

Rev. Harold Wilke: Disability Rights and the “Breaking of Chains”

Date July 26, 2024 **Time** 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Location Chapel, Eden Theological Seminary
475 E Lockwood Ave. St. Louis, MO 63119

*pre-registration is required

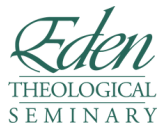
ADA Celebration

Each year Paraquad celebrates the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 1990, with a special celebration. Since the justice champions that secured the ADA are passing away, it is important that we preserve memories of their courageous actions. In 2024, we celebrate the life of Rev. Harold H. Wilke (1914-2003), a minister who gave an invocation at the White House signing of the ADA with Pres. George H.W. Bush. Wilke was born without arms on a farm in Washington, Missouri, and had to fight discrimination in school, in religious institutions, and in society throughout his life.



Without his efforts and that of our disability rights ancestors, there would be no ADA.

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Philip Dietch

A former hospital administrator, Deitch served on the Advisory Board for the “Independence Festival” led by Rev. Wilke and other people with disabilities on the National Mall in Washington, DC, in 1978. He currently volunteers with numerous social justice organizations, documenting many events with his camera, and provides leadership in several local chambers of commerce.



Lori A. Becker, Chief Executive Officer Starkloff Disability Institute



After serving as Starkloff Disability Institute’s Director of Development and Communications and Chief Operating Officer during the past twelve years, Becker is now CEO, advancing strategic direction and overseeing staff, programs, and fundraising. Personally impacted by a disability, Becker was named a Diverse Business Leader in 2019 by the St. Louis Business Journal.

DeMarco Davidson, Executive Director Metropolitan Congregations United(MCU)

Davidson has been a leader in education (including teaching in the Hazelwood School District), engineering, youth development/mentorship, and community organizing, as well as running for public office. His 2018 M. Div. from Eden Theological Seminary had an emphasis in Liberation Theology & Faith Based Community Organizing. He became executive director of MCU in 2023.



Please use the QR code to register for the celebration. You may attend in person or virtually. Peace UCC is providing light refreshments, beginning at 9:15 a.m. Your RSVP helps us plan hospitality.

The Missouri Humanities Council (MHC) has awarded a grant to Paraquad, Inc. in support of the project, “Rev. Harold Wilke: Disability Rights and the “Breaking of Chains.” The MHC is the only statewide agency in Missouri devoted exclusively to humanities education for citizens of all ages. It has served as a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities since 1971.

