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# In Touch with UPC



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WORSHIP AND MINISTRY

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear friends,

Last week we read the beginning of [Jesus's sermon on the mount](#) where he talks about the upside down nature of God's blessings. After giving y'all some time to write your own blessings, we received 97 beatitudes from our community. They will be displayed around the sanctuary for y'all to read for the next few weeks.

Here's what some of them say:

- Blest are you who love your neighbor, for you are doing what I called you to do
- Blessed are the immigrants, for they will make a bridge and home
- Blessed are the open, for they will find belonging
- Blessed are those who experience anxiety, for they are fortunate enough to care and feel deeply
- Blessed are the bored children, for they have time to fill (written by a child, this one is my favorite)

If you are a part of our online community or missed worship and want to submit a beatitude, [please email it to the church office](#) and we will add it to our display!

We are continuing in Matthew's gospel this Sunday with another very well known passage, often referred to as Salt and Light. It's a great opportunity to sing a classic tune, This Little Light of Mine! After worship, we have

acolyte worship (lighting the Christ candle in worship) for 2-5th graders. Erika and I planned this before we knew the Scripture passage! Talk about God's timing!

As you read this month's Multitude, take note of our ministries that are possible because of generosity with time, talent, and treasure. As I reflect on my one year at UPC, I'm so grateful to serve such a faithful, vibrant, and caring community. As we continue to be hit hard by the news and the state of our world, I will say it again: come to worship. Come to Sunday school. Be present here at UPC. Your spirit needs and deserves this time every week to be reminded of our saltiness and our light. We shine brighter when we are together!

Your Pastor,  
Lora

Sunday's Scripture: [Matthew 5:13-20](#)

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## SUNDAY INFORMATION

### 8 a.m. Outdoor Meditative Gathering

Participate in meditative gathering out on the front lawn.  
Bring a blanket or chair and join us.

### Childcare

Childcare is offered 8:30 a.m. - 12 noon  
for children Kinder and younger in UPCC Room #2.  
Obtain gate code [from Erika Stiner](#) or Greeters.  
(Note: UPCC family codes don't work on Sundays.)

### Sunday School for All Ages

Classes for children and adults are offered 9-10 a.m.  
Most are held in the CE Building and one in the Library.

### 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Join us for worship in the sanctuary or watching the service online.  
The first Sunday of each month we celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

### Online Service Links

[Click here for Zoom Webinar](#) or [click here for YouTube Live](#).  
You can also watch past services at any time by [clicking here](#).



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## THE SEASON OF LENT

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### ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

UPC's Ash Wednesday Worship Service will be at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb.18. It will be a contemplative service which will include the imposition of ashes. No childcare is available.

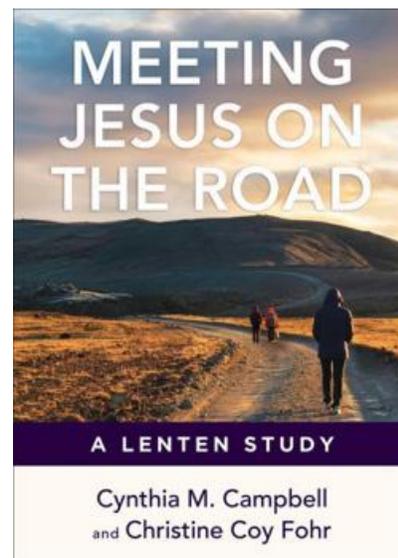
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### LENT STUDY GROUPS

Lent is coming soon (Pastor Lora says, "In five minutes.") Again, this year our Christian Education – Adult ministry will provide small groups for study during Lent. We'll be using the new book, *Meeting Jesus on the Road*, by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr. We have a local connection! Before she taught at Austin Theological Seminary and became the ninth president of McCormick Theological Seminary, Dr. Campbell served as interim pastor at Madison Square Presbyterian here in San Antonio.

