

## United Presbyterian Church Communicator

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### Message from Pastor Michelle

We are living in unprecedented times. We're being asked to do new things, relate in new ways, and care for one another in different and sometimes uncomfortable ways. For many, this is a time of great fear, stress, and anxiety. The **Presbyterian Mental Health Network** offers the following suggestions for our mental well-being:

- **Maintain positive thoughts.** It is too easy for our thoughts to cascade into catastrophe. Though this crisis will bring about changes, not everything is permanent, pervasive, or personal. Balance the reality of the situation with gratitude.
- **Be imaginative and creative.** Imagination can be both a terrible and terrific human feature. It can convince the worst is upon us, it can also save us from depression and anxiety. When you feel overwhelmed, use your imagination to draw upon meaningful, peaceful, safe, carefree, experiences.
- As you are able, when stressed, **change your physical surroundings.** Our minds often try and predict what is coming next. Physical spaces can become associated with emotional states. When stress or panic hits, change your physical space, what you view or see, or who is in front of you.
- We are in uncharted territory, and that can feel tenuous. Predictability is difficult. Therefore, **make a routine** that honors this new normal. Create a daily schedule: bathing, eating, sleeping, working, relating, exercise, social interaction.

- **Relate, relate, relate.** Reach out to friends, family, and members of your church and other communities. Invent creative social interactions. Physical distance does not have to equate to social isolation. We can teach and embody and embolden the people around us to create and be community.
- **Seek professional help.** When you need it, access professional help. Share with others that you are seeking help. Break down the stigma of seeking counseling and coaching. Virtual counseling and coaching are normal now.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to give me a call.

Grace and peace,  
Michelle

### MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

This resource from the PC(USA) provides links for mental health, crisis helplines, online training opportunities, and uplifting stories of resilience. Check it out! <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/mental-health-ministry/covid-19-mental-health-resources/mental-health-for-everyone/> For Laramie Mental Health resources [click here](#).

### COFFEE HOUR



Use the link to join a time of virtual fellowship on Zoom Sundays at 10:30 am. [Click here for Zoom link](#)

## FEBRUARY SERMON SERIES

Sunday worship live stream service can be found at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyLkd7kE\\_l0acTnxJQ\\_Eg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyLkd7kE_l0acTnxJQ_Eg) and through the UPC website.

## FROM WORSHIP COMMITTEE

We are delighted to have so many of you attend worship, and we realize it's "not like it used to be." The Worship Committee continues to research what is safe in reference to masked singing and responsive speaking, as well as length of time together in the sanctuary. Currently we are limiting the length of the service to about 30 minutes, limiting the number of singers on the chancel, and asking that the congregation not sing or read the responses out loud. This is based on aerosol research the UW Department of Music is using to guide safe practice for their singers and instrumentalists. We would like things to be "back to normal" but this is the compromise necessary at this time to provide a safe in person worship experience. Thank you for your patience and flexibility."

## CHURCH CONSTRUCTION

The church office will be closed for two weeks due to the North wing ceiling improvement that began on February 1st. This project is not funded through the operating budget, but by generous Memorial gifts to UPC. It will complete the project initiated in May 2013. Pastor Michelle and Nikki will be working from home and can be reached via email and phone. The mail will be checked on a regular basis. We will continue to have in-person Worship on Sundays using the West doors.

## ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on February 7, at 10:00 am. The meeting will be both in person and virtual via Zoom:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83641533093?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83641533093?pwd=NFpiUGFqL3VqeGhzRVITZGpJNFQ2Zz09)

[pwd=NFpiUGFqL3VqeGhzRVITZGpJNFQ2Zz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83641533093?pwd=NFpiUGFqL3VqeGhzRVITZGpJNFQ2Zz09)

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

February will be another busy month for CE. The CE committee will meet at church on February 7 at 10:30 following the congregational meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend. **LOGOS** continues to meet through February with the exception of Ash Wednesday on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The elementary kids will have their last brown bag dinner of the year on the 10<sup>th</sup>. We will be having a joint **Mid and Sr High youth group** meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup> starting at 2:00. Evelyn Edson the director of United Way of Albany County will be joining us through Zoom to inform the youth of all the agencies they work with locally. As well as to inform the youth how they too can help as we look to plan our local mission work for the upcoming summer. Looking ahead.... Please save the date for **Vacation Bible School!** We are planning for a somewhat traditional VBS the week of June 14<sup>th</sup>. Please let Michelle Harris know if you or your youth are able to help out.

## FAMILY PROMISE

UPC is not scheduled to host for Family Promise again until March.

