



PARKWAY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



www.parkwayucc.org
May 21, 2023

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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.

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

Scripture Reader sign up today: <https://tinyurl.com/PUCCreader>

Flowers: John & Joyce Ruiz in honor of their wedding anniversary.

Subscribe to our email lists: Sign up at www.parkwayucc.org

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Photos/Videos Please be aware that our worship services are video recorded, streamed live on Facebook Live, and made available for later viewing through that service.

Photos/videos should generally not be taken of children in church except as part of organized activities and programs, and any requests of children or their parents or guardians should be respected. Please be respectful of privacy and mindful that this is a safe and sacred space for all who enter.

Media uploads: <https://tinyurl.com/PUCCmedia>

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

5/24 BARNES, Andrea & Steven (37)

5/24 KRAUSE, Ashley & Matthew (8)

5/25 SPERRY, Brenda & Doug (21)

Birthdays

5/21 CLIFFORD, Thomas

5/21 DOTY, Nathaniel

5/21 OEHLER, Kurt

5/23 MASTERSON, Jamie

7th Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 21, 2023 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

Meditation *Integration is a basic law of life; when we resist it, disintegration is the natural result, both inside and outside of us. Thus we come to the concept of harmony through integration. ~Norman Cousins*

Welcome Let us know you are here!

Passing the Peace of Christ

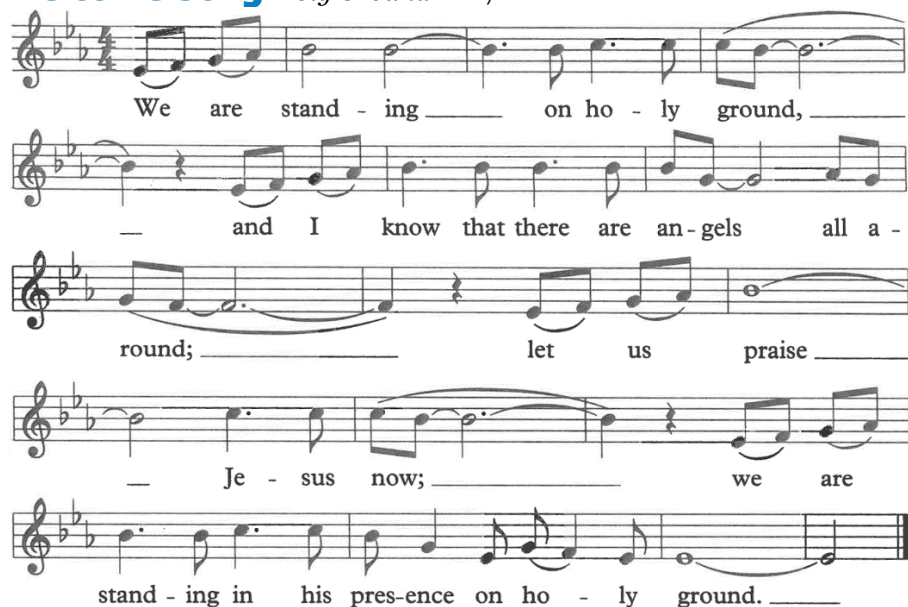
“May the peace of Christ be with you.”

(We are intentional about bringing more peace into the world.)

Prelude *I Know Whom I Have Believed*—arr. David Lasky
Based on the tune: *El Nathan* by James McGranaham

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Welcome Song *Holy Ground* #2272



Scripture Luke 24:44-53 (CEB – Common English Bible)

Jesus said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. He said to them, “This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and a change of heart and life for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

Look, I'm sending to you what God promised, but you are to stay in the city until you have been furnished with heavenly power."

Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, where he lifted his hands and blessed them. As he blessed them, he left them and was taken up to heaven. They worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem overwhelmed with joy. And they were continuously in the temple praising God.

*Call to Worship

One: We come because we are eager for community. We want to belong and to give one another room.

Many: **We want to be known by name. We want to recognize one another and be in solidarity with one another.**

One: We come because we want to be quiet. We want to have hushed sacred space.

