



# UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH

## MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER

ROOTED IN JUSTICE,  
WORKING FOR PEACE

1219 University Ave SE Minneapolis MN 55414  
Established 1850 at Owámniyomni/St. Anthony Falls, MN



### MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

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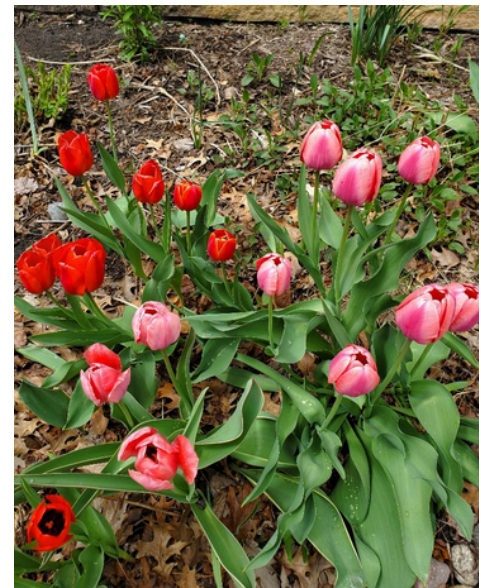
"This is my last newsletter column after 25+ years as your pastor. It's been the great honor of my life to walk and work alongside the great people of UBC."

Read more on p. 2.



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# FROM THE PASTOR: THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING

This is my last newsletter column after 25+ years as your pastor. It's been the great honor of my life to walk and work alongside the great people of UBC. Come to a service in May and you'll hear reminiscences and words of gratitude from me for all these years together.

I want to thank you for being the great community of faith that you are. I want to thank you for nurturing me and my family. I want to thank you for being patient with me and forgiving me when I have done some foolish things. We have loved each other and that love will sustain me and I hope my love sustains you. So, I want to leave you with these humble words.

Continue to be the great expression of the beloved community that you have been for 176 years.

Continue to lean into the antiracism work we have done together these past few years. Not because it makes us look better to each other, but because it looks better to God.

Continue to celebrate music. Play a bell or two. Lift your voices in song. Pick a stringed instrument or pound on a piano. Make a joyful noise.

Celebrate the children among you. They are not just the future, they are the present. They show you how God operates in the world.

Learn from the wisdom of the sages among us. They have been through so much and they long to pass that wisdom along.

Don't take yourselves too seriously. Laugh, celebrate, try something new. Embrace failure and learning.

Take the Gospel incredibly seriously. It is Good News for all of us.

Enjoy the gem of the building we share. We are stewards of this fine old house. Walk the halls and hear the voices of the ancestors cheering you on.

Work to share the Good News of UBC's form of the Gospel with the community that is hungry and thirsty for some fresh audacious courageous witness.



Don't get hung up with membership numbers. There are plenty of ways to measure success that don't have to do with butts in the pews. Think instead of the lives you impact just by being the voice of hope, reason, and inclusion. I guarantee that there are people watching and encouraged by our ministry.

Remember those who might feel left out or forgotten. Remember that Jesus seeks them out, and so should we.

Most of all, remember that God has great things in store for you. And I can't wait to celebrate you in the years to come.

*Blessings and Peace, Doug Donley*

# FROM THE ARCHIVES: "LET THE JOURNEY CONTINUE"

## UBC NEWS

UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH—EST. 1850 AT ST. ANTHONY FALLS, MINNESOTA  
1219 UNIVERSITY AVENUE SOUTHEAST  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55414

**"STILL AHEAD OF OUR TIME"**

No foolin'  
Daylight Saving  
Time starts Sunday,  
April 1! Spring forward  
(get it?) one hour Satur-  
day night or you'll be  
an hour late for  
worship!

Vol. 56, No. 4

FREE

April 2001

### from the minister



Hello All!

What a great Sunday we had on March 18th! The culmination of lots of hard work and fervant prayers brought us together for our first Sunday. My family and I feel very blessed to be part of this great church community.

The plants you gave us are adorning our dining room table in Moundsview. Once the ground thaws, we look forward to planting those bulbs so we can be reminded of this weekend every spring. Thanks again to all who made the trip so smooth. We have simply been overwhelmed by the support, the willing hands transporting and unpacking boxes and the general excitement about what God has in store for all of us in the weeks, months and years ahead. So this is the season for saying "hello."

I'm still trying to get my bearings around here. I'm pretty sure I know how to get to the church. I have taken some walking tours of Dinkytown and the campus. Before next month I will hope to have met with all of the Boards and Committees. But more important than that, I would love to meet and greet each one of you.

