





www.parkwayucc.org

January 21, 2024

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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 Kari Borgmann

If you would like to volunteer to be a reader, sign up online **here**.

Flowers given by Cindy and Ralf Wessel as we continue to grieve and give thanks for Tyler on his birthday this week.

Consider signing up to donate flowers on the large bulletin board in the Gathering Space!

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

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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

The numbers below are called Warmlines (not Hotlines).

They are peer run by people with lived experience.

Not all of them are 24/7/365

Teen Warm Line: 1 800-248-8336

Black Warm Line: 1-800-604-5841 (They are divested from the police)

Trans Warm Line: 1-877-565-8860

Project Return Warm Line: 1-800-448-9777 (run away)

Learn more about warm lines: <https://warmline.org/warmdir.html>

Birthdays

01/21 Darland, Nancy

01/21 Langton, Benjamin

01/21 Simonson, Hannah

01/22 Jones-Goldstein, Dawn

01/23 Burcham, Kathy

01/23 Wolff, Scott

01/24 Ristau, Evan

01/24 Schrenker, Cheryl

01/26 Buretta, Evelyn

01/27 Doty, Grant

Anniversaries

01/26 Sableman, Mark & Lynn

01/28 Scalion, Karen & Mike

3rd Sunday *after* Epiphany

Sunday, January 21, 2024 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

Welcome Let us know you are here!

Meditation

We go to sanctuaries to remember the things we hold most dear, the things we cherish and love. And then-the great challenge-we return home seeking to enact this wisdom as best we can in our daily lives. ~William Cronon

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 Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*

Lloyd Larson (2013), based on the trad. English melody “Kingsfold”

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Welcome Song *Sanctuary*



Lord, pre - pare me to be a sanc - tu - ar - y, pure and
Lord, pre - pare me to be your lov - ving e - cho, kind and
ho - ly, tried and true. With thanks - giv - ing, I'll be a
gen - tle, tried and true. With thanks - giv - ing, I'll be a
liv - ing sanc - tu - ar - y for you.
liv - ing sanc - tu - ar - y for you.

Scripture Celebrating Sacred Spaces

But I, by your great love, can come into your house; in reverence I bow down toward your holy temple. ~**Psalm 5:7**

One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek God in God's temple. ~**Psalm 27:4**

I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. ~**Psalm 63:2-3**

All the Levites who were musicians - Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun and their sons and relatives - stood on the east side of the altar, dressed in fine linen and playing cymbals, harps and lyres. They were accompanied by 120 priests sounding trumpets. The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to give praise and thanks to the Lord. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, the singers raised their voices in praise to the Lord and sang: "God is good; God's love endures forever." Then the temple of the Lord was filled with the cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God. ~**II Chronicles 5:12-14**

How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you. Blessed are those whose strength is in you . . . Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; . . . For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does God withhold from those whose walk is blameless. Lord Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you. ~**Psalm 84:1-2, 4-5, 10-12**

***Litany of Re-Dedication on this 25th Anniversary**

adapted by Kim Livengood from the January 17, 1999 Litany of Dedication

One: O God, You are present in all places of Your world, and You invite all of us to lives of service and praise. Hear us as we re-dedicate this place of worship to You by the power of Your Spirit.

Many: Hear us O God.

One: We recall the guidance and grace You have given in abundance throughout the one hundred eighty-six years of this congregation.

Many: We re-dedicate this sanctuary to You in a spirit of thanksgiving.

One: For the opportunity to live and learn together, for making welcome in these places all God's people.

Many: We re-dedicate this space and renew our promise to show hospitality to all.

One: Here may the lonely find friendship, the timid find courage, the brokenhearted find healing, the outcast find acceptance, the young find room to grow in Your Spirit, and all awaken to the life offered in the love You have shown in Christ.

Many: Fill this place with Your Spirit and strengthen the lives of all who enter here.

One: With thanksgiving for Your faithful love, for Your Spirit of generosity that has shone through all those who have given of their gifts: time, energy, money.

Many: We re-dedicate this building to Your glory.

One: In grateful remembrance of the generous gift of Marie K. and William H Rectern, and the partnership with St. Luke's United Church of Christ which made possible this sanctuary.

