



remember  
restore  
renew



PARKWAY

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 6, 2020

Sunday, September 6, 2020

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## Limitless Love | Courageous Action | Spirited Inquiry

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### 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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John Nourse, *Pastor Emeritus*

# Welcome to Parkway

**Thank you for joining us this morning.** Please let us know you are here by commenting in the chat.

**Welcome Children.** We invite children to full participation in worship.

**Bell Rung During Lord's Prayer.** A tradition begun when farmers working in surrounding fields would stop their work and join in prayer.

**Subscribe to our email lists:** Text your email address to 22828 or sign up at [www.parkwayucc.org](http://www.parkwayucc.org)

**Communications Requests:** Please use the form at [www.parkwayucc.org/communications](http://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.

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## Birthdays

9/6 SMITH, Dwight

9/7 EIFFERT, Jackie

9/7 BIEST, Emily

9/7 YESS, Makenzie

9/7 BOWERMASTER, Kathryn

9/12 OEHLER, Grant

## Written in A Carefree Mood

by Lu Yu

Old man pushing seventy,  
In truth he acts like a little boy,  
Whooping with delight when he spies some mountain fruits,  
Laughing with joy, tagging after village mummers;  
With the others having fun stacking tiles to make a pagoda,  
Standing alone staring at his image in the jardinière pool.  
Tucked under his arm, a battered book to read,  
Just like the time he first set out to school.

# 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday *after* Pentecost

September 6, 2020 | 10:00am

**Meditation** First Congregational UCC, Memphis

*We will be together. We will stand as brothers and sisters given life by one God. We will be together. We will watch out for one another. We will listen to what needs to be said in a spirit of compassion. We will respect the power of silence. We will wait for the slowest. We will sooner or later catch up with the fastest. We will dry the tears of those who are weeping and know that they will dry ours when the time comes. We will let ourselves begin to feel at least a little of the pain of those we have considered our enemies. We will entrust our stories to each other. We will not be skeptical that peace can come. We will not forget the joy of life. We will not forget to be grateful. We will do our best to stir in each other hope, courage and faith.*

**Passing the Peace** “May the peace of Christ be with you.”  
(We are intentional about bringing more peace into the world.)

**Prelude** *Crusaders' Hymn/Beautiful Savior*—arr. by Albert Beck

**Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell**

**Welcome Song** *You Are Welcome Here*

You are wel - come here, no mat - ter who you are, no mat - ter  
where you are on life's jour - ney. You are wel come here,  
no mat - ter who you are, come and  
join with us, in our U - ni - ted Church of Christ.

**Scripture** Romans 13:8-14a (NRSV—New Revised Standard Version)

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep.

For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Call to Worship

One:	Creator God, we gather together from many places, pasts and communities to celebrate and worship together, as your people.
<b>Many:</b>	<b>We come to worship in God.</b>
One:	Jesus, life-giver, we celebrate all that brings us together. We are on a journey, learning and celebrating.
<b>Many:</b>	<b>We come to worship in Jesus.</b>
One:	Spirit of love, we are a living community and we give thanks for the movement of the Spirit—ever inspiring, strengthening, moving and challenging us.
<b>Many:</b>	<b>We come to worship in the Spirit.</b>
<b>All:</b>	<b>Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.</b>

## Song *Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether*

*Unison*



1 Draw us in the Spir-it's teth - er, for when hum - bly  
 2 As dis - ci - ples used to gath - er in the name of  
 3 All our meals and all our liv - ing make as sac - ra -



in your name, two or three are met to - geth - er,  
 Christ to sup, then with thanks to God the Giv - er,  
 ments of you, that by car - ing, help-ing, giv - ing,



you are in the midst of them; Al - le - lu - ia!  
 break the bread and bless the cup, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 we may be dis - ci - ples true. Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! Touch we now your gar - ment's hem.  
 Al - le - lu - ia! So now bind our friend - ship up.  
 Al - le - lu - ia! We may serve with faith a - new.

