



www.parkwayucc.org

November 12, 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 or sending an email.

Welcome Children We invite children to full participation in worship. We also have activity bags for young children to use while they are here.

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

Scripture Reader: Dottie Dwyer

Please consider signing up to donate flowers in 2024

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

Birthdays

11/13 DWYER, John
11/14 RAUSCHER, Nathan
11/14 ROSS, Emma
11/15 POLSTER, Stephanie
11/17 PENICO, Steve
11/17 TOSSING, Linda
11/18 RUSSELL, John
11/18 SCHMELIG, Greg

24th Sunday *after* Pentecost

Sunday, November 12, 2023 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

Meditation *If you believe you can accomplish everything by “cramming” at the eleventh hour, by all means, don't lift a finger now. But you may think twice about beginning to build your ark once it has already started raining. ~Max Brooks*

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 Need Thee Every Hour*—arr. Benjamin David Knoedler (2016)
Based on the hymn tune *Need* by Rober Lowry

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Introit *God Is Our Refuge and Strength*—Lloyd Larson (1998)

Offered by the Sanctuary Choir.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble.
God is our refuge and strength. Creator Almighty is with us;
Our God, the God of Jacob, is our refuge!

Welcome Song *As We Gather*

1. As we gath - er may Your Spir - it work with - in us,
as we gath - er may we glo - ri - fy Your Name.
Know-ing well that as our hearts be - gin to wor-ship,
we'll be blessed be - cause we came,
we'll be blessed be - cause we came.

Scripture Matthew 25:1-13 (NRSV – New Revised Standard Version)

Jesus said, “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten young women took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’

Then all those young women got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. Later the other young women came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us.’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ Keep awake, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

*Call to Worship

One: Come one and all ~ to worship individually and together.

Many: To worship and to claim our willingness to share the story of our faith with one another and with the next generation.

One: Faith continues only when it’s passed along

Many: from each of us to those who have not yet heard—or who haven’t heard it in our particular way.

One: We’re telling stories of God’s wonder and mystery, God’s commandments and guidance, God’s inclusive love and grace.

Many: We set our hope in God, and remember our faith story must still be told.

One: We also commit ourselves to listening to others.

Many: For we do not have a corner on the truth. We all have something more to experience and learn.

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

*Song O God, Our Help in Ages Past



1. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
2. Un - der the shad - ow of thy throne still may we dwell se - cure;
3. Be - fore the hills in or - der stood, or earth re - ceived its frame,
4. A thou - sand a - ges, in thy sight, are like an eve - ning gone;
5. Time, like an e - ver - roll - ing stream, soon bears us all a - way;
6. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,



1. our shel-ter from the storm-y blast, and our e - ter - nal home!
2. suf - fi - cient is thine arm a - lone, and our de-fense is sure.
3. from ev - er - last - ing, thou art God, to end - less years the same.
4. short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.
5. we fly for - got - ten, as a dream dies at the o - pening day.
6. be thou our guide while life shall last, and our e - ter - nal home.

*Opening Prayer

Holy One, we are often pulled in many directions. Many duties and tasks seek to lay claim on our lives. This day, in this place, let love be our choice and our focus. We open our hearts and spirits to You and to one another. We are grateful that You have called us here. 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 For children under the age of 3, parents are invited to take them to Room 01 (upper level) where one of our teachers will meet them at the door. Children from age 3 to 5th grade can follow one of our teachers down to Room 12 (lower level), and youth from 6th to 12th grade can follow a teacher to Room 15 (also lower level). For children in Room 01, parents please pick them up after worship. Children and youth from age 3 thru high school can be met in the Gather Space just outside the Sanctuary after worship, as the teachers will bring them back upstairs after class.

Blessing the Children *Jesus Loves Me*

Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so;

Little ones to him belong, they are weak but he is strong

Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me still today, walking with me on my way,

Wanting as a friend to give, life and love to all who live

Yes, Jesus loves me...

