delight to introduce you to my good friend, Karen Roe. (By the way, I got the job.)

Karen is not only the daughter of a Methodist minister, but a granddaughter and niece of Methodist ministers as well. In fact, both maternal and paternal grandfathers are Methodist ministers, meeting when they were roommates at Trinity University when Trinity's campus was in Waxahachie, TX. I bet there is never a shortage of people to say prayers at their family gatherings. Karen describes living in the parsonage as "living under a microscope." "I was certainly held to a different standard." Knowing Karen, she rose to the occasion.



Possessing a bright, analytical mind, Karen obtained her BA in Political Science with a Minor in Business from Southwestern University in Georgetown. She graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with her law degree. The bulk of her 25 year law career was spent in juvenile justice, working at state agencies (Texas Youth Commission and Texas Juvenile Probation) that oversee incarcerated youth. "It was heartbreaking work but there was an element of satisfaction in overseeing the facilities at which some of the most vulnerable were given services aimed towards rehabilitation," Karen told me. She volunteers in the Beacon Hill Ministry of UPC as she is convinced that the intervention of mentoring at risk children can make a difference in their lives.

It must have been a breath of fresh air to begin a second career with Road Scholar. A tour company that has recently adapted as their motto, "University of the World," targets the senior population with educational travel. Karen worked tenaciously and tirelessly to make her programs excel. She created from scratch a program for Arkansas, which takes guests to Crystal Bridges American Art Museum, The Bill Clinton Presidential Library and Central High School, a National Historic Site where visitors learn about The Little Rock Nine from a Park Ranger. She developed new programs to Big Bend National Park and an intergenerational Grandparent program in Galveston. I met one of her bosses at a Farewell dinner held at The Institute of Texan Culture, and he told me, "Oh, if I could only clone Karen Roe."

Last year, Karen graduated from The San Antonio Professional Tour Guide Association and is ready to embark on a third career. She has just been hired by Holland America/ Princess in the rail division and this summer will provide narration for the guests as they travel from Anchorage, Alaska to Denali National Park. If we could only bottle her energy, it would be a best seller.

The pride and joy of Karen's life are her two sons, Rob and Scott. Both young men are graduates of Rice University, and both hold degrees in Mechanical Engineering. Does it surprise you that they were both Eagle Scouts? Rob, 28 years old is in Customer Service for Echo Software and Scott, 25 years old, works for Raytheon and is involved in the missile defense system of the United States.

Karen transferred her 20 plus year membership at First Methodist Church of Austin, to UPC. Selecting a church home in San Antonio was a task she did not take lightly. She visited more than a dozen churches, making notes on a spread sheet of strengths and weaknesses of each before making her decision. " I liked the friendliness of UPC's members, the welcome statement and the inclusiveness of the church."

Welcome, Karen! We are pleased to have you join us!  
Submitted by Bonnie Robin Simons

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## UPCOMING DEACON ASSIGNMENTS

The Deacons have called in helpers as we seek to stay in touch with all members and frequent visitors of the congregation during this time. The new Deacons have been elected, but not yet installed, but this seemed like an excellent time to follow the outgoing Deacons, learn from them about their new parish, and start getting in touch and meeting the members of the parish that will become theirs in June.

Here are the assignments:

Janice Zitelman will care for the Stone Oak parish, following Don Sheldon  
Anne Pearson will care for the Alamo Heights parish, following Gail Olsen  
Mary Lance will care for the Windcrest parish, following Marlyn Gibbs  
Cynthia Smith will care for the College Students, following Karen Jensen  
Margaret Cairnes will care for the Olmos parish, following Nancy Vaughan  
Moderator will be Nancy Vaughan, following Margaret Cairnes  
Vice-moderator will be Carol Brown, following Nancy Vaughan.

Additionally, there are many "auxillary Deacons" among the congregation; those who previously served and remember the adage "Once a Deacon, always a Deacon". This church is blessed in so many ways; truly it is a "beloved community!"

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## CONGRATS GRADS!

**We celebrate these graduating high school students:**

William Cox  
Samuel Lewis  
David Rezendes  
Libby Sanders

**We celebrate these graduating college students:**

Josh Kang  
Tatyana Lewis  
Kristina Reinis  
Isla Stewart



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## PRAYER CHAIN

Over 160 people are currently united in praying for others as needs arise through an email distribution list. If you would like to participate or if you have a prayer request, please contact [the church office](#) or [contact Ruth Ann Mclver](#).

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## MAY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

**We celebrate these Birthdays:**

1-Eddie Bravenec  
1-Mariel Garber  
1-Ben Srinivasan  
2-Michelle Cox  
2-Gay Spinks  
3-Maya Sloan  
3-Barbara Smith  
6-Sera Steves  
7-Susan Langan  
8-Robin Raquet  
9-Lisa Campbell  
10-Larry Higgins  
10-Devon Hile  
11-Melodie Pue  
12-Elise Frescas  
13-Bonnie Simons  
14-Daryl Anderson  
15-Leroy Sebesta  
17-Jim Warren  
18-Nancy Frescas  
18-Lucy Maxwell  
19-Terry Fried  
20-Lupe Bernal  
20-Harry Jewett  
22-Frankie Boyd  
22-Lisa Clyde  
22-Susan Flanagan  
23-Roger Arhelger  
23-Caitlin Villareal  
25-David Carpenter  
27-Carl Helser  
28-Safira Carpenter  
29-Eric Rodriguez  
30-James Nicholson  
31-Neena Tefteller  
31-Martha Whitworth  
31-Kate Wilson

**We celebrate these Anniversaries:**

4-Allison & David Esman  
21-Victoria Thompson & Ramesh Srinivasan  
21-Linda & Jim Ireland  
28-Amanda & Bob Harris  
28-Mary & Tim Walsh  
29-Neena & Ron Tefteller

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## GIFTS & MEMORIALS

**UPC Memorial Fund in memory of Carolynn Cobbs**  
Stan Cobbs

**UPC Pastor's Discretionary Fund in honor of Dries Coetzee  
and the meaningful services during Holy Week**  
Mary Alice Powell

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## FALL 2019 PHOTO DIRECTORY

Have you picked up your copy of the UPC Fall 2019 photo directory? If not, please [contact the church office](#) during the week to see about mailing options.

