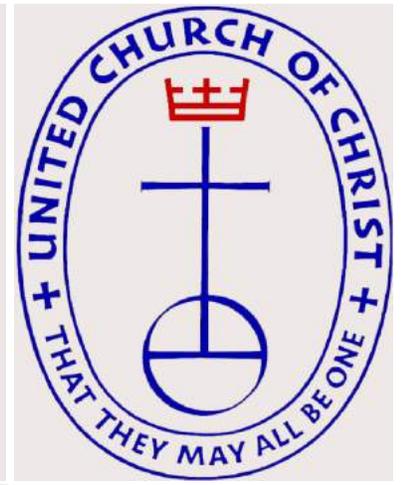


The Hilltop News



JUST A LITTLE LIGHT

For several weeks now we have been closing our worship with words of mission. In answer to the question, “Who will take the light into the world?” we have responded, “We will!” This is a vow to not let the darkness overcome us.

It’s amazing how little light has to shine through to overcome the darkness! The totality of the eclipse on our hill brought a few moments of relief from the heat of the day and interesting shadows on the ground. The birds stopped singing, the flood lights on the hill popped on, the valley lit up like Christmas and the crickets began their evensong, but the darkness did not overcome the light. One percent of the sunlight is all is needed to dispel the darkness!

You may think you have no power to change anything, but you do! The denouncing of hate and efforts to bring peace and justice to the world by even just one person can make a huge difference! If you talk to just one person, and that person talks to just one person, and that person talks to another person and so on...*your* light can actually change the world.

With all the hatred and violence expressed and embedded in the racist

systems in which we all live and move, the voices of people of faith are urgently required! But you don’t have to go out into the street with a placard to make yourself heard.

Here are some ways to use *your* voice to bring just a little light and truly make a lasting difference:

1. Read “*Witnessing Whiteness: The Need to Talk About Race and How to Do It*” by Shelly Touchluk, and get involved in a YWCA discussion group of this book. If enough of you would like, we could hold a discussion group at church – just let me know!
2. Hold a conversation with neighbors in your living room, across the fence, over the grocery cart or anywhere using the skills you will learn reading “*Witnessing Whiteness.*”
3. Work to make sure that St. Thomas United Church of Christ is not only a welcoming place, but also a sacred space for healing.

Do not remain silent! Let your light of love shine!

Bring just a little light wherever you happen to be!

Just a little light will make a huge difference!

*peace,
Margaret*

SEPTEMBER 2017

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Pastor

Rev. Margaret Diz Philip
Council

Kelly Day, pres.

Neil Glaser, treas.

Liz Konneman, sec.

Dale Konneman, grounds
Janet Moehsmer, bldg. fund

Music Director

June Jones

Custodian

Neil Glaser

Office Admin.

Gail Schneider

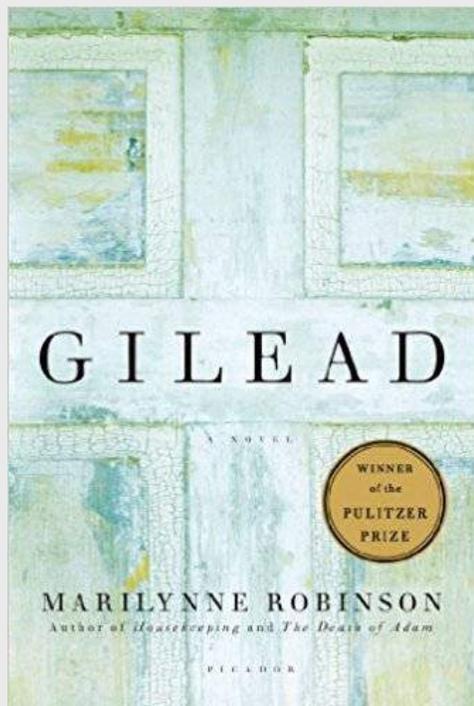
NEIGHBORS IN NEED—OCTOBER 1

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on October 1, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through ucc.org/justice, our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice. Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hockak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

Neighbors in Need helps make another world possible. It needs your support. Please give generously.

When God is about to do something great, he starts with a difficulty. When he is about to do something truly magnificent, he starts with an impossibility.

