



There's a season for everything.

 **PARKWAY**
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
ALL ACCEPTED. NO EXCEPTIONS
September 27, 2020



www.parkwayucc.org

Sunday, September 26, 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.

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Birthdays

9/26 Sue Stolze

9/27 Lilly Bowman

9/28 Kim Weas; Wyatt Yess

9/29 Lisa Duke; Mike Rutherford;
Doug Yakel

9/30 Pam Manning

10/1 Becca Frazier; Lincoln Pickett

10/2 Dan Connors

18th Sunday *after* Pentecost

Sunday, September 26, 2021 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

Meditation

Perhaps this is the moment for which you were created. – Esther 4:14

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 *Spirit of the Living God* — by Daniel Iverson, arr. by Allen Pote

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Welcome Song *We Gather Here, O God*

TERRA BEATA 6.6.8.6 D ("This is My Father's World")

We gather here, O God, and it's a joy to see

the blessings of your gift of love in this community.

Some gather in one place to offer thanks and praise;

some join online — and we all find fresh hope for these new days.

Scripture Psalm 124 (CEB – Common English Bible)

If the Lord hadn't been for us - let Israel now repeat! - if the Lord hadn't been for us, when those people attacked us, then they would have swallowed us up whole with their rage burning against us! Then the waters would have drowned us; the torrent would have come over our necks; then the raging waters would have come over our necks!

Bless the Lord because God didn't hand us over like food for our enemies' teeth. We escaped like a bird from the hunters' trap; the trap was broken so we escaped! Our help is in the name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

*Call to Worship

One:	We invite you to listen to, around, under and through the words we share today.
Many:	We come to receive the blessing of sacred space.
One:	We invite you to hear about God and to experience God.
Many:	We come that we might live further into being Christ-like in our homes and in the world.
One:	We invite you to lay your burdens down.

Many:	We come to experience support, grace and peace beyond our full understanding.
One:	We invite you to feel the gentleness and the strength that is coming to you now.
Many:	We come in order that we might be surprised by gifts of the Holy Spirit.
One:	We invite you to bring your whole self – even the parts you are uncomfortable with or unsure of today.
All:	Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.

***Song** *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise #1-NCH*

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible, hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.**

**Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might,
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**To all, life thou givest, to both great and small.
In all life thou livest, the true life of all.
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.**

**So perfect your glory, so brilliant your light,
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight.
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.**

***Opening Prayer**

Gracious God, we gather this morning in this house of worship which, thanks to your love, is for many a home away from home. We come to add our human voices to the chorus of praise raised by your creation! We come as we are – distracted and weary, hopeful and open – knowing that you accept us and are ever mindful of our cares and joys. Still in us now the many voices that clamor for attention, that we might center ourselves upon you. Speak to us in word and melody and quiet, that we may be renewed in our faith and strengthened for caring for others near and far. 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 are invited to Room 12 (Lower Level) and Youth to Room 15 (Lower Level) following this Children's Time. We will also be on Zoom for those at home. We continue to require masks for all.

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 Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22 (New Revised Standard Version)

So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled."

Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king."

Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?" Esther said, "A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!"

Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, "Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on that." So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon

Call to Prayer *Cares Chorus #2215*

I cast all my cares up-on you, I
lay all of my bur-dens down at your feet, and
an-y-time that I don't know what to do, I will
cast all my cares up-on you.

Pastoral Prayer and 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.]

Song *Perhaps You've Been Chosen (Tune: The Church's One Foundation)*

"Perhaps you have been chosen for such a time as this!"

So Mordecai told Esther to serve as she'd been blessed.

Their people were in danger and needed someone brave –

A queen who knew her calling to risk and act and save.

She stood up for her people and dared approach the king

Although he might have killed her for doing such a thing.

Inviting him to dinner – a feast to satisfy –

She asked of him a favor: "Don't let my people die!"

The king gave what she wanted and let her people live,

And all because Queen Esther used what she had to give.

She faced her fear with courage, she changed the things she could,

She chose to make a difference – to use her life for good.

O God, we look around us and see a world in need.

There's violence and injustice, there's prejudice and greed.

Remind us of our calling to bravely use our gifts.

Perhaps we have been chosen for such a time as this.