I will be in the office Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from roughly 9-4:00. I work at home on my sermon on Wednesdays and I take Mondays and Saturdays off. I would welcome meeting with each of you in the office, at your home, your work (if it's O.K. with the boss) or over a meal. I want to hear about your hopes and dreams. I want to see the ways that I or the church can help you to live into your individual and collective callings.

We are off to a great start. Let's keep the momentum going. I look forward to meeting you and saying "Hello."

Peace,

Doug

### Our year of anticipation has culminated in the arrival of our new pastor—welcome to UBC, Doug!

By President Don Dresser

A little bit less than two years ago, members of University Baptist Church heard the official announcement that our pastor, Nadean Bishop, would be retiring soon. At the time, our congregation entered a new part of our ongoing journey together. This portion of our journey has involved all of us in new decisions, new circumstances and new understandings of what our church means. We have now reached a significant milestone in that ongoing journey with the arrival of our new pastor, Doug Donley, and his family. The Donleys arrived in the Twin Cities on March 9, and Doug officially started work Mar. 16.

We could not have reached this point without the contributions of many people. Jeanne Lubke, Morris Floyd, Lisa Milhouse, and Jim Ketcham led our discernment process, and many members of the congregation participated in that process that provided a basic foundation for the search process (and much of the rest of the life of the church). Kay Welsch provided excellent leadership as our interim pastor, and Jim Ketcham kept things running as the "mini-interim." Members of the congregation took on just a little bit more in various ways, to keep things going. And, of course, the members of the Search Committee (Chair Paula Moyer, John Madeiros, Denise Roy, Howard Johnson, Harriet Johnson, and Nancy Myers) did the work of publicizing our opening, reviewing materials from candidates and recommending both Kay and Doug to the church.

Many thanks to all of you, for all of you made reaching this milestone possible. We look forward with hope and joy to the tenure of Doug Donley at University Baptist Church. Let the journey continue.

Deadline for the May Newsletter is April 15. Please e-mail thork@puccini.crl.umn.edu - give or fax (651-644-0783) info to your editor by that date.



# MAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Worship Theme:**  
**"Faithfulness: Then and Now"**

## May 3

Communion  
Preaching: Doug Donley  
Sermon: "Mayday"  
Scripture: Acts 7:54-8:1  
Worship Leader: Gayla Marty  
Ushers: Chris Follett & Terri Wottrich

## May 10

Preaching: Doug Donley  
Sermon: "Shadows"  
Scripture: Acts 5:12-16  
Worship Leader: Violet Butler  
Ushers: Trish Donley & Joel Delikowski

## May 17

Preaching: Doug Donley  
Sermon: "Graduation"  
Scripture: Deuteronomy 16:18-20  
Worship Leader: TBD  
Ushers: Robbie Steele & Gene Velasco

## May 24

Preaching: Doug Donley  
Sermon: "Community Reimagined"  
Scripture: Acts 2:1-13  
Worship Leader: Deidre Druk  
Ushers: Chris Follett & John Medeiros

## May 31

Preaching: Doug Donley  
Sermon: "A Parting Glass"  
Scripture: Acts 28:23-28  
Worship Leader: Jean Lubke  
Ushers: Trish Donley & Terri Wottrich



# MAY FORUMS

Forums are held 11:45am-12:45pm, after coffee time. We do our best to provide a Zoom option for remote participants.

## May 3—Report from Chicago: annual gatherings of the Alliance of Baptists and THRIVE cohort

Pastor Doug, Denise Roy, and Gayla Marty attended the Alliance of Baptists annual gathering in Evanston, Illinois, April 16–19 and also the THRIVE/Sankofa retreat in Chicago that preceded it, April 15–16. They will report and reflect on their experiences including great music, preaching, and many great sessions relevant to our work at UBC. The theme was Reckoning with Our Roots: Repent, Repair, Reclaim, with womanist theologian Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas giving the keynote on Saturday and preaching on Sunday. Come hear more about the next phase of THRIVE with a second grant from the Lilly Foundation.

## May 10—Discussion on building issues

This forum will provide updates on the Rooted Good team's ideas for a social enterprise or other uses of our building, the National Register of Historic Places application process in progress, and building projects and potential financial solutions. See p. 5.

## May 17—Congregational meeting for a vote

In this forum, a congregational meeting will be held for a vote whether to remain in the building for at least five years while social enterprise ideas have a chance to occur, the process for National Register of Historic Places concludes, and a new permanent pastor is called and begins ministry with us. See p. 5.

## May 24—Memorial Day weekend—no forum

Extended coffee hour.

