

**United Presbyterian Church**  
May 17, 2026 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter



**Welcome and Announcements** Elder Allen Pease

**Prelude** Benjamin Watkins, piano

**Call to Worship** Elder Souheil Haddad, Liturgist

Leader. In the beginning, God made the world.

All that is green, blue, deep, and growing,

**People. The world belongs to God.**

Leader. All that is tender, firm, fragrant, and curious,

**People. The world belongs to God.**

Leader. All that crawls, flies, swims, walks, or is still,

**People. The world belongs to God.**

Leader. All that speaks, sings, cries, laughs, or keeps silence,

**People. The world belongs to God.**

Leader. Alleluia, Christ is risen.

**People. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia**

**Opening Hymn:** *Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks* #106

**Call for Confession** (Liturgist)

O God of life, eternity cannot hold you,

nor can our little words catch the magnificence of your kindness.

Yet in the space of our small hearts, and in silence,

you can come close and repair us.

Here us as we pray:

**Prayer of Confession** (in unison with Liturgist)

**O God of life, grant us your forgiveness**

**for our careless thoughts, for our thoughtless deeds,  
for our empty speech and the words with which we wounded.  
Grant us your forgiveness for our false desires,  
for our hateful actions, for our wastefulness and for all we left untended...**  
*(all pray in silence)*

**Assurance of Pardon** (Liturgist)

Praise to the living Christ, hanged on a tree, yet risen in the morning, Christ scatters the sin from our souls as the mist from the hills; Let us welcome the grace of Christ in our hearts to begin what we do, to inform what we say and to redeem who we are.

\* *Gloria Patri* #579

**\*Passing of the Peace**

Liturgist: The Peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also, with you.**

Liturgist: Let us share that peace with one another.

**Prayer for Illumination** (Liturgist)

Gracious and Holy God, give us wisdom to perceive thee, diligence to seek thee, eyes to behold thee, a heart to meditate upon thee, and a life to proclaim thee; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Old Testament Lesson** *Isaiah 52:7-10 – Liturgist*

**Music for Meditation**

**The Gospel:** *Mark 4:26-32 – Leader*

Leader: The word of the Lord

**People: Thanks be to God**



**UPC Prayer List** - Email requests to: [upcbloomington@gmail.com](mailto:upcbloomington@gmail.com).

The family of Miriam Michael as they mourn her loss

The family of Dr. Mashal Poor as they mourn his loss

The Haddad family is also mourning his loss as he was a long-time, dear friend and Souheil's medical practice partner

Kevin Roby Troy Virginia Kathleen Anita Raymor

All people who are suffering from armed conflict.

**Pyoca Camp and Retreat Center** asks for your prayers for our campers, staff, and volunteers journeying from across the Midwest to join us at Pyoca. May each person who comes to camp know they are welcomed by a loving God. We pray this will be a summer of deep reflection, bold imagination, joyful play, and faithful growth, as we seek another way together.



Wednesday, May 27–6 p.m.

## **Spaghetti Dinner & Dessert Auction**

to benefit the UPC Music Program.

Chefs – Benjamin, Darian, Melanie

Auction Masters – Fadi, Souheil

We need attendees -- \$10 adults/\$5 kids 10 & under  
*AND*, folks to donate desserts.

Contact Allen or Melanie if you'd like to donate a dessert.

## **UPC's last fun-filled Spaghetti Dinner & Dessert Auction**



Miriam Lee Michael ♦ May 21, 1951 – May 1, 2026

Miriam Lee Michael, 74, passed away peacefully on May 1, 2026. She



was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on May 21, 1951 to Marvin and Merle Michael. Miriam attended school in Bloomington, Indiana and worked for many years at Stonebelt Services of Indiana. For the past many years, Miriam has been under the care of Developmental Services of Bloomington. United Presbyterian was Miriam's church home and attending the Sunday service was the highlight of her week. Her outgoing personality brought many friends into her life and she cherished each one of them. We greatly appreciate the love and care given to Miriam by Victoria Purtlebaugh, Christina Harris, Angela Jeffrey, Patty Reed McGuire, and many others. The care Miriam received from these dear people was outstanding.

Surviving are her brother Richard (Gail) Michael of Carmel, IN, nieces Marla Michael, Claire Michael, Ally Michael, and nephew Todd Michael. Miriam's parents and brother Paul preceded her in death.

