



# The Messenger

Newsletter of University Place Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Champaign, Illinois 61820-4503

December-January 2020-2021

Volume 92 No. 11

## Looking Beyond Covid

Eric Freyfogle

Among the effects of our nagging pandemic is a weakened sense of having control over our plights. Under somber skies we've curtailed our gaze to the short term, to the here and now. The church of Jesus Christ, though, has endured much worse, carried onward by Christians confident in the lasting truth of their message and mission. Indeed, dark times are sometimes the best moments to take stock, reaffirm vows, and plot new paths.

The Board of UPCC will soon take up a proposed budget for 2021. As it looks ahead, it will likely take pleasure in the growth of our current ministries, despite the challenges. Community dinners have expanded and, someday soon, will return home to Page Hall. With our help the DREAAM program too has grown and will soon bring all its new programs to life in our welcoming facility. Someday soon, the many Bible study and prayer groups that have gained such ground will gather and witness in person. Someday soon, we'll make good use of the new parlor kitchen and parlor serving area. Someday soon, Samir Golescu, now chomping at the bit, will be off and running with a vigorous new music schedule. In the meantime, our new boiler system should begin operation today (many thanks to all who helped!), with enhanced means to keep temperatures steady. Our occasional water leaks are nearly all gone, and a plan is in place, at lower-than-expected cost, to rework the north-balcony roof.

Our ability to grow in 2021 will depend, as it always does, on the generosity of UniPlace members and friends. Church finances were strong as of September 30, our most recent reporting date—again, due to our generosity (and to lowered expenses and solid investment earnings). It is important, though, that we end the year strong. Please continue to mail your donations to the church—403 S. Wright Street, Champaign, 61820. We'll send out more stamped envelopes soon.

This is the time year, of course, when we run pledge campaigns; the season of Advent, a time to look ahead. Campaigns encourage us to consider not just our contributions for the coming year but, even more, our aspirations for the ways stewardship will shape and guide our lives. What kind of campaign makes sense in a time of pandemic when we cannot return pledge cards in person? The Board will soon take up the issue.

In the meantime, Advent season has arrived. Upcoming worship services will feature even more music, all recently recorded in our sanctuary. A special service is in the works for Christmas Eve. We have reason to rejoice.



Dear UniPlace Family,  
This year has required many unexpected adjustments to the pandemic including where and how we worshiped, what and how we learned and how we supported one another while being physically apart. One thing that we could count on amidst all the uncertainty was the wonderful UniPlace staff. They have gone above and beyond to keep our church community strong! They continued to care for our church members, inspired us with their words and music, deepened our community and campus connections, and kept our building safe - all while learning new technology, adjusting schedules and navigating changing public health guidelines. Physically distanced but spiritually close - We are so blessed to have them.

Every year, we ask our church family to consider donating money to a gift fund that is distributed at the end of the year to all of the staff. Please send your check to the church office by December 20th. Simply make a note in the memo line indicating "staff gift".

Thank you for your continued support of UniPlace Church. 2020 has been better because we have experienced it together!  
Deb

## *Musically Speaking*

Robert Schumann, the ultimate "poet-in-music" Germany gave us, wrote:

**Nature best teaches how to pray, and how to reverence all the gifts the Almighty has given us. She is like a vast outspread handkerchief, embroidered with God's eternal name, on which we may dry alike our tears of sorrow and of joy; she turns weeping into ecstasy, and fills our hearts with speechless, quiet reverence and resignation.**

The relationship between nature and music happens on many levels, from the merely descriptive to the essential.

An example of the descriptive is the act of instrumental or vocal trilling - repeating two pitches in quick succession, emulating elemental bird sounds. Music lovers smiled and still smile at the characteristic birdcall in *Le Coucou* by Louis-Claude Daquin (1694-1772). Johann Sebastian Bach's *Sheep May Safely Graze* exhibits both humor and substance, where the deep Christian meaning of shepherding imagery is embellished with a touch of good-hearted "musical baaing."

Beethoven's *Sixth (Pastoral) Symphony* takes the descriptive element on peaks of musical elocution, complete with bird calls, frolicking brooks, mighty thunders, and a final, all-encompassing, inherently pantheistic prayer of thanks. "More the expression of feeling than painting," Beethoven said.

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), Tōru Take-mitsu (1930-1996), and (the latter a bona fide ornithologist, aside from being a composer) Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) took inspiration from nature into extraordinary musical sophistication.

I mentioned only a few snapshots in the inexhaustible interplay between nature and classical music. One cannot omit though *Pines of Rome* by Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936), describing four groups of majestic pines in historical Roman locations, and the inexpugnable cultural memories encapsulated in their glorious fremitus.

I like to remind my students that the major chord itself, the DNA of much great music, **is not an invention but a discovery**, being embedded in the natural resonance of the Sound itself. The musician takes into temporary usage this chord - and many derived therein - does not own it.

Like the gift of life.

*Samir*

Website features sermons and music!

Please make sure you visit our website:

<https://www.uniplace.org/sermons/>

to hear the latest from Pastor Kris.

