Hello Epiphany Friends,

For several years I participated in a Facebook "challenge" to post something for which I was thankful each day of November. Now besides the basic problems of not getting on Facebook every day, and just plain forgetting; it was too easy to just say the usual stuff: Family (done right that can take up half the month), Friends, Job, Home, Health, etc..

Our Advent theme this year is "Blossoms in the desert" which comes from Isaiah where it is a promise for the future. We aren't using it that way.

So many of our Advent themes have been about light: following light or looking for light which ignores that there are blessings in the darkness too!

Blossoms in the desert, blessings in the dark, or petunias in the sidewalk offer us opportunities to go deeper, to grow spiritually as we look past the easy and the obvious.

I encourage you to take a day for the devotional and go deep (which does not mean long); and/or challenge yourself to think about your unexpected blessings during November (even if you don't share them on Facebook 😊)

(Continued on page 2.)
I'm going to wrap this up with an example from the book *Simple Prayers for Complicated Lives*, by Jennifer Phillips:

Thanksgiving for Age
Blessed One, long-companion on my way:
My bones creak your praise,
my back (slowly) straightens to do you honor,
I rise (gradually) from my bed to do your will this day.
If I finish fewer tasks,
   may they be done with greater love.
If I remember fewer things,
   may they be held in greater wisdom.
If I act more slowly,
   may I give life greater attention.

Bless me through the changes and accidents of time.
Uphold me through the wearing down and wearing out of my parts.
Give me the gifts of love and good humor to pass along to others.

Forgive me my frustrations and my fears, my cussed independence and my pride
Do not let the complaints of my body shrink my care for your world.

Lend me grace at every stage and at every age
to enjoy some part of this marvelous gift of life
and always to give you thanks. Amen.

Peace and blessings,

[Signature]
MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Church Visioning Building Meeting
Sunday Nov. 20
After Worship (Potluck lunch)

Thanksgiving Potluck
Thursday Nov. 24
2 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service
Saturday Dec. 24
7 p.m.

Christmas Day Service
Sunday Dec. 25
10:30 a.m.
(No Adult Ed))
ADVENT DEVOTIONAL "BLOSSOMS IN THE DESERT" PLANNED AS COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

The Worship Committee has selected “Blossoms in the Desert” as our theme for Advent 2022 and asks us to contemplate how God comes to us in surprises like flowers in unexpected places. We also are invited to envision all that God has promised in the time when God’s commonwealth is realized.

The theme is drawn from Isaiah 35:1-2a, one of the readings for the Third Sunday of Advent: “The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing.”

Epiphany United Church of Christ has produced an Advent Daily Reflection booklet since 2013. This year we will collaboratively work with Friedens Peace UCC in New Melle on this project, utilizing the “Blossoms in the Desert” theme. (Epiphany member Lauren Verseman is currently ministering in this congregation.)

A Google document has been created to keep track of who has volunteered to write for which day. Go to THIS LINK to access the form, or request a PDF from Jeanette Mott Oxford (J-MO) at jmo.mott.oxford@gmail.com.

(Continued on page 5.)
Drafts of daily reflections are due by Nov. 18 and should be emailed as a Word document to J-MO at jmo.mott.oxford@gmail.com. They should be 350 words or less. The booklet will be available on the first Sunday of Advent, Nov. 27, and Adult Sunday School will utilize the booklet and lectionary passages as the basis of discussion during December.

If the term Advent is new to you, it is a season of the liturgical year observed in most Christian denominations. Most Protestant and Catholic churches treat Advent as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ (or the fulfillment of the kingdom of God) in what some term “the Second Coming.”

Many at Epiphany UCC enjoy Advent as an opportunity to be countercultural. We wait for Christmas to arrive instead of joining the rushed practices of secular society where Christmas decorations appear in stores before Halloween and Christmas songs play non-stop on some local radio stations by the day after Thanksgiving. Given that patience and waiting is a reality in human existence, Advent is a chance to deepen our spiritual practices around this human necessity.

CENTERING PRAYER

In November we are slightly adjusting our centering prayer. We are moving BACK to Wednesdays. Normally we have it the first and third weeks. But for November, we’re going to have it Nov. 9 and Nov. 23 (tentative). We will return to a first/third week schedule after November.

We are also moving to a 5:30 p.m. start time for November through March. Location will be in the church council room, unless otherwise noted.

