



THE ENLIGHTENER

JULY/AUGUST 2023

Epiphany UCC | St. Louis, Missouri
Benton Park Neighborhood

Thoughts from the Annual Meeting



Like many of you, I went into the June 11 annual meeting feeling somewhat tense. As Pastor Kris had described the meeting in the June newsletter, we would be “[gathering] for the annual meeting to decide if there is a future for Epiphany and what shape that future may take.” Since Epiphany has been my beloved community of faith since 1991, the thought that there might not be a future for Epiphany sparked fear and anticipatory grief.

Something happened as the meeting was getting started though that truly feels like a “God is still speaking” thing to me. I opened the emails on my phone to check for something I needed to look up and noticed [this sermon](#) by Nadia Bolz-Weber had arrived in my inbox. I didn’t take time to read it but noted that it seemed ironic that she was preaching on the parable of the fig tree (Luke 13:6-9) – a story about whether a fig tree that wasn’t producing would be allowed to keep taking up space or be cut down. At first it seemed to speak to where we were as a congregation.

But as I listened to the reports from the ministries of the church – the UME program, the building team, the fundraising team, Christian education, and so many more – it became apparent that Epiphany is NOT the fig tree. The fig tree in the parable in the Gospel of Luke had not been producing for three years. Epiphany on the other hand has been such a productive congregation, sharing God’s love in multiple ways, despite our limited membership and finances.

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As the meeting went on, I thought about the many times that I had sat in meetings with Pastor Mary as a member of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee a few years back as we took the “pulse of the congregation.”

“The congregation seems tired” someone would say. “The struggle to maintain the building is wearing us out.” I thought of the recent listening and visioning sessions that Donna Schaefer and I had facilitated – three sessions with three groups, so nine conversations in all. Over and over, we heard it said that “Our members experience building maintenance as a tremendous drain.”

I began to wonder: what might we do with our energy and willingness to work hard if these were not directed toward care of the building and the congregation’s financial survival? I felt led to verbalize a motion for consideration: “I move that we initiate the process of releasing our building.” After a bit more discussion, a poll of the congregation was taken, and there was agreement that we should do this – by a 3 to 1 margin.

That margin is important in that releasing our building is obviously an emotionally charged and controversial decision. Such decisions should never be implemented unless there is a strong consensus, and it appears that consensus is there.

What are we to become? Will we really find a way to release the building, perhaps even a way that allows the building to continue to be a resource for the community? We don’t know yet, and uncertainty is difficult and can be very tiring. Thankfully the Bible is full of stories of the ways God has led God’s children on all types of journeys full of uncertainty.

And thankfully we have a small but committed church council that has already met once (June 29) to begin the discussion of how we proceed from here. Let us pray for our Council and let us each bring our own best selves to the discussion.

Jeanette Mott Oxford





NEW PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE



A Pastor Relations Committee has been re-formed to help with communication between the congregation and pastor, as well as provide support for the pastor. Thank you to JMO, Chris Heckendorn, and Vernon Kays for agreeing to serve on the team. If you have any concerns or issues you would like to bring to the committee, please reach out to JMO with details.

PASTORAL CARE DURING PK'S SABBATICAL

July 1-9

Rev. Sarah McCann - 314-303-4161

July 10-20

Rev. Jeff Groene: 314-517-2468

July 20-23

Dorothy Gannon: 314-791-5904

July 24-31

Lois Yatzek: 314-498-5256



- Wes and Amanda are going to do the electronic bulletin, Friday email, and run worship technology. We still need a backup person in case they are away.
- Vernon will be running the zoom during adult class.
- Anne has a mailbox key and will handle the mail.
- Dorothy will be managing voicemail and the pastor's email as well as being the point person for worship.
- J-MO is handling social justice actions that need quick sign-on from the congregation.

UME IN FULL SWING

Our first UME group was here last week, and it was such a pleasure hosting them! Columbia UCC from Columbia, MO brought a youth group last Sunday. They spent several days volunteering at the St. Louis Area Foodbank, Lydia's House, the English Cave Garden, and doing a neighborhood alley cleanup. They also had time for some fun stops at the Arch, Zoo, Cathedral Basilica, and Grant's Farm. A big thanks to Norma Keller, Bob Keller, James Verde, Dorothy Gannon, and Wes Buchek for your help while they were here.

