



UBC NEWS

University Baptist Church

1219 University Ave SE

Minneapolis MN 55414

Established 1850 at St. Anthony Falls, MN

July 2021

From the Pastor

The New Normal

Across the country, churches are reopening their buildings. This is a good thing. It means that the virus is more under control. It means that people can see each other once again in person. It means that there is a return to "normal." See elsewhere in this newsletter about our new building use plan as we move (hopefully) away from the COVID danger zone.



2. We are not all safe from COVID-19. While many of us have been vaccinated and the vaccines seem to be very effective, our children under 12 still cannot be vaccinated. Some adults cannot or choose not to be vaccinated. Masks, distancing, or even absence of some of our loved ones will be a reality for a while yet.

While we celebrate this milestone, there are several things to keep in mind:

1. We will not be back to "normal". Normal to so many people means the way things used to be. There's a certain nostalgia to this idea. But remember all of the things that have changed over the past 15 months. Remember the racial reckoning. Remember the contentious election. Remember the people who have died. Remember the milestones we have missed (graduations, weddings, funerals, baby dedications, baptisms). We'll be back together older and wiser, embracing a new normal.
3. We need to be nimble enough to switch our plans as the science gives us more data.
4. We have really benefitted from our zoom meetings, even though they have become at times tiresome and glitchy. As we resume in-person events, how can we still connect with people who can only attend our events online? We have gotten some spendy estimates on upgrading our sanctuary to allow for interactive hybrid worship. A task force is forming to noodle this out and come up with some reasonable and realistic plans.

Continued on page 2

Pastor – continued

5. There are some of us who will be excited to be back and some who are still feeling the effects of 15 months of quarantine and fear. Let's be patient and understanding of each other's differing reactions to returning to the building and our people.
6. As we return to the building, recognize that a whole segment of the population may not be thinking about coming to church. How do we welcome and invite people into ministry partnership?
7. Remember, church is not a building. It's a community engaged in the good news of the Gospel. How do we live it? How do we engage with others who share or need this good news?

Enjoy this summer renewal time. For now, we'll continue to produce recorded worship services until we can find a way to do quality hybrid services. We look forward to seeing you at our outdoor worship services. If it rains, join us for worship in the UBC sanctuary!

Blessings and Peace,

Doug Donley

Page 1 photo of lilies in the UBC garden by Jim Ross

UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH COVID-19 PROTOCOL FOR USE OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

INDOOR GUIDELINES


- Masks and six-foot distancing are optional for vaccinated people; this includes singing.
- Masks and six-foot distancing are strongly encouraged for anyone who has not been vaccinated in order to protect themselves and others; this includes singing. The only exception to this is with tenants of the building who are alone in their own offices; they do not need to wear masks.
- Unvaccinated people need not follow six-foot distancing guidelines (though masks are strongly encouraged) while in their social pods (a small group of people who form their own social circle to safely interact without maintaining six-foot distancing).
- Sanitizing hands and surfaces are strongly encouraged.

OUTDOOR GUIDELINES

- Masks and six-foot distancing are optional for vaccinated people; this includes singing.
- Masks and six-foot distancing are strongly encouraged for anyone who has not been vaccinated in order to protect themselves and others.
- When outdoors, unvaccinated people may remove their masks when in their social pods (a small group of people who form their own social circle to safely interact without masks and without maintaining six-foot distancing).
- Worship will be indoors when the weather precludes outdoor worship.

Updated 6/20/2021

Calendar for July 2021

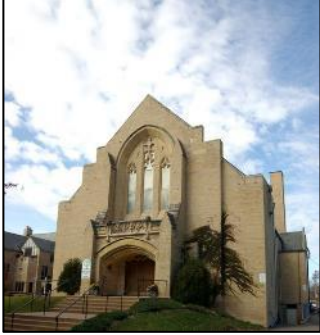
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
				10 am Garden Team 6:30 pm Caregivers Support Group		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9 am Joys & Concerns 10 am Worship			6:15 pm Bells	10 am Garden Team		9 am Bible Study 1 pm Book Group
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9 am Joys & Concerns 10 am Worship		7 pm Memoir Group		10 am Garden Team 5-7 pm Drop-in for unsheltered		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9 am Joys & Concerns 10 am Worship 10 am Otto Lubke Dedication 11:30 am Council 5 pm Shaped Note Singing	7 pm Knitting Group		6:15 pm Bells	10 am Garden Team		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
9 am Joys & Concerns 10 am Worship <i>Newsletter deadline</i>		7 pm Memoir Group	6:15 pm Bells	10 am Garden Team		

Gay Pride, Transgender
Pride, and Black Lives
Matter flags fly on the
UBC grounds.