Scripture Psalm 78:1-7 (CEB – Common English Bible)

Listen, my people, to my teaching; tilt your ears toward the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a proverb. I'll declare riddles from days long gone - ones that we've heard and learned about, ones that our ancestors told us. We won't hide them from their descendants; we'll tell the next generation all about the praise due the Lord and about God's strength - the wondrous works God has done.

God established a law for Jacob and set up instruction for Israel, ordering our ancestors to teach them to their children. This is so that the next generation and children not yet born will know these things, and so they can rise up and tell their children to put their hope in God - never forgetting God's deeds, but keeping God's commandments.

Song *Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying*



1. Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing; the watch-men on the
 2. All who hear the watch-ers sing - ing, whose hearts with deep de -
 3. Now let all the heav'ns a - dore you, let saints and an - gels



heights are cry - ing, "A - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, a - rise!"
 light are spring - ing, a - wake and rise up from your gloom.
 sing be - fore you, let harp and cym - bal now u - nite.



Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es and at the thrill - ing
 Forth the Sav - ior comes, all glo - rious, in grace ar - rayed, in
 Of one pearl each shin - ing por - tal, where we shall join the



cry re - joic - es; Christ comes, O Church, lift up your eyes!
 truth vic - to - rious; our Star is risen, our Light is come!
 choir im - mor - tal in prais - es round your throne of light.



Rise up, with will - ing feet go forth, the Sav - ior meet:
 Now come, O bless - ed One, God's own be - lov - ed Son,
 Our eyes be - hold the sight, our ears fill with de - light:



Al - le - lu - ia! Lo, great and small, we an - swer all;
 Al - le - lu - ia! We haste a - long, an ea - ger throng,
 Al - le - lu - ia! There - fore we sing, our hymns we bring,



we fol - low now with joy the call.
 and glad - ly join the ad - vent song.
 in praise to you our voi - ces ring.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon

A Time of Prayer *You Are Mine*



1. — I will come to you in the si - lence, —
2. — I am hope for all who are hope-less, —
3. — I am strength for all the de - spair-ing, —
4. I am the Word that leads all to free - dom, I



I will lift you from — all your fear. —
I am eyes for all who long to see. In the —
heal - ing for the ones who dwell in shame. —
am the peace the world can - not give. —



You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice, be
shad-ows of the night, I will be your light,
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free, and
I will call your name, em - brac - ing all your pain, stand



still and know I am here. —
come and rest in
all will know my
up, now walk, and

2-4 *Refrain*




me. _____
 name. _____
 live! _____

Do not be a - fraid, I am



with you. I have called you each by name.



Come and fol-low me, I will bring you home; I



love you and you are mine. _____

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.]

Stewardship Moment *Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives*



Offering Our Gifts to God

www.parkwayucc.org/giving

There is a plate up front and one on the round table in the Gathering Space.

Offertory *Canticle of Thanksgiving*—Herbert Brokering/Dale Wood

Based on the Welsh tune *The Ash Grove*.

Creator of glory, all seasons Thy story.
 The roses, the rivers, the ridges, Thy mirth.
 The straining of power, of eons each hour,
 all heavens o'er meadows, old signs of rebirth.
 The weeping in willows, all children in pillows,
 all valleys, all oceans, Thy spaces of birth
 Thy blossoms unfolding, all angels beholding,
 with morning and darkness renewing Thy earth.

In quaking and thunder, when life breaks asunder,
 in pain and in sorrow, all death is Thy door.
 Thy table of prizes, in daily surprises,
 our souls only feasting Thy treasure and store.
 Through silence and wonder our spirits would ponder,
 a sight of the brightness which saints now adore.
 Thy love comes escaping while watching and waiting,
 our hearts overflowing adore Thee, adore.

Thy beauty so tender, we live in Thy splendor.
 O send us the life of the Lamb on the throne.
 Come visit our tables, our castles and stables,
 'til nothing and no one be ever alone.
 Come father, come mother, come sister, come brother,
 the cup is o'er flowing, the harvest is done.
 Rise up, O partaker! Give thanks to the Maker!
 The banquet is set in the midst of the Son!