Mission Moment *Walk to End Alzheimer's*

Offering Our Gifts to God

Offering Interlude *Upon This Rock* — Words by Sally K. Albrecht,
Music by Jay Althouse

***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

Holy One, you call us to be generous now - not when all the bills are paid, not when we have everything we need, not when we see our way clear. You call us to be generous now, in this present moment, trusting that You are caring for us at the same time. And so we give freely, as we have received freely, we love fully as we have been fully loved. Amen.

***Song of Parting** *Word of God in Human Language* #2246

(Tune: Love Divine, All Loves Excelling)

Word of God in human language
For this time and in our tongue,
Tell anew the ageless story
Ever Ancient, every young.
May our heart receive the message
Of God's faithful, loving care.
May our lives respond in action,
Living deed and living prayer.

All around the world is hungry
For the liberating Word,
Food for spirit as for body,
To be tasted, felt and heard.
It is thus the Word encounters
At God's own appointed hour,
Bringing knowledge and perception
Of true justice, peace, and power.

So God's voice continues speaking
In the words we can't deny,
Sounding out across the ages!
Will we answer or defy?
As the call becomes still clearer,
Witness that the Word shall last,
May we follow with commitment
In the present as the past.

***Benediction**

*God's Light Goes Forth

***Music for Going Forth** *Andante in C Major* — by F. Mendelssohn (1809-1847), arr. Carlo Rossini

Announcements

Share Joy with Flowers!

Sign up for Worship Service Altar Flower donations on the poster in The Gathering Space. If you wish to remember a loved one or honor someone please make a note. The cost is \$30.00 and please place a check on the offering plate. A Sanctuary Team member will purchase and arrange for you. More info, contact Carol Cobb: ccjacob@aol.com

The Parkway Speakers Series Presentations for Fall

Sundays | 11:15am | Heritage Room and ZOOM

September 26

The Wonders of Poetry by Dottie Dwyer. Dottie Dwyer returns to take us on another amazing tour of the wonders of poetry.

October 10 and 17

The Twists and Turns of the Law of Divorce in Missouri by Judge Tom Frawley. Divorce is the death of a dream you thought was going to last. If you have some insights into the law and the process, you may be more helpful and effective in offering care and empathy.

November 14 and 21

Critical Race Theory by David Spener, Professor of Sociology at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas and an adjunct professor in the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas in Austin. He teaches Critical Race Theory, a body of scholarship and an academic movement that seeks to critically examine the intersection of race and US law. (Youth are encouraged to attend too).

December 5

The Fall of County Executive Steve Stenger by Winston Calvert. Winston is a senior member of the current St. Louis County Executive's office. He observed the downfall of Stenger as it unfolded, and will share his views and observations, some of which may not generally be known by the public.

All of these presentations are currently scheduled in the Heritage Room following worship, as well as on Zoom. Some are live, others have or will be prerecorded. Those that are prerecorded will be available for televising in the Heritage Room and on Parkway's YouTube channel. Watch for any changes as our season moves along.

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84691476997?pwd=aEM2ZURyWURLNmkwD0EzV0VHVVlyQT09> **Meeting ID:** 846 9147 6997 | **Passcode:** 181565 | **Dial** (312) 626-6799

Ruth Beckman Murray

September 11, 1936 – June 25, 2020

Please join us as we continue to grieve and give thanks for Ruth.

She was a remarkable person who was so nurturing, kind and committed to the health and wholeness of others. She knew how to love her neighbor! Her career as a nurse and nurse educator was such a fine fit.

We continue to treasure her and find inspiration in the way she lived.

“My greatest interest is people; I love to listen to all kinds of people, to share ideas, and feel comfortable with adults from a variety of cultures. I enjoy the outdoors – flowers, gardening, bird watching, hiking, travel. I enjoy stamp collecting. I ‘dabble’ in genealogy. I enjoy reading, especially spiritual and biographical. I like being useful.” - Ruth

Due to the ongoing challenges with COVID-19, we will not be able to gather in person to celebrate Ruth. We had hoped since her death from Covid in June 2020 that we would soon arrive at a time when conditions were more favorable for a memorial service.... but since that hasn't happened yet, we decided to pre-record her Memorial Service. It will be premiere on YouTube on Saturday, October 2 at 11am CST. A direct link will be posted when the service is uploaded. Our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAfCOpEFqhhAXB5MFpsxoPw>

We give thanks for all of the ways that you and others have loved her. Ruth's relationships grounded her, encouraged her and filled her with joy.

