

Palm
Sunday

Sunday, April 5, 2020

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Limitless Love | Courageous Action | Spirited Inquiry

Purpose Statement

Parkway United Church of Christ strives to be an inclusive community embracing: spiritual nourishment, open—minded inquiry, courageous action, and interfaith partnerships to fulfill God’s calling to create a just world for all.

Congregational Statement

Parkway United Church of Christ, with God’s grace, seeks to be a congregation that includes all persons, regardless of race, ethnic, or socio—economic background while respecting differences of gender, marital status, age, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability. We aspire to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. We invite all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of participation in our open and affirming congregation.

PARKWAY UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

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Office Hrs: Mon - Thu 8:30am-3:00pm; Fri 8:30am-12:30pm

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John Nourse, *Pastor Emeritus*

Welcome

Thank you for joining us this morning. Please let us know you are here by signing a friendship card in your pew. If you are looking for a church home, please speak with us today.

Welcome Children. We invite children to full participation in worship. There are “creation bags” [with paper, crayons, colored pencils, etc.] available in the Gathering Space for the children to use. Infant/toddler care is available in Room 1. Ask an usher for directions.

Bell Rung During Lord’s Prayer, a tradition begun when farmers working in surrounding fields would stop their work and join in prayer.

A Wheelchair & Walker [and crutches!] are located in the foyer and storage closet for Sunday use. To borrow them at other times, contact the office.

Hearing Assist Units available for use during worship. Ask an usher.

Please Recycle. If you are not taking your bulletin home or sharing it with a friend, please recycle it in the labeled basket in the sanctuary or in the blue container in the Gathering Space.

Photo and Personal Privacy Policy: Photos should generally not be taken of children in church except as part of organized activities and programs, and any requests of children or their parents or guardians should be respected. Please be respectful of privacy and mindful that this is a safe and sacred space for all who enter.

Subscribe to our email lists: Text your email address to 22828 or sign up at www.parkwayucc.org

Need a clip-on name tag? Sign the clipboard in the Gathering Space.

Guest WiFi: username: parkway-guest | password: parkway2841

Communications Requests: Please use the form at www.parkwayucc.org/communications for all announcements for the bulletin/eNews/website/social media/etc. Bulletin and eNews communications request deadline is noon Tuesday. Bulletin announcements will generally be run for three weeks prior to the event. However, all announcements will be posted via our various publications as fits in our communications strategy and as resources permit.

A Thank You Gift for Visitors: Please pick up a PUCC mug today or the next time you are here. They are located on the Welcome Table just inside the front doors.

PALM Sunday

April 5, 2020 | 9:55am

*Please stand if it is comfortable to do so.

Meditation *Electric communication will never be a substitute for the face of someone who with their soul encourages another person to be brave and true.* ~Charles Dickens

Announcements

*Passing the Peace of Christ

“May the peace of Christ be with you.”

(We are intentional about bringing more peace into the world.)

Prelude Organ Meditation on *Sweet Hour of Prayer*

original tune by William B. Bradbury (1816-1868), arr. Dale Wood

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Welcome Song #2129—*I Have Decided to Follow Jesus* [blue book]



1. I have de-cid-ed to fol-low Je-sus, I have de-
2. The world be-hind me, the cross be-fore me, The world be-
3. Though none go with me, still I will fol-low, Though none go



cid-ed to fol-low Je-sus, I have de-cid-ed to fol-low
hind me, the cross be-fore me, The world be-hind me, the cross be-
with me, still I will fol-low, Though none go with me, still I will



Je - sus— no turn-ing back, no turn-ing back.
fore me— no turn-ing back, no turn-ing back.
fol - low— no turn-ing back, no turn-ing back.

Scripture Mark 11:1-11 (MSG - The Message)

When they were nearing Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany on Mount Olives, he sent off two of the disciples with instructions:

“Go to the village across from you. As soon as you enter, you’ll find a colt tethered, one that has never yet been ridden. Untie it and bring it. If anyone asks, ‘What are you doing?’ say, ‘The Master needs him, and will return him right away.’”

