



CHURCH & PASTOR PROFILE

University Presbyterian Church
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INTRODUCTION

University Presbyterian Church (UPC) is an established Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) church in Las Cruces, NM. Founded in 1959 and located near New Mexico State University (NMSU), UPC maintains strong relationships with other Rio Grande Presbytery churches. From its inception, UPC has been known for its commitment to sound Biblical teaching and expository preaching. We desire for our discipleship and community ministries to thrive and for the Gospel of Jesus Christ to continue to be faithfully preached and carried forward into Las Cruces and all the world.

Our members come from a variety of denominational backgrounds and live and work throughout Las Cruces and the surrounding area. Our current membership is 212 with 40 noncommunicant children, and an average Sunday attendance of 150. UPC has a multi-generational membership serving in the church and the community. While many members have been at UPC for years, a portion of the membership is always in transition, as they move to Las Cruces for school or work for only a few years before moving to another city.

As we seek a new pastor to shepherd this flock, we trust in the LORD's providence and are praying earnestly for all who may be considering joining us.

OUR MISSION AND VISION

OUR MISSION IS TO...

make disciples of Jesus Christ
who glorify God and love their neighbors
all through the power of the Holy Spirit.



OUR VISION IS TO BE...

- a **gathered community** rooted in the Word, united in worship, committed to discipleship;
- a **welcoming community** cultivating joy, humility and reconciled relationships; and
- a **scattered community** fostering mercy, proclaiming Jesus, and practicing stewardship.



WHO WE ARE

We are a congregation of strong family identity.



We value our traditional and reverent worship experience.



We value discipleship firmly grounded in the Word of God.



VISION FOR THE FUTURE

We desire to maintain our family identity, while being a family team on mission to our city.

We desire to make worship a place where both believers and non-believers can meet and experience the Savior.

We desire to better equip our congregation both for evangelism and for fellowship deeply rooted in the love of Christ.

RHYTHMS OF UPC

SUNDAY RHYTHMS

Sunday mornings begin with a corporate prayer meeting to pray for the preaching of the Word. Following prayer, a coffee hospitality is an invitation for everyone to gather and build connections within our community. We offer a variety of Sunday School classes for all ages, including multiple adult options and tailored programming for children and youth by grade level. UPC encourages family participation in worship, welcoming children of all ages to join their families to worship as one body. For our youngest attendees, a nursery is available for children ages 3 and under throughout the worship service.

WEDNESDAY RHYTHMS

On Wednesday nights, **we gather again with family and fellowship in focus.** We break bread together with a family-style dinner, followed by children's and youth programs, as well as a corporate prayer meeting where we pray for our church, its members, and our community.

YEARLY RHYTHMS

Throughout the year, we incorporate special observances during Easter, Christmas, and Thanksgiving, providing opportunities for reflection of Christ's work on our behalf.

We gather with other churches throughout the year for joint events and fellowship, and special services to commune with our sister churches around the city.



HISTORY OF UPC

UPC has a **rich history of God’s generational faithfulness to His people**. Started in 1959 by a group of families with a vision and desire to worship God biblically, fidelity to Scripture is central to the DNA of UPC. Like any church, UPC has experienced its ups and downs, but continues to hold to the gracious, loving, and faithful sovereignty of our LORD, from our founding to the present day.

Our early gathering place was a small A-Frame building which was constructed by members of the church and still stands next to the church office, being used now to support both youth and Reformed University Fellowship ministries. The current Sanctuary was completed in 1999 after a fire destroyed our multipurpose structure in 1992. We added a Family Ministry Center adjacent to the Sanctuary in 2007. All of the land and buildings owned by the church are held free of debt. We are grateful for the LORD’s providence.

Our name reflects our close connection with and proximity to NMSU, and from the very beginning, **we have been passionate about serving and ministering to its students**. This commitment has spanned for more than half a century. We have continued to faithfully support the University through various ministries including Reformed University Fellowship (RUF), which just celebrated 30 years at NMSU. **UPC desires to be a home away from home in Las Cruces for the college students**.