Photo by Doug Donley



What's Going On



Sunday Mornings

9 am – Joys & Concerns via Zoom

10 am – Worship (on the church lawn, and if weather is bad, in the sanctuary)

We will continue to have prerecorded services available, too. We will also continue to meet on Zoom before the 10 am worship hour. At 10 am, we will close out the Zoom meeting. **You can watch the recorded service by clicking on the link you'll find at <http://www.ubcmn.org>.** If we cannot meet outdoors at 10 am due to inclement weather, Pastor Doug will send an email by 8 am confirming we will be meeting in the sanctuary.

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID 839 4725 7444 passcode 257750

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83947257444?pwd=cFZCWEdqUkR0RDgwT0JwT3hrQ3FpUT09>

Sunday, July 4 - We have started our Grab Bag sermon series. This Sunday we will hear a sermon about Revelation. Read Revelation 13 and try to get your mind around it. Reflect on the intersections of the images in the chapter and the national narrative that we try to construct and deconstruct every 4th of July.

Garden Team – Thursdays at 10 am

Come help beautify our church gardens! We have tools and gloves available, and will mostly work on weeding, pruning and watering. Park in the Mormon lot or behind the church. Feel free to join us whenever you're available! If you have any questions, please contact Trish Donley at crazyazgal@msn.com.



Caregivers Support Group – July 1 (1st Thurs.) at 6:30 pm on the church lawn (or in the lounge if bad weather.) UBCers who have an elderly parent meet for support. If you have questions, please contact Jean Lubke at lubk0001@umn.edu.

Bells Practice – Wednesdays at 6:15 pm in the church sanctuary.



Bible Study – Saturday, July 10 at 9 am.

The Bible Study Group concludes its first season July 10, and with it the reading of Paul's Letter to the Galatians, and then will be on break until fall. (No meeting July 3.) The focus will be Galatians 5 and 6. If you have an interest in Bible study, please know that you are welcome as a regular or occasional member or simply to check us out. No special preparation and/or background required. Meetings are Saturday from 9-10 am via Zoom.

For more information contact Diane Ehr at DianeEhr@q.com.

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 886 6992 0103 passcode: 613038

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88669920103?pwd=dnozWEYzQUh1RU5HUTFWcVd3ZFY1Zz09>

More of What's Going On



UBC Grace in Contemporary Literature by Women Book Group – July 10

(2nd Sat.) at 1 pm at the home of Betty Shaw and via Zoom. The book this month is *The Secrets We Kept* by Lara Prescott. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Follett at chrisf2828@yahoo.com.

ZOOM INFO: meeting ID 815 2376 4072 password 525996

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82720573517?pwd=VHM4M0paVOIEKzVzQjZuZkl3aVluUT09>

Memoir Writing Group – July 13 & 27 (every other Tues.) at 7 pm

The group has decided to continue meeting every other week through the summer. All are welcome! New prompts include *Summer*, *Independence*, and *Popsicle*, in addition to whatever other topics we are moved to write about. Contact Trish Donley if you have any question at crazyazgal@msn.com. (See some of the members' work on page 13.)



ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 810 6944 9838 passcode: 244380

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81069449838?pwd=ZWNIUmMzNXRSYIFYaHJUczk2ZmRoUT09>



Shaped Note/Sacred Harp Singing – Sunday, July 18 from 5-7 pm under the tent on the UBC lawn. Next date is Aug 15, 5-7 pm.

UBC-FCC Knitting Group – July 19 (3rd Mon.) at 7 pm at the home of Deb Wensman. We will meet in a screened patio if the weather is nice, or indoors if not. The group is made up of stitchers from UBC and First Congregational Church. All are welcome! If you have any questions, please contact Chris Follett at chrisf2828@yahoo.com.



