

# 1st Sunday of Lent

*"Bread of Life"*

February 22nd, 2026 at 10:30am (onsite/online)  
Umstead Park United Church of Christ



## GATHERING

**Welcome and A Time of Greeting**

Rev. Paula Womack

**Invocation**

Dan Harrell

**Meditation**

*"Because we plant its seed  
and grow it  
not for one man  
but for all,  
there will be enough:  
there will be bread  
for all the peoples of the earth.  
And we will also share with one another  
whatever has  
the shape and the flavor of bread:  
the earth itself,  
beauty  
and love--  
all  
taste like bread  
and have its shape....."*

*-Pablo Neruda from Ode to Bread*

**Prelude**

David Wilson

**\*Call to Worship**

Rev. Paula Womack

**One:** Beckoned to this place of belonging, we, of Umstead Park United Church of Christ, with body, mind, and spirit, gather to worship, serve, and proclaim God, unknowable mystery whose center is love, and Jesus the Christ, who makes this loving mystery known.

**Many:** **With inarticulate words and unfinished lives, we yearn to further embody this holy love, shaping the future as partners with God, who dances and weeps with us along the way.**

*-from the UPUCC Covenant*

**Choir Anthem**

*"Be Still"  
(see insert)*

UPUCC Choir

## HEARING AND RESPONDING

**Time with Children**

Erinn Long



We're search-ing for our dai - ly bread, for what we need to - day.



We'll find it as we wel - come all in fol - low - ing Christ's way.

**SPIRITUAL  
PRACTICE**

### Savor

Your invitation this week is to **savor!**

How can you practice savoring the sensory delights in your world?

Begin where you are.

When you sit down for your next meal, pause to give your full attention to that first tasty bite.

If the light coloring the clouds, the riff in a favorite song, or the coziness of your favorite pajamas gives your spirit a feeling of fullness, *close your eyes to relish the moment.*

**LENT ONE: BREAD OF LIFE**

**Reading of Scripture** John 6:25-40, from *The Inclusive Bible* Dan Harrell  
(see insert)

**Sermon** "What Does It Take to Make Bread?" Felix Flanders

**\*Responsive Hymn** #564, "We Are Not Our Own" Congregation

**Prayers of the People** Rev. Paula Womack



*You are invited to share names or brief joys and concerns. To submit written prayer requests for the weekly email, visit [tinyurl.com/upuccprayers](https://tinyurl.com/upuccprayers), or scan the QR code to the left.*

**Celebration of Gifts (Offering)** Rev. Paula Womack

*Today's offering will be a love offering. All gifts placed in the offering basket today that are not designated specifically for UPUCC will be given to the charity our guest preacher chose, the Religious Community for Reproductive Choice. We give with gratitude for Felix's ministry with us and with and for others!*

## **SENDING INTO THE WORLD**

**\*Sending Hymn** #490 "I Want Jesus to Go with Me" Congregation

## **Announcements**

**\*Affirmation of Community** Dan Harrell

**One:** We believe that all people are God's people, that every child is holy, that every person is a part of the sacred family.

**Many:** **We believe that God's love embraces all, and that to exclude any person would be contrary to the message of Jesus.**

**One:** We proclaim that this community of faith, Umstead Park UCC, will strive to be as open as the radical realm of God, and as liberating as the love of Christ.

**Many:** **And so we journey into our hopeful future with joy, pledging to offer each other welcome, compassion and care. May God grant us wisdom, grace, and guidance in our life together.**

**\*Benediction** Felix Flanders

**Postlude** David Wilson

## **About Our Guest Preacher: Felix Flanders (she/her)**

We are glad to welcome Felix Flanders to UPUCC as our guest preacher today! Pilgrim UCC in Durham has been Felix Flanders' church home for over 9 years. She started as a Pilgrim church member and then served as Pilgrim's Director of Christian Education and Formation from 2019-2025 (including the pandemic years when her son was just a baby). She loved working in that role, especially building community with families with young children and teens. As things in the world shifted however, Felix felt a tug to serve the wider Durham community, and with Pilgrim's blessing left her full time role for grad school at UNC's School of Social Work. She is still serving in the role of youth director at Pilgrim and has enjoyed being able to collaborate with Umstead Park UCC on youth projects. When not at church, she says she is probably reading to her kiddo, playing DnD with her husband and Pilgrim buddies, sewing messy embroidery projects, watching stories of rebellion (Andor!) or trying to get their cats not to lick the butter!

