



The Grapevine



Short & Sweet...

Reverend Edward Dunn

February may be a short month, according to the number of days, but those days are active ones at United Presbyterian Church. I'll summarize a few of the events happening over the next 28 days and encourage you to read about them in greater detail within this newsletter.

February 1 will be our **Souper Bowl Sunday**. A suggested \$5 donation gets you a bowl of soup, bread and a cookie. Our donations will go to the Food Bank of Manatee.

February 8 is **Scout Sunday** and we'll recognize our scout groups, Troop and Pack 22, during worship. They will be serving up pancakes during our fellowship time afterward.

Our **Annual Congregational Meeting** will take place on February 15. This will be an opportunity to hear reports about the past year and to engage in the work of the congregation.

The season of Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday, February 18**. Join us for a light lunch beginning at 11:30a.m. followed by a worship service, including the imposition of ashes, at 12:30p.m. Weekly opportunities for learning and a meal will take place each Wednesday during Lent, beginning February 25 through March 25, beginning at 10:30a.m.

United church will host Peace River Presbytery's first meeting of 2026 on Thursday, February 19 beginning at 9a.m. Volunteers are needed to help with greeting Elders and Ministers from other churches in our area, assisting with refreshments and the lunch that will be provided by Westminster Communities.



I invite you to attend our Lenten study series, “**Why Easter Matters**” beginning **Wednesday, February 25 at 10:30a.m.** in the Parlor. These lessons focus on these ideas:

- *When you decide to follow Jesus, it will cost you something. But whatever you’ve replaced God with is less than God.*
- *When we bargain with God, we are responsible for the outcome. When we surrender, God takes responsibility for the outcome of the journey.*
- *God is not what you have experienced. You can trust God despite your experiences.*
- *The church didn’t create the story of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus launched the church and created our faith.*

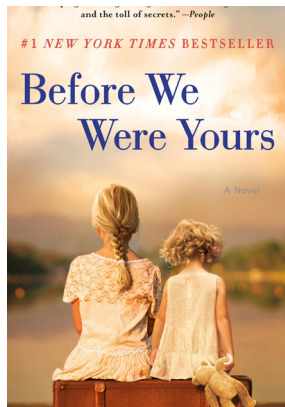
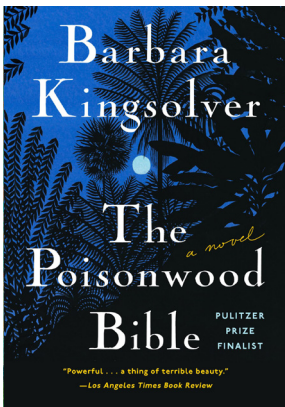
Our study time will also include a light lunch meal afterward. This is an occasion to visit or even continue discussions from class. Please consider joining us as your schedule allows.

Blessings,
Edward

Dec & Jan Session Highlights

- Session approved the Income/Expense Budget for 2026 with an operating deficit of \$109,179. Details will be available to the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting.
- Approved a contract to obtain real estate appraisals of the church buildings and the campus property as vacant land.
- Approved the schedule of services for the Advent and Easter season.
- Rescheduled Session meetings to begin at 3:15 pm on the third Tuesday of the month to accommodate its members.
- Approved the 2025 Annual Statistical Report for Presbytery.
- Celebrated the total monetary value of outreach and mission contributions by the membership for 2025 at \$85,434 ! This number does not include the value of in-kind gifts of food, clothing, books, etc. made through other specific collections during the year.
- Approved additional expenditures for audio and visual monitoring, as well as for fire alarm equipment, to ensure that the office building elevator upgrade will meet new State requirements.
- Reviewed procedures for hosting the Stated Presbytery Meeting on February 19th and assigned responsibilities for various duties.

United Book Club



FEB 9 | 1 - 2:30PM MAR 9 | 1 - 2:30PM

Join in any second Monday at 1pm in the Media Center & Zoom for fun conversation.

2026 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

FEB 5 - Fellowship and breakfast | Poppi's Place restaurant

FEB 19 - Fellowship & a discussion about Christian Living | Fellowship Hall

Please contact Ron Dickerson
rondickersonupc@gmail.com

Outreach Update & Opportunities

Happy New Year! Let's plan a year showing our love for others through OUTREACH. December and January were full of events celebrating Christmas by giving to others.

