

Peace

Mead 3-1-20



www.parkwayucc.org
Sunday, December 4, 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

2841 North Ballas Road | St. Louis, MO 63131 | 314-872-9330 [p] | 314-872-9014 [f]
parkwayucc.org | contact@parkwayucc.org

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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 given by Charlotte Smith in memory of Dwight

Today's Scripture Reader: Dana Delibovi

Bell Rung During Lord's Prayer. A tradition begun when farmers working in surrounding fields would stop work and join in prayer.

Cover art Mona Herberg

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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

Birthdays

12/5 RUZICKA, Ryan

12/8 BORGMANN, Kari

12/6 WINKELMANN, Polly

12/10 SINGER, Michelle

Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice. — Spinoza

Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. — Saint Francis de Sales

Do not let the behavior of others destroy your inner peace. — Dalai Lama

Nobody can bring you peace but yourself. — Ralph Waldo Emerson

If you are depressed you are living in the past if you are anxious you are living in the future, if you are at peace, you are living in the present. — Lao Tzu

2nd Sunday of Advent: *Peace*

Sunday, December 4, 2022 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

Meditation *We often think of peace as the absence of war, that if powerful countries would reduce their weapon arsenals, we could have peace. But if we look deeply into the weapons, we see our own minds - our own prejudices, fears and ignorance. Even if we transport all the bombs to the moon, the roots of war and the roots of bombs are still there, in our hearts and minds, and sooner or later we will make new bombs. To work for peace is to uproot war from ourselves and from the hearts of men and women. To prepare for war, to give millions of men and women the opportunity to practice killing day and night in their hearts, is to plant millions of seeds of violence, anger, frustration, and fear that will be passed on for generations to come. ~Thich Nhat Hanh*

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 *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*—Anna Laura Page

Based on the plainsong *Veni Emmanuel*

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Introit *Prepare a Way for the Lord!*—Buryl Red/Ragan Courtney

Gathering at the Advent Wreath: Peace

One: Isaiah 11:6-8 (NRSV, adapted)


The wolf shall lie down with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put their hand on the adder's den.

Many: **This is the Candle of Peace.**

One: May we become people who speak, pray and act out peace.

All: **Come, Jesus, with your light of peace.**

***Response** *Light One Candle*
Yiddish Folk Song/arr. James L Wold, 1984



2. Light one can-dle to wait for our Je sus; let the peace ban-ish dark-ness.
Lift your heads and o - pen the ga-te way. Let your light be shin - ing.

Children's Time Children are invited to Room 12 (Lower Level) and Youth to Room 15 (Lower Level) following this Children's Time. Please meet your child/youth in the Gathering Space just outside the Sanctuary after worship - as the teachers will bring them there after class.

Blessing the Children *Be Near Me, Lord Jesus*

**Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
And teach us, dear Jesus, to laugh and to share.**

Mission Moment Second Mile Advent—Nancy Litzinger

Circle of Concern | **Emmaus Homes** | The Christmas Fund

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.

Offertory *Awake, O Israel!*—Merla Watson (adapted)

Awake, O Israel, put off your slumber, and the truth shall set you free;
For out of Zion comes your Deliverer, in the year of jubilee.

Refrain:

O, hallelujah! O, hallelujah! Hallelujah, praise our God!
O, hallelujah! O, hallelujah! Hallelujah, praise our God!

***Response**

**Praise God for gifts of hope and peace
Praise God for gifts of joy and love
Praise God for sending Christ to dwell
On earth for us—Emmanuel. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication** based on Elena Keppel

**Holy One, the call to peace rings in our ears when all around is
raging. Within, without, temptation shouts—our wrathful whims
engaging. We wait, wait, for you are near: our weapons drop to the
ground. We are joined in family with all as we are dependent on
one another. We are warmed and led by the holy fire of Advent.
Amen.**

Scripture

Psalms 122 (CEB – Common English Bible)

I rejoiced with those who said to me, “Let’s go to the Lord’s house!” Now our feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem! Jerusalem is built like a city joined together in unity. That is where the tribes go up—the Lord’s tribes! It is the law for Israel to give thanks there to the Lord’s name because the thrones of justice are there—the thrones of the house of David!

