

Tower Notes

September 2019

**United Protestant Church
(UCC)**

in Morgan Park
830 88th Avenue West
Duluth, MN 55808
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Pastor

Rev. Paul VanAntwerp
218-349-0143
pastor@unitedprotestantchurch.org

Worship Schedule: Sunday at 10:30 AM
YOU ARE INVITED TO WORSHIP WITH US EVERY WEEK

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| September 1 | Worship Service 10:30 AM
Communion
Food Shelf
Second Offering - Fuel Fund |
| September 8 | Worship Service 10:30 AM |
| September 15 | Worship Service 10:30 AM
Second Offering - Fuel Fund |
| September 22 | Worship Service 10:30 AM |
| September 29 | Worship Service 10:30 AM |



Pastor's Commentary

...I was asked recently if "I bless things."

"Things? Like what things?" I responded.

"You know... animals or backpacks?"

"Well, not really," I had to say honestly. "I guess I prefer to bless the people that use them."

...And this led to a bigger conversation (the kind of conversation I just love!). See, instead of blessing things, or people, or animals, I prefer to put my whole self into sharing life with them. My body and mind. My efforts and actions. My faith has guided me to appreciate that humanity is already blessed by God, because we are loved by God (no exceptions). My theology is also that God - for reasons I am still trying to understand, and humbly accept as an ongoing conversation - wants to engage US in the work that God is doing. Shane Claibourne put it something like this: "When I saw how wrong things were, I said 'God, why don't you do something!'", and God responded: 'I did do something, I made you!'"

I've read and heard of things such as the "blessing of the bicycles" or "blessing of the pets" or "blessing of the backpacks"—and have even attended a few...but something always feels incomplete.

Let's take the backpacks: I don't think anybody would disagree that the child carrying the backpack is already loved by God (if that sounds strange, let's talk...please), but many of the young souls whose bodily heat will be felt on those backpacks face barriers that keep them from succeeding. They lack access to resources for school. They lack access to reliable and healthy food. They lack access to a safe and comforting space to study. With this small sample of the many challenges children face in attaining a healthy education in mind, I tend to feel like the words are...well...just words.

So here's my suggestion: let's pray for them—oh God, yes and Amen!—let us lift them up to the light and love of God...but let's also *EMPOWER* them! I think the way we "bless" those children is to work toward giving these children what they need to succeed. Work toward giving them school supplies. Yes. Work toward giving them reliable sources of food (*FEED* them!). Work toward giving them safe and comfortable places to study. Now *THAT*'s my kind of blessing!

But "blessing" the backpacks without embodying those words by living in a manner that supports the soul that uses the backpacks... well, it seems to me that such a thing amounts to what Deidrich Boenhoeffer called "cheap grace" – little more than when our leaders bear witness to an act of horror like a school shooting, stand at a podium and say "our thoughts and prayers are with you", and return to working toward their personal agendas, self-promotion, and individual successes.

As I write this, the cool breeze of fall is here, the flowers have seed heads, the popple is yellowing. The kids are at the bus stop. Our church, like the region around us, looks toward the season of fall. So let me offer this blessing - um, I mean this *prayer and empowerment*: may our church's ministry be not mere words, but actions. May our building be not merely attractive and historical, but helpful and relevant to the human souls we share this life with. And to you, dear reader, I ask that you take a look at what we're up to in the other sections of this newsletter. Take a moment and consider where you can put your hands and heads and hearts to work commensurate to your faithful thoughts and prayers. And if something seems missing...seems less embodying than a ministry of Jesus should be, well, take a moment and give me a call: 218-349-0143.

Lets talk,
Pastor Paul

AROUND UPC

Message from the Moderator

Hello to all!

I hate to say it, but have you noticed that fall is in the air? My green beans are about done, zucchini and cucumbers are growing as are the carrots and beets, and the tomatoes are starting to turn red. All sure signs that our summer days are numbered. As I think back to the days of summer, I wonder what have I accomplished these past months. Good question, right? What have your summer days been like? Have you accomplished good things or just put up with the heat of summer? Time goes by really fast, folks. Let's make the best of the days ahead of us in our church life and personal lives.