A beloved scripture passage of Ruth's – Philippians 4:6,7

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Welcoming Afghans to St. Louis

The International Institute is grateful for the contributions from communities around St. Louis. They are overwhelmed by this generosity and currently need volunteers to help sort recent gifts from everyone. The Institute asks that future donations of goods not be dropped off at their location until September 9 to allow for sorting, organizing, and assessing future items most needed.

You can help by:

1. Signing up to volunteer for sorting current items. Shift times are listed on a link at www.iistl.org. Click on the Afghan SIVs banner for further information. The volunteer slots can be found at <https://iistl.volunteerlocal.com/volunteer/>
2. Donating: Visa gift cards, gas cards, gift cards for Aldi's, Target, Schnucks, Walmart, Jay's International, and monetary gifts to the International Institute.

3. Continue saving household items as International Institute gears up for current and arriving Afghans. Items can be placed in the church lobby and marked for later delivery to the Institute.

Your support will be greatly appreciated.

Crop Walk 2021

Sunday, October 24 | 4:30 check in | | 5:00pm walk | Eden Seminary: 475 E Lockwood Ave, Webster Groves MO 63119

The 2021 CROP HUNGER WALK will be a hybrid event. For those who feel safe gathering in person to walk together, we shall gather at Eden - check in 4:30PM and Walk at 5:00PM. However, participants may also register for the Walk, and they may choose to walk wherever and whenever they wants or in small groups. For more details and to register, raise funds, and/or donate:

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/event/saintlouismo>

Type in Parkway UCC where you may join the team or make a donation

The CROP CONCERT will follow the CROP Walk at 7:00PM in the Wehrli Chapel at Eden Seminary Covid Precautions will be in place.

Contact Sue Moellering: susieqslp@sbcglobal.net

Walk to End Alzheimer's

Saturday, October 23 | 9:00am | The Enterprise Center

The Walk to End Alzheimer's is scheduled for Sat. Oct. 23, 2021. The Greater Missouri Chapter is moving forward with plans to host the walk in-person downtown outside the Enterprise Center. (Everything is outside.) They will continue to offer options to participate online and in your neighborhood for those who prefer to socially distance. It could be, as last year, and be everywhere: on every sidewalk, track and trail. COVID will again dictate. The Parkway team page:

https://act.alz.org/site/Donation2?df_id=47035&PROXY_ID=667857&PROXY_TYPE=22&FR_ID=14598

You can learn more by going to www.alz.org/help-support/resources or the Alzheimer's Helpline which is accessible 24/7 via 800-272-3900 and staffed by master's level clinicians to assist with crisis situations, decision making, and disease information. You can find virtual dementia caregiver resources online at alz.org/covid19help. Tools and support are also available in Spanish. Want to learn more about the Alzheimer's Association and what they do here in St. Louis? Visit alz.org and/or contact PUC's Faith Outreach Ambassador with the Alzheimer's Association, Joyce Ruiz at joyceruiz7@gmail.com.

Habitat for Humanity Volunteers Wanted

Sat, Nov 20 | 8:00am | 3400 Park Ave

The PUC workday is scheduled. HFH is asking for 4 volunteers from our church. RSVP Tom McKenzie: mckenzie1947@att.net or 314-567-0429.

The work site is the 3400 block of Park Ave, just East of Cardinal Glennon Hospital. Please make any financial contributions to: Habitat for Humanity Saint Louis | 3830 South Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63118

DRAG Bingo!

If you attended last year, you know what a riot this is. We laughed a ton and had a really good time supporting important and sometimes lifesaving work of the Open and Affirming movement.

Deadline for registering is September 28.

Questions? Reach out to PUCer Greg Schmelig (314-308-1868) greg_schmelig@hotmail.com

2ND ANNUAL DRAG QUEEN BINGO

TO BENEFIT THE OPEN & AFFIRMING COALITION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

HOSTED BY GATEWAY O.N.A.