## May 31—Reception farewell for Pastor Doug & Kim

Cake and fellowship on the lawn (weather permitting). See p. 7.



## SOLVING BUILDING ISSUES -

### MAY 10 FORUM AND MAY 17 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Two years ago, we ended a year-long discernment process with three directions:

- Refocusing People Power (which included hiring a marketing manager)
- Solving Building Issues
- Opening our Doors Within and Without (which included creating our brand and increasing our marketing and advertising)

To ultimately decide our big “Building Issue” – should we stay or should we go? – we needed answers and data in several areas:

1. What is the current condition of our building? What needs fixing and how much will it cost?
2. Where could we get funding to help us restore the building? Could we qualify for the National Register of Historic Places?
3. What are other possible uses of our building? Is there a way to get more money from renting the building in different ways?
4. What are the building needs of our congregation? What amount of space, what configurations of space do we need? What other spaces might be available that would meet our needs and how much would they cost?
5. What is the market value of our current building? What would happen to the building / space / community if we were to sell?

We naively thought that we’d have all of this data and information and we’d be able to make our big decision within a year or two.

For the last two years, we’ve been working to answer the first three sets of questions. We have the answers to #1 with our Architect’s report (which we distributed and discussed in a previous forum this year).

We are in the process of determining our qualification as a National Register property – we’ll have the answers within the next year. Our Rooted Good team has been working to explore alternative uses of our building. Our marketing and property managers have been working to see what advertising does for rentals.

But, as a passion-led congregation, we haven’t yet had the passion, time, or energy to have teams investigate the answers to questions 4 and 5.

We have the timely opportunity to do some significant work to the building – adding a canopy to the back parking lot doorway to solve the water and snow problem, and to replace the old boiler with a new HVAC system to solve our various heating problems.

But we need more time to gather all of the data for our ultimate decision. And we need time for our new long-term pastor to get on board.

So the Council is proposing a short-term decision: push our ultimate decision out five more years giving us time to answer all of our questions by committing to stay in our building for AT LEAST five years so we can get some of the critical projects completed without waiting several years for the ultimate decision. Come to the May 10 forum and learn what we know and what we don’t know. Come to the May 17 congregational meeting to vote on the proposal to stay in the building for (at least) five years to finish our Building Issues discernment and to do some major building work in the meantime.

– Jean Lubke, President

# MAY 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2
						<b>9am</b> Bible Study <b>11:30am</b> Border CrosSing concert <b>7pm</b> SoundMind Project concert
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>10am</b> Worship Communion <b>11:15am</b> Coffee <b>11:45am</b> Forum/Journeys <b>2:30pm</b> Bell Concert at Walker	<b>7pm</b> Bell Concert at Lyngblomsten	<b>11:15am</b> Meals on Wheels <b>5:30pm</b> Sacred Harp <b>7pm</b> Memoirs	<b>9am</b> Garden Team <b>11am</b> Handcraft Group <b>11:15am</b> Meals on Wheels <b>12pm</b> UBC-FCC Taskforce <b>6pm</b> Choir <b>7:30pm</b> Bells	<b>11:15am</b> Meals on Wheels <b>6:30pm</b> Caregiver Support	<b>11:15am</b> Meals on Wheels <b>11:15am</b> Every Meal	<b>1pm</b> Gardening at Carrie Lubke's <b>2pm</b> Book Group
10 Mother's Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
<b>10am</b> Worship <b>11:15am</b> Coffee <b>11:45am</b> Forum/Journeys <b>4pm</b> Sacred Harp		<b>5:30pm</b> Sacred Harp <b>7pm</b> Memoirs	<b>9am</b> Garden Team <b>6pm</b> Choir <b>7:30pm</b> Bells			<b>9am</b> Bible Study
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<b>10am</b> Worship <b>11:15am</b> Coffee <b>11:45am</b> Congregational Mtg	<b>7pm</b> Handcraft Group	<b>5:30pm</b> Sacred Harp <b>7pm</b> Racial Justice Team	<b>9am</b> Garden Team <b>6pm</b> Choir <b>7:30pm</b> Bells	<b>5pm</b> Rooted Good		<b>10am</b> Spanish Conver <b>1pm</b> Card Club
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<b>10am</b> Worship <b>11:15am</b> Coffee <b>11:45am</b> Journeys <b>4pm</b> Sacred Harp	<i>Memorial Day - office closed</i>  <i>Newsletter deadline</i>	<b>5:30pm</b> Sacred Harp	<b>9am</b> Garden Team <b>6pm</b> Choir <b>7:30pm</b> Bells	<b>11:15am</b> Every Meal		<b>5pm</b> Doug & Kim Farewell Potluck & Program
31						
<b>10am</b> Worship <b>11:15am</b> Farewell Reception for Doug & Kim						

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## CELEBRATIONS OF DOUG'S RETIREMENT

The weekend of May 30-31 will be filled with memories, laughter, tears, hugs, favorite music, love, sadness at our upcoming separation, joy in memories of our years together, and fond wishes for the future. Hope you are able to join us and/or participate in the activities!