Many: **We want to have an experience of the Holy today. We want God to reach out to us in our uniqueness.**

One: We come to learn more about Jesus. We want to align ourselves with him and to become more and more like him.

Many: **We want to catch the breath of the Holy Spirit. We want to be refreshed and to recommit to the fruits of the spirit.**

One: We come to be of the world, but not twisted or jaded by it. We come to learn to be above it all.

Many: **We want to be of the spiritual realm and we want to keep our feet on the ground.**

One: We want to be balanced, integrated, whole. God meets us wherever we are and brings us close.

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

*Song *When Morning Gilds the Skies* #487



1. When morn - ing gilds the skies, My heart a - wak - ing cries:
2. Does sad - ness fill my mind? A sol - ace here I find:
3. Let earth's wide cir - cle round In joy - ful notes re - sound:
4. Be this, while life is mine, My can - ti - cle di - vine:



May Je - sus Christ be praised! A - like at work and prayer
May Je - sus Christ be praised! Or fades my earth - ly bliss?
May Je - sus Christ be praised! Let air and sea and sky
May Je - sus Christ be praised! Be this the e - ter - nal song



To Je - sus I re - pair: May Je - sus Christ be praised!
My com-fort still is this: May Je - sus Christ be praised!
From depth to height re - ply: May Je - sus Christ be praised!
Through all the a - ges long: May Je - sus Christ be praised!

*Opening Prayer

Holy One, open the eyes of my heart. I want to experience things on a deeper level. I want to read between the lines. I want to feel what is unspoken. I want to be available to you. Help me to receive you this hour and to experience some enlightenment, transformation and maturation in the faith. 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. Please meet your child/youth in the Gathering Space just outside the Sanctuary after worship - as the teachers will bring them there after class.

Children's Response *All God's Critters Got a Place in the Choir*

Refrain: All God's critters got a place in the choir
Some sing low and some sing higher
Some sing out loud on the telephone wire
And some just clap their hands... or paws... or anything they got now...

Listen to the bass, it's the one on the bottom,
Where the bullfrog croaks and the hippopotamus
Moans and groans with a big t'do,
And the old cow just goes MOO-OO-OO

The dogs and the cats they take up the middle
While the honeybee hums and the cricket fiddles
The donkey brays and the pony neighs
And the old coyote HOOOOOWLS. [Refrain]

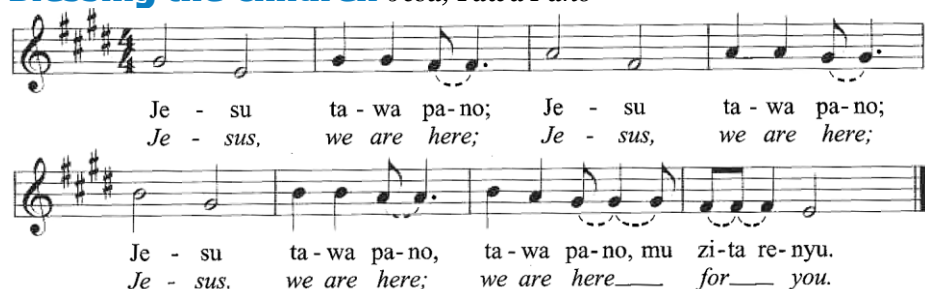
Listen to the top where the little birds sing
On the melodies with the high notes ringing
The hoot owl hollers over everything
And the jaybird disagrees (mmblbbmmmmmblll).

Singin' in the night-time, singin' in the day
The little duck quacks, then he's on his way
The 'possum ain't got much to say
And the porcupine talks to herself. [Refrain]

It's a simple song of living, and it's sung everywhere
 By the ox, and the fox, and the grizzly bear
 The grumpy alligator and the hawk above
 The sly raccoon and the turtle dove.

