

THE SPIRE

Love God! Love Others!



Upland Baptist Church, 1851

December 2019

Upland Baptist Church
325 Main Street, Upland, PA 19015
610-874-7474

Email: uplandbaptist@verizon.net

Website: www.uplandbaptist.org

Chapter 8: Do Not Judge

One evening as Jesus and the disciples rested after dinner, I took a break from writing in my journal. It had been a busy day. This adventure I was on was nothing like I expected. I was learning so much from Jesus. Some days it felt as if I would burst from all the new sights and lessons.

I was also beginning to worry about Abraham. He seemed to be getting very quiet. I was afraid he was getting homesick. We hadn't talked about what was troubling him, but I could tell that something was bothering him.

Jesus had recently taught a lesson on judging. He said that we were not to judge others, or we will be judged in the same way we have judged. Then he told this very funny story about a person who had a plank in their eye. I decided that Abraham and I needed to have a little fun. So, I found myself the biggest twig I could carry. I snuck up on Abraham who was sitting quietly, held the twig up to my eye, and staggered into his line of sight saying, *my eye, my eye*. It didn't take long before both of us were laughing hysterically.

"Malachi with that twig against your eye, you looked ridiculous," said Abraham when he could catch his breath.

"I know," I responded. "It really is a ridiculous thing to do."

"Then why did you?"

I paused and looked at Abraham, maybe he hadn't heard Jesus teaching that day. Maybe something was wrong with him. I went and fetched my journal so I could read to him what Jesus had said. I didn't have it word for word, but I shared as much as I had remembered and written down.

"Abraham, Jesus said that we were not to judge others, or we would be judged in the same way we judged others. Then he told this ridiculous story about a person who sees a speck in their friend's eye but fails to notice the log in his own eye. He said we had to deal with taking the log out of our own eye before we could see clearly."

Abraham responded, "I am beginning to wonder about following Jesus. I am thinking about going home."

This was not the response I was expecting. I was shocked and didn't know how to respond. I just sat there with my journal hanging from my fingertips and my mouth open.

After a few moments of silence, Abraham continued, "It has been exciting following Jesus and hearing what he is saying. And I have really liked being your friend, Malachi, but some of the things Jesus says just don't make any sense. Do you think we should be listening to him? Maybe he isn't who we thought he was."

My first response was to get angry with Abraham, but then I remembered Jesus' words not to judge and I took a deep breath. Before I answered, I thought about Abraham and how quiet he had been these last few days. I knew that this was not something he was just saying, but something for which he was struggling.

"Abraham," I finally responded, "I know something is bothering you. I am glad you decided to talk to me about it."

We sat together for quite a while that night. We talked about some of the things we had heard Jesus say that seemed very confusing. We talked about the lessons that we did not think could follow. We talked for a long time.

As dusk was beginning to fade away, I asked Abraham, "What made you join me on this adventure?"

"I was amazed at the things Jesus was saying. He was talking about things so differently than I was used to hearing. He challenged me to look at things in a different way. But now, I am just not sure. Maybe he goes too far."

"Abraham, when I started following Jesus, I saw him heal the sick. It was amazing how with just a word, a touch people were made well. I saw Jesus do miracles, before I heard these difficult lessons. I think that is what you need. You need to see Jesus as work, not just hear the words he says. Please stick around for a few more days. I am sure that Jesus will do more miracles. Then you will see that Jesus lives out what he says."

"It would be wonderful to see someone healed. I guess I can spare a few more days."

When we snuggled into one of the disciple's bags to sleep that night, I said a quick prayer of thanks. I was glad I was not losing my new friend so soon. I wanted to continue on this adventure. Nothing would stop me from following Jesus. But I was glad I did not have to go alone.

Jesus' lesson about judging helped me be a friend to Abraham. Before I heard Jesus tell me to deal with my own log before I try to help remove the speck from another's eye, I probably would have told Abraham that he was being ridiculous for thinking about leaving this adventure. Instead, this lesson from Jesus helped me listen to Abraham and understand what he was struggling with instead of judging him. Following Jesus is changing me as a mouse.

Malachi, Mouse Adventurer

P.S. Read the adventure for yourself in Matthew 7:1-5.

May Jesus' words change us as much as they are changing Malachi. Following Jesus' teachings, even when they are difficult makes all the difference. It is good that we are not on this journey alone. Adventures are better together.