Many: We re-dedicate this sanctuary.

One: In recognition of our relationship with the wider church in our St. Louis region,

Many: We renew our ministry to building up the hope and dignity of St. Louis.

One: Gracious God, we dedicated this building twenty-five years ago so that we could begin anew to serve the local and global human family whom You love.

May Your Spirit guide our steps so that the physical building never becomes an idol and obscure Your glory.

May this place help You shape us as messengers of Your goodness and grace, so that we may proclaim with the prophet of old:

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news."

All: We renew ourselves as servants and messengers of Your transforming Spirit, O God. Thanks be to You for all that we have and are as Your people. Amen.

***Song** *God of Grace and God of Glory*



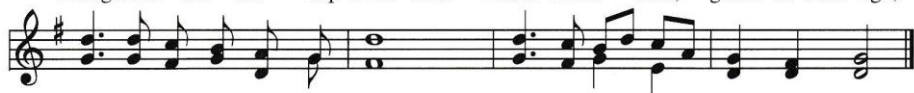
1. God of grace and God of glo - ry, On Thy peo - ple
2. Lo! the hosts of e - vil round us Scorn Thy Christ, as -
3. Cure Thy chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness, Bend our pride to
4. Set our feet on loft - y pla - ces; Gird our lives that



pour Thy power; Crown Thine an - cient chur - ch's sto - ry;
sail Thy ways! From the fears that long have bound us
Thy con - trol; Shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness,
they may be Ar - mored with all Christ - like gra - ces,



Bring its bud to glo - rious flower. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
Free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
Rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
Pledged to set all cap - tives free. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,



For the fac - ing of this hour,
For the liv - ing of these days,
Lest we miss Thy king - dom's goal,
That we fail not them nor Thee!

For the fac - ing of this hour.
For the liv - ing of these days.
Lest we miss Thy king - dom's goal.
That we fail not them nor Thee!

***Opening Prayer** based on Matthew 5:14-16

Holy One, Jesus tells us that we are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, help us to have the courage and compassion to let our light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and love in the things we say and do each day. 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 12th grade can follow our teachers down to Room 13 (lower level) for our Sunday School Opening Session. For children in Room 01, parents please pick them up after worship. Children and youth can be met in the Gathering Space just outside the Sanctuary after worship, as the teachers will bring them back upstairs after class.

Kinderchimes *Being God's Light*

The Story of this Sanctuary crafted by Kim Livengood

Blessing the Children *Weave*

Weave, weave, weave us together

Weave us together in unity and love

Weave, weave, weave us together

Weave us together, together in love.

Scripture Mark 5:1-20 (NRSV - New Revised Standard Version)

They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain; for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him; and he shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he had said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many." He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding;

and the unclean spirits begged him, “Send us into the swine; let us enter them.” So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned in the sea. The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened. They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. Those who had seen what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine reported it. Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. But Jesus refused, and said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy has been shown you.” And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon

Invitation Prayer *Standing on the Promises*



1. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ my king,
 2. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es that can - not fail,
 3. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ the Lord,
 4. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es I can - not fall,



through e - ter - nal a - ges let his prais - es ring;
 when the howl - ing storms of doubt and fear as - sail,
 bound to him e - ter - nal - ly by love's strong cord,
 lis - t'ning ev - ery mo - ment to the Spir - it's call,



glo - ry in the high - est, I will shout and sing,
 by the liv - ing Word of God I shall pre - vail,
 o - ver - com - ing dai - ly with the Spir - it's sword,
 rest - ing in my Sav - ior as my all in all,



stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.

Refrain

Stand-ing, stand - ing, stand-ing on the prom-is-es of
 stand-ing on the prom-is-es,

God my Sav-ior; stand-ing, stand - ing,
 stand-ing on the prom-is-es,

I'm stand-ing on the prom-is-es of God.

Pastoral Prayer and 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.