At UPC, **we are thankful to be a sending church**. Over the last 50 years, UPC has helped to plant sister congregations in Alamogordo and Las Cruces. Our church family has had the opportunity to support numerous young men and women on their journey to seminary and into the ministry, as well as sending missionaries to South America, Mexico, and Europe. It’s truly a joy to witness these individuals flourish in their calling, and we love when they return to share their inspiring stories with us.



LOCATION AND CULTURE

Nestled in the Mesilla Valley and at the base of the stunning Organ Mountains, located about an hour north of the Mexican border, UPC serves Las Cruces, NM, and its surrounding areas. Las Cruces is a diverse city, offering a wealth of ministry opportunities.

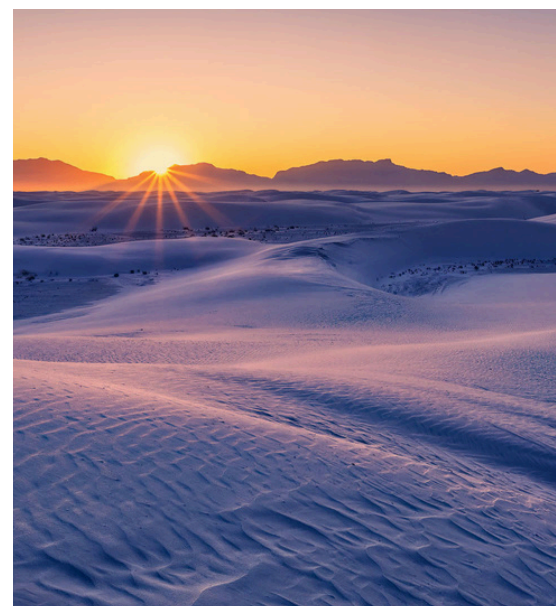
This high desert city is celebrated for its breathtaking and wide-ranging landscape. Surrounded by farmland and desert-scaped mountains, Las Cruces is just a short hour's drive east of the southernmost part of the Rocky Mountains, offering beautiful views and outdoor adventures.

Home of green chile, pecan orchards, and the New Mexico State Aggies, the culture of Las Cruces is one that is warm and familial. With a population of approximately 115,000, it is New Mexico's second largest city.

UNIQUE CULTURAL MINISTRIES

Due to its cultural context and geographic location, **Las Cruces is a true melting pot of cultures.** This city has varied demographic influences, including historic roots in the agricultural and Catholic communities, the college population, and nearby military bases. Outreach efforts are crucial in the borderland with issues such as poverty, a broken foster care and adoption system, immigration and homelessness being significant challenges of Southern New Mexico's landscape.

Being a college town with a large student presence, there is an urgent need to disciple the next generation. This presents an opportunity to equip young people to be salt and light wherever God may call them.



MINISTRIES AT UPC

DISCIPLESHIP

The Discipleship Ministry aims to empower believers to impact their communities and fulfill the Great Commission. UPC offers various programs and activities, including Children's Sunday Schools, Youth Programs, and Men's and Women's Bible Studies. UPC desires to grow in equipping individuals to live out their faith actively. We also desire to partner with parents in the raising up of the next generation to love and serve the LORD. We long to see our members become strong, committed followers of Christ and have created programs to aid in this endeavor.



FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship and Hospitality Ministry plays a crucial role in building community within the church. This ministry desires to create a warm and welcoming environment where individuals and families feel valued and connected. Through organized events such as our Sunday coffee hospitality, Wednesday night church family dinners, and Card Ministry, the team encourages members to engage with one another, fostering relationships that extend beyond Sunday services. Our women's ministry hosts a variety of programs throughout the year encouraging women of all ages to gather for food and fun; church wide family events such as game nights and visits to local attractions help include everyone in a sense of community. Home groups serve as a place where members are encouraged to share life together and support one another. By prioritizing connection and care, the Fellowship and Hospitality Ministry aims to reflect the love of Christ in every interaction.



WORSHIP

The worship team serves as a vital component of UPC's Sunday liturgy, leading congregants in worship and fostering a spirit of praise. We consider worship as being a central ministry of our church from which all other ministries flow. Our desire is to see God glorified and to delight in Him as we worship. In light of this we extol, commend, and declare the greatness of our God and splendor of his majesty through Sunday worship.



