

Solid Rock



www.parkwayucc.org

Sunday, June 20, 2021

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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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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

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 Monday.

Cover Photo: by Mona Smith Herberg at Mill Mountain Shut-ins

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Anniversaries

6/20 FAGERBERG, Roger & Virginia (61)

6/24 STOLZE, Mike & Cherie (20)

6/25 MAXEINER, Tom & Mary (20)

Birthdays

6/20 CAMERON, Tavis

6/24 SCHEFFEL, William

6/22 SEETHARAMAN, Jay

6/25 DOMBEK, Charles

6/24 MASON, Lisa

4th Sunday *after* Pentecost

Sunday, June 20, 2021 | 10:00am Facebook Live... YouTube later

Meditations

Of all the paths you take in life, make sure a few of them are dirt.

~John Muir

I am like a drop of water on a rock. After drip, drip, dripping in the same place, I begin to leave a mark, and I leave my mark in many people's hearts.

~Rigoberta Menchu

Welcome Let us know you are here!

Passing the Peace of Christ

“May the peace of Christ be with you.”

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

Prelude

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Welcome Song *Sanctuary*

Lord, pre- pare me to be a sanc- tu - ar - y, pure and
Lord, pre- pare me to be your lov - ing e - cho, kind and
ho - ly, tried and true. With thanks- giv - ing, I'll be a
gen - tle, tried and true. With thanks- giv - ing, I'll be a
liv - ing sanc- tu - ar - y for you.
liv - ing sanc- tu - ar - y for you.

Scripture Matthew 7:24-27 (CEV - Contemporary English Version)

Jesus said, “Anyone who hears and obeys these teachings of mine is like a wise person who built a house on solid rock. Rain poured down, rivers flooded, and winds beat against that house. But it did not fall, because it was built on solid rock.

Anyone who hears my teachings and doesn’t obey them is like a foolish person who built a house on sand. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded, and the winds blew and beat against that house. Finally, it fell with a crash.

Song *My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*



1 My hope is built on noth-ing less than Je - sus' love and
2 When shad - ows veil my Sav - ior's face, I rest up - on un -
3 Christ's oath and cov - e - nant and blood sup - port me in the
4 When Christ shall come with trum-pet sound, oh, may I then in



right - teous - ness; I dare not trust this earth - ly frame, but
chang - ing grace; In ev - ery high and storm - y gale, my
ris - ing flood; When all a - round my soul gives way, Christ
Love be found, Dressed in God's right - teous - ness a - lone, fault -



whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.
an - chor holds with - in the veil. On Christ, the sol - id Rock, I stand;
then is all my hope and stay.
less to stand be - fore the throne.



all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand, all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

Opening Prayer

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.

Scripture and Reflections

Genesis 28:10-22

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went towards Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth,

and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!” And he was afraid, and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you.”

Matthew 6:13-18

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but God in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”

Matthew 28:1-7a

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples...”

1Samuel 17: 1a, 4-11, 19-23, 32-49

Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armored with a coat of mail; the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. He had greaves of bronze on his legs and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver’s beam, and his spear’s head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and his shield-bearer went before him. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, “Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me.

If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.” And the Philistine said, “Today I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together.” When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. David rose early in the morning, left someone in charge of the sheep, took the provisions, and went as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the encampment as the army was going forth to the battle line, shouting the war cry. Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage, ran to the ranks, and went and greeted his brothers. As he talked with them, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines, and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him. David said to Saul, “Let no one’s heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.” Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are just a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth.” But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep sheep for his father; and whenever a lion or a bear came, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after it and struck it down, rescuing the lamb from its mouth; and if it turned against me, I would catch it by the jaw, strike it down, and kill it. Your servant has killed both lions and bears; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God.” David said, “The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine.” So Saul said to David, “Go, and may the Lord be with you!”

Saul clothed David with his armor; he put a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail. David strapped Saul’s sword over the armor, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these; for I am not used to them.” So David removed them. Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in his shepherd’s bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. The Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field.” But David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s and he will give you into our hand.”

When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly towards the battle line to meet the Philistine. David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

John 8:2-11

Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to Jesus and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, sir." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again."

1Kings 19:1-9

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again. The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you." He got up, ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food for forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. At that place he came to a cave and spent the night there.