Offertory *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*

Gregg Sewell, based on the Traditional Spiritual

*Response

**Praise God whose many names abound;
 Our Peace, our Rock, Our Holy Ground,
 Our Home, our All, Earth's Majesty,
 Love, Spirit, Light and Mystery. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication** based on *Now Thank We All Our God*

Now thank we all, God, with heart and hands and voices. You wondrous things have done, in whom this world rejoices. From our parents' arms, you've blessed us on our way - with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today. Guide us into places where we can share and care to help meet others' hungers and thirsts. Amen.

***Song of Parting** *In the Midst of New Dimensions*

In the Midst of New Dimensions

Julian Rush, 1985; alt.

Gen. 9:12-16; Exod. 13:21-22; Num. 14:14



- 1 In the midst of new di-men-sions, in the face of chang-ing ways,
- 2 Through the flood of starv-ing peo - ple, war-ring fac-tions and de - spair,
- 3 As we stand a world di - vid - ed by our own self - seek - ing schemes,
- 4 We are one and we are man - y all per-sua-sions, old and young,
- 5 Should the threats of dire pre-dic-tions cause us to with-draw in pain,



Who will lead the pil - grim peo - ples wan-dering in their sep - arate ways?
Who will lift the ol - ive branch-es? Who will light the flame of care?
Grant that we, your glob - al vil - lage, might en - vi - sion wid - er dreams.
Each a gift in your cre - a - tion, each a love song to be sung.
May your blaz-ing phoe-nix spir - it res - ur - rect the church a - gain.

Refrain

Am



God of rain-bow, fier - y pil - lar, lead-ing where the ea - gles soar, We your



peo-ple, ours the jour-ney now and ev - er, now and ev - er, now and ev - er - more.

***Benediction**

***God's Light Goes Forth**

***Music for Going Forth** *Postlude in D*

Austin North (2018)

Announcements

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

Parkway UCC Speaker Series

Occasional opportunities after worship from 11:15am-12pm

January 21 - Remembrances of a Parkway Pastor

Rev. John Nourse served Parkway for many years with distinction and compassion. He will share his memories of those times and welcome audience participation to provide their own recollections and favorite stories of this special person, as we embark on an hour of nostalgia, grace, gratitude, and humor.

Jan. 28 - The Kim Gardner Saga

By all objective standards, Kim Gardner was a stunning failure as the City of St. Louis' top prosecutor, but she stubbornly refused to give up her position. Our speaker, Bill Corrigan served as the number two person in the Missouri Attorney General's office and will recount his story as the lead attorney in the court case that successfully forced Ms. Gardner out of office.

Our Speaker Series is in person in the Heritage Room and on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84691476997?pwd=aEM2ZURYWURLNmkwdoEzVoVHV1IyQT09#success>

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

Questions? contact Richard Scherrer - 90fivetpr@gmail.com; 314- 591-6803

AWOL: Adventurous Women Out Late

Join us as we make new connections and strengthen existing ones.

Thursday, Feb. 15

Mamma Mia at The Fox Theater 7:30pm

Sunday, March 3 at 1pm- ART IN BLOOM @ The St. Louis Art Museum.

This event requires RSVP also

Saturday, April 13 at 1pm- Spend a couple of hours with us at Laumière Sculpture Park

Friday, May 10 at 6pm- Dinner on the patio - details TBA.

Contact Carmen Bumgarner: cbum@charter.net | (314) 330-0813

Post-Dispatch Trivia Night to Benefit STL 100 Neediest Cases

Fri, Feb. 16 from 6-9pm; Moolah Shrine - 12545 Fee Fee Rd | St. Louis, MO 63146

We need some trivia minded folks to fill out a table for the 100 Neediest Cases fundraiser. Trivia will focus on St. Louis history, music and general knowledge. Cash prize, silent auction, raffles, free beer, BYO food.

\$35 per person.

Contact Dan Connors at connorsd@aol.com by February 1 if interested.

