

Board Walk Plus ~ January 2026



Hi All!

Despite what you may have read or heard about no newsletter this month, I decided to put one together after all. There has been so much excitement in our church this past year, and we have much to look forward to in 2026.

If you have ideas for a column, or wish to contribute to a future issue, please let me know. You may email me at:

cindy.fitzwater@gmail.com.

As we begin the New Year, please keep in mind the theme from Advent – kindness. And, as my sister expressed on Sunday during her Children’s Message – gratitude. Take some time every day to express or offer an act or word of kindness, and to give thanks for all that we are blessed to have and love, and enjoy in our lives!

Faithfully yours,

Cindy Fitzwater

UPCOMING January EVENTS:

- 1/11: 4 Baptisms and 2 new members
- 1/13: Trustees - 7 PM
- 1/14: Lunch with Friends – noon
- 1/15: Community Prayer Service 3:00 PM Chapel
- 1/18: New Members joining our church
- 1/19: MLK Celebration – Hornell Arts Center
- 1/20: Session – 7 PM
- 1/21: Lunch with Friends
- 1/22: Community Prayer Service – time TBA
- 1/27: Music & Worship meeting 1:30 PM
- 1/31: Pastor Ted’s Birthday!

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HELP! We are looking for a volunteer to do a CHILDREN’S MESSAGE on **Sunday 1/25/2026!**
If you are so moved, please contact Cindy Fitzwater @ 607 661-2154 or email: cindy.fitzwater@gmail.com. Thank you!

The Pastor's Pathway...

2026 has arrived; I feel surprised that I've already spent a full year among you. Looking back on 2025, our life together feels both full and a bit surreal. We grieved beloved members who went home to the Lord, even as we celebrated their lives and witness. We also have much to give thanks for, as God continues to work wonders at UPC. This month, I want to share a bit of my own journey to Hornell.

I did not plan a transition from healthcare chaplaincy to congregational ministry when I first led a worship service at the United Presbyterian Church in Hornell, yet I found myself drawn into a life-changing journey of renewal. Nestled between my father's childhood home in Burns and my mother's in Jasper, UPC serves as a place of belonging and refreshed faith.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, we embrace this renewal that inspires hope and connection as we live out the gospel by supporting and serving the Hornell community. When I first provided pulpit supply at UPC in September 2024, my family and I were struck by the warmth and authenticity of this congregation—something we rarely encounter. The girls felt immediately at ease, and Sam remarked, "This church actually keeps up with the times. They don't live in the stone age."

During my examination for ordination and for the call to serve UPC, someone asked me, "What are you thinking? Pastors have no authority today, many see the church as irrelevant, and there's no guarantee of lifelong full-time work." I had to laugh, because I once said the same thing about chaplain colleagues who moved into congregational ministry. And yet here I am—because the call of God, and the call of this church, proved irresistible. Even when it didn't make perfect sense on paper, I simply couldn't turn away. And truly, who could resist serving a congregation as supportive as this one. You take care of me. You pour your time, your gifts, and your hearts into this church. I am deeply grateful.

Over time, I've learned how much faithful work this congregation carried out between pastors—including a thoughtful self-study that helped clarify our identity and mission. The nine new members who joined in 2025 are, in many ways, the fruit of that long, steady effort. And of course, it is the Holy Spirit who continues to call people into the life of this church. We have learned to trust God together. My role, as I often joke, has simply been not to scare visitors away. Many newcomers have told me that UPC is a place where they feel welcomed, valued, and supported.

In these recent months, we've read and studied side by side, lifted our voices in vibrant worship, and gathered to share and pray. Most of all, we have paid attention to God's nearness. Christmas teaches us that the name Emmanuel means God is with us. We have been living that truth all year. As we step into a new year, we carry that awareness like a lantern.

I close with joy. Soon I will preside over my first baptisms here, welcoming children from our church family into the waters of grace. I also met with a young couple preparing to be married in our sanctuary, who hope to join our congregation soon as well. As 2026 unfolds, I urge you to keep letting God lead us. Do not lose heart; with God, all things are possible. Our prayer list is long and our challenges real, yet they are signs of life. Let us keep the faith as we continue to walk this road together.