Everybody here is a part of the plan
 We all get to play in the great critter band
 From the eagle in the sky to the whale in the sea
 It's one great symphony! [Refrain]

Blessing the Children *Jesu, Tawa Pano*



Je - su ta - wa pa-no; Je - su ta - wa pa-no;
 Je - sus, we are here; Je - sus, we are here;

Je - su ta - wa pa-no, ta - wa pa-no, mu zi-ta re-nyu.
 Je - sus, we are here; we are here for you.

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

Theophilus, the first scroll I wrote concerned everything Jesus did and taught from the beginning, right up to the day when he was taken up into heaven. Before he was taken up, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus instructed the apostles he had chosen.

After his suffering, he showed them that he was alive with many convincing proofs. He appeared to them over a period of forty days, speaking to them about God's kingdom. While they were eating together, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what God had promised. He said, "This is what you heard from me: John baptized with water, but in only a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

As a result, those who had gathered together asked Jesus, "Lord, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?" Jesus replied, "It isn't for you to know the times or seasons that God has set by God's own authority. Rather, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

After Jesus said these things, as they were watching, he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going away and as they were staring toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood next to them. They said, "Galileans, why are you standing here, looking toward heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you saw him go into heaven."

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon

A Time of Prayer *Lead Me, Guide Me #2214*

Lead me, guide me, a - long the way,
for if you lead me, I can - not stray.
Lord, let me walk each day with thee.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

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.

Blessing of the Letters Bread for the World

Offering Interlude *We Have Peace with God—* Lester H. Groom
Inspired by Romans 5:1

*Response *Ubi Caritas ~ Live in Charity #2179*

Live in char - i - ty and stead - fast love,
U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,

live in char - i - ty; God will dwell with you.
u - bi ca - ri - tas De - us i - bi est.

*Prayer of Dedication

Holy One, the gifts we bring today are a small part of all we have received. We push back our inclination to be more generous because of our anxiety about the economy. We hold back on sharing our faith and advocating for compassion and justice out of anxiety about the division in our world and in our neighborhood. We hold back on inviting neighbors to church out of anxiety about how they might view us and the church. Help us to be more generous and engaged advocates - willing to be vulnerable and courageous in sharing our faith. Amen.

*Song of Parting *O Jesus, I Have Promised #388*

1. O Je - sus, I have prom - ised To serve Thee to the end;
 2. O let me feel Thee near me! The world is ev - er near;
 3. O let me hear Thee speak - ing In ac - cents clear and still,
 4. O Je - sus, Thou hast prom - ised To all who fol - low Thee

Be Thou for - ev - er near me, My Mas - ter and my friend;
 I see the sights that daz - zle, The tempt - ing sounds I hear;
 A - bove the storms of pas - sion, The mur - murs of self - will;
 That where Thou art in glo - ry There shall Thy ser - vant be;

I shall not fear the bat - tle If Thou art by my side,
 My foes are ev - er near me, A - round me and with - in;
 O speak to re - as - sure me, To has - ten or con - trol;
 And, Je - sus, I have prom - ised To serve Thee to the end;

Nor wan - der from the path - way If Thou wilt be my guide.
 But, Je - sus, draw Thou near - er And shield my soul from sin.
 O speak, and make me lis - ten, Thou guard - ian of my soul.
 O give me grace to fol - low, My Mas - ter and my friend.

***Benediction**

***God's Light Goes Forth**

***Music for Going Forth** *Improvisation on Lasst Uns Erfreuen* (#455 All Creatures of our God and King)

Announcements

Please submit your announcement at www.parkwayucc.org/communications.
Bulletin and eNews deadline: noon Monday.

5/23—Tuesday Evening Dialogue

The Sun Does Shine by Anthony Ray Hinton

2nd & 4th Tuesdays | 6:00pm Potluck | 7:00pm Discussion | Heritage Room

Please join us as we continue our TED book on May 9 entitled *The Sun Does Shine* by Anthony Ray Hinton. This is a powerful, revealing story of hope, love, justice, and the power of reading by a man who spent thirty years on death row for a crime he didn't commit. Destined to be a classic memoir of wrongful imprisonment and freedom won, Hinton's memoir tells his dramatic thirty-year journey and shows how you can take away a man's freedom, but you can't take away his imagination, humor, or joy.

