

A long-exposure photograph of a night sky showing concentric star trails in shades of blue and white. The trails curve around a central point, creating a sense of rotation. Below the sky, a dark, rugged mountain range is visible, with a small, glowing orange light source, possibly a sunset or sunrise, visible in the distance between the peaks.

*God counts the stars by number,  
giving each one a name.*

Sunday, February 7, 2021

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- 3 Birthdays & Anniversaries
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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 Monday. 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.

## **Pledge Campaign for our Mission & Ministry 2021**

We are still accepting pledges: <https://parkwayucc.org/giving/pledge/>

Thank you for your continuing support of Parkway United Church of Christ.

**Cover Image:** Evgeni Tcherkasski from Pixabay  
<https://pixabay.com/de/photos/sterne-startrails-astronomie-nacht-3625515/>

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## **Birthdays**

2/7 FAGERBERG, Virginia

2/9 SPERRY, Leah

2/7 LOWENTHAL, Sharon

2/9 WADDELL, Quinn

2/8 MAXEINER, Tom

2/11 WINKELMANN, Jim

2/9 DEGROOTE, Jennifer

# 5<sup>th</sup> Week after Epiphany

Sunday, February 7, 2021 | 10:00am | Facebook Live

**Meditation** *We long to have companions who travel by our side, strong friends to call and answer with whom we are allied. As we life up each other when struggles lay us low, community develops; our faith and caring grow.*

~Dosia Carlson

## Passing the Peace of Christ

“May the peace of Christ be with you.”

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

## Prelude *There Is a Balm in Gilead*—Gregg Sewell

Based on the traditional tune

## Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

## Welcome Song *Pass It On*, v3



1. It on - ly takes a spark to get a fire go - ing,
2. What a won - drous time is spring when all the trees are bud - ding,
3. I wish for you, my friend, this hap - pi - ness that I've found—



and soon all those a - round can warm up in its glow - ing;  
the birds be - gin to sing, the flow - ers start their bloom - ing;  
on God you can de - pend, it mat - ters not where you're bound;



that's how it is with God's love, once you've ex - per-i-enced it:  
that's how it is with God's love, once you've ex - per-i-enced it:  
I'll shout it from the moun-tain top, I want my world to know:



you spread God's love to ev - ery - one, you want to pass it on.  
you want to sing, it's fresh like spring, you want to pass it on.  
the Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.



**Scripture** Psalm 147:1—11 (CEB – Common English Bible)

Praise the Lord! Because it is good to sing praise to our God! Because it is a pleasure to make beautiful praise! The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem, gathering up Israel’s exiles. God heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds. God counts the stars by number, giving each one a name. Our Lord is great and so strong! God’s knowledge can’t be grasped!

The Lord helps the poor, but throws the wicked down on the dirt!

Sing to the Lord with thanks; sing praises to our God with a lyre!

God covers the skies with clouds; God makes rain for the earth; God makes the mountains sprout green grass. God gives food to the animals—even to the baby ravens when they cry out.

God doesn’t prize the strength of a horse; God doesn’t treasure the legs of a runner. No. God treasures the people who honor God, the people who wait for this faithful love.

**Call to Worship** Isaiah 40:28-31 Joanna Harader

One:	Have you not known?
Many:	<b>Our God is the everlasting God, Creator of the ends of the earth.</b>
One:	Have you not heard?
Many:	<b>God does not faint or grow weary.</b>
One:	Have you not known?
Many:	<b>God’s understanding is unsearchable.</b>
One:	Have you not heard?
Many:	<b>God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless.</b>
One:	Have you not known?
Many:	<b>Those who wait for God will renew their strength — they shall mount up with wings like eagles.</b>
One:	We come to hear.
Many:	<b>We come to know.</b>
All:	<b>Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.</b>

**Song** *On Eagle’s Wings*

**You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord  
Who abide in His shadow for life  
Say to the Lord, “My refuge, my rock in whom I trust!”**

Refrain: **And He will raise you up on eagles’ wings  
Bear you on the breath of dawn  
Make you to shine like the sun  
And hold you in the palm of His hand**

The snare of the fowler will never capture you  
 And famine will bring you no fear  
 Under His wings your refuge, His faithfulness your shield (refrain)  
 You need not fear the terror of the night  
 Nor the arrow that flies by day  
 Though thousands fall about you, near you it shall not come (refrain)  
 For to His angels He's given a command  
 To guard you in all of your ways  
 Upon their hands they will bear you up  
 Lest you dash your foot against a stone (refrain)

**Opening Prayer** *God of Wondrous Darkness*—Ronald Allen  
 O living God, you dwell in clouds and thick darkness. We lift our eyes to the night sky and sense depth and fullness beyond our grasp. You freed your children from Egyptian bondage under the security of nightfall. When you were born, the star came in the night heavens. A black man carried your cross. You made the depths of your love in the midday darkness.