—Armin Gesswein



BOOK CLUB SELECTION:

“GILEAD,” by Marilynne Robinson, is a 2004 Pulitzer Prize winning novel and a New York Times Top-Ten Book of 2004. It is also the winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction. An intimate tale of three generations, from the Civil War to the 20th century, *Gilead* is a story about fathers and sons and the spiritual battles that still rage at America's heart. In the words of Kirkus (Indie book reviews), it is a novel "as big as a nation, as quiet as thought, and moving as a prayer. Matchless and towering." GILEAD tells the story of America and will break your heart. Book Club meets September 21 at 2pm.

SEPTEMBER MINISTRY— HABITAT

For 22 years, the United Church of Christ has partnered with Habitat Saint Louis to bring our mission to life.

In 1995, a United Church of Christ (UCC) pastor challenged local congregations to support the mission of Habitat for Humanity Saint Louis. More than 20 churches responded with the human and financial resources needed to build the very first UCC-sponsored house in 1996.



Since then, the UCC partnership has helped to erect 26 more houses across the city. Our UCC volunteers have spent hot hours during a summer blitz and trudged through snow in order to revitalize neighborhoods and give our partner families a fresh start.

Today, the UCC partnership has raised over a million dollars and given tens of thousands of hours to work alongside Habitat Saint Louis's partner families on the build site.

For 2017, our local UCC congregations will be working on a new build in the Tiffany neighborhood just north of St. Louis University. Please make your donations payable to St. Thomas UCC.

Beatitude in action

After a renowned career in academia, priest and author Henri Nouwen devoted his final years to living in community with and caring for adults with severe developmental disabilities. A friend once asked Nouwen if it might make more sense to spend his remaining time writing.

“I am not giving up anything,” Nouwen answered. “It is I, not Adam [the man he helped with the most basic needs], who gets the main benefit from our friendship.”

Nouwen didn't merely read Jesus' beatitude “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy” (Matthew 5:7). He lived it.

Christ United Church of Cypress, 25 miles northwest of Houston, washed out in 2016, has been flooded by Hurricane Harvey.



They experienced a devastating flood on Tax Day 2016, and were just weeks away from worshipping once again in their sanctuary. The Texas congregation returned to its building on Aug. 20, holding that first worship service in the fellowship hall. Since the flooding in April 2016, the people of Christ United rented out space from a school. The building reconstruction was just about complete. And though situated on high ground, about 40 inches of rainfall from Harvey brought floodwaters up to the middle of the front door.

The Rev. Jeff Willey, pastor at Christ United, said that the two main roads on both sides of the building now resemble major rivers, with water rushing past and still rising. But he said, "The church is not the building. We have new families joining us and some of them have never been in the building. Our church is a comfort. The steeple gives people faith that God is still with us. Although this is the second major disaster to hit the congregation in the past two years, we still proclaim that our God is good and will abundantly provide."

Sunday services at Christ United Church of Cypress and throughout the South Central Conference of the UCC were cancelled for Sunday ahead of the hurricane. Members were told to stay home, check on each other, and prepare with extra water and food. There are 123 churches in the South Central Conference, 25 of which are in the Houston Association. [UCC Disaster Ministries](#) has begun coordinating a long-term response with the conference, but the extent of the damage won't be known immediately. The Church is encouraging donations at this time until volunteers are called for what is expected to be a recovery phase of 5 to 6 years. South Central Conference Minister the Rev. Don Longbottom pledged that the conference will look out for anyone affected, not just the UCC churches. He said, "The UCC's Slumber Falls Camp in New Braunfels, Texas, an outdoor ministry of the conference, has offered to be a refuge center and is ready to receive people." The UCC will be there for the long-haul.

SUMMER REPORT FROM CAMP MOVAL

This summer at Camp MoVal has been very successful. This summer, our campers have been Branching Out and learning more about God, growing in their faith, and new ways to connect with Christ. We began the summer with over 40 people attending Family Camp and a full Adventures in Community Camp with 25 campers. We had quality Discovery and Primary camps and very full Junior, Middle School, and High School camps.

