Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

November, 2026 at 10:30am (Onsite & Online)

umstead park
UNITED CHURCH *of* CHRIST

GATHERING

Welcome and Call to Worship Rev. Tyler Ung

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

Invocation Dan Harrell

Meditation "Blessing for the Brokenhearted"†

***Gathering Hymn** "What Comfort Can Our Worship Bring" *(see insert)*

BUTTON MEMORIAL

Responsive Prayer

One: What I really want to tell you is to just lay this blessing on your forehead, on your heart; let it rest in the palm of your hand, because there is hardly anything this blessing could say, any word it could offer to fill the hollow.

Many: Let this blessing work its way into us with its lines that hold nearly unspeakable lament.

One: Let this blessing settle into us with its hope more ancient than knowing.

Many: Hear how this blessing has not come alone—how it echoes with the voices of those who accompany us, who attend us in every moment, who continually whisper this blessing to us.

One: Hear how they do not cease to walk with us, even when the dark is deepest. Hear how they encompass us always—breathing this blessing to us, bearing this blessing to us still. Amen.

†© Jan Richardson from *The Cure for Sorrow: A Book of Blessings for Times of Grief.* janrichardson.com.

"Blessing for the Brokenhearted"

Let us agree
for now
that we will not say
the breaking
makes us stronger
or that it is better
to have this pain
than to have done
without this love.

Let us promise
we will not
tell ourselves
time will heal
the wound,
when every day
our waking
opens it anew.

Perhaps for now
it can be enough
to simply marvel
at the mystery
of how a heart
so broken
can go on beating,
as if it were made
for precisely this—

as if it knows
the only cure for love
is more of it,

as if it sees
the heart's sole
remedy
for breaking
is to love still,

as if it trusts
that its own
persistent pulse
is the rhythm
of a blessing
we cannot
begin to fathom
but will save us
nonetheless.

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Interlude

HEARING AND RESPONDING

Reading of Scripture Romans 8:38–39, *The Inclusive Bible* *(see insert)* Dan Harrell

Sermon "Death's Door" Rev. Tyler Ung

***Responsive Hymn** "This Is a Day of New Beginnings" *(see insert)* Congregation

Prayers of the People Sharing of Joys and Concerns Dan Harrell

*You are invited to share your joys and concerns. People onsite can raise a hand and a microphone will be brought to them. People online can type their requests in the chat. We ask that you share carefully, knowing that we do not know what traumas people carry with them into this gathering and striving to not trigger or harm our neighbors. After each person shares, we will respond with: "**This is our prayer."** To submit prayer requests for the weekly email, visit tinyurl.com/upuccprayers, or scan the QR code.*

Celebration of Gifts

Stewardship Moment Cody Walter Welch

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

COMMUNION Rev. Tyler Ung

Remembering and Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Prayer That Jesus Taught words adapted by Mark Miller from "The Lord's Prayer"

Our God, in heaven, holy is your name.
Your reign come, your will done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and help us forgive, as we have been forgiven.
In the time of trial lead us into light,
for yours is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Communion Liturgy

One: As we share in the bread, may we remember and give thanks for the life that Jesus lived.

Many: As we share in the cup, may we remember and give thanks for the lives that we are living.

One: As we receive the fruits of Spirit, we celebrate the communion of all things. Creator, Christ, and Spirit dance as one. So may it always be. Come for all things are ready.

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* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Those onsite are invited to come forward at this time. The bread may be dipped into the cup and then eaten. The cup contains juice. The center station contains gluten free bread. Those online can prepare their elements and receive words of blessing from the online server.

SENDING INTO THE WORLD

***Sending Hymn** #297, "Give Thanks for Life" 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** Rev. Tyler Ung

Postlude David Wilson

umstead park
UNITED CHURCH *of* CHRIST

Church Staff

Lindsay Cooper, she/her
Nursery Director

Ellen Fiedler, she/her
Youth Director

Rev. Tyler Ung, they/them
Senior Minister

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:
Nevin Fouts, AV Team
Bill Yoder (he/him), AV Team
Hope Kiser (she/her), Online Greeter
Mike Boston (he/him), Auditor
Bob Martin (he/him), Usher
Dan Harrell, Lay Leader

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.