*Response *Make Me A Servant*

Make me a ser-vant, hum-ble and meek, Lord, let me
 lift up those who are weak. And may the prayer of my
 heart al-ways be: Make me a ser-vant, make me a
 ser-vant, make me a ser-vant to - day. _____

*Prayer of Dedication

Holy One, we want to follow Jesus' lead as we speak and act in the world. Harness our energies for good. Challenge us and motivate us to be ready at any given moment, for opportunities to love are all around us. Heighten our awareness so we are able to bring what is needed. Enlighten and humble us when we need to be on the receiving end. Amen.

***Song of Parting** *Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?*

1 & 6 Won't you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as Christ to you?
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, we are trav - elers on the road;
3 I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shad - ow of your fear;
4 I will weep when you are weep-ing; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
5 When we sing to God in heav-en we shall find such har - mo - ny.

Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my ser-vant, too.
We are here to help each oth-er go the mile and bear the load.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
I will share your joy and sor-row, till we've seen this jour-ney through.
Born of all we've known to-geth-er of Christ's love and ag-o-o-ny.

(repeat stanza 1)

Richard Gillard was born in England and later made his home in New Zealand. Largely self-taught, Gillard has described his musical style as "folk." This is the best known of his many songs in the United States.

Tune: SERVANT SONG 8.7.8.7.
Richard Gillard, 1977
Arr. Betty Carr Pulkingham, 1977; adapt.

*Benediction

*God's Light Goes Forth

*Music for Going Forth

Postlude in Bb Major—K. Seeger (18th century), arr. Carlo Rossini

CONSIDER THIS REMARKABLE FACT: IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, THERE IS NOT A SINGLE WORD ABOUT WHAT TO BELIEVE, ONLY WORDS ABOUT WHAT TO DO AND HOW TO BE. BY THE TIME THE NICENE CREED IS WRITTEN, ONLY THREE CENTURIES LATER, THERE IS NOT A SINGLE WORD IN IT ABOUT WHAT TO DO AND HOW TO BE— ONLY WORDS ABOUT WHAT TO BELIEVE.

Robin R. Meyers

Saving God from Religion: A Minister's Search for Faith in a Skeptical Age

#kindlequotes

Announcements

Speaker Series TODAY: Respect, Empathy, Awareness

by Katie Rodriguez-Banister

Sunday, November 12 | 11:15am | Heritage Room & ZOOM

Our speaker, Katie Rodriguez Banister survived an auto accident in 1990 that left her a quadriplegic, paralyzed from the chest down. After six months of rehabilitation and fifteen months of living with her parents, she returned to living independently in 1992.

With her husband, Steve the two co-founded *Access-4-All, llc.* with a mission to educate and empower others through motivational speaking and disability education. Katie serves as a board member of the Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis since 1992, serving now three terms as President. Katie was a performer and founding member with St. Louis' *Disability Project* for six years. She served as a board member and President of the Delta Center for Independent Living from 1996-2002 and board member of the VSA Arts of MO from 1996- 2000. She co-produced her own motivational video *Change Takes Time* as well as two music videos, *Spring* and *Beauty in the Lou*.

The speaker will appear in person in the Heritage Room following worship. You may join us live or remotely by Zoom.

Zoom Link:

us02web.zoom.us/j/84691476997?pwd=aEM2ZURYWURLNmkwdoEzVoVHV1IyQT0g#success **ID:** 8469147 6997 | **Passcode:** 181565 | 312- 626-6799

Circle of Concern Thanksgiving Baskets

Circle of Concern serves 650 families in West St. Louis County. As part of their Thanksgiving Basket program, 6 area churches pack boxes containing 8 sought after items, including: can of pumpkin, stuffing mix, box of mashed potatoes, corn muffing mix, can of fruit, can of cranberries, jar of turkey gravy, and a container of chicken broth. These boxes are then distributed along with a pie, fresh vegetables and a \$30.00 gift card to Aldi's.