MISSION AND OUTREACH



NMSU

Strategically placed near the NMSU campus, part of UPC's original mission was to minister to students in the community. We recognize the unique opportunities to reach young adults during this pivotal time in their lives. Historically, UPC has partnered with local campus ministries to provide resources and a church home for students. By investing in these ministries, our church hopes to empower the next generation to live out their faith boldly and make a lasting impact in their communities.



VBS

Every year since its inception, University Presbyterian Church hosts a yearly Vacation Bible School and in recent years has cooperated with our sister churches in town. Our hope for VBS is to spread the gospel throughout the community to all who attend, introducing children to the love of Christ and encouraging them in faith. It is a place that children from our community return to year after year.



MISSION TO THE WORLD

At UPC, we are grateful to be a sending church, actively supporting many young men and women as they pursue their paths to seminary and ministry. Our congregation has also had the privilege of sending missionaries to South America, Mexico, the Navajo Nation, Europe and more. We long to see the gospel reach all nations, tribes and tongues sharing the message of Hope to every corner of the world, especially to the border region.

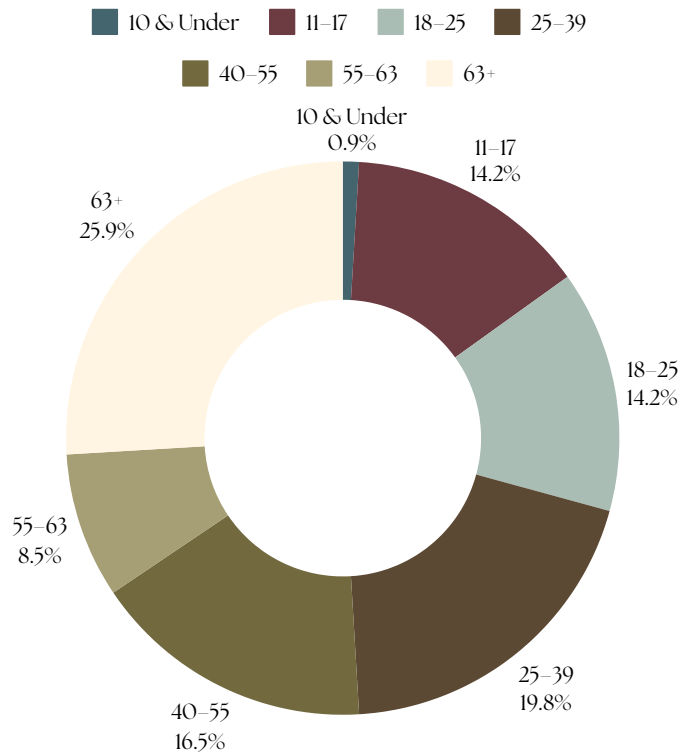


OUTREACH TO THE CITY

We host Celebrate Recovery weekly, offering a space for healing and support. We also partner with organizations like Crosstown and Kairos, which serve both incarcerated individuals and those reentering society. Our Bible Study Ministry at a local nursing home brings spiritual support to elderly residents, helping them feel connected and valued. Additionally, we collaborate with local pro-life groups through yearly fundraisers to support mothers, babies, and families in need. These ministries reflect our heart for the community, and we're grateful for the chance to serve alongside them.