Contact: Helen Race | raceh@att.net | 314-401-4382

5/31—Parkway Adventurers Tour White Haven

Wed, May 31 | 9:30am carpool from church | 10:00am White Haven
7400 Grant Road (opposite Grant's Farm)

Join the Parkway Adventures on a visit to the beautiful estate White Haven, National Historic Site, General Ulysses S. Grant's St. Louis home. Meet at PUCC's parking lot at 9:30 am for carpooling or 10 am at White Haven,. Grant was a Civil War General credited with saving the Union, and the 18th President of the United States. We'll explore the grounds and museum from 10-11am and take a reserved tour of the White Haven estate at 11. Admission and tour are free. After White Haven, you are invited to join us for lunch at Fitz's SoCo, 5244 S. Lindbergh.

White Haven was built between 1812 and 1816, one of the oldest homes in St. Louis County today. It was built by the Dent family, and Julia Dent eventually became Grant's wife. The Grants lived at White Haven before and after the Civil War, and visited the estate during Grant's presidency. For the tour, the house has an accessible entrance and all but one room on the main floor is completely accessible. The winter kitchen in the basement is accessible only by stairs but there is photo information available.

<https://www.nps.gov/ulsg/index.htm>

Please RSVP to Donna Fauss, donnafauss@gmail.com or text/call (314)650-2607 so that we can have a head count for the guided tour. The more the merrier.

6/4—The PUCC Council -Question/Answer sessions about PUCC Articles & By-laws Revision

Sunday, June 4 | 11:15am-12:15pm

The PUCC Council will be conducting Question/Answer sessions regarding the PUCC Articles & By-laws Revision. This is in preparation for the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, June 11, 2023. The meeting will be available on Zoom.

Contact Linda Tossing, Council President: ltossing@att.net | 314-495-3063

6/11—Parkway UCC Annual Congregational Meeting & Pot-Luck Dinner

Sunday, June 11 | 11:15am-12:15pm | Sanctuary

Parkway UCC's The Annual Congregation Meeting will be Sunday, June 11, 2023 after the regular Sunday Service. The meeting will be available on Zoom. One the key items on the agenda is the Council is requesting approval of the revised Articles & By-laws. A printed copy is available in the Gathering Space and electronically on our website..

Potluck dinner to follow the meeting. Details upcoming in future bulletins.

Contact Linda Tossing, Council President: ltossing@att.net | 314-495-3063

Parkway Picnic Potluck Lunch

Sunday, June 11 | Following Congregational Meeting | Fellowship Hall

Let's celebrate after PUCC Annual Meeting on June 11, with a Potluck Lunch. Our goal is to be trash-free, using cloth tablecloths, napkins, china plates, and glassware. Volunteers will be washing dishes, and others will wash tablecloths and napkins. Please bring potluck entrees, sides, and desserts in non-disposable containers. We will not be throwing anything away; you may take home your containers after lunch. We will collect food waste in a container and try to leave as little as possible. The poster for Pot Luck offerings is located in the Gathering Space.

Ministry sign-ups will be posted around the room for activities that interest members and visitors. Many of our projects are one-and-done tasks and take less time. Contact Carol Cobb: ccjcobb@aol.com | 314-965-4147.

Cloth Napkin Collection: Let's save the planet by not using paper napkins

We are collecting easy-care cloth napkins to promote Fellowship meals as environmentally smart. There are three ways to donate: 1) money, 2) gently used easy-care napkins, and 3) purchase new easy-care napkins. The sign-up poster is in the Gathering Space with a basket to place the donated napkins. Volunteers will be recruited to wash a batch from time to time. If you wish to donate money by check, write napkins on the memo line. Contact Carol Cobb: ccjcobb@aol.com | 314-965-4147.

CAMP MOVAL
PRESENTS

Discover Camp Open House

Bring
the
Whole
Family!

Find Out What
Camp MoVal is All
About!