FREE WILL OFFERING ALSO AVAILABLE FOR THE OPEN & AFFIRMING COALITION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST & ALLIANCEQ OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

OCTOBER 2, 2021

6:30-8:30PM CST

\$25.00 Registration Fee

Register by September 28, 2021 at : <http://www.gatewayona.com/bingo-fundraiser-2021.html>

Each registrant will receive 5 Bingo Cards via email. Drag Queen Bingo will be conducted via Zoom. Each person will need a unique email address per registration.

For Addition Information, contact Melissa at mhattman@att.net or call: 314-443-4277

Candy! Candy!

Help us send Halloween treats to our college students! We like to let them know we are thinking about them. There is a container marked Halloween Candy inside the front door of the church!

Also, we are planning an event in place of our Annual Trunk or Treat this year. It will be a community Outside Halloween Adventure. Families will move with social distance and masks on around the church grounds. They will meet superheroes that will tell the children what their powers are and how they help people. We are asking for candy for this event as well. With all the uncertainty for kids again this year, we thought it was important to offer something for them at Halloween.

This event will be held on Sunday, October 24 from 5-6pm.

Thanks!

Questions? Barb Kuhlmann at barbk@parkwayucc.org (314-872-9330)

September is Suicide Awareness/Prevention Month

It's time to raise awareness on this stigmatized, and often taboo, topic. In addition to shifting public perception, use this month to spread hope and vital information to people affected by suicide. Be intentional this month so that individuals, friends and families have access to the resources they need to discuss suicide prevention and to seek help. Do some exploring of these websites and share what you learn with others...

<https://www.nami.org/get-involved/awareness-events/suicide-prevention-awareness-month>

<https://www.stlsuicideprevention.org/>

<https://www.ndbh.com/suicide>

<https://www.mhn-ucc.org/>

PUCC Mental Health Training – *Bridges to Care*

In honor and memory of Tyler Wessel and Gloria Wandless, we have applied and been accepted to participate in some mental health training with other churches in St Louis. The program is called *Bridges to Care and Recovery* hosted by The Behavioral Health Network of Greater St. Louis. The goals of the training are to reduce the stigma of mental illness in faith-based communities by equipping congregations to talk about behavioral health issues and increasing congregation participants' understanding and acceptance of behavioral health through training and education; establish partnerships between area mental health professionals that enable congregations to better access care and treatment; and equip congregations with tools needed to develop wellness ministries and volunteer companions for long-term sustainability.

We are looking for 5-7 PUCCers who would commit to this free training. This training is all virtual and runs from October - May... most months it is from 6-8pm on the third Thursday of the month beginning on October 21.

If you would like to know more about this important opportunity/responsibility, please reach out to kevin@parkwayucc.org

The Behavioral Health Network of Greater St. Louis is a collaborative effort of providers, advocacy organizations, government leaders and community members dedicated to developing an accessible and coordinated system of behavioral healthcare throughout the eastern region of Missouri.

<http://bhnstl.org/bridges-to-care-and-recovery>

Welcoming New Members – Sunday, October 10

Our church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born. Children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives. Individuals move into our community and church life. Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, new opportunities.

It is with joy and gratitude that we will welcome new members into our worship, work and witness on Sunday, October 10 during our 10am In-Person and Facebook Live worship service.

If you are interested, please contact kevin@parkwayucc.org; 314-872-9330.

Prayer List

as of Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Celebrations

Dana Schrenker and Nate Foreman - wedding here this weekend.
All the acts of kindness, justice and equity near and far!

Concerns

Jim and Polly Winkelmann - healing for her spinal stress fracture; healing for his arm and shoulder after a fall - surgery pending? He is at Ascension Living Sherbrooke Village for now – in the Lodge #310... 4005 Ripa Ave, St. Louis, MO 63125.

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

All impacted by Covid-19 - individuals, families, healthcare workers; including PUCCEr Rick Lindner fully vaccinated but breakthrough Covid case in Texas... If anyone needs support or if anyone vaccinated would like to be on the Care Team, please reach out to kevin@parkwayucc.org

Caregivers of all shapes and sizes.

People recovering from natural and human made disasters.

Continuing

Pat & Janet - his cancer diagnosis; radiation/chemo (Skip Larson SIL).

Cindy & Ralf and Andrew Wessel - grieving Tyler.

