

# *The Grapevine*



## *Christmas Events at United*

**December 8 (11am) - Christmas Luncheon**

**December 13 (6:30pm) - The Christmas Story  
by The Creative Arts Academy**

**December 14 (3-5pm) - Candy Cane Carnival**

**December 15 (11am) - Cookie Walk Fellowship**

**December 20 (6pm) - Creative Arts Academy Christmas Party**

**December 21 (6:30pm) - Longest Night Service**

**December 24 (7pm) - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

*December 25 - Merry Christmas!*

# *A Year In Review*

## Reverend Edward Dunn

Many of us will receive at least one Christmas card that, in addition to a holiday greeting, includes a letter describing how the year has been. The missive describes the high points in family members' lives and may speak briefly about the challenges and heartaches as well. Family vacations, births and graduations, marriages and school achievements are always welcome news to read about. The death of a loved one, the loss of a job, or a move far from family and home may move us to tears. These letters or notes are an invitation into the life of a family; they serve as a reminder of the special connection we have with the author and their loved ones.

As we near the end of 2024, our church celebrates its first anniversary under the name, United Presbyterian Church. It seems strange to call something a first anniversary when the connection between us has been in place for nearly five years. The relationship begun by Palma Sola and Westminster in 2020 has grown stronger because you were willing to take on the goal of becoming one congregation. It is my privilege as your pastor to shepherd the two churches into the reality of being a single congregation – united by our love of God and each other – and declared to the community by the choice of our name – United Presbyterian Church.

There has been much to celebrate this year. The official merger of the churches in December 2024. The beginning of new opportunities for learning: our Present Word Class on Sundays and special classes including the Mayberry Bible Study and our summer Between Sundays series. The joy in our labor as we have now made more than 10,000 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for Our Daily Bread diners. The planning for a new holiday season event – Candy Cane Carnival – for Palma Sola Elementary students and families on December 14th. The sharing of talents from our Chancel and Bell Choirs and our Praise Band in worship. The offering of Drive Thru Ashes on Ash Wednesday was certainly a different practice for some and a welcome opportunity for the drivers and those who stopped by at the beginning of Lent.

The year has not been without its heartaches for our congregation. Our All Saints worship service commemorated the passing of seven members. We said good-bye to other members who have moved from the area to be closer to family. We are in prayer for others who because of health matters are no longer able to join us in worship each week. We are saddened by these losses and changes to our congregation's life but we give thanks to God for the sure and certain hope of the resurrection and the assurance that nothing can separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ.



Our program year for 2025 is A Season of Possibilities. The Session has begun consideration of the input provided by my members during our Ministry Fair event. We will be exploring areas where God has already called us to mission; and keeping our eyes, ears, and hearts open to new occasions and possibilities that God has in store. One of these new possibilities is in a deepening relationship with the staff, children, and families of Palma Sola Elementary. We are now a community partner with the school which will allow us to join in activities and share in promotion of our church to those families. I believe that our Season of Possibilities includes growing in our connection with families in our neighborhood. This will require some new thinking and may call us to re-learn and re-live our past connections. I'm eager to discover what else is in store for us.

So, as one year ends and a new one begins, this is my review of the year. It's not thorough nor complete but is meant to inspire you to recall other blessings we have received and ways we can become a blessing to others in the future.

**May you have a happy and blessed Christmas and New Year,  
Edward**



# November Session Highlights

- Endorsed resumption of 'between the Sundays' Bible Study on Wednesdays in December to explore the Advent messages in depth.
- Approved repair of the drain line serving the Ladies Restroom at a cost of \$4,092.
- Approved air conditioning replacement or repairs projects totaling \$9,051.
- Approved a project to install tempered glass panels in the front doors of the sanctuary to improve security during worship at a cost of \$4,200, with the funds to be included in the 2025 operating budget.
- Approved Dennis Schooley and Diane Clark for membership on the Investments Committee.

## Reminder: Please Turn off the Lights!



Help meet our church pledge, which aligns with PC(USA)'s denomination-wide pledge, to reduce our carbon footprint 25% by July 2026.

Where you see signs next to light switches, "Please turn off lights when leaving," please turn off the lights! This will also help reduce our operating costs.

