

The Spire

From Your Pastor

October 2022

Representation Matters

Just this past week, I asked the Deacons to approve an Advent liturgical resource from *A Sanctified Art*, a worship arts collaborative that creates visual, written and devotional resources for congregations that use the Revised Common Lectionary. We have used their materials before during Advent 2020 and Lent 2021. The artists and writers at *A Sanctified Art* proclaim the gospel message using words and artwork. I find their materials breathtakingly beautiful and creative. One of the aspects of their art that I deeply appreciate is their use of images of people and places from many backgrounds and settings. For instance, for the Sunday in Advent when the genealogy of Jesus is the gospel reading, the artist has imagined this image to illustrate that reading:



The women depicted in this illustration are women from the lineage of David, Jesus' grandmothers. It is important that all of us are able to not just intellectually but visually see ourselves as part of Jesus' family. Black, brown, tan, white. We need to be represented not just in words and ideas but in physical image.

Representation matters.

Also, just this week, the trailer for the new live action Disney "The Little Mermaid" film was released. It has caused some controversy in some quarters because Ariel is played by Halle Bailey, an African American R&B artist. Some critics took to social media and posted complaints using the hashtag: #NotMyAriel, complaining that a fairy tale heroine written by a Scandinavian (Hans Christian Andersen) should be White, as she has been depicted up until this point in popular media. But just like all those depictions of white skinned angels, depicting mermaids, even Scandinavian mermaids, as White is completely arbitrary. A Black Ariel messes with our categories, not because the categories are right but because they are familiar.

So, when we represent Jesus' grandmothers using multiple ethnicities, or imagine angels and mermaids that appear African or Asian, we are trying to broaden our familiarity. In the few days that the new Disney trailer has been released, parents of young girls of color have been going to social media to post videos of their daughters' reactions to a Black Ariel who shows her face in the last five seconds of the 2 minute trailer. If you haven't seen any of these videos, you can see some here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/14/arts/little-mermaid-trailer-halle-bailey.html>

I dare you to watch the video clips of young Black girls bursting into smiles and laughter when they see a known Disney character that looks like them and not laugh or cry with joy, too.

Representation matters.

I believe part of the redemptive work of the church, especially churches that want to be anti-racist, is to tell better stories (See "Witness Stones Project" in this issue) and paint better pictures so that ALL of Jesus' family will feel joyfully familiar.

Grace&Peace. Rev. Jan

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

October's Deacon of the Month is Amy Monahan. (amypmonahan287@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. Martorella 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.

**The Congregational Meeting
of
The Kingston Congregational Church
United Church of Christ**

Will be Held in the Sanctuary & via Zoom
Following the Worship Service

Sunday, October 23, 2022

10:45 a.m.

Frank Lenox, Secretary

Tentative Agenda

1. Call to Order Joyce Stevos, Moderator
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of Annual Meeting of June 26, 2022
4. Report of the President Sharon Davis
5. Report of the Treasurer Doug Kraus
6. Reports of Boards and Committees
 - *Report of Nominating Committee
7. Old Business
8. New Business
 - *Evaluation of Ministries Survey Results
 - *Pastor's Health Insurance
9. Pastor's Comments & Closing Prayer Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier
10. Adjourn

Congregational Meeting
Kingston Congregational Church, UCC
Sunday, June 26, 2022

1. Call to Order by Moderator, Joyce Stevos(11:02 am)
 - a. 6 handouts: Agenda with Minutes from Jan 23, 2022; Balance Sheet/Treasurer's Report; Proposed Budget, Boards & Committees Report, Endowment Portfolio Report; Investment Committee Report
 - b. Quorum declared by Moderator (in-person and online)
2. Adoption of Agenda (handout #1)
 - a. **Motion** to accept the agenda, **M/S/P**
3. Approval of Minutes of January 23, 2022 Congregational Meeting,
 - a. Approved as read.
4. Report of the President, Louise Pearson
 - Welcome back to Rev. Jan!
 - Boards and Committees will give reports today
 - Staff positions have been the priority: Communications and Technology, Church School Director, Music Director. Job descriptions have been written and interviews for the first begin this week.
 - Recognition and thanks for Michelle Girasole in her staff roles.
5. Report of the Treasurer, Sharon Davis, ex-officio (handout #2)
 - a. Health care plan for minister will change from family to

Budget Report, Sharon Davis, ex-officio (handout #3)

 - b. budget shows a \$14k loss
 - c. there is a request to draw more from the Endowment to meet the proposed budget
 - d. **Motion** to accept the Budget, **M/S/P**
6. Reports of Nominating Task Force (Boards and Committees)
 - a. Sharon Davis - President
 - b. Doug Kraus - Treasurer
 - c. Slate - voting of Officers, Boards and Committees will be affirmed by Church Council
 - d. **Motion** to accept the Slate of Officers, as presented, **M/S/P**
 - President - Sharon Davis
 - Moderator - Joyce Stevos
 - Secretary - Frank Lenox
 - Treasurer - Doug Kraus
7. Funding Forward Experience, Rev, Jan
 - a. First year was successful in terms of fundraising and conducting a project.
 - b. Proposal for the coming year:
 - Quarterly Beneficent Banquet (income)
 - Monthly Community Meals as outreach to the community