Sunday, May 28
Noon-5:00pm
At Camp MoVal,
Union Missouri

Activities:

- Camp Tours
- Swimming
- Fishing and Boating
- Snacks
- Meet your MoVal Staff
- And More!

Camp MoVal
SINCE 1962

For more information:
email Amanda@mmsucc.org
636-583-2730

6/11—AWOL to MO Botanical Garden for Chihuly Exhibition

Sunday, June 11 | Approximately 2:00pm carpool from church

Join Adventurous Women Out Late (AWOL). Chihuly returns to the Missouri Botanical Garden for the first time since 2006, with a stunning exhibition uniting art and nature. Featuring 18 large-scale installations presented throughout the Garden's grounds, the beauty and drama of *Chihuly in the Garden 2023* is an inspiring experience whether viewed in the natural light of day or under a blanket of stars during *Chihuly Nights*.

Gateway ONA Needs You!

Hello Parkway Family! For those who don't know I am deeply involved with the Gateway Open Affirming Coalition and am the current treasurer. We are in fairly dire need for additional support from within our supporting bodies of churches. As an FYI - Meetings are normally held on the fourth Thursday of each month, by Zoom, beginning at 7:00 PM with a brief social time before the meeting beginning at 6:45 PM.

Our needs include:

1. GONA needs a person skilled in knowledge to support our website, Facebook page, and to assist with virtual connections for the Annual Convocation on the first Saturday in March and the Fall Fund Raising event held in October.
2. GONA needs a person who could become the Assistant Treasurer. Work with the current treasurer, to make deposits, write checks, keep minimal records showing what has come in, what has gone out and what our balance is in the checking account.

This person needs computer skills or accounting skills. If you or someone you know might be interested, please mail me or our convener, Lorin Cope, at buckeyeohio@hotmail.com, or call his office at St. Paul UCC: 314-772-4772 or my cell: 330-903-7711. Thank you.

Finally, participating in St. Louis Pridefest has been a hallmark of GONA. Unfortunately, I will not be able to participate in this years' celebration as myself and my partner, Doug, will be in Toronto helping my employer with our first in-person Pride celebration. If you could please help us with some of your time during the PrideFest celebration we would greatly appreciate it!

3. GONA needs help staffing the booth/tent at PrideFest on June 24 and 25 in downtown St. Louis. We also hope to always have on each shift at least one authorized pastor who would be available to those who come into the tent if there is a need for spiritual care or a conversation with a pastor. Here is the link to volunteer:

https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.signupgenius.com%2Fgo%2F409044AABAD2BA46-stlpride%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR15xdnRx6ZPbpJoXjJvmM-N2mVXQfHVkjs8Nz6UowkafwRhTYHg-s_2Oik&h=ATonDmVbJAx2Vy4bm7Ya9GKMdMnWqSX6-Po8-esE8RFbgmqTATqPPJIgrDIpjKpmnQULm1EvbeZwkspfek-NnpIc4soBYzRS3pD59w5msVPF7CxUlu8D_8S5IcRf3z6nSWqBmpySKpdVp h6mxA

Thank you! Greg Schmelig ~ greg_schmelig@hotmail.com; 314-308-1868

JHLTB—Jesus Has Left the Building

Our next Fifth Sunday - July 30, 2023

If you'd like to be a part of the team, please let us know:

kevin@parkwayucc.org

Please put July 30 on your calendar. Many more details to come!

Caring for Creation in Action: PUCC Sustainability Seekers to Plant a Native Pollinator Garden

Buzz buzz buzz! New and exciting things are happening at PUCC. The Sustainability Seekers are branching out and are planting a native garden next to the kitchen on the east side of the building. Why natives? Our planet has lost much of our native habitat. Native plants provide nectar for pollinators including hummingbirds, native bees, butterflies, moths and bats. Many caterpillars have evolved to eat specific plants, like the monarch caterpillar which eats only milkweed. Our native birds, insects and animals can't survive without our native plants.