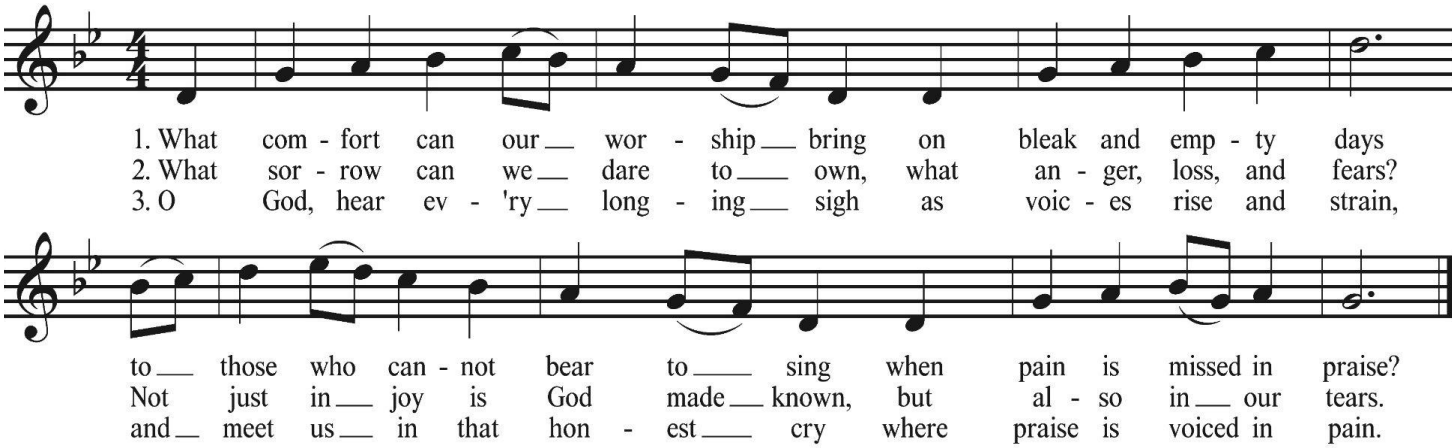
Visiting?
You are invited to fill out the online visitor form so that we can get to know you!

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

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Supplemental Hymns and Texts

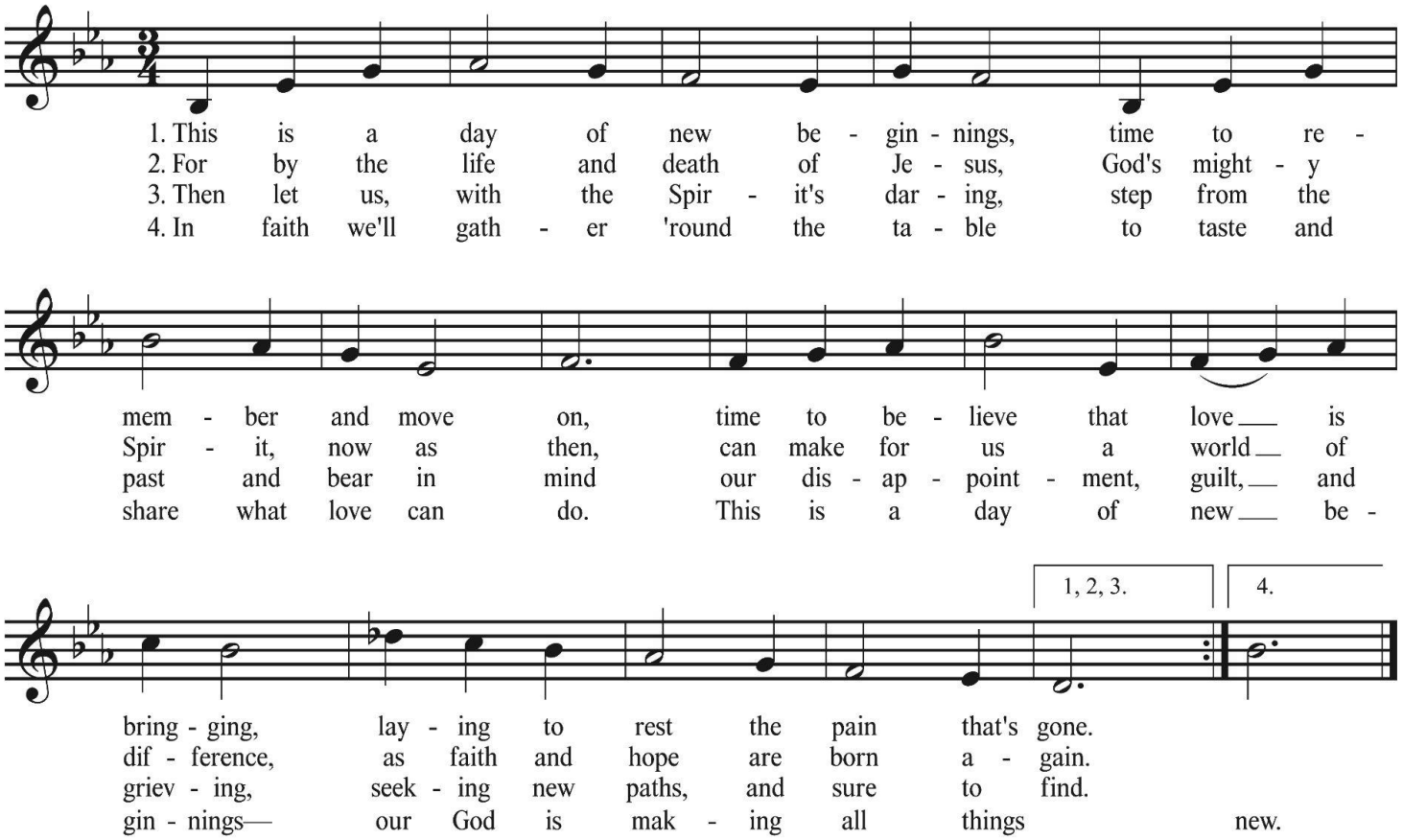
***Gathering Hymn** "What Comfort Can Our Worship Bring" Congregation