Rain falls from black clouds. Babies grow in uterine shadows. Prophets speak in ebony voices. Treasure of darkness! Help us receive them as riches from you. Amen.

**Response** *Make Me A Channel of Your Peace* #2171, v1—2

1. Make me a chan-nel of your peace. \_\_\_\_ Where  
 2. Make me a chan-nel of your peace. \_\_\_\_ Where  
 there is ha-tred, let me bring your love. \_\_\_\_ Where  
 there's de-spair in life, let me bring hope. \_\_\_\_ Where  
 there is in - ju - ry, your par-don, Lord, \_\_\_\_ and  
 there is dark-ness, \_\_\_\_ on - ly light, \_\_\_\_ and  
 where there's doubt, true faith in you. \_\_\_\_  
 where there's sad-ness, ev - er joy. \_\_\_\_

**Children's Time** Children through 5<sup>th</sup> grade will go to Room 2 for Pathways of Faith. Please pick your children up in the CE hallway at 11:15am.

## **Blessing the Children** *Go My Children with My Blessing*

**Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone;  
Waking, sleeping, I am with you. You are my own;  
In my love's baptismal river I have made you mine forever  
Go, my children, with my blessing. You are my own.**

## **Offering Our Gifts to God**

### **Offering Interlude**

*Jerusalem, My Happy Home*—Patricia Lou Harris

Based on the Ealy American melody

### **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

**Generous God, let your grace flow through us; a generous stream,  
unstoppable, refreshing, abundant. We release these gifts into  
your river of love, flowing out to all the world. May all of our gifts  
bring hope, healing and heart to your people near and far. Amen.**

### **Scripture** Mark 1:29—39 (NRSV—New Revised Standard Version)

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother—in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

## **Moment of Silent Reflection**

### **Sermon**

**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.

Come to this table because you want to celebrate—care in illness, comfort in sorrow, healing beyond curing, peace in forgiveness, hope in times of fear or threat.

Come to this table because you claim your abundance, as culture defines it or as your heart knows it. Come to this table because you have discovered your own generosity and need to start giving.

Come to this table because you are willing to be welcomed, even when that is awkward, and willing to welcome to the limit of your resources, and even to offer welcome knowing it may be rejected.

Come to this teeter-totter table, where the bakers and the starving, touch elbows and hearts. Come to find and offer healing. Come for nurture and strength and sweetness.

Come!

## **Communion Song** *In the Singing*



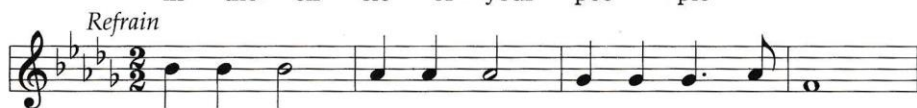
1. In the sing-ing, in the si-lence, in the hands ex-pec-tant,
2. In the ques-tion, in the an-swer, in the mo-ment of ac -



o - pen, in the bless-ing, in the break-ing,  
cep - tance, in the heart's cry, in the heal-ing,



in the Pres-ence at this ta - ble —  
in the cir - cle of your peo - ple —



Je - sus Christ, Je - sus Christ, be the wine of grace:



Je - sus Christ, Je - sus Christ, be the bread of peace.