The book guides us through the Lenten biblical readings that relate to Jesus' journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. We get an opportunity to reflect on the text as if we were on this pilgrimage and learn how the scriptures apply to our own lives. There also are "Walking Prompts" for each chapter.

In 2025 we had only positive responses to our satisfaction survey. When asked about doing this kind of study again in 2026, one participant said, "Absolutely. I find it to be a meaningful Lenten devotion, unique in my experience of the many churches I've been part of."



This year we have six weekly groups available on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. We invite you to enrich your personal journey through Lent by participating with a small group of others. Signup sheets are in the Narthex on Sundays and in the office during the week. Please sign up so the correct number of books are available. [Contact Doug Posey](#) with any questions.

2026 UPC Lenten Study Groups					
Group	Day	Time	Location	Leader(s)	Start Date
#1	Thursday	3:00pm	Online Meeting Zoom	Jim Gentner	Feb. 19
#2	Sunday	9:00am	UPC CE #4 Living Our Faith Class Time	Sandy Nicholson	Feb. 22
#3	Sunday	9:00am	UPC Library Parent Connection Time	Josh Clapp and Lora East	Feb. 22
#4	Sunday	3:00pm	Online Meeting Zoom	Carla Monroe-Posey and Douglas Posey	Feb. 22
#5	Monday	6:00pm	UPC Library Young Adult Ministry Time	Josh Clapp	Feb. 23
#6	Tuesday	6:00pm	UPC Oak Tree (Narthex if Bad Weather)	Janifer Meldrum	Feb. 24

## EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

### ACOLYTE TRAINING - FEB. 8

We will be holding acolyte training for all children in 2nd to 5th grades in order to begin during the season of Lent. Acolytes are worship leaders who bring in a flame to remind us that God is with us when we gather together and take the flame out to remind us that it is our job to take the light out into the world. [Please contact Erika Stiner](#) for more information.

### PARKING LOT RE-STRIPING - FEB. 12

There will be no use of the UPC parking lot from 6 pm to 6 am Thursday, Feb.12 for the purpose of re-stripping.

### EARTHCARE MEETING - FEB. 15

#### Planet vs. Plastic? – Earth Day Theme

If you have some ideas of what you would like the Earthcare Taskforce to do this year, please meet with Sandy Nicholson after worship in the Narthex on Sunday, Feb. 15. In the past, we have held an Earth Day Celebration on a Sunday near the officially declared Earth Day. We have also organized a landscaping day to help with items around the church campus.

We welcome any and all help and ideas! If you can't make the meeting but have some thoughts, [please contact Sandy Nicholson](#).



### PW BIBLE STUDY - FEB. 18

The Presbyterian Women Horizons Bible Study will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 21, at 10:30 a.m. in the UPC Library. Lesson 4 in the PW Horizons study book will be discussed: "The Prodigal Child, the Eldest Child, and the Devoted Parent." The Scripture reference is *Luke 15:11-32*.

All women are invited. Each lesson stands alone, so previous attendance is not necessary to participate. For more information, [contact Paula Gentner](#).

### **INTERGENERATIONL FAMILY DAY - FEB. 21**

In October, two UPC members along with Pastor Lora and Erika Stine attended a Font and Faith Summit put on by Union Presbyterian Seminary in Charlotte, NC. They learned so much and are excited to bring a Font and Faith Intergenerational Family day to San Antonio on Feb. 21, at UPC.

These programs invite children (age 12 and under) and their families to embark together on a journey that can result in more meaningful worship experiences as a family. They are also not just for UPC families, so please spread the word. [Click here](#) or on the picture for more information and to apply.



Font & Faith is coming to San Antonio!

INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY DAY

February 21, 2026 • 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

University Presbyterian Church

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### **LUNCH BUNCH - FEB. 22**

All invited to join others following the worship service on Sunday, Feb. 22, at South BBQ (2100 N Main Ave, 78212). This Dutch treat lunch fellowship opportunity is a great way to get to know people from UPC.