**Saturday, May 30** – UBC Adele Fadden Assembly Hall

- 5pm potluck – [Potluck sign-up](#)
- Program – If there's something you'd like to contribute to the program (a memory, a song, a poem, etc.), please contact Jean Lubke

**Sunday, May 31**

- 10am service (UBC Sanctuary) with Doug's last sermon, bells, choir, and a special send-off. If you'd like to join the choir for this service, please contact Jean Lubke.
- Cake reception (on the lawn, weather permitting) – if you'd like to bake a cake, sign up here: [Cake for reception](#)



**May 1 is International Labor Day**—when we remember the struggle for workers' rights. There will be a general strike on May 1st, when our friends in the Labor community are calling for no work and no spending in order to raise awareness about the ongoing struggle for the dignity of those who make our country run. How are we doing with advocating for workers? How might the things we have learned this year influence us?

## SAVE THE DATES

- May 2, 11:30am** Border CrossSing  
Día de las Madres Community Sing at UBC
- May 9, 1pm** - Gardening at Carrie and Jonathan Lubke's
- May 9, 2pm** - Book group at Kim Donley's
- May 14** - Reports for the 2025-26 Annual Report due
- May 26, 5:30pm** Special Retirement  
Sacred Harp sing
- June 6, 9am-3pm** – Work day
- June 7** – Annual meeting and potluck
- June 27-28** - Pride Festival
- July 5 & 12** – Joint services with First Church (at FCC, 500 SE 8th Ave)
- July 19 & 26** – Joint services with First Church (at UBC)



**May 2, 7pm, Sound Mind Project's Spring Concert: Find Peace** at First Lutheran Church (1555 40th Ave NE, Columbia Heights). Join us to support this choir dedicated to supporting the mental health of youth in our community. The concert is a benefit for CLUES, one of UBC's longtime mission partners. As a bonus, the song "Find Peace" in the title of the program was written by Kim Donley after one of the many school shootings a few years back.

## BETWEEN US\*

*I am the vine; you are the branches. John 15:5*

Between us  
words take root  
not as a flower that blooms just once  
and then sheds its petals, its beauty soon lost.  
Nor as a tree  
with its branches outstretched  
reaching vertically and horizontally,  
never grasping what it spends its life yearning.  
Instead, between us  
words take root like a vine,  
wrap themselves around each other,  
twist in the embrace, enraptured, enveloped,  
our words become one, a promise, a covenant.  
Both fruit and blossom.

Between us  
there is God, looking out from within,  
listening all the while to sounds we make together.  
Between us  
songs rise from our souls  
and we sing our praise, our joy,  
our thanksgiving, our sorrow.  
And in our songs our words,  
once again, take root.

Between us  
love shows itself accessible,  
widens to the touch, spreads itself  
thin as a veil, and quiets the mind  
and the unquiet heart, moves with both  
the slowness of a day and the speed  
of a single moment.

Between us  
love spills like seeds  
from God's hands, filled with overflow.  
And we learn, as children learn,  
to pick up, to sow, to nurture, together.

Between us  
love grows bountiful,  
beautiful, faithful to us as we tend it.

– John Medeiros

## CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES



**Violet Butler** (they/them) is graduating from the University of Minnesota Law School on May 16. After graduation they will be working at the County Attorney's Office in criminal law/ prosecution. Violet started attending UBC in March 2024, joined October 20, 2024 and was baptized February 2, 2025.

Violet is currently on the Worship Team serving as a worship leader, and sings in the choir.



**Joel Delikowski** (he/him) graduated in December from the U of M with a degree in political science and will walk May 17 in the graduation ceremony. He is currently working as a Legislative Intern at Friends of the Boundary Waters. Joel has been attending UBC for about a year and is an usher.



**Zena Hamilton** (she/her) will graduate from the University of Minnesota Law School on May 16. She will be working as a judicial clerk with Judge Karen Duncan in Steele County. Since the position is hybrid she will continue living in the Cities. Zena joined UBC October 20, 2024 and currently serves on the Rooted Good team and will be helping coordinate our Pride booth.

