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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR AND CHILDREN'S SPIRITUALITY DIRECTOR

Dear UPC Community and Congregation,

We have outgrown our family worship space! It is exciting to have so many families prioritizing church, and we no longer have space around the tables for all children to have parents sit and worship with them. Our goal has always been to teach our children how to worship and for them to be active participants, so we are trying something new. Again!

We have worship bags in the pews with tools for all ages. We still encourage families to sit up front or where your child can see so they can participate. This is a great opportunity for parish pals or friends to sit together if a parent is with them to guide the children through worship.

When you get to your seat in the sanctuary, look for the worship bag in your row. It is full of tools to help everyone in the pew actively participate in worship. Find some things that interest your child and pass along the bag to others in the pew so they can use the tools as well.

Here are some suggestions for teaching your child how to worship:

- Look up the hymns in the purple hymnal and scriptures in the Bible with your child. Help them follow along with the responsive liturgy.
- Encourage your child to stand when the congregation stands. A part of learning how to worship is learning when we stand, sit, walk around (passing the peace).
- Follow along in the pictorial Order of Worship.
- Talk to your child about worship before and after. What did they see? Hear? Learn? What was their favorite part? Do they have questions?

Our whole congregation continues to grow in our experience of intergenerational worship. Please partner with us to make worship a space where everyone can feel God's presence. We request everyone stay seated for as much of the service as possible. We are mindful that children are not adults, and this is a great space to practice being respectful of all in our beloved community.

A reminder that for their safety, children must be accompanied on the campus. Please do not let your child leave the sanctuary alone during worship, walk themselves to Sunday School, use the Gathering Space without your supervision, etc.

If you want to help with our children's ministry, we would be so grateful. When we teach the children of UPC about worship, we are fulfilling our baptismal vows to raise them in the faith and show them God's love in Jesus Christ.

Faithfully yours,
Pastor Lora & Erika

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. Get gate code [from Erika Stiner](#) or Greeters.

Sunday School for All Ages

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

10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Join us for worship in the sanctuary or watching the service online. [Click here for worship bulletins](#), 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](#).

Artwork

Image from aneelaranha.com website.



EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

JOINT WORSHIP SERVICE - JAN. 18

We are very excited to attend a combined worship service with the congregation of Madison Square Presbyterian Church on Sunday, Jan. 18, at 10:50 a.m. We encourage carpooling from UPC to MSPC

due to their limited parking. [Click here to sign up](#). Pastor Lora, the W&A Committee, and the Adult Choir have been working with staff to make the worship service especially meaningful for everyone.



There will be no Children's Sunday School or Children's Choir, but there will be Adult Sunday School at the regular time of 9-10 a.m. For those who forget, or prefer to not travel to MSPC, there will be a watch party here in the Sanctuary with Mark Seaman.

PARTICIPATE IN THE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MARCH - JAN. 19

The City of San Antonio invites the community to participate in the largest Martin Luther King Jr. march in the nation. Dr. King is well known for his non-violent work in the Civil Rights movement, as a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, and as a role model for activists in peace and justice movements. The 39th Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. March and Celebration will take place in person on Monday, Jan. 19, at 10 a.m.

As in years past, University Presbyterian Church will be participating and over 25 people have already indicated that they plan to march. If you are interested in participating, [please email Janice Zitelman](#). She will keep you updated via text messages on when and where to meet. Friends are welcome to join our group. If you have not participated previously and would like more details about this exciting event, [click here](#) to visit the website.

PW BIBLE STUDY - JAN. 21

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](#).

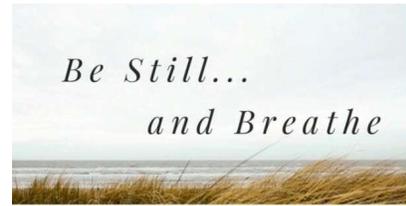
A SPACE TO BREATHE

UPC'S 2026 WOMEN'S RETREAT - JAN. 23 & 24

Take a pause. Step away from the noise and into a space of rest, creativity, and connection at UPC.