Fall and early winter are always busy times for us here at United Protestant Church. Lots of events coming up and lots of help needed to arrange and make these events happen. I'm looking forward to the coming months, but not so much the cold and snow.

The Council has had the summer months off but we will be meeting again on September 10, so if there's something you want us to attend to, please let me know so we can try to fit it into our agenda.

Thanks, and see you in church!
Karen Robnik, Moderator

Remember in Prayer

*Remember those who are unable to be with us on a regular basis; members, family and friends who are dealing with health problems or surgery; those who grieve; those who have emotional, financial or other hardship; those who are searching or in a time of transition; those who serve our community, our country and our world.

*If you would like prayer for yourself, family or friends, you may contact Sue Linde, 626-1272, and she will begin the prayer chain.

Memorials

UP Church has received a generous gift of money in memory of Ron Benson, who passed away August 2, 2012. A special thank you to this family friend who has given a memorial every year for Ron.

Congratulations!

John and Doris Toman celebrated 65 years of marriage on August 21.

Christian Education

A meeting to plan and work on final details is set for Monday, September 9, at 6:00 pm. If you are interested in lending a hand, or have some resources that we would value, we would love to hear from you!

Do You Know Your Hymns?

Weatherman's Hymn: "There Shall Be Showers of Blessings"

Marna Fastland sent us the following note and photo: "I retired from working with the Carlton County 4-H program at the end of 2018. Over the years 4-H members often asked me if I would write a letter of recommendation for them if they were applying for a scholarship of some sort. About a year ago a young man named Berti asked me to write a letter of recommendation on his behalf to "win" a cow from the Minnesota Beef Association. He had to complete an application and write an essay about why he wanted the cow. It was very easy to write the letter for Berti because he has worked hard to learn about raising beef as part of his 4-H activities.

"Berti won the beef cow, a purebred Hereford he named Stella. Berti sent me a very nice thank you note for writing the letter of recommendation. When I retired, the 4-H club that Berti attends sent me a very nice card with many of the 4-H kids writing 'thanks for your help over the years,' 'congrats on retiring,' and so forth. Berti wrote 'Marna - whenever I look at Stella, I will think of you!' "I shared this story at church in February because it made me laugh! I went to the Carlton County Fair and got to meet Stella - she is a beauty! (And I got another thank you from Berti!)"



Marna & Stella at Carlton Co. Fair

History Work Days

Work days are 2nd & 4th Wednesdays at 10 am. Progress is being made, but still many papers and photos to sort through and organize. A 1920 Easter service program and Children's Day programs from the 1920s have been found. All are welcome to come as you can to help on the project. Thank you to Bob Berg & Morgan Park History Tours for a donation for the project. Bob has a vast know-ledge of UPC and Morgan Park history, and is willing to help us with this project.


A Finnish kantele group, "Kardemimmit", is touring the U.S. in September, and will present a concert at UPC on Friday, September 13, 7:00 pm. \$10/adult, children free. Group is sponsored by Finlandia Foundation Northland.

2019 Financial Report – year to date (8/31/19)

Income:	\$ 35,500
Expenses:	41,571
Difference:	\$ - 6,071

UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH

September 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Worship 10:30 Communion Fuel Fund Food Shelf	2 Labor Day	3	4 Office 10-2 Women's Fellowship 1:30 pm Grill's On 5:30 pm	5	6 Office 10-2	7
8 Worship 10:30 Morgan Park All Class Reunion	9 Children's Education Meeting 6:00 pm	10 Council 7:30 Trustees & Diaconate 6:30 pm	11 Office 10-2 History Work Day 10 am Grill's On 5:30 pm Choir 6 pm	12	13 Office 10-2 Concert by Kardemimmit	14
15 Worship 10:30 Fuel Fund	16 Lectionary Study 6 pm	17	18 Office 10-2 Grill's On 5:30 pm	19	20 Office 10-2	21
22 Worship 10:30	23 Lectionary Study 6 pm First day of Fall	24 	25 Office 10-2 History Work Day 10 am Grill's On 5:30 pm Choir 6 pm	26	27 Office 10-2	28 Ruby's Pantry 11:00 am
29 Worship 10:30	30 Lectionary Study 6 pm	October 1	2 Office 10-2 Women's Fellowship 1:30 pm Grill's On 5:30 pm	3	4 Office 10-2	5
6 Worship 10:30 Communion Fuel Fund Food Shelf	7 Lectionary Study 6 pm	8 Council 7:30 Trustees & Diaconate 6:30 pm	9 Office 10-2 History Work Day 10 am Grill's On 5:30 pm Choir 6 pm	10	11 Office 10-2	12
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Coming Up in September