# Supplemental Texts and Hymns

## Choir Anthem

“Be Still”

UPUCC Choir

Be still and know that I am God; let peace embrace your heart.  
Be still and know that I am God; let fear and anguish now depart.

Though the earthquakes rage, though the tempests roll,  
though the storms conspire to destroy,  
be still and know that I am God; the earth shall rise again in joy.

Be still and know that I am God; let tranquil hope fill your mind.  
Be still and know that I am God; let grief and trouble be left behind.

Though the shadows fall, though the darkness cries,  
though the night seems endless and dire,  
be still and know that I am God; the morn shall rise in holy fire.

## Reading of Scripture

John 6:25-40, from *The Inclusive Bible*

Dan Harrell

- <sup>25</sup> When they found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they said, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”
- <sup>26</sup> Jesus answered them, “The truth of the matter is, you’re not looking for me because you’ve seen signs, but because you’ve eaten your fill of the bread.
- <sup>27</sup> You shouldn’t be working for perishable food, but for life-giving food that lasts for all eternity; this the Chosen One can give you, for the Chosen One bears the seal of Abba God.” <sup>28</sup> At this they said, “What must we do to perform the works of God?”
- <sup>29</sup> Jesus replied, “This is the work of God: to believe in the one whom God has sent.” <sup>30</sup> So they asked Jesus, “What sign are you going to give to show us that we should believe in you? What will you do?”
- <sup>31</sup> Our ancestors had manna to eat in the desert; as scripture says, ‘God gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” <sup>32</sup> Jesus said to them, “The truth of the matter is, Moses hasn’t given you bread from heaven; yet my Abba gives you the true bread from heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”
- <sup>34</sup> “Teacher,” they said, “give us this bread from now on.” <sup>35</sup> Jesus explained to them, “I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever be hungry; no one who believes in me will be thirsty.
- <sup>36</sup> But as I told you, you see me and still don’t believe. <sup>37</sup> Everyone Abba God gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I won’t turn away. <sup>38</sup> For I have come from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of the One who sent me. <sup>39</sup> It is the will of the One who sent me that I lose none of those given to me, but rather raise them up on the last day. <sup>40</sup> Indeed, this is the will of my Abba: that everyone who sees and believes in the Only Begotten will have eternal life. These are the ones I will raise up on the last day.”

umstead park  
UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

## Church Staff

Lindsay Cooper, she/her  
Nursery Director

Rev. Tyler Ung, they/them  
Senior Pastor

Gwen Vass, she/her  
Financial Administrator

Cody Walter Welch, he/him/they/them  
Teaching Intern

David Wilson, he/him  
Director of Music

Rev. Paula Womack, she/her  
Associate Pastor

## Guest Preacher

Felix Flanders (she/her)

## A special “thank you” to this week’s volunteers:

Reed Altman, AV Team

Peter van Dorsten (he/him), AV Team

Amy Lewis, Coffee Set Up

Debbie Elliot, Coffee Set Up

Dan Harrell, Lay Leader/Assistant Treasurer

Tim Champion, Auditor

Ashley Montague (she/her), Greeter

Nicki Norris (she/her), Usher

Seth Kandl, Online Greeter

We at  
Umstead Park  
United Church of Christ  
welcome and affirm all  
as we journey to seek  
the divine, to embody loving  
community, and to strive for  
justice as a progressive  
community of  
faith.

## Giving



Scan the QR code to make a one-time or recurring donation!

## Visiting?



You are invited to fill out the online visitor form so that we can get to know you!

## Realm



Access your Realm account

# Lent at UPUCC

For this season of Lent, we will explore a new series called, "Bread of Life." This series invites us on a Lenten journey to discover abundance in the ordinary—where grace is shared, hearts are filled, and love is never in short supply. Come hungry, leave nourished. You are invited to distribute the Lenten flyer to those in your community, which is available at the back of the worship space, and at the QR code.



As a part of our journey through Lent this year, there are Lenten Spirals available on the table in the worship space for families to use throughout the season. Pick up a Lenten Spiral on Sunday! Each day offers a simple activity for your family to complete together. Some activities are inwardly focused and some are outwardly focused, and they mark the transformative journey of Lent. Display the spiral in a spot at home where you and your family can see it each day. We hope this resource provides a simple yet meaningful way to connect during Lent.

