



faith



PARKWAY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



www.parkwayucc.org
Sunday, August 14, 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 scripture reader: Mark Sableman

Today's flowers: Sue Stohr

Bell Rung During Lord's Prayer. A tradition begun when farmers working in surrounding fields would stop 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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Mental Health Support

988 (new nationwide 3-digit number similar to 911... call or text)

24/7 Crisis Hotline 800-273-8255 (TALK)

800-SUICIDE: 800-784-2433

24/7 Missouri Department of Mental Health 800-811-4760

Text 741741 and someone will text right back... www.crisistextline.org

Behavioral Health Network of Greater St Louis 314-449-6713

Anniversaries

8/15 STAPPENBECK, Julie & Thad (24)

8/19 WOLFF, Scott & Katy (22)

8/20 KLEIN, William & Pat (48)

Birthdays

8/14 STOHR, Sue

8/16 LARSON, A. F.

8/15 DWYER, Dottie

8/19 LANGTON, Gerre

8/15 WATSON, Mary

8/19 TUPPER, Tom

10th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, August 14, 2022 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

Meditation *If a religion is a specific faith, **the faith** is in the rational mind. And, therefore, we as professors or as rationalists become the priests in that particular faith system, which is a faith, after all. It's faith in what you know through your senses. Through your thinking mind, and through the logic of your thinking mind. That's a faith. There's nothing you can do about it. Because you can never get outside of the predicament of knowing, independent of that faith. ~Ram Dass*

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 *Lauda Anima*—Jason D. Payne

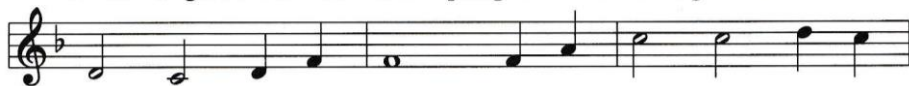
Based on the tune by John Goss

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Welcome Song *As a Fire is Meant for Burning* #2237, v2



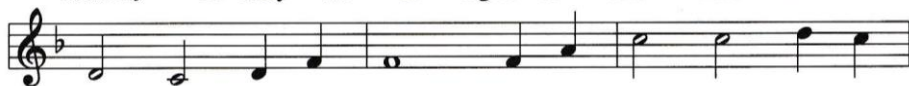
1. As a fire is meant for burn - ing with a bright and warm-ing
2. We are learn - ers; we are teach - ers; we are pil - grims on the
3. As a green bud in the spring-time is a sign of life re -



glo - ry to God's name. Not to preach our creeds or
ves - sels made of clay. By our gen - tle, lov - ing
peo - ples, man - y hues. As a rain - bow lights the



flame, so the church is meant for mis - sion, giv - ing
way. We are seek - ers; we are giv - ers; we are
newed, so may we be signs of one - ness 'mid earth's



glo - ry to God's name. Not to preach our creeds or
ves - sels made of clay. By our gen - tle, lov - ing
peo - ples, man - y hues. As a rain - bow lights the

cus - toms, but to build a bridge of care, we join
 ac - tions we would show that Christ is light. In a
 heav - ens when a storm is past and gone, may our
 hands a - cross the na - tions, find - ing neigh - bors ev - ery - where.
 hum - ble, lis - tening Spir - it we would live to God's de - light.
 lives re - flect the ra - diance of God's new and glo - rious dawn.

Scripture Hebrews 11:1-31 (CEB – Common English Bible)

Faith is the reality of what we hope for, the proof of what we don't see. The elders in the past were approved because they showed faith.

By faith we understand that the universe has been created by a word from God so that the visible came into existence from the invisible.

By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice to God than Cain, which showed that he was righteous, since God gave approval to him for his gift. Though he died, he's still speaking through faith.

By faith Enoch was taken up so that he didn't see death, and *he wasn't found because God took him up*. He was given approval for having pleased God before he was taken up. It's impossible to please God without faith because the one who draws near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards people who try to find him.

By faith Noah responded with godly fear when he was warned about events he hadn't seen yet. He built an ark to deliver his household. With his faith, he criticized the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes from faith.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance. He went out without knowing where he was going.