We had a very successful Grandparents/Grandchild Camps, two this year because of continued growth. We had three outstanding Outback camps this summer, Junior, Middle School, and High School, all of which went off site to camp out. We are closing out our summer program season this year with our young adult camp program. We have had very dedicated volunteer staff this summer, both Counselors and Session Directors, to make this summer possible with their great leadership. This summer has been a blessing from God on everyone who been a part of Camp MoVal.

Jeremy Force - Director of Outdoor Ministries - Camp MoVal

Missouri Mid-South Conference of UCC

2659 Camp MoVal Rd., Union, MO 63084 ~ Web: www.campmoval.org



BACK-TO-SCHOOL HUMOR

- Summer is over. Time to officially remember what day of the week it is!
- “Labor Day is a glorious holiday because your child will be going back to school the next day. It would have been called Independence Day, but that name was already taken.” (Bill Dodds)
- Receiving new textbooks, one student to another: “Psst. How do you turn this thing on?”
- Parent: “What did you learn today?” Kindergartner: “Not enough. I have to go back tomorrow.”



If you have knowledge of someone on the Prayer List who no longer needs our prayers, please let us know.

Content removed for web edition

Cereal

Dinner Helpers - **CRITICAL**

Mac & Cheese

Peanut Butter

Jelly

Canned Chicken

Ibuprofen, Tylenol,
Aspirin - **CRITICAL**

Laundry Soap

Dish Soap

There is a **CRITICAL** need for new box fans and window A/C units for clients with health issues.



2nd Annual Movie Night At the Firehouse—A Community Event Benefiting Circle of Concern—September 24, 7pm

See <http://www.circleofconcern.org/events/> for more information.

COUNCIL CONTACTS

President	Kelly Day	314-307-7890 kmday44@gmail.com
Treasurer	Neil Glaser	636-391-0279 njglaser@att.net
Secretary	Liz Konneman	636-458-5643 enkonneman@live.com
Buildings & Grounds	Dale Konneman	636-458-5643 dalekonneman@hotmail.com
Building Fund	Janet Moehsmer	636-458-1058 jmoehsmer@gmail.com



5K RUN/WALK

benefiting

CIRCLE OF CONCERN FOOD PANTRY

Are you ready to make a difference in the lives of hungry families? Then hit the trail on Valley Park's scenic Meramec River Trail on September 16 to **Run Circles Around Hunger!** Paced for runners or perfect for a casual walk with family and friends - all proceeds benefit Circle Of Concern's food pantry and programs for our neighbors.

NEW IN 2017!
A first-of-its-kind
Cereal Bar
after hitting the trail!
Healthy cereal or sweet
with an array of
tasty toppings!

WHEN: Saturday, September 16, 2017

TIME: 7 a.m. Check-In
8 a.m. CrossFit Warm-Up
8:30 a.m. 5K Run/Walk Start
9-10 a.m. Music, Food & Fun
9:30 a.m. Winners Presented

WHERE: Arnold's Grove Trail Head Park
4 Meramec Station Road
(Hwy 141 & Marshall)
Valley Park, MO 63088

COST: \$25* per person
\$20* per person on teams of 10+
* \$3 service fee on online sign-ups

- Race is chip-timed by Fleet Feet
- Register by Aug 21 to assure your size T-shirt
- Packet pick-up at Circle on September 13 from 3 to 7 p.m. or at event check-in

Thanks to our Platinum Sponsor!



EXPRESS SCRIPTS®

REGISTER ONLINE NOW at circleofconcern.org!

There are **TWO WAYS TO PAY:**

1. Pay online with your credit card **OR**
2. Reserve your spot online and then send your check to -
Circle Of Concern, Attn: 5K, 112 St. Louis Avenue, Valley Park, MO 63088

Do you have a team of 10 or more participants?

- If you register them all at once, the \$5 discount per person will be applied automatically.
- If your participants will register separately, call Juliet (636.861.2623 ext. 106) for your own unique Team Discount Code to share with your participants. Save \$5 per registration!

We're Collecting 1,000 Boxes of Cereal!
Cereal is a good, quick meal for our clients. Will you please bring a box or two to share with the families we serve?

