



GATHERING

Welcome and A Time of Greeting

Rev. Paula Womack

Invocation

Bob Martin

Meditation

"We are all together in the same web of life. When an animal dies, we feel a rip in the fabric because they were woven into our souls."

-Alice Walker

Prelude

David Wilson

***Call to Worship**

Tim Champion

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

Anthem

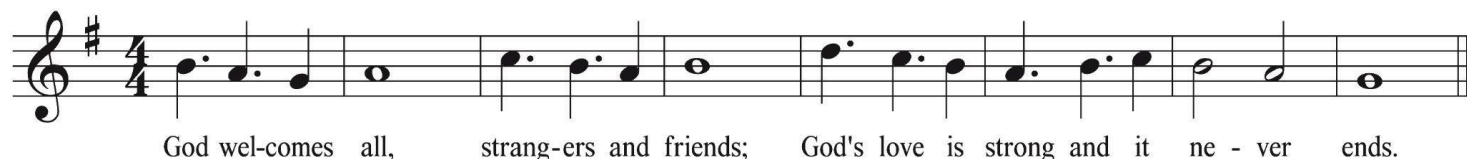
"O, Colored Earth"
(see insert)

UPUCC Choir

HEARING AND RESPONDING

Time with Children

Erinn Long



Reading of Scripture

Job 12:7-10, from *The Inclusive Bible*
(see insert)

Bob Martin

Sermon

"Ask the Animals"

Rev. Paula Womack

Remembrance of Animal Companions

Rev. Paula Womack

One: We remember the animals who have shaped our lives—the ones who stayed beside us, comforted us and loved us.

Many: **They were part of us. They remain with us.**

You are invited to come forward, speak the name or names of your beloved animals out loud with the microphone and light a candle in remembrance of them.

*If you need a candle and the microphone brought to you,
please raise your hand and an usher will assist.*

***Responsive Hymn**

#31, "All Things Bright And Beautiful"
(verses 1 and 2)

Congregation

(Unison):

**“We shake with joy, we shake with grief
What a time they have, these two
housed as they are in the same body.”**

- Mary Oliver



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

Celebration of Gifts (Offertory)

Rev. Paula Womack



In addition to placing gifts into the offering basket, you may also visit upucc.org/giving or scan the QR code to the left to make an online contribution.

SENDING INTO THE WORLD

***Sending Hymn**

**“Pray for the Wilderness”
(see insert)**

Congregation

Announcements

***Affirmation of Community**

Bob Martin

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**

Rev. Paula Womack

Postlude

David Wilson

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

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

- Don Alderman, AV Team
- Peter van Dorsten (he/him), AV Team
- Dan Harrell, Assistant Treasurer
- Tim Champion, Auditor/Lay Leader
- Bob Martin (he/him), Usher/Lay Leader
- Seth Kandl, Online Greeter
- Erinn Long, Lay Leader



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

Supplemental Texts and Hymns

Anthem

“O, Colored Earth”

UPUCC Choir

Words and Music by Steve Heitzeg

Black, white, brown, and every birth, blue and green, O, colored earth.
Sister Rain, Brother Stone, bring us back to our true home.

What can I, a single soul, do for those I don't even know?
O, I shall sing and I shall work for peace on earth until all are free.

Peace and love, love and peace, peace and love, the earth is waiting.
Peace and love, love and peace, peace and love, help one another.
Peace and love.

No more war, no more fear, may hunger soon disappear.
No more doubt, and no more lies, only truth shall free the cries.

Only hope, only dreams can erase the tears and screams.
O, I shall sing and I shall work for peace on earth until all are free.

Turtle and wolf, leopard and deer, water and land, all lives are equal.
Birds and trees, people and plants, dolphin and whale, all lives are equal.
Butterflies, kangaroos, elephants, all lives are equal.

Thousands of lives, each life is sacred. Sacred lives.

Reading of Scripture

Job 12:7-10, from *The Inclusive Bible*

Bob Martin

⁷ But turn to the animals, and let them teach you; the birds of the air will tell you the truth. ⁸ Listen to the plants of the earth, and learn from them; let the fish of the sea become your teachers. ⁹ Who among all these does not know that the hand of God has done this? ¹⁰ In God's hand is the soul of every living thing; in God's hand is the breath of all humankind.

