





www.parkwayucc.org
Sunday, May 8, 2022

Contents

- 3 Birthdays & Anniversaries
- 4 10:00am Worship
- 11 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.

Today's flowers: In appreciation for all who have nurtured us.

Today's Scripture reader: Atticus Reed

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.

Cover Graphic

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Anniversaries

5/12 RAUSCHER, Kevin & Steffanie (29)

Birthdays

5/9 CLIFFORD, Scott

5/11 SPERRY, Sam

5/10 HAGGARD, Gale

5/12 DOWNING, Angie

5/10 PENICO, Paige

5/12 STAPPENBECK, William

5/11 MEYER, Lydia

5/14 MASTERSON, Scott

4th Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 8, 2022 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

*Please stand if it is comfortable to do so.

Meditation *Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others. ~Marianne Williamson*

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 *Holy Ground* #2272

We are stand - ing on ho - ly ground,
— and I know that there are an - gels all a -
round; let us praise
— Je - sus now; we are
stand - ing in his pres-ence on ho - ly ground.

Scripture Psalm 5, selected verses (CEB – Common English Bible)

Lord, in the morning you hear my voice. In the morning I lay it all out before you. Then I wait expectantly. Because you aren't a God who enjoys wickedness; evil doesn't live with you.

I will enter your house because of your abundant, faithful love; I will bow down at your holy temple, honoring you. Lord, because of many enemies, please lead me in your righteousness. Make your way clear, right in front of me.

But let all who take refuge in you celebrate. Let them sing out loud forever! Protect them so that all who love your name can rejoice in you. Because you, Lord, bless the righteous. You cover them with favor like a shield.

***Call to Worship**

One: We are here to expose ourselves to the Word of God—and to the words of people who have gone this way before us.

Many: **God welcomes each of us and touches us with grace and tenderness.**

One: The Holy verbalizes a commitment again and again—and can be trusted.

Many: **We are of incredible value to God. We are cherished.**

One: We move into this worship service knowing that we will be blessed.

Many: **We want to learn how we can become more of a blessing to others.**

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

***Song** *Welcoming God* (Tune: *Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine*)

**Children are welcome, Christ said one day,
When the disciples just urged them away.**

**Children are welcome at Jesus' knee:
God's own examples for ministry.**

**Welcoming God, you open the Way;
Even the smallest worship and pray,
Singing with faith and serving you well,
Your life to know and good news to tell.**

**Women are welcome, as are the men;
Through God's own Spirit, we're partners again.**

**Partners as prophets, ministers, too:
No more divided—made one in you.**

**Welcoming God, you open the way;
Those once divided join now to pray,
Serving at Table, preaching your Word,
So that your love for all will be heard.**

Outcasts are welcome; sinners are, too,
Eating with Jesus and being made new:
Some like Zacchaeus turned right around;
Wounded and poor ones felt peace profound.
God of great love, you stand at the door,
Welcoming people outcast and poor.
So you forgive and call us to be
Filled with the joy of your jubilee.

So may we welcome into our pew
All who in Jesus are being made new —
All those who seek him, wanting to know,
Wanting to love him, wanting to grow.
Welcoming God, you stand at our door,
As someone different, outcast or poor.
With longing eyes, Lord Jesus, you search.
May we all welcome you in your church.

***Opening Prayer**

Holy One, we are here in worship because you have called us here.
You have insights, grace, peace, power to share with us. Help us to
be open to your Spirit now — so that we can be reassured of your
presence in our lives at every turn. Encourage us to find new ways
to share your gifts with others. Amen.