A native garden is different from a conventional garden in several important ways. In a conventional garden you may put pesticides on your plants to keep them from being eaten. In a native garden it is the opposite. You want the plants to be eaten by caterpillars and insects! Did you know that baby birds need caterpillars, insects and spiders to survive? They don't eat seed, they need the protein provided by these invertebrates. A single clutch of Carolina Chickadee chicks can eat more than 9,000 caterpillars in the weeks between hatching and taking flight.

It may seem as if nothing much is happening in the garden for the first year or two. It takes time to establish natives! Their root system grows very deep, as deep as fifteen feet or more. The first few years native plants put their energy into growing their root system. This allows them to survive drought and find the nutrients they need in the soil. Once established they need very little watering or fertilizer.

You may see our native garden start to take shape this month. We will be removing the sod and adding compost to the soil. Planting will start soon! Be sure to watch this exciting addition to PUCC.

Word Scramble for the Pollinator Garden

vetnai
denrag
tscpmoo
esbe
npalt
psorut
ecsicen
untrae
bthiata
dwmeilek
drbi
gudrhto
trwea
nnhssieu
dddpmuleu

imhdrbgiumn
otsro
liso
nair
shomt
ivruves
nchoamr
slamani
esdes
ptaclelriar
izfrreetil
cmalier
yblstautisnaii
ohwrtg
acnepiet

A Light Bulb Moment

It's. Not. My. Luggage.

A Light Bulb Moment with Molly Grisham, PUCer and listener, inspirer, actualizer.

Today started early. Way too early.

Last night, I arrived at my hotel a little after 11pm. I tried to go right to bed, but my brain would not power down. After a night of tossing and turning and solving all the world's problems, my alarm jolted me back to life at 5:30am.

I took a shower, drank some tea, ate a Power Crunch bar, repacked my stuff, and checked out of my hotel by 6:30 am. I got in my rental car and headed to a college campus for a full day of meetings.

My first session began at 7:45am, and my last session ended just before 3pm. I had to work through lunch, and unfortunately – due to my travel schedule – I needed to eat my next meal at the airport. The Regional Airport I was flying out of offered two food options; a vending machine or a small market that sold chips, candy bars, sodas, and anything they could put in a fryer. This included fried chicken tenders, French fries, fried cheese sticks, or fried jalapeno poppers. I opted for the fried combo.

While wiping the grease from my fingers, I heard the dreaded announcement that my flight was delayed. I had a connecting flight in Chicago with a long layover, so I knew I would be fine. I found a quiet corner in the nearly empty terminal and spent time reflecting on the day.

Eventually, we made it to Chicago, where – you guessed it – my last flight was also delayed. We finally boarded around 9:30pm. Since I was flying on Southwest, I was free to select a window seat. A pilot from another airline was in the aisle, and the middle seat was empty. Fingers crossed.

Unfortunately, that seat stayed empty for just a moment. A woman who was carrying a lot of stuff – both physically and emotionally – made her way into the middle seat. Her bags and her elbows were everywhere. Respecting personal space was clearly not one of her core values.

As a frequent flyer, I can usually sense when something isn't right. We should have closed the main door by now. We should have heard some announcements. We should have pulled away from the gate. But that wasn't happening. I also noticed that new passengers were joining us every couple of minutes.

It was clear to me that we were on the last flight to St. Louis, and we were waiting for additional people. You could feel the tension rising, and then we heard, "Ahhh, passengers, thank you for your patience. We are just waiting on some bags. We will be ready to go as soon they find them and get them loaded."

Did he just say, "As soon as they find them?" Rookie mistake!

Ms. Elbows turns to the Pilot beside her and says, "Oh really? Is that so? Or is that just something they are saying? Does that really happen?"

Mr. Pilot calmly replies, "Yes, Ma'am, this is the last flight of the night, so they will do everything possible to get all the luggage on the plane."

Ms. Elbows fires back, "Oh please!" (Insert eye roll.)

Mr. Pilot responds, "Well, if it were your luggage, you would want them to do everything possible for you."

