

PK's Little Epiphanies

Hello Epiphany Friends!!

The Missouri Mid-South Conference Annual Gathering this year was organized around the theme: "Authenticity: The stories that shape us." Our keynote speaker was Rev. Ann Kansfield, a UCC minister who serves as a pastor at the Greenpoint Reformed Church in Brooklyn and as a chaplain with the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY). She told a story that I think could just as easily have been an Epiphany story. I am paraphrasing and using Ann's cleaned up version of the fireman's statement.

Ann was at the FDNY training center and a "salty" fireman who was up on a catwalk, scratching at his arm and obviously agitated called out, "Hey, Chaplain, come over here." He told her his story. He had served multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan and came home with PTSD. The doctors at the VA gave him meds that helped and he had gone back to work with the fire department. He had passed multiple physicals and then suddenly was told that his meds were sedatives and that it was unsafe for him to be on active fire duty while taking them and that he had to choose. He had been off the meds a couple of weeks and that was why he was



agitated and scratching... "Chaplain," he said, "truth is we're all messed up here; **but we're all** messed up together!"

(Continued on page 2.)



That got me thinking about the stories we tell about ourselves; the old German widow ladies who kept the church going and welcomed people in; stories about Ross, Beverly, Joan, and John; about the food pantry and how the breakfast ministry started; stories of being small and poor and tired; stories of getting things done anyway... stories of faith and life shared by members this summer and fall in worship; stories about knowing the date the doors would close and how they didn't... stories of people who have come to Epiphany wounded in spirit, or psyche who stayed awhile and healed and then moved on... stories of passion for justice: one of the first ONA congregations in St. Louis, member of Jobs with Justice Faith Labor Alliance; member of the Interfaith Committee on Latin America; partner of Metropolitan Congregations United; host of air quality monitor; host of the All Wigged out event with Marcy Marxer and Cathy Fink; home of Urban Mission Experience where kids get to think about the systemic causes of poverty AND do some work (and some play) in the city; and so much more.

We've been trying to focus our vision and I think that it is there in those stories. Where ever we land we will remain a healing, gospel rooted, social justice oriented, worshipping community that uses art, music, and food to heal body and soul; AND work toward building the kin-dom of God. We need a space that is affordable and efficient but has a commercial kitchen and room to share with non-profits and small businesses that share those foci.

Our current building just keeps making it clear that we can't stay. The roof is getting worse, and the council just approved emergency repairs to the boiler so that we can have heat and avoid an even worse disaster. Please attend the gathering on Nov. 5 as we discuss next steps. All our voices matter as we seek the best way to stay together and reshape our ministry to fit our congregation's abilities and calling.

Because we believe in the healing power of community and food, we will be having our Thanksgiving potluck on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 23 at 4 p.m. Plan to come early and stay as late as you like – there will be games and music! Invite anyone you know who could use the meal and/or the company – because we are Epiphany and we Draw the Circle Wide!! That's OUR story and we're stickin' to it.



Peace.

Pastor Krissy

NOV. 5 - WHAT'S NEXT MEETING

Please join us after worship on Nov. 5 to continue our discussion about what's next for Epiphany. Soup lunch will be provided. The agenda is as follows:

Congregation

Focus on mission during transition

- Getting to know you meetings with Carondelet
- Merger vs independent

Building

- Boiler update
- Insurance questions
- Building manager
- Building offer
- Realtor meeting
- Alternative meeting locations





TRIVIA NIGHT SUCCESS!

The annual trivia night fundraiser raised \$4,435 and a car load of food that was donated to Feed My People. A special thanks to all who participated and volunteered time or resources.

And an extra special thank you to St. John's UCC for hosting the event! See you next year!





WRITERS AND ARTISTS BEING SOUGHT FOR EPIPHANY UCC ADVENT BOOKLET

For several years, members and friends of Epiphany United Church of Christ have compiled a devotional booklet for daily spiritual reflection during the liturgical season of Advent. We will be doing so again this year!