***Response** *O Friends, In Gladness Let Us Sing* (Hymn #451, 4th stanza)
O friends, in gladness let us sing, supernal anthems echoing,
Alleluia, Alleluia! To God Creator, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, Three in One,
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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

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

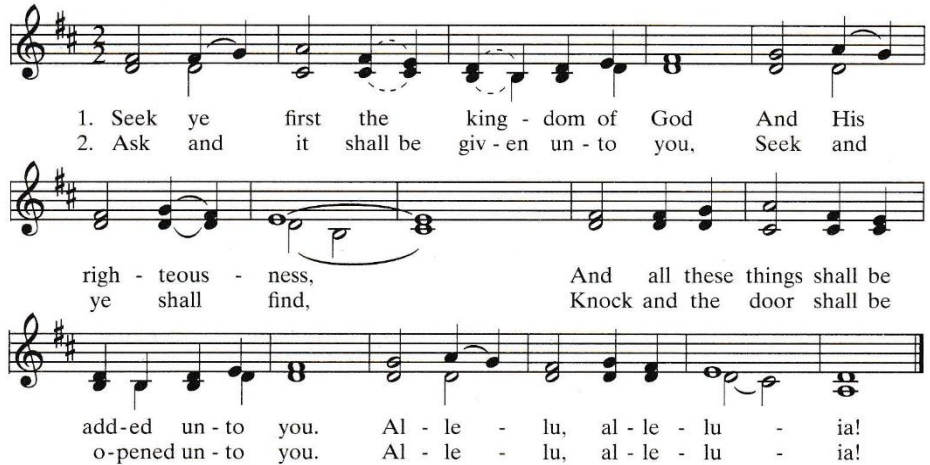
Scripture Acts 9:36-43 (CEB – Common English Bible)
In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas).
Her life overflowed with good works and compassionate acts on behalf of
those in need. About that time, though, she became so ill that she died. After
they washed her body, they laid her in an upstairs room. Since Lydda was near
Joppa, when the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two people to
Peter. They urged, "Please come right away!" Peter went with them. Upon his
arrival, he was taken to the upstairs room. All the widows stood beside him,
crying as they showed the tunics and other clothing Dorcas made when she
was alive.

Peter sent everyone out of the room, then knelt and prayed. He turned to the body and said, “Tabitha, get up!” She opened her eyes, saw Peter, and sat up. He gave her his hand and raised her up. Then he called God’s holy people, including the widows, and presented her alive to them. The news spread throughout Joppa, and many put their faith in the Lord. Peter stayed for some time in Joppa with a certain tanner named Simon.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon

A Time of Prayer *Seek Ye First #333*



1. Seek ye first the king - dom of God And His
2. Ask and it shall be giv - en un - to you, Seek and
righ - teous - ness, And all these things shall be
ye shall find, Knock and the door shall be
add - ed un - to you. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia!
o - pened un - to you. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia!

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.]

Litany *A Wide Continuum of Mothering*—based on messymiddle.com

One: To those who gave birth this year to their first child or expanded their family...

Many: We celebrate with you.

One: To those who lost a child this year...

Many: We mourn with you.

One: To those who are in the trenches with little ones every day and wear the badge of food stains and are sometimes afraid they don’t know what they are doing...

Many: We appreciate you.

One: To those who experienced loss through miscarriage, adoption or running away and may feel they have failed...

Many: We ache with you.

One: To those who walk the hard path of infertility, fraught with pokes, prods, tears, and disappointment...

Many: We walk with you. Forgive us when we say foolish things. We don't mean to make this harder than it already is.

One: To those who are foster moms, mentor moms, and spiritual moms...

Many: We need you.

One: To those who have warm and close relationships with your children...

Many: We give thanks with you.

One: To those who have disappointment, complications and distance or separation with your children...

Many: We sit with you.

One: To those who lost their mothers this year and may feel lonely in their lives and in their mothering...

Many: We grieve with you.

One: To those who experienced abuse at the hands of their own mother and therefore didn't have a healthy model for mothering...

Many: We acknowledge your experience.

One: To those who lived through driving tests, medical tests, and the overall testing of motherhood...

Many: We are better for having you in our midst.

One: To those who have aborted children and/or who became mothers against their will...