## **Opening Prayer** Craig Mitchell

We gather—hoping for a glimpse of the holy:  
the One who brooded over Creation,  
who engulfed a bush in flame,  
who made a path through the waters,  
who rolled away the tombstone.

We gather—hoping for a whisper of the truth:  
the Word who first spoke in the silence,  
the voice who raged with prophet's zeal,  
the host who sang of peace on earth,  
the teacher who blessed humble and poor.

We gather—hoping for a touch of compassion:  
the tenderness that shaped the human body,  
the caress that opened eyes of the blind,  
the soothing hand that brought healing calm,  
the warmth that embraced lonely and lost.

We gather—in the presence of mystery:  
of One who is revealed and hidden, known and unknown,  
mother of Creation, human God-with-us,  
living Word, eternal Spirit, Three and One.  
Breathe into us hope, faith and joy.  
Breathe into us compassion, truth and holiness.  
Breathe into us reconciliation, justice and peace.  
Breathe newness of life as we worship today. Amen.

## **Response** *Spirit of the Living God*

Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me;  
Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me!  
Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me.

**Children's Time** Children and Youth are invited to separate Zoom classrooms immediately following this Children's Time.

## **Blessing the Children** *Weave*

Weave, weave, weave us together  
Weave us together in unity and love,  
Weave, weave, weave us together  
Weave us together, together in love.

## **Offering Our Gifts to God**

*Allegretto from Sonatina in C Major—T. Latour*

## **Response**

Praise God whose many names abound;  
Our Peace, our Rock, Our Holy Ground,  
Our Home, our All, Earth's Majesty,  
Love, Spirit, Light and Mystery. Amen.

## **Prayer of Dedication** Carol Penner

**God of grace, financially, we are sometimes in the dark. We don't always know how much money we have, or how secure our resources are—or even what expenses we will have in the future. We choose to give our money to you with light hearts, gifting boldly and cheerfully, knowing that our security lies in your grace, and not in our bank accounts. Accept these gifts from our hands, for the work of your church. Amen**

## **Scripture** Matthew 18:15-33 (CEB—Common English Bible)

“If your brother or sister sins against you, go and correct them when you are alone together. If they listen to you, then you’ve won over your brother or sister. But if they won’t listen, take with you one or two others so that every word may be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses. But if they still won’t pay attention, report it to the church. If they won’t pay attention even to the church, treat them as you would a Gentile and tax collector. I assure you that whatever you fasten on earth will be fastened in heaven. And whatever you loosen on earth will be loosened in heaven. Again I assure you that if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, then my Father who is in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I’m there with them.”

Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Should I forgive as many as seven times?”

Jesus said, “Not just seven times, but rather as many as seventy-seven times. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle accounts, they brought to him a servant who owed him ten thousand bags of gold. Because the servant didn’t have enough to pay it back, the master ordered that he should be sold, along with his wife and children and everything he had, and that the proceeds should be used as payment. But the servant fell down, kneeled before him, and said, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I’ll pay you back.’ The master had compassion on that servant, released him, and forgave the loan.

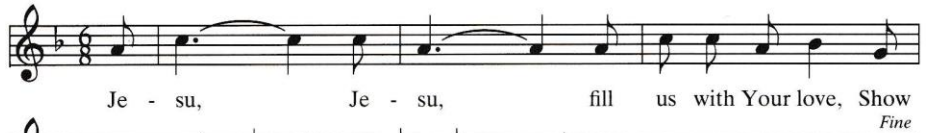
“When that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him one hundred coins. He grabbed him around the throat and said, ‘Pay me back what you owe me.’