*\*Read at the Installation Service of Rev. Douglas M. Donley at University Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 20, 2001.*

# GIVING AT UBC

## SPECIAL OFFERING FOR MAY/JUNE

### Marginalized Communities

The Outreach mission focus for May and June will be for organizations that help marginalized communities in the Twin Cities. In the past, we have supported CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations), Indian Food Shelf, Queer Space, and Clare Housing. Thank you for your donations, which will help support the important work being done for these groups.

You can drop your designated offering in the offering plate, send a check to the church, designate a gift directly from your bank, or use our online portal for giving on the UBC website, [www.UBCmn.org](http://www.UBCmn.org).

Thank you for your ongoing outreach support!!

Kim Donley and Karole Graham,  
Outreach Team Co-Coordinators



### INTERESTED IN JOINING UBC?

We would love to learn more about you and help you learn more about UBC. We'll arrange time for a chat about Baptist beliefs, our congregation, and the logistics of joining. Please contact Paula Moyer, our New Member Facilitator, at [paulamoyer52@gmail.com](mailto:paulamoyer52@gmail.com) or 651-279-4152.

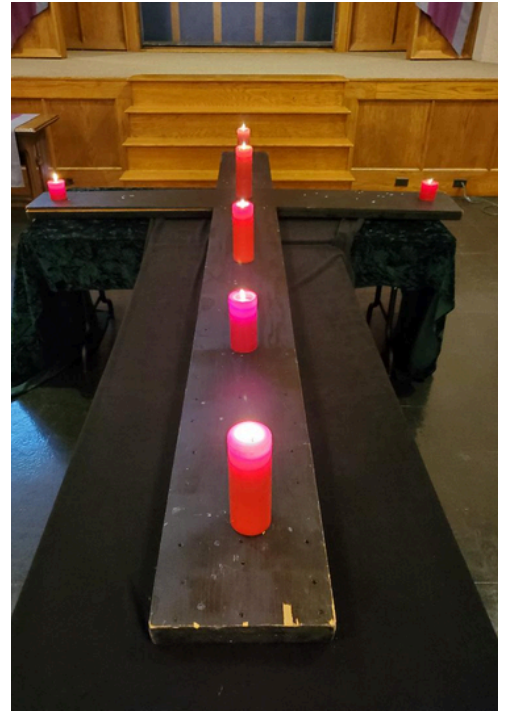
### BLESSING OF THE BOOKS

Stop by the pew between the sanctuary and the lounge to pick up some books. Pastor Doug is looking for homes for the books that have lined his office shelves. It's amazing how many books one can accumulate over the years. He wants to bless you with these books that have blessed him. Doug will be putting out a new batch every two weeks, so do your shopping now. Actually, they are free. If you want to make a donation to UBC, go ahead (but it's not necessary).

# MAUNDY THURSDAY & HOLY FRIDAY

We joined with our friends from First Congregational Church to mark Maundy Thursday (at First Church) and Holy Friday (at UBC).

*Photos clockwise from bottom right: Peter and Andrew Justin helped prepare communion, and served it. Pastor Jane blessed the communion. Red candles on black cross for Good Friday.*





## EASTER

*Photos clockwise: Beautiful banners made by Karole Graham. We had a full house as we celebrated the baptisms of Ivan Beda and Peter Justin. The children were invited up front to view the baptistery. Thank you to Gayla Marty for the spring flowers that decorated the front entrance.*

# BABY DEDICATION

Ignatius (Iggy) Hartman Waller was dedicated on April 19.

Doug Donley presided while proud parents, Jim and Katie Hartman Waller, and grandparents and siblings looked on.

Jim sang and played guitar to "Beautiful Boy" by John Lennon and Grandpa Hartman gave a blessing.



# ALLIANCE OF BAPTISTS AND THRIVE GATHERINGS

Doug Donley, Gayla Marty, and Denise Roy represented UBC at the gatherings in Chicago April 14-19. **Learn more at the forum on May 3.**



Photos by Gayla Marty, clockwise:

Lake Street Church of Evanston, inside and out, site of the Alliance of Baptists annual gathering, April 16–19 (the exterior one has Doug in it).

Doug and two other pastors in our THRIVE cohort [Tim Shaefer from First Baptist Church of Madison, WI, and Kathy Donley (no relation to Doug) of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Albany, NY].



Ellis Avenue Church of Hyde Park neighborhood in Chicago, site of the THRIVE retreat April, 14–16.

# MUSIC & MEDIA



## ROOTS CELLAR SEASON FINALE

Crys Matthews (left) performed to an enthusiastic crowd at the final Roots Cellar concert of the season on April 11.