We have three more groups joining us before the end of August:

July 9-15, Pilgrim UCC, Grafton, WI

July 23-29, Edmond FCC, Edmond, OK

August 2-6, First Congregational UCC, Downer's Grove, IL



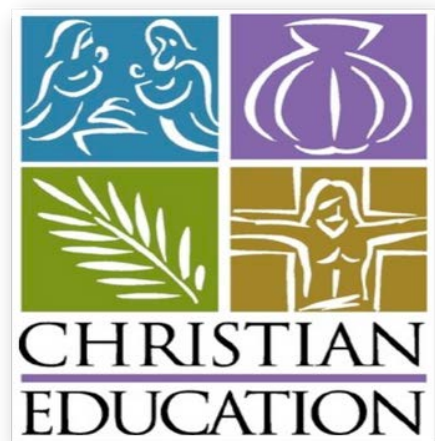
COMMUNITY DINNER KICKOFF

Epiphany had it's first Community Dinner on June 6 and kicked things off with a Summer BBQ. So many other wonderful volunteers went grocery shopping, cleaned the church, setup tables and chairs, prepped food, grilled the food, and helped cleanup afterward. The meats were purchased locally from Grote Farms and Have a Cow Cattle Farm. Those who came to dinner were encouraged to stay after for the Benton Park Neighborhood Association meeting. Thanks to every who helped make the dinner possible and to those who came out to join us for dinner and fellowship! Stay tuned for details on another meal in September.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE

Our study materials for the Book of Revelation will be newly revised for September. They will include a video and slides. The focus will be on the church in crisis. Please consider joining us on Sundays in September and October from 9:15 to 10:15.





ALL WIGGED OUT - SAVE THE DATES

TWO DAYS OF SPECIAL EVENTS: OCT. 20-21

For several years, Epiphany United Church of Christ has been hosting neighborhood concerts to bring the joy of live music to Benton Park and the Greater St. Louis Region. On October 20 and 21, we will undertake our most ambitious musical event to date by welcoming Grammy Award winning artists Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer for two days of programming that highlights breast cancer awareness and community resources for people experiencing cancer.

This event is made possible through a major grant from AARP in St. Louis. AARP has secured the Hi-Pointe Theater on Friday, October 20, for a showing of “All Wiggged Out,” a movie of a ten-song musical written by Marxer and Fink to chronicle Marcy’s experience of breast cancer and neuropathy caused by chemotherapy. It was filmed by the Emmy Award winning HMS Media in Evanston, IL before a live audience and was directed by Tracy Walsh. The movie will be followed by a panel featuring Marxer and Fink and representatives from Cancer Support Community of Greater St. Louis and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

On Saturday evening, October 21, Fink and Marxer will bring their musical talents to Epiphany UCC. Expect a variety of music from folk to swing to jazz to bluegrass from these multi-talented artists. Along with refreshments in the fellowship hall during intermission, cancer resources will be available, and we’ll have some fun raffle prizes as usual.

The American Cancer Society has indicated that by the year 2030, one in two people in the US will be diagnosed with cancer. Epiphany UCC knows the pain of cancer all too well, having lost John Scott to cancer in 2023. Anne Little has survived breast cancer twice and thanks Medicaid for the treatment necessary to provide her surgeries, medicines, and follow up care. We pray for Rev. Doug Kaufman who starts radiation for prostate cancer in June.

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Since Fink and Marxer filmed “All Wiggged Out”, Fink has also been diagnosed with breast cancer and is currently being treated. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, so this two-day event can encourage early detection and possibly save some lives. Please mark your calendar now for October 20 and 21 and start to invite friends to come to the movie and the concert.

ALL WIGGED OUT, was featured on NPR’s *Morning Edition* in May with a fabulous interview by Leila Fadel. [Click here to heart the interview.](#)

Links to all streaming and purchase options, as well as info on All Wiggged Out:
<https://www.cathymarcy.com/allwigggedout/>

BYLAWS AMENDED

Some bylaws were amended at the June Annual meeting. The full set of bylaws can be [viewed here as a Google document](#). The document is nine pages. If you need a printed copy, please let Anne or Wes know.



8th Annual

Rainbow Camp

August 11-12, 2023

9am-7pm



Rainbow Camp is a day of outdoor fun with water games, canoeing, fishing, horseback riding, archery, crafts, pontoon rides and more. You can be as active or as restful as you like. The day finishes with dinner at Oak Lodge while watching the sunset across the lake.

Rainbow Camp is for LGBTQ singles, couples and families. Straight allies are always welcome.

Register at: www.DuBoisCenter.org

Info: 618-787-2202
dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org

DuBois Center is the camp and retreat center of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ



DuBois Center is a place where everyone is welcomed as a whole child of God. Come experience camp in the beauty of God's creation and have a lot of fun.

