



JESUS DOES.
How about you?



Sunday, April 3, 2022

PARKWAY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



www.parkwayucc.org
Sunday, April 3, 2022

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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. 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.

Today's flowers are given by Jackie Eiffert.

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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Anniversaries

4/4 MOHL, Mike & Peggy (47)

Birthdays

4/4 KRPAN, Jennifer

4/7 DOTY, Ian

4/4 SCHRENKER, Rick

4/7 RUIZ, Joyce

4/6 SIMONSON, Florence

4/7 WILCOXEN, Pinky

4/6 WATKINS, Sera

4/9 WAITE, Phil

5th Sunday in Lent

Sunday, April 3, 2022 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

Meditation

May the touch of your skin register the beauty of the otherness that surrounds you. And when you partake of food and drink, may your taste quicken to the gift and sweetness that flows from the earth. ~John O'Donohue

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 *Gather Us In* #2236, v2-3



1. Here in this place new light is stream-ing,
2. We are the young — our lives are a mys - t'ry,
3. Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter,
4. Not in the dark of build - ings con - fin - ing,



now is the dark - ness van - ished a - way,
we are the old — who yearn for your face,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
not in some heav - en, light - years a - way, but



see in this space our fears and our dream - ings,
we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,
here you shall call your sons and your daugh - ters,
here in this place the new light is shin - ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day. _____
called to be light to the whole hu-man race. _____
call us a - new to be salt for the earth. _____
now is the King-dom, now is the day. _____



Gath-er us in — the lost and for - sak - en, gath-er us in — the
 Gath-er us in — the rich and the haugh-ty, gath-er us in — the
 Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion, give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
 proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so low - ly,
 bread that is you; nour - ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
 make us your own; gath - er us in — all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name. _____
 give us the cour-age to en - ter the song. _____
 lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true. _____
 fire of love in our flesh and our bone. _____

Scripture Mark 9:35-37 (NRSV – New Revised Standard Version)

Jesus sat down, called the twelve disciples, and said to them, ‘Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.’
 Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ‘Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.’

***Call to Worship** *Waiting for the Touch of God*—Ruth Sandberg

- One: I’ve got a life meant for living.
- Many: I’ve got hands meant for serving.**
- One: I’ve got a mind that needs direction.
- Many: I’ve got a heart meant for loving.**
- One: I’ve got feet meant for dancing.
- Many: I’ve got wounds that need healing.**
- One: We come waiting for the touch of God.
- Many: We come to receive blessings.**
- One: We come to learn afresh how to be a blessing to others.

All: Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.

***Song** For One Great Peace #2185



1. This thread I weave, this step I dance, this
2. this pot I shape, this fire I light, this
3. this check I write, this march I join, this



stone I carve, this ball I bounce, this nail I drive, this
fence I leap, this bone I knit, this seed I nurse, this
faith I state, this truth I sign, this is small part, in



pearl I string, this flag I wave, this note I sing,
rift I mend, this child I raise, this earth I tend,
one small place, of one heart's beat for one great Peace.

***Opening Prayer**

Holy One, as we make this Lenten journey, we see what Jesus does—in order that we might do similar things. We can. We sense his power and we can exercise our own agency and make choices. We feel his empathy and we can bring more love into the world. We see him spend time apart from everything else and we can take time to step away and be still. We listen to his stories and can weave our stories together with people near and far. We watch him touch people and we can release our reassurance to others. We hear him speak up and we can be bold for ourselves and others. We sense his struggles and we can find our own courage and stamina. We receive his peace and we can become calm amid storms of every kind. Amen.

***Response** *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me* #363, v1

I want Jesus to walk with me (walk with me)

I want Jesus to be in me.

All alone this Lenten journey.

Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me. (with me)

Children's Time Children are invited to Room 12 (Lower Level) and Youth to Room 15 (Lower Level) following this Children's Time. Masks are recommended.