By faith he lived in the land he had been promised as a stranger. He lived in tents along with Isaac and Jacob, who were coheirs of the same promise. He was looking forward to a city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

By faith even Sarah received the ability to have a child, though she herself was barren and past the age for having children, because she believed that the one who promised was faithful. So descendants were born from one man (and he was as good as dead). They were as many as the number of the stars in the sky and as countless as the grains of sand on the seashore. All these people died in faith without receiving the promises, but they saw the promises from a distance and welcomed them. They confessed that they were strangers and immigrants on earth. People who say this kind of thing make it clear that they are looking for a homeland. If they had been thinking about the country that they had left, they would have had the opportunity to return to it. But at this

point in time, they are longing for a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God isn't ashamed to be called their God—he has prepared a city for them.

By faith Abraham offered Isaac when he was tested. The one who received the promises was offering his only son. He had been told concerning him, *Your legitimate descendants will come from Isaac*. He figured that God could even raise him from the dead. So in a way he did receive him back from the dead.

By faith Isaac also blessed Jacob and Esau concerning their future.

By faith Jacob blessed each of Joseph's sons as he was dying and *bowed in worship over the head of his staff*.

By faith Joseph recalled the exodus of the Israelites at the end of his life, and gave instructions about burying his bones.

By faith Moses was hidden by his parents for three months when he was born, because they saw that the child was beautiful and they weren't afraid of the king's orders.

By faith Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter when he was grown up. He chose to be mistreated with God's people instead of having the temporary pleasures of sin. He thought that the abuses he suffered for Christ were more valuable than the treasures of Egypt, since he was looking forward to the reward.

By faith he left Egypt without being afraid of the king's anger. He kept on going as if he could see what is invisible.

By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, in order that the destroyer could not touch their firstborn children.

By faith they crossed the Red Sea as if they were on dry land, but when the Egyptians tried it, they were drowned.

By faith Jericho's walls fell after the people marched around them for seven days.

By faith Rahab the prostitute wasn't killed with the disobedient because she welcomed the spies in peace.

***Call to Worship**

One: Let us rejoice, good people, and praise our Creator!

Many: By faith, we have arrived to listen to the teachings of many.

One: Let us rejoice, good people, in the presence of one another!

Many: By faith, we have arrived to renew our faith and love of this community.

One: Let us rejoice, good people, for we will make a way!

Many: By faith, we have arrived to participate in the work of God.

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

*Song *Guide My Feet #497*



1. Guide my feet
2. Hold my hand while I run this race,
3. Stand by me
4. I'm Your child



- Guide my feet
Hold my hand while I run this race,
Stand by me
I'm Your child



- Guide my feet
Hold my hand while I run this race, For I
Stand by me
I'm Your child



- don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain!)

*Opening Prayer

As we face the predicament of knowing both the joy and despair our faith brings to us, let us approach You today with a clear mind and an open heart. Help us gather our will to engage the text through discernment & careful study. Open us to prayerful imagination and conscientious listening. Lead us in passionate commitment to communal wellness and positive change. In your name, let us pray for the occurrence of these things. 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.

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 Hebrews 11:32-12:2 (CEB – Common English Bible)

What more can I say? I would run out of time if I told you about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. Through faith they conquered kingdoms, brought about justice, realized promises, shut the mouths of lions, put out raging fires, escaped from the edge of the sword, found strength in weakness, were mighty in war, and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured and refused to be released so they could gain a better resurrection.

But others experienced public shame by being taunted and whipped; they were even put in chains and in prison. They were stoned to death, they were cut in two, and they died by being murdered with swords. They went around wearing the skins of sheep and goats, needy, oppressed, and mistreated. The world didn't deserve them. They wandered around in deserts, mountains, caves, and holes in the ground.