Dec 2025 - Jan 2026 Outreach Activities:

- We renewed our membership with S.T.R.E.A.M., Stronger Together Reaching Equality Across Manatee.
- We held a Food Drive on December 13th, collecting non-perishable food goods for Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry.
- Christmas Caroling, stories and jokes, plus cookies and hot chocolate was enjoyed at Brookdale/Palma Sola Assisted living residence. There were seven folks from the congregation and Woody at the piano!
- We donated 18 bags of food, as part of "The 12 Days of Christmas", to the Food Bank for the December DOES IT project.
- We purchased Christmas gifts for a student in need at Palma Sola Elementary School.
- A second round of pen pal letters were received and returned to Palma Sola Elementary School.
- 29 Christmas gifts were purchased for the students in the Creative Arts Program.
- Many enjoyed the sock wrapping and Christmas card writing event for Our Daily Bread.
- The Cookie Walk proceeds were \$180 which will go for socks for next for Turning Points.
- Christmas Joy offering was \$985.
- January outreach offering is for the Food Bank.
- Habitat for Humanity workday was January 31st.
- The Dreyer Trust distribution for 2025 was \$47,693.
- Holy Strollers started back up on January 8th at the north entrance to Robinsons' Preserve every Friday at 9AM.
- Every Friday folks served at Our Daily Bread.
- 100 PB and J sandwiches were made every Sunday after service.

THE TOTOAL MONETARY CONTRIBUTION AS A CHURCH FOR 2025 WAS
\$85,433.86

(this includes the Dreyer Trust)

THANK YOU!

February Outreach Opportunities:

- The DOES IT Project for February is to donate cans or boxes of soup for the Food Bank.

Souper Sunday

Support our Souper Sunday on February 1st! Gather in Fellowship Hall after worship and enjoy a yummy bowl of soup, bread, and a cookie for a suggested donation of \$5. Proceeds will go to The Food Bank of Manatee to help the hungry in our local community. To-go containers will also be available. Hope to see you there!

Outreach Opportunities & Offering

Hope Seeds

Pack a seed, fill a need! Please join us for our Spring Hope Seeds packing event on **Thursday, February 26th from 10am-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 sitting 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.
- We continue to collect non-perishable food items in the cart in the Narthex to donate to Our Daily Bread of Bradenton. They are always in need of shelf stable items to stock the Loaves & Fishes food pantry.
- 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. Thank you to all who have been bringing in supplies, making sandwiches, and helping SPREAD the love of Christ to your neighbors in need!

February Outreach Offering

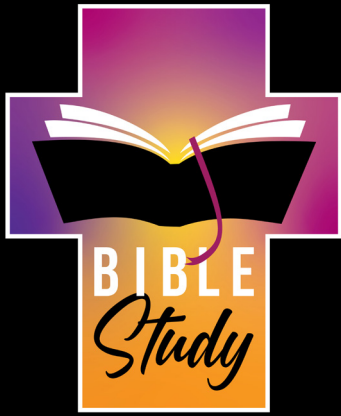
Our Outreach Offering for February will go to **Our Daily Bread of Bradenton** to support free meals and a food pantry for those in need. Our Daily Bread staff and regular volunteers (that's us on Fridays!) serve hearty meals seven days a week from 10-11:30 am. At Our Daily Bread's self-serve food pantry, 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
- or contribute through online giving

A United Holiday Season





“The Present Word” - BIBLE STUDY

We gather each Sunday morning at 8:45 a.m. for Bible Study using The Present Word curriculum from the Presbyterian Church (USA). New materials are provided each quarter, making it easy to join at any time — everyone is welcome!

Join Us this Lenten Season!

Come walk with us through Lent, Holy Week, and Easter — all are welcome to worship, learn, and celebrate together.



Ash Wednesday Service **February 18th @ 12:30**

Lenten Lunches

Wednesdays, Feb. 18 – March 25 | 11:30 a.m.
Soup • Salad • Bread • Dessert

Bible Between Sunday Study: “Why Easter Matters”

Wednesdays, Feb. 25 – March 25 | 10:30 a.m. in the parlor

HOLY WEEK EVENTS:

- Palm Sunday Service – March 29
- Maundy Thursday Dinner & Service – April 2 | 6:00 p.m.
- Easter Sunrise Service – April 5 | 7:00 a.m. (Botanical Garden)
- Easter Sunday Service – April 5 | 10:00 a.m.

More information is coming next month.

Thank You United! You Make A Difference!

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-23"



Immokalee, December 2025

Dear Pastors, Mission Committees & Donors,

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for your generosity during our Christmas Joy Drive! Because of your support, we were able to bring smiles and holiday cheer to over 550 children and 200 families in the Immokalee community.

Your donation of toys, books, and financial contributions ensured that every child we serve received a gift to enjoy this Christmas. We saw firsthand your kindness made. While the past months have been a difficult time of fear and uncertainty for many of the families and children we serve, your support transformed last Friday into a day of genuine Christmas joy.


Attached to this letter is a card with messages of gratitude written and drawn by the children and their parents in Spanish, Creole, and English.

We feel truly blessed to have you as part of the ministry among the farmworkers. You made many Christmas wishes come true, and we hope you have a very blessed New Year!