Tuesday Evening Dialogue – January 23

2nd & 4th Tuesday | 6:00pm potluck | 7:00pm discussion | Heritage Rm
Please join us on for our second session on *The Book of Charlie* by David Von Drehle. This is the true story of the author's neighbor, 109-year old Charlie. Von Drehle came to understand that Charlie's resilience and willingness to grow made this remarkable man a master in the art of thriving through times of dramatic change. *The Book of Charlie* is a gospel of grit—the inspiring story of one man's journey through a century of upheaval. The history that unfolds through Charlie's story reminds you that the United States has always been a divided nation, a questing nation, an inventive nation—a nation of Charlies in the rollercoaster pursuit of a good and meaningful life. Read up to Chapter 8 for our second session. Contact Helen Race: raceh@att.net | (314) 401-4382

Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue – February 6

***The Anthropocene Reviewed* by John Green**

1st & 3rd Tuesday | 1:45pm fellowship | 2:00pm discussion | Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83670617428?pwd=bUxPZEdDMlU4ay9oNndTWw4yZUYwUT09>
(312) 626-6799; Meeting ID: 836 7061 7428; Passcode: 480007

TAD's new book is John Green's *The Anthropocene Reviewed: Essays On a Human-Centered Planet*. From Amazon: “*The Anthropocene* is the current geologic age, in which humans have profoundly reshaped the planet and its biodiversity. In this remarkable symphony of essays adapted and expanded from his groundbreaking podcast, bestselling author John Green reviews different facets of the human-centered planet on a five-star scale—from the QWERTY keyboard and sunsets to Canada geese and Penguins of Madagascar. Funny, complex, and rich with detail, the reviews chart the contradictions of contemporary humanity.” TAD would love to have you. Contact Jackie Eiffert: jeiffert2@gmail.com; 661-378-6781

Adventurers ~ Urban Archaeology: Lost Buildings of St. Louis

Pulitzer Arts Foundation, 3716 Washington Boulevard, St Louis MO 63108
Join the PUCC Adventurers on Thursday, Jan. 25th as we visit the Pulitzer Arts Foundation's exhibition *Urban Archaeology: Lost Buildings of St. Louis*. The modern Pulitzer building is accessible, parking is close, and entry is free. We'll meet at Parkway at 9:30am for carpooling or 10:00am at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation. Afterward we'll head to a restaurant for lunch.

This fascinating exhibition brings together salvaged architectural elements from landmark buildings, residential homes, and neighborhood institutions built in St. Louis between 1840 and 1950. The artifacts on display represent important histories of material innovation, labor, and the everyday lives of the people who inhabit the city. The exhibition sheds light on the city's history, revealing complicated legacies of power, wealth, and neglect that shape our experience of the built environment and daily life. Those people with a long history in the St. Louis area will remember many of the buildings from which the artifacts were salvaged.

Included is a 15-minute film about St. Louis architecture, demolition, and revitalization, and an opportunity to provide your own input to the exhibit if you'd like. For more information: <https://pulitzerarts.org/art/urban-archaeology-lost-buildings-of-st-louis/>. There is a very small modern art exhibit in the building that can be viewed as well if you'd like, **Sarah Crowner: Around Orange**. Contact Jackie Eiffert at jeiffert2@gmail.com with questions.

Gateway Open and Affirming Convocation

Saturday, March 2nd; 8:30am-3:00pm

Join area churches at Parkway UCC for an inspirational day of learning and providing support for the LGBTQIA Community. Participants can attend three workshops during the day following a worship service and keynote address. We encourage Parkway members to live up to their commitment from years ago when Parkway voted to become ONA and learn more about the movement and how we can be partners with the LGBTQAI community. The workshops are led by experienced individuals who are well-prepared. The worship service and keynote address are inspirational. This year, Rev. Dr. Katrina Roseboro-Marsh, UCC ONA Coalition's Executive Director, will give the Keynote address. We are encouraging Parkway members to attend, but also volunteer to assist in various roles. Thanks for letting us know if you can volunteer and where you would be willing to serve. For more info, contact Carol Cobb ccjacob@aol.com or Greg Schmelig greg_schmelig@hotmail.com. Let's learn and love the LGBTQAI+ Community!