A BIG thank you to Ivan for setting up and doing sound, to Deidre (and others) for staffing the door, Kim (and others) for selling refreshments and especially to Doug for booking the acts all these years. If anyone is interested in taking over the Roots Cellar concert series, please see Doug as soon as possible!

## PODCAST RECOMMENDATION: GHOST OF A CHANCE

I recently listened to a fantastic podcast that I think you all would find very interesting as well! It's called *Ghost of a Chance*. The premise is this: reporter Eric Roper bought a house in King Field, and being a history buff/investigator by nature, he read up on the families listed in the house's deed. To his surprise, he discovered that in the 1920s, his house had been owned by one of only a handful of Black families in all of Southwest Minneapolis at that time, Clementine and Harry Robinson. He then spent five years finding out what happened to them. The six-part series follows the Robinsons and intertwines with Black history in Minneapolis. It was so good, I could hardly stop listening! The website has additional source materials and scans of newspaper articles for each episode. 10/10, highly recommend! You can stream it on all the regular podcast platforms as well as directly from the website.

[www.startribune.com/ghost-of-a-chance](http://www.startribune.com/ghost-of-a-chance)

– Maura Dunst



## MUSIC FROM ELWYN

UBCer Elywn Fraser, Jr. wrote a new piece that dropped online on his birthday. It's entitled "And For You And For Me." This piece will be in the new UBC hymnal. [Give the video a watch/listen.](#)



## C. Borchardt led the forum on April 26 about the Singing

**Resistance.** She taught us some protest songs, which we sang very exuberantly! She also spoke about the movement that has added song and spirit to the work for justice in the Twin Cities and beyond.

# FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Our pledge income balance is doing well as many folks have already completed their pledge. Rental income is also up as we are almost at capacity with our rentals. Our miscellaneous income budget item includes 15K in new funding/fundraising. Currently we are behind on that goal. We always welcome new ideas! In addition to the regular distribution, the Foundation contribution includes funds to cover the facilities supervisor and marketing manager positions.

Operating Income 2025-26	%	Budget	Expected	Received	Over (short)
Pledge Income	47	\$207,933	\$173,278	\$175,500	\$2,222
Rental Income	18	\$80,000	\$66,667	\$71,362	\$4,695
Misc income	7	\$31,500	\$26,250	\$17,322	(\$8,928)
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$319,433</b>	<b>\$266,194</b>	<b>\$264,183</b>	<b>(\$2,011)</b>
Foundation Contribution	27	\$118,811			
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	100	<b>\$438,244</b>			

We received \$1,293 for the March/April special offering for childhood health and hunger organizations. - *Chris Follett, Financial Secretary*

## 2025-26 UBC WISH LIST

These are items that don't fit in the budget but would be really nice to have. Please contact Financial Secretary Chris Follett if you would like to donate toward these items.

1. A big welcoming banner on the northwest side of the building visible to people driving or walking on University Avenue (\$300)
2. Upgrade or replacement of our playground equipment
3. New bell-table covers (\$3,000)
4. Wiring and electric stoves for apartment and lounge kitchen (\$6,000)
5. New furniture (couch, chairs, etc.) for nursery (\$3,000)
6. Additional benches under the crab apple tree (\$2,500)

# STORIES FROM UBC HISTORY

## *Garden Reflections by Sue Wester*

*"The kiss of the sun for pardon, the song of the birds for mirth, one is nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth." - Dorothy Frances Gurney*

I cannot think of our church garden without remembering Adele. She was the matriarch of the church when we first arrived—she taught Sunday school, was an active member of many committees and had many special attributes, among them her culinary prowess (one always wanted to be on her committees) and her talent as a gardener. Adele's home garden was a marvel; and she always shared. Many of us benefited from her hosta collection. And she commandeered the semicircle of ground in front of the portico to create a seasonal garden. The first sign of spring was the emergence of crocus in "Adele's garden." Tulips, daylilies and peonies followed suit.

Other UBC gardeners made a significant impact on the landscape: Vicki Wilson revised the hill to the north of the entrance, planting flowering shrubs, including paniculate hydrangea. Beth Wilson envisioned and supervised the creation of a garden by the walkway leading to the portico, consisting of peonies, perennials and a shrub bank of viburnum, Thor Kommedahl chose the beautiful crabapple trees which now grace the area near the water gardens. And multiple gardeners struggled with the SE corner garden, which was alternately covered with stones and having the stones removed.