*Responsive Hymn

“Pray for the Wilderness”

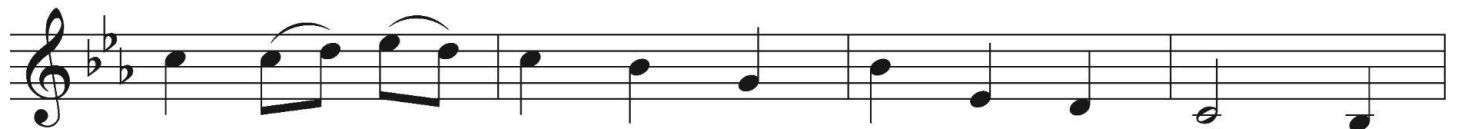
Congregation



1. Pray for the___ wil - der - ness, van - ish - ing fast,
2. Learn from the___ e - le - phant, ea - gle, and whale,
3. Work for the___ jus - tice cre - a - ted things need,
4. Pray for the___ at - mo - sphere, pray for the sea,



pray for the rain - for - est, o - pen and vast;
learn from the dra - gon - fly, spi - der, and snail;
work for the health of each plant and its seed;
learn from the ri - ver, the rock, and the tree;




Pray for___ the___ wa - ter - falls, pray for the trees, _____
Learn from the___ peo - ple in neigh - bor - ing lands, _____
Work for___ the___ crea - tures a - buse has be - trayed, _____
Work till___ sha - lom in full har - mo - ny rings. _____




pray for the pla - net brought down by de - grees.
learn from the chil - dren who___ play in their sands.
work for the gar - den God's___ wis - dom once made.
Trust the con - nec - tion of___ all liv - ing things.

Coming Up Soon

Help Plan Our First Halloween Masquerade!

 On Friday October 30th, we are inviting community LGBT youth and ally youth to our church for a Halloween Masquerade. We want this to be a safe, fun, and welcoming event that welcomes individuals throughout the Triangle, and shows the community what we value as a church. We invite all interested, youth and adults, to join the Masquerade planning task force so that the event reflects an array of skills and viewpoints in the creation of an event that we hope will become annual. Scan the QR code to help plan!

Mutual Care Network Starting Up

The UPUCC 2026 Ministry Plan calls for building a culture of helping one another, fostering genuine connections, and ensuring that no one feels alone. In support of this aim, the Covenant Leadership Circle has created a task force (TF) that is charged with outlining a structure for UPUCC to implement a mutual care network. Our first step is identifying volunteers who are willing to help out when covenant partners have needs. We want to emphasize that signing up and letting us know how you can help, DOES NOT mean that you must respond to every request, but rather helps us know who might have the needed skills and/or inclination to assist with a particular request. We recognize that each of us has unique skills and different gifts to offer. The TF has come up with a list of things that folks might need and we invite you to add your name to any area you might be willing to assist with. If you think of something we've missed, please add it to the "other" category or send us an email. Thank you for helping us get this valuable resource up and running. Scan the QR code to access the form to sign up! —The UPUCC Mutual Care Task Force (care@upucc.org) 

Neighborhood Clean-Up | April 25th


Help us celebrate Earth Day Saturday 4/25 at 9:30 am as we again partner with our friends at Healing Transitions to pick up trash on Brownleigh and Glen Royal. We'll pick up trash for about an hour then gather in the kitchen for ice cream and fellowship. We will provide the supplies, just bring yourselves and your water bottle. While we had been doing 3 cleanups per year for the past two years, we've decided to do just 1 annual clean up in April in honor of Earth Day. So come out on 4/25 or you'll miss out on the fun until 2027! Reach out to Ashley Montague for more information!

Congregational Meeting | Next Sunday, April 26th after Worship

We will gather onsite and online after worship on Sunday, April 26th for a potluck and congregational meeting. Bring your appetite for food and church business!

How to Stay Regulated in a Dysregulated World | May 5th

When the world feels chaotic and overwhelming, regulation becomes resistance and preservation becomes power. Join the North Carolina Council of Churches' Partners in Health and Wholeness initiative for a free webinar on Tuesday, May 5, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m., featuring Dr. Sherronda Banks for an honest conversation about what it means to protect your peace in a dysregulated world.

Drawing from her Radical Preservation™ framework and more than two decades of culturally responsive clinical work, Dr. Banks, who is a therapist, speaker, and founder of Intentional Steps Counseling Services, will offer a bold and innovative approach to sustainable well-being, one that centers rest, boundaries, identity and intentional self-care. Scan the QR code for more information. 