Pray that Jerusalem has peace: “Let those who love you have rest. Let there be peace on your walls; let there be rest on your fortifications.” For the sake of my family and friends, I say, “Peace be with you, Jerusalem.” For the sake of the Lord our God’s house I will pray for your good.

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19 (CEB – Common English Bible)

God, give your judgments to the king. Give your righteousness to the king’s son. Let him judge your people with righteousness and your poor ones with justice. Let the mountains bring peace to the people; let the hills bring righteousness. Let the king bring justice to people who are poor; let him save the children of those who are needy, but let him crush oppressors! Let the king live as long as the sun, as long as the moon, generation to generation. Let him fall like rain upon fresh-cut grass, like showers that water the earth. Let the righteous flourish throughout their lives, and let peace prosper until the moon is no more. Bless God, the God of Israel—the only one who does wondrous things! Bless God’s glorious name forever; let this glory fill all the earth! Amen and Amen!

Matthew 3:1-6 (CEB – Common English Bible)

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the desert of Judea announcing, “Change your hearts and lives! Here comes the kingdom of heaven!” He was the one of whom Isaiah the prophet spoke when he said:

The voice of one shouting in the wilderness, “Prepare the way for the Lord; make the paths straight.”

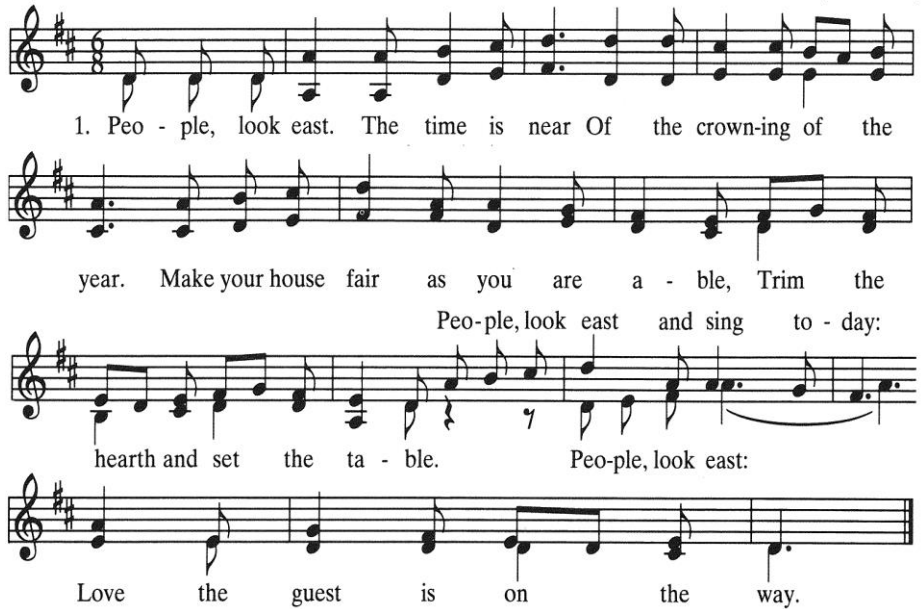
John wore clothes made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. People from Jerusalem, throughout Judea, and all around the Jordan River came to him. As they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

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 *People Look East #12*



1. Peo - ple, look east. The time is near Of the crown-ing of the
year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble, Trim the
Peo-ple, look east and sing to - day:
hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo-ple, look east:
Love the guest is on the way.

