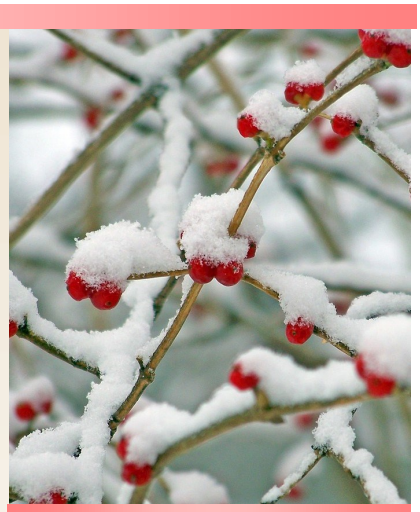
February 1, 2024

DOWNTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Celebration!



Starlings in Winter

Mary Oliver

Chunky and noisy,
but with stars in their black feathers,
they spring from the telephone wire
and instantly

they are acrobats
in the freezing wind.
And now, in the theater of air,
they swing over buildings,

dipping and rising;
they float like one stippled star
that opens,
becomes for a moment fragmented,

then closes again;
and you watch
and you try
but you simply can't imagine

how they do it
with no articulated instruction, no pause,
only the silent confirmation
that they are this notable thing,

Continued on pg 3

Inside this Issue

50th Celebration Article..... 2

Guest Pastor Schedule
Liturgist Schedule…….... 3

Food Pantry Dist. Support
Psalms+ Study Group…...4

Pastor Search,
Session Notes ……..…...5

Book Group,
Sophia Circle ……6

Who Shares Our Building
The Quakers and RIDC ...7

DEIB-Code of Conduct....8

Sunday Forum.....9

50th Celebration Poster ...…..... 10

DUPC Committees..... .11

Congregational Learning
Day, Save the Date…12, 13

Historian's Corner 13

February Birthdays 14

Calendar ……..…14, 15, 16

We are 50 years old!!

For some of us, that's a really good deal. For others it's "not yet!!"

Dear friends,

This year we are joyously celebrating our 50 years together as The Downtown United Presbyterian Church. We strive to be a community of faith, which seeks justice, and promotes a creative and multifaceted spirituality that reflects both tradition and newness. Over 50 years we have continued to build on our tremendous legacy of music making, spiritual seeking, and, of course, the joy that comes from our support, warmth, and love of each other as individuals, and collectively as members of the beloved community.

Please join us for our kick-off luncheon on Sunday, February 11th where we will continue to celebrate together our Golden Jubilee Year! We will have a delicious catered lunch following worship in the Hallock Lounge. The menu will include lasagna, salad, bread, dessert and beverages. Vegetarian and gluten free options will be available.

Kim McConnell will be our fun and fabulous emcee, and members of the choir will join us in this celebration! If you would like, we invite you to bring a po-em, writing, photo, and/or piece of artwork about dreams, light, or hope for the future. This work can created by you or by someone else. We will share them with each other and add them to a memory book we are creating to commemo-rate this special anniversary.

RSVPs are encouraged - just call the front desk or use the QR code on the flyer on **page ten** of this newsletter. **We can't wait to see you there!**

Your 50th Anniversary Planning Team,
Nancy Brown, Kim McConnell,
Becky Parks, Carol Snook,
and Lee Wright.

Forward from 50: Lighting the Way!

Guest Pastors in February

In the coming month we will be extending a warm welcome to those listed below who have graciously agreed to lead us in worship. Thank you to Worship Chair, Nancy Brown for the work she has done to bring them to our pulpit.

February 4 - the Rev. Val Fowler
February 11 - Lea Kone
February 18 - John DeHority
February 25 - the Rev. Celie Katovich

February Liturgists

February 4—Bob Richane **February 18**—Pat Tweet
February 11—David Lee **February 25**—John Williams