Volunteers Needed for Pride Booth

The 49th Annual Twin Cities Pride Festival will be held at Loring Park on **July 17-18, 2021**, and will feature local BIPOC and LGBTQ+ vendors, food courts, and music. Due to time constraints Pride is foregoing the traditional Saturday night concert and fireworks this year, and at this time no Pride march/parade is planned.

At this time, UBC is planning to partner with Judson Baptist Church to host a booth at the festival. Hours will be 10 am to 6 pm both Saturday (July 17) and Sunday (July 18) at Loring Park in Minneapolis.

We are currently seeking volunteers to “person” the booth for 2-hour blocks to answer any questions people may have about UBC and the services we provide. This is a great opportunity to share our church with others in a way that is social, fun, and engaging.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact John Medeiros at johnthomasmedeiros@gmail.com and let him know your preference of day(s) and time(s).

DROP-IN DAY

Thursday, July 15th 5PM- 7PM

**University Baptist Church
1219 University Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414**

A WARM MEAL, RESOURCES, AND CONNECTIONS

Come by University Baptist Church anytime between 3:00 and 5:00pm for a warm meal, haircut, shower, find resources and connections (masks are required and will be provided).



To request interpreting services or accommodations for this event, please contact secom@secom.org.
Para solicitar servicios de interpretación o acomodaciones, por favor contacta secom@secom.org.
Tshawn rau thov tus neeg txhais lus loss kev pab, thov hu rau secom@secom.org.
Si aad u codsoto turjubaan oma waafajin, fadlan la xirir secom@secom.org.

Sponsored by the Accompanying Unsheltered Neighbors Group, a collaborative of organizational partners including: Aliveness Project, First Congregational Church of Minnesota, Hennepin County Library-Arbonne Fraser, Marcy Holmes Neighborhood Association, Off-Campus Living at the University of Minnesota, Raising Cane's, Steller Hair, Southeast Como Improvement Association, University Baptist Church & University Lutheran Church of Hope

**UBC is hosting an event
for our unsheltered
neighbors.**

**Volunteers are needed. If
you would like to help,
please see Doug Donley as
soon as possible.**

Take Survey about Parking

There are some proposed changes to the University Avenue and 4th Street paving, scheduled to be completed in 2023. The City is proposing dedicated bike lanes on both streets with two different kinds of barriers. Both seem like good ideas. What is not clear is whether the new design will retain the Sunday parking we have enjoyed on both streets. The public input phase is underway and you can weigh in about this at www.hennepin.us/universityandfourth. Please complete the survey in the Online Open House by July 2.

Mark Your Calendars

**Dedication of
Otto Lubke**
July 18 during the
church service.

**Celebration of Life
Service
for Char Follett**
Sat., August 28 at 11 am
at UBC and via Zoom
Wear colorful clothes!

Claire & Chris' Baby Due July 21st!

We invite you to support Claire Mavity and Chris Loch as they prepare for and welcome their new baby

Eleni, a close friend of Claire, asked her what kind of support she would appreciate. She had two beautiful ideas and they are listed here so we can show her our love:

1) Many of us would like to offer a gift! To keep everyone safe and healthy, the request is that if you feel inclined to give something, you could:

- Consider purchasing some still-needed items at this registry: babylist.com/baby-Loch-Mavity
- Ship your gift to: 3048 16th Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55407
- Thrifty items and recommendations for useful things are very welcome!
- If you would like to drop a gift in person Claire, would welcome your sweet company one-on-one. Contact her to make arrangements at: s.clairecat@gmail.com.

2) After the baby arrives, the couple would love to have your support in bringing them meals.

- You can sign up on the collaborative Google doc [here](#). Refer back to the Google doc for updates.
- Take a look at the couple's brief notes on allergies and preferences
- Call or text when you're on your way: 612-728-8905



Beaming parents to be, Chris and Claire.

Photo by Zoe Martens

Claire and Chris are hopeful about how a baby can bring people together, and so thankful that you are a special member of their community. Let's show them how much their beautiful family means to us, and that we will be there for them as helpers, supporters, and loving friends.