Song *How Firm A Foundation*

1. How firm a foun - da - tion, ye saints of the Lord,
2. "Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dis - mayed,
3. "When through the deep wa - ters I call thee to go,
4. "When through fi - ery tri - als thy path - way shall lie,



Is laid for your faith in God's ex - cel - lent Word!
 For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
 The riv - ers of sor - row shall not o - ver - flow;
 My grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be thy sup - ply;

What more can be said than to you God hath said,
 I'll strength - en thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
 For I will be near thee, thy trou - bles to bless,
 The flame shall not hurt thee; I on - ly de - sign

To you who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
 Up - held by My righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.
 And sanc - ti - fy to thee thy deep - est dis - tress.
 Thy dross to con - sume, and thy gold to re - fine.

5. "The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
 I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
 That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
 I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."

Litany for Father's Day

Adapted by Robb McCoy, United Methodist Book of Worship

- One: For fathers everywhere, who have given us life and love, that we may show them respect and care.
- Many: Holy God, hear this prayer for our fathers.**
- One: For fathers who have lost a child through death, that their faith may give them hope, and their family and friends support and console them.
- Many: Holy God, hear this prayer for our fathers that mourn.**
- One: For men who may or may not have children of their own, but act like a father to someone in need of advice, support, nurture and love.
- Many: Holy God, hear this prayer for our father figures.**
- One: For step-fathers who have loved the children of another as their own, and created a new family.
- Many: Holy God, hear this prayer for step-fathers.**
- One: For adoptive fathers, who have heard the call of God to lovingly step forward for those that need their care.
- Many: Holy God, hear this prayer for adoptive fathers.**

One: For fathers who have been unable to be a source of strength, who have not responded to the needs of their children, and have not sustained their families.

Many: Holy God, have mercy on absentee fathers.

One: For fathers who struggle with temptation, violence, or addiction. For those who do harm, and for those whom they have harmed.

Many: Holy God, have mercy on fathers and families that struggle.

One: For new fathers, full of hope. For long-time fathers, full of wisdom. For the fathers yet to be, and fathers soon to be.

Many: Holy God, hear our prayer for the fathers of our Church.

One: For those that have shaped our lives without claim of family or kinship. For those who have taught us, guided us, shaped us and molded us into Christ's disciples.

Many: Holy God, hear our prayer for the fathers of our faith.

All: God our Parent, in your wisdom and love you made all things. Bless these men, that they may be strengthened as fathers. Let what we learn from them about faith and love shine forth. Grant that we, their daughters and sons, honor them always with a spirit of profound respect – even if that is complicated. Grant this through your Spirit. Amen

Call to Prayer

Pastoral Prayer & Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer

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.]

Offering Our Gifts to God

Prayer of Dedication Carol Penner

Holy One, it's a small gesture - pulling coins or bills out of our pockets, writing a check, arranging for our bank to send our offering. It almost makes no sound as it drops into the offering plate. But it is the act of our hearts opening, giving you the fruit of our labor. It is our collective offering of love, a weekly deposit in the account of your faithfulness. We do this in the name of Jesus who taught us how to care and share. Amen.

Song of Parting *God, Whose Love Is Always Stronger*

God, whose love is always stronger

Than our weakness, pride and fear,

In your world, we pray and wonder How to be more faithful here.

Hate too often grows inside us; Fear rules what the nations do.

So we pray, when wars divide us: Give us love, Lord! Make us new!

Love is patient, kind and caring, Never arrogant or rude,

Never boastful, all things bearing; Love rejoices in the truth.

When we're caught up in believing War will make the terror cease,

Show us Jesus' way of living; May our strength be in your peace.

May our faith in you be nourished;

May your churches hear your call.

May our lives be filled with courage As we speak your love for all.

Now emboldened by your Spirit Who has given us new birth,

Give us love, that we may share it Till your love renews the earth!

BEACH SPRING 8.7.8.7 D God Whose Giving Knows No Ending

Benediction

God's Light Goes Forth

Music for Going Forth

Announcements

A Bonus for Father's Day

For last Wednesday's Mid~Week Meditation from our sanctuary, we decided to share some hymns that refer to God as Father...

<https://youtu.be/FQ3oGD5q3xs>

We are a congregation that talks about God with a variety of words, images, ideas. Please keep this in mind as we zero in on *one of the ways* people have expressed some of their understanding and connection with the Holy down through the ages.

First some scripture then some music and lyrics...