Because we affirm the value of all God's people, the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, ability, national origin, religious background, sexual orientation, or gender identity. To the extent possible, we endeavor to accommodate those with a variety of physical, mental, emotional, medical, or dietary needs.

Rainbow Camp (Aug. 12, 9am-7pm)

Includes: 2 meals, activities & supplies

Adults	\$70 / \$80
Youth 12-17	\$55 / \$65
Children 11 and under	\$35 / \$45

Rainbow Camp Plus (Aug. 11, 5pm)

Includes overnight 8/11, 4 meals, activities & supplies

Adults	\$110 / \$120
Youth 12-17	\$90 / \$100
Children 11 and under	\$65 / \$75

Family of 5 or more? Call Registrar Julie Riechmann for pricing, (618) 357-1809

Optional Horseback Riding

\$20 - 1 hour trail ride • \$10 - 30 min arena ride

Register before 7/7 - Pay Early Bird Rate

Final Registration - 8/2

2651 Quarry Road, DuBois, Illinois USA 62831- Just 70 miles southeast of St. Louis, close to I-64



LECTIONARY READINGS FOR JULY 2023

You can deepen your experience of worship by reading the scriptures in advance of Sunday. Worship services are often (but not always) based on one of the lessons of the week.

July 2

Genesis 22:1-14 & Psalm 13 or
Jeremiah 28:5-9 & Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18
Romans 6:12-23 - Matthew 10:40-42

July 9

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-29, 58-67 &
Psalm 45:10-17 or Song of Solomon 2:8-13
or Zechariah 9:9-12 & Psalm 145:8-14
Romans 7:15-25a
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

July 16

Genesis 25:19-34 & Psalm 119:105-112 or
Isaiah 55:10-13 & Psalm 65:(1-8), 9-13
Romans 8:1-11 - Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 23

Genesis 28:10-19a & Psalm 139:1-12,
23-24 or Isaiah 44:6-8 & Psalm 86:11-17
Romans 8:12-25
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 30

Genesis 29:15-28 & Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
or 1 Kings 3:5-12 & Psalm 119:129-136
Romans 8:26-39
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Sundays Worship & Education

Adult Education, 9:15 a.m.

Worship, 10:30 a.m.

Click the link to Zoom with us,
or worship with us at
facebook.com/epiphanyucc.

Stewardship Update May 2023

	May	May YTD
Total Income:	\$ 10,557.99	\$ 80,274.13
Total Expenses:	\$ 11,292.31	\$ 114,328.74
Net Income:	\$ - 734.32	\$ - 34,054.61

Additional information is available from the Treasurer



NOISY OFFERING - 3RD SUNDAYS

JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
-	-	-	-	-	-	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

You may contact Amanda at amandanv530@yahoo.com for an invitation to the Zoom worship and meetings.

Pastor Kris on sabbatical through July.

July 1 – Saturday

July 2 – Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion

July 3 – Monday

July 4 – Tuesday

No Benton Park meeting in July.

July 5 – Wednesday

6 p.m. Centering Prayer Group

July 6 – Thursday

July 7 – Friday

July 8 – Saturday

July 9 – Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship

July 10 – Monday

July 11 – Tuesday

July 12 – Wednesday

July 13 – Thursday

July 14 – Friday

July 16 – Sunday with NOISY OFFERING

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion

July 17 – Monday

July 18 – Tuesday

July 19 – Wednesday

6 p.m. Centering Prayer Group

July 20 – Thursday

7 p.m. Council

Devotion: Dorothy

July 21 – Friday

July 22 – Saturday

July 23 – Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship

July 24 – Monday

July 25 – Tuesday

July 26 – Wednesday

July 27 – Thursday

July 28 – Friday

July 29 – Saturday

July 30 – Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship

July 31 – Monday

Pastor Krissy returns tomorrow.



Remember, the **newsletter** is only as good as the items that are submitted to the editors. We're always looking for new and interesting content. If you have anything to share (news, ideas, musings), send to [Wes](#) or [Anne](#).

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR AUGUST 2023

You can deepen your experience of worship by reading the scriptures in advance of Sunday. Worship services are often (but not always) based on one of the lessons of the week.