- September 1 *Communion, Fuel Fund, Food Shelf
- September 2 *Labor Day
- September 4 *Women's Fellowship, 1:30 pm, Fellowship Hall
- September 7 *Music from the Alps to the Adriatic featuring the Singing Slovenes and special guest Kerry Christensen, World Champion Yodeler, 1-5 pm, GND REC
- September 8 *Morgan Park all class reunion - worship at UPC prior to meeting at DECC
- September 9 *Children's Education Meeting, 6 pm
- September 11 *Council Meeting, 7:30 pm, Trustees & Diaconate 6:30
- September 13 *Concert by Finnish kantele group "Kardemimmit" 7:00 pm
- September 15 *Second Offering - Fuel Fund
- September 23 *First Day of Autumn
- September 28 *Ruby's Pantry at Mission Creek Church, 11 am-12:30 pm

Looking Ahead to October

- October 2 *Women's Fellowship, 1:30 pm, Fellowship Hall
- October 6 *Communion, Fuel Fund, Food Shelf
- October 8 *Council Meeting, 7:30 pm, Trustees & Diaconate 6:30 pm
- October 14 *Columbus Day
- October 20 *Second Offering - Fuel Fund
- October 26 *Ruby's Pantry at Mission Creek Church, 11 am-12:30 pm
- October 31 *Halloween



Monday, 6:00 pm: Bible Study Join Pastor Paul for a first look at the Lectionary texts for the following Sunday. This is a time for questions and conversation in our lives of faith - and your participation greatly assists in creating a meaningful sermon on Sunday.

Wednesday (2nd & 4th) 6:00 pm: Choir Practice Choir performs the following Sunday. Everyone who likes to sing is welcome to join in. Let Karen Robnik or Pastor Paul know if you have a favorite piece of music you would like to hear.

Wednesday, 5:30 pm: Grill's On! We'll be inside for cold weather, but grill as long as we can, until we turn to indoor cooking. Bags and Ladder Ball will be set up inside, but bring your own indoor fun games.

Weekly Email Update Each Friday, UP Church sends out a church-wide email including reminders of upcoming events and a note from Pastor Paul. Interested in receiving this? Send a note to the office. Also, paper copies of the updates will be available on Sunday mornings in the Narthex and Fellowship Hall.

UP Church Pastoral Relations Committee meets periodically to visit about our Ministry at UP Church. Committee members are Kevin Behm, Marna Fasteland and Dale Williamson. Please feel free to contact any of these folks to share your perspectives on the programs and activities at our church.

Church Contact List: Let us know if you have a new home address, phone number or email address, so we have up-to-date information for the directory. Also, if you have any additions, deletions or other changes you would like made to the directory or birthday/anniversary list, please leave a message in the office.



September Birthdays

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 2 Christine Parenteau | 2 Leah Blevins | 3 Brian Fredrickson |
| 7 Jamie Merila | 8 Joyce Hollingsworth | 10 Crystal Leal |
| 18 John Toman Sr. | 19 Gary Merila | 21 Isabel Davey |
| 22 Deborah Therrell | 27 Bill Dale | 28 Karen Wickner |

September Anniversaries

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|----------------------------|
| 6 Beth & Brian Fredrickson |
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United Protestant Church UCC

830 88th Avenue W.

Duluth, MN 55808

unitedprotestantchurch.org



United Protestant Church Vision Statement

The United Protestant Church aspires to be a vibrant Christian congregation that is sustainable and welcoming to all, putting its faith into practice through its outreach activities. The church strives to be the center of the community's mind, body and spirit through its ministries and the programs it offers.

September 2019

*100 Years
1917 - 2017*

*“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!”
they cried one to another.*

“All the earth is filled with His glory!”

Isaiah 6:3