They went and found a colt tied to a door at the street corner and untied it. Some of those standing there said, “What are you doing untying that colt?” The disciples replied exactly as Jesus had instructed them, and the people let them alone. They brought the colt to Jesus, spread their coats on it, and he mounted.

The people gave him a wonderful welcome, some throwing their coats on the street, others spreading out rushes they had cut in the fields. Running ahead and following after, they were calling out,

Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes in God’s name!

Blessed the coming kingdom of our father David!

Hosanna in highest heaven!

He entered Jerusalem, then entered the Temple. He looked around, taking it all in. But by now it was late, so he went back to Bethany with the Twelve.

***Call to Worship** Church of Scotland

One: Humble and riding on a donkey, not a war horse.

Many: We greet you;

One: Acclaimed by crowds and caroled by laughing children,

Many: We cheer you;

One: Moving from the peace of the countryside to the corridors of power,

Many: We salute you:

One: You are giving the beast of burden a new dignity;

Many: You are giving majesty a new face;

One: You are giving those who long for wholeness a new song to sing.

Many: With them, with heart and voice, we shout:

All: Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

All: Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.

***Song #88—All Glory, Laud and Honor** [red hymnal]

Wave your palm, flower or branch ... place your coat or robe on the floor!

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or To Thee, Re-deem-er, King, To
Fine
whom the lips of child - ren Made sweet ho - san - nas ring.
Thou art the Kings of Is - ra - el, Thou
The peo - ple of the He - brews With
To Thee, be - fore Thy pas - sion, They
Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; Ac -
Da - vid's roy - al Son, Who in the Lord's name
palms be - fore Thee went; Our praise and prayers and
sang their hymns of praise; To Thee, now high ex -
cept the prayers we bring, Who in all good de -
com - est, The King and bless - ed One.
an - thems Be - fore Thee we pre - sent.
alt - ed Our mel - o - dy we raise.
light - est, Thou good and gra - cious King!

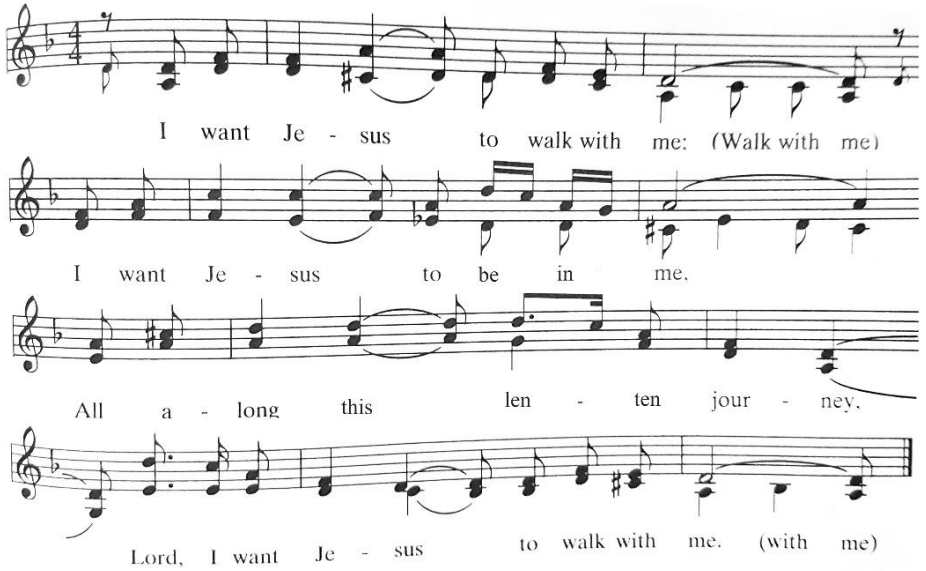
Lenten Candles *I Am the Way*

We light seven candles as we continue on this Lenten journey. We want the light to illumine our path as we seek to be the words and ways of Jesus. We commit to being more infused by the Spirit as we travel. Even as we know this is good and important work, we recognize that it isn't easy—and we may come upon the shadow side of humanity and some of our own unique darkness. We will extinguish one candle each time we gather for worship this season, acknowledging that this can be tough and exhausting work. As we approach the desertion and depletion of Good Friday, we also prepare ourselves for the dawn and love of Easter morning...the light that never goes out.