Save the Date!

There will be a Meet & Greet baby shower during an extended coffee time on
Sunday, Sept. 26 after church.
Contact Trish Donley or Deidre Druk
if you have questions
All are welcome!!

Back in the Building!

Approximately 30 UBCers, ages 17-months (Otto) to 100 (Tai), were on hand for the June 27 church service, a return to the UBC sanctuary for the first time in 15 months. The church's outdoor grounds were too wet from rain, forcing the congregation inside and in keeping with COVID-19 guidance.



Those in attendance were in praise of being together and hearing the church organ played once again by Music Director David Lesniaski. Karen Swenson was the worship leader. There was a short time for Joys and Concerns, some already having been noted in a zoom meeting an hour earlier. Pastor Doug's sermon "God of Rainbow" was on human diversity.

Future Sunday services will continue to be outdoors weather permitting, moving into the sanctuary if needed.

Photo by Jim Ross

Mission Giving Committee Seeks Your Input!

Throughout the years, UBC has been blessed with members with big hearts, and, as the Outreach Ministries co-chairs, we could not be more grateful for your generosity! This past year has brought many unique and unprecedented challenges to our mission giving procedures. To address those challenges, we revised UBC's mission giving model to allow us to better pool our collective resources and maximize their impact on meeting the needs of others.

Under the new procedure, instead of identifying a specific organization to donate to each month, we identified five ministry areas for the entire fiscal year. Once the ministry areas were identified, we collected funds for a two-month period, after which we met to discuss the options and to determine the recipient(s) of the funds. The result was immensely successful – so much so, in fact, that we are continuing the procedure for another year. And here is where you can help!

We are asking that you please take just a few moments to answer five questions that will better help us identify mission giving areas important to those who attend UBC, as well as specific organizations that meet the needs of others within those areas. You can find the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XVT86YN>.

Please complete this survey by July 30. It should take just a few minutes to complete, and your input will be invaluable.

Thank you in advance! *John Medeiros and Kim Donley*

News from Nicaragua



Isabel de la Cruz Lanza
Photo by Jean Lubke

The letter below is from Lesbia Escoto, our liaison to our sister church in Nicaragua who is passing her responsibility to Isabel de la Cruz Lanza. Isabel was part of the 2017 delegation with Anielka and Napoleon.

Lesbia Escoto (Francisco's mother / Anielka's mother-in-law, member of the 1st delegation in 2008) was approved by the Council and the U.S. Government in 2019 for an R-1 Religious Worker visa, like Anielka's; however, the U.S. Embassy in Managua twice denied her a travel visa to come here to work at the church. With the new administration and loosening immigration restrictions, she is going to try one more time to obtain her travel visa. Her appointment is on October 8.

Anielka Montiel's R-1 application was renewed for an additional 2½ years! So we will have Ani with us until July 2023. Ani now has a phone that works to make and receive calls and texts here – her phone number is 651-295-4590.

León, 21 June 2021

Dear Pastor Douglas Donley:



John 6:27 "Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of God will give you. For on you God has placed the seal of approval."

Dear and appreciated brothers and sisters, receive from Second Baptist Church Mount Zion a hug filled with blessings.

Since 2007, I was given the opportunity to assume the responsibility to establish the coordination between the two churches, University Baptist Church and Second Baptist Church Mount Zion. This has been a beautiful experience because during that time, many blessings have been given between the two churches:

- Sharing the love of God among brothers and sisters, despite cultural differences; through the different delegations of the sister churches.
- Exchange of customs, especially when shared in the homes of the brothers and sisters during the travels.
- Sharing experiences as churches who believe in a living God
- Worshipping together as believers during church services
- Strengthening the skills of the teachers through the different teaching pedagogy workshops
- Financial help through the sponsorship of the children of the church and the neighboring community through all these years.
- Creation of a small library to help with the lesson planning and to strengthen the teachers' skills to facilitate learning
- Sharing singing experiences, the donation of the set of chimes which we played on Christmas in the church
- Construction assistance in areas of the school.
- Computer and technical support for the evangelism in the community.