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

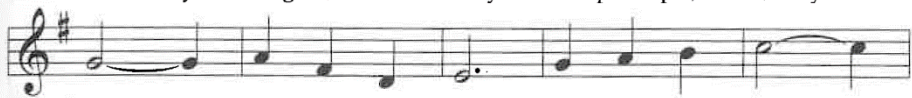
***Prayer of Thanksgiving** Presbyterian Church USA

Unslumbering God, at an unexpected hour you sent an unlikely liberator to an undeserving world. Keep us faithful in unguarded moments and alert in uncertain times, so that we may seek your unmeasured mercy, serve you with undivided hearts, live together in unbroken community, and greet you with unending praise; for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whom we know your unfailing justice, unfathomable grace, and precious peace. Amen.

*Song of Parting *Christ Be Our Light*



1 Long-ing for light, we wait in dark-ness. Long-ing for
2 Long-ing for peace, our world is trou-bled. Long-ing for
3 Long-ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long-ing for
4 Long-ing for shel - ter, man - y are home-less. Long-ing for
5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants

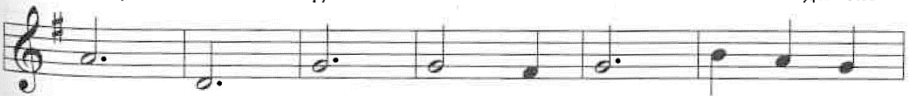


your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
has power to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
to one an - oth - er. mak - ing your king - dom come.

Refrain



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

*Benediction

*God's Light Goes Forth

*Postlude *Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying*—Zack Unke Based on *Wachet Auf* by Philipp Nicolai

Announcements

Please use the form at www.parkwayucc.org/communications for all announcements for our media. Bulletin and eNews deadline: noon Monday.

Christmas Eve Saturday, December 24 In-person and Facebook Live
4:30pm Family Friendly Worship—A lively and spirited service with Nativity scriptures, carols and contemporary reflections. We will sing *Silent Night* by candlelight as we prepare to go out into this holy night.

7:30pm Candlelight & Communion—This traditional service includes the Christmas Gospel, choir and carols as we ponder what this love story means for us today. We will share Communion at our open table and sing *Silent Night* by candlelight.

TODAY: Bake Sale for Youth Mission Trip—Summer 2023

Sunday, December 4, 2022 | 11:00am | Gathering Space

Yum! Please support our youth this today at their Bake Sale after worship in the Gathering Space. They will have pre-packaged homemade treats for \$1 each. This is a fundraiser for next summer's Youth Mission Trip. Thank you! Contact Kevin Cameron: kevin@parkwayucc.org | (314) 330-0629

Communications Team Reboot Tue, Dec 6 | 7:00pm | Zoom

Our first meeting was an energizing time of vision casting. As we are still building the team, we welcome people with a background or expertise in editing, marketing, journalism, graphic design, photography, videography, blogging, social media and website creation/maintenance. There will be opportunities for involvement in specific projects and/or a longer term commitment. Please RSVP to Mona: mona@parkwayucc.org | 314-872-9330

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84691476997?pwd=aEM2ZURYWURLNmkwD0EzV0VHV1lyQT09>

Meeting ID: 8469147 6997 | **Passcode:** 181565 | **Dial** (312) 626-6799

Youth Games, Outreach Project and Christmas Lights

Friday, December 9 | 6:00-8:30pm | Gathering Space

Calling all middle schoolers and high schoolers. Join us for some games, an outreach project and some Christmas lights. This will be a lot of fun. Feel free to bring a friend! Questions? kevin@parkwayucc.org

Christmas Caroling

Sat, Dec 10 | 9:00am-12:00pm **and** Sat, Dec 17 | 1:00-4:00pm

Spread the Christmas Spirit with us on one or both of these Saturdays... Christmas Caroling to church members and friends—Meet at church to warm up, grab some jingle bells and head out on our adventure. We will be going to homes and care centers. Please bring a mask. This is one of the most important things a church does each year—a tangible expression of love and commitment. Please join us! Questions? kevin@parkwayucc.org

Next Week! Speaker Series: *Ways to look at the Supreme Court—guidance to help lay people understand Supreme Court decisions and trends by Mark Sableman*

Sunday, December 11 | 11:15am | Heritage Room & Zoom

PUCCEr Mark Sableman will discuss these issues: Why we really can't expect the Court to be a "balls and strikes" umpire. Is it all about views of presidential power? What are originalism and literalism theories? What is the progressive alternative to originalism and literalism?