There were garden challenges: The area south of the building, which has little sun but significant trash from students walking by, was always difficult to maintain. Beth added a quince tree and an espaliered apple tree; Shirley Roy tried an indigenous method of planting called "Three Sisters." We tried one year to plant a community garden, where residents could pick the produce, but the lack of sun was prohibitive to growth. But the grape vine which took over the back fence and telephone pole had no growth inhibitions: Sheila Wolk, our "office everything" person called (husband) Don in a panic one morning relating that the phone service was out due to the vine. The two of us spent significant gardening hours doing grape vine removal.

The last iteration of the UBC gardens was the cooperative project working at water conservation by diverting rain water into perennial garden areas. So far the plants are persisting, in spite of the ravenous bunny competition. The Garden lives on!



The Gardening Team has started work on the church grounds.

If you are interested in helping, show up at 9am on Wednesdays.

If you have questions, please contact Betsy Kerr at [bjkerr@umn.edu](mailto:bjkerr@umn.edu)

# STORIES FROM UBC HISTORY

## *Gardening at UBC by Trish Donley*



When I moved to Minnesota back in 2012, I hadn't been active in any church since I was in my 20s. And back then, my involvement was basically Sunday worship and choir.

At first, I was ambivalent about attending UBC, where my brother Doug had been pastor for many years. I was a shy introvert, healing from some pretty severe mental health challenges. When I went to church everyone welcomed me warmly. I worried that my story preceded me and I was embarrassed. Everyone knew my name, but trying to remember all the names of all the people who were so integral to Doug's life was overwhelming. So I attended on and off (mostly off).

When I moved into my own rental house I began to plan a garden (something that had been impossible in arid Flagstaff except for a few frequently watered planters out front). Doug and I built two raised beds in my large yard with mostly scrap wood, and I began experimenting with lasagne gardening and square foot gardening. I was hooked! Getting my hands in the dirt and tending and harvesting the veggies was an important part of my healing process.

At some point that first summer in Minnesota, Doug introduced me to my first church mentor, Shirley Roy. Like me, Shirley was a nurse. And she also worked hard keeping the church gardens beautiful. And she desperately needed my help! And I liked to be helpful. That trait was in my blood but had lay dormant for many years. Shirley picked me up each week and we worked together weeding, planting, transplanting, watering—whatever needed to be done. I didn't really know

what I was doing, but doing SOMETHING was so vital to my recovery. So I tried. I learned. I showed up. I worked hard. I saw things come alive in ways that I hadn't seen in my years living in Flagstaff. Everything was so green!

I don't really remember whether anyone else was gardening that first year besides Shirley and Doug. At one point Shirley and I went to a plant sale at the Arboretum. The church had a membership there and as a non-profit, we were able to choose some plants for free. I remember filling two flatbed carts with various plants, and then coming back and planting them over the next weeks.

I guess gardening was kind of my gateway into more regular church attendance. I began to attend more regularly. And I learned that if I wanted to be helpful, there were plenty of ways I could help! Soon, there was a need for help at a funeral, and setting up for Palm Sunday brunch, and then there was commitment Sunday, and the annual meeting. I found myself remembering some names, and slowly made some friends. And I began to feel like I belonged somewhere for the first time in a very long time.

In the following years, we had more help in the gardens. Nancy Myers, Sue and Don Wester, Diane and Alan Ehr, Harriet and Cork Johnson, Roger and Anne Johnson, Margie Garmers, Marie LaFrance, Deidre Druk, Betty Shaw, Randy DeMent, Barb Patterson (from Sacred Harp), Santos and Gerson, Laurie Brazman, Christie Ranck (from 1st Church), Chris Follett, Betsy Kerr, Ivan and Erik, Felix and Dorcal and even a few parents of university students, passersby or students themselves have all lent a hand at different times.

During the early months of the pandemic, a core group consisting of Don and Sue Wester, Diane and Alan Ehr, Nancy Myers and Marie LaFrance, Doug and I changed things up a bit and met in the lounge to chat and share treats before we gardened. Sometimes we went out to lunch afterwards as well. And once it got too