August 6

Genesis 32:22-31 & Psalm 17:1-7, 15 or
Isaiah 55:1-5 & Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21
Romans 9:1-5
Matthew 14:13-31

August 13

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 &
Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b or
1 Kings 19:9-18 & Psalm 85:8-13
Romans 10:5-15
Matthew 14:22-33

August 20

Genesis 45:1-15 & Psalm 133 or
Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 & Psalm 67
Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
Matthew 15:(10-29), 21-28

August 27

Exodus 1:8-2:10 & Psalm 124 or
Isaiah 51:1-6 & Psalm 138
Romans 12:1-8
Matthew 16:13-20

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES



July Birthdays

Ms. Elizabeth O'Reilly 7/4
Sylvie Williams 7/13
J-MO Oxford 7/16
Anne Little 7/22
Lois Yatzeck 7/20
Jackson Ruthenburg 7/24
Hannah Ruthenburg 7/24
Fred Tilinski 7/24

July Anniversaries

Dorothy Gannon & J-MO Oxford 7/4
Vernon Kays 7/28

August Birthdays

Jennifer Everett 8/9
Fred Hudson 8/12
Nicole Avise-Rouse 8/12
Anne Nancy Vosler 8/19
Dwayne Sell 8/25
Dawn Martin 8/28

August Anniversary

Dwayne and Karen Sell 8/24

AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
-	-	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	-	-

You may contact Amanda at amandanv530@yahoo.com for an invitation to the Zoom worship and meetings.

Pastor Kris back from sabbatical.

August 1 – Tuesday

No Benton Park meeting in August.

August 2 – Wednesday

6 p.m. Centering Prayer Group

August 3 – Thursday

August 4 – Friday

August 5 – Saturday

August 6 – Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion

August 7 – Monday

August 8 – Tuesday

August 9 – Wednesday

August 10 – Thursday

August 11 – Friday

August 12 – Saturday

August 13 – Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship

August 14 – Monday

August 15 – Tuesday

August 16 – Wednesday

5:30 p.m. Centering Prayer Group

August 17 – Thursday

August 18 – Friday

August 19 – Saturday

August 20 – Sunday with NOISY OFFERING

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion

August 21 – Monday

August 22 – Tuesday

August 23 – Wednesday

August 24 – Thursday

August 25 – Friday

August 26 – Saturday

August 27 – Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

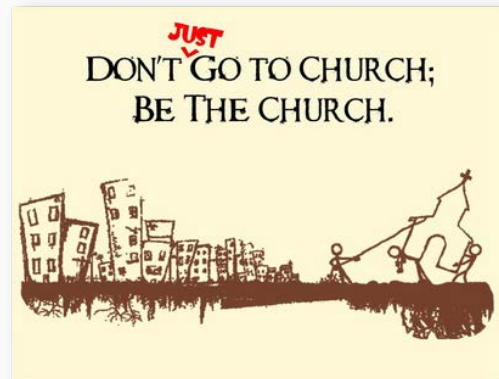
10:30 a.m. Worship

August 28 – Monday

August 29 – Tuesday

August 30 – Wednesday

August 31 – Thursday





**Members
who cannot
be with us
but would
love to hear
from you!**

John DeClue #529925
C/O Digital Mail Center-Missouri DOC
PO Box 25678, Tampa FL. 33622-5678

David Hon
2005 Frenken St.
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Chris Heckendorn
Garden Villa South, Apt. 130
13457 Tesson Ferry Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63128
Front desk phone: 314-843-7788
Chris welcomes visitors, please
call first.

Ministers at Epiphany

Pastor, Rev. Kristofer Avise-Rouse
President, Lois Yatzeck
Vice President, Karen Sell
Secretary, Amanda Verbeck
Treasurer, Kat Logan Smith
Council Member: Dorothy Gannon
Asst. Treasurer, Anne Little
Financial Secretary, Dorothy Gannon
Accounts Payable, Jeanette Mott Oxford

Building Care, Amanda Yatzeck
Choir, Dorothy Gannon
Christian Education Chair, Lois Yatzeck
Church Office, Anne Little
Enlightener Editor, Wes Buchek
Hospitality and Usher Coordinator,
Wes Buchek
Minister of Music, Peter Ruthenburg



Our Purpose: We love God by: Accepting and affirming all, fostering growth, and working for social justice.

Our Commitments:

We are "Open and Affirming"—welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities into church life and leadership.

We are a "Just Peace" Church—seeking to bring peace by working for social justice.

We are a "Whole Earth" Church—committed to caring for creation and bringing a 'green' consciousness to our living.

We seek to become a "Multicultural" Church—celebrating the diversity of racial and ethnic traditions.

WE SEEK TO BE MULTI-CULTURAL AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

Sunday Schedule

9:15 a.m.

Christian Education

10:30 a.m.

Worship

Telephone:

314-772-0263

Email:

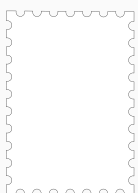
pastorkris@epiphanyucc.org

or

anne@epiphanyucc.org

Website:

www.epiphanyucc.org



Return Service Requested

Epiphany United Church of Christ
2911 McNair Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63118