Without a second thought, she yelled, "It's NOT MY LUGGAGE!" and then she pulled her hoodie down over her face, and with a huff, she silenced herself. And that was the moment I pulled out my laptop and began this post. Yes, I'd like to go home too, I'm hungry again, and it's been a full day, but I also realize this moment is not about me.

As I look around, I can see that the last few passengers to board our flight may very well be immigrants. I am hearing different languages and noticing different styles of clothing. I can't help but wonder if we are waiting on their luggage. To me, it is worth the wait. I know firsthand what it feels like to want your sweatshirt that smells like home, or the last of your favorite homemade snack, or the shampoo or toothpaste that is familiar to you.

It amazes me how many people lack empathy. This idea that we shouldn't wait ten more minutes because it isn't MY luggage isn't something I can comprehend, but I see it all the time with my clients. There are so many individuals who simply cannot embrace the needs of the group, but high-performing teams embrace empathy. They set aside their personal needs and wants for the sake of the team. This is what allows them to perform at the highest level.

Empathy on teams is essential because it increases trust. When individuals feel that their teammates understand and care about them, they are more likely to trust each other because they don't have to be the sole holders of their needs. This trust also opens up space for honest dialog, often leading to deeper and more meaningful relationships.

I have also noticed that empathy tends to foster a sense of collaboration. People are more willing to collaborate when they know they are seen and heard. This, in turn, allows them to work more effectively, make better decisions, and move toward innovative solutions.

Empathy matters. I know for sure that I want to surround myself with people who will see past their own needs and put the group first. I'd say more, but we just got word that the lost luggage has been found, and it is time to return my seatback and tray table to their original and locked position.

Here's to hoping that my seatmate sleeps the rest of the flight ...

[Visit [mollygrisham.com](https://www.mollygrisham.com) to learn more --- and find inspiration in additional *Light Bulb Moments* at <https://www.mollygrisham.com/blog>]

Versions of the Lord's Prayer

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever. Amen. (New Zealand Prayer Book)

Dear One, closer to us than our own hearts, farther from us than the most distant star, you are beyond naming. May your powerful presence become obvious not only in the undeniable glory of the sky, but also in the seemingly base and common processes of the earth. Give us what we need, day by day, to keep body and soul together, because clever as you have made us, we still owe our existence to you. We recognize that to be reconciled with you, we must live peaceably and justly with other human beings, putting hate and bitterness behind us. We are torn between our faith in your goodness and our awareness of the evil in your creation, so deliver us from the temptation to despair. Yours alone is the universe and all its majesty and beauty. So it is. Amen. (Jim Burklo)

Great Love; the root and sap of our evolving fullness, nudge us forward in our creative potential so we may flourish for the common good. In each mindful moment, help us recognize that we free ourselves from the ghosts of our past in the release we grant those who have harmed us. Keep us focused on what is right. Make us thirsty for what is just. For it is love, that knows the way, shows the way, becomes the way, to the fulfilment of our eternal call. Amen. (Stephen Best)

Eternal God, we invite your spirit to come into this room and guide our actions. We are not here to ask you to bless what we have designed. We are here to ask you to transform us: To make us better. Make us courageous. Make us tireless in seeking a more just nation for all who live in this land. We know that we will only be a great nation when we are a good nation - when every citizen is fully vested in the promises of citizenship and fully shares in the opportunities of this great land. Eternal God, hope of all who call out to you, may we each be one pivot point where the world swings from what it is to what it can be. We may call you by different names, we may pray in different languages, we may come from a multitude of perspectives - but right now we share this moment in history - as we live together on this fragile planet. Give us grace, courage, compassion, hope. Amen. (Steven Bailey)

Most Compassionate Life-giver, may we honor and-praise you; may we work with you to establish your new order of justice, peace and love. Give us what we need for growth, and help us, through forgiving others, to accept forgiveness. Strengthen us in the time of testing, that we may resist all evil for all the tenderness, strength and love are yours, now and forever. Amen. (unknown)

Prayer List

as of Wednesday, May 17, 2023

Celebrations

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

Spring beauty.

Elliot Rene Gaillardetz - 1st grandchild of Andrea/Steve Barnes 5/10.

