

A person in silhouette is walking across a wet, reflective surface, likely a pier or waterfront promenade. The background features a city skyline with several buildings, some of which are brightly lit, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds, and the overall color palette is dominated by warm, golden-yellow and orange tones. The person's reflection is clearly visible in the wet pavement.

***Another* Road**



www.parkwayucc.org
Sunday, January 2, 2022

Contents

- 3 Birthdays & Anniversaries
- 4 10:00am Worship
- 10 Announcements
- 14 Prayer List

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. If you are with us virtually, 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 all our media. Bulletin and eNews deadline is noon Monday.

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Birthdays

1/2	HOGARTY, Rosanna	1/6	TILLY, Ethan
1/3	BURKHARDT, Connie	1/7	MCDUGALL, Marilyn
1/3	RISTAU, Nicole	1/8	FRIEDMANN, Dawn
1/4	SIMONSON, Ryan	1/8	HENKE, Pema
1/6	HILGEMAN, Bill		

2nd Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, January 2, 2022 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

Meditation

How could you have a soccer team if all were goalkeepers? How would it be an orchestra if all were French horns? ~Desmond Tutu

Welcome and 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 *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

**Sages, leave your contemplations, Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations, Ye have seen his natal star:
Come and worship, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

Scripture Matthew 2:1-12 (MSG – The Message)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem village, Judah territory - this was during Herod's kingship - a band of scholars arrived in Jerusalem from the East.

They asked around, "Where can we find and pay homage to the newborn King of the Jews? We observed a star in the eastern sky that signaled his birth. We're on pilgrimage to worship him."

When word of their inquiry got to Herod, he was terrified - and not Herod alone, but most of Jerusalem as well.

Herod lost no time. He gathered all the high priests and religion scholars in the city together and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

They told him, "Bethlehem, Judah territory. The prophet Micah wrote it plainly:

*It's you, Bethlehem, in Judah's land, no longer bringing up the rear.
From you will come the leader who will shepherd-rule my people, my Israel.*

Herod then arranged a secret meeting with the scholars from the East. Pretending to be as devout as they were, he got them to tell him exactly when the birth-announcement star appeared. Then he told them the prophecy about Bethlehem, and said, "Go find this child. Leave no stone unturned. As soon as you find him, send word and I'll join you at once in your worship."

Instructed by the king, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time!

They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they kneeled and worshiped him. Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh.

In a dream, they were warned not to report back to Herod. So they worked out another route, left the territory without being seen, and returned to their own country.

***Call to Worship** Isaiah 60:1-6

One:	Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and glory will appear over you.
Many:	Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
One:	Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come.
Many:	They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.
All:	Let us worship our God together – Creator, Christ and Spirit.

***Song** #66—*We Three Kings*

**We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts, we travel afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star**

Refrain: **O, Star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;**

Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

**Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never; over us all to reign.**

**Frankincense to offer have I: Incense owns a deity nigh,
Prayer and praising we are raising, worshiping God most high.**

**Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
Breathes a kife of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone cold tomb.**

**Glorious now, behold Him arise, King and God, and Sacrifice
Alleluia, Alleluia sounds through the earth and skies!**

***Opening Prayer** Thom Schuman

We have heard of your grace, Shaper of stars; from those set free from injustice; from our children who whisper of your joy; from greeters of dawn's fresh start; from late risers who listen to the stories of the needy. We have heard of your Light, Bright Star of the morning: which can illumine the shadows of our lives; which can show the path to God's heart; which can point the way to where we become servants of the gospel. We have heard of your promised peace, Wisdom's Radiance: that peace which can end war, as well as heal our hearts; that peace which can conquer our fears, and flood us with faith; that peace which can enter our lives and overwhelm us with hope. We have heard of you, and so we come here to experience you now. Amen.

***Response**

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Shepherds shy this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Children's Time Children are invited to Room 12 (Lower Level) and Youth to Room 15 (Lower Level) following this Children's Time. We continue to require masks for all.

Blessing the Children *Jesus Loves the Little Children*

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

Invitation to Generosity

Offering Interlude

***Response** #593—*Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow* (Avery & Marsh)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise God, the Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication** Thom Schuman

We do not have gold, frankincense or myrrh to offer, but we do give our tangible gifts in hopes that the lives of the poor might be touched, that refugees might be honored, and that those searching might find a community with us. In the name of the Christ Child still being found today, we pray. Amen.