## Coming Up Soon

### **Paint the Halls with Us! | This Saturday 8am-12pm**

Deck the halls? Nope! PAINT the walls!

It's time to paint the office entryway, the halls, and the fabulous new gathering space Peter and Colin created. We have painter needs of all types. Do you like to cut in? Do you like to tape and paint edges? Do you like to roll big spaces? Do you like to tidy up when we're done? We need it all!

What we'll have available: We'll have some paint brushes, paint trays, rollers, tarps, and paint.

What you can bring: Your favorite paint brushes, trays, rollers, painting clothes, and smiles; Snacks or beverages as you need.

When:

2/28: 8am - noon

3/7: 8am - until we've had enough

3/8 : IF NEEDED - after church until we're done!

### **Rev. Tyler Ung on Parental Leave | Returns March 8**

While Tyler is away, Rev. Paula Womack will step into an expanded leadership role as the Acting Senior Pastor, along with several guest preachers.

### **New Locks for the Building | March 9**

As one component of our updated security policy for the church, we will be changing the locks for all exterior doors during the week of March 9th. In addition we will be installing a new keypad entry system on the door that leads from the front parking lot directly to the offices. Codes will be administered for church staff and leadership, as well as for certain individuals or groups that require access to the church space for meetings or events. More details will be shared as we get closer to the date.

# Covenant Leadership Circle

The purpose of this section is to update you on the work of the Covenant Leadership Circle (CLC). We hope that this enables you to have a more thorough understanding of what happens behind the scenes at UPUCC, and to discover opportunities to join us in actualizing new ideas!

**Moderator:** Alice Jermyn  
**Moderator-Elect:** Gia Hafler  
**Treasurer:** Vickie Teal  
**Secretary:** Renate Houts  
**Facilities Lead:** Gary Sanders

**At-Large Members:**  
David Frink  
Bob Martin  
Mary Nations  
Rebecca van Dorsten

January Financial Results	
General Offerings	\$17,539
Total Income	\$19,859
Total Expenses	\$26,095
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-\$6,236</b>

**Next Meeting:** Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:00pm in the UPUCC Library. All are welcome!

**1. A Mindset of Abundance:** As we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic and a pastoral transition soon after, we focused on sustainability as a church, and erred on the side of caution with regard to how we spend our money. Now, with a newly settled pastor, refinanced mortgage, and a revitalized governing body we are in a position of relative abundance. Therefore, we invite you to come to us with your ideas!

- How do you imagine us living into our Ministry Plan of “Connecting with Courage and Care?”
- Is there an event or activity that would be life-giving to you and our community?
- Do you have thoughts on how to bring more people through our doors?

We have funding available to help you realize the dreams you have for our community. Reach out to Alice Jermyn ([adjermyn@gmail.com](mailto:adjermyn@gmail.com)) or Gia Hafler ([gia@giabrelle.com](mailto:gia@giabrelle.com)) with your ideas and questions!

**2. The Social and Civic Action Task force** has completed its work and identified two areas of focus to help us live into our 2026 ministry plan. As a result, there are two new task forces forming:

- **Inform/Protect/Get out the Vote (GOTV) Task Force** - to help inform people inside and outside of the congregation, to increase the number of non-voters participating in the 2026 election, to protect access to voting
- **Family, Youth, and Children Task Force** - charged with strengthening connections with families beyond the congregation, communicating that the church is a place where families are welcomed and supported in all circumstances and configurations, and helping ensure that families, youth, and children experience a clear and consistent sense of welcome and belonging when they enter the church community.

If you are interested in participating in a task force, or just want to learn more, please reach out to:

- David Frink ([david@dfrink.com](mailto:david@dfrink.com)) for Inform/Protect/Get out the Vote Task Force
- Amy Walter ([amywalter@hotmail.com](mailto:amywalter@hotmail.com)) for Family, Youth, and Children Task Force

**3. Open Positions on the CLC:** Working on the CLC is a terrific way to learn more about UPUCC and to "put your money where your mouth is," so to speak. The positions we have opening up include:

- Moderator-Elect
- Secretary
- Personnel Lead
- At Large position

We have some folks who have expressed interest but would welcome hearing from more of you! Please reach out to our Moderator, Alice Jermyn ([adjermyn@gmail.com](mailto:adjermyn@gmail.com)), or Moderator-Elect, Gia Hafler ([gia@giabrelle.com](mailto:gia@giabrelle.com)) to let us know. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