Skip Larson, Karen Nolte, Janet Prendergast - remembering Ellie.

Mary Maxeiner - healing after knee replacement surgery.

Joan and Larry Brannigan - continuing health concerns for Larry.

Sr. Mary Kay McKenzie - diagnosed with stage 4 cancer (Tom's sis).

Val - healing of fractures in her back (Jim Winkelmann's mom).

Bob - continues to struggle with Parkinson's.

Christopher, Gail & Bill Haack - chronic health challenges.

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

Lori Connors - for strength, stamina through health challenges.

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

Bill Darland - ongoing health issues.

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).

The extended Eggebrecht Family - healing and wholeness.

Home/Care Facility/Rehab Center

Carol Aston - *Sunrise on Clayton*; 7920 Clayton Rd, #122;

Richmond Hts, MO 63117; 314-646-7600. [birthdate: December 12]

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]

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

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]

Ruth Peace - 10379-D Forest Brooke Ln; StL MO 63146; 314-983-0253; meadletter222@gmail.com [birthdate: August 8]

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

Pinky Wilcoxon - 10379-D Forest Brooke Ln; StL MO 63146; 314-983-0253; meadletter222@gmail.com [birthdate: April 7]

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.

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

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 September 26 - St. Louis Association UCC;

<https://www.missourimidsouth.org/st-louis-association>

Week ending October 3 - St Martin's UCC, Dittmer;

<https://www.stmartinsuccdittmer.com/>

Loving our Neighbors at Thanksgiving

We look forward to sharing Thanksgiving with loved ones near and far.

We will provide 200 1-pound bags/boxes of sugar for **Isaiah 58** families.

Please consider donating one or two or more bags/boxes through 7 November.

Place your sugar in the marked box in the church entryway.

Circle of Concern is also gearing up for their big Thanksgiving Basket Program for 700 families. Just like last year, we are committing to supplying 150 boxes of food items that will go alongside a turkey, frozen pie, fresh fruit, vegetables and a gift card from Aldi's. It would be helpful if your donation contained all eight items for the box, but all donations are appreciated.

Items in each box: canned pumpkin, cranberry sauce, canned fruit, chicken broth, boxed stuffing mix, jar of turkey or chicken gravy, cornbread muffin mix, boxed mashed potatoes.

Many thanks for your kindness and generosity!

18th Sunday *after* Pentecost

Sunday, September 26, 2021

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22

Courage for Community

American Indian Ministry Sunday/United Samoan Ministries Stewardship Sunday

Esther's story is hidden history for most modern United Church of Christ congregations. Readings from the Old Testament book that bears her name only appear once in the three-year cycle of the lectionary, which is the calendar of Bible readings used by many congregations to guide worship. And there are several readings to choose from each Sunday, so unless a congregation is very thoughtful and deliberate in choosing to share her story, you might not know anything about her.

This is not so for our Jewish brothers and sisters in faith. Each year in the festival of Purim, her story is celebrated with joy and gratitude as one of the great heroes in the centuries-long battle against anti-Semitism.

Hidden histories are those stories from the past that have either been forgotten or deliberately suppressed as a way to center only one telling of history. On this day in the UCC, as we bring Esther out of hiding, we celebrate the voices of two significant groups whose stories have too often also been hidden.

American Indian Ministry Sunday is an opportunity to hear the voices of our Native American siblings. According to caimucc.org, American Indian congregations "are an integral part of the life of the United Church of Christ. We maintain our Indian traditions by employing our Native values and cultures to witness in our communities through authentic and postcolonial Indian expressions of the Christian faith."

United Samoan Ministries Stewardship Sunday is a chance to recognize the UCC's Samoan congregations. You can find their web presence on Facebook at [/unitedsamoanministriesucc/](https://www.facebook.com/unitedsamoanministriesucc/), where they proclaim: *We are the body of Christ, gathered and scattered in various states and cultural environments, proclaiming our faith in our Risen Lord Jesus Christ! The United Samoan Ministries of the UCC is established to provide a setting for members of Samoan congregations to gather for fellowship, spiritual nurturing, mutual support, and communications, and strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ.*

Learn about Esther, and then join these two organizations in keeping language alive and telling stories that reveal hidden histories.