## **Moment of Silent Reflection**

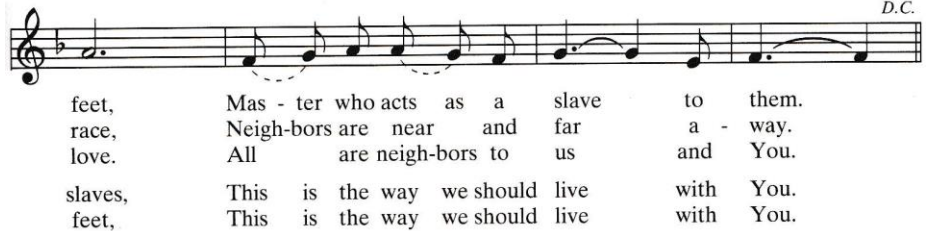
## **Sermon** *The Case for Church Now*

**Invitation to the Communion Table** We invite *all* to this **open table**. All accepted—no exceptions—as we commit ourselves to limitless love, courageous action and spirited inquiry.

## Communion Song *Jesu, Jesu*



- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Kneels at the feet of His friends,  | Si - lent - ly wash - es their  |
| 2. Neigh-bors are rich and poor,       | Var - ied in col - or and       |
| 3. These are the ones we should serve, | These are the ones we should    |
| 4. Lov - ing puts us on our knees,     | Serv - ing as though we are     |
| 5. Kneel at the feet of our friends,   | Si - lent - ly wash - ing their |



## Pastoral Prayer & Prayers of the People

### 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.]

## Breaking Bread & Pouring Wine/Juice

### Communion Interlude

*Improvisation on Precious Lord*—George N. Allen, 1844 (Hymn #404)

### Prayer of Thanksgiving Nadia Bolz-Weber

**I do not know when we can gather together again in worship, Lord. So, for now I ask that:**

**When I sing along in my kitchen to each song on Stevie Wonder's *Songs in The Key of Life* album, that it be counted as a gathering song.**

When I read the news and my heart tightens in my chest, *may it be counted as a call to worship.*

When my eyes brighten in a smile behind my mask as I thank the cashier *may it be counted as passing the peace.*

When I water my plants and wash my dishes and take a shower *may it be counted as remembering my baptism.*

When the tears come and my shoulders shake and my breathing falters, *may it be counted as prayers of the people.*

When I stumble upon a Tabitha Brown video and hear her grace and love of You *may it be counted as a hearing a sermon.*

And that when I sit at that table in my apartment, and eat one more homemade meal, slowly, joyfully, with nothing else demanding my time or attention, *may it be counted as communion.*

Amen.

## Song of Parting *Make Me A Channel of Your Peace*



1. Make me a chan-nel of your peace. \_\_\_\_\_ Where  
2. Make me a chan-nel of your peace. \_\_\_\_\_ Where  
4. Make me a chan-nel of your peace. \_\_\_\_\_ It



there is ha-tred, let me bring your love. \_\_\_\_\_ Where  
there's de-spair in life, let me bring hope. \_\_\_\_\_ Where  
is in par-don - ing that we are par - doned, \_\_\_\_\_ in



there is in - ju - ry, your par-don, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and  
there is dark - ness, \_\_\_\_\_ on - ly light, \_\_\_\_\_ and  
giv - ing of our - selves that we re - ceive, \_\_\_\_\_ and in



where there's doubt, true faith in you. \_\_\_\_\_  
where there's sad - ness, ev - er joy. \_\_\_\_\_  
dy - ing that we're born to e-ter-nal life. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Oh, Mas-ter, grant that I may nev-er seek \_\_\_\_\_ so  
 much to be con-soled as to con-sole. \_\_\_\_\_ To be  
 un-der-stood as to un-der-stand, \_\_\_\_\_ to be  
 loved as to love with all my soul. \_\_\_\_\_ D.C.

## Unison Benediction Jan Struther

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy, whose trust, ever childlike,  
 no cares could destroy:

be there at our waking, and give us, we pray, your bliss in our  
 hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith, whose strong hands were  
 skilled at the plane and the lathe:

be there at our labors, and give us, we pray, your strength in our  
 hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace, your hands swift to  
 welcome, your arms to embrace:

be there at our homing, and give us, we pray, your love in our  
 hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm, whose voice is  
 contentment, whose presence is balm:

be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray, your peace in our  
 hearts, Lord, at the end of the day. Amen.