Scripture Matthew 2:1-23 (NRSV – New Revised Standard Version)

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’” Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

Song #56—*The First Nowell*

The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay a-keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

They look-ed up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light so it continued both day & night.

And by the light of that same star,
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the northwest;
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest, and there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.

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.

Call to Prayer #525—*Here I Am, Lord*

I, who made the stars of night; I will make their darkness bright
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me
I will hold your people in my heart

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.]

***Breaking Bread & Pouring Wine/Juice**

***Prayer of Thanksgiving** Thom Schuman

Holy One of Great Light, you send down your Spirit of hope upon those gathered around this Table, and on the gifts of the bread and the cup, that they might make us your faithful and loving children. You have fed us with the bread of hope, so when we leave,

we will travel another road—to defend the weak, to speak for the voiceless, to assist those cast aside. Refresh us with the sweet nectar of grace, so we, overwhelmed with joy, will go forth to enter the houses of the strangers in our time; to enter the despair of the lonely and forgotten; to enter the hearts of everyone we meet.

And when eternity's time begins and we are gathered around your Table, with friends and family we loved, with those we ignored and mistreated, with all our sisters and brothers of grace, we will lift our songs of glad joy to you, God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

***Song of Parting** *This Little Light of Mine*

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

Hide it under a bushel? No! I'm gonna let it shine...
Don't let anyone blow it out! I'm gonna let it shine...

***Benediction**

***God's Light Goes Forth**

***Music for Going Forth**

The Three Kings Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

Three Kings came riding from far away, Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large and clear, that all the other stars of the sky
Became a white mist in the atmosphere,

And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,
Three caskets of gold with golden keys;
Their robes were of crimson silk with rows
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,
Through the dusk of the night, over hill and dell,
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,
With the people they met at some wayside well.
"Of the child that is born," said Baltasar,
"Good people, I pray you, tell us the news;

For we in the East have seen his star,
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,
To find and worship the King of the Jews.”

And the people answered, “You ask in vain;
We know of no King but Herod the Great!”
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,
As they spurred their horses across the plain,
Like riders in haste, who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,
Sent for the Wise Men and questioned them;
And said, “Go down unto Bethlehem, And bring me tidings of this new king.”

So they rode away; and the star stood still,
The only one in the grey of morn;
Yes, it stopped—it stood still of its own free will,
Right over Bethlehem on the hill,
The city of David, where Christ was born.

And the Three Kings rode through the gate and the guard,
Through the silent street, till their horses turned
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard;
But the windows were closed, and the doors were barred,

And only a light in the stable burned.
And cradled there in the scented hay,
In the air made sweet by the breath of kine,
The little child in the manger lay,
The child, that would be king one day of a kingdom not human, but divine.

His mother Mary of Nazareth sat watching beside his place of rest,
Watching the even flow of his breath,
For the joy of life and the terror of death
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet:
The gold was their tribute to a King,
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete,
The myrrh for the body’s burying.

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,
And sat as still as a statue of stone,
Her heart was troubled yet comforted,
Remembering what the Angel had said
Of an endless reign and of David’s throne.

Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;
But they went not back to Herod the Great,
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,
And returned to their homes by another way.

Announcements

Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue New Book Begins Jan 4

1st & 3rd Tuesdays | 1:45 Fellowship | 2:00pm book discussion | via ZOOM
Join TAD Tuesday afternoon, January 4th, from 2 – 3, as we begin discussing a new book, *The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times*, by Jane Goodall, Douglas Abrams, and Gail Hudson. *The Book of Hope* touches on vital questions, including: How do we stay hopeful when everything seems hopeless? How do we cultivate hope in our children? What is the relationship between hope and action? Everyone is welcome.

Contact Jackie Eiffert: jeiffert2@gmail.com

Video:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83670617428?pwd=bUXpZEdDMlU4ay9oNndTWw4yZUYwUT09>

Phone: 312 626 6799 | **Meeting ID:** 836 7061 7428 | **Passcode:** 480007

NEXT SUNDAY: *What to do to Promote a Just Solution in Israel and Palestine* by Paul Roesler

Select Sundays | 11:15am | Heritage Room and Zoom

Paul is a member of Parkway UCC and a Professor of Political Science at St. Charles Community College. He will briefly discuss the history of the seemingly endless and unsolvable Israel/Palestine conflict. He'll also discuss the UCC's recent positions regarding the conflict to address the question of how should Christians respond to Israel's treatment of Palestinians. We'll end by having a conversation on what response would be helpful to encourage a just solution. Be there for this important, provocative, and timely presentation.