## **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**

### **Words of Remembering**

**We remember that Jesus Christ came from a culture of oasis hospitality, stories of manna, grain gleaned, a raven feeding the prophet Elijah, Abigail hurrying to offer a feast, and a Passover meal for which everything stopped and all were fed.**

**We remember that Jesus came from both family Sabbath evenings, and the rule-bending of grain plucked from a field when someone was hungry.**

**We remember that Jesus, on his first day in the healing business, lifted up a woman from her fever and she responded by serving everyone from the generosity of her wellness. Jesus sat and ate at that table.**

**We remember that Jesus, near the end of his ministry, called a short man from a tree into a forgiveness so abundant it became a meal for the least and lost. Jesus sat and ate at that table, too.**

**And we remember that Jesus knew, when it was the last Passover, how important healing and turning lives around was, and so he blessed unleavened bread, and poured wine and love freely, inviting us always to share both brokenness and grace. Amen.**

### **Song of Parting** *God Whose Will is Health and Wholeness*

*Tune: There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*

**God whose will is health and wholeness,  
hear your people as we pray:**

**Many now are facing illness; more face sickness every day.**

**As we lift our song toward heaven, may we use the gifts you give —  
Science, justice, and compassion—to help others safely live.**

**Jesus taught that your commandments call for us to use the mind.  
May we use the gifts of science to seek health for humankind.  
Bless the ones who work for healing; bless the ones who seek to be  
Builders of a health care system that protects society.**

**God, you call for love and justice, yet our laws are far from wise:  
Many don't have good insurance;**

**lack of health care threatens lives.**

**Many workers must keep working, sick or not, to pay the bills.**

**Turn us round when we have sanctioned**

**greed that leads to greater ills.**

**Loving God, we ask your blessing on the sick and those they love,**

**And we pray for those now grieving as they lift their cries above.**

**There is trouble all around us; illness causes pain and fear.**

**Give compassion, love and kindness as we serve your people here.**

Text: Copyright © 2020 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

"God Whose Will is Health and Wholeness" is a new hymn for the time of coronavirus. Permission is given for use of this hymn in local churches.

## **Benediction**

### **God's Light Goes Forth**

**Music for Going Forth** *On Our Way Rejoicing*—David Paxton

Based on *Hermas* by Francis R. Havergal

# **Announcements**

## **TED—Tuesday Evening Dialogue: *This I Believe***

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays | 7:00pm | via Zoom | Next session – February 9

Please join us for the final session on *This I Believe* edited by Jay Allison and Dan Gediman. We will be covering pages 180 to the end of the book. The group will be choosing the next TED book so please come with ideas for new readings. There is no strict criteria for TED book selections other than choosing topics that stimulate discussion and provide opportunities to share thoughts and ideas. Contact Helen Race: raceh@att.net

### **Zoom Link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86172300024?pwd=bFdGQ0xKRHFGRnZXM0kyRC9FdZGQ0T09>

**Meeting ID:** 861 7230 0024 | **Passcode:** Book Club

**Phone:** (312) 626 6799 US | **Passcode:** 13607034

## **Book Sunday Virtual Style**

Book Sunday is always a fun day as Parkway UCC gives each of our children a book chosen just for them and their age. We will have to do it differently this year as we can't be together. We will present the books chosen on Sunday, February 14 during the 10:00 AM Worship Service. Then parents can write us that they want one of the chosen books. We will then order the book and have it delivered to your home. We love our children and celebrate this special event on Valentine's Day! Contact Barb Kuhlmann: barbk@parkwayucc.org

## Speaker Series: Demystifying Our Juvenile Courts

Sunday, February 14 | 11:15am | Connection details TBA

Neither Perry Mason nor Atticus Finch ever tried a juvenile case. They probably don't even know the answers to these questions: Can juveniles be held in jail? Do they have any due process rights? May a juvenile be prosecuted as an adult? What is the role of the court, when a child is abused or neglected? Why are proceedings confidential? What is a Court Appointed Special Advocate ("CASA") and how can I be one? Judge Tom Frawley, who ran the City of St. Louis Juvenile Court, will answer these questions and others. It's a civics lesson that promises to be entertaining and educational.

## TAD—Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays | 2:00pm | via ZOOM | Next session – February 16

We are discussing Walt Brueggemann's book, *Virus as a Summons to Faith: Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief, and Anxiety*. Come join us! Let's talk and learn together. Questions? Please email Jackie Eiffert, jeiffert2@gmail.com or Gerry Rogers, gcr123055@gmail.com

### Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83670617428?pwd=bUxPZEdDMlU4ay9oNndTWw4yZUYwUT09>

**Join by phone:** 312 626 6799 | **Meeting ID:** 836 7061 7428 | **Passcode:** 480007

## Month of Grace + Prayer

February 21 - March 21, 2021

Month of Grace + Prayer co-hosted by Dayspring Baptist Church and Parkway United Church of Christ. All meetings virtual (Zoom). Any adult is welcome to participate regardless of church affiliation or denomination.