Many: We pray for you this day and many days.

One: To those who are not mothers and do not want to be.

Many: We respect and celebrate your decisions.

One: To those who are single or married and want to be parenting...

Many: We sigh with you that life has not turned out the way you long for it to be.

One: To those who step-parent...

Many: We walk with you on these complex paths.

One: To those who envisioned lavishing love on grandchildren, yet that dream is not to be...

Many: We come to grips with you.

One: To those who will have emptier nests in the upcoming year...

Many: We grieve and rejoice with you.

One: To those who are pregnant with new life, expected and surprising...

Many: We anticipate with you.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Offering Interlude

*Response

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures high and low;
Praise God whose love is fully known;
Creator, Christ, and Holy One. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, we are listening to you, one another and the stranger. We want to really hear, so help us to set aside the things that distract and disturb us. We are learning more about you, one another and the stranger. We want to be vulnerable and available—to grow and stretch in our understanding and solidarity. We are loving you, one another and the stranger. Lead us out of the center, so we can have one another's best interests in mind and heart and action. Amen

*Song of Parting *Martha Labored in the Kitchen*

Tune: *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*—Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Martha labored in the kitchen; there was much yet to be done!
There was cooking, cleaning, baking — too much work for anyone.
For the Lord had come to visit; Jesus sat there as her guest.
So much work! She longed to share it,
so the meal would be its best.

Mary sat and humbly listened to their guest — her Friend and Lord.
She just thought of Jesus' teaching —
not the need for bread and board.

So when Martha came complaining, seeking Mary's help that day.
Jesus turned to her explaining, "Mary chose the better way."

God, we see in her distraction — Martha lost sight of her goal;
In her grumbling and complaining, She forgot food for the soul.
For there's always something pressing —
something urgent we must do,

Yet for us there's also blessing in the time we spend with you.
Were there days when Mary labored, helping others, serving well?
Were there times when Martha savored stories Jesus loved to tell?
May we worship, pray and study; may we serve you well today!
All are needed on the journey as we travel Jesus' way.

*Benediction

*God's Light Goes Forth

*Music for Going Forth

Announcements

In Honor of Mothers and Women at Parkway United Church of Christ, The Covid Team has donated \$100 to the Crisis Nursery. We are hoping the Mother's Day Brunch can return next year.

TED—Tuesday Evening Dialogue New Book May 10

2nd & 4th Tuesdays | 6:00pm Potluck | 7:00pm Book discussion | Heritage Room
Please join us on dinner and fellowship. We will read and share responses to the first two sections of *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wells Kimmerer: "Planting Sweetgrass" and "Tending Sweetgrass." Our author is a botanist and a member of the Potawatomi Nation. We look forward to contemplating ancient wisdom and contemporary concern about caring for God's creation. Please join us. (We ask that you use the Harper entry at the back of the building to avoid disturbing rehearsal of the children's choir.)
Contact Barbara Harris: barbharris@charter.net

Go AWOL with us—Adventurous Women Out Late

Help us build community and enjoy one another's company!

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

Sat, May 21 | 1:00pm | Chinese Cultural Days | 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 to Carmen.)

Saturday, June 25 | Movie Night at local theater—TBA
We will meet there at theater or at church at 6:30pm to carpool.
(Please RSVP by midnight that Thursday)

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

The Color Purple makes its Muny debut!

Ticket prices and details coming soon.

Carmen Bumgarner cfbum@charter.net

Interfaith Sprouts of Peace for Kids and Families

Sunday, May 15 | 12:00 – 1:00pm | PUCC playground & back parking lot
We are ready to launch our free interfaith Sprouts of Peace 2022-2023 for Pre-K through 5th graders—kids that age out can be helpers! We are so pleased to be doing this again with our Muslim and Jewish friends – as well as with our friends from Peace UCC in Webster Groves.