Prayer at the Candles

Holy One, we are on this Lenten journey with Jesus because we want to watch him and listen to him—so that we might become more like him. Jesus has a solid sense of who he is. He tells us that he is the bread, door, vine, life, light, way, shepherd. He interacts with people in expected and unexpected ways—and they all learn and grow with the interaction. Send your Spirit to lead us, guide us and light the way to ourselves, one another and the Holy. Amen.

Response [tune: #363—*I Want Jesus to Walk with Me* (red hymnal)]



I want Je - sus to walk with me: (Walk with me)

I want Je - sus to be in me.

All a - long this len - ten jour - ney.

Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me. (with me)

Children's Time Children and Teens can switch over to ZOOM now for their age specific Sunday School. Parents may want to accompany their younger kids. All can come back to the recording of this worship service later to finish it.

Blessing the Children *Jesus Loves the Little Children*

**Jesus loves the little children,
All the children of the world.
Every child in every land,
Jesus holds them by the hand.
Jesus loves the little children of the world.**

Mission Moment 2nd Mile Lent—Karen Boyd

Heifer International | Lydia's House | **Unleashing Potential** | Eden Seminary

Offering Our Gifts to God

Thank you for sending your gifts in the mail, via *bill pay* with your bank or by using PayPal at <https://parkwayucc.org/giving/>

Offertory Interlude

Response

**Praise God for visions great and small,
Praise God who calls us one and all,
Praise God whose Spirit gives new sight,
Praise God who fills our lives with light. Amen**

Prayer of Dedication

The crowds offered You their coats to walk on, they waved palm branches, honoring Your presence. Today we honor and celebrate You, Holy One, with our offerings of finance and faithfulness. We spread these gifts before You, symbols of our love, as a visible way to express our commitment to You and all of Your people. Amen.

Gospel Lesson Mark 11:1-11 (NRSV – New Revised Standard Version)

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’”

They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, ‘What are you doing, untying the colt?’ They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

Then Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Palm Sunday Cry Maren Tirabassi, UCC pastor

Response: Hosanna = Save us!

This happened. Jesus entered Jerusalem this way. But it isn't a one-time thing. Jesus still comes in the middle of our world and our distress and we still cry out —

When the ordered world and institutions fail us. When our trust in power, violence and military might turns on us and becomes oppressive. When we are trapped in behaviors that pull us away from relationship with God and each other —

When the harms done to us through racism, sexism or victimization become open wounds in our lives, destroying our trust and making us hate ourselves. When society itself becomes an enslaving trap from which we are afraid we cannot escape —

From gun violence in our schools and our streets that kill our children and make targets of people of color and those who are marginalized by our society —

From leaders who lack courage, or who have sold out for money and power. From everything that is life-destroying, O God, and separates us from You —

No wonder they told Jesus to shut his people up. This is language that changes the world. And it changes the world because God hears our cry. God gives God's own Self in Jesus to do what we cannot do... and then invites us to be part of that redeeming work in the world, woven together by the Spirit —
But today, this Sunday, we point to the wounds, the sins, the oppressions we see in ourselves and in the world around us and we cry out —

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon *Substitutions*

Invitation to the Communion Table

Song #560—*We Plow the Fields and Scatter* (red hymnal)



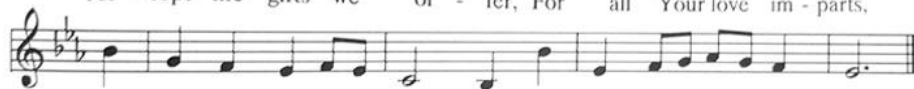
1. We plow the fields and scat - ter The good seed on the land,
2. You on - ly are the Mak - er Of all things near and far;
3. We thank You, then, Cre - a - tor, For all things bright and good,