MONTH OF GRACE + PRAYER (A Retreat in Everyday Life)

Make 2024 the year when your relationship with God blossomed by participating in the Month of Grace + Prayer retreat in everyday life. Pray on your own each day and meet privately with a spiritual companion for one hour, once per week for four consecutive weeks. This retreat is personalized to what you are hoping for, whether that is to make more time for prayer, to learn new ways to pray, to pray about a certain issue in your life, deepen your personal relationship with Jesus, or to receive whatever God is offering to you at this time. During the weekly sessions, your spiritual companion will listen with love and affirmation, offer questions that will lead you deeper into your prayer experiences and offer prayer suggestions for the coming week. Offered in person and completely virtually, all adults are welcome regardless of denomination or affiliation. Committed couples also have the option to participate as a couple.

The retreat will begin with a 90 minute group gathering (in person/virtual) of all participants on Sunday, Feb. 25. In person meetings with spiritual companions take place at church on Monday mornings, afternoons or evenings, and virtual meetings are scheduled on any day and time mutually convenient with the companion and participant. All participants will gather again in celebration on Sunday, March 24. For even more information or to register, visit www.momentsofgraceandprayer.org or contact Clarence Heller (clarenceheller@gmail.com; 314.258.9066). There is no registration fee, but retreatants are invited to share the costs of the retreat as they are able. Clarence will be joining us for worship on January 28 and will be available afterwards to answer any questions you may have.

Join the Children's Ministry Team

We are looking for two additional volunteers to join the team and help teach Children's Ministry in 2024. It's an excellent way to serve in this church, and we have a vibrant Children's Ministry program. So, if you have a joy teaching children from PreK to 3rd Grade, we'd love to have ya! It's pretty low commitment, so not too demanding, so if you feel you'd have a couple weeks out of the month free, or even just one week a month, then this could be the right fit for you.

If interested, please reach out to Gabriel Requadt, our Director of Christian Education, for more information: gabriel@parkwayucc.org; 314-872-9330

Looking for More Singers for PUCS Sanctuary Choir

If you've always imagined singing in the choir—or the thought is just occurring to you for the first time right now, why not give it a try?

We're needing extra singers right now—reach out to barry@parkwayucc.org 636-485-5378 to let him know!

We have an intergenerational choir called *First Sunday Choir* that gathers at 9am on the first Sunday of each month to learn a simple song or two to sing that morning in worship.

The *Sanctuary Choir* sings on the second and fourth Sundays of each month from September – May and practices on Thursday evenings.

Our *Children's Choir* sings on the third Sunday of each month.

January Sustainability Suggestions

7 Easy Ways to Use Less Plastic

Have you ever thought about all the items we buy in stores or shop for online and how so many are either made of plastic or packaged in plastic? Not blaming the stores, they stock what we buy. But there's the vision of all these items overloading our landfills and slowly degrading into endocrine disruptors such as toxins that can cause cancers and alter the development of our children. Currently, every year, humans produce about 400 million tons of plastic waste (we recycle about 2 million). In the U.S., we average about 300 pounds a year per person. What can we do about that?

We can start at home. In 2024 let's learn ways to use less plastic, even if it's less convenient.