Taverna Promessa Annual Fundraiser February 20th: <https://fpalbanycounty.org/2021/01/12/taverna-promessa-3/>

Please use the following link to take a look at Family Promises latest newsletter and upcoming fundraising opportunities: <https://fpalbanycounty.org/2021/01/07/january-newsletter-21/>

## LET'S HELP OUT UW STUDENTS!



As a result of a generous family who donated funds to be used for folks impacted by COVID-19 as well as helping students, UPC was able to work with the UW Food Share Pantry. In the past, church members have asked Mission to consider this Pantry but due to available resources, it had never made the Annual Mission Plan. Consequently, this unexpected donation to the Mission Budget started conversations with the staff at UW's Office of the Dean of Students. They were thrilled to be contacted and the family's donation has already been sent to support the UW Food Share Pantry (information on this Pantry can be found on the website of the Office of the Dean of Students). Mission has learned that many students live on the edge financially and they have been impacted by the loss of part-time jobs due to the pandemic. The Food Share Pantry does partner with the Interfaith Food Pantry. Meanwhile, the pandemic has forced UW to provide an additional service to those students who either have contracted the virus or have to self-isolate in their dorm rooms due to exposure to the virus. The UW Food Share Pantry is providing "survival bags" that are delivered to the students to help them during their periods of mandatory isolation. Mission has decided to delay the February drive for Gift from the Heart Survival Kits to later in the year in order to prepare some "survival bags" to help out the UW Food Share Pantry. **Mission is asking for donations of the following items to be brought to the church by February 28<sup>th</sup>. Monetary donations are also welcomed through checks made out to UPC with "Mission/UW" in the memo line.** Mission is looking forward to partnering with C4 in the preparation of these "survival bags."

Items Needed:

Chunky soups (chicken and corn chowder; chicken tortilla; chicken noodle)	Canned chili with beans – either beef or turkey	Canned beef stew	Micro-waveable Mac & Cheese
Microwaveable rice	Beanie Weenies	Trail mix	Granola bars
Almonds	Pistachios	Cheese in aerosol cans	Crackers
Tortilla Chips	Salsa in jars		
Microwave cup-cake/muffin mixes	Applesauce	Canned fruit – peaches or mixed fruit	Canned corn or canned bean salad
Tissues	Toothpaste	Toothbrushes	Menstrual products
Shaving cream	Dental floss	Sudoku puzzle books	Cross-word puzzle books
Adult coloring books and colored pencils	M&M's or Reeses' Pieces	Mixed types of puzzles books	Jigsaw puzzles

## IN THE COMMUNITY

In the link below you can find more information on the history of Sanctity of Life Sunday, a video showing more of **Heart to Heart's** services, and a link that can be used for donations for this year's **Virtual Baby Bottle campaign** in the month of February. <https://heart2heart.center/sanctity-of-human-life/>

February 2021 **Virtual Art Raffle** Joint Fundraiser for **Laramie Soup Kitchen/Laramie Interfaith**: <https://go.rallyup.com/artraffle2021>

**COVID Vaccines:** Albany County Public Health 307-721-2561 now accepting pre-registration for those aged 65 and older. For assistance with the form please call 307-766-8222. For updated WY Department of Health vaccination priorities visit:

[https://health.wyo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/WDH\\_Phase-1-COVID-19-Vaccination-Priorities\\_2.1.21.pdf](https://health.wyo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/WDH_Phase-1-COVID-19-Vaccination-Priorities_2.1.21.pdf)

For Albany County vaccine information visit:

<https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/immunization/wyoming-covid-19-vaccine-information/county-covid-19-vaccine-information/>

## FOC & STEWARDSHIP

How UPC stands financially at the end of December 2020:

Total Income \$238,978.23; 96.87% of 2020 operating budget

Total Expenses \$239,820.85; 98.15% of 2020 operating budget

While we continue to worship virtually, the ministry of UPC continues and relies on your generosity. Please consider sending your tithes and offerings through the [on-line giving](#) on the UPC website or mail through the US postal service. On-line is very easy and categories that you can choose from have been created to direct your donation to the correct place. There is a "Notes" box at the end of the form which will allow you to be more specific if you so desire.

## 2021 PER CAPITA

PER CAPITA is "the tie that binds" — annual support that unites the entire church in the ongoing and essential work that guides the Office of the General Assembly, the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and benefits every congregation and every mid council ministry. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Office of the General Assembly encourages the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be a people of hope ~ Seeking together the mind of Christ; Working for justice and mercy in the world; and Participating in God's continual reformation of the church. Per capita provides the Office of the General Assembly with the means to strengthen the connections of our work, and build lasting relationships to help all Presbyterians share God's love through mission and ministry. For 2021, in the Presbytery of Wyoming, Per Capita is **\$44.98 per member**. Kindly submit your check to UPC with "Per Capita" noted in the memo line, or through the UPC website by selecting "Per Capita." Thank you for your continued support of our congregation, presbytery, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

## CABIN FEVER

Please let the church office know if you would like to be placed on the waitlist for a fun filled weekend!