### **CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSALS**

**WEDNESDAYS AT 7P**

**IN THE SANCTUARY**

### **BELL CHOIR REHEARSALS**

**WEDNESDAYS AT 6P**

**IN THE SANCTUARY**





# Christmas Luncheon

**December 8th**

After Service

**The Church will provide Ham**

Please bring your favorite dish to share.  
A Sign Up Sheet will be in the Narthex  
to let us know how many are coming.

**Last Name Starts With:**

**A to N - Side Dish**

**O to Z - Dessert**

## *Join Us for a* **Cookie Walk**

**Sunday, December 15th  
after the service**

*To benefit Turning Points*



**Please Bring in 2 Dozen or More Cookies on  
Sunday Dec. 15**

We will be selling a cookie box for \$5. You may  
fill up to a dozen cookies in the box. Proceeds  
will buy socks for Turning Points & Daily Bread.

See sign up sheet.

## *Longest Night* *Christmas Service*

**DEC. 21ST | 6:30PM**

**Parlor Room**

Also called Blue Christmas. On this day,  
Pastor Edward will lead a service to help  
people that have lost loved ones and  
are experiencing grief

## *Christmas Eve*

**Candlelight Service**

**Tuesday, Dec. 24th | 7pm**

It's a time to come together with  
friends & family to celebrate and  
reflect on the true meaning of  
Christmas.

*Jesus comes to bring Peace to the world and to  
people's hearts.*

# December Outreach Update

It is hard to believe the year is almost over, but what a year it has been! You have worked together to reach out with love and service in so many ways, and we look forward with gratitude to all the things we can accomplish as **United Presbyterian Church** in the future.

## November Outreach Highlights:

- You generously gave monetary contributions to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to help with hurricane recovery and other crisis around the world.
- Folks volunteered every Friday at Our Daily Bread.
- You wrote letters to 2nd graders as part of our Pen Pal Program with Palma Sola Elementary School.
- You shopped for and filled over 50 wrapped shoe boxes to help provide gifts to seniors served by Meals on Wheels this Christmas.
- You made an additional 400 PB&J sandwiches that helped feed hungry clients of Our Daily Bread in Bradenton.
- You lovingly donated to the Salvation Army Angel Tree to help buy Christmas gifts for those “angels” not previously selected from the tree. \$348 of our budget from the Marshall Fund was added to make an even bigger impact.
- You reached out to our neighborhood families by participating in Palma Sola Elementary’s Harvest Roundup. UPC provided a lollipop ring toss game and volunteers shared information about our church with parents and children. It was a lot of fun for all involved!

## December Outreach Opportunities:

- Our **DOES It (Done On Every Sunday)** project for December is making **12 Days of Christmas food gifts bags to donate to those in need.** Pick up a large fabric reusable grocery bag and place the following items in it, item by item each day as you give thanks to God for your own blessings:

**Day 1 – Jar of peanut butter | Day 2 – Jar of jelly | Day 3 – Box of pasta**  
**Day 4 – Jar of spaghetti sauce | Day 5 – Can of corn**  
**Day 6 – Can of green beans | Day 7 – Box of mac ‘n’ cheese**  
**Day 8 – Box of cereal | Day 9 – 2 lb. bag of rice | Day 10 – can of soup**  
**Day 11 – Can of chicken or tuna**  
**Day 12 – roll of toilet tissue & a bar of soap**

Return your bags to the Narthex or church office by **December 24th.** Filled bags will be taken to Our Daily Bread for distribution through the Loaves and Fishes food pantry.



