

The Spire

From Your Pastor

September 2022

God is Good...All the Time!

If you have been to church camp, family camp, on youth group mission trips, or just about anywhere where Christians gather in large groups, you've maybe heard the above call-and-response. The emcee or gathering leader shouts out, "God is good!" to which the crowd responds, "All the time!" It's little bit hokey. It's a lot true. In the good times, and the bad times. In times of success and failure. In times of doubt and assurance. God is good all the time. Of course, sometimes offer easy discernment of God's goodness: when what we hoped and prayed to be so does indeed prove true, when the operation turns out successful, the biopsy benign, the teen home safely at the end of the night. Even less urgent or consequential occurrences of God's goodness make themselves known to us: the beauty of the world shining through in rocks, rivers, oceans and trees, the hug of a family member, the joy of a lazy afternoon in the shade.

Here at KCC we've certainly seen God's goodness come shining through in answered prayers. Knowing that replacing Michelle Girasole (see Michelle's letter below) with two new staff people was going to be challenge given the current job market and the nature of church work, I encouraged our congregation to pray hard! God knew who we needed and was moving their hearts to hear our invitation. And sure enough, two wonderfully gifted and experienced people answered our call almost right away, in time to start off our program year full speed ahead (see new staff news below). God is good...all the time!

But we've also experienced some less obvious experiences of God's goodness. Right after our summer newsletter was printed and sent, we lost our long-time Music Director, Dr. Enrico Garzilli (see Enrico's memorial below) who died the beginning of June. Yet even in the midst of such sadness and loss, we've felt God with us, grateful for the amazing gift of Enrico in our lives, welcoming talented substitutes in his absence, pulling us together in shared love and grief. Yes, that is evidence of God's goodness, too. God is good...all the time.

And now, as we get ready to launch a new program year, welcoming new staff, exploring new ideas, renewing old commitments, we can rest assured that the goodness of God is with us always. The weeks and months ahead will be full of joy and celebration, and they will almost certainly contain some hardship and loss. But no matter what, we will step into the future believing and reminding each other that this much is true: God is good. All the time.

Grace&Peace,
Rev. Jan

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

September's Deacon of the Month is Carolyn Eldridge. (grauntiec@yahoo.com)

In Memoriam of Dr. Enrico Garzilli

A KCC Memorial Service is being planned for Enrico on Saturday, October 1, 2022 at 11:00 am. More details to be announced soon.

This remembrance of Enrico was written by his dear friend and KCC choir member, Susan Hammen-Winn:

Enrico has captured the hearts of many during his years here on earth. Always kind and gentle but endowed with immense talent he has led an extraordinary life. At the age of fifteen, he gave his first solo piano concert at the Music Mansion in Providence, RI. This was followed by many other concerts with a major piano recital at seventeen. As a teenager he also performed regularly on television and radio and became the assistant organist and studied organ and choral conducting with Dr. Alexander Peloquin at the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul in Providence, RI. Later his MICHELANGELO was performed at the Providence Performing Arts and his RAGE OF THE HEART at Veterans Auditorium here in RI. As Artist in Residence at Johnson and Wales University, Providence, RI, he performed three of his compositions with the Rhode Island Philharmonic, famed Broadway star Mark McVey, and Metropolitan Opera Soprano Elizabeth Blanke-Biggs. In recent years we have been able to enjoy his SHADOW OF THE WALL and THE SMART SET in South County theaters. While in college in Rome he studied choral conducting and organ with Prof. Martorell and Dom Barrata. He gave many organ recitals in the church of Santa Susanna and also played in St. Peter's, Rome, and in all the major Basilicas of the city. As choral conductor, he conducted the North American College Choir in the same hallowed places. When he gave his audition at the Pontifical Music School, Professor Carducci hailed him as the finest pianist to enter the portals of the Academy in the twenty-two years that he was there. One of his many memorable concerts was his solo performance with Dave Brubeck in the premier of Brubeck's concert Mass. Enrico has recordings with EMI/ Virgin and First Night Records, and was instrumental in launching the career of famed British singer, Michael Ball who sang on the concept recording of Rage of the Heart. Dr. Garzilli holds advanced degrees in Philosophy, Theology and Literature and was the first person to receive a Ph.D from Brown University in Comparative Literature. His dissertation, nominated for many national awards, was published by Harvard University, as CIRCLES WITHOUT CENTER. Paths to the Discovery and Creation of Self in Modern Literature. Other of his writings include ASHEN VICTORS in 1977; Dramatic monologues inspired by the sonnets of Vittoria Colonna and Michelangelo, and THE GOLD SHOP in 1985, Drama playrights, Brown University. Enrico has composed many choral works for liturgy as well as oratorios and instrumental pieces. His Romans VIII has been translated into many languages and sung around the world.