Paul will be with us in person in the Heritage Room following worship. Or you can catch the presentation on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84691476997?pwd=aEM2ZURYWURLNmkwD0EzV0VhV1lyQT09>

Meeting ID: 846 9147 6997 | **Passcode:** 181565 | **Dial** (312) 626-6799

More info? Contact Richard Scherrer: 90fivetpr@gmail.com | (314) 591-6803

Intertwine Interfaith Welcome Circle (IIWC)

WE NEED YOUR HELP - to welcome an Afghan family as new Americans!

Nearly 40,000 Afghans are currently being housed on American Army bases. The Army can only house these families until mid-February. Consequently, the US Department of State issued a call to action to expand the United States' capacity to welcome these families and help them begin their new lives as Americans.

Congregation Shaare Emeth (CSE), Parkway United Church of Christ (PUCC) and Turkish American Society of Missouri (TASOM) have committed to answer this call.

Intertwine Interfaith is launching an emergency initiative through the Welcome Circle program with the *Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society* (HIAS) which was founded in 1881 and has settled more than 4.5 million refugees over the years. Our Welcome Circle has committed to supporting the resettlement of an Afghani family in St Louis. Together, Intertwine Interfaith Welcome Circle (IIWC) must raise a total of \$27,750 which will cover essential needs such as housing, clothing, food, utilities, etc. for the first six months in St. Louis.

The IIWC Core Team is made up of reps from each faith community. The Core Team will have direct contact with the Afghani family and will help enroll kids in school and help the parents learn the fundamentals of food shopping, transportation, language skills, banking in St Louis and more. We will also need the participation of everyone in our communities for indirect support, furniture donations, apartment set-up, resource identification, and other activities.

Contributions are needed no later than January 17, 2022 –

MLK Jr. Day. All contributions are tax deductible and 100% of your donation will go toward the needs of the family. Please make your contribution online via our GoFundMe account

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/welcome-an-afghan-family-arriving-in-st-louis> or by check made payable to *We Believe Inc* at 16535 Baxter Forest Ridge Drive; Chesterfield, MO 63005.

We are grateful to *We Believe Inc*, a 501(c) 3 non-profit corporation, for their help collecting the funding for IIWC. *We Believe* was created by Stan Shanker (CSE), one of our IIWC founders, a few years ago in an effort to spread kindness, hope, and positivity while raising money to support social justice issues. Two other IIWC Founders, Lisa Mason (PUCC) and Engin Blackstone (TASOM), serve on the *We Believe* Board.

Thank you for considering being a part of this important work.

Your Interfaith Intertwine Team: Kevin Cameron, Lisa Mason, Paige Penico, Ali Durhan, Engin Blackstone, Stan Shanker and Debbie Bram

If God is Love, Don't Be a Jerk

Join us this winter as we invite ALL PUCCers to engage with our friend John Pavlovitz and others who find him to be challenging and inspiring.

Secure a copy of his newest book, *If God is Love*, through your favorite book distributor or pick one up from church for \$15 (checks to PUCC with JPav Book in the memo).

We will give you access to 6 pre-recorded videos from John, one each week, beginning the week of January 9. You can watch it whenever you can.

We will come together in-person at church for Live Zooms with John and others for six Wednesdays at 7:00pm CT beginning on January 19 and ending on February 23. (Links and recordings will be available if needed.)

We'll come together again for a special live closing message on Saturday, February 26, 8:00pm CT in the Heritage Room—or you can do it from home.

Questions? Please contact kevin@parkwayucc.org; 314-872-9330

More about the book....

Imagine for a moment what the world might look like if we as people of faith, morality, and conscience actually aspired to this mantra.

What if we worked to create a world that was more loving and equitable than when we arrived?

What if we invited one another to share in wide-open, fearless, spiritual communities truly marked by compassion and interdependence?

What if we daily challenged ourselves to live a faith that simply made us better humans?

John Pavlovitz explores how we can embody this kinder kind of spirituality where we humbly examine our belief system to understand how it might compel us to act in less-than-loving ways toward others.

This simple phrase, "Thou Shalt Not Be Horrible," could help us practice what we preach by creating a world where:

- spiritual community provides a sense of belonging where all people are received as we are;
- the most important question we ask of a religious belief is not Is it true? but rather, is it helpful?
- it is morally impossible to pledge complete allegiance to both Jesus and America simultaneously;
- the way we treat others is the most tangible and meaningful expression of our belief system.