# *December Outreach Opportunities*

## **December Opportunities Continued:**

- Participate in the STREAM Annual Community Assessment Meeting on Monday, December 9th at 6:30 pm at Pathways Christian Fellowship Church. STREAM (Stronger Together Reaching Equality Across Manatee), of which UPC is a member congregation, is a grassroots non-partisan faith-based community organization that aims to take direct action against poverty and injustices in Manatee County
- The Annual Assessment Meeting will select an area of focus for the coming year, and input from the community is crucial. Please contact Andrea Harmon if you are interested in attending this important event.
- Please join members of the Outreach Team for Cookies, Cocoa, and Caroling at Brookdale Palma Sola on Tuesday, December 10th from 2-3 pm. As part of our Older Adult Ministry we will visit and share Christmas cheer with the residents there, and it would be great to have extra voices and helping hands. Hope to see you there!
- Volunteer to help with our Candy Cane Carnival on Saturday, December 14th from 3-5 pm in Fellowship Hall. We will be welcoming children and families from the community with a variety of free games and activities to celebrate the holiday season. We will need lots of people to make this a success, so please sign up in the Narthex or call the church office to volunteer. Sitting and standing jobs are available including greeting families, helping with cookie decorating, crafts, snacks, and more. Let's show our UPC spirit and love during this special event by getting involved.
- You are invited to a Christmas wrapping party on Saturday, December 21st from 10 am – noon in Fellowship Hall to prepare socks and cards for clients of Our Daily Bread. For many years member Amy Pedon has been giving out socks and other goodies there on Christmas Eve morning, and the Outreach Team has been blessed to partner with her by purchasing some of the supplies needed. Join us for a time of fellowship and fun as we wrap, write, and enjoy some beverages and light snacks. Friends and family are welcome.
- Contribute to our 3 Cents a Meal Offering on December 29th and help fight hunger in our community. The month's total comes to \$8.19 but feel free to round up!

# Winter Outreach Offerings

## December Outreach Offering

Our Outreach Offering for December will go to the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Christmas Joy Offering, supporting leaders of the Church – past, present, and future. Your gifts will make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. They will also provide assistance to current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs.

You may donate to Christmas Joy:

- during the worship service, in your offering envelope,
- by mailing a check to the church office with “Christmas Joy” in the memo line, or
- Palma Sola members may also contribute through [online giving](#)

## January Outreach Offering

Our Outreach Offering for January will go to Our Daily Bread of Bradenton to support free meals and a food pantry for those in need. Our Daily Bread staff and regular volunteers (that's us on Fridays!) serve hearty meals seven days a week from 10-11:30 am. At Our Daily Bread's self-serve food pantry, clients can shop free once a month for fresh produce and other food items of their choice.

You may donate to Our Daily Bread of Bradenton:

- during the worship service, in your offering envelope,
- by mailing a check to the church office with “ODB” in the memo line, or
- Palma Sola members may also contribute through [online giving](#)



# January & Ongoing Outreach

## **January Outreach Opportunities:**

- Our DOES It (Done On Every Sunday) project for January is collecting egg cartons for Mision Peniel Farmworker Ministry in Immokalee. The Mision provides food, clothing, fellowship, and spiritual support to farmworkers and their families. They receive a wonderful donation of eggs from a local farm each week and are in constant need of ½ or 1 dozen cartons in order to distribute the eggs to the community. Drop your cartons in the bins in the Narthex or bring them to the church office through January 26th and help support this important ministry.
- Please join us for our rescheduled Hope Seeds packing event on Saturday, January 18th from 10 am – noon in Fellowship Hall. Join with other volunteers to assemble seed packets to be distributed all over the world. Hope Seeds is a Christian, charitable organization that seeks to improve the nutrition of the poorest in the world by providing quality garden seed and agricultural education through Christian missionaries and organizations. All supplies are provided and work is done seated at tables. Come for an hour or stay the whole time. Friends and family are welcome.

## **Ongoing Opportunities:**

- Servers for Our Daily Bread on Fridays are always needed. Contact Dorothy Simes if you would like to volunteer.
- Please keep in mind our Blessing Box by the east parking lot. The Blessing Box serves as a mini food pantry for our local neighborhood, and you are welcome to add to it or take from it as needed.
- Contributions of loose change, soft money, and checks for FELT (Feeding Empty Little Tummies) are always welcome. To donate, use the envelopes in the pews or mail a check to the church office with “FELT” in the memo line.
- Join your church family in Fellowship Hall after worship each week to make PB&J sandwiches to share with the clients of Our Daily Bread.
- The Holy Strollers walking group meets every Friday at 9 am at the north entrance of Robinson Preserve. You are invited to gather for exercise, conversation, and a short devotional in the great outdoors.

Children's Theater Productions  
*presents*



# A SAVIOR is BORN- The Christmas Story



Two Performances! Please Join Us!

Tuesday, December 10th, 2024, 6:30pm  
Manatee Life Church 315 15th St E,  
Bradenton, FL 34208

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Friday, December 13th, 2024, 6:30pm  
United Presbyterian Church 6510 3rd Ave.  
West Bradenton, FL 34209

with

Live Instrumentalists and Vocalists!