Retreat leader, Rev. Dr. Eunbee Ham from Madison Square Presbyterian Church, wishes you to join us for a women's retreat centered on nurturing the soul

through stillness, reflection, and spiritual practices. This time of renewal invites you to listen deeply, create freely, and reconnect with your spirit and community. The \$35 registration fee includes both days of programming, Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, and an art project. Some scholarships are available. All women and those who identify with women's spaces are warmly welcome. [Click here for registration - deadline is Sunday, Jan. 18.](#)



Friday, January 23

- 5 p.m. - Optional Yoga

A gentle yoga session to help us arrive in our bodies and settle into the space.

- 6 p.m. - Dinner and Table Conversation

We'll share a meal together and take time for introductions and guided conversations.

- 7 p.m. - Program

We will start with an opening meditation and breath prayer. There will be an introduction of the art project and process. Participants will begin creating their Soul Collage Cards (a creative, prayerful collage process) on Friday evening and return to them on Saturday.

Saturday, January 24

- 8:30 a.m. - Breakfast

A light breakfast will be served.

- 9 a.m. - Program

We will begin with a guided meditation and some optional journaling time.

Participants will return to the art project began the day before or begin a new one. All will move at their own pace with no pressure to finish. There will be a Lecto Divina option for those who are done early. A time of guided sharing and closing will conclude the program.

- 11:30 a.m. - Worship

A worship service will close the retreat.

LUNCH BUNCH - JAN. 25

All are invited to join others following the 10:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, Jan. 25, 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.

Winter Journey

Schubert's *Winterreise*

Christopher Briggs Rodriguez,
baritone

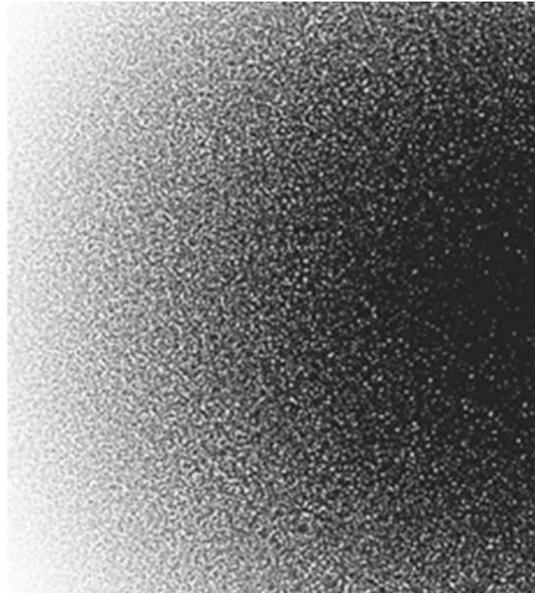
Zachary Ridgway,
pianist

Sunday, Jan. 25, 2026

3 p.m.

Ruth Taylor Recital Hall
Trinity University

Free Admission



WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP - JAN. 26

The book group will meet on Monday, Jan. 26, at 6:30 p.m. in the home of Carla Monroe-Posey, who will moderate the discussion of *The Good Lord Bird* by James McBride. As usual, all are welcome, even if you have not yet read the book. Simply bring a salad to share. [Kindly notify Carla](#) if you plan to attend or need directions to her house. [Contact Sandy Nicholson](#) to RSVP as a Zoom participant.

FUTURE EVENTS

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - FEB. 1

The Annual Congregational Meeting of University Presbyterian Church is called for Sunday, Feb. 1. The purposes of the meeting are to elect officers, receive committee reports, review the annual budget, and to vote on the Pastor's Terms of Call. Reports will be available online and in print the week before the meeting.

CLUSTER HABITAT BUILD - BEGINS FEB. 6

[Click here](#) or click on the image to get information and sign up. [Contact Daniel Almsted](#) with questions.



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.