John 1:14; John 15:10; John 10:30; John 14:1-11; Mark 14:36; Luke 23:34;

Matthew 28:19 and Luke 15:11-32

This is My Father's World; Faith of Our Fathers; Of the Father's Love Begotten; He's Got the Whole World in His Hands; Eternal Father, Strong to Save; Dear Lord and Father of Mankind; Bring Many Names; and When Jesus Called You 'Father'

Announcements

Tuesday Evening Dialogue—June 22

2nd & 4th Tuesdays | 6:45pm social time | 7:00pm Book discussion | via Zoom
Join us for our second session of discussion on the novel entitled *The Heart's Invisible Furies* by John Boyne. It's about an Irish orphan and takes place from the 1940's to present. For June 22, read up to page 423 which is the start of the section Fathers and Sons.

Video: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86172300024?pwd=bFdGQ0xKRHFGTnZXM0kyRC9FdDZGQT09>;

Meeting ID: 861 7230 0024 | (312) 626 6799 US | **Passcode:** BookClub

Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue—June 29

1st & 3rd Tuesdays | 2:00pm | via ZOOM

Please join us this summer as we read *Great Psalms of the Bible* by Clint McCann. McCann is an internationally recognized Psalms scholar at Eden Seminary, and he comes highly recommended by several PUCers who have taken his classes. Feel free to join us whether or not you've studied the Bible before, or can't make all of the meetings because of a busy summer. This promises to be an excellent study of twelve Psalms. We'd love to have you.

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

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

Visit to St Louis Art Museum

Wednesday, June 30 | 9:30am - 12:00pm | St Louis Art Museum

Join Parkway UCC as we head to the beautiful St. Louis Art Museum. Meet at Parkway at 9:30 to carpool—or meet at the main entrance to the Art Museum at 10. Admission is free.

More info? Contact Jackie Eiffert: jeiffert2@gmail.com

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Parkway UCC continues to serve our long-time outreach midtown ministry, Isaiah 58. Socks and underwear for all sizes and ages are being requested by this ministry for a 24 July Carnival, (raincheck on 31 July). Parkway UCC is also contributing a special requested bulk item as a separate gift. There will be an opportunity to donate school supplies later in the summer during the August Back-to-School sales. As you are able, please consider placing socks and underwear in the designated box in the church lobby and/or add to monthly food pantry donations now through 22 July. Thanks in advance. Questions? Contact Evelyn Buretta at burettaevelyn@gmail.com

Prayer List

as of Tuesday, June 16, 2021

Celebrations

All the acts of kindness, justice and equity near and far!
LGBTQ+ Pride Month.

Concerns

Marv Herpel and family after today's Memorial Service for his daughter Georgia. <https://www.schrader.com/obituary/georgia-herpel>

Polly & Mike Rutherford - as they grieve/give thanks for her mother Bea Dot Peck.

<https://www.schrader.com/obituary/bea-dot-peck-nee-smallwood>

Ellie Svenson - knee replacement surgery yesterday.

Dan & Kim, Ben/Henry/Davis Weas - Dan's cancer treatment plans.

All impacted by Covid-19 - individuals, families, healthcare workers.

Physical Distancing... if anyone needs groceries, medicine and/or other support OR if anyone newly vaccinated would like to be part of the Care Team, please reach out to kevin@parkwayucc.org; 314-330-0629.

Gun violence and other violence across the US and other lands.

Continuing

Peter Shelton - healing at home after recent surgery.

Larry & Joan Brannigan - healing from his heart surgery.

Ellie & Skip Larson - as she settles into a care unit at Meramec Bluffs.

Gail Haack - healing from torn rotator cuff.

Jim Winkelmann's mother Val Weber - healing from back injury.

John - receiving hospice care at home (lifelong friend of Winkelmanns).

Edwin - in midst of cancer (spouse of Maria, care giver of Joe Runtz).

Brian - healing at home; dbl lung transplant due to COVID (Tossing).

Al & Cindy - healing from car accident (Tarr).

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

Lori Connors - for strength, stamina through health challenges.

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

Bill Darland - ongoing health issues.

Maria Hendrix and Denise Hein (Stifel).

Carolyn & Hank Kraichley - serious health challenges.

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

Gary - risky behaviors; seeking balance and stability.

Grateful Tran - half-way house, new skills, schizophrenia (Buretta).

Bob - continues to struggle with Parkinson's.

Christopher, Gail & Bill Haack - chronic health challenges.

The extended Eggebrecht Family - healing and wholeness.

Transitional Conference Minister Mary Nelson and our Missouri

Mid-South Conference - beginning our shared ministry.