Pastor Brenda

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Legal Corporation Highlights (November 26)

- Reviewed the financial reports through the end of October
- Pledges received as of November 24: 31 pledges for \$76,395
If you have not returned your pledge, please send it to:
Mrs. Dawn Rafalski
c/o Upland Baptist Church
325 Main Street
Upland, PA 19015
- Discussed sending a follow-up letter for stewardship
- Reviewed completed repairs and work that still needs to be completed
- Discussed on-line giving – see the article in this *Spire*
- Approved the Christmas gifts for the Church staff
- **Ministry Council Highlights (November 26)**
- Discussed upcoming programs for December
- Discussed the Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon
- Heard reports from each of the Team Leaders which can be found in elsewhere in the *Spire*.



CHILDREN AND TEEN NEWS



- **Oliver Kulp** was in the Brookhaven Holiday Parade with Cub Scout Pack 493. He enjoys reading at school and at home. Oliver loves to draw with his PopPop Frank!
- **Matthew Shaw** is a million-word reader! He completed his million words just before Thanksgiving. He also has completed several adventures in Cub Scouts.



- **Stephen Shaw** has been busy doing community service through Boy Scouts. Besides helping in the Upland Baptist Food Bank, he has also helped serve a community dinner and worked on the Boy Scout Food Drive. Stephen has read 1.3 million words so far this school year.



CHRISTMAS CARD FUND

Are you sending Christmas cards this year? Be sure to include your friends at Upland Baptist Church by adding a card to the Church's Christmas tree. By giving one card, you can send Christmas wishes to the entire congregation. Please put your card and donation in the boxes at the back and front of the Church by **December 15th** so your name appears in the December 22nd and Christmas Eve Bulletins. All donations will go towards supporting our Bell Choir members for all their extra time and efforts. One suggestion was to have a Bell Choir "Thank You" Dinner. Your donations would go towards purchasing the food and supplies needed to prepare the dinner. **If you cannot make it to Church, but you would like to be included, please send your card to : Linda Cook, c/o Upland Baptist Church, 325 Main Street, Upland, PA 19015.**

ADVENT ENVELOPES

The Advent Offering can be turned in anytime during the Advent season. **This offering is over and above your usual envelope giving.** Please pray for our Advent offering as our contributions have gone down the last two years since we have switched to envelopes.

This year, the congregation's Advent Offering will go towards Outreach to Children. This includes our ministry to children through the Monday Night VBS program and Main Street School. As our attendance grows on Monday nights, crafts and food become costly. We also want to continue our work with Main Street Elementary School and be able to offer more support to the school. This support includes recognizing students for their academic achievements with awards and treats, stocking the Friday Recognition Cart, providing refreshments for parent gatherings and student programs and special activities like Field Day.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Plan Ahead . . .