In 2023, Advent begins on Sunday, December 3 and extends to Christmas Eve. Christians have traditionally observed Advent as a period of fasting, prayer, and reflection on what it means to wait in anticipation (for the birth of Christ, for the second coming of Christ, for the fulfillment of God's kin-dom as a reality).

The worship committee has looked at the scriptures for "Year B" of the Common Lectionary (which we will be using in Advent 2023) and selected this phrase from Isaiah 64 as the theme for this year's booklet: "Tear Open the Heavens and Come Down." In this phase we hear our shared very human longing that God would arrive and rescue us from the oppression and violence that is in the news and in our lives daily. We also acknowledge that the history of our ancestors in faith is that God indeed does tear open the heavens and come down repeatedly. Yet this generally is in ways that surprise us – as a helpless baby born in a stable and cradled in a feeding trough, for example.

A sign-up sheet will be circulated in the congregation and on our church and fellowship Facebook pages beginning on Sunday, October 29. If you are willing to write one or two reflections (no more than 200 words), please sign up or email or text <u>Jeanette</u> Mott Oxford (314-775-3261). The deadline to submit your devotions is Sunday, Nov. 26.

2911 McNair, St. Louis, MO 63118



The Enlightener

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE

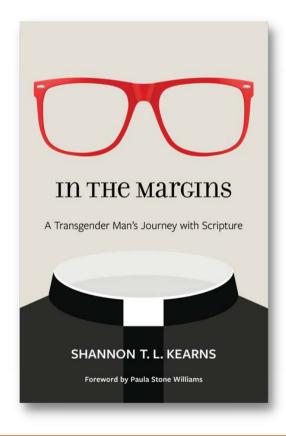
Our study of the book "In the Margins," by Shannon Kearns, a transgender ordained priest, has opened our eyes to the challenges of "coming out." It has generated deep discussion of our own journeys to cultivate and embrace our own paths to become our most authentic selves.



As we transition to our Advent reflections, we will study the Bible texts that are assigned to each Sunday. Beginning Dec. 3 we will share the rich reflections of our church siblings in the new Advent booklet based on the theme

"Tear open the heaven and come down!" Please consider sharing your thoughts on the Advent readings. Information on how to contribute is later in this bulletin.

We are looking forward to beginning our study of the Book of Revelation in January 2024





PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES INVITE EPIPHANY TO BE ADVOCATES AGAIN ON PARATRANSIT ISSUES

By Jeanette Mott Oxford

In September, almost every active member of Epiphany UCC answered the call to action issued by the STL Metropolitan Alliance for Reliable Transit (S.M.A.R.T.) which is convened by Paraquad, the independent living center for St. Louis City and County. Members of S.M.A.R.T. are very thankful for your solidarity! This action certainly is in line with Epiphany's covenant as a Just Peace Congregation.

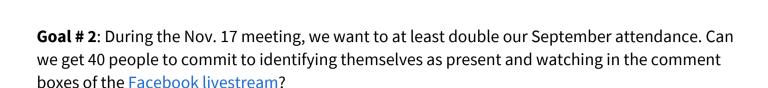


Epiphany members are prominent among the more than sixty people who bothered to post online public comments before the Sept. 22 meeting of the Bi-State Development Corporation's Board of Commissioners. (These may be read in pages 6-28 of this document.)

Combined with all the media coverage of the recent Call-A-Ride service shutdowns due to a cyber-attack, people with disabilities presently have increased attention from the Commissioners and Metro executive staff. Now is the time to move them from concern to deep commitment and urgent action. A safe, affordable, accessible, and reliable paratransit system cannot wait. Therefore, our next goals for action will be:

Goal # 1: In the period between now and 7:30 a.m. on Nov. 17, we will generate at least 100 public comments to the Board of Commissioners using the Public Comment Form that is available at this web address. See the meeting materials from September 22nd that are linked above for sample content for your public comment, but please use your own words. Create your own comments by answering these questions:

- Why is Call-A-Ride and/or other public transit important in your life?
- What do you miss when public transit is not there?
- What problems have you encountered trying to use public transit? How did you solve that problem, and what did it cost you? Or were you simply stuck at home?
- Even if you do not personally use Call-A-Ride, fixed route buses, or MetroLink, why do you think public transit is essential for our region?