If you have any questions, contact Wes or Lois.
VISIONING UPDATE & NEXT STEPS

We had a very productive congregational meeting on October 16 to discuss the visioning report. Thanks to all who attended and participated in the process. At the meeting, we identified 5 top priorities moving forward:

1. Building
2. Missions
3. Communication
4. Congregational care
5. Butts in seats

Our next congregational potluck meeting will be Sunday, Nov. 20 right after worship.

We will discuss all things building related (use, maintenance, costs, repairs, etc).

Please come ready to discuss specifics, not just generalities. We look forward to seeing you there!

Next Visioning Meeting:
Sunday, Nov. 20, after worship
CONTINUING—WRESTLING WITH THE WORD

You don’t often think of the adult education class (Sundays at 9:15) as a time of wrestling. But that is what we have been doing this past October: wrestling with the meaning of Jesus’ parables in the New Testament.

Parables were the prime teaching mode of Jesus. Often we have gotten so accustomed to hearing them that we forget they have a disruptive meaning – a twist. In class we are challenged to discern what Jesus is really saying.

Take, for example, Luke 10:25-37 – the Good Samaritan. Jesus told the parable to answer a pharisee’s question, “who is my neighbor?” The neighbor in this parable turns out to be the Jewish people’s historical enemy, a Samaritan from a despised territory. After grappling with the concept that the ones we define as our enemy may be those who have greater compassion than so-called “religious folk.” An even more profound teaching of the parable is that the generosity of the Samaritan may be likened to the character of God: the one who shows mercy. We are to do likewise.

Join us for these challenging discussions. We will be delving into the parables up to the beginning of Advent on November 27. During Advent we will be sharing our reflections based on our Advent Devotional book, whose theme is “Blossoms in the Desert.”
BUILDING TEAM UPDATE

Earlier this year, the Building Team shared our to-do list with the congregation. We're happy to report that much progress has been made! Thank you to everyone who has helped with the projects, and a special thank you to Gail Ahumada for all of her amazing work!

If you have projects you would like to add to the building to do list, or if you would like to help with some of the projects, please contact Amanda Verbeck at amandanv530@yahoo.com.

Completed items (since May 2022):
- change lightbulb outside of fellowship hall
- install hardware cloth on basement vents
- plant flowers
- repair bathroom door lock
- install new blinds and drapes in UME rooms
- repair plaster on UME bedroom wall
- repair UME light
- repair and paint side green doors
- install insulated drapes in fellowship hall and classroom
- major storage and tool room cleanup
- recycle old paint and stain
- repair and paint sanctuary window sills
- repair and paint office basement window sills
- repair and paint red bell tower door
- Fall sanctuary cleanup
- repair bottom of front sanctuary doors
- bell tower cleanup of pigeon waste
- repair and paint bell tower louvres
TRIVIA FUNDRAISING RECAP

The Fundraising Team would like to thank everyone who supported this year's trivia night...it was a success! Thank you to the many silent auction donors, and to all of our fabulous players. We raised over $2,300 for the evening, and we couldn't have done it without you.

A special thanks to St. Paul's UCC for hosting and providing so many tables of players, as well as emcee Kyle Kerns.

Thank you, also, to our round sponsors:

- Crusoe's
- Biome Press
- St. Paul's UCC
- Glazed and Confused
- Anonymous
EPIPHANY CONCERT SERIES
Up Next: Miles Brenton

Coming Feb. 4 will be the next installment of the Epiphany Concert Series, featuring the music of Miles Brenton. To learn more about Miles, or to listen to some of his music, visit milesbrenton.com.

Mark your calendar right now for Feb. 4!! And start inviting friends to the concert. Flyers, Facebook invites, and more announcements will be posted soon. But it's never too early to invite people. Let's pack the sanctuary for Miles!

SPECIAL THANK YOU

Thank you to Karen and Dwaine Sell and Dorothy Gannon and Jeanette Mott Oxford for their donation in honor of Fred and Beckie Tilinski's 50th anniversary!
VOTE AS IF

YOUR SKIN IS NOT WHITE
YOUR PARENTS NEED MEDICAL CARE
YOUR FRIEND IS A MISSING INDIGENOUS WOMAN
YOUR SPOUSE IS AN IMMIGRANT
YOUR LAND IS ON FIRE
YOUR GRANDMOTHER CAN’T AFFORD HER MEDICINE
YOUR SON IS TRANSGENDER
YOUR HOUSE IS FLOODED
YOUR SISTER IS A VICTIM OF GUN VIOLENCE
YOUR BROTHER IS GAY
YOUR DAUGHTER IS A SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVOR
YOUR WATER IS UNSAFE
YOUR NEIGHBOR IS BURIED IN STUDENT DEBT