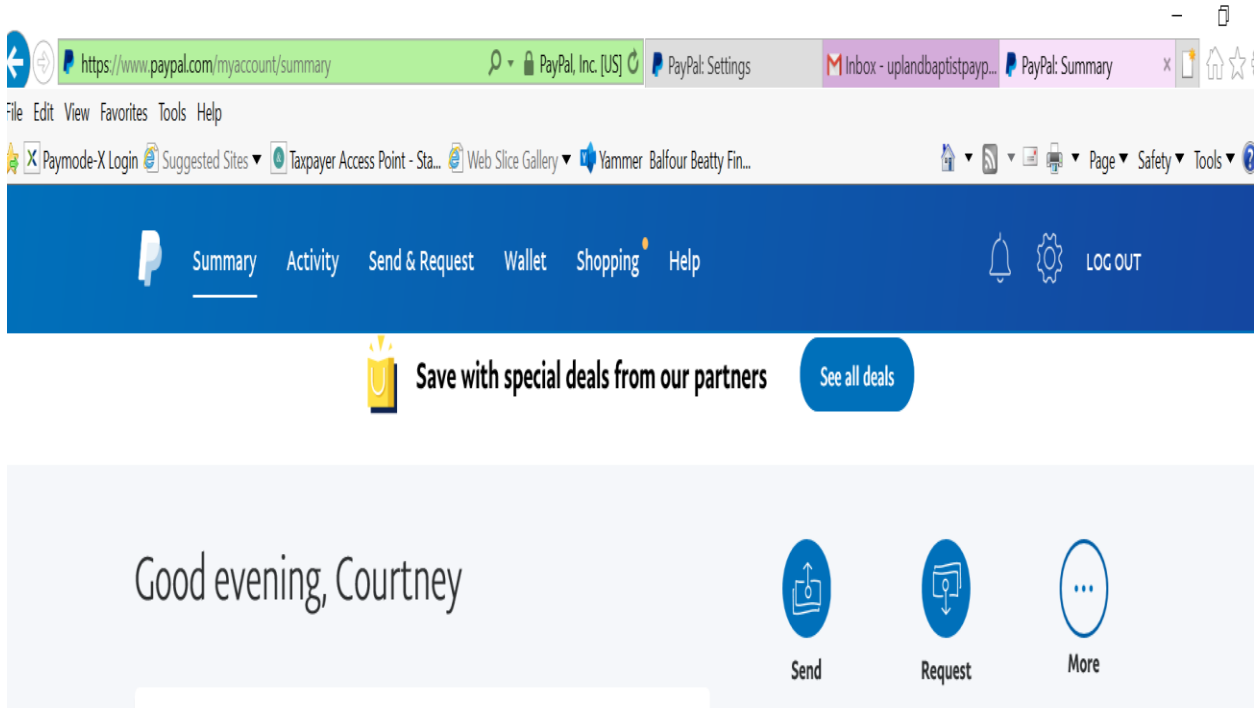
- December 1 Fellowship Lunch and Craft
- December 15 Blessing of the Giving Tree –
All Gifts should be under the tree!
Last Day for Christmas Cards -
If you want to be listed in the December 22 & 24 Church Bulletins and the January Spire
- December 16 *Night of Music*
VBS Night – Dinner & attend *Night of Music*
- December 23 No VBS Night
- December 24 Christmas Eve Service, 7:00
- December 30 No VBS Night
- January 4 Undecorating the Church
- January 6 VBS Night
Annual Reports Due
- January 13 VBS Night
- January 20 No VBS Night
- January 26 Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon
- February 1 Miniature Golf at Linvilla followed by Dinner
- February 16 Valentine's Brunch
(Snow Date is February 23)



Have you been in church and realized that you forgot your checkbook or cash? Or have you watched Sunday Service through the UplandBaptist.org website, and wanted to make a donation? No need to worry, Upland Baptist has added PayPal as a method to receive money, through either the Upland Baptist.org website, the PayPal website or through the PayPal app. All deposits will still be credited to you, via the name on your accounts whether it's you PayPal or through the UBC site.

Through PayPal:

All you need to do is login to the website or app and select "Send" from your home screen.



After hitting "Send" where it asks you to send money you can enter our email address uplandbaptistpaypal@gmail.com.

Send Request Contacts More

Send money

Name, email or mobile number
uplandbaptistpaypal@gmail.com

Next

How it works ?

- Send to friends abroad**
The faster way to get money to friends and family across the globe.
- Send an invoice**
Customize, track, and send invoices.
- Send a digital gift card**
Choose from over 300 gift card brands and personalize it with a message.

After entering the address all you'll need to do is enter in the dollar amount of your donation, and then you can add a note as a reference to what your donation is for.



Upland Baptist Church
uplandbaptistpaypal@gmail.com

\$ 100.00

USD

Sending to a friend

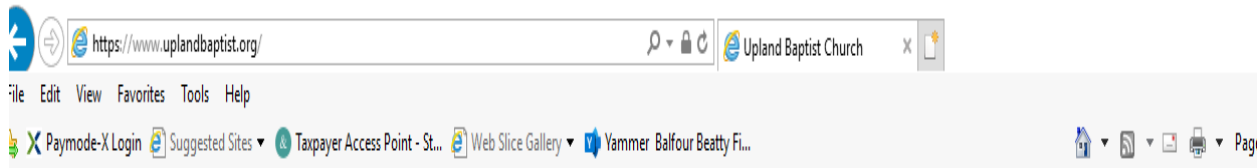
Change

Add a note



Through the Upland Baptist.org website:

This is still under construction, however coming soon in the **uplandbaptist.org** website across the top banner you will see a button for “Donations”. Through there it will take you to a different screen which will prompt you for your credit card information for your online donations.



Upland Baptist Church

325 Main Street

Upland, PA 19015

Rev. Brenda A.B. Shaw, Pastor

Church Office: 610-874-7474

e-mail: uplandbaptist@verizon.net

Once we get this updated on our website, I will send an update in next month's Spire.

Respectfully,

Brian Klimek

Upland Baptist Controller

PROPERTY – Frank Kulp

No Property Report this month.