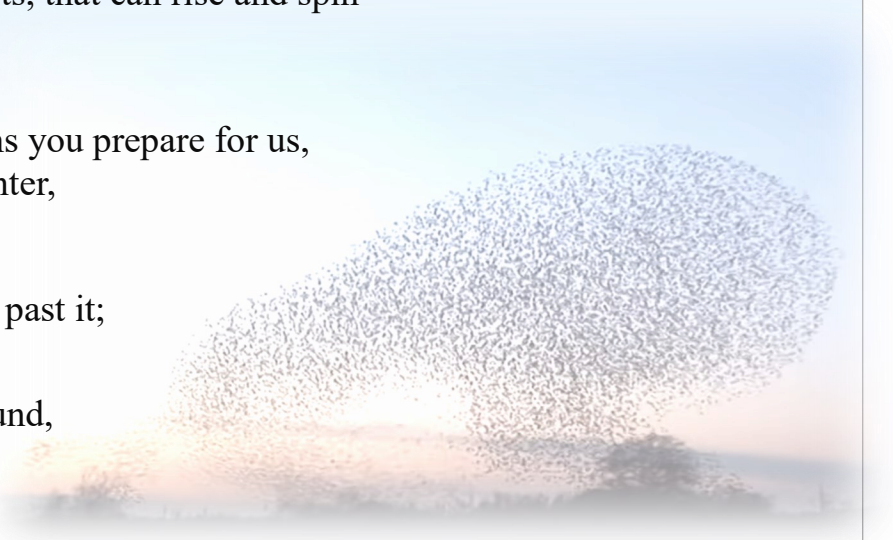
Thank You!

Starlings in Winter—continued from page 1

this wheel of many parts, that can rise and spin
over and over again,
full of gorgeous life.

Ah, world, what lessons you prepare for us,
even in the leafless winter,
even in the ashy city.
I am thinking now
of grief, and of getting past it;

I feel my boots
trying to leave the ground,
I feel my heart
pumping hard. I want

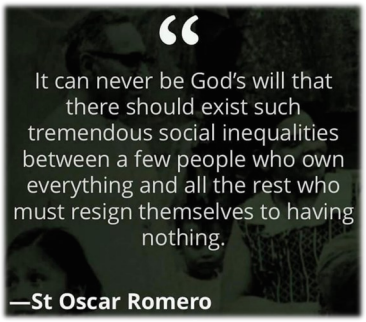


to think again of dangerous and noble things.
I want to be light and frolicsome.
I want to be improbable beautiful and afraid of nothing,
as though I had wings.

Continuing Support for Spiritus Christi Food Cupboard Ministry

For many in the city food access is a 365 days a year challenge, not just around the holidays. The Spiritus Christi Food Cupboard Ministry works to meet that need throughout the year and our congregation can join in that effort at any time as well.

Feel free to drop off food donations in the basket to the right of the Front Desk or give a check to the receptionist made out to DUPC and put "Spiritus Christi Food Cupboard" in the Memo line. You can also bring non-perishable food items and place them directly into the Micro Pantry in our side garden as you feel led.



Psalms + Bible Study - Each Tuesday Morning

The Psalms + Bible Study Group is continuing their journey through the Psalms and on many alternate weeks studies the lectionary text for that Sunday. If Psalm 110 and above are some of your favorites, consider joining us in the coming weeks.

The group meets each Tuesday at 10:30AM via Zoom. Everyone is welcome and the link will be sent in advance via eConnect.

ONLINE GIVING

Did you know you can contribute to Downtown United Presbyterian Church electronically? Online? Click here to go to the donation page, or you can use the QR code to the right to make your contribution. There is also a donation button on the DUPC website home page.

Pastor Interview Committee

The Session identified a three–person committee of volunteer Session members to conduct the search for a Stated Supply Pastor: Sally Allison, Raina Bouphavong and David Lee. The Pastor Interview Committee (PIC) has contacted two possible candidates and is currently engaged in the interview process.

The Stated Supply Pastor position is contracted for one year at a time, with indefinite yearly renewals as appropriate. The person selected will have specific tasks to address, and for DUPC at this time those will include helping the congregation:

- Clearly understand who we now are as a church and congregation and define our mission – our reasons for being here.
- Identify how our current physical buildings contribute to and/or detract from our mission as we come to define it.
- Clarify options on what to do with our buildings, including the option of a possible sale.
- Determine the role that our endowment should have, given that we are drawing it down each year beyond its sustainability as a major revenue source.
- Repair and strengthen relationships throughout the DUPC community which includes staff and congregants, and more clearly define our relationships with building tenants (those with leases and those who rent space as needed).

Please keep the committee members and the candidates in your meditations and prayers as we enter this time of important discernment.

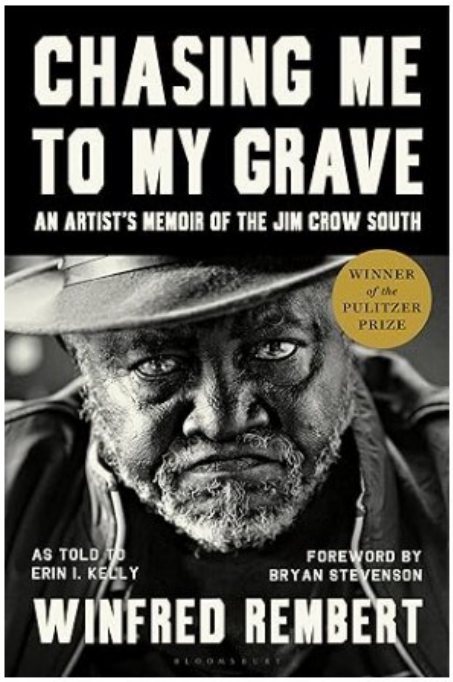
January Session Highlights

Here are some important highlights from the Stated Session Meeting held on January 16.

