

The Spire

December 2024



"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

~ Isaiah 9:6



Our annual Night of Music is approaching fast! Join us on Tuesday, December 10th at 6:30 PM, for a casual celebration of Christmas music. We'll gather in the sanctuary to sing familiar carols, listen to the bell choir, and enjoy beautiful music presentations. A special guest from the North Pole might even stop by!

We look forward to sharing this magical night with you!



Christmas Devotionals

Instead of our traditional advent devotionals, we'll reflect during the Christmas season with a *12 Days of Christmas* devotional. This booklet takes us joyfully through the twelve days between Jesus' birth and the Epiphany with readings and reflections that keep us rooted in Christ even after the festivities end. These will be available near the end of Advent.

Christmas Eve Services

Our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion service will be at 7:00 PM on Christmas Eve.



Poinsettias in Church



Poinsettias will be in church for Christmas Eve. If you ordered poinsettias, you can take them home after the Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service.

Special Offerings

Advent Offering can be given at any time. It will be used to **offset** the staff Christmas gifts.

Christmas Card Fund. You are invited to send a Christmas card and donation. The card will be hung on the Church Christmas tree and the donation will be used to provide a meal for the Upland Police Department and the Upland Fire Company. Your Christmas greeting will be in the Sunday, December 22nd and Christmas Eve bulletins. Please mail your Christmas card and donation **by December 15th** to Upland Baptist Church c/o Linda Cook 325 Main Street, Upland, PA 19015 or leave them in the back of the church in the "mailbox."

Staff Christmas Gifts donations will be accepted throughout November and December. They can be given to Linda Cook. **These donations are over and above your Advent offering.**

All these gifts can be mailed to the church, donated through the website, or placed in an offering plate. Please designate your donation in the memo or note section.

Annual Meeting

The Upland Baptist Church Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2025. This meeting will be held immediately following worship.

Those who are attending worship will remain in the sanctuary for the meeting. Those who are worshipping with us virtually will be able to be a part of the meeting through our live streaming.

We will stop the broadcast when worship is completed, and then start a new broadcast for the meeting. You will have to click on live broadcast again to enter the meeting. People who are participating virtually will be able to text Pastor Brenda with questions and even cast their votes.

Notice for Annual Meeting

At the January 26, 2025 Annual Meeting, a motion will be put forth to suspend the term limits for the position of Worship Team Leader.

Birthdays for December and January

December Birthdays

- 7 Deloris Hanley
- 16 Ben Geveke
- 26 Kathleen Geveke
- 27 Courtney Klimek
- 29 Jamie Levi

January Birthdays

- 2 Jane Kofroth
- 22 Marge Waltman



Stewardship Pledges

Thank you to everyone who has returned a pledge. If you have not sent in your pledge yet, we are asking you to do so before the end of the year. So far, \$72,511 has been pledged for 2025. We are ahead of where we were last year, but still need over \$40,000 to meet our 2025 budget. The closer we get to the amount needed to meet our budget, the less we have to take from our investments. We encourage everyone to be a part of the ministry of the Upland Baptist Church by sharing their talents and by making a financial commitment to the Church. Please consider what God is asking you to give and make a commitment to reflect that devotion.

You can bring your pledge to worship, mail it to Upland Baptist Church, c/o Dawn Rafalski, 325 Main Street, Upland, PA 19015, or email: drafalski@verizon.net. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Cook.



Food Bank

The Food Bank would like to extend our gratitude to all who helped collect and deliver donations from Scouting for Food.

We have an abundance of items from this event, but if you'd like to donate something for the month of December, we'd love some syrup.

Volunteer Opportunities

Communion

Please consider signing up to help with communion preparations. There is a sheet in the back of the sanctuary, and you can contact Priscilla Mills for details.

Sunday School

We're looking for volunteers to teach Sunday School on the following dates in 2025:

March 2 • April 6 • May 4

No lesson prep required! Please consider helping with our growing children's ministry. There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the sanctuary for anyone who's interested. Thank you!



Looking Ahead

- **Church Undecorating**
Saturday, January 4th
- **Annual Reports Due**
Tuesday, January 7th
- **Sunday Social**
January 19th following worship. We will be having a mini brunch so watch for a sign-up sheet for items to bring.

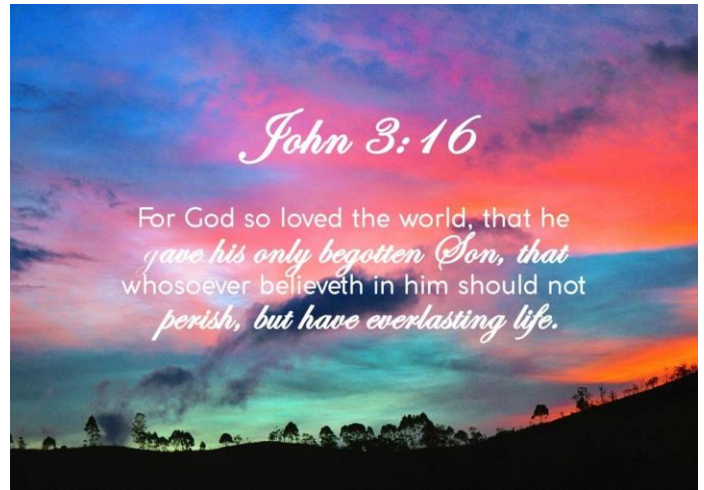
Devotional Thought...

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." ~John 3:16

When I was a kid, my parents were pretty good at picking out gifts for me at Christmas time. I loved to come down the stairs and see my pile of presents. But there was one gift that I wanted and never received—a Barbie Dream House. No matter how many times I asked, I never came into possession of that perfect gift.

What I didn't know as a youngster was that the Barbie Dream House was not the perfect gift. God giving his only Son to the world (and to me) was the perfect gift, and that gift was already given long ago. Believing in the goodness of Jesus and his power to give me eternal life makes me truly happy. A Barbie Dream House would never have given me that—never ever!

~Sue Kulp



Verse of the Year Reflection

What was your verse for 2024? Did you memorize it? Is it hanging on the fridge? How did God use that verse to help you through 2024?

As we begin to prepare to 2025, it is a good time to reflect on how God spoke to us through our verse this year. I also want to challenge you to ask God to give you a new verse for 2025. In January, I am hoping you will share your verse for 2025 with me.

~Pastor Brenda



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