Students, teachers and families as school year ends now/soon.

Sara Tallyn Endejan just graduated from SIUE with a BS in Biology; heading for grad school at the University of Minnesota.

Coree Mix - settling into new home by DePaul Hospital... 11777 Minot Drive, Bridgeton 63044; 314-412-0150. They'd love a call and/or visit!

Graduates and other collegians as they wrap up their semester.

New Members - *Kathy and Stan Burcham; Peg Sant'Ambrogio; Sally Dodge and Peter LaSalle.*

Kari Borgmann's mother turned 99 on Friday, May 11.

Concerns

Val & Doug Detjen - her heart surgery went well...complicated healing.

Don Wandless - healing at Cape Albeon after a fall and hospital stay.

Dawn Jones-Goldstein - healing after tonsil surgery last Friday.

Norma Shafermeyer - pacemaker surgery on May 17th (Ferrel).

Effects of Cyclone Mocha - Bay of Bengal (Bangladesh & Myanmar).

The ongoing power struggles and violence in Sudan.

The continuing war in Ukraine.

Continuing

Peter LaSalle - healing and strengthening.

Joseph Miller - home after hospitalization & rehab (son of Deb Carter).

Cassie Rosenberger's mother Martha - ongoing cancer treatments.

Tito, Sarah & Family - his outpt rehab after stroke (Mason nephew).

Tom - healing after surgery due to car accident (Kathleen Tarr nephew).

Barb - complications with cancer tx and at odds with insurance co (Tarr)

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

Bill Darland - ongoing health issues.

Gail, Bill and Christopher Haack - chronic health challenges.

Jan - experiencing dementia (great-grandma of Coree Mix).

Angie - living with Hodgkin's Lymphoma (Rosenberger).

Matt Albers - 3rd round chemotherapy soon (Connors' friend's son).

Theresa - surgery/treatment/recovery - aggressive cancer (Schwarz).

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

Sharon - variety of health challenges (Rogers).

Val - strength and patience (Jim Winkelmann's 102 year-old mother).

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.

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

JoJo & Derek and Natty Kersting as they await a baby this summer.

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 & those dealing with meds.

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.

7th Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 21, 2023

John 17:1-11

Spirit of Witness

Mental Health Sunday

“Pandemic has us living at 80% of our stress capacity. This is why those minor things set us off. We aren’t going from 0 to 100 without cause. We are going from 80 to 100 with good reason. If there was no pandemic, the dog incessantly barking might cause usual stress levels to go up 20 points. We get annoyed and yell at the dog with a little more volume than strictly necessary. However, given the 80% stress we endure as a result of COVID-19, the same constant barking puts us at or over maximum capacity to cope. We might end up crying over the stubborn dog or feeling way more anger than the situation calls for.

Of course, not all of us are in the same boat. Those of us with more resources have an obligation to support those with fewer resources. We need to remember that for some of our neighbors pandemic conditions have elevated their stress levels to maximum; they are coping the best they can. Now is a time to practice compassion and not judgment. Remember that Paul tells us in Romans that we are to “owe no one anything, except to love one another.” If you are doing okay today, right now, what can you do to help someone else alleviate some of their stress? Reach out and listen before choosing what to do. Remember that people living alone, single parents, healthcare workers, retail workers, delivery people, people with physical disabilities, people with mental health challenges, People of Color, and many others have increased stress, often more than the 80% we can attribute to COVID-19.

One of the most often over-looked spiritual need is the need for community. A good spiritual practice is to intentionally connect with a community (church, AA, book club, etc.). Remember that it is okay to be stressed, to be overwhelmed, to feel what you feel in any given moment. It is not okay to ignore the stress, self-destruct, or take out our emotions on another person. We are not alone. God wants us to find life in God’s ways even now.”*

*Keefe, Rev. Dr. Rachael. “Recognizing Reality: The Stress of Pandemic.” *United Church of Christ Mental Health Network*, 7 Sept. 2020, <https://www.mhn-ucc.org/2020/09/07/2281/>.