But it is fed and wa - tered By God's al - might - y hand;
You paint the way - side flow - er, You light the eve - ning star;
The seed-time and the har - vest, Our life, our health, our food;



God sends the snow in win - ter, The warmth to swell the grain,
The winds and waves o - bey You, By You the birds are fed;
Ac - cept the gifts we of - fer, For all Your love im - parts,



The breez - es and the sun - shine, And soft, re - fresh - ing rain,
Much more to us, Your chil - dren, You give our dai - ly bread,
And what You most would wel - come, Our hum - ble, thank - ful hearts.

Prayers at the Table

Lord's Prayer sung to the tune by Nate Stout

Our [Creator/Mother/Father/Holy One] **who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

[A variety of names for God are welcome here — including in the Lord's Prayer.]

Sharing A Sacred Meal

One: Let us in our many places receive this gift of God, this Bread of Life.

Many: We are one in Christ in the bread we share.

One: Let us in our many places receive this gift of God, this Cup of Blessing.

Many: We are one in Christ in the cup we share.

Communion Interlude

Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: Let us pray in thanksgiving for this meal of grace, rejoicing that, by the very method of our worship, we have embodied the truth that Christ's love is not limited by buildings made with human hands, nor contained in human ceremonies, but blows as free as the Spirit in all places.

All: Spirit of Christ, you have blessed our tables and our lives. May the eating of this Bread give us courage to speak faith and enact love, not only in church sanctuaries, but in our homes and in your precious world. May the drinking of this Cup renew our hope - even in the midst of pandemic. Wrap your hopeful presence around all whose bodies, spirits and hearts need healing, and let us become your compassion and safe refuge for one another. Amen.

*Song of Parting *Day by Day*

Day by day, oh, dear Lord, three things I pray
To see thee more clearly, Love thee more dearly
Follow thee more nearly, day by day (3x)
Day by day by day by day by day...

*Benediction

One: Passing from joy into sorrow and isolation then on to elation...

Many: We enter into this Holy Week.

One: Today is only a part of the story. Come back for the rest.

Many: Jesus makes visits, teaches tough lessons, flips tables, listens lavishly to others, reads scripture, washes feet, leans on God, is arrested and mistreated, dies and is buried. The story doesn't end there either. We will continue to walk with him and one another.

All: May the journey of this week lead us into the fullness of God's love—in Christ—through the Spirit.

*God's Light Goes Forth

***Postlude** *Passion Chorale*—arr. Albert Beck

2nd Mile Lent & Easter 2020

Go the 2nd Mile with us!

We are pleased to announce that Parkway is again supporting four worthy organizations with its Second Mile Giving for Lent and Easter. We believe this blend of support will help Parkway create a local, national and international impact with its gifts. Please remember that Second Mile Giving is over and beyond the Operational Budget and donations will be divided evenly among the organizations listed below. Please be generous as these organizations need on our gifts in order to be more faithful and effective.

Lydia's House

Lydia's House works in faith to end domestic violence in St Louis by being a place of healing and a voice of hope for abused women and their children. The agency provides safe, confidentially-located furnished apartments for up to two years, assists women in creating and implementing goal plans that will help them live independently, and increases community awareness of domestic violence. For more information, please visit lydiashouse.org

UP—Unleashing Potential [formerly Neighborhood Houses]

For more than 100 years, Neighborhood Houses has loved children in St Louis. Currently, there are three main facets to their mission:

Early Childhood Education—Caroline Mission is a licensed and accredited Early Childhood facility operated by Neighborhood Houses. Our Mission is to provide quality affordable childcare for children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age. Caroline Mission is a “home away from home.”

Girls' Night Out: Neighborhood Houses and Parents as Teachers collaborated together in the design and execution of a program dedicated to supporting and assisting young mothers, ages 13—22. *Girls Night Out* is designed to promote healthy individuals and families.