Blessing the Children *Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands*



Je - sus' hands were kind hands, do - ing good to all. Heal - ing pain and
Take my hands, Lord Je - sus, let them work for you. Make them strong and

sick - ness, bless - ing child - ren small. Wash - ing tir - ed feet and
gen - tle, kind in all I do. Let me watch you, Je - sus,

sav - ing those who fall. Je - sus' hands were kind hands, do - ing good to all.
till I'm gen - tle too. Till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you.

Mission Moment 2nd Mile Lent/Easter—Florence Simonson
Heifer Project | **Lydia's House** | Unleashing Potential | Eden Seminary

Offering Our Gifts to God

*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

Holy One, we are eager to be useful—helping along your vision of a just and caring world. Heighten our senses that we can be more aware of your presence—and the ways you are guiding us to be more loving to one another. Shape us into your grace. Amen.

Scripture Mark 5:25-34 (NRSV – New Revised Standard Version)

Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, 'If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.' Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, 'Who touched my clothes?' And his disciples said to him, 'You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, "Who touched me?"' He looked all round to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.'

Response *He Touched Me*



1 Shack - led by a heav - y bur - den, 'Neath a load of
2 *Since I met this bless - ed Sav - ior,* *Since He cleansed and*



1 guilt and shame — Then the hand of Je - sus touched me,
2 *made me whole,* *I will nev - er cease to praise Him —*



1 And now I am no long - er the same. He touched me, O He
2 *I'll shout it while e - ter - ni - ty rolls.*



touched me, And O the joy that floods my soul; Some-thing



hap-pened, and now I know, He touched me and made me whole.

Scripture John 9:1-11 (NRSV – New Revised Standard Version)

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' Some were saying, 'It is he.' Others were saying, 'No, but it is someone like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.' But they kept asking him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?' He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." Then I went and washed and received my sight.'

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon

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

Communion Song *Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love* #367

Je - su, Je - su, fill us with Your love, Show *Fine*
us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from You.

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

D.C.
feet, Mas - ter who acts as a slave to them.
race, Neigh-bors are near and far a - way.
love. All are neigh-bors to us and You.
slaves, This is the way we should live with You.
feet, This is the way we should live with You.

Pastoral Prayer & Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer sung to the tune by Nate Stout

Our [Creator/Mother/Father/Holy One] **who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

[A variety of names for God are welcome here – including in the Lord's Prayer.]

*Breaking Bread & Pouring Wine/Juice

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

We are grateful, Generous God, for your invitation to this simple sacred meal. You always set a place for us. May the nurture of Christ's presence, the power of the Holy Spirit and the encouragement of this community move us forward - to be your hands, heart and hope today and tomorrow. Amen.

***Song of Parting** *Amazing Grace #280*

**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; Was blind, but now I see**

**Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.**

**When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first begun.**

***Benediction**

***God's Light Goes Forth**

***Music for Going Forth**

Announcements

Holy Week April 10-17

Worship with us during Holy Week – *in person and Facebook Live*

Palm Sunday | April 10 | 10:00am

Maundy Thursday | April 14 | 7:00pm in the Sanctuary

Good Friday | April 15 | Prayer Service at noon in the Historic Sanctuary

Good Friday | 7:00pm in the Sanctuary

Easter Vigil | 8:00pm Friday through Easter morning

Easter Sunrise | 6:15am | Elm Lawn Cemetery behind Historic Sanctuary

Easter Morning Worship | April 17 at 10:00am

Easter Flowers

Please consider purchasing a lovely hanging basket of Boston Fern to decorate the sanctuary this Easter. A sign-up sheet is in the gathering space where you may place your order and indicate if you would like to dedicate the flowers to someone. The ferns may be taken home after the Easter service. Please make your check payable to PUC, noting on the check "for Easter flowers," and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church. Thank you for your generous support. (\$20.00 per basket of ferns) ~The Sanctuary Committee