In addition, Mark will analyze First Amendment trends in which we have increasingly seen the court turn away from precedents, which gave speech rights to protect minorities and dissidents, to new doctrines that grant free speech rights to the wealthy, even allowing them to be used to beat down minorities and dissidents. There is a similar trend in freedom of religion, away from interpretations of the establishment clause, which protect minorities, to interpretations of the free exercise clause, which exempts adherents to majority religions from basic social rules like non-discrimination.

Finally, who is Samuel Alito and can he and others of his persuasion be neutralized by "court packing?"

Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84691476997?pwd=aEM2ZURyWURLNmkwD0EzV0VHV1lyQT09>

Meeting ID: 8469147 6997 | **Passcode:** 181565 | **Dial** (312) 626-6799

Church School Theme: Festival of Lights around the World

This year's program takes us on a journey around the world to explore the many ways people celebrate during these holiday months. We'll learn about the traditions of Diwali, Bodhi Day, Tree of Lights, Las Posadas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, the Advent Wreath, the Christmas Tree, and the Creche. The children and youth are spending Church School time designing scenery, learning songs, practicing speaking parts and choosing costumes. We hope your child/children will be able to participate in this fun and exciting program!

Events and Dates to Remember

Dress Rehearsal on December 17, 9:30-11:00am—all children and youth

Program on December 18, during worship—all children and youth

Christmas Eve services (see separate announcement)

No Church School Class on Christmas Day or New Year's Day

Regular classes resume January 8, 2023

Christmas Gifts for Children—Every Child's Hope

Parkway UCC Adopting Two Families for Christmas

The Parkway UCC Outreach Christmas Team picked two foster families to assist with Christmas wishes. There is a total of 12 children of various ages. Each child has three wishes, and the foster mother has added suggestions for clothes. You may choose to adopt one child, and the expectation is that three items would cost about \$75. You may choose just one gift. If you would rather not shop, you can donate money, but please let Laura Waite or Carol Cobb know that you wish to do that. We will be collecting unwrapped items every Sunday. We also appreciate donations of wrapping paper. All gifts must be

brought to PUCC by December 4 and placed in the CE Office. They will be delivered that week. We have posted the children's wishes on SignUpGenius – <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0e49a9a722a2f58-echchristmas>
You may choose a child or more to support.
Carol Cobb: ccjacob@aol.com | (314) 640-8166
Laura Waite: (314) 583-0696 | (314) 583-0696

Volunteering at St Louis Area Food Bank

Monday, December 12 | 11:15am – 2:45pm

St Louis Area Food Bank | 70 Corporate Woods Dr, Bridgeton MO 63044

The St. Louis Area Foodbank is looking for more volunteers this season. Please consider being one of five people to accompany Kevin for the 12-2pm shift.

We will be sorting and packaging food in their Repackaging Center. This is an indoor event. This can include building food boxes for senior citizens, sorting food drive donations, packaging produce into individual family size portions, etc. Please note that volunteers will be on their feet for the majority of their shift. Please wear closed toe shoes and dress comfortably.

Let kevin@parkwayucc.org know that you would like to come so we can get you officially signed up with the Food Bank.