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### **WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP - FEB. 23**

The book group will meet on Monday, Feb. 23, at 6:30 p.m. in the home of Sandy Nicholson. Jeanette Clark will moderate the discussion of *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. As usual, all are welcome, even if you have not yet read the book. Simply bring a salad to share.

[Kindly notify Sandy](#) if you plan to attend or need directions to her house. [Contact Sandy Nicholson](#) to RSVP as a Zoom participant.

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### **STILL TIME TO SIGN UP FOR FOOD BANK WORKDAY - FEB. 28**

WoW's (Women of the Word) volunteer activity at the San Antonio Food Bank (5200 Historic Old Hwy 90, 78227) is on Saturday, Feb. 28. We will work in their warehouse to help sort and organize donated food items. You can carpool from church, leaving at 12:45 p.m.; or meet at the Food Bank by 1:15 p.m. UPC's shift ends at 4 p.m.

To participate, you must [RSVP to the church office](#) AND [complete the Volunteer Group Member Registration](#) for the Food Bank. You must sign up at least one week ahead of time (Feb. 21) or the volunteer slot will be given to volunteers from another group. All volunteers must wear closed-toe shoes. No short shorts, skirts, or low-cut shirts are allowed. Children 8-16 years must be accompanied by an adult.

We hope you will join us. For any questions, [please contact Becky Huston](#).

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### **CLUSTER HABITAT BUILD - THROUGH APR. 11**

This is the 32nd build for the San Antonio Presbyterian Cluster of Churches. Join hundreds of other Presbyterians in San Antonio in building a home for a family on Saturdays through April. There are jobs for all skill levels. [Click here](#) or click on the image to get information and sign up. [Contact Daniel Almsted](#) with questions.



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## SESSION AND COMMITTEE INFORMATION

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### WELLNESS WORKSHOPS TO BE OFFERED DURING LENT

In May 2025, the Bridges to Care group distributed a Mental Health Survey to UPC. The results from congregation members indicated concerns centered around Stress/Anxiety, Aging Issues, and Long Term Care. In an effort to respond to those needs, workshops will be offered on five Sundays after worship in CE #4 beginning at 12 noon.

- Feb. 22 - Building Resilience Part I by Pastor Lora East
- March 1 - Scams and Exploitations by J. Hunter Morris, Assistant Criminal District Attorney, Bexar County Criminal District Attorney's Office, Elder Fraud
- March 8 - Conversations Around Death & Dying by Beverly Tuomalo, hospice nurse, and Darwin Huartson, M.Div., semi-retired chaplain
- March 15 - End of Life Legal Considerations by Brennen Boze, Bertsch & Boze Elder Law, PC
- March 22 - Building Resilience Part II by Pastor Lora East

The classes will be in person only. Plan to bring a brown bag lunch to tide you over, if needed. Childcare available [only with RSVP to Erika Stiner](#) before Feb. 16.

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### JANUARY SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Josh Clapp shared a video from churchco.org with plans for our new website.
  - MOJ Elder, Janice Zitelman, reported that on Jan. 19, our congregation honored Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy by participating in our city's MLK March, the largest march in the nation. UPC was represented by 55 people.
  - Facilities & Operations Chair, Bob Wise, invited all to check out the new coffee bar in the CE building.
  - CE-Adult Chair, Doug Posey, shared the 2026 Lenten study book: *Meeting Jesus On The Road* by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr.
  - Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministry, Josh Clapp, provided the dates for 2026 Youth Confirmation classes and Confirmation Sunday.
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### TREASURER'S REPORT

The 2026 budget has been adjusted for Personnel changes with health insurance. We have a healthy balance in most of the special funds which are non-operating funds, usually designated for a particular purpose. The overall balance in the special funds account is \$426,458; however, there are still large facility projects in progress. The SoL Center is mostly on hold and has a skeletal budget of \$2,850. The SoL Center has endowment funds which can be used for programming if needed.