Reading of Scripture Romans 8:38–39, *The Inclusive Bible* Dan Harrell

[38] For I am certain that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, [39] neither heights nor depths—nor anything else in all creation—will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus, our Savior.

***Responsive Hymn** "This Is a Day of New Beginnings" Congregation



* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Pledge Campaign

Our 2027 Pledge Campaign has officially begun! After listening to and reflecting on the stories shared in Home Groups, we have set a plan for our community and our ministry next year. We will focus on nurturing wonder & spirituality, building community, social & civic action, and embodying our values. Woven through all of these major areas is the work of sharing our story and engaging with the wider community so that we can live into what we say each and every week: 'All are welcome!'

To make this plan a reality, we have added time and talents to the pledge form. The ways that you volunteer and show up for our community are key to sustaining our community and helping it to flourish. For financial pledges, we are asking for an 8.5% increase to help us reach a sustainable budget for the work and growth we hope to realize.

With different ways to pledge and a hope for a fully engaged community, our goal is to have 100% participation in the pledge campaign this year. Even if you pledge $5 per month, to volunteer once per month, these contributions are vital toward reaching our goal and building a beloved community. Thank you for all that you give, and you can make your pledge today by scanning the QR code included here:

Scan to Pledge

or visit:
https://forms.gle/cedydyZu8fopKq6g7

Announcements

Community Hour| After Worship

Upcoming opportunities (Scan the QR code for more information or add yours!)

- **November 1**: Pop-Up Choir; Sharing Stories of those we Remember
- **November 8**: CLC Meeting; Creating with Katelyn S. (all hobbies welcome!)
- **November 15:** Learn to create handmade greeting cards with UPUCC's Creativity Group.
- **November 22**: **Your idea goes here!**
- **November 29**: **Your idea goes here!**
- **December 6:** Fall Crafts Workshop - Learn or share a craft!; Learn about Hanukkah!

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Pop-Up Choir Rehearsal | November 1st during Community Hour

For Community Hour you are invited to join the Pop-Up Choir to learn a group song that we will sing in worship on Nov. 15.

Crafting with Katelyn S. | November 8th during Community Hour

Bring your creative hobbies & enjoy them with our community! Some ideas include knitting, crocheting, cross stitch, embroidery, quilting, coloring, scrapbooking or any creative hobby that brings you joy. Knitting & crocheting supplies will be available for anyone who wants to learn!

Covenant Leadership Circle Meeting | November 8th During Community Hour

You are invited to attend the Covenant Leadership Circle (CLC) for their monthly meeting after church onsite in the library or online via the QR code included here. You may bring a bag lunch, or partake in some of the snacks we have on hand. All are welcome.

Make Cards with Creativity Group | Nov. 15 during Community Hour

Learn how to make homemade greeting cards with members of our Creativity Group.

Next PeerSpace Rental | November 20th

Please be advised that our space will be rented for an event on the above date.