GOD’S LEFT HAND

A 6-year-old and his grandma went for a walk one autumn day. “Look at the gorgeous leaves!” Grandma exclaimed. “Just think, God painted each one of them just for us!”

“Yep,” said her grandson, “and he did it left-handed.”

Perplexed, Grandma asked, “Why do you think God used his left hand to create all this beauty?”

“Because,” said the boy matter-of-factly, “we learned in Sunday school that Jesus sits on God’s right one.”

BIBLE

QUIZ



The “Trinitarian formula” occurs only once in the Bible. In which New Testament book do we read “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” and who said these words?

- A. Romans; Paul
- B. 1 Peter; Simon Peter
- C. The Acts of the Apostles; Luke
- D. Matthew; Jesus

Answer: See pg. 10



WHY RECYCLE?

Recycling plants need your help. It’s a rare business model that can save taxpayer dollars and lower the cost of consumer products. Extracting money from rubbish is capitalism’s only means of sustaining recycling efforts. For now, that means sorting has to be quick and relatively easy.

According to local studies, about 50 percent of your household waste is composed of recyclable items. Yet in 2016, less than 10 percent of St. Louis residential waste was actually recycled.

Every day, Resource Management Cos. processes 400 tons of material from residential recycling bins. It’s one of two local companies — Republic Services is the other — that operate in the region. Sending waste to the landfill costs \$33.98 per ton for St. Louis city. Sending it to the recycling center costs \$15.60 per ton. “Yes, every ton that goes to the recycling facility saves the city \$18.38 to be exact,” explains Elysia Musumeci with Brightside St. Louis. If you do the math, the savings add up quickly.

But there’s no time or machinery to dismantle TVs, furniture or mixed media items fused with glass, metal, plastic and wood. Those items are sent to the landfill after needlessly being carted to recycling centers that waste precious time weeding such items out. The more efficient the system, the more cost benefit there is in recycling.

Here at St. Thomas, we have two methods of sorting. The blue bins are for paper only (newspapers, magazines, catalogs, mail, envelopes, folders, colored paper, fax & copy paper but *not* cardboard). The items collected in the kitchen should *not* include plastic bags or plastic wrap. (Plastic bags are collected at grocery stores.) Food containers should be rinsed out. In both instances, the items go to the type of recycle dumpsters you find at churches and schools, rather than single stream recycling, which many of us have at home, so the rules are different. (*Information from Post-Dispatch article, 4/15/17*)

September 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 +Joe & Kelly Day	4	5 No Centering Prayer	6 9am Ladies Guild +Hal & Robbie Brock	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 *Ray Bopp
17 +Chuck & Marilyn Coffman	18	19 1:30pm Centering Prayer	20	21 2pm Book Club	22	23
24	25	26	27 *Kara Winckel	28	29 *Clara Mueller	30

St. Thomas UCC
17842 Wild Horse Creek Road
Chesterfield, MO 63005
www.stthomasucc.org

Phone: 636-532-3556

E-mail: ucc.st.thomas@gmail.com

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

BIBLE QUIZ Answer: D (See [Matthew 28:19](#).)



Worship: 8:30 (summer) & 10:00 am (all year)

11:00 am Fellowship Time

We are ADA Accessible.

Childcare is provided during Worship.

Office Hours: 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Please call first if you need to stop by!

Office Phone: 636.532.3556

About Us

Mission Statement

We are St. Thomas UCC, a caring faith community welcoming all to share with us. You will find us supportive, nurturing, and encouraging. Our worship is traditional yet contemporary, applying scripture and Christ's teachings to everyday life. Accepting all who come as family, we are St. Thomas UCC.

Value Statement

We are a close-knit welcoming community. We cherish and honor the traditions of our 100 years past. With respect and compassion we work together. We strive to grow in our faith by serving the community. We embrace and celebrate our youth and the promise of each new generation of God's children. We seek God's blessings and wisdom in the joys and challenges of our daily lives. We grow in our understanding of Christ's teachings while being respectful of our differences.

Vision Statement

We seek to :

- Invite others to join in our faith journey
- Explore worship opportunities
- Enhance our fellowship and service outreach
- Expand our use of technology
- Increase our community involvement