Vote Nov. 8 (or before)
LECTIONARY READINGS FOR NOVEMBER 2022

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 6**
- Haggai 1:15b-2:9
- & Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21
- or Psalm 98
- Job 19:23-27a & Psalm 17:1-9
- 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

**November 13**
- Isaiah 65:17-25 & Isaiah 12
- Malachi 4:1-2a & Psalm 98
- 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13
- Luke 29:5-19

**November 20**
- Jeremiah 23:1-6 & Psalm 46
- Colossians 1:11-20

**November 27**
- Isaiah 2:1-5
- Psalm 122
- Romans 13:11-14
- Matthew 24:36-44

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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](http://facebook.com/epiphanyucc).

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NOISY OFFERING - 3RD SUNDAYS

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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.
You may contact Pastor Kris at pastorkris@epiphanyucc.org for an invitation to the Zoom internet groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>7 p.m. Benton Park Neighborhood Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2</td>
<td>8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at Epiphany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 4</td>
<td>8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| November 5    | Daylight Savings Time Ends  
  - Spring Forward - Fall back  
  - Set your clocks back one hour tonight! |
| November 6    | 9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion 10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion |
| November 7    | Pastor Kris' day off                                      |
| November 8    | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at Epiphany 5:30 p.m. Centering Prayer Group |
| November 9    | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at Epiphany 5:30 p.m. Centering Prayer Group |
| November 10   | 7 p.m. Fundraising Committee on Zoom                      |
| November 11   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom |
| November 12   | Pastor Kris' day off                                      |
| November 13   | 9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion 10:30 a.m. Worship             |
| November 14   | Pastor Kris' day off                                      |
| November 15   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom |
| November 16   | 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at Epiphany                           |
| November 17   | 7 p.m. Church Council on Zoom                             |
| November 18   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom |
| November 19   | 9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion 10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion  
  including Noisy Offering  
  Following worship - all-church potluck and building concerns meeting |
| November 20   | Pastor Kris' day off                                      |
| November 21   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom |
| November 22   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom |
| November 23   | 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at Epiphany 5:30 p.m. Centering Prayer Group |
| November 24   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom |
| November 25   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom |
| November 26   | 9:15 a.m. Adult Discussion 10:30 a.m. Worship             |
| November 27   | Pastor Kris' day off                                      |
| November 28   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8 p.m. Wine and Theology on Zoom |
| November 29   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at Epiphany |
| November 30   | 8 - 9:30 a.m. Pastor Kris' office hours 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at Epiphany |

Following worship - all-church potluck and building concerns meeting
## Stewardship Update AUGUST 2022

### Income:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actual YTD</th>
<th>Budget YTD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$ 9,017</td>
<td>$ 14,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Education</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>124</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Appeals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facility Rental</td>
<td>2,700</td>
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<td>Urban Mission Exp.</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>375</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Ordinary Income</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Restricted Income</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 17,012</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 19,237</strong></td>
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### Expenses:
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Actual YTD</th>
<th>Budget YTD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member in Discernment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missions</td>
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<td>2,468</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Education</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship/Leadership</td>
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<td>14,743</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comm/Evangelism</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>1,250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospitality/Insurance</td>
<td>4,353</td>
<td>5,087</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>2,625</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban Mission Exp.</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commissary License</td>
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<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(-65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 15,499</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 27,048</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 1,513</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ - 7,811</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### November Birthdays
- Wes Buchek - 11/2
- Lauren Verseman 11/4
- James Bellamy Jr. 11/5
- Monica Bellamy 11/11
- Dennis Paglusch 11/17
- Raekwon Kinnard 11/18

### November Anniversary
- None
Members who cannot be with us but would love to hear from you!

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

RaeKwon Kinnard
123 Draper Hall
801 E. Main St.
Redford, VA 24142-0001
raekinnard@gmail.com

David Hon
2005 Frenken St.
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Ministers at Epiphany

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

Building Care, John Scott
Choir, Dorothy Gannon
Christian Education Chair, Lois Yatzeck
Church Office, Anne Little
Enlightener Editor, Wes Buchek
Hospitality and Usher Coordinator,
Wes Buchek
Safe Church Coordinator,
Jennifer Everett
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