## God's Light Goes Forth

**Music for Going Forth** *Rondo from Sonatina in C Major—T. Latour*

## Announcements

# Announcements

## Harper School Comes to Parkway UCC

The education wing will again be filled with the joy of students as we welcome Harper School to their second campus in the area. Pictured are Joe Wagner, founder of Harper School, ringing the commemorative PUNS school bell, and Council President Linda Tossing.



Harper Hybrid is an in-person school for K-5 students whose regular school is fully or partially closed due to the pandemic. Their goal is to help parents who want their kids to have a sense of normalcy and who themselves may be in the challenging position of trying to balance their work and family responsibilities. Harper Hybrid provides a safe environment where their staff will help students

stay on track with their school day as laid out by their regular public school. Follow this link for more information about Harper Hybrid School: <http://harperschool.org/harperhybrid-overview.html>

The school offered Parkway a creative financial arrangement.

The length of Harper Hybrid's tenancy at Parkway is related to the need for the hybrid service to the community. Joe Wagner would like to consider Parkway for a K – 5 elementary school to complement the established Harper preschool now located at Faith & Des Peres Presbyterian in Frontenac.

## Tuesday Evening Dialogue September 8

Tuesday, September 8 | 7:00pm | via ZOOM

Please join us on ZOOM for a fun discussion of the Pulitzer Prize winning book *Less* by Andrew Sean Greer. It's about a failed novelist about to turn fifty who receives a wedding invitation in the mail from his former boyfriend. How does he avoid attending? He looks at the series of invitations to half-baked literary events around the world and decides to attend ALL of them. It's described as a scintillating satire of the American abroad, complete with mishaps and misunderstandings, a bittersweet romance of chances lost and ultimately a love story about the human heart.

Please read up to page 99 to the start of the German chapter. You can get the book on your device, library or buy the paperback.

## **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86395775050?pwd=R2JJdTR6Ni9ubFp1dStzMGlJSXI1dz09>

**Meeting ID:** 863 9577 5050 | **Passcode:** Book Club

**Phone:** 312-626-6799 US

**Meeting ID:** 863 9577 5050 | **Passcode:** 952340918

Questions? Contact Helen Race: [raceh@att.net](mailto:raceh@att.net) | 3144014382

## **Dr Jo Grove receives her Doctorate**

Saturday, September 12 | 1:00pm CST

Hello family and friends,

I am delighted to invite you to my virtual graduation ceremony presented by the University of Phoenix on their YouTube channel. It will be held on:

Saturday, September 12, 2020 at 11am PDT (2pm EDT)

Link to watch ceremony:

<https://https://www.youtube.com/universityofphoenix>

There will be a program that can be downloaded and shared with family and friends. It will be available the day of the ceremony as well as one month after the ceremony. Also, doctoral graduates will see their dissertation titles and chair names in the program.

Immediately following the ceremony, I will show you my cap and gown via a Zoom meeting. Please join me for a little gathering of family and friends. Also, bring a glass of wine or your favorite drink so we can have toasts. Anyone can make a toast! I will send the link to Zoom prior to the ceremony. Feel free to share this email with others as you desire. I hope you enjoy the ceremony and I look forward to seeing you afterwards on Zoom.

P.S. "Virtual ceremonies are not meant to replace or even mimic our physical commencements, but rather serve as a compliment to them. We'll continue to monitor the COVID-19 impact; however we anticipate in-person graduation ceremonies to resume sometime in 2021."

Love and hugs, Dr. Jo

## **Month of Grace + Prayer**

Sunday, September 13, 1:00pm

Pray on your own 20 minutes each day and meet one-on-one with a spiritual companion one hour each week for four consecutive weeks. Starts September 13. All meetings will be virtual (Zoom or phone if you prefer). Weekly meeting times set around your schedule. This is an individually directed retreat tailored to your own deep desires. Committed couples also have the option to participate as a couple. The spiritual companions are not members of our church nor can companion anyone they know. All adults are welcome regardless of denomination or affiliation. For more information, visit [www.momentsofgraceandprayer.org](http://www.momentsofgraceandprayer.org) and to register contact Clarence Heller at [clarenceheller@gmail.com](mailto:clarenceheller@gmail.com).