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### *Gardening - continued*

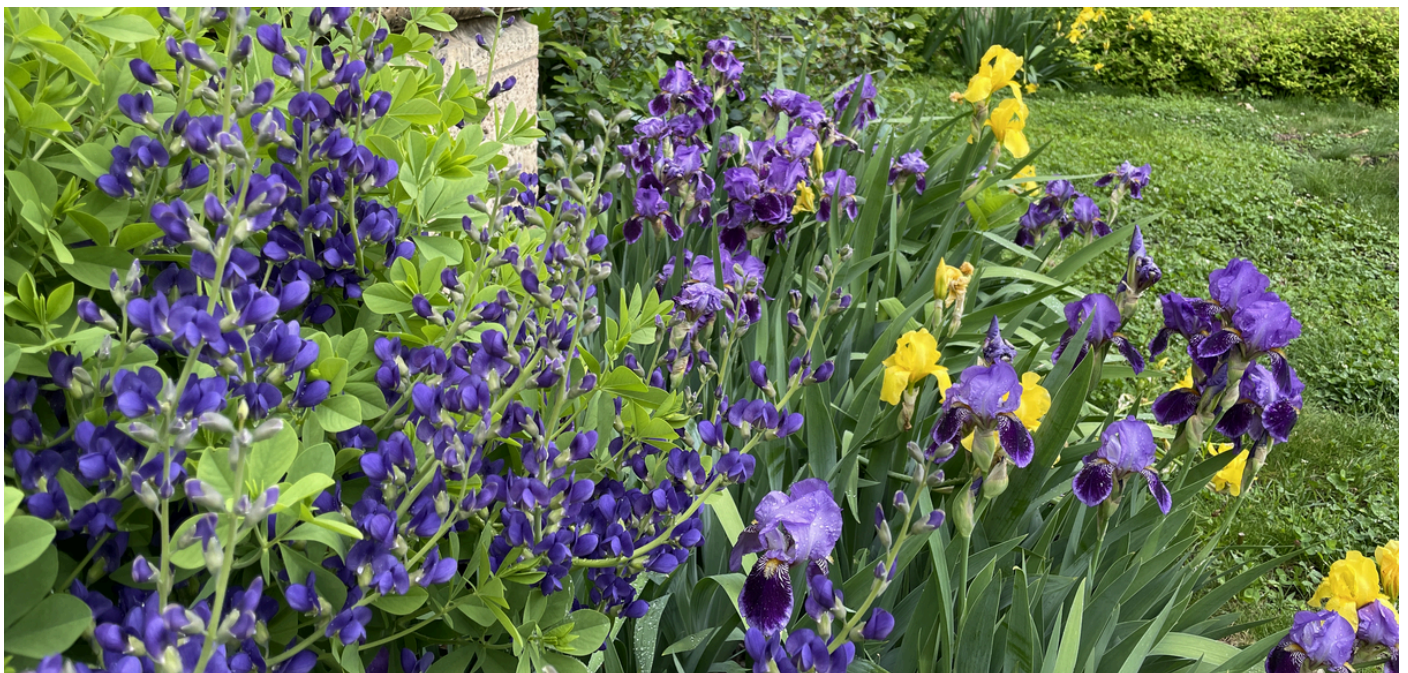
cold to garden, we continued to meet to do little projects around the church: cleaning out closets, cleaning various cupboards in the kitchen, dusting and polishing the pews, etc. These meetings were so important during such a time of isolation and turmoil. Around this time, Barb Patterson from the Sacred Harp group was completing her Water Steward training and helped Doug apply for a grant with the Mississippi Watershed for a rain garden project. Actually it was two grants. The first was a grant for the proposal. The second was a grant for the plants and the implementation. We received both grants and in 2022, our four rain gardens were born.

The planting of these gardens was not without controversy in our little group, mainly because we needed to follow certain guidelines outlined in the grant, and we had so much to do in the new gardens in addition to all of our regular garden work. Unfortunately, the grant necessitated the transformation of the beloved Adele's garden (named for Adele Fadden) into a different configuration of native plants and a new drainage system to keep the water out of the basement. Many people expressed remorse over "losing" Adele's garden.

I had been leading the garden team for many years at this point but was feeling really discouraged by the lack of volunteers to take over as older members transitioned out of their gardening roles. Santos was willing to water several times a week as the rain gardens were getting established, which really helped.

Then Betsy Kerr and Chris Follett answered the plea to help! Betsy is an experienced and knowledgeable gardener and Chris is a master weeder! Betsy, Chris and I became the new core team, with help from Doug and Marie when they were available. Betsy soon agreed to coordinate the team as my energy waned. And Patrick keeps us supplied with hoses and leaf bags and whatever else we need. Ivan and Erik are happy to help with labor-intensive jobs like mulching and transplanting.

Because Betsy has a huge garden at home as well, she often shares her bounty with us on gardening days, as we sit under the shade of the crabapple trees planted so many decades ago. We are a small but mighty group, and not a gardening session goes by when I don't think of all the people who have contributed to our precious little slice of green space in the heart of Dinkytown.



## MAY BIRTHDAYS

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- 3 Caroline Lee
- 14 John Medeiros
- 19 Bill Allen
- 25 Stephanie Leervig
- 27 Ty Wottrich
- 28 Jade Elder



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