With deepest gratitude,


Mari Francis Estrada
Mission Coordinator
m.castillo@missionpeniel.org
(239) 839-3738 Call/Text

Dear Mission Committee,
Thank you so much
- your generous donation!
- are blessed by your
financial support!
Ang USA has some exciting
initiatives beginning in
the community. With God's will we will
be able to touch more lives
through His Word. We humbly
ask for your prayers that
the mission be successful
spreading the Good News


MAY HIS BIRTH BRING YOU
peace & happiness
NOW & ALWAYS.

as we seek to honor God
We wish you a very
Merry Christmas and God
Blessings to you all now and
in the New Year!
Gratefully, Lucia L. Linares
Director



DOING THE
MOST GOOD

William Booth, Founder
Brian Peddle, General
Commissioner Kelly Igleheart, Territorial Commander
Lt. Colonels Kent and Melody Davis, Divisional Leaders
Majors Thomas and Jennifer Richmond, Corps Officers

December 23, 2025

United Presbyterian Church
6510 3rd Avenue W
Bradenton, FL 34209

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your support of The Salvation Army with your gift of \$305 on 12/7/2025. Your donation will help us provide programs and services for Manatee County neighbors in need.

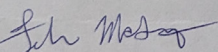
In a world brimming with challenges, it's supporters like you who light the way for positive change. Your contribution isn't simply a gift; it's a beacon of hope for the nearly 65 guests who find nightly refuge in our shelter, including the five families with children who now have a safe place to rest their heads.

Thanks to you, we're providing over 4,000 meals every single month. That's more than 200 daily opportunities to share nourishment and a warm smile with someone facing hard times. Your generosity is the reason someone will go to bed with a full stomach and a lighter heart.

I want you to know that your donation does more than address immediate needs; it fosters a sense of community and caring that's absolutely priceless. Each day, as we serve those most vulnerable among us, we are reminded of your kindness.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 941-757-5770.

With heartfelt thanks,



Felicia McDermott
Special Events & Volunteer Coordinator

Your Donation Helps a student & further
supports Bible Mission USA.

Non-profit 501c3



Thank you, Bible Mission donors,
for your ongoing support. Students
across southern Bible Collages are
signing up for 2026 Bible Mission
USA volunteer rotation and
evangelistic leadership training..
Each participant will complete their
hours and a certificate signed by
Rev. Dr. Paul Eckel for graduation
requirements.

Sharing God's Word. "Changing Lives"

In 2025, more than 6,000 pocket Gospels were distributed bringing hope to families impacted by flood, fire and weather-disaster are

A photograph of several young green seedlings with two leaves each, growing out of dark brown soil. The seedlings are in the foreground, and more are visible in the background, slightly out of focus. The entire image is framed by a thin green border.

Volunteers needed...

to pack Hope Seeds!

**Thursday, February 26th
10 am–12 pm**

**United Presbyterian Church
6510 3rd Ave West Bradenton**

A community event, all welcome ages 8+

HopeSeeds.org improves nutrition of
the world's poorest by providing garden seed
and agricultural education worldwide.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

FEB 8 William Ball, Jane Mittel
FEB 10 Gregg Pead

FEB 24 Janesse Fritzmeier
FEB 25 Martha Johnson

**HOLY STROLLERS
WALKING GROUP**



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

EVERY FRIDAY AT 9AM



**ROBINSON PRESERVE
(NORTH ENTRANCE)**



PRAYER GROUP

2nd & 4th Tuesday 11a | Room 14

- United Presbyterian Church | February 2026 Newsletter -

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

Church Website: upchurchbradenton.org

February

2026

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

1 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service w/ Communion 10a SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP 11A	2	3 <i>Outreach / 3p</i>	4 Bell Choir 6p Chancel Choir 7p	5 MEN'S GROUP 8:30a Poppi's <i>Renewal - 6p</i>	6 HOLY STROLLERS 9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	7
8 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service 10a Fellowship	9 <i>Book Club / 1p</i>	10 PRAYER GROUP 11A	11 Bell Choir 6p Chancel Choir 7p	12 FINANCE - 3:30P	13 HOLY STROLLERS 9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	14 VALENTINE'S DAY
15 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service 10a Fellowship	16 PRESIDENTS DAY	17 UPC SESSION 3:15p	18 <i>Ash Wednesday Lunch 11:30a</i> <i>Service 12:30p</i> Bell Choir 6p Chancel Choir 7p	19 MEN'S GROUP 8:30a UPC HOSTS PEACE RIVER MTG 9A	20 HOLY STROLLERS 9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a GRAPEVINE INPUTS DEADLINE	21
22 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service 10a Fellowship	23	24 PRAYER GROUP 11A	25 <i>Between Sundays 10:30am</i> LENTEN SOUP 11:30A Bell Choir 6p Chancel Choir 7p	26 HOPE SEEDS PACKING 10AM	27 HOLY STROLLERS 9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	28

UPC - Resource Links

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](#).