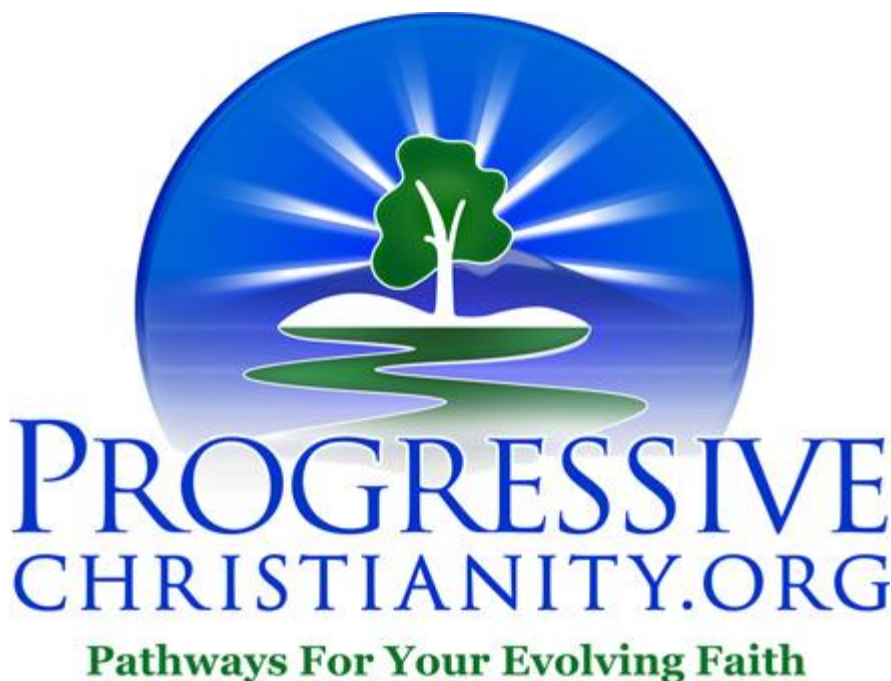
1. Skip single use plastic utensils. Stainless steel portable cutlery under \$15 is easy to find.
2. Choose compostable or metal straws. I keep a few in my car, because you just never know when they'll throw a plastic straw at you.
3. Store food in compostable, reclosable bags. Cleanomic sells various sizes of zip-close bags for around \$12 a box.
Cleanomic | Planet-Friendly Cleaning Product for the Entire Home

4. Bag your fleece. Turns out that fleece (your beloved ones made from recycled bottles) can shed hundreds of thousands of microfibers every wash. One answer? A Guppyfriend Washing Bag that captures those tiny bits before they get into our rivers and oceans. <https://zerowastestore.com/>
5. Try Earth Breeze (Laundry Detergent ECO SHEETS) or Sheets LaundryClub. Zero plastic waste. Buy online: <https://www.earthbreeze.com/> or Laundry Sheets & Cleaning Supplies | Sheets Laundry Club
6. Drink from metal water bottles. Try to REFUSE/ or at least REDUCE use of single use plastic water bottles. Enough said!
7. Choose restaurants that use paper or cardboard takeout containers. (PLEASE - AT LEAST NO STYROFOAM – ASK FOR AN ALTERNATIVE/ OR OTHER OPTIONS) Customers letting their preferences be known will perhaps encourage restaurants (their owners) to move towards these eco-friendly options.

If we demand it. Companies will respond. Vote with your wallet. Be willing to try something new. Join your sustainability committee in lessening our personal plastic waste in 2024.

(Parts of this article were edited from the Healthy Planet – January 2024 with their approval)





Progressive Christians Are Christians Who:

1. Believe that following the way and teachings of Jesus can lead to experiencing sacredness, wholeness, and unity of all life, even as we recognize that the Spirit moves in beneficial ways in many faith traditions.
2. Seek community that is inclusive of all people, honoring differences in theological perspective, age, race, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, class, or ability.
3. Strive for peace and justice among all people, knowing that behaving with compassion and selfless love towards one another is the fullest expression of what we believe.
4. Embrace the insights of contemporary science and strive to protect the Earth and ensure its integrity and sustainability.
5. Commit to a path of life-long learning, believing there is more value in questioning than in absolutes.

Check out progressivechristianity.org

Progress

Ella Wheeler Cox

Let there be many windows to your soul,
That all the glory of the universe
May beautify it. Not the narrow pane
Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays
That shine from countless sources. Tear away
The blinds of superstition; let the light
Pour through fair windows broad as truth itself
And high as God ...

I look at the world

Langston Hughes

I look at the world
From awakening eyes in a black face—
And this is what I see:
This fenced-off narrow space
Assigned to me.

I look then at the silly walls
Through dark eyes in a dark face—
And this is what I know:
That all these walls oppression builds
Will have to go!

I look at my own body
With eyes no longer blind—
And I see that my own hands can make
The world that's in my mind.
Then let us hurry, comrades,
The road to find.

This Is Just To Say

William Carlos Williams

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold

Prayer List

Wednesday, January 17, 2024

Celebrations

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

Mike & Gerry Rogers - hosting exchange student, Beiberys ('Baybars') from Kazakhstan - started school this week at Parkway North.

Concerns

Jones-Goldstein Family - recent diagnoses of COVID.