- Session approved the Cover Letter and Job Description to be sent to those expressing interest in the Stated Supply Pastor position (see above).
- Session appointed the 2024 Church officers: Commissioner to Presbytery-Nancy Brown (beginning April—Sam King continues through March), co-Clerks of Session-Lea Kone and Mary Rees. Treasurer-Sam King. The officers of the Corporation for 2024 are: President-Sally Allison, Vice President-Jim Vesper, Secretaries-Lea Kone and Mary Rees, Treasurer-Sam King.
- Session approved the Per Capita and Mission Commitment payments to our Presbytery, our Synod, and General Assembly totaling $5,785.45

The 3rd Friday Book Group
~ Non-Fiction for February ~

Our book selection for February is the Pulitzer Prize winning ***Chasing Me To My Grave: an Artist's Memoir of the Jim Crow South***, by the late Winfred Rembert as told to Erin I. Kelly.



Winfred Rembert grew up in a family of Georgia field laborers and joined the Civil Rights Movement as a teen. He was arrested after fleeing a demonstration, survived a near-lynching at the hands of law enforcement, and spent seven years on chain gangs. During that time he met the undaunted Patsy, who would become his wife. Years later, at the age of fifty-one and with Patsy's encouragement, he started drawing and painting scenes from his youth using leather tooling skills he learned in prison.

Vivid, confrontational, revelatory, and complex, *Chasing Me to My Grave* is a searing memoir in prose and painted leather that celebrates Black life and summons readers to confront painful and urgent realities at the heart of American history and society.

A Zoom link will be sent out prior to the gathering. Come join the discussion even if you haven't read the book.

SOPHIA CIRCLE - February Gathering

Sophia Circle decided to cancel its meeting in January and move the topic **"What is your WORD for 2024?"** to the February 18th meeting.

Your word of the year is meant to set your intention for how you would like the coming year to unfold for you. Contact Marie Gibson who can send you more information choosing your word.

Sophia Circle is a time of spiritual conversation and sharing that is inclusive and gender neutral. Everyone is welcome. A Zoom link will be sent via email prior to the gathering.

Those Who Share Our Buildings

Religious Organizations
- Spiritus Christi
- Quakers
- LIFFE Church
- United Christian Leadership Ministries

Theatre Troupes
- Off Monroe Players
- Open Road Theatre

Athletics
- Back Alley Fencing

Music Organizations
- Hochstein Music School
- Rochester Women's Community Chorus
- First Inversion
- Pegasus Early Music
- Organ Practice—Eastman School of Music

Community Organizations
- NY Civil Liberties Union
- Roc ACTS
- HOPE for Haiti
- Rochester Global Refugee Services
- Building Minds in South Sudan

Focus—Rochester Friends Share at Sunday Forum

The Rochester Friends Meeting, better known to many of us as the Quakers, are one of two faith communities who have recently begun worshiping in our building. We are thrilled to welcome them and were doubly thrilled to welcome them to the January 28th Sunday Forum at which Sarah Fitts-Romig, Jeff Fitz, and Dan Bell shared about their involvement in the **Rochester Interfaith Development Corporation (RIDC)**.

Jeff Fitz, Dan Bell, and Sarah Fitts-Romig

The Quakers, and three other faith communities, Fifteenth Tabernacle Beth El, Holy Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, and Peace Missionary Baptist Church, incorporated as a 501.c.3 non-profit in 2020 with a mission to "provide essential housing to those with the greatest need." Their current projects include a partnership with DePaul Developers and the City of Rochester Housing Division on two new structures that will be a 50/50 mix of market rate units, and units with support services for frail elderly folk and those who are chronically unhoused. A third new structure will be a substance abuse center on North Street.

The Quakers have been committed to being in and serving the city of Rochester for decades, and DUPC has extended a warm welcome to them as they downsized from their home at 84 Scio St. To learn more visit:
The Rochester Friends Meeting website at https://www.rochesterquakers.org/
the **RIDC** website at https://ridc.us/
the **Sunday Forum** presentation at https://downtownpresbyterian.org/worship-archive/

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

The DUPC Community Code of Conduct

Purpose/Mission Statement: the purpose of the DEIB Committee is to help foster a culture of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in all DUPC activities, ministries, and missions; to provide a safe space for hearing concerns about possible violations of the Code of Conduct; and to support training, dialogue and programming to help create an open and inclusive community where all feel welcomed.