For more information Contact Lane J. Ruise (941) 348-5662



## HOLY STROLLERS WALKING GROUP



**JOIN US ON A WEEKLY STROLL  
TO GET SOME FRESH AIR**

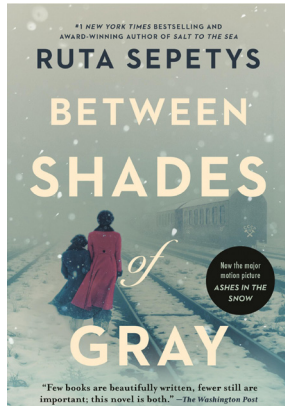
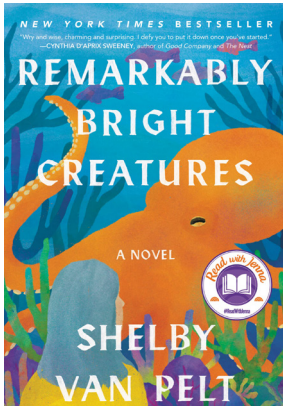
**EVERY FRIDAY STARTING SEPT 27 | 9AM**



**ROBINSON PRESERVE  
(NORTH ENTRANCE)**



## Palma Sola Book Club



**DEC 9 | 1 - 2:30PM JAN 13 | 1 - 2:30PM**

Join in any second Monday at 12pm  
in the Media Center & Zoom for fun  
conversation.

### **2024/25 READING LIST**

For more information, call  
Vicki Schooley at (941) 518-2315.

## Men's Group



## MEN'S GROUP

You're invited to attend the Morning  
Men's Group. Get to know the men you  
see in church. Share your story. Enjoy  
fellowship.

**MEETINGS START AT 8:30A**

**DEC 5 | JAN 2** - Fellowship and breakfast |  
Poppi's Place restaurant

**DEC 19 | JAN 16** Fellowship & a discussion  
about Christian Living | Fellowship Hall

Please contact Rich Wachunis  
[rwachunis@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:rwachunis@tampabay.rr.com)

## 3 Cents A Meal Offering

With five Sundays, December is another month of opportunity to donate to the  
3 Cents-A-Meal program!

**Next Collection: December 29, 2024**

Last collected on September 29, 2024. Next five Sunday month is December 2024.

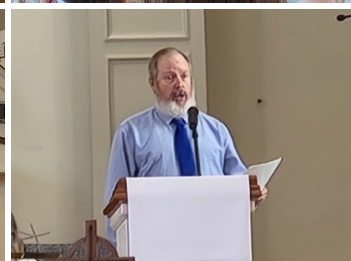
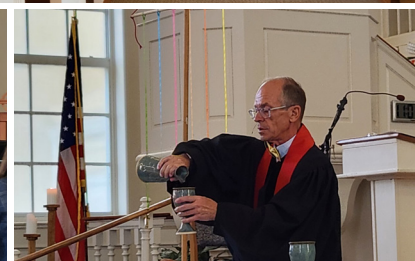
91 days x 3 meals a day = 273 meals.

273 meals x .03 = \$8.19. Please feel free to round up to \$10!

Offerings go to Beth-el, Mision Peniel and Our Daily Bread after each collection.



# November Photo Gallery





## December Birthdays & Anniversaries

**DEC 2** Richard Haynes, Jean Scott  
**DEC 3** Richard Bergman  
**DEC 4** Jeanette Lindo  
**DEC 7** Eugene Adams  
**DEC 8** Betty Butler  
**DEC 9** Lois & Norman Lee  
**DEC 11** Zan Mustaine  
**DEC 12** Tekla McClimon  
**DEC 16** Beverly Zimmer

**DEC 21** Lynne Smith  
Robert & Myrna Felix  
**DEC 22** Peter White  
**DEC 23** Jim Wedel  
**DEC 24** Sherri Kramer  
**DEC 30** Chris Felix  
**DEC 31** Jack & Nancy Slocum

## January Birthdays & Anniversaries

**JAN 1** Sherril Scannell  
Roy Williams, John Progar  
Frank Jenkins  
**JAN 3** George Clark  
**JAN 4** Diane Clark  
**JAN 5** Valerie Beechy  
**JAN 6** Andrea Harmon  
**JAN 11** Emmett Scott  
**JAN 13** Cindy Perez  
**JAN 14** Woody Johnson