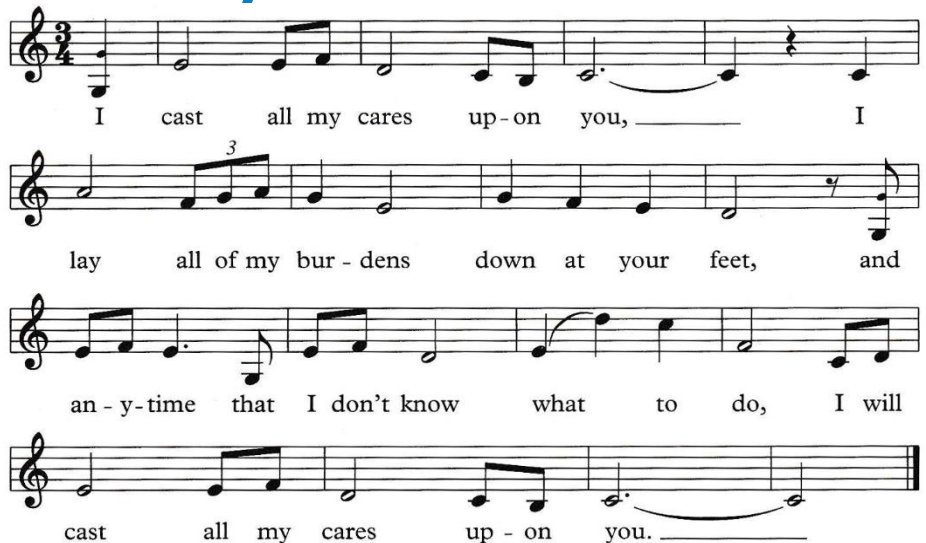
All these people didn't receive what was promised, though they were given approval for their faith. God provided something better for us so they wouldn't be made perfect without us.

So then, with endurance, let's also run the race that is laid out in front of us, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let's throw off any extra baggage, get rid of the sin that trips us up, and fix our eyes on Jesus, faith's pioneer and perfecter. He endured the cross, ignoring the shame, for the sake of the joy that was laid out in front of him, and sat down at the right side of God's throne.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon

A Time of 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 & Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer

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

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

Offering Our Gifts to God

If you have an offering today, please place it in the plate on the communion table before the end of the closing hymn. There are also offering plates in the Gathering Space just outside the sanctuary. Thank you for your generosity.

Offering Interlude *A Prayer of Quiet Thankfulness—Fenton Groden*

*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 *Mustard Seed*

Holy One, we make our offerings, small and large, with the hope and confidence that all we do, all we offer, all we say, all we think, and all we hope will take root in this world - and be the source of new expressions of God's love, of God's justice, of God's character, of God's mission, and of God's reign. May God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven through us, alongside us, despite us, and for us. Amen.

*Song of Parting *This Little Light of Mine*

**This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine (x3)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

**Don't let anyone blow it out! I'm gonna let it shine...
All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine...
Hide it under a bushel? No! I'm going to let it shine...**

*Benediction

*God's Light Goes Forth

*Music for Going Forth *A Praising—Gilbert M. Martin*

Our Guest Worship Leader today is Zipporah Lee

A graduate of Eden Theological Seminary in 2006, Zipporah Lee (they/them) has spent 9 years in the discernment process of an ordainable call (getting close, y'all!). Zippy has held positions in Christian Education (serving Disciples of Christ and Unitarian Universalist congregations), after-school programs (in the Riverview Gardens school district), and case management for City Hope St. Louis (a homeless services agency in the City of St. Louis). Currently, they work as a case manager for St. Patrick's Center (another homeless services agency in the City of St. Louis) in their Hospital to Healthy Housing program. Zippy sees their current work as a cross between "resource chaplaincy" and uprooting the systemic injustices of industrialized healthcare (along w/a bunch of other profit-centered, human-harming systems). When they're not making a better world for all, they can be found at Mokabe's Coffeehouse drinking chai and/or espresso, playing video games & being artsy-crafty.

Announcements

Pearl Harbor Experience Shared Sunday, August 14 | 2:00-3:00pm
Tappmeyer Homestead, 2 Barnes West Drive, Millennium Park in Creve Coeur
Dorinda Makanaonalani Nicholson was 6 years old and living in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. She and her parents fled to nearby sugar cane fields and witnessed the bombing. When the American Girl doll Nanea was created, Dorinda served as a consultant in her development. Her personal experiences have been the basis for her books about the history and culture of Hawaii and how the attack affected civilians. Dorinda has since settled in Missouri. Doll exhibits will be featured noon – 4 p.m. August 14 and 28. Reservations are requested for Dorinda's talk; email TappmeyerHomestead@gmail.com. And learn more about Tappmeyer at TappmeyerHomestead.org

Organ Vespers Barbara Raedeke (former PUCC Music Director) will be the guest organist for a vespers service on Sunday, August 14 at 5 p.m. at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 110 N. Warson Road. The service celebrates the 20th anniversary of their organ and includes organ and choral music of Bach, Clérambault, Nivers, and Bruhns. All are warmly invited!