Pinky Wilcoxon - strengthening at Delmar, Creve Coeur after surgery.
(Please consider writing or visiting Pinky - see info next column).

Becca Palmgren - healing from surgery on January 11.

Val Detjen - additional surgery on January 9 – POSTPONED.

Sally Dodge - in Philly for granddaughter's tonsillectomy and healing.

Jackie - transitioning to hospice care at home (sister of Nick McMillon).

Jackie - grieving and giving thanks for her mother and step-father.

The continuing war in Ukraine.

War in the Mideast - Israel and Hamas....Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Yemen.

Continuing

Bill Hilgeman - continued healing after serious injuries.

Rebecca Ray - that her book on suicide prevention will be published.

Kari Borgmann - her mom becoming more feeble, lack of awareness.

Cassie Rosenberger's mother Martha - ongoing cancer treatments.

Gram Ruth Hughes - Lymphoma; receiving hospice care (Schneider).

Seger Ruiz - paralyzed from car accident in September.

Joseph Miller - long road to healing (son of Deb Carter).

Nelson Spencer - continued treatment for multiple issues (Svenson).

Trudy - living with cancer; healing after a fall (Scharf).

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

Cherie & Mike Stolze and family - her chronic health challenges.

Bill & Nancy Darland - his ongoing health issues.

Gail, Bill and Christopher Haack - chronic health challenges.

Chris - hospice care after brain cancer surgery (Doug's sister-in-law).

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

**The function of prayer is not to influence God,
but rather to change the nature of the one who prays.**

~Soren Kierkegaard

Home-Centered/Care Facility/Rehab Center

Marv Herpel - *Brookdale West County*; 785 Henry Ave, #217;

Ballwin, MO 63021; 636-227-5838 [birthdate: March 3]

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]

Glady 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]

Judy Waddell - *McKnight Place*; 3 McKnight Pl, #229; StL MO 63124; 314-312-1129 [birthdate: August 13]

Pinky Wilcoxon - *Delmar Gardens Creve Coeur*; 850 Country Manor Ln; #130; Creve Coeur, MO 63141; 314-434-5900 [birthdate: April 7]

Other

President 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.

PUCF 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.

Why must people kneel down to pray? If I really wanted to pray I'll tell you what I'd do. I'd go out into a great big field all alone or in the deep, deep woods and I'd look up into the sky—up—up—up—into that lovely blue sky that looks as if there was no end to its blueness. And then I'd just feel a prayer.

~L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables

3rd Sunday *after* Epiphany

January 21, 2024

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Mark 1:14-20

Follow Me

Ecumenical Sunday

In today's reading, Jesus calls the disciples to follow him not only to a new line of work (fishing for people instead of fish) but also to a whole new way of life. Centuries later, those who are called to ministry also find themselves not just in a job, but in a vocation or way of living. Helping to navigate the sometimes complicated waters of this vocation is the MESA team of the United Church of Christ's National Offices.

According to their website,*

“Within the United Church of Christ, the *Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization team (MESA)*, supports the critical implementation of denominational polity for authorized ministry, especially equipping the Committees on Ministry that determine authorization of those persons who hold or are pursuing ministerial standing.

In other words (to make metaphorical use of “mesa”), the Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization team serves as host at the table that is ministry in the United Church of Christ. Gathered at the table are authorized ministers, calling bodies, Associations, Conferences, and Committees on Ministry, to which the MESA team offers support and resources for faithful and effective ministry. Additionally, MESA's role as host includes the encouragement of ongoing conversation regarding issues of ministry in the 21st century. The MESA team works in a collaborative model to meet the needs of those at the table.”

All settings in the United Church of Christ, speak to and with each other, rather than for each other. MESA is one of those settings that is ready to be in conversation with you. Maybe, like those first disciples, you hear Christ calling you too. Maybe, like those first disciples, you are ready to change your life as well as your vocation. Maybe, you just have a question or an idea about ministry. Whatever the case, pull up a chair at the table and begin or continue the conversation with MESA today.

*<https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/local-church/mesa-ministerial-excellence-support-and-authorization/>