**Group Opening Session:** February 21 from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

**Group Closing Session:** March 21 from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

**Private meetings** with spiritual companions (one hour each) occur once each week via Zoom (or phone at the participant's preference) any time of the week that is mutually agreed between the spiritual companion and the participant.

**Registration:** Contact Clarence Heller at [clarenceheller@gmail.com](mailto:clarenceheller@gmail.com).

Registration encouraged by February 16. A Zoom link will be sent to you.

**Share the Costs:** There is no registration fee, but participants are invited to share the costs of the retreat as they are able. Regarding offering amount, the average cost for each retreatant is about \$20, some retreatants contribute less and some contribute more. Offerings are accepted once the retreat has begun.  
\* Please let Kevin know if you would like us to make a donation in your name.

<http://www.momentsofgraceandprayer.org/>

Learn about this experience from PUCers:

Dottie Dywer -- <https://youtu.be/FpqH4KNkz6k>

Sue Stolze -- <https://youtu.be/if6DWTEnv98>

## The Inward Experience—A Virtual Retreat

Saturday, February 27 | 9am – 3pm | Zoom link provided upon registration  
Participate in an interactive online self-care process. We will meet online and the event will be limited to 16 people with much of the work being done in cohorts of four people. Our format will be based on unpacking several Core Questions and these questions will be connected to this particular season of our lives which will include the challenges of COVID, the stress of social distancing, and the darkness that often comes with winter. This is a highly reflective and interactive process. If you need to do some inner personal work in the context of a community this may be the event for you!

Registration <https://www.mollygrisham.com/events/virtualwinterretreat>

PUCC would like to pay your \$99 fee so please let Kevin know.

Questions? Email Molly Grisham: [molly@mollygrisham.com](mailto:molly@mollygrisham.com)

## Sprouts of Peace—Interfaith Families

Let's bake bread together! On behalf of the Islamic Foundation of Greater St. Louis, United Hebrew Congregation, Parkway UCC, and Peace UCC we bring our Sprouts of Peace families back into community with one another—virtually, of course.

**ABOUT:** Sprouts of Peace is a free program geared for children, Pre-K—5th grade, and their parents who are interested in building interfaith friendships and learning about how their religious tradition is similar to and different from those of the friends they will make.

**VIRTUAL PROGRAM:** We have an exciting two-part program planned for everyone focused on the theme of baking, breaking, and sharing bread with one another. To participate, please follow the link below to register for:

- Saturday, February 6 at 2pm—watch live or watch later—as we will share part 1 of the program on YouTube
- Saturday, February 20 at 2pm when we will have the opportunity to come together on Zoom for more fun!
- Upon registering, we will share more details about the exciting program.

**REGISTER:** <https://interfaithstl.org/sprouts-registration/>

**HOME LIBRARY:** New this year is the Sprouts of Peace Home Library. Registration includes six children's books free of charge throughout the 2021 calendar year (reading level birth-gr. 3). Book themes will include topics like religious diversity, compassion, generosity, and friendship. Interfaith educational materials will accompany each title.

We cannot wait to see you all again!

**Questions?** Contact Erin Fisher, Director of Community Engagement, Interfaith Partnership of Greater St. Louis at [efisher@interfaithstl.org](mailto:efisher@interfaithstl.org).

# **LGBT+ Virtual Alzheimer's Community Forum: Alzheimer's disease, dementia and memory loss**

Join us in this virtual community forum to learn about Alzheimer's, dementia and memory loss. Invite a friend who has been affected by the disease. Share your thoughts about how we can help people in your community.

**February 11, 2021 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**

Please register at: <https://tinyurl.com/y5rd57zp>

We want to hear from you. Please take time to let us know how we can help you and your loved ones.

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LGBT Elders





# Prayer List

as of February 3, 2021

## Celebrations

All the acts of kindness, justice and equity near and far!