Easter Egg Hunt for PUC Children

Sunday, April 17 | following Worship Service

Parkway's children always looked forward to the annual Easter Egg Hunt following the Worship Service. Although we have not been together to celebrate the past two years, this year WE CAN!! Donations of individually wrapped candy will be gratefully accepted in the front door lobby. We will collect the donations until Palm Sunday. Thanks for supporting a beloved tradition. Contact Barb Kuhmann: 314-872-9330 | barbk@parkwayucc.org

TAD—Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue April 6

1st & 3rd Tuesdays | 1:45 Fellowship | 2:00pm book discussion | via ZOOM
Please join TAD as we begin discussing *Invisible Child: Poverty, Survival, and Hope in an American City*. *Invisible Child* is based on nearly a decade of reporting on a family and the power of resilience, the importance of family, and the cost of inequality. The book illuminates some of the most critical issues in contemporary America through the life of one remarkable girl in New York City, Dasani, one of eight children living in a homeless shelter with her parents in Brooklyn. We will discuss this book over four meetings.

Video: us02web.zoom.us/j/83670617428?pwd=bUxPZEEdDMlU4ay9oNndTWw4yZUYwUT09
Phone: 312 626 6799 | **Meeting ID:** 836 7061 7428 | **Passcode:** 480007

Speaker Series April 10

In Search of Birds, my Adventures as a Long-time Birder by Claudia Spener
Select Sundays | 11:15am | Heritage Room & Zoom

A birder is a person who person who observes or identifies wild birds in their habitats. The fast-growing recreational activity of birding is relatively inexpensive and can be done by anyone. It can provide enlightenment, peace, meaning, and the incalculable wealth of time spent quietly in the beauty of nature. Ms. Spener, a serious birder, has many fascinating stories to tell of her worldwide search for birds and how she has put together what is called her “life list” of birds she has seen and identified.

Zoom: us02web.zoom.us/j/84691476997?pwd=aEM2ZURyWURLNmKwd0EzV0VHV1lyQT09
Meeting ID: 8469147 6997 | **Passcode:** 181565 | **Dial** (312) 626-6799

IIRC welcomes family from Afghanistan



The Intertwine Interfaith Welcome Circle has been helping the Afghan family to acclimate to living in the US. Read more about this family of six and how you can continue to support them:
<https://parkwayucc.org/about/intertwine-interfaith/>

Go AWOL with us—Adventurous Women Out Late

Please consider helping us build community and enjoy one another’s company!

Questions? Carmen Bumgarner (cfbum@charter.net; 314-330-0813)

Friday, April 22 | 6:00pm | Dinner at Walnut Grill – Ellisville

1386 Clarkson Clayton Center, Ellisville, MO 63011

We may eat outside - depending on weather and group consensus.

<https://eatwalnut.com/location/ellisville-mo/>

(Please RSVP by April 17)

Saturday, May 21 | 1:00pm

Chinese Cultural Days at the Missouri Botanical Garden

Meet us there at the Garden at 1pm or carpool from church at 12:30pm

Admission: \$16 Non-member adults

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/things-to-do/events/event-details/sreventid/1565.aspx>

(Please RSVP by April 24)

Saturday, June 25 | Movie Night at local theater—TBA

We will meet there at theater or at church at 6:30pm to carpool.

Ice cream and chat about the film afterwards!

(Please rsvp by midnight Thursday)

Wednesday, August 3 | *The Color Purple* at the MUNY (largest outdoor musical theatre in North America)

Based on Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel and Steven Spielberg's landmark film, *The Color Purple* makes its Mundy debut! Featuring a Grammy Award-winning score infused with jazz, ragtime, gospel and African blues, this moving tale is a testament to the healing power of love, faith, resilience and sisterhood. Winner of the 2016 Tony Award for "Best Revival of a Musical," this epic staging promises a joyous evening of courage, hope and healing.

Ticket prices and details coming soon.

(Please rsvp by April 24)

Carmen Bumgarner cfbum@charter.net

Video System Update

Thank you for your incredible response to our call for contributions to complete payment for our new audio-visual system in the sanctuary. In the two weeks following our March 9 email, more than \$10,000 has been received in contributions for this project. The \$2,500 challenge was met (with matching contributions of \$7,500) within a relatively short time after it was announced.