After School Programs: Neighborhood Houses is the #1 provider of after school programming with the St Louis Public Schools ... fun & creative activities, homework assistance, character education, cultural awareness, health & fitness focus, arts & crafts, supervised recreation, and much more! For more information, please visit neighborhoodhouses.org

Heifer International

Heifer International does so much more than put food in the mouths of hungry people. Heifer helps people to feed themselves. The goal of every Heifer project is sustainability—project partners achieving self—reliance. And year after year, as partner families “pass on the gift” of knowledge and one or more of their animals' offspring to others in need, they become links in a network of hope, dignity and self—reliance that helps hundreds of others care for themselves. For more information, please visit heifer.org

Eden Seminary

Eden Theological Seminary is a graduate school preparing women and men for ordained Christian ministry. One of the six seminaries of the United Church of Christ, Eden is a community that seeks God's justice and peace in the world. Eden is welcoming, inclusive and ecumenically diverse.

Eden was established in 1850 at Marthasville, Missouri. It was established because a European education was not adequate to prepare pastors for Evangelical churches on the North American frontier. From its beginning, Eden has embodied an ecumenical spirit. Its first graduating class included six Evangelicals as well as a Methodist and a Mennonite.

Eden admitted its first African American student in 1933. In 1965, the late Joseph Cardinal Ritter of the Saint Louis Archdiocese became the first Roman Catholic Cardinal to address a graduating class in a Protestant seminary.

Today, students from many different denominations are engaged in theological education here. Eden remains committed to educating faithful and effective leaders for church and society. The seminary counts among its distinguished graduates Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr and Walter Brueggemann.

Eden Theological Seminary is committed to the study of theology in the context of the ecumenical Christian community and the contemporary interfaith world. For more information, please visit eden.edu.

Please be sure to clearly mark your 2nd Mile gifts throughout the season of Lent.

Announcements

Take Action with Bread for more help from Congress for COVID-19 Relief

The coronavirus continues to cause anxiety, uncertainty, and disruption around the world. It is understandable to feel powerless and overwhelmed.

But God's call to care for the most vulnerable among us never ends. Congress must pass a comprehensive economic stimulus package in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

Right now, Bread for the World members throughout the U.S. are calling on Congress to provide adequate funding to assist those most vulnerable who are impacted by this crisis in the U.S. and abroad.

Federal nutrition programs provide roughly 10 times as much food assistance as private churches and charities. Congress must fully fund and support the Pandemic Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (P-SNAP) and suspend the implementation of rules changes that weaken SNAP benefits.

Please [email Congress \(https://tinyurl.com/BFW-email-congress\)](https://tinyurl.com/BFW-email-congress) now and pray for our elected officials to swiftly pass and sign urgent legislation into law that supports the most vulnerable people in the U.S. and around the world. Thank you.

Express your Love of Creation by participating in the Three Great Loves Tree Planting Campaign!

Over the course of 50 days in 2013, the United Church of Christ planted over 141,000 trees as part of Mission 4/1 Earth. In celebration of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22nd, this year we are seeking to **plant over 50,000 trees in ten days from April 17th to 26th.**

Trees, one of God's precious gifts, provide us not only with beauty, but we depend on them for the air we breathe and the stable climate we inhabit. Through your campaign donation, more of these beautiful gifts of creation will be planted and nurtured.

In expanding the scope of our collaborative efforts in 2020, the [Ministry of Environmental Justice](#) for the United Church of Christ has partnered with Interfaith Power and Light to make this tree planting campaign part of their [Faith Climate Action Week](#). Many of the following tree-planting options come through [Global Ministries](#), a shared ministry of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The United Church of Christ, Interfaith Power and Light and The Arbor Day Foundation are teaming up this Earth Day/Arbor Day 2020. See below to participate:

Plant a Tree

For \$1 a tree, the Arbor Day Foundation will plant numerous trees on your behalf in a national park. Fires, diseases, and insects have taken their toll on natural settings. Your donation will help to rebuild these areas.