SIGN UP NOW FOR FOOD BANK WORKDAY - FEB. 28

WoW (Women of the Word) has organized a church-wide volunteer activity at the San Antonio Food Bank (5200 Historic Old Hwy 90, 78227) 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](#).

SESSION AND COMMITTEE INFORMATION

DECEMBER SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The Session approved UPC's 2026 Budget of \$778,010.
- Facilities & Operations Committee Chair Bob Wise, reported that the expansion of our Columbarium will be underway soon.
- The Session approved a joint worship service with Madison Square Presbyterian Church on Sunday, Jan. 18, at 10:50 a.m. The Worship & Arts Committee and Pastor Lora are helping plan the service. Their address is 319 Camden St, 78215.
- Mission Outreach & Justice Committee enrolled UPC to participate in the MLK March on Monday, Jan. 19. UPC has invited Madison Square PC members to join us.
- The UPC Women's Retreat will be held on our campus on Friday, Jan. 23, and Saturday, Jan. 24. Reverend Dr. Eunbee Ham, Pastor at Madison Square PC will facilitate.
- UPC's Annual Congregational Meeting has been called for Sunday, Feb. 1, after the 10:30 a.m. worship service. The Annual Report will be available digitally the week of the meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

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 \$354, 950; however, there are several large facility projects in progress. The SoL Center remains on hold and has a skeletal budget of \$2,850. The SoL Center has endowment funds which can be used for programming if needed.

Financial Report for November 2025 Operating Budget				
	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance	Annual Budget
Revenues				
Pledge Income	\$512,219	\$527,340	-\$15,121	\$575,280
Reimbursements	\$50,197	\$48,961	\$1,236	\$53,412
Other	\$110,614	\$85,806	\$24,808	\$91,623
Total Revenues	\$673,030	\$662,107	\$10,923	\$720,315
Expenses				
Mission, Outreach & Justice	\$67,918	\$72,215	\$4,297	\$74,857
Stewardship & Finance	\$13,835	\$16,550	\$2,715	\$18,032
Personnel	\$365,106	\$378,828	\$13,722	\$418,383
Christian Education	\$16,505	\$12,192	-\$4,313	\$13,300
Worship Ministry	\$6,137	\$6,875	\$738	\$7,500
Facilities & Operations	\$141,532	\$150,700	\$9,168	\$164,400
Welcome & Fellowship	\$2,827	\$8,617	\$5,790	\$9,400
Session	\$14,261	\$14,698	\$437	\$15,125
Total Expenses	\$628,121	\$660,675	\$32,554	\$720,997
Net Total	\$44,909	\$1,432	\$43,477	

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 November market value of UPC Endowments is \$1,614,916 and the book value is \$1,122,357, up this month. The November market value of SoL Endowments is \$205,510 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.

GREETER SIGN-UPS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Scan the QR code or click on the picture to volunteer. Slots are open through Easter. [Contact Julie Wise](#) for information.



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

God Is Applauding by Hafiz
from *A Year with Hafiz* by Daniel Ladinsky, Penguin
Books, 2011

*God is applauding our every act, but
He hides that reality from most, until
we can understand more about real
love.*

The miracle of Zoom allows knitters, crocheters, and weavers from Boston, Arizona, Chicago, New Mexico, and Fredericksburg to join us. I like to think of them as our Love Outposts. It extends our reach far beyond San Antonio City limits.

Hear a tender story from Fredericksburg: one of our members gifts her carefully knitted shawls to other residents of the retirement community where she lives. She has recognized and shared their loneliness and infirmities and she gives comfort from the "inside." One of her shawl recipients recently shared that she wears the shawl when praying for others, sort of Love Squared. It may seem a small thing, a very small thing, but I think that somewhere Someone is applauding.

For more information about the UPC Shawl Ministry or to request a shawl, please [contact Caryl Gaubatz](#).



CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

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.

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.