## Concerns

**Pat and Bill Owens** - healing and peace amidst her recent heart issues.

**Jim & Polly Winkelmann** - he is home healing after a stroke...

1504 Wolf Trail Rd; Wildwood, MO 63021; 314-610-3348 (Jim's cell).

**Charlie** - healing - open heart surgery (Cassie Rosenberger's cousin).

**Jean Mueller and Family** - grieving/giving thanks for her aunt.

**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; 314-330-0629

## Continuing

**Cherie & Mike Stolze** - her health; her father's kidney disease.

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

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

**Bill Darland** - ongoing health issues.

**Audrey and John Nourse** - as she finds healing and strength.

**Anne Brodinski** - nearing the end of her life (Svenson).

**Marilyn McDougal's sister** - strength/courage for what lies ahead.

**Shalonda** - kidney transplant last wk (Cassie Rosenberger co-worker).

**Nelson Spencer** - failing heart valve he received years ago (Svenson).

**Carolyn & Hank Kraichley** - serious health challenges (McKenzie).

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

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

**Grateful Tran** - on parole at half-way house nearer family, learning new life skills, struggling with 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.

## 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 Memory Care Division* #1001; 15250 Olive Blvd, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [birthdate: March 31]

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

## Other

**Pres Biden, VP Harris, Congress**, all local, national, world leaders.

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

**All people who live with mental illness.**

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

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

**Our Missouri Mid-South Conference and St Louis Assn UCC**

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

**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.

**Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen.**

## St Louis Assn UCC Covenant Partner

*Week ending February 7* - **Christ the King UCC**, Florissant;

ctk-ucc.org

*Week ending February 14* - **Christ UCC**, Maplewood; maplewooducc.org

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God,

We pray for Myanmar in the midst of military coup –  
in the interruption of Internet, in the seizing of television stations  
and the silence of phones, in the curfew in the night, in roads closed and  
banks closed, in the seizing and taking of leaders elected in good faith,  
Aung San Suu Kyi, Win Myint, and twenty-two other ministers and deputies  
for an illegal emergency year.

We pray for those who are Buddhist, for those who are Christian,  
for those who are Muslim, for those who do not name a holiness.

We pray for those who are children, those who are elders, those who are sick  
in this pandemic.

We pray for those detained and those who live an emergency of the heart.

We pray for peace in fear, courage in protest, hope where the future is  
unknown., in all your holy names.

Amen.

- Maren Tirabassi  
UCC Pastor

# 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

February 7, 2021

## Source of Strength

Mark 1:29-39

Simon Peter's mother-in-law speaks:

“Peter was like a son to me, even though I did not bear him. So, when he put down his fishing nets and started to follow the Teacher, I paid attention. Some of the other women in the village said they were irresponsible, and if they stopped the work we counted on, we all would starve. “Fishing for people!” they scoffed, “THAT won’t put bread on the table.” I never said much in those conversations. In truth I never said much at all.

When we heard the Teacher was coming for a meal, I felt this might be my chance to listen, to finally understand his teachings. The other women and I worked all the day before and all through the night to make everything just right. By midday, I felt heavy and moved slower and slower. Finally, the other women saw and urged me to bed, but I was determined to meet the Teacher so without a word I tried to keep to my work. At last I took to bed. I tried to stay awake, but the sickness made me sleep.

When I woke up, the Teacher was there. That strange light that always seemed around him shone in the darkness of the room. His hand on my forehead was cooling and his touch was light, but it filled me with a new strength. All at once, I understood his strange command. To fish for people was to bring them near to God, to one another. I wanted to be one of those fishers, and in that moment, I knew that I would be able to. No longer heavy with fever, I rose.

Serving quietly was the chance to be near the table, and to hear what the Teacher was saying. As fast as I could bring bread and wine to the table, it was gone! First, the neighbors came pouring in, and then people I had never seen before. With that cool touch, he healed them all.

Early the next morning, I was up before the rest and I saw The Teacher slip out the door. I understand what it's like to need a few quiet minutes with the Holy One.

So, when the others asked where he was, I kept silent. But when they started to get ready to go, to look for him, I packed a bag and I followed. And I'm following still. We don't have to be preachers or have our names recorded in books to follow. We just have to be ready, to rise up, to listen and to go when he calls.”