We will have an info and kickoff event for Parkway UCC and Peace UCC here at Parkway on the back parking lot and playground on Sunday, May 15 at noon....

If you're at church, you may just want to stick around and play on our playground, walk the Labyrinth or head over to Drace Park or Des Peres Park while the Peace UCC arrive at noon from Webster Groves --- or wherever they are coming from that day.

Please bring a picnic lunch. We will provide drinks and popsicles. We will play some old and new games as well as other fun activities. There will also be a BAG for each family to bring home.

No need to RSVP for May 15 but do please consider registering now for Sprouts 22-23.

<https://interfaithstl.org/programs/sprouts/cohorts/>

We are so excited about this!

Questions? Please let us know!

You are invited to take a musical trip with the singers of Allegro: a St. Louis Choral Community and be dazzled as they share songs of classic Broadway!

Our concert will be held Sunday May 15 at 3pm at Parkway UCC, 2841 N. Ballas Rd, St. Louis, Mo 63131.

Allegro's concerts are always free. It is part of our mission to make musical programs free and accessible to your entire family. We will gratefully accept your freewill donation to help us continue making great music in the St. Louis area. You may contribute in person at our concert or on our website.

For more information or to donate visit us at Allegrochoral.org or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/AllegroChorusStLouis>
We look forward to sharing our passion for music with you!

Mining for Memories

A great opportunity to look back at your life and build relationships now. We share a word or a phrase that might spark a memory - eg. stairs, library, all work and no play, water, train, a fool and their money are soon parted, eyeglasses, button, turn the other cheek.

Monday, May 16 | 11:00am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87654782106?pwd=bUVqbDdXM0xPSXF0d1FPZFtUVUxQdz09>

Meeting ID: 876 5478 2106; Passcode: 796557

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.

Racial Justice Ministries—United Church of Christ

Our UCC acknowledges and supports the equality of all humans. We are one of the very few Christian churches that are leading bold and courageous conversations, engaging in direct social activism, and participating in civil disobedience as a way to bring attention to and disrupt racist systems and structures. The reality of racism, white supremacy and nationalism threatens God's sacred human family. As people of faith we remain vigilant anti-racists advocates and activists responding to threats and acts of violence towards our sisters and brothers—our siblings of African, Asian, Latin, and Native descent—whose civil and human rights are violated on a daily basis.

<https://www.ucc.org/racial-justice-ministries/>

Alzheimer's News May 2022

The benefits of Music for People Living with Alzheimer's: Music offers people living with Alzheimer's the priceless opportunity to connect to their pasts and the people who love them. As the disease progresses, this medium can be used as an efficient tool for self-expression and engagement. With flexibility and creativity, music can be part of their daily care plan and enrich their everyday life. Studies have shown that music may reduce agitation and improve behavioral issues that are common in the middle stages of Alzheimer's. Even in the late stages of the disease a person may be able to tap a beat or sing lyrics to a song from childhood. Music provides a way to connect, even when other methods of communication have become more difficult. As you plan this new activity consider the following: Utilize music that is familiar and enjoyable to the person. If they are able, let them have a say in the activity. Avoid music that might seem demeaning or childlike. Build conversation into the listening session. Discuss what the person is feeling or reminisce.

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 PUCC's Faith Outreach Ambassador with the Alzheimer's Association, Joyce Ruiz at joyceruiz7@gmail.com

Some Mother's Day Humor

If evolution really works, how come mothers only have two hands?

Why did the mommy cat want to go bowling on Mother's Day?
She was an alley cat.

What did the momma say to the foal?
It's pasture bedtime.

How did the Panda open her Mother's Day card?
With her bear hands.

How do you keep little cows quiet, so their mommy can sleep late?
Use the mooooooote button.

I Sing a Song of the Woman's Voice

(Sung to the tune: *I Sing a Song of the Saints of God*)

William L. Wallace

I sing a song of the woman's voice
Tender and strong and clear;
Of those who longed to gain the vote
Despite men's doubt and fear;
And one was a housewife,
And one was a nurse,
And one as a mother cared for ten
But all of them dreamt of women's rights
And I plan to be like them.