Please bring your donated items to church and leave inside the entry doors before the deadline of November 12, 2023. We are slated to pack 100 boxes. Thanks for your generosity! Lana Biondo lanabiondo66@gmail.com

Sharing Our Food with Isaiah 58

We also have an opportunity to serve our midtown ministry with our neighbors at Isaiah 58. We are requested to provide 300 2-lb bags of flour for Thanksgiving Day clients. As you are able, consider adding the 2-lb bags of flour to your shopping carts until November 12. Place your donations in the marked box under the donation tables in the lobby. Thanks in advance for your continued support. Questions? Evelyn Buretta burettaevelyn@gmail.com; 636-220-1280

TAD ~ Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue... Zoom with us!

TAD will meet November 7th, 21st, and December 5th to discuss *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michelle Richardson.

Related to current issues of book accessibility in libraries, this book is historical fiction but based on true stories about the women librarians in Kentucky back in the 1930's who rode on horseback into the mountains to deliver books and newspapers. The main character has a genetic condition causing her to be shunned by her community. This adds an important component to the story about how isolation impacts the human spirit and how education and acceptance can overcome ignorance to allow understanding and kindness. Come 15 minutes early if you want to chat and build community before we start the book discussion...

Zoom...<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/83670617428?pwd=bUxPZEdDMlU4ay9oNndTWw4yZUYwUT09>

(312) 626-6799; Meeting ID: 836 7061 7428; Passcode: 480007

Questions? Contact Jackie Eiffert, jeiffert2@gmail.com; (661) 378-6781

TED ~ Tuesday Evening Dialogue Concludes Book on 14th

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

Please join us as we wrap up our discussion of *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michelle Richardson.

Related to current issues of book accessibility in libraries, this book is historical fiction but based on true stories about the women librarians in Kentucky back in the 1930's who rode on horseback into the mountains to deliver books and newspapers. The main character has a genetic condition causing her to be shunned by her community. This adds an important component to the story about how isolation impacts the human spirit and how education and acceptance can overcome ignorance to allow understanding and kindness. Please bring your ideas for our next book to read.

All are welcome for Potluck and Book Discussion.

Questions? Contact Helen Race raceh@att.net; 314- 401-4382

TASOM Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

Thursday, November 16 | 6:30 - 8.30pm | TASOM 664 Lemay Ferry Rd 63125

You are invited to the 2023 Thanksgiving dinner at TASOM featuring all of the traditional dishes with vegetarian options. This is a great opportunity to share a meal with old and new friends with our interfaith friends.

Free but donations are welcome to support TASOM Youth Club

Please RVSP by November 13...

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScx7PJin63d1JuonDzSb7ob_e19E54AVA6tc1BPRhD8ulwpw/viewform

Join us for a Special Worship December 3

Sunday, December 3 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall

Come One, Come All to a Special Worship Service on Sunday, December 3, 2023, at 10 a.m. We will begin with Worship in the Sanctuary and then... A Journey to Bethlehem in Fellowship Hall. Children will be given a Passport to visit Mary and Joseph, Angels, and spend time in the stable with a photo opportunity. Travel further on to the Bethlehem Market and taste

some of the foods of the era, visit some farm animals, and make a final visit with The Wisemen. Bring children of all ages, and invite grandkids to join us. There will be tables in the middle with more activities: God's Eyes, Festive Paper Chains, Ornaments, and Writing Poetry. Join us on the first Sunday of Advent!

More info? Contact Carol Cobb: ccjacob@aol.com | (314) 640-8166

Inquirers' Gathering - for those who want to know more about PUCC and who want to be known

Monday, January 8, 2024 | 6:30-7:45pm | Dessert | Heritage Room

Our goals that evening include:

- getting to know one another a bit more
- describing Parkway's worship, outreach, education, leadership, fellowship
- taking a look at our denomination, the United Church of Christ
- sharing ideas about the exciting future of Parkway UCC
- soliciting your thoughts on how we can be a more welcoming and inviting community of faith
- discussing some key issues of faith
- answering any of your questions

You will find our time together meaningful and informative.

Some churches call this sort of gathering a New Members Class—we do not.

While we do know that there are a number of visitors who have expressed interest in becoming members of the church, we do not assume that Inquirers are seeking membership. We just want to be hospitable, get to know you and have the chance to express gratitude for your presence among us.

Kevin Cameron: kevin@parkwayucc.org | 314-872-9330

Childcare is available that evening if requested ahead of time.