<https://shop.arborday.org/content.aspx?page=commemorative>

Plant your own tree or work with an organization of your choosing to plant trees.

Report how many trees you planted in this manner to our partners at Interfaith Power and Light.

Report a Tree

When This is Over by Laura Kelly Fanucci

When this is over,	Each deep breath
May we never again	A boring Tuesday
Take for granted	Life itself
A handshake with a stranger	When this ends,
Full shelves at the store	May we find
Conversations with neighbors	That we have become
A crowded theatre	More like the people
Friday night out	We hoped to be
The taste of communion	We were called to be
A routine checkup	And may we stay
The school rush each morning	That way-better
Coffee with a friend	For each other
The stadium roaring	Because of the worst.

Prayer List

as of April 1, 2020

Celebrations

Jones-Goldstein Family now includes Nate born last Saturday!

..... Nathaniel Owen Goldstein 6lbs 3 oz

David Comens & Meghan Graham were to be married this wknd – wedding has been rescheduled for Friday, July 17.

Lisa Mason – just completed her radiation treatments!

All the acts of kindness that are happening near and far!

Concerns

Andy and Kris Impastato - grieving/giving thanks for his mother.

Dwight and Charlotte Smith - rehab ctr after his days in the hospital.

Donna Carey - pacemaker checked; it's replacement time - can't now.

Nelson Spencer - began chemo treatments on March 30 (Svenson).

Pam Chastain - hospitalized with Covid-19 (Mary Akers).

Sister Mary Kay McKenzie - for health/wholeness (Tom's sister).

Pat Purdy - healing of unknown illness... not COVID-19 (Connors).

Healthcare workers and many others at risk as they care for people.

Social Distancing... if anyone needs groceries, medicine and/or other support, please reach out to kevin@parkwayucc.org; 314-330-0629

[If you'd like to be on the **Spring Care Team 2020**, please say so.]

Continuing

Mike Mohl - several broken ribs after fall; multiple myeloma struggles.

Paul/Sue Stohr - healing after his stroke; making progress at home.

Randal Barnes - radiation for cancer has started (Steve's brother).

Cherie Stolze - ongoing health issues; navigating medications/fatigue.

Lori Connors - for strength, stamina through some health challenges.

Ruth Peace, Mary Whitney, Pinky Wilcoxon - health challenges.

Bill Darland - ongoing health issues.

Dick Wegner - cancer treatments halt; hospice care now (McKenzie).

Chuck Miller and family - as he lives with cancer (William Tharp).

Alan Nichols - chemo for cancer of spine; pain management (Pleis).

Tina - undergoing tests for cancer; crafting a treatment plan (Scharf).

Anthony - multiple challenges as he lives his post-incarceration life.

Martha - receiving treatment for leukemia (sister of Mary Lynn Dario).

Gary - risky behaviors; seeking balance and stability (McKenzie).

Grateful Tran - in prison; struggles w/schizophrenia (Evelyn Buretta)

Bob - still struggling with Parkinson's (McKenzie).

Christopher, Gail & Bill Haack - chronic health challenges.

The extended Eggebrecht Family - healing and wholeness.

More Anti-LGBTQIA legislation being considered/debated in MO.

The United Methodist Church and our LGBTQIA siblings there.

Pregnancy

Rosanna & Kevin Hogarty will be first time grandparents mid-May.

Home/Care Facility/Rehab Center

Millicent Guerri - living with cancer... 14300 Conway Meadows Ct E, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [birthdate: December 5]

Georgia Herpel - *Cedarhurst*: 12826 Daylight Cir, St. Louis, MO 63131

Marv Herpel - *Brookdale West County*; 785 Henry Ave, #217;

Ballwin, MO 63021; 636-227-5838 [birthdate: March 3]

Ruth Murray - *Villages of St Peters Memory Care*:

5300 Executive Centre Pkwy, #107; St. Peters, MO 63376; 636-477-6955. [birthdate: September 11] Best times to visit – before 11am or after 2pm.