Did you know that our church has a Community Code of Conduct? Below is the Code itself and it applies to staff and congregants alike.

DUPC Code of Conduct

All Downtown United Presbyterian Church congregation members and staff are expected to support an inclusive community by adhering to the following conduct standards:

- Treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
- Address and report inappropriate behavior and comments that are discriminatory, harassing, abusive, offensive or unwelcome to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.
- Foster teamwork and participation, encouraging the representation of different employee perspectives.
- Seek out insights from others with different experiences, perspectives and backgrounds.
- Avoid slang or idioms that might not translate across cultures.
- Support flexible work arrangements for co-workers with different needs, abilities and/or obligations.
- Address the decisions or behaviors of others that are based on conscious or unconscious biases.
- Be open-minded and listen when given constructive feedback regarding others' perception of your conduct.
- When addressing conduct that is received as abusive, disrespectful, biased, offensive, discriminatory, harassing or otherwise unwelcome, it is expected the person will take responsibility for correcting their behavior.

Downtown United Presbyterian Church will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or any behavior or language that is abusive, offensive or unwelcome.

Have questions? Come talk to Pat Tweet, Raina Bouphavong, Sally Allison, Grania Marcus, Andrea Piccone, or Windsor Wade. We are here for you.

Sunday Forum in February

February 2024

DUPC Sunday Forum Series

Sundays, 9:45AM—Shaw Room

Beyond Resistance

The Institutional Church Meets the Postmodern World

by John Dorhauer

Come join the discussions of this thought-provoking book led by several members of the congregation.
***Beyond Resistance* presents a call "to move the institutional church out of a modality of denial and into a perspective of hope."**

Copies are available to loan.
contact David Lee for more information.

Look for exact dates to be announced soon!

Come and Celebrate!

DUPC Committees

Committee/Team	Chair	Meeting Day/Time
Addressing Spiritual Relevance (ASR)	Ed Saphar	TBD
Building and Property	Don Fairman & Joe Hancock	2nd Thursday, 7:30PM
Deacons	co-Moderators: Henry Ehindero, Jacque Hancock Cindy Hamilton	2nd Tuesday, 6:30PM
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)	Pat Tweet Raina Bouphavong	3rd Wednesday, 11AM
Finance Committee	Sam King	2nd Thursday, 5PM
Justice League	TBD	2nd Saturday, 12:45PM
Personnel Team	Sally Allison	3rd Thursday, Various
Session	Moderator, Laura Norris-Buisch Co-Clerks, Lea Kone and Mary Rees	3rd Tuesday, 7PM
Space Use Committee	Shared	As Needed
Sunday Forum	David Lee	3rd Wednesday, 4:30PM
Worship Team	Nancy Brown	1st Thursday, 4PM

***NOTE: Times and dates of some meetings may change to accommodate the schedules of members. Changes due to a chairperson change will be noted in upcoming newsletters.**

Are you interested in serving the DUPC community but are unsure where to start? Consider contacting one of the committees above. Many have service opportunities beyond being a committee member. An example: the Worship Committee identifies folks to serve as ushers and liturgists each week. The church is what we make it, and if we each contribute our talents we create a more robust community.

Save the Date!

CONGREGATIONAL LEARNING DAY

Saturday, March 2, 2024

- **For New & Experienced Church Leaders & Church Members**
- **Offering 6 Courses**—2 of which are offered twice—**and Worship Online**
- **Registration deadline: 2/26/24**

SCHEDULE:

9 – 10:45 a.m. Introduction & Workshop Session 1
10:45 – 11 Break
11 – 11:30 Worship *
11:30 – 1 p.m. Workshop Session 2

* Worship will be led by Acts of Faith participants from various locations around the country—as they do with their weekly eWorship services. The Acts of Faith model was created by South Presbyterian Church as a 21st century embodiment of the first century Christian community.

Course Topics: Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy Training, Ruling Elder Training, Deacons Training, PGV Website, Google Drive and More Training, Property Guys From Around the Presbytery (featuring Don Fairman and David McDowell), PCUSA's Long Standing Support for Justice in Palestine.

REGISTER: https://pbygenval.org/congregational-learning-day/

Save the Date!