DEMOGRAPHICS

MEMBERSHIP BY AGE

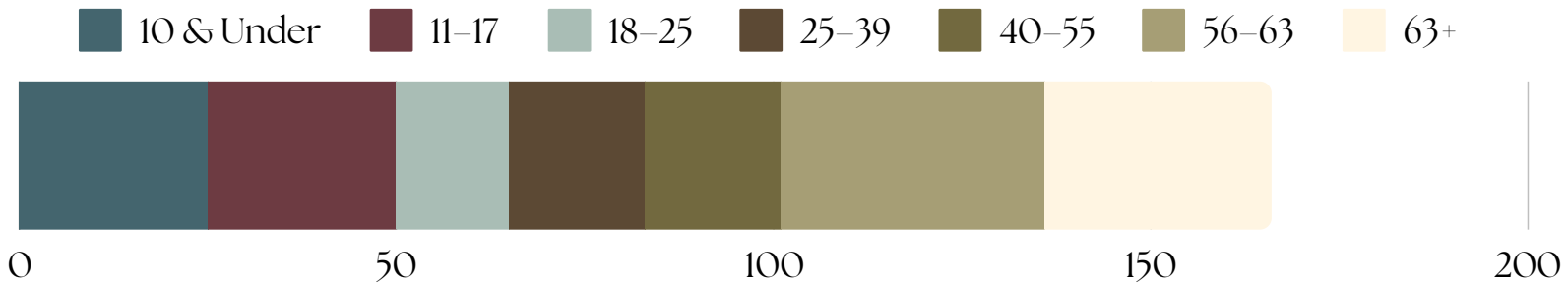


Total membership is 212 with 40 noncommunicant children.

LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

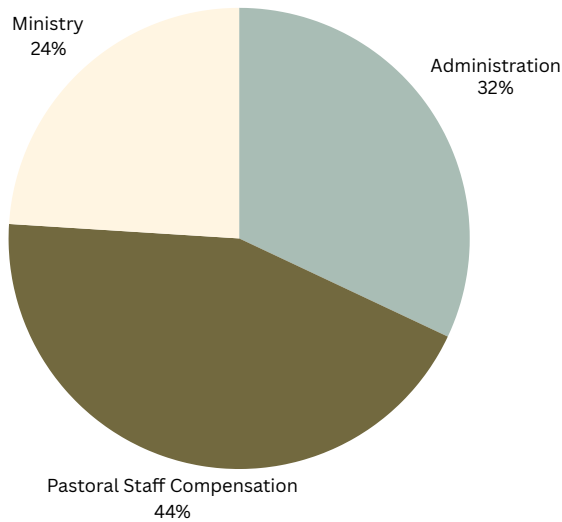


ACTIVE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE BY AGE

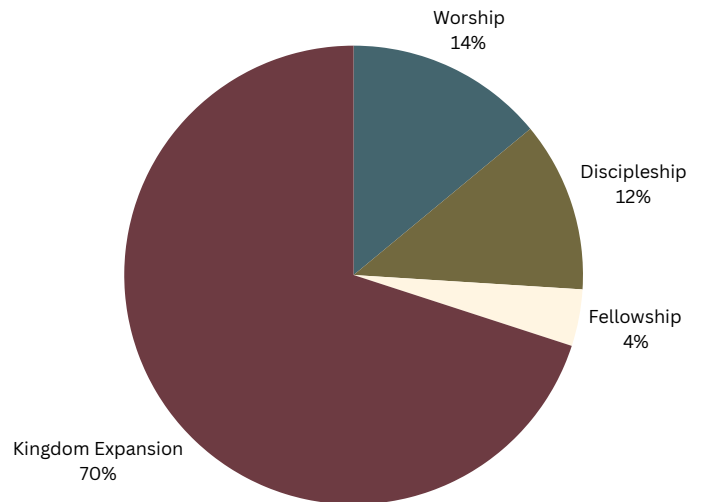


2024 BUDGET SUMMARY

TOTAL BUDGET

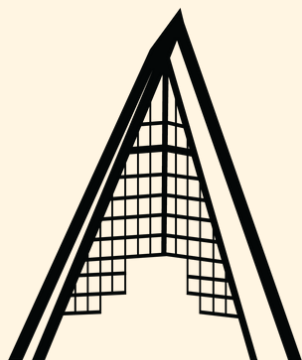


MINISTRY BUDGET



Each year, UPC approves an operating budget, which mainly covers fixed costs like salaries and building maintenance, as well as our ministry expenses. Most of our fellowship activities are made possible thanks to the generosity of our members. The congregation contributes in many ways, such as hosting home-based gatherings and fellowship events. Many donate food for shared meals, potlucks, and community outreach events.