Continued on page 10

Letter – continued

Thanks to God and you for everything through these years; to everyone I worked with directly – Pastor Doug and your family, sister Jean and your family, Deidre, John, the Church Council, and all those others whom I haven't mentioned by name, but who were also involved, thank you and God bless you always.

We are grateful for all of your love and understanding; and to formally present before the Council of your dear church the sister who will be my successor in this coordination work. Her name is Isabel de la Cruz Lanza and I hope she always does her work in name of God.

Note: The email to use for correspondence to the church is segundaiglesia1992@gmail.com.

I appreciate you a lot; a hug; always yours,

Sister Lesbia Escoto

Translated from Spanish by Jean Lubke and Anielka Montiel

Checking in About Our History

In reviewing UBC's long history beginning in 1850, the year 2021 is an important one in marking the church's evolution and development. It was exactly 100 years ago that we started to build our current church building, having been in numerous structures and locations previously.

When Nov. 6, 2021, rolls around, just four months away, it will be exactly 100 years since the church's cornerstone was laid. The congregation marched from its then 13th Ave. and 4th St. location to celebrate its new site, just a block away.

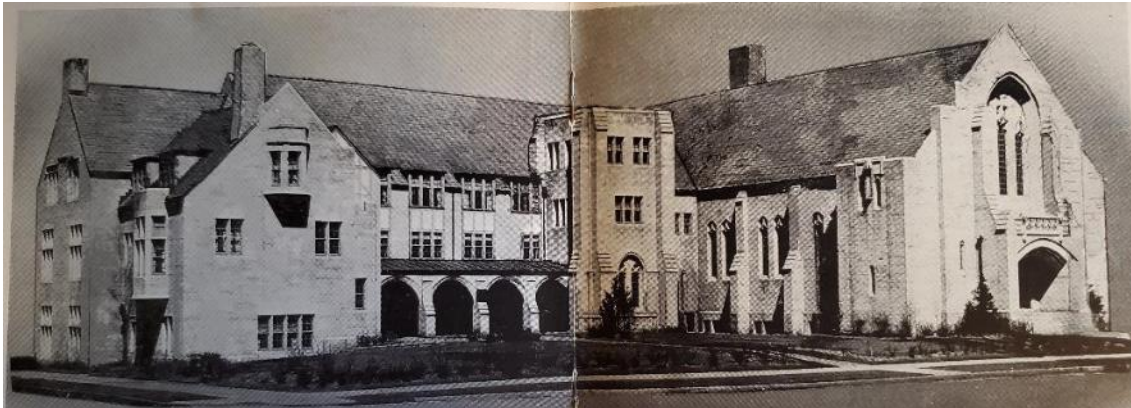


Photo of UBC building in 1922, from *“Through the Years – A Hundred Year History of the University Baptist Church”* by Rev. John Bone

It was in March 1921 when we changed our name from Olivet Baptist Church to University Baptist Church, since a new building project and assistance from denominational agencies was successful in raising money to purchase a plot of land at our current location.

It took until the following year to hold services in the assembly room, awaiting the building's complete construction. In former UBC pastor John Bone's booklet *“Through the Years – A Hundred Year History of the University Baptist Church”*, it mentions Oct. 29, 1922 when the first services were held. And note, too, we are now only four years away from marking UBC's 175th anniversary.

- Don Follett, UBC Historian

President's Column

Unexpected Blessings

July 1 is already the start of my second year as UBC President! The first year has been a wonderful experience thanks to the UBC community, a community that lives out its mission through even the hardest times:

Our mission at UBC is to be a loving and inclusive community seeking faith, joy and action nurtured by the biblical traditions, the teachings of Christ, and God's continuing revelation.



- permission to extend grace to ourselves, as well as others
- strengthened conviction to work for racial justice
- the special bonds that come with shared adversity

As we transition to “normal” times and celebrate the return to familiar activities and people, we face the challenge of hanging on to the unexpected blessings we have found in the crisis. We face the challenge of sustaining the commitment to do better—for ourselves and for the entire beloved community. And that’s okay, because it’s all good. As Peanuts creator Charles M. Schultz once said, “Absence makes the heart grow fonder, but it sure makes the rest of you lonely.”