Pearl Sellenriek - *Friendship Village Care Center*; #725-2

15201 Olive Blvd, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [birthdate: March 31]

Ellen Surber - *Delmar Gardens*: 14855 N Outer 40 Road, #508;

Chesterfield, MO 63017 (Lisa Davidson's mom) [birthdate: November 3]

Sue Houser - *Bethany Ctr for Rehab & Healing*; 421 Ocala Dr - #209B; Nashville, TN 37211; 615-577-2049. [birthdate: July 8]

Other

Dan Connors - completed writing a novel... taking next steps.

President Trump, Congress, all local, national, world leaders.

The “me too” Movement - shining a light on sexual abuse.

Healing of relationships between police and the public.

All people who live with mental illness.

PUCC Family (and others) struggling with healthcare costs and limits.

Our Missouri Mid-South Conference and St Louis Assn UCC

Variety of Parkway members/friends - employment issues.

Victims of Natural and Created Disasters around the world.

Peace and Justice near and far.

US Military around the globe.

St Louis Assn UCC Covenant Partner

Week ending April 5 - **First Congregational UCC**, St Louis;

firstcongregational.org

Week ending April 12 - **First Congregational UCC**, Webster Groves;

firstchurchwg.org

Birthdays

4/6 SIMONSON, Florence

4/7 WILCOXEN, Pinky

4/6 WATKINS, Sera

4/9 WAITE, Phillip

4/7 DOTY, Ian

4/11 WESSINGER, Nancy

4/7 RUIZ, Joyce

April 5, 2020

Matthew 26:14-27:66 (Liturgy of the Passion)

Palm/Passion Sunday**Sunday, April 5 Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem during the festival of Passover.***Read Matthew 21:1-11.* The crowds welcomed Jesus, yet they still continued to question who he was. Allow yourself to be surprised by your own response to the question, "Who is this?"**Monday, April 6 Jesus enters the temple and clears out the signs of commerce.***Read Matthew 21:12-17.* Those in power are threatened by Jesus, but the common people continue to cry "Hosanna" or "save us!" What places in our own lives and world need cleansing or purifying? Who cries to Jesus for salvation today?**Tuesday, April 7 Jesus tells wisdom stories to those gathered in Jerusalem***Read Matthew 22:34-40.* In your prayer time today, ask Christ to open your eyes to the ways in which your love of God or neighbor is less than authentic or ways in which your lifestyle leads to the oppression of others. Pray for the strength and courage to change.**Wednesday, April 8 Scripture says nothing about what Jesus did this day. It is sometimes known as "rest day" and some believe it was on this day that Judas betrayed Christ.***Read Isaiah 53:1-12.* Bring to your prayers today an urgent plea to God to open your eyes to the suffering of the world, and to be an agent of healing in those places of suffering.**Thursday, April 9 Jesus celebrates Passover. Afterward, he is arrested and tried.***Read Matthew 26:17-27.* You hear these words when we celebrate communion together. Read them now and listen for what is new or challenging in this message.**Friday, April 10 Good Friday. Jesus is crucified.***Matthew 27:27-66.* In his darkest hour, Jesus felt alone and abandoned. In your prayer today, speak directly to Jesus. Acknowledge and ask forgiveness for times you have turned from him or betrayed him.**Saturday, April 11 Holy Saturday. Jesus lies in the tomb.**

Scripture says nothing about what Jesus did this day and there is no scripture reading for this day. In your prayer time, light a single candle, and meditate on the illumination cast by even one small flame. How has God been steadfast, even in times of seeming absence?

Sunday, April 12 Easter Day! On this exhilarating, although at times bewildering, day we celebrate the resurrection of the Risen Christ.*Matthew 28:1-15.* Although the angel's first words to the women are "do not be afraid," still the women leave the tomb, "afraid." How does the resurrection touch you with fear or awe? How does it touch you with joy?