Here is a sample comment, but please use your own words:

"Good morning, Commissioners. My name is _____, and I am a member of the STL Metropolitan Alliance for Reliable Transit (S.M.A.R.T.). (Or you can use Epiphany UCC if you are not part of S.M.A.R.T.) I am watching because I know that a Call-A-Ride system that works well is essential to the success of our region."

To learn more email <u>Teona McGhaw</u>, Organizing and Advocacy Specialist at Paraquad, or call 314-289-4260. Here is some of the recent media coverage of the paratransit crisis in our region: <u>STLNPR | KMOV | STLToday | St. Louis On the Air</u>

O GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD

...for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever. (1 Chronicles 16:34)

Scripture tells us in all seasons to give thanks. And this time of year, as Thanksgiving is fast approaching, we are often reminded to say thank you for small things and big things - for the person in your household who does the dishes even though it is your turn or to the 10th-grade speech teacher who started you on the journey to preaching. But this Thanksgiving season, it may feel a little harder than usual to feel grateful. The brutality of Hamas and of Israel's response is breath-taking. The ongoing war in Ukraine and Russia with no end in sight. Instability in North Korea and political games in our Congress. Wage and health and food insecurity in our city. It could be easy to struggle with gratitude.

All the more reason then to take this season as an opportunity to spend a little time thinking about what you are thankful for, and expressing that gratitude where it is appropriate. Write in a journal. Make the phone call or write the note. Spend some time in prayer. And on the days when it is hardest to be grateful, may you remember that God's love endures forever, and you are God's beloved.



~Dorothy Gannon



GUMBO - BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Please join New Cahokia Commons Urban Farm on Sunday, Nov. 12, at the **Growin' For Gumbo Dinner & Pie Auction** fundraiser! You'll get a taste of a rich and flavorful culinary heritage that reaches back to West-Central Africa.

Gumbo is a flavorful stew combining ingredients and culinary practices of several cultures, including African, French, Spanish, and the Choctaw peoples. Okra is mandatory. Versions of gumbo can include greens, peppers, seafood, sausage or poultry. "A Gumbo" is also an event or a gathering - such is the tradition of this dish bringing people and families together.

On Nov. 12, at Growin' for Gumbo, Nisha Martin-Schmidt, our master gumbo chef, will offer vegetarian gumbo and traditional gumbo. Your meal will include cajun hushpuppies and a drink. Dinner tickets are \$25 each. The dinner is at Earthbound Brewery at 2724 Cherokee St., St. Louis, MO 63118. (see flyer on next page)

Proceeds from Growin' for Gumbo will help <u>New Cahokia Commons Urban Farm</u> construct two high tunnel growing structures to extend the growing season year round. The farm is raising \$25,000 to match a grant for construction of the high tunnels.

Support fresh, local food grown by BIPOC (black, indigenous, people of color) farmers by getting your Growin' for Gumbo tickets at Eventbrite today.









Growin' for Gumbo Gumbo Supper & Pie Auction



The event will feature vegetarian and meat gumbo options and proceeds will benefit New Cahokia Commons Urban Farm's goal to raise \$25k going towards "raising the roofs" on farming high tunnels for growing year-round produce.

www.newcahokiacommons.farm

Earthbound Brewery | 2724 Cherokee St. | St. Louis, MO 63118







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AND FOR

Sat., Nov. 18 at 7:00 pm & Sun., Nov. 19 at 3:00 pm Kirkwood High School Theater 800 Dougherty Ferry Rd

THE KIRKWOOD R-7 SCHOOL DISTRICT does not endorse the goals, objectives, activities, or opinions of any non-sponsored clubs or their members nor does the District encourage or discourage student participation therein.