Habitat for Humanity St Louis Thanks You!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the recent auction to benefit Habitat for Humanity St. Louis. Your support helps provide decent affordable housing for those in need. Your donations and volunteer efforts reduce the weight of a mortgage for those who buy the homes.

St Louis Metro Area Crop Walk Results

The results from the St Louis Area Metro Area Crop Walk have been tabulated. The St. Louis Walk raised almost \$10,000.00. Our Parkway team raised \$2900.00 of that total. Thanks to all the donors, volunteers, walkers and supporters. We could not help eliminate hunger one step at a time without your efforts...Thanks so much to the Parkway Community. Pam Manning and Sue Moellering, Parkway's Crop Walk Team Organizers

November Alzheimer's News

Scientists may have discovered a new diagnostic tool for recognizing the early stages of Alzheimer's disease, providing hope for early detection in the future. Scientists believe that Alzheimer's is caused by the abnormal buildup of proteins in and around the brain cells, but what triggers this is still unclear.

"The disease starts to develop 20 years before the onset of symptoms, so it's important to detect it early – especially given the retardant medicines that are starting to arrive," Per Nilsson, one of the study authors, said in a statement. Nilsson is an associate professor at the Department of Neurobiology, Care Sciences and Society at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden.

In 2022, scientists developed a simple blood test that can detect abnormally folded proteins, and thus the early signs of Alzheimer's, before the disease symptoms begin to manifest.

However, in the latest study, published in the journal *Molecular Psychiatry*, Nilsson and his team discovered a hallmark of the disease that may allow for even earlier diagnostic testing: a metabolic increase in the brain's hippocampus, a part of the brain involved in memory and learning.

"Interestingly, changes in metabolism can be seen before any of the characteristic insoluble plaques have accumulated in the brain," Maria Ankarcrona, a professor and co-author of the study, said in a statement.

"The different energy balance tallies with what we've seen in images of the Alzheimer brain, but we've now detected these changes at an earlier stage"

To analyze these metabolic changes, the team studied the cells in the hippocampus of mice at different stages of Alzheimer's progression. One of the changes they observed was an increase in metabolism in the mitochondria, the energy-producing powerhouse of the cell.

This metabolic increase was partnered with a disruption in the mice's cellular recycling systems, causing parcels of damaged proteins to accumulate at the junctions between nerve cells in the brain.

"These findings highlight the importance of retaining functional mitochondria and normal protein metabolism," Nilsson said. "Going forward, we'll be able to do tests on mice to see if new molecules that stabilize mitochondrial and autophagic (cellular recycling) function can retard the disease."

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

Justice Work

Today is Bill's and my 43rd anniversary. We both finished our master's degrees in May. We met in October and went on our first date on Friday, November 7, 1980. We were married a year later in a church in Atlanta, Georgia. Thirty-five years after our first date, on November 7, 2015, we were legally married in a different church in the same neighborhood in Atlanta. Bill died eight months and ten days later of cancer.

I recently applied for widower's benefits through Social Security. This appointment was over the phone, and the woman kept telling me over and over we had not been legally married long enough for me to qualify. I kept trying to say to her this was not my fault. Bill and I got married soon after the Supreme Court ruled we could. I explained that, for the previous 35 years, we had paid the same taxes as she and her husband. I told her we owned businesses and reared two children together and were common-law spouses. She kept quoting the law and reminded me Bill died in Georgia, a state that had banned common-law marriage, specifically to avoid having to recognize relationships such as ours.

By sheer luck, or perhaps the grace of God, several weeks before this conversation, I had read an article about a same-gender couple who had taken this very issue to court. The courts ruled the nine-month requirement didn't apply to same-gender couples because, according to the Supreme Court ruling, we had been wrongly discriminated against.

The woman on the phone said all she could do was to go by was the letter of the law. She said I could apply, and she would deny me. Then I could appeal, and the next level would deny me. Only when I fought through four levels of denial could my case be considered by the judiciary. She then asked me if I still wanted to apply for Bill's benefits rather than mine.