At our October 1st Memorial Service we will have a chance to remember all that Enrico was to KCC and the many gifts we received from him. Please mark your calendars.



CHURCH SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

- Holding a Meet and Greet Picnic with King Cong Kids and their families on August 28th.
- Preparing Church School Rooms
- Recruiting Church School Teachers and Assistants
- Back Pack and Devices Blessing Sunday on September 4th (see weekly newsletter for more information)
- Rally Sunday on September 11th (see weekly newsletter for more details)

To help out please contact Ms. Cindy
dirce@kingconchurch.org

A Note from Michelle

Dear Friends in Christ at KCC,

This note is to express my deep gratitude for all the blessings you have bestowed on me during my time at KCC, but especially the enormous love and support you've given me as I take leave of my staff position.

I served this church for three years, joyfully, and by God's grace, helped in many ways through pandemic.

Your shower of cards, gifts and love were the icing on the cake, and I want you to know how special each of you are to me.

With your generous [cash] gift, I am leaving today for a 3 day prayerful silent retreat on Enders Island, off the coast of Mystic, CT. I will surely feel your presence there, alongside God's ever-presence.

Much love and many thanks,
Michelle Girasole

Welcome New Staff!



We welcome Cindy Dowgiallo (“Duh-Gallo”) as our new Director of Christian Education. Cindy grew up in Kingston, attending KCC and now is a member of the Peace Dale UCC. She is an educator in the South Kingstown schools and brings a wealth of experience and energy to this position, including church school teaching, Christian Education Board chairing, VBS leading and many other church related roles. A lifelong UCC member and a mom, she’s excited to join our KCC staff in this capacity.



We welcome Tony Jones as our new Director of Communications. Tony is a communications professional with extensive experience in audio-visual production, marketing, and media development. You’ve perhaps already seen Tony up in the “tech corner” of the sanctuary balcony. Tony has worked with faith-based organizations as a volunteer and is eager to help us communicate our faith inside and outside the church even more effectively.



We welcome Katie Howe as our Pastoral Intern. Katie is an MDiv candidate at Chicago Theological School and will be completing her field education requirement with KCC during the upcoming program year. As a pastoral intern Katie will engage in practical learning and apply her studies in various areas of congregational life, including preaching, teaching, leading, pastoral care. Katie works full-time at the RI Department of Health, where she serves as the Prevention Program Manager for the Center for HIV, Hepatitis, STD and TB Epidemiology for the State of Rhode Island. Katie is a member of the Woodridge UCC in Cranston.

To welcome Katie and to offer her opportunities to get to know KCC as thoroughly as she can in her one (academic) year with us, the Field Education Task Force (Rev. Jan, Jean Miller, Amy Monahan) is asking KCC members to host Katie for lunch on the Sundays she is with us. A schedule of available dates will be posted in Fellowship Hall. Invite Katie to your home for Sunday lunch or take her out to lunch with you. Thank you for expanding our welcome and Katie’s learning experience!

Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for Searching People

Adult Christian Education and Spirituality (ACES) for Fall 2022

This small group is for adults who would like to think together about how to integrate their faith into their daily life just a little bit more. Together we'll read about and attempt to practice 12 everyday ways to lead a God-directed life through Christian faith practices. We will meet 13 Sundays 11:00 AM - Noon in the Fireplace Room from Sept. 25 through December 18 or Monday nights, 7-8 pm on Zoom (identical sessions). The resource for our discussions will be the highly acclaimed book, Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People (Dorothy C. Bass, Editor). This book will be available for purchase beginning on September 12 during Coffee Hour.