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EPIPHANY COMPLETES TWO BREAST CANCER AWARENESS EVENTS

By Jeanette Mott Oxford

After 15-months of planning and outreach to potential co-sponsors, our two ambitious Breast Cancer Awareness Month events are in the Epiphany UCC history book! TWO-TIME GRAMMY® Award Winners, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer, both breast cancer survivors, brought their 10-song musical called "All Wigged Out" to the Hi-Pointe Theatre on Oct. 20 as a 58minute movie. The next night they offered a two-set concert in the Epiphany sanctuary, and, although the audience was small, they played like they were the headliners in a packed Busch Stadium.

The following St. Louis organizations partnered with us to bring "All Wigged Out" to St. Louis as a free public event:

- AARP, St. Louis
- American Cancer Society Cancer **Action Network**
- SSM Breast Care
- Missouri History Museum
- Cancer Support Community of Greater St. Louis

It would not have been possible to present the movie and concert without the financial support and volunteer hours of these five partners. They have our deep gratitude.



Our partners have also communicated their thanks for Epiphany's invitation to participate:

Emily Kalmer, Government Relations Director-Missouri, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network: "We had several meaningful conversations with attendees and connected with potential future volunteers, partners, and advocates. We also collected a good amount of donations for Hope Lodge." (see photo.)



Kristine Bader, Breast Nurse Navigator, SSM Breast Care: "Even though the numbers were not as high as hoped, if we even had one person hear the message and act....it was a huge success. We enjoyed ourselves immensely and having the opportunity to educate people is always a blessing."

Dannie Hodges, Program Director, Cancer Support Community of Greater St. Louis: "It was an absolute pleasure to be part of this....I have come to realize that the people who attend receive tremendous benefit and every bit of effort is worth it. Thank you for doing what you do and for thinking of Cancer Support Community. I would be honored to work alongside you in the future."

Emily Underwood, Community Initiatives Specialist, Missouri History Museum: "I had a wonderful time and spoke to many people about Gateway to Pride, which was fantastic. I greatly enjoyed getting to talk with Marcy and Cathy, and I brought back a glowing review to the Museum."

As part of the Epiphany UCC fundraising team, which has made community concerts a frequent choice for several years now, we'd be interested to receive your feedback. If you attended one or both nights, what is your review of each? If you did not choose to attend, please let us know why. I'll be glad to share your thoughts with the committee if you email me at <u>jmo.mott.oxford@gmail.com</u> or set up time to visit on a Sunday following worship.

We also say thanks to the following donors of door prizes or raffle prizes:

- MoKaBe's Restaurant
- Piazza Café
- Indigo Massage
- Missouri History Museum

EPA SNIFFS OUT STL ODORS

On Wednesday, October 25, Region 7 EPA officials from the Air program hosted a community meeting in south St. Louis to update residents on their response to odor complaints. The environmental agency officials said they had received an increase in odor complaints in 2021. In September 2022, the Region 7 EPA Air Enforcement unit secured the use of a specially-equipped van to screen areas for odors. The van uses equipment to measure and record meteorological conditions and to detect (BTEX), a group of volatile organic chemicals that includes benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene that are gases often responsible for odors and for health problems at certain exposures. For four days and three nights the van traveled city streets taking readings.

Of the 1088 regulated air pollution sources in the region, 700 are in the St. Louis metro in Missouri. From the van's screenings, the EPA had identified 44 potential sources of concerning readings. Further investigation narrowed that figure to 15 facilities. The screenings prompted more thorough investigations into the 15 facilities' performance. Those investigation results are nearly finalized. The EPA said that the purpose of the Oct. 25 community meeting was to brief the public. Officials said the results on the 15 facilities investigated would be released on a special website soon.

(Continued on page x.)



(Continued from page x.)

The EPA made it clear that their region, with headquarters in Lenexa, Kansas, was not responsible for the Veolia hazardous waste incinerator in Sauget, Illinois, which is under the authority of Region 5 EPA with headquarters in Chicago. Residents commenting made it clear that the majority of their concerns were about an acrid odor that leaves a metallic taste and brings to mind an electrical fire. It often triggers watering and burning eyes, asthma reactions, and breathing problems in some people exposed and drives people and their pets indoors. Some people also reported a sweet, strawberrylike smell that triggered breathing problems. Residents report noticing the odor when the winds are from the east or when the air is very still, especially after 10 p.m and before 9 a.m.