– Denise Roy

Alongside immeasurable anxiety and loss in the last fifteen months, the UBC community has also enjoyed blessings, many of them unexpected:

- worship with UBCers near and far through the gift of technology
- twice-per-month newsletters brimming with good news, thoughtful words, and vibrant images
- new small group gatherings to nourish spirits and inform understandings
- new members to enliven and enrich the UBC community
- the opportunity to take good care of ourselves and our loved ones
- encouragement to take nothing for granted

July Birthdays

3 Ginny Gray, Camille Weinfurter
5 Howard Johnson
6 Andrew Lee
7 Tyler Wottrich
14 Doug Donley, Gene Velasco
16 Insook Lee
17 Tin Aye
24 Jim Williams
28 Pete Dahlberg
30 Doug Roy, Deidre Druk, Vicki Jo Fadden-Gutenkauf

July Anniversaries

7 Colleen & Jim Moravek
24 Laura & Ben Justin



Oldie but Goodie!!

(thanks to Jean Lubke for digging this out of the archives!)

Ushers and Ushering Report 1983

by Thor Kommedahl

The people who come to Sundays at Ten
Are met by two greeters, and then - -
A calendar is offered by Drew,
While Thor leads the way to the pew.
This continues up to the "Amen."

Several young people take Offering.
They assemble as Lee urges proffering,
The Shaws, Deb or Kathy,
Or, Underwood, Tami
Collect, in the plates, what we're doffering.

They line up in pairs in the narthex,
The routine is not really complex,
Andy Roy takes aisle right,
While Jim Johnson takes left
And Luisa and Margot go centrex.

After the offering's collected,
And cards are culled and are sorted,
The plates go to altar-sans-tester
By Scott or Adrienne Wester;
And Gertrude finds out what was netted.

When Martha plays postlude, excited,
The candles must then be de-lighted,
By Caroline Collins, Steph Roy,
Mark U or Todd Johnson - -
Our hearts should then be ignited.

Special Offering for July and August Ministries that Promote Racial Justice and Understanding

We believe that the church is for all people, and that God calls us to help heal the pain caused by the injustices of racism around us. The special offerings for July and August will go toward ministries that promote racial justice and understanding and that help create a world that dismantles white supremacy and its acts of institutional racism.

We have used these offerings in the past to support organizations like The One Fund, which supports local African American ministries whose communities suffer from historic inequities, and the Council on American-Islamic Relations, which builds coalitions that promote racial and religious justice and mutual understanding. Please consider a gift to our July and August special offering to support our work to promote racial equity and justice.

- John Medeiros

Online Giving Available

You can now donate funds electronically via the UBC website. Here's how it works. First, go to ubcmn.org and scroll down to the middle of the page and click on "[Giving](#)" under "Quick Links." You will have several options for donations (pledge, Fellowship Fund, mission offering, etc.).

Click on one of them and indicate how much and often you want to give. Please choose the option to add a small amount to your gift to help reduce processing fees. You may want to set up an account with Vanco, our administrator, to keep track of your giving. If you have any questions, please see Denise Roy or Chris Follett.

Contributions from the UBC Memoir Group

Baptism

By Trish Donley

Growing up, I attended First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland. It was a wonderful church to grow up in! There were lots of children of all ages, and my grandparents Edith and Dan King always sat in the same pew—on the left side, close to the aisle, about a quarter of the way back from the front row. Grandma often wore a pillbox hat, neatly bobby-pinned to her perfectly-coiffed grey hair.

There were lovely stained-glass windows the whole length of the sanctuary depicting various biblical stories, and ornately-carved pews and stonework, which we traced for art projects in Sunday school. The pews were covered with velvety red cushions. Up front was a huge gold cross hanging over the baptismal, a large choir loft on both sides which was always full, and chairs neatly set up in front for the children's choir.

Off to the right, there was an organ which F. Broadus Stahley (and later, Bill Trafka, then Mark Scholtz) played with theatrical fanfare. There was a pulpit on either side for the ministers, the one on the left larger and where the sermon was always preached. Behind these were ornately-carved wood chairs (read: thrones) where the ministers sat during services.