In addition to operating funds and special purpose funds, UPC also has Endowment Funds. These funds are invested for the long term to help support programs of the church, The SoL Center, and the Children's Center. The December market value of UPC Endowments is \$1,534,056 and the book value is \$1,107,611. The December market value of SoL Endowments is \$192,815 and the book value is \$135,617, up this month. Endowments are invested and only distributions or a percentage of the current value may be used regularly.

Financial Report for December 2025 Operating Budget				
	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance	Annual Budget
<b>Revenues</b>				
Pledge Income	\$540,645	\$575,280	-\$34,635	\$575,280
Reimbursements	\$54,640	\$53,412	\$1,228	\$53,412
Other	\$133,411	\$91,623	\$41,788	\$91,623
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$728,696</b>	<b>\$720,315</b>	<b>\$8,381</b>	<b>\$720,315</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Mission, Outreach & Justice	\$72,918	\$74,857	\$1,939	\$74,857
Stewardship & Finance	\$15,897	\$18,032	\$2,135	\$18,032
Personnel	\$400,251	\$418,383	\$18,132	\$418,383
Christian Education	\$17,924	\$13,300	-\$4,624	\$13,300
Worship Ministry	\$6,879	\$7,500	\$621	\$7,500
Facilities & Operations	\$162,813	\$164,400	\$1,587	\$164,400
Welcome & Fellowship	\$3,331	\$9,400	\$6,069	\$9,400
Session	\$14,669	\$15,125	\$456	\$15,125
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$694,682</b>	<b>\$720,997</b>	<b>\$26,315</b>	<b>\$720,997</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>\$34,014</b>	<b>-\$682</b>	<b>\$34,696</b>	

### A NOTE FROM MIRIAM ABOUT LITURGISTS

I have an abundance of possible Liturgists to choose from - our entire Congregation! And no matter who I ask, the answer is usually a big YES!! When they choose a date, they receive a detailed bulletin script via email from the church administrator during the week that tells them every word to say. They can practice at home for an effective, good delivery. Everyone does a superb job!

I recruit Liturgists on Sunday mornings as I look around the Congregation before and after church, and I even ask those sitting near me. I recruit up to two months ahead. If I have skipped over you and you would like to be a Liturgist, [please let me know](#).

### PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

"In the 1940's, Norwegians made and wore red pointed hats with a tassel as a form of visual protest against Nazi occupation of their country. Within two years, the Nazis made these protest hats illegal and punishable by law to wear, make, or distribute."  
(Paul S. Neary, Minneapolis)

By now you will have read and heard stories in *The Guardian*, *The NYT*, and on *National Public Radio* about the red hat that is being knitted or crocheted by groups or individuals across the country and across the ocean. A yarn shop in Minnesota has raised nearly \$400,000 so far by selling the pattern for \$5.00 each. Monies thus raised are donated to nonprofits supporting immigrants.

Pictured are two members of the UPC Shawl Ministry with their red hats - a quirky little answer to a very real problem. Yes, it's just a silly little hat, but it's a very significant symbol of people coming together in righteous anger, in solidarity, and in compassion. It really doesn't matter how you do it, but do it! Knit that hat, march, knock on doors, take a meal, beat a drum, build a house, donate! Love your neighbor! Get involved. You can't not.

To request a shawl or lap robe or to join this caring group, please [contact Caryl Gaubatz](#).



### ACTION ITEM FOR RICE AND BEANS

The Interfaith Welcome Coalition has announced a drive to collect dry rice and dry black beans for local immigrants with emergency food needs. More information is coming and updates on this new IWC effort. You are

invited to bring items to the church beginning this Sunday, Feb. 8, to the collection box in the Narthex. For more information, [please contact Mary Lance](#).

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## UPC at the SA MLK Jr March



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## CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

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### CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

#### Sunday Childcare

Childcare is available for those in kindergarten and younger available 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. in the UPCC Downstairs Classrooms. [Contact Erika Stiner](#) for the gate code or ask the Greeters.

#### Breakfast Snacks

Breakfast snacks are available for all classes from 8:30-8:55 a.m. [Click here to volunteer](#).