COMMUNICATIONS – Dave Geveke

Congregational Meeting – Sunday, November 17, 2019

Thank you to all who attended the special meeting of the entire Church on Sunday, November 17. After discussing the upcoming nominations for the Legal Corporation and the Ministry Council, a motion was made to suspend the Church bylaws to allow several members of the boards to continue in their positions for another two years. The motion passed unanimously.

The angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

WORSHIP – Priscilla Mills

Joyful Noise Bell Choir

The Joyful Noise Bell Choir played on Sunday November 24th. Don't miss the next opportunities to hear them on December 16th at the Night of Music and on Sunday December 22nd as well as on Christmas Eve Tuesday December 24th. They have special music to enhance our Worship Services.

Worship at Belvedere

Sunday December 22 at 2:30pm. The residents will be singing Christmas Carols and enjoying a short Christmas message. The Giving Tree items are due to Church by Sunday December 15th. The activity staff at Belvedere will give the gifts to the residents on Christmas day.

Christmas Night of Music

Join us as we spend an evening enjoying the sounds of the season. We will sing carols and hymns together, listen to the Bell Choir, hear a story for the children, and perhaps even enjoy a visit from Santa. Come to the chapel afterwards for cupcakes, drinks, snacks and enjoy socializing with friends and neighbors from our community. The crafts made at the Sunday Social on December 1st are available for you to give with an invitation to the Night of Music to your neighbors and friends. It is a wonderful pre- Christmas event to celebrate the birth of Christ. We need cupcakes for the social time. Please sign up on the sheet in the back of the church if you can provide 20 –24 decorated/iced cupcakes.

Greeters and Ushers

Greeters are needed for the Night of Music on December 16th. Greeters and ushers are needed for Christmas Eve December 24th. Sign up in the back of the church.

Christmas Worship

Advent starts on Sunday December 1st. Families from our church will be participating and lighting the Advent Candles on December 1, December 8th, December 15th, December 22nd, and the last candle on Christmas Eve December 24th.

MAY YOUR CHRISTMAS BE WRAPPED IN WARMTH, TOUCHED BY JOY, AND FILLED WITH LOVE AND PEACE.

MINISTRY TO MEMBERS – Dawn Rafalski

Offering envelopes will be out later this month. Check the back of the church and pick yours up.

Make sure you have your offering into the church by 12/29 if you want to have it included in your tax letter for 2019.

Looking ahead – The Annual Church Meeting and luncheon will be on January 26th following worship. Come out and see all that we are doing and all that we are in the eyes of God.

The next Sunday social will be on March 15th following worship. Menu to be decided on later. Any suggestions?

DISCIPLESHIP – Karen Johnston

Merry December! Children's Church is back in full swing. We are always looking for adults in our congregation to share their love of our Lord on Sunday mornings. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to participate.

OUTREACH – Joan Decker

VBS Night

Come join us in the chapel on Monday nights from 6 – 7 pm to help with dinner, the Bible story or the activity.

Main Street Elementary

There are volunteer opportunities available at Main Street Elementary. Please call the church office for more information 610-874-7474 if you would like to help.

Food Bank

Please remember the Food Bank with **cold cereal** for the month of December. The Food Bank is always in need of canned goods as well as paper and plastic bags. You can place those items in the box at the back of the church. Please support the food bank in any way by dropping off donations at the church. The Food Bank is always in need of help. Please call the church office at 610-874-7474 if interested in helping at the food bank. Assistance is greatly needed with weekly deliveries.

Abundance of Blessings

Thank you to all who donated to Abundance of Blessings.

Christmas Tree Giving Gifts

A big thank you to all the elves who took Christmas tree tags. There were fifty-one tags that were made up. A list came from Belvedere as to what the residents wanted or needed. The gifts will be delivered on December 15 by Santa's elves. The activity staff at Belvedere will give the gifts to the residents on Christmas day. Thanks to all who took a tag to make for a special Christmas.

Worship

Please join us for worship on Sunday mornings at 10:00 AM.

HOME AND INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES FOR DECEMBER 2019

All cards for International Missionaries are to be sent to the following address:

International Ministries
1003 W. 9th Ave., Suite A
King of Prussia, PA 19406-1210

Rev. David Reed 12/25
6640 W. Brightwater Way
Tucson, AZ 85757

December Birthdays

4 Bobbi Jean Simcox
7 Deloris Hanley
16 Ben Geveke
 Cheryl Rhoads
24 Amanda Harman
26 Kathleen Geveke
27 Courtney Klimek

December Anniversaries

18 Carol and Richard Arscott