In our church, Baptism happened in 6th grade. I don't really remember it being a choice. It was a given. The year leading up to that, we took discipleship classes, and we were expected to do assignments in a workbook between sessions. I remember next to nothing about what we learned in those workbooks, but I do remember there was a group of 8-10 of us in my grade preparing for baptism.

Sometimes we had overnight retreats in the church as well during this time, including a trek to the dark bowels of the church to re-enact the Last Supper. I remember feeling grown up and as if I was doing

important work in preparation for becoming a full-fledged member of the church.

On Baptism Sunday, we prepared in dressing rooms behind the baptistry, and were instructed to wear white slips under our white baptismal robes. We waited in the chapel to the left of the sanctuary until it was time, doing our best to heed the admonitions of the elders telling us to keep our voices down.

There were two ministers baptizing that day, and we descended one by one into the warm baptismal pool. I remember choosing Bob Remington to baptize me. I always felt closer to Bob than Earl Sires, the other minister who was baptizing that day. Bob was also not much taller than me, and I worried that he would drop me!



He was so reassuring and kind as he asked if I accepted Jesus Christ as my lord and savior. As he covered my mouth with a white handkerchief, he dipped me gently back and I remember feeling goosebumps as I emerged, then walked up the stairs on the other side of the baptismal. Again, we dressed in the changing room into our Sunday best, then made our way as a group to the front row of the sanctuary to receive the right hand of fellowship from the congregation.

We each received a red leather-bound soft-covered bible with our names inscribed on the front. The congregation sang Be Thou My Vision. Again, goosebumps.

Continued on page 14

Baptism – Continued

I don't really remember feeling much different after being baptized, except maybe I felt older and more grown up. I don't remember doing anything different.

In the years to come, I continued to be a member of the choir and on Sunday evenings participated in the Institute for Creative Living (aka ICL), the youth group at our church. We met in a newly-decorated room called the Montage Room, which included modern 70s-style orange-upholstered furniture and a bay window with vents that we sat on to keep warm in the winter.

As a teenager, I also taught Sunday school to the 3- and 4- year-olds with another woman from the church, following a pre-set curriculum that mostly included story time, an activity and snack time.

After graduating from high school, I went to a small Catholic college (Siena Heights College in Adrian, MI). There, I rarely went to mass and certainly did not seek out a community Baptist church home (if there even was one—which was not likely in that small town). Sometimes I'd fast for Lent, because that's something a lot of people did. Sometimes I participated in service projects that were held by the Campus Ministry group. When I went home from college, I grudgingly went to church and, once there, relished the sense of home I felt, loving the hymns and the organ the most.

After college, I did not attend any church for many years, except sporadically a Unitarian Universalist church in Flagstaff, AZ. Church felt like an institution that I didn't want to be a part of. I've never been a religious person. I've been a ritual person. I like the gathering and the sense of community I feel in a church that I belong to, but the introvert in me despises going to an unfamiliar church with unfamiliar rituals and unfamiliar people.

When I moved to Minnesota, at first, I only sporadically attended University Baptist Church, where my brother Doug was the pastor. The summer after I moved there, the Baptist Peace Fellowship had its annual Peace Camp in Northfield, Minnesota, an hour or so away. I was offered a scholarship to attend, and Doug really encouraged me. I went, and it was truly a transformative experience. After that, I felt more comfortable attending UBC, and slowly began to get to know people.

I'm still not a religious person, but I remember the service piece was what drew me in. Shirley Roy was a retired nurse who learned I liked to garden and invited me to join the garden group at the church. Weekly, I helped with weeding and trimming and planting and watering, and gradually got to know people more.

Then Lu Carman learned that I had worked in a library and asked if I'd help get the library organized. Then there was a funeral and I helped with that. Then someone asked me if I'd like to usher. Many times before I accepted, Dave Bienhoff asked if I'd like to go on a bike trip. And as I began to know people, and began to learn the rituals of the church, I began to feel a sense of belonging that I hadn't felt in years. Eventually, I joined the church, and have felt baptized with love ever since!

UBC NEWS

Published monthly

University Baptist Church

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Rev. Douglas M. Donley, Pastor

Please send contributions by

the 25th of the month to

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