In *If God Is Love, Don't Be a Jerk*, John Pavlovitz examines the bedrock ideas of our religion: the existence of hell, the utility of prayer, the way we treat LGBTQ people, the value of anger, and other doctrines to help all of us take a good, honest look at how the beliefs we hold can shape our relationships with God and our fellow humans—and to make sure that love has the last, loudest word.

Prayer List

as of Wednesday, December 29, 2021

Celebrations

Lilly Dwyer and parents Lea and Jeff - at her Baptism last Sunday!

Brad Lyons (Zoe, Summer, Blake) and Courtney Richards

celebrating her move to St. Louis last week.

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

Concerns

Greiwe Family – as they grieve and give thanks for mom/grandma Betty.

Conrad Damsgaard - doing well in the hospital; was about to be discharged to rehab but tested positive for Covid - now on Covid floor.

Marv Herpel - recently returned to Brookdale after hospitalization & rehab.

Steve and Andrea Barnes - preparing for surgery on his elbows and wrists due to nerve damage from sarcoidosis and as his mother undergoes treatment for cancer and had a toe amputated on December 23

Grieving families into the new year - including Albers, Larson, Nolte, Nourse, Peek, Smith, Sperry, Stappenbeck, Wandless, Wessel.

Scott Schmidt - paralysis after serious fall while hiking; some progress.

Lizzie - awaiting liver transplant (niece of Barb Kuhlmann).

Mike Guthrie and Mary Guthrie - as Mike is ill (Stifel).

People amidst grief & cleanup from deadly storms.

All impacted by Covid-19 - individuals, families, healthcare workers; If anyone needs help getting vax/booster or if anyone vaccinated would like to be on the Care Team, please reach out to kevin@parkwayucc.org

Continuing

Sally Boughman, Lana Biondo, George Lestina, Jim and Polly Winkelmann - healing and strengthening at home.

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

Pat & Janet - he is post-radiation/chemo (Skip Larson's son-in-law)

Joan and Larry Brannigan - continuing health concerns for Larry.

Christopher, Gail & Bill Haack - chronic health challenges... Bill has begun the lengthy prep process for extensive back surgery in early summer - approximate recovery time will be one year.

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.

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

Gary - risky behaviors; seeking balance and stability.

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]

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]

John Nourse *The Village at Cape Albeon*; 3300 Lake Bend Dr, #103; Valley Park, MO 63088 [birthdate: October 26]

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]

Dick Witte - Meramec Bluffs Assisted Living; 40 Meramec Trails Dr; Apt #104; Ballwin, MO 63021; 636-368-7324 [birthdate: March 25]

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.

Caregivers of all shapes and sizes.

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.

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... Peace and Justice near and far.

St Louis Association UCC Covenant Partner of Week

Bethany-Peace UCC, St Louis; see Facebook page

January 2, 2022

John 1:(1-9), 10-18

Another Road

Many church stewardship teams breathe a collective sigh of relief at this time of year. If your stewardship season arrives with autumn and winds up around Advent, the new year is often a time to take a break. But the thing is, God's grace is evident through faithful giving all year long. So, it might be time to imagine a new rhythm of stewardship that weaves stewardship into every season of the church year.

Here are suggested stewardship activities for every month of the year. Which of them are you already doing? Which of them seem like they might be helpful? What would you add to this calendar?

January - Send a message from the Pastor with help in laying the biblical foundation of how church giving is different from your members' other giving opportunities.

February - Invite each of the ministries of the church to communicate how their work is a reflection of the greater mission of the church.

March - If you send a quarterly giving statement, consider adding a brief communication about how the gifts are used to further the church's mission. Include pictures!

April - Send a message from an elder member, reflecting on why they give to the church, and how their giving has changed over their lifetime.

May - Encourage church members to write wills and make estate plans that reflect their faith commitments.

June - Assemble a group to lead a fall stewardship campaign and spend the first meeting inviting sharing about why each person gives to the church.

July - Share a message from a member of the wider church staff and host a conversation on how that message relates to your local congregation's work.

August - Take a retreat day as a community to pray about how each person's gifts and graces might be utilized to grow your church in both numbers and in spirit.

September - Create and share a chart that shows the average giving to the congregation. Ask members to prayerfully consider where they are on the chart and where they want to be.

October - Send a message from a younger church member about how their giving relates to their faith.

November - During your church Thanksgiving celebrations, find a personal way to thank those who give to the church.

December - Ask how the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy, and love encourage church members to be generous, extravagant givers.