Youth Group Schedule

Jan. 11 - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Jan. 18 - No Youth Group

Jan. 25 - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Events

Jan. 16-18 - Midwinters @ Mo-Ranch

Jan. 19 - MLK March

Jan. 25 - Blessing of New Drivers during Worship

Youth Group Dinners

All are invited to feed the youth during their Sunday evening gatherings. [Click here to sign up](#) as a way to keep your baptismal vows to guide and nurture children and youth by word and deed, with love and prayer. You can also get to know this great group of kids! [Contact Josh Clapp](#) for details about dinners and/or to be added to the youth email newsletter.

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.

Meetings are every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. alternating locations between the church library and off-site places. [Contact Josh Clapp](#) for more information.

CHILDREN'S CENTER



REGISTRATION FOR 2026-2027

In house registration for church members and current families for the 2026-2027 school year runs through Jan. 20. Then open registration begins.

[Contact the Children's Center office](#) for information.

UPCC LIGHT FEST

The annual celebration with children, families, friends, and staff gathered in the sanctuary on the last day of school in December. There was music and dancing to experience the cultural traditions of the families with the lighting of Advent candles, a menorah for Hanukkah, and a diya for Diwali. Each child was provided their own candle for songs about letting their light shine all over the world.



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.](#)

SYMPATHIES

UPC member, **Bryann Grubbs** died on Dec. 31. Pastor Lora presided over a graveside service on Jan. 9. [Click here for the obituary.](#)

JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays

2-Arlene Aguilar
3-David Williams
4-Sonia Samples
5-Abel Garcia
6-Miriam Ellison
7-Cynthia Lyle
8-Betty Fritz
8-Daniel Lopez
9-Laura Armistead
9-Dave Gaskins
10-Katherine Bridgman
10-Margaret Cathey
11-Bob Harris
13-Lora East
13-Paula Henderson
15-Francisco Mar
18-Marlo Anderson
18-Victoria Beaver
18-Lorna Shinkle
20-Miriam Martinez
22-Patty Nicholson
22-Andrew Wilson
25-Andrea Anthony
26-Emlyn Harris
30-Marian Higgins
31-Audrey Nicholson

Anniversaries

1-Molly Roth and Alfredo Villareal
8-Bonnie and Bill Simons
9-Barb and Karl Lincoln
15-Carolyn and Don White
20-Cristina and Christopher Silva
22-Safira and Christian Carpenter

GIFTS & MEMORIALS - DECEMBER

UPC Loaves & Fishes

Gay Spinks

Janifer Meldrum and Bud Eaton

UPC Memorial Fund in memory of Tres Nicholson

Edith Speert Book Group

UPC Cluster Habitat Fund in honor of Daniel Almsted

John Burke

UPC Cluster Habitat Fund in honor of Carol Brown

Mary and Wayne Brown

UPC Contingency Fund

Barry Hubbard

UPC Special Donations in memory of Gene Clark and in honor of Jeanette Clark

James F Blanke

UPC Deacons Fund

Becky and John Huston

Sandy and Art Nicholson

Janifer Meldrum and Bud Eaton

Jeanette Clark

in memory of her husband, Gene Clark

Paula and Ben Henderson

in memory of Paula's mom, Guadalupe Valdez

Barry Hubbard

in memory of Cynthia Smith

Hanna Kuykendall

in memory of her brother, Efraim Soren

Sally Lloyd

in memory of her husband, Chriss Lloyd

Gail Olsen

in memory of her sister, Rev. Diane Hutchins

Gay Spinks

in memory of her husband, Bill Spinks

Paula and Jim Gentner

in honor of Mary Jane and Raymond Judd

Janice Zitelman and Fred Johnson

in honor of Lydia Hernandez

UPCC Good Shepherd Scholarship Fund

Jeanette Clark

Carla Monroe-Posey and Doug Posey

University Presbyterian Children's Center

Katherine Hill

STAFF THANK YOU NOTES

Thank you so much UPC family for the extraordinary Christmas gift! Your grace and generosity continue to astound me. Peace and Blessings to you all this Holiday season.