Lay leaders and Rev. Jan will lead discussion on the following chapters:

Honoring the Body
Hospitality
Household Economics
Saying Yes and Saying No
Keeping Sabbath
Testimony
Discernment
Shaping Communities
Forgiveness
Healing
Dying Well
Singing Our Lives

If you would care to lead one of these sessions (Leader's Guide provided) you can indicate your interest on the registration form or tell Jean Miller (jeanmiller@uri.edu).

Please register online. Here's a link to the registration form:
<https://tinyurl.com/PracticingOurFaith>

Faith Build 2022

On Saturday August 13, eleven volunteers from KCC helped with construction of South County Habitat for Humanity's newest home project on Mooresfield Road, just east of Kingston. The crew painted, installed siding, constructed an attic storage platform, and helped with window installation all while having a great time for a great cause!



Did you know that Habitat for Humanity has volunteer building opportunities every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday? If you are interested in participating as an individual, you can sign up here:

<https://southcountyhabitat.charityproud.org/VolunteerRegistration/Calendar/3554>

Share Fresh garden produce with Jonnycake Center for Hope

I know if you have a vegetable garden, you often have extra produce this time of year. You may not be aware that the Jonnycake Center for Hope will gladly accept your fresh garden produce. If you drop items off at church on Sunday, we will see that they get to the Jonnycake Center. You can donate items which can be kept for a couple of days without refrigeration such as carrots, squash, eggplant, potatoes, onions, cabbage, green beans, peppers, tomatoes, etc. If you have items that need faster turnover such as leafy greens, you can drop them off directly at the Jonnycake Center food pantry on Kersey Road in Peace Dale. Don't have a garden, but want to help out? They will happily accept produce from the grocery store as well! As always thank you so much for your generosity!

KCC Board of Missions/Social Justice

KCC Member, Amy Monahan, Attended the Poor Peoples' March in June 2022

Dear Friends at Kingston Congregational Church,

I attended the Poor Peoples' March and Low Wage Workers Assembly and Moral March on Washington on June 18th of this year in Washington DC.

A rally bus was scheduled to leave Providence at 12:30am on June 18th, and I signed on. Twenty-six souls were on board, and after the rally, we returned to Providence at 3am early on Sunday, June 19th. Joe Montero of Cranston was our bus captain. Chatting with him and the other passengers was enjoyable.



The National Poor Peoples' Campaign is co-chaired by the well-known Reverend Dr. William J. Barber II, and Reverend Dr. Liz Theoharis. It consists of a large and varied coalition of organizations, brought together by shared goals and concerns for the people, and the future of our country. Its platform asks the following:

1. That our people and government establish Justice and end systemic Racism.
2. Promote the general welfare, and an adequate standard of living.
3. Ensure domestic tranquility (in all neighborhoods).
4. Secure the blessings of Liberty.
5. Provide for the common defense.

The campaign describes itself as a movement to Reconstruct American Democracy by fully addressing poverty and low wages from the bottom up.



Our country is made up of 140 million poor and low wealth Americans of all races, creeds, and religions from every region. An estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants live and work here as well.

Reverends Barber and Theoharis spoke to the estimated 150,000 people present at the rally point at the start of Constitution Avenue at 6th Street in Washington DC. They were truly inspirational. Many clergy, and other voices spoke from 9am to 3:30pm.

Reverend Dr. William Barber stated his hopes to revive a commitment to constitutionally establish justice, provide for the general welfare of all peoples, end decades of austerity, and recognize that policies that center on the 140 million poor, and low income people in the country are also good economic policies that can heal and transform our nation.

As a retired RN who served many years in mental health care settings, I saw poverty firsthand. Jesus and the gospel spoke to me from an early age of equality, fairness, forgiveness, and justice. I believe we are called to care for each other, especially the poor and infirm. The Poor Peoples' campaign bridges beliefs I share with a political voice and strategy. We were encouraged to let our concerns be known to those in power at all levels of government. And we are urged to take action in our states, "...to challenge the evils of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation, and the nation's distorted narrative of religious nationalism." To join your local Poor Peoples' Campaign get on their website: RhodeIslandPoorPeoplesCampaign.org.

Thank you for your time and interest. Feel free to call/email me with any questions.

Peace to you all, Amy P. Monahan, KCC member