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

Christmas is most truly Christmas when we celebrate it by giving the light of love to those who need it most.

-Ruth Carter Tapleton

Advent/Christmas Celebration with FTC Neighbors

After church this **Sunday, December 11**, 15 of us (who have signed up in advance) will have lunch at UACC and then walk across the parking lot to sing Christmas carols with and distribute gift bags to 75 residents at the Forensic Treatment Center.

We were thrilled last Sunday that so many stayed after worship to decorate bags for the gifts we will take to our neighbors at FTC. It was a gathering of people of all ages, long-time and new church friends. Thank you, thank you for sharing in this project. Another great group of 11 hearty UACC members gathered this Wednesday to fill the 75 bags and get them ready to go! Because of the rules of FTC, only 15 of us can go there, *but so many more a part of the giving!* *It really does take a village!*



Outreach and Justice Ministry Team Members

Dianne Benjamin
Rose Fischer
Rochelle Kaskowitz.
Matthew Mahaffey

Kathy Davis
Jacque Foster (Chair)
Daniel Leach
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.

JOY SUNDAY
December 11

*No one is useless
in this world who
lightens the
burdens of
another.*

-Charles Dickens

Giving as an act of Compassion, Empathy, & Joy

Many of us have already started shopping for Soldan families; and are experiencing the joy and the challenge of choosing coats (and possibly other articles) for people we do not know.

I don't know about you, but I find myself really wanting to choose the coat that they might like, that will keep them warm, that they will feel good in, just as I would if I were buying for my child, my sibling, my mom or dad, or for myself. Last Sunday Rev. Michael and Sandra Miller talked about this as "compassion." That's exactly what this is: compassion, empathy, God's love embodied through you.

**The Joy
of
Christmas**

Our Soldan School Christmas Coat Project

CHRISTMAS GIFTS -- WINTER COATS FOR KIDS



The Outreach and Justice Team and Soldan International Studies High School thank everyone for committing to buy winter coats for the Angel Tree Project. Soldan notified us of ten families in need of warm winter coats, and we're pleased to report that UACC folks quickly came together to commit to buy *all* of the requested coats. Individuals are now purchasing and wrapping the gifts.

Please bring wrapped gifts to the church no later than **Monday, Dec. 12 at 4:30 p.m.** Each wrapped gift must have a **GIFT TAG** securely attached to the **OUTSIDE** of the package with the Family Number (e.g., F7) plus one of

the following: Son or Daughter and Age, Grandson or Granddaughter and Age, or Mom or Dad. Examples of Gift Tags: (F7, Daughter 15), (F1, Mom). This will allow Soldan to distribute the coats to the correct families.

Please feel free to contact Rochelle Kaskowitz, rakasko@gmail.com, 314-813-4686, with any questions. It seems that giving warm coats to those who need them, in turn, brings warmth to UACC.

HELP IS NEEDED AT THE CHURCH ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13 AT 9:00 AM (until finished) to organize and deliver coats to Soldan! Come join in the joy!

Christmas is for giving and for showing that we care,
For honouring the Christ Child with the loving gifts we share.

The wise men gave of riches; the shepherds, faith and love.
Each gift, in its own measure, was smiled on from above.

Let every gift be treasured; not always size or price
Determines the extent of love and willing sacrifice.

Handsome gifts with festive trim brings smiles of sweet content,
But modest gifts of humble means are oftentimes heaven sent.

Whether it be large or small each gift will share in part
The message of true Christmas joy if given from the heart!

- Iris W. Bray



**MID-AMERICA
REGION GROUPS
INCLUDE:**

**CLERGY CLUSTERS AND
CARE**

YOUTH MINISTRY

DISCIPLES' WOMEN

**MID-AMERICA MEN and
FRIENDS**

**AFRICAN AMERICAN
CONVOCATION**

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!



In this season we are confronted with the story of Jesus' birth:

“She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a feeding trough, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

- Luke 2: 7

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.

(NOTE: This applies to Food Pantries – NOT Food Banks)

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>

Memorial Blvd Food and Clothing Pantry

Daniel Leach's report from Food Pantry Outreach

The November food collection drive for Memorial Food Pantry was a success!

Daniel delivered **180 total cans and jars, 10 packages of dry goods, and 16 lbs of oranges** from our Sunday collections.

He worked at MB Food Pantry on Thursday, December 1, from 10am to 2pm, and plans to work again on Dec 15th. It would be great to see another team member or other member from the congregation assist on Thursdays, Dec 22nd or Dec 29th.

It would be best to notify the Food Pantry in advance of additional participation.

We hope to have at least one UACC volunteer at the Food Pantry each Thursday.

Daniel plans to volunteer at least one Thursday per month, and Jacque plans to volunteer on the 4th Thursday of each month beginning in January. *Who would like to join us in this endeavor to build a UACC partnership with MBCC Food Pantry?* We would love to fill in a schedule that would offer UACC support and relationship-building each week!

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

One of our Outreach Team families has also pledged monthly giving to the Food Pantry! See the financial possibilities below.

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.

12 DAYS OF
Wellness

FEATURING
Joselyn
Spence

LPC, ATR, RYT-200
NBA DIRECTOR OF MENTAL
HEALTH & WELLNESS

National Benevolent Association

THANKS to our NBA for this wellness offering in the Holiday Season.

To help with feelings of grief, depression, or anxiety you may be feeling this season, Joselyn Spence, Director of NBA's Mental Health and Wellness program has recorded 12 tips that will help you get through this time of year with a bit more wellness in mind. Starting Monday, December 13 NBA will share a video each day to help you navigate this Advent season and all that comes with it.

<https://www.nbacares.org/resources/12-days-of-wellness/>

Hylton Point II Senior Apartments Holiday Giving

Dianne Benjamin, of our congregation and a member of the Hylton Point II Board writes:

I am thrilled to report a "loaves & fishes" type of success!

First, as we discussed at our last UACC Outreach meeting, I explained to the Hylton Point 2 board members at our 11/28/22 board meeting that UACC will donate an extra \$100 to our prior 2022 \$500 donation -- if that would mean a \$10 expenditure for each of the 60 apartments for this Christmas. And that UACC will donate \$600 in 2023 for the same purpose.

Then, Board members were so inspired by UACC's \$600 donation that they agreed to a match, with additional individual board member pledges totaling \$600! That's a grand total of \$1,200. Each apartment will now receive a \$20 gift card for Christmas 2022.

The gift cards will be distributed at the upcoming holiday luncheon a few days before Christmas. The catered lunch will include games and other festive activities that Lutheran Senior Services will provide in the Hylton Point 2 community room. This will be a joyous return to their traditional winter holiday gathering since the pandemic began. Yet it will be the first time that such a generous gift card is given to each and every Hylton Point 2 apartment.

The plan is for a board member to purchase generic gift cards that can be spent anywhere. LSS will hand deliver the gift cards to any apartment that does not attend the holiday lunch.



Weekly Prayer

[Colombia https://www.globalministries.org/resource/pray-with-colombia-december-11-2022/](https://www.globalministries.org/resource/pray-with-colombia-december-11-2022/)

Sunday, December 11

**GLOBAL MINSTRIES of the
Christian Church (Disciples of
Christ) and the United Church
of Christ**



Global Ministries
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
and the United Church of Christ