4. **Personnel Help:** Our current Personnel Lead, Mary Nations, is rolling off of the CLC soon, she is looking for some assistance in some of her current work. In particular, she is looking for folks who have experience with:
- *Human Resources* (hiring, performance management, employee relations, and other strategic aspects such as aligning our staff efforts with its overall goals and objectives and keeping policies aligned), and/or
  - *Personnel work* (payroll, benefits, employee records, and other routine administrative tasks),

If interested in helping out, please contact Mary Nations (mary.nations@gmail.com) or Alice Jermyn (adjermyn@gmail.com).

5. A **UPUCC Security Task Force** has been working diligently to examine all aspects of security for our community at church events both onsite and offsite. The CLC has affirmed their recommendations to help ensure the safety of all of us. As a part of security policies, we'll continue to lock the front entrance doors, the doors from the deck into the atrium and the glass door into the hallway from the atrium at 10:30 a.m. as worship starts. The entrance door from the deck into the worship space will remain unlocked during worship and should be used for entry by late arrivers. If you would like further information about security policies, send an email to Pastor Paula at paula@upucc.org.
6. **Volunteers Needed for "Out! Raleigh" Task Force.** For many years, UPUCC has had a significant presence at the LGBT Center of Raleigh's annual pride event "Out! Raleigh," which is Friday, June 26th – Saturday, June 27th this year. The event brings tens of thousands of visitors to downtown Raleigh, and is a crucial element of visibility for our church and how we show that we are open and affirming. We are looking for folks who are excited to serve on the task force as we approach the registration window for the event within the next few weeks.

If you are skilled at making efficient decisions and following through, and have a soupçon of creativity, this would be a great group for you! The time commitment should only be about 4-6 weeks to plan (or less if you're really efficient), and the week of the event itself. We have people who have participated and planned the event before, so there is already somewhat of a blueprint of what needs to be done. If you are interested in contributing to, or leading, this task force, please reach out to David Wilson (wilsondm92@gmail.com) **by March 1st.**

# Ongoing Announcements

## Help Host Healing Transitions on First Sundays

We host our friends from Healing Transitions on the first Sunday of every month. If you would like to help with food, drink, and fellowship, sign up via the link on the website, or at the QR code. Get to know our neighbors!



## UCC Connections

The United Church of Christ has announced the 2026 Climate Hope Art Contest. Art submissions will be accepted from February 6th to March 20th. The theme this year is “A Future with Hope.”



Children and youth are invited to draw, paint or color works of art that bring this theme to life. There will be winners for different age groups and an overall winner who will receive an all-expense paid trip to visit Washington, DC with a parent or guardian.

## Hiring Youth Director and Teaching Interns

We are hiring for two part-time positions currently:

The Youth Director role designs and leads weekly opportunities for youth to gather, helps plan and implement programs, and collaborates with our established network of progressive youth ministries in the area. Read the Youth Director job posting for more information on the role and how to apply via the QR code.



The Teaching Intern role is a valuable opportunity to gain hands-on experience in curriculum development, classroom management, and faith-based teaching within a supportive and progressive community environment. This includes teaching Sunday



School classes and preparing lessons and materials. Read the Teaching Intern job posting for more information on the role and how to apply via the QR code. We are thrilled to have Cody on staff as one teaching intern, and are looking to add to our team!

## Want to Submit an Announcement?

To submit an announcement for publication on the website and the bulletin, simply scan this QR code and fill out the online form! To submit an announcement in time for the Friday email, the deadline is the preceding Tuesday by 11:59pm.



## Submit Photos and Videos of UPUCC Happenings

Did you know that we have an online Google Photos album? It's chock-full of moments from UPUCC past and present, and you are invited to add your own! Simply scan the QR code, click the “Add Photos” button pictured here, and select which photos you would like to submit to the album. Alternatively, you may email photos or videos to [umsteadparkucc@gmail.com](mailto:umsteadparkucc@gmail.com)!



## Visiting With Us Today?

We're so glad that you spent your Sunday with us—we would love to get to know you better! You are invited to fill out the visitor form by scanning the QR code so that we can connect with you about our church and add you to our email list!