Members of the citizen group Metro Toxic Air Task Force (MTATF) who are organizing for clean air appreciated the agency's efforts, which included a room full of Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources and EPA staff who lingered between presentations and took questions. Some of the emissions MTATF is concerned about include toxic metals like arsenic and mercury, which EPA's odor sniffing van would not have detected. Missouri DNR confirmed the state only has 5 air monitors in the city and county of St. Louis. Research reveals that none of those monitors detect metals, not even lead. MTATF was disappointed when agency officials from EPA and MDNR could not answer questions about how Missouri based officials formally and routinely work with their counterparts in Illinois to address pollution that knows no state boundaries.

Representatives were also on hand from Congresswoman Cori Bush's office, from Alderwoman Cara Spencer's office, and from Alderwoman Alisha Sonnier's office.

MTATF encourages everyone to report bad air experiences to its email mtatf23@gmail.com and include the date, time, weather conditions, the general location, the type of smell, the duration (if known), and any effects experienced with health (ie: had an asthma attack) or lifestyle (ie: had to stay inside). The Metro Toxic Air Task Force is on Facebook and on Instagram @breathebetterstl where you can find links to documents and for easy reporting.

2911 McNair, St. Louis, MO 63118

~Meeting Summary by Kathleen Logan Smith, MTATF

GET INVOLVED!

Interfaith Power & Light (IPL) always has a one or several petitions going. Here are three that have been mentioned at Epiphany, and may be of interest to readers.

Petition to Toyota for 100% EV

Right now, Toyota only produces one 100% electric vehicle with extremely limited availability in the US. Toyota says that it makes the most "electrified" cars in America, but this messaging is misleading because it includes cars that still run on polluting fossil fuels.

<u>Click here</u> to send Toyota a letter telling them that it's past time to phase out internal combustion (ICE) engines!

As people of faith and conscience, we have a moral obligation to tackle climate change and help protect our communities, clean air, and Sacred Earth. Transportation is the biggest source of climate pollution in the US, and we must rapidly decrease transportation emissions if we are to solve the climate crisis. A personalized message with your story is the best way to influence Toyota.

Letter to President Biden RE: 28th UN Climate Change Conference (COP28)

This November, in Dubai, the United Nations will convene COP28, the annual international climate conference. Along with partners and state affiliates, IPL will be in attendance, advocating for the United States to play a pivotal leadership role in these global climate negotiations as we remain steadfast in our pursuit to limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius.

As the largest historic emitter of carbon pollution in the world, this is a significant moment for the United States to showcase its dedication to environmental responsibility, which is why we are taking this opportunity to raise our collective voices to impact our nation's position on the climate crisis. Join us in <u>signing this letter</u> to President Biden calling on the U.S. government to lead by example by committing to bold and just climate action at COP28.

No Arctic Drilling

The Enlightener

Oil companies are pushing for more drilling in the fragile western arctic landscape. Drilling for more fossil fuels is not the direction our nation needs to go to address the climate crisis. It will also permanently scar this critical wildlife habitat, which is the breeding ground for migratory birds, caribou, muskox, Dall sheep, foxes, and more. Tell the Bureau of Land Management: No drilling in the Arctic.

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~For more information on these items, please contact Doris.



LECTIONARY READINGS FOR NOVEMBER 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.

November 5

Joshua 3:7-17 & Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37 or Micah 3:5-12 & Psalm 43 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13 Matthew 23:1-12

November 12

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25 & Psalm 78:1-7 or Amos 5:18-24 or Psalm 70 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Matthew 25:13-18

November 19

Judges 4:1-7 & Psalm 123 or Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 & Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11), 12 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Matthew 25:14-30

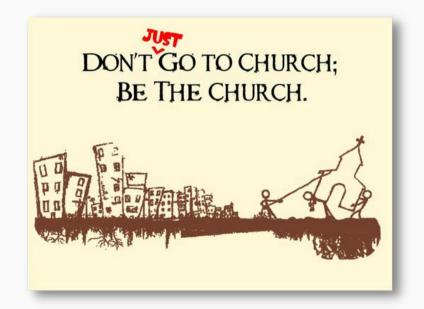
November 26

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 & Psalm 100 or Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 & Psalm 95:1-7a Ephesians 1:15-23 Matthew 25:31-46