With Love,
Josh Clapp

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas bonus. I truly appreciate the thoughtfulness and kindness behind it. It's a pleasure to be part of such a welcoming and supportive community, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to contribute through music. Your generosity and encouragement mean a great deal, and they don't go unnoticed. Thank you again for the gift and for your continued support throughout the year.

-Isabel Briseño

I would like to say a heartfelt 'thank you' to each member of the UPC congregation. I appreciate your dedication to making UPC a welcoming place for families and children and your willingness to try new things and be open to change. 2025 has been a year of changes for us, but we have learned together and, I believe, gotten better together. Thank you for your generosity in giving to meet our 2026 budget, your gifts are used each week to fulfil our baptismal covenant to raise each child in our church knowing they are loved by God and by their community. I am also appreciative of your gifts going above and beyond this Christmas season in the form of a bonus for staff members. I am so grateful to be a part of this community.

Thank you,
Erika Stiner

Thank you so much for the thoughtful Christmas bonus and kind note. I truly appreciate your generosity and support, it means a great deal to me and I am very grateful to be part of this church community.

Warmly,
McKayla Rodriguez

Thank you all for another wonderful year at UPC. I have loved every minute of it. You have seen me through my time at Trinity, and I couldn't feel more blessed to be with you each Sunday.

Sincerely,
Matthew Payton

I cannot express my gratitude for your kindness and financial support you've given us! Thank you so much for believing in us and I only hope I can continue to provide the children and the congregation the love and kindness I've received. Thank you again!

-Nicholas Dimick

I cannot thank you enough for your generosity during this holiday season! My bonus helped Kealey and I take care of some much needed home repairs and also went towards purchasing Christmas gifts for the children of some dear family friends that are struggling with the death of a father. Your kindness has helped make Christmas possible for more than just my family. I hope that your holiday season was filled with family, friends, laughs, and Cowboys football!

Peace and Blessings,
Keith Martinez

I am so grateful for this faith community and the colleagues I am honored to work with on the church staff as we learn and ponder together. Thank you for the Christmas bonus and for all your support and encouragement throughout the years.
Cindi Catlin-Gaskins

I wanted to express my sincere gratitude for the Christmas bonus gift. It was a tangible expression of appreciation from the church congregation to the staff's leadership and hard work throughout the year. 2025 was filled with so many joyous occasions: welcoming our new pastor, recognizing my 20 years of service, hosting the Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering, and the many activities and events celebrating UPC's 75th Anniversary. I am so blessed to be part of this team, and your support motivates and empowers me to continue serving UPC with even greater joy and dedication. Thank you for investing in each member of this current group of people and trusting us to do our jobs.
Filled with God's blessings and grace,
Anastasia Bernal

PEOPLE SERVING YOU

STAFF DAYS OFF, HOLIDAYS, AND OFFICE CLOSURES

Lora East: 01/12/26-01/14/26 and 01/26/26-01/28/26

Anastasia Bernal: 01/16/26

All Facilities Closed: 01/19/26

Josh Clapp: 01/23/26

STAFF

Anastasia Bernal – Church Administrator

Christian Carpenter – Media Technician

Allan Catlin – Maintenance Coordinator

Cindi Catlin Gaskins – Children's Center Director

Josh Clapp – Youth & Young Adult Ministries Director

Nicholas Dimick – Children's Choir Director

Lora East – Pastor

Keith Martinez – Choral Music Director

Zachary Ridgway – Organist/Pianist

Erika Stiner – Children's Spirituality Director

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 – Clerk and Welcome & Fellowship Liaison

Kelli Weedon – Stewardship & Finance Chair

Bob Wise – Facilities & Operations Chair

Janice Zitelman – Mission Outreach & Justice

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
PRESBYTERIAN
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.***

University Presbyterian Church | 300 Bushnell Ave | San Antonio, TX 78212 US

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