Creches on Display

Share a nativity scene with the congregation anytime after worship on Sunday, December 18 through Monday morning. Tables will be set up around the sanctuary for you to display any number of creches. No one will touch them as they enjoy them with their eyes and spirits! There will be note cards and tape for you to affix to the table in front of your nativity set with your name and anything else you might want to share about that particular creche. Please retrieve your creche(s) anytime after noon on Friday, December 23. Questions? Speak with kevin@parkwayucc.org; 314-330-0629

Jazz Noel: The Light Returns

Sunday, December 18, 2022 @3:00pm | First Congregational Church of Webster Groves | 10 West Lockwood Avenue | Webster Groves, MO

Jazz Noel at First Church Jazz Noel is back! After a two-year hiatus due to Covid, illness and injury, our annual Jazz Noel concert will be held once again with the theme, *The Return of the Light*. This will be most appropriate commemorating the birth of the Light of the world, the hope of the winter solstice, and the return of our beloved jazz event led by the Oikos Ensemble. *The Return of the Light* will feature Christmas carols with a jazz twist, dance artistry, and creative interpretation by the Logos Readers. If you would like to help support this year's Jazz Noel production, please contact Rev Cliff Aerie (cliff.aerie@gmail.com) for further information about being a donor. Jazz Noel is a Christmas gift to the community and the offering received is used for local mission. Jazz Noel is a program for all ages. A wonderful way to celebrate the Christmas season.

2023 Pledge Campaign

Making a list, checking it twice. If making a pledge isn't on your list, there's still time. Extra pledge cards are in the Gathering Space, or you can pledge online— <https://parkwayucc.org/giving/pledge/> Thank you for your support. Questions? Contact Harold Cobb: ccjacob@aol.com | (314) 965-4147 ~The Stewardship Commission.

PUCC Year-End Contributions

Council and the Stewardship Commission thank everyone in the congregation for their strong financial support for the church. As we near the end of the calendar year (which is the church's fiscal year), we ask members and supporters to remember to catch up on pledges, and to consider any further year-end contributions.

In addition to our annual needs, Council has recently learned that significant roof repairs must be made to Fellowship Hall, a major non-budgeted expenditure. Council is currently looking at funding plans and sources, but we can assure everyone that any year-end gifts will be put to good use. You can designate special year-end gifts for a special purpose, or allow them to be used where needed most.

For those of you who are taking Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from an Individual Retirement Account or other tax-deferred account, please consider a direct gift to the church from your retirement account; such gifts will count toward your annual RMD obligation, but will not count as taxable income.

Finally, as we announced in October, we encourage everyone to consider helping Parkway in the longer term, through planned giving. Our long-time and much-beloved member Ruth Murray set the example for this, by leaving us a gift in her will. That gift became the seed money for our new audio-visual system.

The year end is sometimes a time for long-term thinking, and as you think ahead, we hope you will consider following Ruth's example. Bequests in wills, gifts of appreciated stock, and gifts from Individual Retirement Accounts can all greatly benefit the church and its mission, while providing tax or other benefits to the donors. Even giving a small percentage of your estate, such as 5 or 10 percent, will help ensure that Parkway's mission will continue to aid many people in the future, while still allowing you to provide fully for your heirs.

Thank you!

Mark Sableman | 314 602-6103 | msableman@outlook.com

For Peace in Cities

Book of Common Prayer, Episcopal Church, 1977

God of heaven and earth,
in your Word you have given us a vision of that holy city
to which the nations of the world bring their glory.
Look upon and visit the cities of the earth.
Renew the ties of mutual regard that form our civic life.
Send us honest and able leaders.
Help us to eliminate poverty, prejudice, and oppression,
that peace may prevail with righteousness,
and justice with order,
and that men and women from various cultures
and with differing talents
may find with one another
the fulfillment of their humanity;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Fear

by Kahlil Gibran

It is said that before entering the sea
a river trembles with fear.

She looks back at the path she has traveled,
from the peaks of the mountains,
the long winding road crossing forests and villages.

And in front of her,
she sees an ocean so vast,
that to enter
there seems nothing more than to disappear forever.

But there is no other way.
The river cannot go back.

Nobody can go back.
To go back is impossible in existence.

The river needs to take the risk
of entering the ocean
because only then will fear disappear,
because that's where the river will know
it's not about disappearing into the ocean,
but of becoming the ocean.

Prayer List

as of November 30, 2022

Celebrations

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

Advent! Try these brief daily Taize services with our UCC.