Also the Facebook page keeps you updated. <https://www.facebook.com/UniPlaceCU/>

Check out the music on Youtube at UniPlace Christian Church. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAiRoXaFQIU>

### New Address!

Suzie Reardanz

1414 Scottsdale Dr

Champaign, IL. 61821

### Birthdays for December

- 2 Samir Golescu
- 9 Mica Witt
- 11 Carol McClaine
- 14 Jim Trefzger
- 19 Jennifer Heinhorst
- 25 AJ Huffer
- 27 Jane Heaton
- 28 Jay Delost, Cara Kallembach
- 30 Marilyn Ruzic

### Anniversaries

- 18 Jessica & Ben Dager

### January Birthdays

- 11 Elizabeth Slifer
- 12 Richard Lindstrom
- 18 Ellie Broyles
- 21 Eric Freyfogle
- 27 Jim Holiman
- 29 Lucas Branaman
- 30 Ed Taylor

### Anniversaries

- 15 Deb & Bruce Reardanz
- 24 Jess & John Trefzger
- 28 Dorie & Jim Trefzger

Please Keep **Roger Mahannah** in prayer and feel free to write to him while he recovers from a broken leg.

Clark Lindsey Village

101 W. Windsor Rd.-Room 216

Urbana, IL 61801

Also, prayers and love go to Sharon Hyland's Family. She passed away on Nov. 6. Sharon was married to Jake Hyland a long time member of our congregation.

## Open Door Ministries

Can you spare food the next two months? Any type of canned food would be appreciated. Thank you for blessing others with your generosity and love!

"Hello everyone,

As you may know, my last day as Campus Connector is January 1. Jay and I have made the exciting decision to start growing our family! Although we are not pregnant yet, we know that with increasing rates of covid-19 we need to limit my risk of exposure to ensure a healthy pregnancy once I am. The great news is that I will still be a congregation member, which means I'll see everyone in worship once it is safe to congregate again.

I have no words that can express my gratitude for the last two and a half years. I've found a home in our congregation and community, my voice as a mentor and leader, and a passion for ministering to young adults. As I look back on the cherished memories, I am also looking forward to the future of becoming a mother -- and being able to celebrate this new chapter with all of you!

Because we won't be seeing each other in person for some time, I'd love to stay connected in other ways! Here is my updated contact information:

Email: [jessidelost@gmail.com](mailto:jessidelost@gmail.com)

Phone: 8154096734

Address: 601 S. Darst Street., Eureka, IL, 61530

With endless gratitude,  
Jessi"

## Community Dinner

The Community Dinner Program will take a short break while University of Illinois students return home for a longer than usual semester break and will start up again when they return in January. In the meantime, our Pantry will be open every Tuesday from 9-1 and thanks to you it is well stocked and ready for the extra distribution dates.

Please consider picking up hats and gloves for the Community Dinner Program to make available to guests who might need them.

Keep those Dream Donations Coming. A reminder that the program is looking for: Crock pots, Microwaves, Small desks (families need desks for remote learning), Bookshelves, Coffee pots, Ice coolers, Camping tents and supplies, and Dumbbells. Thanks!

Jessica Dager

## Laundry Schedule

Thank you to those who volunteered to do laundry after Community Dinner.

Jan.-Elizabeth and Fred

## University Place Christian Church

403 S. Wright Street 217 352-5118

Champaign, IL 61820-4503

Office Hours M-Th 9-3,

[www.uniplace.org](http://www.uniplace.org)

## Children Worship and

## Wonder Training

CW&W Zoom Training Dates is January 22nd (evening) and January 23 (morning). If anyone is interested in signing up to be a Greeter or a Storyteller, please contact Jessica Trefzger at

[jessicatrefzger1@gmail.com](mailto:jessicatrefzger1@gmail.com).

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## Seminary Spotlight

### Reflections from my Disciples History and Polity to Policy :

The founders of the Disciples movement believed unity was a precursor to peace and that peace between Christians might eventually lead to peace for the whole world. Our early founders, while virtually indistinguishable from other Protestant Christians in many ways, longed to expand the name "Christian" to include any person, regardless of adherence to creed or doctrinal belief, who desired to know and follow in the way of Jesus. When disputes came up between brothers and sisters in Christ around meaning, practice, belief - Disciples were encouraged to, with humility, choose fellowship, friendship, and unity over being "right." That longing for unity amidst a diversity of belief set us on a trajectory that has distinguished us from other denominations and movements, and perhaps uniquely prepared us to meet this current moment.

Many times during this class I've been reminded of the Japanese tradition of Kintsugi, where artisans fix broken pottery with precious materials, usually gold. The resulting piece acknowledges both the brokenness but also the strength and beauty of something put back together again with skill and love. I believe we as Disciples have an opportunity to function like that precious metal - bringing broken people, broken systems, broken communities, back together again, as we continue to prize the fragile power of cooperation, standing shoulder to shoulder with one another, and holding on to one another, despite the storms of life.

What a pleasure to be among you and to learn from you long time Disciples as many of you operate this way so instinctively.

Love, Jess Dager