#### Sunday School Classes

The Godly Play Grace Growers (Pre-K - 2nd grade children) meet in the CE Building, Room #6. They use the *Godly Play* curriculum, a hands-on way to engage with the stories of the people of God and wonder together about the mysteries of our faith. The Upper Elementary Peace Makers (3rd - 5th grade children) meet in Room #7 of the CE Building. They follow the *Path to Peace with Creation* curriculum. They will learn responsibility to care for creation through stories from the Old and New Testaments. Are you interested in helping with these classes? [Click here to sign up](#) to help on Sunday mornings. Feel free to [contact Erika Stiner](#) with questions.

#### Children's Choir

Our children are in a new semester of making a joyful noise during children's choir on Sundays, 9:50-10:25 a.m. [Please contact Nicholas Dimick](#) if you have any questions.

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### YOUTH MINISTRY

#### Sunday Mornings

Middle and High School Youth are invited to come hang out in the Youth Room to read a book, do homework, or play a board game on Sundays, 9-10 a.m., in the CE Building Room #1. [Contact Josh Clapp](#) to be added to the youth email newsletter.

#### Youth Group Schedule

Feb. 1 - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Feb. 8 - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Feb. 15 - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Feb. 22 - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

#### Events

TBD - Blessing of New Drivers during Worship

### Youth Confirmation

Classes on Wednesdays in March, 4-5:30 p.m. in CE #1  
Confirmation Sunday on April 19.

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### YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

The group continue their discussion on *Being Presbyterian in a Dysvangelical America* by Ted V. Foote Jr. and P. Alex Thornburg. This book follows two others by the same authors about what it means to be Presbyterian in certain places and times in today's world.

During Lent, the group will move to *Meeting Jesus on the Road*, by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr.

Meetings are every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. in the church library. [Contact Josh Clapp](#) for more information.

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## CHILDREN'S CENTER

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### UPCC TRAUMA-INFORMED CERTIFICATION

Over the next four months, UPCC staff will work toward becoming a Trauma-Informed Early Childhood Education Organization through the Ecumenical Center. This process includes 20 hours of trauma-informed training for leadership and teaching staff, along with family and staff surveys.



The UPCC leadership team—Cindi Catlin-Gaskins, Sandy Stout, Melanie Valdez, and Christopher DeLeon—will document current practices focused on safety, trust, respect, collaboration, and emotional skill-building. This certification is funded by Texas Workforce for Texas Rising Star centers in Bexar County. We are grateful for this opportunity to strengthen the care and support UPCC provides for children, families, and staff.

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## CONGREGATIONAL UPDATES

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### WE SEE YOU!

Pastor Lora met up with UPC's Seminary Student, Karen Jensen, during Lora's time at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary at the end of January.

She was attending MidWinter Lectures at APTS.

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### PARTNERSHIP OF PRAYER

Over 160 people are currently united in praying for others as needs arise. If you would like to participate or if you have a prayer request, [please contact the church office.](#)

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### FEBRUARY CELEBRATIONS

#### Birthdays

3-Steffanie Stevens

4-Lillian Holland

6-Bill Campbell

6-Kristin Lopez

19-Jeffrey Gingerich

19-Melissa Richard

20-Christian Dittmer

22-Sarah Harvey

23-Marc Wilson

6-Tim McGovern  
6-Aidan Wilson  
9-Marge Clyde  
9-Arthur Ridgway  
10-Barb Lincoln  
12-Gail Raney  
14-Devan Aguilar-Mock  
14-Nicholas Roberson  
16-Samantha Morgan  
16-Tom Williams  
17-Cabral Balreira

24-Rowan Morgan  
24-Zachary Smith  
26-Maggie Sorrell  
28-Chuck Bray  
29-Ben Plummer

#### Anniversaries

20-Melanie and John Strybos  
20-Alyssa and Cynthia Balderrama  
21-Cindi Catlin-Gaskins and Dave Gaskins  
29-Laura and Anthony Armistead

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### GIFTS & MEMORIALS FROM JANUARY