## **Speaker Series: The OKC Bombing by Brad Lyons**

Sunday, September 20 | 11:15am

Until the September 11 attacks in 2001, the Oklahoma City bombing was the deadliest terrorist attack in the history of the United States. It remains the deadliest act of domestic terrorism in U.S. history. The bomber received the death penalty. Brad Lyons, a Parkway member, and newspaper reporter at the time, was at the scene within minutes. Hear his story in this presentation.

### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84898581439?pwd=V1JhZXNod1JSTjVJcm1QYWWhOck9JQT09>

**Meeting ID:** 848 9858 1439 | **Passcode:** 256973 | **Phone:** 312-626-6799 US

Contact Richard Scherrer: [90fivetpr@gmail.com](mailto:90fivetpr@gmail.com) | 3149935210

## **Gateway ONA Drag Bingo**

Saturday, September 19, 2020 | 6:30 - 8:30pm

Last year, Gateway Open and Affirming Churches hosted a dinner/trivia event to raise funds for the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ. It was a wonderful evening and we were looking forward to holding another dinner/trivia night this year. Our Covid-19 pandemic has changed those plans. However, we still want to host a fun evening of fundraising for Coalition. Thus, we have created a Drag Bingo Evening which will be virtual on Zoom!

**Registration Fee:** \$25.00

**Register by September 14 at:**

[www.gatewayona.com/bingofundraiser-2020.html](http://www.gatewayona.com/bingofundraiser-2020.html)

Each registrant will receive 5 Bingo Cards via email. For additional information: [mhattman@att.net](mailto:mhattman@att.net) | 314-443-4277.

## **UPDATE St Louis Metro Area Crop Walk 2020**

Sunday, October 25

The Crop Walk 2020 is still happening on October 25th. It will be followed by the Crop Concert. All Crop Walk Events will be virtual this year

The need to alleviate hunger continues greater than ever. Please visit the Crop Walk website for all details:

[www.crophungerwalk.org/saintlouismo](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/saintlouismo)

Please join Parkway's team as a virtual walker, or donate to the team. Crop Walk and world hunger need you, Parkway

If you have questions, please contact your Parkway Crop Team, Mike and Gerry Rogers, Pam Manning, Sue Moellering

# PUCC Prayer List

as of Wednesday, September 2, 2020

## Celebrations

**A new and unique school year has begun.**

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

**The momentum toward justice and equity.**

**Our new lease with Harper Hybrid Elementary School!**

**Doug & Adriana Scherrer** - baby boy in early October. Grandparents Betty and Richard are ecstatic!!

## Concerns

**PUCC Collegians just tested positive for COVID-19 ...**

**... Lydia Davidson Meyer (AZ) and Hannah Simonson (KS).**

**Polly Rutherford** - healing from her successful 2 day back surgery - fusion of L2&3, L3&4, connecting to /revising L4&5 from 2 years ago.

**Healthcare workers, homeless** and many others at risk right now.

**Physical Distancing...** if anyone needs groceries, medicine and/or other support, please reach out to [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org); 314-330-0629