I sing a song of the suffrage cause
Firing the true and bold
To plan and work to live the dream
Which they first dreamt of old;
And one had a garden,
And one baked the bread,
And one made the beds and one swept floors
But all of them planned for women's rights
And I aim to be like them.

I sing a song of the suffrage Christ
Freeing the sexist mind
Empowering those whom men abused
In roles which men defined;
For Mary and Martha,
His mother, his friends,
Whatever their status, race or wealth
Were all of an equal worth for Christ
Since each is a child of God.

I sing of those who through sharing power
Gift a new life to all,
In ways which prize the other's worth
And heed the suffrage call;
Till men and the women,
The children and aged
From all of the groups on planet Earth
Shall join in that fight for human rights
Which follows the prophets' call.

Prayer List

as of Wednesday, May 4, 2022

Celebrations

We are Easter people!

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

Ruzicka Family's revitalized & award-winning *Cub Scout Den & Pack!*

Concerns

Charlotte Smith - healing after removal of deep skin cancer.

Family and friends of Pearl Sellenriek - funeral was here Tuesday.

<https://www.schrader.com/obituary/pearl-sellenriek-nee-wenzel>

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

<https://missouri.funeral.com/2022/04/18/conrad-damsgaard-jr-st-louis-cremation/>

Sally Boughman - just had her last lumbar epidural steroid injection.

Joan Biest - in the midst of chemotherapy treatments.

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.

Recent violence across the US and Palestine/Israel.

Continuing

Lori Connors and Bill Schulenburg - healing for broken arms.

Kathleen Tarr - healing after recent foot surgery.

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

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

Jackie - special needs adult battling Parkinson's, cancer, and dementia (sister/sister-in-law of Nick & Sue McMillon).

Janet Schoedinger - chemotherapy for 3rd cancer battle (Litzinger).

Lynda Ruby - living with cancer (Lindner).

Val - strength and patience (Jim Winkelmann's 101 year-old mother).

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.

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.

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]

Gladys 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]

Other

Lucia McKenzie and John Bieg - engaged to be married.

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

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.

PUCC Family struggling with employment; healthcare costs and limits.

Our Missouri Mid-South Conference and St Louis Assn UCC

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.

Peace and Justice near and far... **US Military** around the globe.

St Louis Association UCC Covenant Partner

Week ending May 8 - *Holy Trinity Community UCC, Memphis*;

holyltrinitymemphis.org

Week ending May 15 - *Hope UCC, DeSoto*; hopeunitedchurchofchrist.com

4th Sunday of Easter

May 8, 2022

Acts 9:36-43

Life-giving Acts

Mother's Day

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. About that time, she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room.

Lydda was near Joppa; so, when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!" Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them. Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the LORD. Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon. (NRSV)

This story of the healing of Tabitha/Dorcas is populated with lively and fascinating characters. Take a moment to step into the shoes of each of these people, imagining what they must have seen, heard, smelled, tasted, and touched, not only as part of this story but before and especially afterwards.

Imagine yourself first as Peter. How do you feel when you are summoned to help this woman who you have never met? What gives you the courage and the authority to know what to do in this seemingly hopeless situation? What leads to your decision to stay in the area of Joppa after this initial healing?

Imagine yourself as Tabitha. Imagine being willing to give all that you have and are in service to others. What would be your reaction to learning you are ill? What changes might you feel in your body and mind when you are called from the precipice of death back into health and wellness?

Imagine yourself as one of the widows or disciples. How do you react to this rollercoaster of events from serious illness back to life? How will being witness to this situation change you going forward?

Imagine yourself as Simon the Tanner. Tanning is difficult, dangerous, and smelly work. How does it feel to welcome one of Jesus' followers into your home? How might it change you?