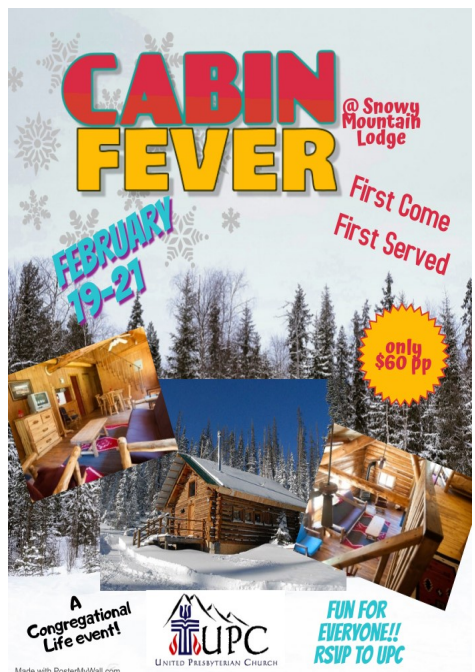
Large duplex cabins offer all of the comforts of home while staying in the woods. The main level contains one private bedroom with a queen bed, a kitchen, a bathroom, and a living room with futon couch. The upstairs loft has two additional full sized beds. Each kitchen has a small stove, refrigerator, microwave, coffee pot, and other general

kitchen items like silverware and basic pots and pans. The bathrooms are equipped with hot water and showers. A small TV and DVD are also included, although they do not have cable TV service or internet. These duplex style cabins offer a perfect escape from the elements in the winter. Sleeps 6-8.

Individual Cabins are also stand alone cabins and also offer all of the amenities of staying at home. Each cabin has one full bed, one set of bunk beds with twin mattresses, and one futon couch. The cabin is equipped with a small kitchenette with small stove, mini-fridge, coffee pot, sink, and basic kitchen items. These cabins also have a full bathroom and sleep 4-6.

The main lodge will accommodate guests on comfy cots and with shared bathrooms. The main lodge has a large meeting room, a cozy living room and a commercial kitchen.

We as a group can play in the great outdoors or games in the main lodge where we can be spaced, or spend quality family time in your own cabin.



## WOMEN'S CIRCLES & MEN'S GROUP

**Mary Martha Circle** will meet Wednesday, **February 17th** in the North Lounge at UPC at 1 pm. We will continue our study "Into the Light" Finding Hope through Prayers of Lament. Janice Shuster will lead us in Lesson six of our journey. Freda Dixon is our Co-Hostess. All women are invited to join us for prayer, study and fellowship.

**Rebecca Circle** Next meeting will be **February 18th** at 10:00 am. It will be on Zoom. [Click here](#) for Zoom link. Mary Prather will lead our discussion on prayer. Everyone is asked to bring a couple of scripture verses that are tied to prayer. Do they lead to prayer, do they prompt prayer or do they encourage one to pray?

**Evening Circle** will meet on **February 25th** at 7:00 pm via Zoom. We will continue with lesson 9 of "Love Carved in Stone". All are welcome.

**UPC Men!** Please join us via Zoom every **Friday morning at 7:00** for great conversation! All are welcome. [Click here for Zoom link](#)

## PRACTICE RESURRECTION

The study by Eugene Peterson Practice Resurrection will meet on Tuesdays through February 16th at 9:30 am in the North Lounge. Call Celeste Kobulnicky with questions.



## THE UPPER ROOM

The Upper Room for March, April, May has arrived. If you were one who would pick up the Upper Room on a Sunday morning please let the church office know and we will make sure you get one!

## UPC's ELDERS AND DEACONS



**Elders:** Bryce Barker, Elizabeth Williams, Dona Coffey, Gearld Van Campen, Kim Buchanan, Nancy Lick, Hillary Utton

**Deacons:** Codi Broten, Linda Haynes, Rita Ver Ploeg, Marla Smith, Linda Sheets, DJ Yocom, Donna Mecham

## REPORTS AND SESSION MINUTES

Session and committees continue to meet via Zoom. The UPC Session Minutes and reports can be read at our website at [upclaramie.org/minutes/](http://upclaramie.org/minutes/)



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT UPC

For a full calendar of events click on the calendar link. If you or your group wants to add something to the UPC calendar please bring it or send to the church office for it to go for approval at the following Wednesday staff meeting. [CLICK HERE](#) for calendar.