Holiday Cards Available for Order from Creativity Group | Order by Nov. 22nd

This Holiday Season, consider sending one of our beautiful handmade Christmas cards. Our cards are uniquely designed to help you share your holiday wishes. With a variety of designs, personalize the inside message with one of ours or with your own. Start a new tradition and send a little piece of holiday wonder to everyone on your list. Specifics are on the order form, accessible via the QR code. Orders must be placed by Sunday Nov, 22. The Creativity Group appreciates your support!

Thanksgiving Day With UPUCC | November 26th at 1pm

If anyone would like to be in community on Thanksgiving Day, Paula W. and Jane W. invite you to join in a potluck at UPUCC! Come share a meal at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 26 and stay for good conversation with friends! Please fill out the Potluck Sign Up via the QR code if you would like to join in. We'll do set up and clean up together. Let's be in community on Thanksgiving Day!

Craft Workshop | December 6th during Community Hour

Attention crafters, from beginners to skilled! Your Fellowship Lead Team will host a craft workshop during Community Hour after church on December 6. We will provide instruction, supplies, and refreshments. Currently there are four crafts to share. If you have a craft you would like to teach us, please contact Roberta O.

Learn About Hanukkah! | December 6th during Community Hour

Emily B. will be facilitating a retelling of the story of Hanukkah and teaching anyone interested how to play the dreidel game. Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday, celebrated Dec 4-12 this year, and celebrates a story of overcoming adversity and the miracles G-d provides. Dreidel is a spinning top game appropriate for all ages (and you win chocolate coins!). Please join us!

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* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Upcoming PeerSpace Rentals

November 20th, 21st | December 5th, 12th, 19th, 20th, 30th, 31st | January 1st, 9th, 16th (2027) | May 14th, 22nd (2027) | July 10th, 31st (2027) | August 1st (2027)

Sunday Volunteer Opportunities

Please consider joining us to provide an extravagant Sunday Welcome to all by volunteering to be a Greeter or Usher, to set-up/clean-up coffee, or help our AV Team (training required). Scan the QR code to access the Sign-Up Genius.

UCC Connections

Join a United Church of Christ "Our Whole Lives" conversation with Hudson Nummerdor, Our Whole Lives Trainer and AASECT-Certified Sexuality Educator, on November 4 at 12:00 p.m. Eastern to dive into the myths and realities about trans athletes. Scan the QR code to register.

AV Team Volunteers Needed

Have you ever found yourself worshiping online? Was it valuable to you? Is being able to worship online a valuable service for our community? Do you value hearing great speaker audio and piano sound during the worship service? Have you ever used computer software, such as PowerPoint that required active monitoring and changes? If you answered, Yes to some of these questions, the AV Team needs you! While AV work may sound highly technical, it is not as complex (or frightening!) as some might think. Responsibilities are currently split between audio and video jobs. Audio monitors sound levels monitors onsite and online, making active adjustments. Video typically works with 2-3 software applications to do things such as aim the camera and transition between a service Welcome screen, onsite camera feed, and Celebration of Gifts screen, frequently with just the click of a button. Training is required. Perfection is not. With experience will come greater ability. But, experience can only come if you join us. So join us!! Reach out to Peter v.D. or Scott A. if you're interested!

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.

Mutual Care Network

The UPUCC Mutual Care Network was designed to build a culture of helping one another, to foster genuine connections, and to ensure that no one feels alone. There are 2 parts: (1) 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 desire to assist with a particular request; (2) Providing a way for covenant partners to easily request care help when they need it. We've identified individuals who are willing to provide care in areas such as running errands, tech help, pet care and so on. Please let us know what you are needing and we will do our best to pair you up with someone ASAP. Join the Mutual Care Network by scanning the QR code included here.

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Follow Us on Social Media!

Facebook: UmsteadParkUCC | Instagram: UmsteadParkUCC | BlueSky: upucc.bsky.social

Hiring Teaching Intern

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.

Lay Leading in Worship

We want our worship to offer a rich diversity of leadership, as well as help connect our congregants to the spiritual themes that resonate with them. If you're interested in being in our pool of lay leaders, please provide your contact via the QR code here! We will make sure that the people in the Lay Leader interest pool are regularly helping lead worship. Thanks for helping keep our church a community-led congregation!

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!

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!

Receive Email Updates!

Each week we send out an e-mail full of updates about upcoming events, Sunday services, as well as joys and concerns of our church family. If you would like to receive these emails, scan the QR code here and submit your email address!