**People who are struggling with their mental health.**

**People who aren't feeling safe at home** but are remaining there.

**Individuals in all levels of leadership** as they make decisions today.

**Healing of relationships between the public and the police.**

**People affected by storms this week.**

## Continuing

**Naomi and Joe Runtz** - as she recuperates from knee replacement.

**Tim Ruiz** - recovering from back surgery last week.

**Crystal** - young mom just diagnosed with 2 types of cancer (Yakel).

**Nelson Spencer** - very serious heart condition (Ellie Svenson).

**Blake** - recent cancer diagnosis (Greg Schmelig).

**David Haack** - 'acute care'; no longer COVID-19 positive (Bill's dad).

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

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

**Ruth Peace & Pinky Wilcoxon** - PUCC sisters with health challenges.

**Bill Darland** - ongoing health issues.

**Tina** - undergoing treatment for cancer (Scharf).

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

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

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

**Bob** - continues to struggle with Parkinson's (McKenzie).

**Christopher, Gail & Bill Haack** - chronic health challenges.

**The extended Eggebrecht Family** - healing and wholeness.

## Pregnancy

**Laura & Phil Waite** and pending big brothers Henry, Oscar and Felix.

## Home/Care Facility/Rehab Center

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

**Marv Herpel** - *Brookdale West County*; 785 Henry Ave, #217; Ballwin, MO 63021; 636-227-5838 [birthdate: March 3]

**Pat Klein** - *Anthology Senior Living of Wildwood*; 251 Plaza Dr, #325; Wildwood, MO 63040 [birthdate: September 21]

**Bill Klein** - *Anthology Senior Living of Wildwood*; 251 Plaza Dr, #104; Wildwood, MO 63040 [birthdate: March 8]

**Pearl Sellenriek** - *Friendship Village Care Center*; #725-2 15201 Olive Blvd, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [birthdate: March 31]

**Dwight Smith** - *Manor Grove*; 711 S Kirkwood Rd; Kirkwood, MO 63122; [birthdate: September 6]

**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.

**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 August 30 - St. John's UCC, St. Louis; sjuccstl.org

Week ending September 6 - St. Lucas UCC, Sunset Hills; stlucasucc.org

## Thank You!

**Hello Kevin and all the wonderful cooks**, I can't say thank you enough for all the wonderful meals the women have been providing us during my recuperation. You can't believe how wonderful it is for us, as meal preparation is the hardest thing for me to do. Our care givers say that our church is the most loving and caring and we certainly agree with that. Thank you, Thank you. ~All the best, Naomi and Joe

**Thanks to our generous congregants for donating food**, socks, underwear, gift cards, and essential personal hygiene products for Isaiah 58 Ministries. All items were greatly appreciated, especially now with job and food insecurity. ~Evelyn Buretta

# 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday *after* Pentecost

September 6, 2020

## Remember, Restore, Renew

Exodus 12:1-14

On this day we recall the beginning of Passover. Passover is celebrated by our Jewish brothers and sisters as a reminder of freedom from slavery. Pressed into hard toil, the people of Israel banded together, and so were able to escape to a new and more equitable life. Although this is not the season of Passover, it is appropriate to read this scripture on the secular weekend of Labor Day, as we recall the hard work by labor unions to secure freedom for workers of all kinds.

In the United Church of Christ, we rejoice that “each worker - judge or janitor, salesclerk or scientist, mother or millionaire CEO - is equal in the sight of God. Each person's work, done with integrity, is a contribution to society and has value and dignity. But the world doesn't always see it this way.

Workers are dependent on their employer, but employers are much less dependent on any particular worker. This unequal power relationship can lead to problems in the workplace. A common way that workers have responded is to join a labor union. Unions are one of the very best ways for workers to bring greater justice to the workplace. The right of workers to form or join unions is so important and fundamental that it is an internationally-recognized human right.” ([https://www.ucc.org/justice\\_worker-justice\\_unions](https://www.ucc.org/justice_worker-justice_unions))

The right of people to gather together and speak out against workplace injustice is part of a long tradition in our faith story. As we recreate or relax on Labor Day Monday, it is also an opportunity to give thanks for the United Church of Christ's commitment to the principles of fairness and equity in the workplace. This Labor Day, take a moment to pray using these or other words.

*Dear God, On this Labor Day, we pause to thank you for the opportunity for satisfying work, and for the pleasure of rest from our labors. Be with all those, we pray, who work under unjust conditions. Be with all who advocate for those who work in such conditions. And be with us, we pray, as we strive along with you for a world in which every person is afforded decency, justice and fair treatment. In your name, Amen.*