Many different people have contributed, including members and friends outside of St. Louis, and some in St. Louis who have only been able to attend worship because of the av system.

The contributions to date ensure that we have funds to make the final payment on the new sanctuary av system, an approximately \$30,000 non-budgeted project. We will also be able to repay the Council Discretionary Fund (accessible church reserves) for the portion of the initial payment on this project that came from that fund.

All additional money collected in this appeal will be applied to our next av project - portable av equipment that can be used for worship services conducted outside the main sanctuary, such as outdoors or in the Historic Sanctuary. We are also considering an improved av set-up for the Heritage Room, -- for adult education and other uses.

Your Church Council thanks all members and friends for their great generosity. We also continue to thank Kent Tallyn, John Ruiz and the members of the AV Team for assembling, installing, and operating a system that so many people have found beneficial and worthy of their contributions.

2nd Mile Lent & Easter 2022

Go the 2nd Mile with us!

We are pleased to announce that Parkway will again support four worthy organizations with its Second Mile Giving for Lent and Easter. We believe this blend of support will help Parkway create a local, national and international impact with its gifts. Please remember that Second Mile Giving is over and beyond the Operational Budget and donations will be divided evenly among the organizations listed below. Please be generous as these organizations need on our gifts in order to be more faithful and effective.

Please be sure to clearly mark your 2nd Mile gifts throughout the season of Lent.

Lydia's House | lydiashouse.org

Lydia's House works in faith to end domestic violence in St Louis by being a place of healing and a voice of hope for abused women and their children. The agency provides safe, confidentially-located furnished apartments for up to two years, assists women in creating and implementing goal plans that will help them live independently, and increases community awareness of domestic violence.

UP—Unleashing Potential | neighborhoodhouses.org

For more than 100 years, UP (formerly **Neighborhood Houses**) has loved children in St Louis. Currently, there are three main facets to their mission:

Early Childhood Education—Caroline Mission is a licensed and accredited Early Childhood facility operated by Neighborhood Houses. Our Mission is to provide quality affordable childcare for children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age. Caroline Mission is a “home away from home.”

Girls' Night Out: Neighborhood Houses and Parents as Teachers collaborated together in the design and execution of a program dedicated to supporting and assisting young mothers, ages 13-22.

After School Programs: Neighborhood Houses is the #1 provider of after school programming with the St Louis Public Schools ... fun & creative activities, homework assistance, character education, cultural awareness, health & fitness focus, arts & crafts, supervised recreation, and much more!

Heifer International | heifer.org

Heifer International does so much more than put food in the mouths of hungry people. Heifer helps people to feed themselves. The goal of every Heifer project is sustainability—project partners achieving self-reliance. They become links in a network of hope, dignity and self-reliance that helps hundreds of others care for themselves.

Eden Seminary | eden.edu

Eden Theological Seminary is a graduate school preparing women and men for ordained Christian ministry. It is committed to the study of theology in the context of the ecumenical Christian community and the contemporary interfaith world. One of the six seminaries of the United Church of Christ, Eden is a community that seeks God's justice and peace in the world. Eden is welcoming, inclusive and ecumenically diverse.

Eden was established in 1850 at Marthasville, Missouri. Its first graduating class included six Evangelicals as well as a Methodist and a Mennonite. Eden admitted its first African American student in 1933. In 1965, the late Joseph Cardinal Ritter of the Saint Louis Archdiocese became the first Roman Catholic Cardinal to address a graduating class in a Protestant seminary. Today, students from many different denominations are engaged in theological education here. Eden remains committed to educating faithful and effective leaders for church and society. The seminary counts among its distinguished graduates Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr and Walter Brueggemann.

Prayer List

as of Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Celebrations

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

Women's History Month.