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## VIRTUAL MEETING ETIQUETTE

In this time of social distancing, we are relying largely on Zoom and other video chat platforms to fulfill our social needs. To make the experience the most meaningful it can be for all participants, please consider these tips.

### 1. Mute yourself when not speaking.

A conversation between 40 people is challenging to manage. Unlike in real life, side conversations can't really happen on Zoom. If you talk, laugh, cough, or make other noises that your microphone picks up, everyone's screen will shift to focus on you rather than the person speaking. Out of respect for the people sharing, and to avoid distracting other participants, please keep yourself muted when you're not speaking. If the host mutes you, it's not personal- it's to help manage the conversation.

### 2. Set the camera at eye level.

If possible, arrange your webcam or computer/tablet camera so that it is about at eye level. Try to look into the camera, rather than at the screen, especially when you are the person speaking. This will mimic eye contact and help the listeners feel more connected to you.

### 3. Consider your background.

We are all getting glimpses into coworkers' and friends' homes that we may have never seen before. Remember that the goal of video meetings is to have a conversation, and some backgrounds can distract from the conversation. If the room where you Zoom is not a place you would like visitors, consider using a virtual background. Beware that the virtual backgrounds can become distractions themselves if not used properly. If need be, you can turn off your video so that you cannot be seen at all.

### 4. Chat box messages can be public or private.

If you choose to communicate via the Zoom chat box, it will automatically be sent to all meeting participants. While this may sometimes be appropriate, consider that you may be distracting or interrupting other participants when you send a chat. If you want to say something to one participant (like a side conversation) you can do that in the chat box as well.

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## PEOPLE SERVING YOU

### STAFF

#### **Andries Coetzee, Pastor**

Anastasia Bernal, Church Administrator  
Allan Catlin, Facility & Event Steward  
Cindi Catlin Gaskins, Children's Center Director  
Dakota Kohfield, Children's & College Ministry Director  
Mary Lowder, Organist  
Dhawn Martin, SoL Center Director  
Keith Martinez, Choral Music Director  
Leroy Sebesta, Music Administrative Assistant  
Maggie Sorrell, Children's Music Director  
Frank Villalpando, Custodian  
Vacant, Youth Ministry Director

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## SESSION & COMMITTEES

### **Ruling Elders - Committee Serving**

Melissa Almsted - Christian Education, Co-Chair (Children)  
David Anderson - Stewardship & Finance, Co-Chair  
Robert Browning - Christian Education, Co-Chair (Adults)  
Eva Dupertuis - Youth Elder  
Terry Fried - Stewardship & Finance, Co-Chair  
Devon Hile - Youth Elder  
Keith Kendall - Mission Outreach & Justice, Co-Chair  
Hanna Kuykendall - Worship & Arts, Co-Chair

Melinda Louden - Mission Outreach & Justice, Co-Chair  
Art Nicholson - Facilities & Operations and Co-Clerk of Session  
Dennis Richard - Welcome & Fellowship  
Molly Roth - Facilities & Operations  
Ariel Simpson - Personnel, Co-Chair  
Sally Smith - Welcome & Fellowship

**Non-Session Members - Committee Serving**

Ben Henderson - Facilities & Operations, Chair  
Sandy Nicholson - Church Treasurer  
Betsy Pasley - Co-Clerk of Session  
Melissa Richard - Welcome & Fellowship, Chair  
Lou Williams - Personnel, Co-Chair  
Tom Williams - Worship & Arts, Co-Chair

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## DEACONS & PARISHES

Carol Brown - Northwest Parish  
Margaret Cairnes - Moderator  
Bonnie Flake - Northwood Parish  
Marlyn Gibbs - Windcrest Parish  
Paula Henderson - Castle Hills North Parish  
Linda Ireland - Northeast Parish  
Karen Jensen - College Students, Secretary  
Gail Olsen - Alamo Heights Parish  
Carlos Rodriguez - Fredericksburg Parish  
David Sanders - University Parish  
Don Sheldon - Stone Oak Parish, Treasurer  
Nancy Vaughan - Olmos Parish, Vice-Moderator

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## OUR MESSAGE TO YOU

*Wherever you may be in the journey of faith, UPC welcomes you.  
We are a community where honest questions are valued  
and where faith is considered a process, not an arrival.*

*Affirming that every person has worth as a unique creation and a child of God,  
we welcome into full participation people of every age, sex,  
race, color, ethnicity, culture, immigration status, political affiliation,  
economic condition, physical and mental ability, marital status,  
sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.*

*If you are passing through, we extend God's blessings to you as you continue on your way.  
If you are seeking a home, we invite you to join us in the adventure  
of serving Jesus Christ in a challenging world.*



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