Very truly yours in Christ,
Rev. Ted Warner

Alternative Holiday Market:

2025 proved to be another successful year in our 20 plus years of offering the Alternative Holiday Market. This year's item chosen by Music & Worship (M & W) from the 2025 Presbyterian Giving Catalog, latrines, offered some new challenges. Latrines are not as cute as chicks or offer the same obvious benefits as bees, so how do we generate excitement over something we take for granted and no one really wants to talk about? By leaning in, of course! Indoor plumbing > outdoor plumbing > outhouses > port-a-potties. Eureka!

Thus, was born our "Support-A-Potty" campaign. With ideas and items shared by members of the M&W committee, we decided to have fun with it. Photos and a replica of outhouses served as the decor for our Market. To help generate interest, we devised outhouse themed games: "Pin the Moon on Jon's John;" a toilet paper-toss; and toilet seat selfie stations were created. The refreshments even echoed the theme: cupcakes with chocolate 'poop emoji' frosting were a big hit! Amid the fun and games, we tried to emphasize *the very serious mission of providing safe, clean, accessible toilets for villages*, especially for the women of those villages, around the world. Once again, the folks of UPC stepped up to make a difference. Kids and grown-ups alike had fun with our games, contributing \$66. Lisa Sanford graciously offered any proceeds from the sale of her vintage Creche postcards to our cause, which totaled \$70.

Contributions made directly toward the purchase of shares of a latrine amounted to \$764. Our total contribution to the Presbyterian Giving Catalog added up to \$900! At \$50 per share that equals 18 shares. The cost of a full system is \$350, so we raised enough for just over 2.5 systems! Thanks go out to all who supported this year's campaign and have allowed us to once again "Give more meaning, not more stuff."

Special thanks to the M&W Committee for all their time, effort, ideas, and contributions: Cindy Fitzwater, Jen Kellogg, Peg Knopf-Willsey, Diane Willey, Cindy Banker, Diane Griffin, Linda Varner, Jon & Lee Richeson, Bev & Earl Packard and Pastor Ted Warner.

Submitted by: Bev Packard, M & W Committee

Christian Education Committee:

Our Sunday School youth presented their annual **Christmas Pageant** on Sunday, December 14, 2025 during worship. As always, the story of Jesus' birth was depicted and celebrated with stories and song. Thank you so much to everyone who helped make this year's pageant a success!

Music & Worship Committee

The December meeting of the Music & Worship Committee was a combination of present and future endeavors. Through last year's hard work and this year's teamwork, the process of decorating the sanctuary for Christmas went very smoothly and was accomplished in a shorter amount of time than anticipated. We continue to look at ways to further refine the process, beginning with making sure the undecorating and storage are well organized, to ensure ease when we repeat the process for the next advent season. The committee is also encouraging new folks to step up to be involved as we look to passing along the collective wisdom to a new generation of helpers and idea people.

On the first Sunday in December, we continued our tradition and publicly celebrated the introduction of the new Creche with our Creche Lighting Service. This year's service was slightly bittersweet as we bade farewell to the original Creche figures that had served us so well for nearly 50 years. Their legacy and their message to the community that Christ is the real "reason for the season" will live on for years to come in the new figures. Also new this year were the signs adorning both the Main Street and Church Street entrances. Though beautiful, the Main St. sign has presented a challenge. Changing the messages on the sign is definitely a two-person job with one person holding the door and the other person changing the letters. Possible solutions are being explored, but suggestions are welcome!

During our 2026 Lenten season, in lieu of flowers, look for a new way to honor and remember those saints who are among us and have gone before us. This is a very exciting time in the life of our church and Music & Worship will continue to support Pastor Ted to make worship access able and meaningful for all.

Submitted by: Bev Packard, M & W Committee

UPW – United Presbyterian Women

The UPW – United Presbyterian Women group is seeking more participation as every new voice and helping hand makes a difference. Greater involvement allows us to strengthen our fellowship with one another. We invite all women of faith to consider joining us and helping this ministry grow and thrive. Please reach out to Cindy Banker, Jo Barnard or Marcia Reynolds if you are interested.