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Covenant Leadership Circle

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

Financial Results				
	September	2026 YTD	2026 Budget	Difference / Remaining
General Offerings	$23,339	$212,444	$304,882	-$92,438
Total Income	$25,427	$233,941	$331,466	-$97,525
Total Expenses	$30,208	$256,176	$386,585	$130,409
Net Income	-$4,781	-$22,236	-$55,119	-$32,684

*As a reminder, the 2026 Operating Budget projects a net income deficit of $55,000 which will be offset by the Operating Fund Reserve
**General Offerings for August include $20,000 from a $30,000 anonymous pledge. The remainint $10,000 will accrue over the next 4 months

Next Meeting: Sunday, October 11th at 12:00pm in the UPUCC Library & Online. All are welcome!

Our community continues to build momentum through ministry planning, outreach, fellowship, and opportunities to serve. At our recent meeting, the CLC discussed financial planning for 2027, community visibility, upcoming youth and family events, and ways to strengthen our shared ministry.

Looking Ahead to 2027
Planning is underway for our 2027 Ministry Plan and Spending Plan. This work will include both continuing ministries and new opportunities, with input from Home Groups helping shape the direction of our shared work. The congregation will have an opportunity to engage with these plans at the October 25 Congregational Meeting, where the proposed 2027 Spending Plan will be presented.

Sharing Who We Are
The CLC approved moving forward with the remainder of a publicity consulting contract to help strengthen our presence on social media and communicate the kind of welcoming community we strive to be. Recent posts highlighted several important observances, and the group affirmed the value of this outreach.

Youth, Families, and Community Events
There are several exciting opportunities to connect, learn, and celebrate in the weeks ahead!
October 25: Congregational Meeting, including the presentation of the proposed 2027 Spending Plan.
October 30: Masquerade Ball! Preparations are well underway, and volunteers are needed to help with setup, chaperoning, and cleanup. Please help spread the word to families and friends.
November 1: Button Memorial Service.

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

Financial Stewardship
The CLC reviewed the year-to-date financial picture and discussed the Thompson Fund, which is now held at Southern Bank. Twenty percent of rental income is returned to the fund. As we look toward 2027, thoughtful financial stewardship remains an important part of sustaining our ministries and supporting the work we do together.

Growing in Community
Community Hour continues after Sunday worship, and recent postcard-writing activities have been well received. It is encouraging to see so many meaningful offerings taking shape across our community. Thank you to everyone who contributes time, energy, generosity, and care. Whether you volunteer at an event, participate in a Home Group, support our ministries, or simply invite someone new to join us, you help make this community what it is.

New Task Forces Starting Up
We are forming 2 Task Forces – one to help identify our publicity & communications strategy, and one to propose a cohesive technology platform.

<u>The Publicity and Communications Task Force</u>
The CLC recognizes that our path to growth is through communicating our core values across various platforms with invitations for people to join our efforts. A communications audit was recently completed by an independent consultant that looked at our existing communications practice and provided very tangible examples where we are executing well and areas for improvement.

In addition, these messages need to be tied into our publicity strategy. There are three areas for consideration: 1) Communications needed to function on a weekly basis (bulletins, Friday email, etc.); 2) Developing consistent messaging across social media platforms.; 3) Our priorities for publicity.

We are looking for 3 to 4 people, although more are welcome, for a 6-week period beginning in late October/early November and ending in mid-December. If you would like to participate, please reach out to Gia H., Laura C-S. or Tyler Ung.

<u>The Technology Strategy for Connection and Growth Task Force</u>
The CLC recognizes that our existing technology platforms are not effectively connected, leading to additional time and effort to update across systems. In addition, it makes it more difficult for Covenant Partners to interact with various aspects of the church (Contributions, Zoom links, announcements, prayer requests, etc.) and there is no connection between our on-site and on-line communities.

The task force is asked to review software options and evaluate their appropriateness and cost for adoption at UPUCC, with a goal of eliminating extra steps while providing greater Covenant Partner connection. In addition, the task force will look at the skills needed to perform day to day tasks and identify any unique skills needed. We are looking for 2 people, although more are welcome, to join a core team for a 6-week period beginning in late Oct./early Nov. and ending mid-December. If you'd like to participate, reach out to Gia H., Laura C-S., or Tyler Ung.

Next CLC Meeting: Sunday, November 8th, 2026 at 12:00pm

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* Please rise in body or in spirit.