

Volume 1 | Issue 4
December 1, 2022



Union Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Outreach and Justice News

*When a new day begins,
dare to smile gratefully.*

*When there is darkness,
dare to be the first to
shine a light.*

*When there is injustice,
dare to be the first to
condemn it.*

*When something seems
difficult, dare to do it
anyway.*

-Steve Maraboli
from - *Life, the Truth, and
Being Free*

Advent/Christmas Celebration with FTC Neighbors

UACC is going Christmas Caroling and sharing gifts at the Forensic Treatment Center on Sunday, December 11 after cookies and coffee at church. Whether or not you choose to carol, there are lots of opportunities for adults and children to help show our love and give hope.

Kids and adults had fun decorating gift bags this past Sunday after church. We finished 10 bags and some people took another 25 bags to decorate at home. That leaves 40 bags to decorate next **Sunday, December 4** after worship.

And do we have a fun time planned for ALL ages -- kids and adults! There will be Christmas music, cookies and punch. And together -- we'll decorate 40 gift bags. No artistic talent required! All you have to do is find your inner child and enjoy the activity and fellowship just for its own sake, just like the kids do!

Doug Weaver is bringing paint and sponges. We'll have all kinds of stickers, construction paper, stamps, stencils, google eyes, sequins, markers, decorative tapes and a host of other supplies.

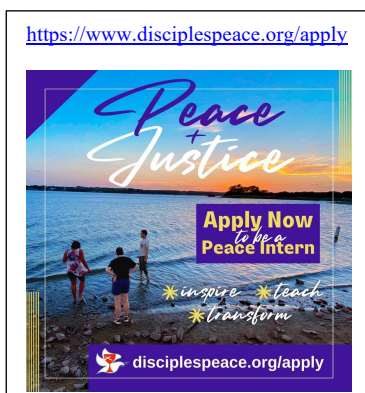
We'll fill the decorated gift bags with warm socks, a Santa hat, drawing pad and Hershey's kisses plus markers for each unit on **Wednesday, December 7** from 9 -11:30 a.m. **We need more volunteers to help** so if you have time and want to make a difference -- email Sandra Miller at millersandr@gmail.com to sign up.

After church on **Sunday, December 11**, those who have signed up in advance will have lunch at UACC and then walk across the parking lot to carol and distribute gift bags at the Forensic Treatment Center (formerly the Metropolitan Psychiatric Center). If you want to join in, email millersandr@gmail.com or sign up Sunday in the lobby.

It take a village to love our neighbors!

COVID Tests are required for all who visit FTC. Chaplain Karen will be at UACC to administer COVID tests during our coffee/lunch time before going over.

<https://www.disciplespeace.org/apply>



*John answered,
“Anyone who has two
shirts should share
with the one who has
none, and anyone who
has food should do the
same.*

Luke 3:11

**Outreach and Justice
Ministry Team
Members**

Dianne Benjamin

Kathy Davis

Rose Fischer

Jacque Foster (Chair)

Rochelle Kaskowitz

Daniel Leach

Matthew Mahaffey

Sandra Miller

Please contact a member of the Outreach and Justice Team if you have questions about UACC’s work in the community and the world.

Our Soldan School Christmas Coat Project

CHRISTMAS GIFTS -- WINTER COATS FOR KIDS

UACC has committed to provide winter coats (and maybe even hats, gloves and scarves) for the children and teens of 10 families in dire need for Christmas in partnership with our neighbor, Soldan International Studies High School. There are two ways you can be a part of this opportunity to make a difference.

As a Group: The response has been overwhelming! A number of groups have already committed to provide coats (and maybe even hats, gloves and scarves) for a whole family. These include AGUA, Plant and Property, Accidental Saints and Second Floor Sunday School Classes as well as the Outreach & Justice Team. Other groups will be discussing the commitment this week. **If your group has not yet made your commitment, please let Rochelle know by Friday, Dec 2 at 3 pm.** Please send an email to Rochelle Kaskowitz at rakasko@gmail.com. Provide the name and telephone number of the group's point of contact. You will receive the name, age, gender and size for each child in the family on Saturday, December 3.

As Individuals and Families: You are encouraged to sign up for one or more individual children and teens. To do this, take an ornament off the Angel Tree in the lobby **this Sunday, December 4.** Ornaments will include a family name, age, gender and size of coat needed. On the table next to the Angel Tree, you will find a **sign-out sheet asking for your name, telephone and email address as well as the name and ID number on the ornament.**

A reminder that as these are Christmas Gifts we would like the winter coats and other items to be New. These are warm winter coats rather than light jackets or sweat shirts. Remember how cold it can be in our city!

GIFT-WRAPPED WINTER COATS ARE DUE AT THE CHURCH ON DEC. 12 Gift wrapped coats and whatever hats, scarves and gloves you might want to include are due at the church **no later than December 12 by 4:30 pm.**

Help is needed at the church on Tuesday, December 13 at 9:00 am (until finished) to organize and deliver them to Soldan!

It is possible that we may need to send some to shop for some coats and wrap them that day, if we end up with a shortage. *(We of course, hope this will not be needed!)*

Rochelle Kaskowitz and Rose Fischer are our leaders for this project.

AS AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION ...

let us hold in welcoming love, those LGBTQI persons who are often separated from or silenced by families in this season. An essential aspect of being the Church of Jesus, God’s Beloved, is that ALL are a welcome and valued part of this church as we seek to live as the Beloved Community.