Obviously, she didn't know me if she thought her "no" was going to deter me from this fight. I applied and began typing an email to my lawyer. I hadn't written much when my phone rang. It was the same woman. She informed me in a flat bureaucratic voice that she had called upstairs to the justice department, and they confirmed I was correct about the court ruling. She would be authorizing me to begin getting Bill's Social Security next month. I haven't gotten the check yet, but I did, for one brief moment, feel like an activist who had won just a little bit of justice.

I wonder how different life would be if we all won just a little bit of justice. If not for yourself, fight for someone else. You never know the difference you might make.

~ Mike Piazza, UCC Pastor in Florida

Prayer List

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Celebrations

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

Concerns

Bill Hilgeman - several injuries after accident; hospitalized in Columbia.
Coree Mix and family as they grieve and give thanks for great-grandma.
Gram Ruth Hughes - Lymphoma; receiving hospice care (Schneider).
The Yakels - as Amy's mother transitions to new care center this month
Karen Grayheck - preparing for upcoming back surgery.
Annette Harrison - recovering from injuries (Stifel).
Trudy - living with cancer; healing after a fall (Scharf).
The grief and healing happening in Maine after deadly violence.
The people of Nepal after the earthquake last weekend.
The continuing war in Ukraine.
War in the Mideast - Israel and Hamas....Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Yemen

Continuing

Becca Palmgren - medical tests and discerning treatment options.
Kathleen Tarr - some success with her mental health program.
Cassie Rosenberger's mother Martha - ongoing cancer treatments.
Seger Ruiz - paralyzed from car accident in September.
Joseph Miller - long road to healing (son of Deb Carter).
Nelson Spencer - medical concerns (Ellie Svenson).
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.
Coree Mix - settling into a new home with great roommates.
Chris - hospice care after brain cancer surgery (Doug's sister-in-law).
Gram Ruth - Lymphoma diagnosis; hip surgery recovery (L Schneider).
Renee and family - very aggressive onset of dementia (McKenzie).
Carol - healing after recent vascular surgery (Mary Akers).
Angie - living with Hodgkin's Lymphoma (Rosenberger).
Theresa - surgery/treatment/recovery - aggressive cancer (Schwarz).
Jackie - special needs adult battling Parkinson's, cancer, dementia.
Lizzie - awaiting liver transplant (niece of Barb Kuhlmann).
The people of Afghanistan, Libya, Morocco after natural disasters.

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 - *NHC Cool Springs*; 211 Cool Springs Blvd #1610; Franklin, TN 37067; 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]

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 & 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.

24th Sunday *after* Pentecost

November 12, 2023

Matthew 25:1-13

Tending God's Light

Stewardship Sunday

Today's story reminds us that we all carry the light of Christ within us, and it is our joy as well as our responsibility as followers of Christ to tend to that light so that it can shine brightly in service of God and the world.

As this year's stewardship materials remind us, because of YOU and the light you shine in the world, our church changes lives. The materials claim, "It is a statement both bold and simple. It boldly expresses the truth about the ultimate nature and the purpose of the church: to engage in acts of transformation. It boldly asserts that we see our mission as one that gives assurance to every individual that their life matters, not because we say so, but because the gospel says so.

...We can be bold because we know it's true. Our own life stories bear witness that being a part of the beloved community in some way has either made us different or causes us to fervently believe that it will. It gives us hope, reminds us of our value, calls us to discover and claim our purpose, clarifies the moral Right and Wrong, motivates us to be a part of something bigger than ourselves all for the sake of change! Change that can more closely align us and our world with the values of the Realm of God. Our church matters because of you.

Our theme, Because of YOU, our church changes lives, is also simple. It recognizes that each of us, by our gifts and the decisions we make to employ them, power this sacred work. Our resources make ministry happen. The arithmetic is not complex. Our choice to grow in our generosity to the church increases the impact of the difference it makes.

By choosing to give even a little bit more, we will expand our shared quest to change lives - even our own. Be bold! Take a step forward in your generosity. It's simple! The choice is yours!"

God has given you a light to tend. How will you tend that light today and into the year to come? The choice to let your light shine is as simple as it is bold. Let it shine!