**JAN 17** Karen Jones  
**JAN 19** Elenita Musgrove  
Betty Wolfe  
**JAN 21** Mary Morse  
Nancy Atherton  
**JAN 22** Mary Jane Shiplett  
**JAN 27** Vicki Elzer  
**JAN 28** Chuck Elzer  
Dennis Schooley



# PRAYER GROUP

2nd & 4th Tuesday 11a | Room 14

- United Presbyterian Church | Dec 24 & Jan 25 Newsletter -

6510 3rd Ave W.  
Bradenton, FL 34209  
941-792-3141

[pspchurch.org](http://pspchurch.org)

# December

2024

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

1

Present Word 8:45a  
Worship Service  
w/ Communion  
10a | Fellowship  
Earth Care Comm.  
Engagement | 11a  
PEN PAL LETTERS

2

3

*Outreach / 3p*

4

BETWEEN SUNDAYS  
10:30A

Bell Choir | 6p  
Chancel Choir | 7p

5

**MEN'S GROUP  
8:30a | Poppi's**

*Renewal 6p*

6

**HOLY  
STROLLERS | 9a**  
Our Daily Bread  
9:30a

7

8

Present Word 8:45a  
Worship Service  
10a | **Christmas  
Luncheon**

9

*Palma Sola  
Book Club / 1p*  
**STREAM Annual  
Comm. Assembly  
6:30p**

10

**PRAYER  
GROUP | 11a**  
Carols, Cocoa  
& Cookies @  
Brookdale | 2p

11

BETWEEN SUNDAYS  
10:30A

Bell Choir | 6p  
Chancel Choir | 7p

12

**TRIPLE CROWN  
MTG | 11a**  
Finance - 3:30P

13

**HOLY  
STROLLERS | 9a**  
Our Daily Bread  
9:30a  
CAA - The Christmas  
Story | 6:30p

14

**Candy Cane  
Carnival | 3p**

15

Present Word 8:45a  
Worship Service  
10a | Fellowship  
& **Cookie Walk**

16

**UPC SESSION  
| 1p**

17

18

BETWEEN SUNDAYS  
10:30A

Bell Choir | 6p  
Chancel Choir | 7p

19

**MEN'S GROUP  
8:30a**

20

**HOLY  
STROLLERS | 9a**  
Our Daily Bread  
9:30a  
CAA - Christmas  
Party | 6p

21

Gift Wrapping  
For Our Daily  
Bread | 10a  
**Longest Night  
Service | 6:30p**

22

Present Word 8:45a  
Worship Service  
10a | Fellowship

23

24

**Christmas Eve  
Candlelight  
Service | 7p**

25

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

26

27

**HOLY  
STROLLERS | 9a**  
Our Daily Bread  
9:30a

28

29

Present Word 8:45a  
Worship Service  
10a | Fellowship  
**3 CENTS A MEAL**

30

31

**New Years Eve**

**Church Office Hours Monday - Thursday | 9am - 4pm**

View the online church [Calendar](#) for latest information about Sunday worship services, Bible study, outreach and other events. Livestreamed and recorded worship services may be viewed at [Online Worship](#).

# January

2025

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

			1 NEW YEARS DAY  Bell Choir   6p Chancel Choir   7p	2 MEN'S GROUP 8:30a   Poppi's  Renewal 6p	3 HOLY STROLLERS   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	4
5 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service w/ Communion 10a   Fellowship	6	7  Outreach / 3p	8  Bell Choir   6p Chancel Choir   7p	9	10 HOLY STROLLERS   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	11
12 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service 10a   Fellowship	13  Palma Sola Book Club / 1p	14 PRAYER GROUP   11a	15  Bell Choir   6p Chancel Choir   7p	16 Finance - 3:30P	17 HOLY STROLLERS   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	18 HOPE SEEDS   10a
19 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service 10a   Fellowship	20 UPC SESSION   1p	21	22  Bell Choir   6p Chancel Choir   7p	23 MEN'S GROUP 8:30a	24 HOLY STROLLERS   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a Feb Grapevine Deadline	25 SESSION LONG RANGE PLANNING WORKSHOP
26 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service 10a   Hometown Potluck @ 11a	27	28 PRAYER GR50UP   11a	29  Bell Choir   6p Chancel Choir   7p	30	31 HOLY STROLLERS   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	

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