#### UPC Loaves & Fishes

Gay Spinks  
Janifer Meldrum and Bud Eaton

#### UPC Shawl Ministry Fund

Jeanette Clark

#### UPC Pastor's Discretionary Fund

Jeanette Clark

#### UPC Music Fund

##### in honor of Matthew Payton

Cheryl Lynn Payton

#### UPC Cluster Habitat Fund

Joseph Luedecke

#### UPC Memorial Reception Fund

Cindi Catlin-Gaskins

#### UPC Deacons Fund

Jeanette Clark

#### UPC Deacons Fund

##### in honor of Paula Henderson's 80th Birthday

Jane and Terry Fried  
Janifer Meldrum and Bud Eaton  
Gail and Marc Raney  
Lucy Llera  
Linda Ireland  
Tucker Gibson  
Ben Henderson  
Mary and Albert Williams  
Melissa and Dennis Richard  
Lou and David Williams

#### UPCC Good Shepherd Scholarship Fund

Jeanette Clark  
Carla Monroe-Posey and Doug Posey

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## PEOPLE SERVING YOU

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### STAFF DAYS OFF, HOLIDAYS, AND OFFICE CLOSURES

Josh: 01/08/26-02/13/26

Lora East: 02/12/26-02/16/26

Anastasia Bernal: 02/15/26-02/24/26

Children's Center Closed: 02/16/26

♪♪ **Where in the World is the Church Administrator?** ♪♪



- Anastasia Bernal  
Out-of-Town  
Feb. 15-24

**TOP SECRET**

- Aunt's Surprise 70th Birthday Trip
- Janifer Meldrum Handling Office Duties



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### STAFF

Anastasia Bernal - Church Administrator  
Christian Carpenter - Media Technician  
Allan Catlin - Maintenance Coordinator  
Cindi Catlin Gaskins - Children's Center Director

Nicholas Dimick - Children's Choir Director  
Lora East - Pastor  
Keith Martinez - Choral Music Director  
Zachary Ridgway - Organist/Pianist

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## SESSION

### Ruling Elders - Ministry Serving

Melissa Almsted - Personnel Chair  
Laurie Doyal-Lampman - SoL Center Liaison  
Ashley Gans - Worship Chair  
Ben Henderson - Mission Outreach & Justice Chair  
Sue Martino - Stewardship & Finance  
Miriam Martinez - Christian Education Jr. Chair  
and UPCC Liaison

Patty Nicholson - Worship  
Doug Posey - Christian Education Sr. Chair  
Melissa Richard - Welcome & Fellowship Liaison  
Kelli Weedon - Stewardship & Finance Chair  
Bob Wise - Facilities & Operations Chair  
Janice Zitelman - Mission Outreach & Justice

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## DIACONATE

### Deacons - Parishes and Assignments

Arlene Aguilar - University  
Tamara Apgar - Alamo Heights  
Safira Carpenter - Olmos  
Cindi Catlin Gaskins - Castle Hills North  
Jeanette Clark - Downtown South and Secretary  
Marilyn Dill - Out-of-Town

Paula Gentner - Northeast and Moderator  
Paula Henderson - North Central  
Becky Huston - Northwood and Vice-Moderator  
Bonnie Bartlett - Airport  
Laine Leibick - Northwest  
Carla Monroe-Posey - Fredericksburg



UNIVERSITY  
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CHURCH  
San Antonio, TX

## UPC'S MESSAGE TO YOU

*Wherever you may be in the journey of faith, UPC welcomes you.  
We are a community where honest questions are valued  
and where faith is considered a process, not an arrival.*

*Affirming that every person has worth as a unique creation and a child of God,  
we welcome into full participation people of every age, sex,  
race, color, ethnicity, culture, immigration status, political affiliation,  
economic condition, physical and mental ability, marital status,  
sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.*

*If you are passing through, we extend God's blessings to you as you continue on your way.  
If you are seeking a home, we invite you to join us in the adventure  
of serving Jesus Christ in a challenging world.*



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