Super Bowl Sunday TAMALE BENEFIT

A Benefit For Eastern Service Workers Association's Winter Survival Campaign

Your choice of **chicken, pork,** or **vegan tamales**
Order by the **dozen** or **half-dozen**

Suggested donation:
$20.00 per dozen • $10.00 per half dozen

Also Available:
Delicious Tex-Mex Soup • $6.00 per quart

Orders available for delivery only on
Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024

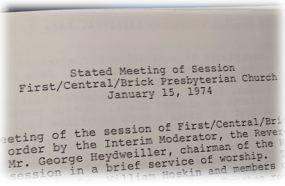
Time and supplies are limited, so order today!
Call 585-654-9640 for more information!

Historian's Corner - Lots of Details to Work Out

Recently, I received an email from Bill Mackey who shared some interesting information about the logistics involved in the merger. Bill was an alternate member of the delegation from Central Church that made up the Goal Setting process, a group that worked to identify programs and ministries that could be undertaken by the churches once they merged.

Another part of the merger work that Bill shared about was the basic organizational issues that arose. When the three churches finally merged, they employed a total of seven full–time pastors. That number did not lend itself to the traditional Presbyterian hierarchy of Senior Pastor and Associate Pastor, and the term co-Pastor was not yet an accepted Presbyterian concept. Ultimately the pastoral staff was organized into a "Collegium," meaning that all seven pastors were on par with one another.

This, however, caused a new problem, namely who would moderate Session. Why, because the Presbytery did not recognize these "co-Pastors" as valid pastors, and so they appointed "legitimate" pastors from other congregations to moderate Session meetings. Even in our founding we were pushing the envelope and creating new ways of doing things. How might we do something new and creative in this our 50th year? What history will we make for future generations to recall?



Stated Meeting of Session
First/Central/Brick Presbyterian Church
January 15, 1974

eting of the session of First/Central/Bri
order by the Interim Moderator, the Reve
Mr. George Heydweiller, chairman of the
session in a brief service of worship.

Happy February Birthdays!

Eileen Smith
Charles Rumsey
Susan Richane
Jim Vesper
Christian Duerr
Christina Eckert
Casey Sheils
Marilyn Terpening
Barbara Ames
Emily Folan
Judith Boyd
Elizabeth Katz
Patrick Doherty
Tom Folan
Todd Caves
Sandy Morales

February 2024

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Newsletters arrive the 1st of every month.
Newsletter deadline is the 20th of each month.

Black History Month

Thursday, February 1	4:30 PM	Worship Team Mtg via Zoom
Saturday, February 3	9:30AM	Men's Breakfast—Steve's Diner
Sunday, February 4	10:00AM	Choir Warm-up
	10:45AM	Nursery
	11:00AM	Worship
	11:15AM	Sunday School
	12:00PM	Coffee Hour in Sanctuary
Tuesday, February 6	10:30AM	Bible Study via Zoom

Meetings and Events – Continued

Wednesday, February 7	7:00PM	Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, February 8	5:00PM	Finance Team Mtg via Zoom
	7:30PM	Property Team Mtg via Zoom
Saturday, February 10	12:45PM	Justice League Mtg via Zoom
	2:00PM	Ordination of Clif Genge
		Reception to follow service
Sunday, February 11	9:45AM	Sunday Forum-TBD
	10:00AM	Choir Warm-up
	10:45AM	Nursery
	11:00AM	Worship
	11:15AM	Sunday School
	12:15PM	**50th Anniversary Luncheon**
		Hallock Lounge
Tuesday, February 13	10:30AM	Bible Study via Zoom
	6:30PM	Deacons Meeting via Zoom
Wednesday, February 14		*Ash Wednesday*
	4:30PM	Sunday Forum Mtg via Zoom
	4:30PM	DEIB Meeting via Zoom
	7:00PM	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, February 18	9:45AM	Sunday Forum– Beyond
		Resistance Book Study
	10:00AM	Choir Warm-up
	10:45AM	Nursery
	11:00AM	Worship
	11:15AM	Sunday School
	12:00PM	Coffee Hour in Sanctuary
Monday, February 19		*Presidents' Day—Building is Open*
Tuesday, February 20	10:30AM	Bible Study via Zoom
	2:30PM	Personnel Meeting via Zoom
	7:00PM	Session Meeting via Zoom

Meetings and Events– Continued

Wednesday, February 21	7:00PM	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, February 25	9:45AM	Sunday Forum– Beyond Resistance Book Study
	10:00AM	Choir Warm-up
	10:45AM	Nursery
	11:00AM	Worship
	11:15AM	Sunday School
	12:00PM	Coffee Hour in Sanctuary
Tuesday, February 27	10:30AM	Bible Study via Zoom
Wednesday. February 28	7:00PM	Choir Practice

Downtown United Presbyterian Church
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MATTHEW 25