AGAPE Fund - Deacons

In February, the Deacons will be raising funds for the Agape Fund. More information coming soon!

Baptisms

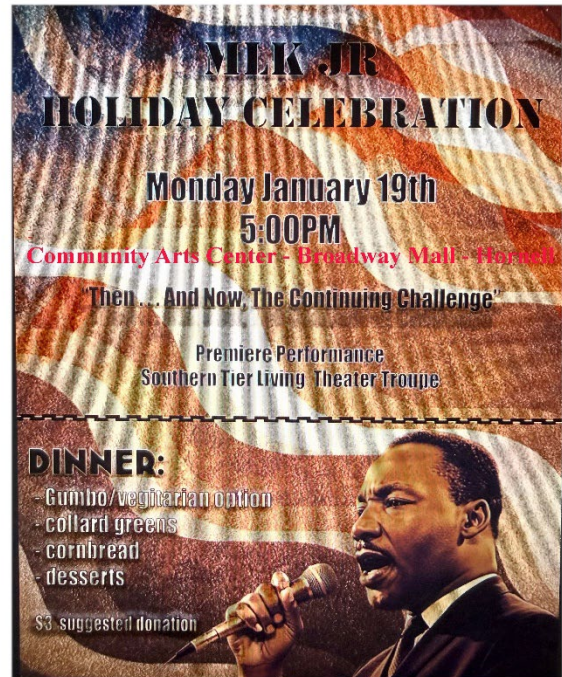
Sunday January 11th, 2026 was a monumental day for our church and our pastor, Ted Warner. We celebrated the Baptism of the Lord, and we rejoiced in five baptisms, witnessing God's grace made visible among us. Bre, Lylah, Kennedy, Scarlett and Margo Kellogg all received the Sacrament of Baptism during our worship service. In addition, Bre and her husband, Zach Kellogg, were welcomed as new members of our congregation. See photos on page 6.

Board Walk - Deacons

Visits and cards continue for shut-ins. Pastor Ted took communion to some of these. Meals were provided for a couple of individuals. Holiday floral bouquets were delivered to those who are local. Fill the cart items were collected and delivered. A goal of \$2,026 was approved for the Agape fund campaign in February.

Submitted by Deb Mammosser, Deacon

Lisa Sanford reminds of this upcoming event at the Community Arts Building 1/19/2026:



Church Contacts

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ADDRESS: 150 Main St., Hornell, NY 14843

CLERK OF SESSION: James Varner | 607-324-0755

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:

Jennifer Kellogg | secretary@presbyhornell.org | 607-324-0755

WEBSITE: www.presbyhornell.org

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/upchornell

**Congratulations to everyone
celebrating in January!**

Birthdays:

- 1 - William Peterson
- 10 - Phyllis Peterson
- 14 – Robert Gaffney
- 17 – Sally Wilcox
- 18 – Pam Johnson-Kock
- 19 – Zack Kellogg
- 21 – Don McFadden
- 21 – Tom Cox
- 22 – Kathy LaBarron-Roberts
- 27 – Roger Stonerock
- 29 – Alexandra Holbrook
- 31 – Ted Warner

Anniversaries:

- 13 – Jeremy & Alysha Ferris

*Please let Cindy F know of any additions or corrections



Christmas Eve ~ Children's Message

Christmas Eve ~ 10:00 PM



Would you like to be interviewed and
featured in an upcoming newsletter
column as **Church Family of the Month?**

If so, please let Cindy F know and we will
make that happen.

Thank you!

Baptisms January 11, 2026

Margo Kellogg with dad, Zach – new member!



Kennedy Kellogg with mom, Haley Kellogg.



Scarlett Kellogg being baptized - with mom, Bre.



Lylah Kellogg, with her mom, Haley.



Bre Kellogg (new member) was baptized by Pastor Ted.



Congratulations to everyone!