TAD Resumes August 16. Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue will resume on Zoom on Tuesday, August 16th, at 2:00pm. We'll begin discussing *One Long River of Song: Notes on Wonder*, by Brian Doyle. Borrowing from Amazon: From a "born storyteller" (Seattle Times), this playful and moving bestselling book of essays invites us into the miraculous and transcendent moments of everyday life." And, "Doyle often used his Catholicism to explore the human and natural worlds, but this is perhaps the most generous, universal 'religious writing' you'll ever read." Please join us in August 16.

Grizzlies Baseball Game Sunday, August 21 | Gametime is 5:45pm

Take me out to the ballgame! Cheer on our Gateway Grizzlies with a dozen or more PUCcErs as they face the Windy City ThunderBolts!

The Gateway Grizzlies are a professional baseball team based in the St. Louis suburb of Sauget, Illinois, in the United States. The Grizzlies are a member of the West Division of the Frontier League, which is a partner league of Major League Baseball.

This is a much more manageable excursion than going to a Cardinals game... so if you enjoy baseball and/or want an 'easier' adventure, this is the opportunity for you.

Please reserve your ticket(s) by contacting PUCcEr Blake Lyons via phone/text 314-681-0620.

Tickets are \$16 each. Please make checks to PUCc with Grizzlies in memo. We can also work out carpooling a few days ahead.

New Member Sunday August 28 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 plan to welcome new members into our worship, work and witness at Parkway UCC on Sunday, August 28 during our 10am worship service.

If this is something you might be interested in, please let us know... kevin@parkwayucc.org; 314-872-9330

Festival of Nations Sat & Sun August 27-28 | festivalofnationsstl.org/

We are a diverse, inclusive and thriving community in St Louis!

An inclusive society is a festival! The FESTIVAL OF NATIONS! It is a time to enjoy amazing foods, toe tap to a musical spectacle, listen deeply to a story told, and support the thriving entrepreneurial spirit of this diverse community.

This is one of the best annual events in St Louis. We will let you know when the full schedule of events is available so we might arrange carpools.

Festival of Nations is again brought to you by the International Institute of St. Louis. For more than 100 years, IISTL has been building a more connected and productive society to benefit immigrants, their families, and the wider community. Our vision is for a diverse, inclusive and thriving community.

Today, IISTL provides a whole host of services annually to more than 5,000 immigrants and refugees, including English classes, citizenship preparation, job services, counselling, and small business development. We are also working to help immigrants and the wider community to build connections by promoting cross-cultural understanding. Join us at www.iistl.org

You can also help make it a huge success by volunteering. This isn't possible without lots of volunteers like you...

Volunteer Opportunities: iistl.volunteerlocal.com/volunteer/?id=63243

Thank you! A big, hearty thank you to our generous congregants for donating 300 2-pocket folders and lots of socks and underwear to Isaiah 58 Ministries for their annual back-to-school event on 30 July. The ministry was so pleased with the donations for the school children. ~Evelyn Buretta

Alzheimer's News August 2022

The following are excerpts from the "What It's Like Living with Alzheimer's" article in the summer 2022 edition of ALZ Magazine:

Five Things People Want You to Know—

1. Some days are better than others – and that is ok. Everyone has good and bad days, but for those living with dementia or Alzheimer's an "off" day means difficulties with everyday life. Validate the person's efforts to be successful and understand that some tasks or conversations may need to be picked-up at another time.
2. You don't need to fear people with Alzheimer's. Much of the stigma surrounding Alzheimer's is rooted in fear. Take the time to learn about it. Knowledge can create empathy and shows you care about the person.
3. Don't make assumptions based on a person's diagnosis. An Alzheimer's diagnosis is life-changing, but it's not the end. Don't count a person out. People with the diagnosis will have to adjust routines. A person may experience some deficits, some behavioral or memory problems, but their lives don't stop.
4. No two journeys are the same. Recognize and respect how each individual feels and what they need, even if it's the opposite of someone else you know living with dementia. No matter what, each person deserves grace and peace.
5. Talk to each person directly. Engage with them the way you always have. It might take them longer to respond or you may have to repeat yourself, but they still need and want to communicate and feel included. They would much prefer to talk and help clarify things that don't make sense rather than being ignored.