Annual tithing and other contributions have averaged around \$690,000 from 2022 through 2024 (projected). The 2024 average monthly collection has been \$53,000 through September, and it is projected that reduced expenses for the year will more than make up for any projected reduction in total funds collected. Undesignated tithing accounts for 94% of total funds received. Our land and buildings are all held debt free.



LETTER TO PASTORAL CANDIDATES

UPC is currently evaluating where we are as a church family—identifying our strengths and areas where we need to grow. Partnering with an outside consulting firm, we are doing the work of looking to the future, while honoring the past and adjusting in the present. UPC is seeking a leader of conviction, devoted to Jesus Christ. This leader will guide our congregation in living out our mission and vision through a deep love for God and others. While we have a small faithful group with a strong heart for service, we've struggled to maintain regular outreach in recent years. We are seeking a pastor who is gifted at visionary leadership who can create and deploy sustainable ministry strategies: one who is willing to enter our family and lead us in vision, equipping our leadership as well as congregation to live out the Great Commission, to be missionaries wherever God has called.

With its university, military and aerospace technology sector, agricultural community, and proximity to the border, Las Cruces faces distinctive challenges. We are seeking a pastor who embodies deep empathy for the social issues and struggles within our cross-cultural environment, demonstrating cultural humility. His compassion should drive him to reach out and walk alongside both our members as well as our neighbors, meeting them where they are. We hope for a leader who will boldly proclaim the Gospel in a city that can be resistant to its message. He should approach the complex cultural issues we face with wisdom, love, and grace, feeling a strong calling to embrace both the beauty and the brokenness of the people in Las Cruces.

PASTOR PROFILE

KINGLY LEADERSHIP

After thoughtful consideration and gaining a deeper understanding of our congregation's needs, UPC is in search of a senior pastor who is gifted in kingly leadership. **UPC is seeking a visionary-leader, one who multiplies ministry impact through training, equipping and mobilizing our leaders and congregation alike.** This leader should be spiritually gifted in planning, organizing, and executing strategies that increase a ministry's organizational effectiveness. We are seeking a leader who understands how to deploy the gifts of our congregation and strengthen our relationships with outside ministry partners, other churches, and the Presbytery.

EXPOSITORY PREACHER

UPC is seeking a pastor who can convey the Gospel's transforming power with clear vision of how to live out the Great Commission daily. **Therefore, our next pastor should be an effective communicator who delivers relevant expository sermons, and these sermons should be gospel-centered with clear application.** In his preaching, he should seek to engage with the questions and idols of our culture in order to identify how Christ better and fully satisfies the longings of our hearts. In doing so, the pastor models for the flock what it looks like to follow the One True God who meets people where they are, but doesn't leave them there. Each week, he will remind the members of UPC of Christ's completed work on the cross through Word and sacrament. A dedicated prayer and Bible study life is essential, as well as daily submission to God's guidance. With a heart for Scripture, he will share its truths with humility and clarity, as guided by the Holy Spirit, compelling believers and non-believers alike of the truth of God's Word.

PEACEMAKER

UPC desires a peacemaker who will remind us how we were reconciled to the Father by the death of Christ, thus encouraging us to be reconciled with one another through repentance and forgiveness. We believe in the transformative power of God's grace and desire a peacemaker who will minister to the pain and suffering of both the church community and the city. **This peacemaker should model Christ-like humility from the pulpit and in everyday life, demonstrating gentleness, and patience, while guiding the members of UPC to bear with one another in love,** encouraging them to love God with all their heart, soul, and mind, and to love their neighbor.

FUNDAMENTALS OF HIS LEADERSHIP AND LOVE

- Evidence of a deep love for the Lord and his people
- Dedication to prayer with a sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit
- Expertise in pastoring skills; leads by equipping and shepherding leaders/staff
- Expository preacher
- Effective communicator
- Confident decision maker
- Missionally focused with a heart for the lost
- A desire to understand and minister to the culture of the southwest
- A long-term fit for our congregation

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Exhibits the qualities of 1 Tim 3 and Titus 1
- Ordained or ordainable in the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)
- Master of Divinity
- 7+ years experience in pastoral ministry
- Additional experience in college ministry is preferred

TO APPLY, PLEASE CONTACT

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PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

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