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]

John and Audrey Nourse - *The Village at Cape Albeon* 3300 Lake Bend Dr; St. Louis, MO 63088; 636-861-3200 [birthdates: Audrey - December 19; John - October 26]

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

Variety of Parkway members/friends - employment issues.

Conversations about the Death Penalty in the United States.

Victims of Natural and Created Disasters around the world.

Peace and Justice near and far.

Healing of relationships between the public and the police.

US Military around the globe.

The people of politically unstable countries across the globe.

Peace in the Mid-East.

St Louis Assn UCC Covenant Partner

Week ending June 20 - **Kirkwood UCC**; kirkwooducc.org

Week ending June 27 - **Carondelet UCC**, St Louis; carondeletucc.com

Why Don't I Cry?

by Jennifer Brownell

“So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.” – Matthew 27:59-60

Joseph took the body and wrapped it.
Mary and the other Mary sat.
Joseph hewed the rock and laid the body in a tomb.
Mary and the other Mary sat.
Joseph rolled the stone in place.
Mary and the other Mary sat.
Joseph went away.
Mary and the other Mary still sat.

The workshop presenter—a grief counselor—tells a story about a man whose daughter has died. Every day for weeks after the loss, the man’s wife cries in the living room, while the man goes to the garage and, tearless, works on a stone sculpture. Hearing from family and friends that he is “grieving wrong,” the man invites the counselor to his garage, and agrees to talk as he pounds rock into shape. “Why . . . don’t . . . I . . . cry?” he puffs between hammer blows. “Why . . . don’t . . . I . . . cry?”

There are approximately as many ways to grieve as there are people on the planet.

The Marys sit. Joseph takes, wraps, hews, lays, rolls, goes.
A mother weeps. A father chisels.
You hold a hand. I make a tuna casserole.
Someone else sits in a soft chair, tears on her face, repeating the name of her beloved over and over and over again.

Like Mary and Joseph, like a grieving man and his wife – some of us will sit still in moments of shock and sadness, and some of us will keep busy. Others of us will grieve in still other ways. One thing we have in common? We are, none of us, doing it “wrong.”

Prayer:

Holy One, we are so very sad today. Some of us can’t move. Some of us can’t stop moving. Bless us all in our grief.

4th Sunday *after* Pentecost

June 20, 2021

Pushing the Boat Out

Mark 4:35-41

Father's Day

What names for God did you learn as a child? Many Christians were raised to call God by the name Father. Today, on this Father's Day, give some thought to that name for God. Is it nurturing for you? Or is it difficult for you to picture a loving Father God?

If calling God "Father" is hard for you, don't worry. The Bible contains many names and images for God, and the United Church of Christ encourages expansive language in naming and praising the Holy. Turning to scripture as a way to expand our images of God is a gift to everyone. Those who call God by the name "Father" are welcomed and encouraged to continue doing so. And those who call God by other names are welcomed and encouraged, too. Worshipping side by side using many names instead of one enriches worship for all of us.

If you regularly use the same name for God in your prayer or worship life, how can you expand and enrich your relationship with God? How might using some new names for God make something new happen for you, too? If you are looking for ideas, consider instead some of these, from the UCC brochure "Expansive Language with Reference to God, Inclusive Language with Reference to God's People."

Midwife Ps 22:9-10

Mother Num 11:12-13, Deut 32:18, Job 38:28-29, Ps 131:2, Isa 42:14, Isa 46:3-4, Isa 49:15, Isa 66:9, Hos 11:3-4, Jn 16:21, Rom 8:22, I Pet 2:2-3

Mother bear Hos 13:8

Shepherd Jn 10:11,14; Ps 23

Woman Lk 15:8-10, Ps 123:2

Baker Mt 13:33, Lk 13:20-21

Eagle Deut 32:11-12, Ex 19:4

Hen Mt 23:37, Ruth 2:12, Ps 57:1, Ps 61:4, Lk 13:34, Ps 17:8

Fire Deut 4:24, Acts 2:3

Wind Acts 2:2, Jn 3:8

Rock Is 17:10, Deut. 32:18

Water Jer 17:13

Light Jn 8:12, Isa 60:2-3

Bread Jn 6:33-35

Vine Jn 15:1

Word Jn 1:1

Wisdom Lk 11:49, I Cor 1:24

I Am Ex 3:14

Potter Jer 18:1-11, Job 10:8-9