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



We can keep them smiling



**3,800 Volunteers
Needed To Pack
1 Million Meals**
2,750 Kids fed for a year

Sept. 8-11, 2022
Kennedy Rec Center
6050 Wells Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63128

Adults and kids (age 5 and up)
work together to
hand-pack FMSC
MannaPack meals



Packing Shifts are just 2 hours
and there is no cost to pack!

Every day 10,000 children die
from hunger related causes

**Our Mission:
Until ALL Are Fed**

**To register or for
more information go to
FeedTheNeedSTL.org**

Feed The Need STL



We CAN do this St. Louis!

Prayer List

as of Wednesday, August 10, 2022

Celebrations

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

Concerns

Amy Yakel - knee replacement surgery tomorrow - Tuesday, August 9.

Bart Coleman - some good progress as he preps for heart procedure.

Peter Shelton - healing after recent surgery.

Cassie Rosenberger - healing after recent surgery.

Jenny - additional medical tests this week (daughter of John Nourse).

Mary Kay - unable to communicate (sister of Tom McKenzie).

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.

Women's Justice issues.

Everyone dealing with aftermath of flooding in StL and elsewhere.

Continuing

Jim and Polly Winkelmann - as Jim heals and strengthens at home.

Bill and Pat Owens - as Bill seeks healing after back surgery.

Family/friends of Barb Kuhlmann - continuing to grieve.

Joan Biest - radiation treatments wrapped up recently.

Jean Gist - healing and strength (Kari Borgmann's 98 year old mother).

Kathy Ferrell - healing for her broken wrist.

Jackie - special needs adult battling Parkinson's, cancer, and dementia.

Josh - starting chemo; will need a bone marrow transplant (Tarr).

Sharon - variety of health challenges (Rogers).

Sue Linson - recently diagnosed with leukemia (McKenzie).

Dusty & Lindsay; Matt & Kim - expecting babies with complications.

Sharon - struggling with many health issues (Gerry Rogers' cousin).

The Haack's neighbor - stage 4 cancer... single parent of a 2.5 yr old.

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.

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.

St Louis Association UCC Covenant Partner

Week ending August 7 - **St. John UCC**, Manchester; stjohmanchester.org
Week ending August 14 - **St. Johns Evangelical UCC**, Mehlville; stjucc.org

Home/Care Facility/Rehab Center

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]

Naomi Runtz - 272 N Lindbergh Blvd; StL MO 63141; 34-993-0469

naomiruntz@sbcglobal.net [birthdate: August 30]

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 on 8/20.

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

Brussee/Dario/Race Family as Skyler and Justin prep to be parents.

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.

10th Sunday after Pentecost

August 14, 2022

Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19

Restore Us

In today's psalm, God's people are envisioned as a vine, planted and carefully tended by God. How might we participate with God in being planters and tenders of the church and its leaders?

Last winter, UCC President John Dorhauer and Pension Board President and CEO Brian Bodager encouraged church members to be vine tenders, as they described one of the crises facing church leadership.

“Seminary and educational debt, the debilitating nature of limited income and the uncertainty of a secure financial future represent a deepening crisis for many pastors in the United Church of Christ,” they wrote in a joint letter. The Ministers' Financial Vitality Initiative (MFVI) is a program to help ministers address this problem with practical tools. Participants in the program receive financial gifts of \$9000 for debt reduction, \$1000 to seed a retirement account and the support of a cohort of fellow pastors and financial experts.

The Ministers' Financial Vitality Initiative strengthens ministry in the UCC by:

- increasing and enhancing financial literacy among UCC authorized ministers, with a particular emphasis on ministers from historically underrepresented groups within the denomination;
- assisting UCC ministers and their Ministry settings, Associations, Conferences, and the National Setting of the Church in “breaking the conspiracy of silence” that exists around pastoral finances;
- providing financial assistance to UCC authorized ministers toward repayment of educational and personal debt as well as seeding of pension funds;
- engaging key lay leaders in UCC churches in collaborative efforts to identify and address the connection between pastoral financial challenges and ministry setting financial challenges; and;
- launching a major fundraising campaign to solicit major gifts that will enable the long-term sustainability, and continued expansion of the program

You can be a vine-tender along with God, planting and nurturing growth. One way is to support the MFVI with your gift at pbucc.org.