During Advent and Christmas, many would like to worship with a church community, but feel unsure about feeling safe and welcome, unsure about the message we will proclaim. It is a season to welcome our friends who are longing for community. Embody Community – Love Incarnate.



**GOOD NEWS IN OUR
MID-AMERICA
REGION**

*On Sunday, November 20,
First Christian Church of
Edwardsville, IL voted and
became an OPEN and
AFFIRMING
Congregation.*

*Congratulations,
Edwardsville!*



**MID-AMERICA
REGION GROUPS
INCLUDE:**

**CLERGY CLUSTERS AND
CARE**

YOUTH MINISTRY

DISCIPLES' WOMEN

**MID-AMERICA MEN and
FRIENDS**

**AFRICAN AMERICAN
CONVOCAION**

NEW CHURCHES

**ANTI-RACISM PRO-
RECONCILIATION JUSTICE
MINISTRIES**

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

DISCIPLES CARE TEAM

**OPEN AND AFFIRMING
MINISTRY TEAM**



When we think of the celebration of Christmas, we bring forth images of Christmas in our congregations, our Advent worship leading to Christmas, lighting the candles of the Advent Wreath that lead us to the Christ candle. We think of gathering on Christmas eve to hear again the story of Jesus' birth. Hopefully we think of the church caring for others at Christmas through giving and sharing the love of God that is born in our midst. It is through life in our congregations that we "repeat the

sounding joy!" both within and beyond the walls of the church.

So it makes sense that our Christmas offering serves the ministry of our Region of congregations. No one congregation stands alone; we are called to this ministry together! Our congregation is a part of the Mid-America Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We include most congregations in Missouri and a few just across the river in Illinois. Together we do more than any single congregation can do alone. We nurture the ordination and commissioning of ministers, and offer support to congregations seeking to call a pastor. We provide ministries for children and youth through church camps and retreats. We have a Disciples Women's Ministry and a Disciples Men's Ministry. Our Mid-America Region has one of the strongest Anti-Racism Pro-Reconciliation Teams in the denomination.

We come together to reach out, such as when we at UACC partner with Memorial Blvd CC to feed the hungry and fight food injustice, and when we work with Webster Groves Christian in support of Doorways. Our presence as churches of the region was apparent when we came together with four other disciples congregations as well as others in the Community after the school shooting at CVPA this fall.

We share resources between congregations and we make decisions as a region to support our congregations. For instance, in the days before this congregation became an Open and Affirming Congregation, our Regional Commission on Ministry undertook a study process that resulted in our Regional Commission on Ministry opening doors that had previously been locked to ordaining LGBTQ people who were called to ministry.

Our Regional Ministers are called to provide support for congregations in conflict, and to provide pastoral support to pastors, chaplains, and lay congregational leaders in our region.

The ministry of the region is to help congregations support each other so that we may continue to "repeat the sounding joy."

We hope you will help us be a strong part of the Mid-America Region, by giving to Disciples Mission Fund this Christmas!

Our Christmas Offering will be received on Sundays December 11 and 18!

JOY TO THE WORLD! THE LORD IS COME!

*If you spend yourselves
in behalf of the hungry
and satisfy the needs of
the oppressed, then your
light will rise in the
darkness, and your night
will become like the
noonday.*

Isaiah 58:10

Memorial Blvd Food and Clothing Pantry

We at Union Avenue have been committed to supporting Memorial Blvd Christian Church with the food ministry in their high need area. We commit financially to the MBCC Food Pantry each year; this year our church budgeted contribution has been \$2,500.00. We are glad to be able to make this commitment. Our financial commitment is a beginning; it is a gift that calls us to deeper engagement with God's people in need of care and with our Disciples community at Memorial Blvd who welcome us to work hand in hand, and heart to heart with them to reach out into the community.

We hope to have at least one UACC volunteer at the Food Pantry each Thursday. Daniel and Randy plan to volunteer one Thursday per month, and we would love to fill in a schedule that would offer UACC support and relationship-building each week!

Please contact *Daniel Leach* the first week of December to talk with him about volunteering! Each Sunday, we will continue to collect your food donations to be placed in crates in foyer.

Items Needed at This Time

Canned soup, canned vegetables, canned beans, as well as peanut butter.

They also need fresh meat products to serve during their hot meal distribution.

Financial contributions will allow the Pantry staff to make these fresh meat purchases. If you would like to make a financial contribution you may place a check in the offering plate. Please make it payable to Union Avenue Christian Church, indicating on the 'memo' line that it is for MBCC Food Pantry. You may also contribute online through the Union Avenue Givelify App. There you may indicate that it is for the Memorial Blvd Food Pantry.

Daniel and Randy took these pictures (along with the ones shared last week) titling these *'Back of house'* It takes a lot of help to feed so many, so well, with such love!



A Note on Giving

If you are looking for other opportunities to support the **MEMORIAL BOULEVARD CHRISTIAN CHURCH FOOD PANTRY**, you might want to consider a year-end, tax-deductible cash donation. Any Missouri taxpayer who donates cash or food to a Missouri food pantry may claim a tax credit. The credit claimed shall equal 50% of the value of the contribution or donation made. Credits cannot exceed \$2,500 per taxpayer per year, cannot exceed the taxpayer's tax liability, and **acknowledgement of the donation using form MO-FPT must be signed by a representative of the pantry organization.** More information and the MO-FPT filing form are available here:

<https://dor.mo.gov/forms/MO-FPT.pdf>