<https://www.youtube.com/@theopenandaffirmingcoalition/streams>

Register here for these free meditation times:

https://openandaffirming.networkforgood.com/events/40218-taiz-morning-prayer-with-the-ona-family-on-zoom?utm_campaign=dms_email_blast_2215266

Talk4Tyler - Mental Health Awareness Night at Parkway Central High.

Concerns

Angie - diagnosis of Stage 2 Hodgkin's Lymphoma (Rosenberger).

Family and friends of Bart Coleman - grieving and giving thanks...

<https://www.schrader.com/obituary/bart-coleman-jr>

Brussee/Dario/Race Family as Skyler & Justin welcomed **Jace** 11/2;

strengthening in NICU - no longer on oxygen; oral feedings going well.

Alice - healing after recent surgery (sister of Ellie Svenson).

Joan Biest - after a season of better health and wonderful family time at two grandchildren's weddings, she has several health concerns again.

Aftermath of deadly tragedies at LGBTQ nightclub in Colorado and the Walmart in Virginia.

All impacted by Covid-19.

Families grieving at the holidays.

Continuing

Ross Livengood and Doris McCarter - healing after hip surgery.

Dusty & Lin - baby born with heart defect... major surgery soon (Yakel).

Edwin & Maria - his cancer returned; thought he was cured (Runtz).

Gail, Bill and Christopher Haack - chronic health challenges.

Patty and mom Estelle - as Patty receives hospice care (Pleis/Eiffert).

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

Josh - receiving chemo; needs a bone marrow transplant (Tarr).

Sharon - variety of health challenges (Rogers).

Sue Linson - recently diagnosed with leukemia (McKenzie).

Mary Beth Anderson - health challenges; apt break-in (Brueggemann)

Brooke - that she would find love and start a family of her own.

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

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

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.

St Louis Association UCC Covenant Partner

Week ending December 4 - **St Martin UCC**, Dittmer; stmartinucc-hr.com

Week ending December 11 - **Ivy Chapel UCC**, Chesterfield; ivychapel.org

Home-Centered/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, #166;

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]

David Smith - *Anthology of Town & Country*; 1020 Woods Mill Rd;

#310; St Louis, MO 63017; 636-200-5076 [birthdate: July 24]

(Father of Deb Carter).

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.

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.

2nd Sunday of Advent: *Peace*

Sunday, December 4, 2022

Isaiah 11:1-10 **Vision of Peace**

On this second Sunday of Advent, we welcome the prophet Isaiah into our midst. The Biblical prophets are not those who foretell the future. Instead, like all of the Biblical prophetic voices on record, Isaiah reveals what is hidden in this present moment. Because it is timeless, his writing is as potent and powerful on this first Sunday of December in the year 2022 as it was in the year that he first wrote them, about three thousand years ago.

Like his sister and brother prophets, the reality that Isaiah reveals brings difficult and joyful news together. So being willing to hear the prophets is really about being able to receive both Divine challenge and Holy comfort. That's because the world as we know it, and the world as Mary and Joseph knew it as they began their journey to Bethlehem, and the world that Isaiah knew it as he put ink to papyrus may seem different, but really they are much the same.

Like Isaiah, like the Christ child's parents, we also yearn for a time when the meek will receive equity and children will not experience the terror of violence as they make their innocent way in the world. Like them, it is our yearning that brings us to the hope of a Messiah, one to show us the way where our human imagination has come to an end. And so, we draw close to the manger, to the one who will bring us the comfort, as well as, the challenge that the prophets foretold.

As you hear the words of the prophet today, in all their joy and difficulty, take some time to reflect on these questions:

Who are the prophets - the ones who reveal truth, even if it is uncomfortable - in your own life? In the life of your church congregation?

What does your community do to respond to the yearning that Isaiah expresses and that so many feel for equity and justice? What could you do that you are not doing yet?

How does the coming arrival of the Christ child fill you with hope? What other responses might the arrival of the Messiah bring up for you?