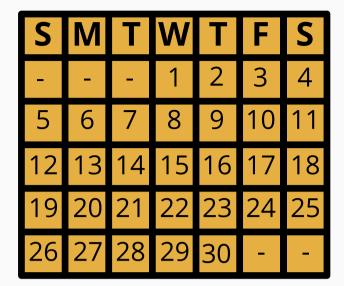
Sundays Worship & Education Adult Education, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m. Click the link to Zoom with us, or worship with us at facebook.com/epiphanyucc.



NOISY OFFERING - 3RD SUNDAYS



NOVEMBER



You may contact Pastor Krissy at pastorkris@epiphanyucc.org for an invitation to the Zoom worship and meetings.

November 1 - Wednesday: All Saints Day

5:30 p.m. Centering Prayer

November 2 - Thursday

8-9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris Office Hours

November 3 - Friday

November 4 - Saturday

November 5 - Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion

12 noon "What's Next" congregational

discussion w/soup lunch

November 6 - Monday

8-9:30 a.m. Pastor Kriss Office Hours

November 7 - Tuesday: Election Day

7 p.m. Benton Park Neighborhood Assoc.

November 8 - Wednesday

November 9 - Thursday

8-9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris Office Hours

November 10 - Friday

November 11 - Saturday

November 12 - Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship

Noon Mini Sound Session

November 13 - Monday

November 14 - Tuesday

8-9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris Office Hours

November 15 - Wednesday

5:30 p.m. Centering Prayer Group

November 16 - Thursday

8-9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris Office Hours

7 p.m. Church Council on Zoom

November 17 - Friday

November 18 - Saturday

November 19 - Sunday with Noisy Offering

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion

November 20 - Monday

November 21 - Tuesday

8-9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris Office Hours

November 22- Wednesday

November 23 - Thursday: Happy Thanksgiving

4 p.m.-? Meal, games, music, fellowship

November 24 - Friday

November 25 - Saturday

November 26 - Sunday

9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion

10:30 a.m. Worship

November 27 - Monday

November 28 - Tuesday

8-9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris Office Hours

November 29 - Wednesday

November 30 - Thursday

8-9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris Office Hours

Please note that you can view the Epiphany calendar on our website under "News & Events."

Events and times are subject to change.

Remember the next newsletter is a double issue for both **December AND** January.



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.



November Birthdays

Gail Ahumada Wes Buchek 11/2 Lauren Verseman 11/4 Carol Trissell 11/7

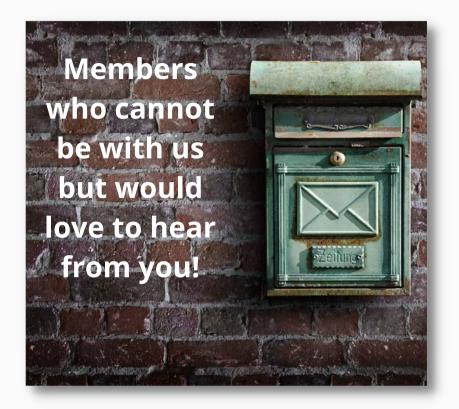
November Anniversaries

None



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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 Financial Secretary, Dorothy Gannon Accounts Payable, Jeanette Mott Oxford

Building Care, Amanda Yatzeck Choir, Dorothy Gannon Christian Education Chair, Lois Yatzeck Enlightener Editor, Wes Buchek Hospitality and Usher Coordinator, Wes Buchek

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

9:15 a.m.
Christian Education
10:30 a.m.
Worship

Telephone: 314-772-0263

Email: pastorkris@epiphanyucc.org

Website: www.epiphanyucc.org

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Epiphany UCC

www.epiphanyucc.org

NOVEMBER 2023

Return Service Requested

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