Visitation was at Day & Deremiah Frye funeral home on E. 3rd St. on Saturday, May 9. Following immediately was a graveside service at Valhalla Memory Gardens officiated by Elder Don Root of United Presbyterian. Afterward, the family invited all to join them for refreshments (prepared by the UPC Deacons) and a time of sharing and fellowship at UPC. Memorial contributions in Miriam's name may be given to UPC, 1701 E. 2nd St., Bloomington, 47401 or Developmental Services, 200 E. Winslow Rd, Bloomington, 47401. The beautiful Photo Memorial for Miriam on display during visitation – →



## 2026 UPC Mother's Day and Blessing of Grad's Service

Even with so many of our flock away on vacations and other trips, 36 attended UPC's Mother's Day and Blessing of Grads service on May 10. Rev. Marietta Macy presented a powerful, unique and thought-provoking sermon, *Advocates for Love* as well as a Blessing of The Grads that was as touching as it was inspiring.

UPC Music Director Benjamin Watkins performed a wonderful piano prelude of *Open My Eyes that I May See* and later in the service, conducted and accompanied The Quartet in a very well-received rendition of *If Ye Love Me, Keep My Commandments*.



☛ UPC's 2026 graduates are all from Indiana University.  
Anna Ambartsunian – Masters of Music-vocal performance  
Abigail Gerstle – Masters of Music in vocal performance  
Jackson Ray – Masters of Music in vocal performance  
Thomas L. Koehnline – BA in Folklore & Ethnomusicology,  
Linguistics and Germanic Studies

Patrick Tervo [back row] – Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance.

During the Blessing of Grads service, the Worship Team gifted the graduates with *Be Still, and Know that I am God* tote bags filled with UPC mementos, '26 Graduate items and, of course, a bag of chocolates.

UPC Christian Education Team Chair Melanie Mathis McBride and husband Darian prepared and hosted a lunch for Mom's and Grads with a Bar-B-Q theme. The buffet and dessert tables were beautiful as was the punch table. During the lunch, the Grads were gifted with a Grad Bag from the hearts and hands of the congregation.



## The Colby's April Report on His Eyes Mission

For almost 25 years Valerie and Felipe Colby have been members of UPC. Over 20 years ago, the couple went to Honduras to visit His Eyes Clinic and Mission and never came back! They've led His Eyes to becoming the ever-growing, thriving mission that it is today. UPC has been with His Eyes from Day One.

Chronologically, April started on the 1st, and for half the month His Eyes was blessed with the second and third group of the year. Their *accomplishments* were many, and we pray that the spiritual fruit would continue to *echo*.

How about a quick *anthropological* peek into the areas of the mission?

-The Hill Climber harvest of fresh coffee beans is continuing into April, and the wonderful smell of brewed coffee could be filling your *schnoz* right now! Why not be *choosing* to drink some coffee by ordering [here](#)?

-The Milk Project saw God weave a way to help three siblings who have suffered greatly into school to study.

-Through the clinic spiritual work, three more of God's *chosen* were baptized, including our second clinic physician, Dr. Valladares, one of the clinic cell church members, Pamela and the His Eyes group coordinator, Ingris.

All that to say, like *chevrons*, there are ups and downs, and thus we keep praying to the only *Monarch* that matters to help *anchor* that which He began! Prayer is as needed in our lives as air in our *bronchia*!

-We don't need more people who think they are head *honchos*, but the mission definitely needs more workers for the physical and spiritual harvest.

-We might think we are ready for *backhoeing* to begin on the clinic expansion, but there is still planning and thought needed before we rush into it. Patience and waiting in Him is needed for sure.

-*Poncho* weather is coming in May so we pray that the coffee harvest and road work will be finished soon, especially in Sampedrana.

-May will be filled with groups working, serving, and being used by God.

-Please pray for us, Felipe and Valerie, that God would keep us moving every day in Him, in physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Thanks for your prayers.

INDNJC, Felipe & Valerie

## ✠Our Chancel Cross by Bob Hammel

In Psalm 92, David writes: *The Righteous Man will flourish like the palm tree; he will grow like a cedar in Lebanon.* It's one of 23 Biblical references to those Cedars of Lebanon, and mention of cedars in 92 other verses that have been taken by Bible scholars to be references to the legendary almost knot-free trees in Lebanon. Dedicated in 2008, the cross you see in the UPC Chancel was hand-carved from one of those trees and includes the beloved Bible verse, John 3:16, carved in calligraphic Arabic.

The cross is an exact replica of the one in the Haddads' home Presbyterian church in Beirut, Lebanon. Souheil and Fadi went to Beirut to bring the cross back and together carried it down our center aisle for dedication in UPC's 175<sup>th</sup> birthday service.

We want you – as a first-time worshiper with us or a long-time member – to feel free after today's service to take your own close-up look at the cross and its elegant carvings, with cognizance of the live linkage it represents between us and David's holy writings.

We invite you to take a moment to notice our chancel cross, which has its own role in our church history. As part of UPC's 175<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebration in September 2008, arrangements were made through the late Dr. Fuad Haddad, father of UPC members Souheil and Fadi Haddad, to bring to Bloomington, a cross from the Holy Land with true biblical roots.

### United Presbyterian Church Staff

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