Transgender Day of Visibility - this Thursday, March 31

<https://www.glsen.org/activity/transgender-day-visibility?fbclid=IwAR1iTwUlbiUrqllPyHnqaTAmCfdncWPEogARi9kV0-7HFMpaOLKLQ42dO18>

Lenten Journey.

Lucia McKenzie and John Bieg - engaged to be married.

The Shelton Family - as Killian prepares to welcome a sister.

Concerns

Family/friends of Conrad Damsgaard – grieving/giving thanks...

Visitation 2pm; Memorial Svc 3pm and a meal - Sunday, April 24 - PUCC

Millicent Guerri - spent the week at St Luke's Hospital - now home.

Kathleen Tarr - foot surgery 3/25; crutches 10 days; boot 6 weeks.

Joan Biest - port implanted today; chemo will start this Thursday.

Gladys Sims family - as they prep for Russ' Memorial Service on 04/16

Russ Sims Memorial Service is at noon on Saturday, April 16 at

Old Barn Inn in St. Albans. All are invited to attend.

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

The war in Ukraine.

Continuing

Ellie Svenson - healing in STL after a mild stroke and ankle surgery.

Sally Boughman - continued issues with back pain.

Steve and Andrea Barnes - preparing for his surgery on elbows and wrists due to nerve damage from sarcoidosis.

Richard Gaillardetz - recent cancer diagnosis (Barnes).

Janet Schoedinger - starting chemo - 3rd cancer battle (Litzinger).

Val Weber - 101st Birthday recently; strength and patience as she recuperates from a couple of mild strokes (Jim Winkelmann's mother).

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

Christopher, Gail & Bill Haack - chronic health challenges... Bill has begun the lengthy prep process for extensive back surgery.

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.

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

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

Gary - risky behaviors; seeking balance and stability.

Kevin Ceballos - sudden death of husband, Darryl Luffman (Schmelig).

Intertwine Interfaith Welcome Circle - Afghan family in St Louis.

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]

Glady Sims - *Friendship Village - 15200 Village View Dr, #2418*; Chesterfield, MO 63017; 636-898-8873 [birthdate: July 4]

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]

St Louis Association UCC Covenant Partner

Week ending April 3 - First Congregational UCC, St. Louis

Week ending April 10 - First Congregational UCC, Webster Groves

5th Sunday in Lent

April 3, 2022

Isaiah 43:16-21

Something New

Ramadan begins

On this day, the prophet Isaiah boldly declares God's plan to do a new thing. It is one of the blessings of the scheduled lectionary readings that this is also the first day of Ramadan for our Muslim brothers and sisters. This month of fasting marks the month that the words of the Qur'an were revealed to the prophet Muhammad and is a time of growing closer to the Holy One.

As people of the Word, we are siblings with our Muslim neighbors. Yet, historically, the relationship between Christians and Muslims has been fraught with misunderstanding and even violence.

How might your church or conference be part of a new thing done in God's name, as we begin to rewrite that history by building bridges where traditionally there have been walls?

The New York Conference of the United Church of Christ has built a bridge by providing resources for education and inspiration. The conference has added a web page about supporting Muslim neighbors to their website. Besides personal narratives, it provides quotes and helpful resources for those wanting to learn and read more. You can read them here:
<http://uccny.org/resources/resources-to-support-muslim-neighbors/>

Some churches have taken the next step, from education to action. The United Church of Christ Pacific Northwest Conference encourages churches to do a new thing by honoring their Muslim neighbors very tangibly during Ramadan. These churches were invited to do one or more of these actions:

1. Hang a banner or change their message boards in a way that honors our Muslim neighbors.
2. Take time to make an appointment to visit a local mosque or Islamic center to bring greetings from their local congregation.
3. Consider hosting an event to learn more about Islam and make a special effort to speak up against anti-Muslim rhetoric.

You can read more about the Pacific Northwest Conference's outreach to the Muslim community during Ramadan here:

https://www.ucc.org/honoring_sacred_time_uniting_ucc_muslim_faith_community_in_pacific_northwest/