Guns to Gardens | June 13th

UPUCC is partnering with RAWTools South to offer a Guns to Gardens safe surrender event on June 13, 2026. Guns to Gardens is a movement and gun safe surrender program where unwanted firearms are collected, dismantled and then transformed into garden tools or other artistic creations, often in partnership with local faith communities.

This initiative aims to reduce gun violence by providing a constructive way to dispose of unwanted firearms while promoting peace and sustainability. Trained volunteers, often blacksmiths, transform the metal into various garden tools, such as shovels, trowels, or mattocks and sometimes into artistic pieces.

The process of turning weapons into tools is deeply symbolic, representing a shift from violence to growth, from destruction to creation and from harm to healing. The program draws inspiration from the biblical passage Isaiah 2:4, which speaks of beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks, signifying a transformation from warfare to agriculture.

The UPUCC Guns to Gardens task force will be reaching out to the UPUCC community for support in the weeks and months to come. Please watch for more information and consider working with us in this important initiative.



Scan the QR code to donate to the Guns to Gardens Task Force (select “Guns to Gardens” from the dropdown menu). **Task Force members:** Kathy Austin, Debbie Beroth, Laura Carter-Scheid, Ada McKerrell, Mary Pat Peters, Paula Womack.

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!

CLC Members (Proposed):

Moderator: Gia Hafler
Moderator-Elect: Hope Kiser
Treasurer: Vickie Teal
Secretary: Sarah Bellak
Facilities Lead: Gary Sanders
At-Large: Elliot Acosta
At-Large: Laura Carter-Scheid
At-Large: David Frink
At-Large: Bob Martin

Financial Results			
	March	Year-To-Date	2026
General Offerings	\$28,787	\$64,421	\$304,882
Total Income	\$31,254	\$70,241	\$331,466
Total Expenses	\$30,006	\$83,086	\$386,585
Net Income	+1,247	-\$12,845	-\$55,119
From Reserves*		\$12,845	\$55,119
*As a reminder, the 2026 Operating Budget projects a net income deficit of \$55,000 which will be offset by the Operating Fund Reserve			

Next Meeting: Sunday, May 17thth at 12:00pm in the UPUCC Library. All are welcome!

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!

The Covenant Leadership Circle (CLC) continues to be energized by the many ways our community is growing, connecting, and living out our values—both within our congregation and across the wider Triangle.

This month, the CLC took several steps to support that shared work. Funding was approved for our presence at Out! Raleigh, along with resources for new community-building tools, updated signage, and additional tables to better host gatherings in our space. Each of these decisions reflects a commitment to hospitality, visibility, and connection.

Building Community & Deepening Connections

Multiple teams are actively shaping how we care for one another and engage beyond our walls. New tools are being developed to help people find pathways into groups and activities, while efforts in community connection and mutual care continue to grow. A new congregational care system—including a dedicated email and sign-up form—will soon make it easier to both offer and receive support.

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Our Family, Youth & Children team is reimagining opportunities for middle school-aged youth and their caregivers, with creative programming focused on transformation—beginning with the upcoming Guns to Gardens initiative. This powerful project, in partnership with other faith communities, will need around 50 volunteers and continued fundraising support to bring it to life.

Looking Ahead: Events & Engagement

There are many meaningful ways to get involved in the coming weeks—keep an eye on your Friday email! In addition, planning is underway for a Halloween Masquerade designed especially for LGBTQ youth and allies—an exciting opportunity to create a safe, joyful, and affirming space. Volunteers are warmly invited to help shape this event.

A Snapshot of Our Finances & Facilities

Financially, we remain stable, with strong participation in giving and rental activity on track with last year. Ongoing building improvements—including new locks, upcoming renovations, and accessibility updates—are helping ensure our space continues to serve both our congregation and the broader community well.

Join the Work

The heart of the CLC's work is shared leadership. Whether you're interested in event planning, community care, youth programming, justice work, or simply exploring where you might connect, there is a place for you. Many of our current efforts began with a simple "yes" from someone like you.

If you'd like to learn more or get involved, we'd love to help you find your way in.

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

Faith practices, even leadership during "normal" times can be difficult but in times of chaos, we might find ourselves asking different questions. In this webinar on April 20 at 3:30 p.m. Eastern, we'll explore how being faithful is an embodied practice that prepares us to not respond with fear or "old ways of being", but to anchor ourselves to communities that commit to cultivating trusting and compassionate practices to meet our spiritual and practical needs. By modeling faith over fear, we can transform crises into opportunities for resilience and abundance. Scan the QR code for more information.



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!



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!



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