8. Reports of Boards and Committees

- a. Deacons – Frank Lenox
 - Thank you to Rev. Jan for her leadership and spiritual guidance.
 - Prayer cards have been well received for Prayers of the People.
 - Online members are encouraged to give feedback on the livestream service
- b. Music Board
 - Music Director job description has been written and will be advertised soon.
- c. Investment Comm - Dick Geisler (handout #6)
 - start value → end value: down \$146k
 - an explanation was provided for withdrawals for the operating budget; take out 4-5% of a 7-year average (\$1,402,000 for 2022; 6.4% = \$90k)
- d. CE - Rem
 - work continues on hiring new Church School Director
 - ACE program - Mondays and Thursdays; check it out!
- e. Trustees - Audrey Hallberg
 - work on flooring in sanctuary
 - Cox family has given a generous gift on behalf of Pat and Dave
- f. Missions - Lisa Bowe
 - Had a great year; budget plus donations have sent over \$16k to services across the globe.
- g. Fellowship - Andrea Richardson
 - 3 events in Nov/Dec (Soup Sunday, Kingston Fair)
 - SCRIP - grossed \$8k for the year!
- h. Stewardship - Doug Kraus
 - Successful stewardship campaign using a new method of drawing members from select Boards.

9. New Business

- a. none

9. Pastor's Comments, Closing Prayer - Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier

- This past year we moved to hybrid worship, the online service has been valued
- Church Retreat with 50 members
- Missions has coordinated the start of the Witness Stones Project, honoring slaves in the local area.
- Confirmation Program ran successfully with 4 students
- New KCC Website!
- Need for a more robust Human Resources Committee that will help with job descriptions, hiring new staff, written reviews of staff, etc.
- Hopes and Dreams for church resources: Beneficent Banquet will continue, possible Child care/Day care facility for up to 20 children; Office Space is available for like-minded non-profits; Witness Stones Project; Messy Church Ministry

10. Meeting Adjourned: 12:00 am

Respectfully submitted,
Francis Lenox, Secretary

Church World Service Blanket Sunday Offering

I remember hearing in a sermon a few years back “You don’t have to do it all, do what you can.” The recent floods in Pakistan have resulted in an enormous number of people who have lost their homes. I heard a recent story explaining that 1/3 of Pakistan was under water, and people are afraid to return to their homes. Many believe the flooding was caused by heavier than usual Monsoon rains and melting glaciers. The scope of this disaster is overwhelming. You may feel “What can I do?”. There is another way to think about it, one family at a time. If any of us had a close friend who had lost everything and needed \$10 for a blanket, we would gladly give it. With just \$10 you can help a refugee family who has lost everything. Remember the story about the starfish on the beach; it makes a difference to that starfish. As Jesus said, “as much as you do it to one of the least of these my brethren, you do it to me”. On Sunday, October 23rd our church will collect money for Church World Service Blanket Sunday. Please give generously.

Sincerely,
Cindy Buxton, For Your Board of Missions

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 September 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>

Soup Sunday October 30, 2022

The Fellowship Board invites one and all for Soup Sunday on October 30th, following the service. Please join us in Fellowship Hall for cozy fall soups and salad. Please bring a dessert to share if you are able. We look forward to seeing you there!

Grieving Loss and Coping with Life Changes

Join presenter and discussion leader, Julie Maraziti, Bereavement Coordinator, Visiting Nurse Home and Hospice, on Wednesday, October 19, 12:30-2:00 pm in Fellowship Hall for a workshop on the challenge of all kinds of losses in our lives. Gain understanding and strategies for resilience. The workshop is free and open to the public.

Landscaping Upgrades in Our Courtyard

The three children of Dave and Pat Cox have decided to install new garden and landscaping upgrades in our front courtyard, in loving memory of their beloved parents. Randy, Jeffrey and Laurie have been working with the Trustees, who have hired a professional landscaper to do the job in October. We are so grateful to this family for donating a very memorable and much needed gift to our church. Pat and Dave were so involved with helping to keep our church in good condition, and gave many hours of their time to see that things were in order here. They were loved by all of us, so we appreciate this generous and meaningful memorial gift.

Submitted by Audrey Hallberg of the Board of Trustees

Our Sexton Needs Your Help

Our favorite sexton, Andy, will not be able to fulfill his duties at our church from January 8, 2023 to April 12, 2023. This job takes 12- 15 hours per week, plus opening up and closing the church on Sunday mornings. Access to a truck would be nice, but not essential. Do you know someone who could fill this temporary position? If so, kindly call the church office at 783-5330 and let us know.

Your Board of Trustees



A very special Thank You to Everyone who helped to make Rally Sunday such a fun-filled event for our King Cong Kids. Thanks to those who helped in the service including our great kid readers, the CE Board and also to the Fellowship Committee who provided us with delicious ice cream donated from Brickley's. Thanks, Steve Brophy, and also for the great toppings which the kids and the

adults enjoyed! Your support thus far has been great- Remember if you want to help with church school, feel free to reach out to me. Thank you all!!! Ms.

Cindy dirce@kingconchurch.org



COME ONE COME ALL

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE at ALL CHURCH HALLOWEEN FUN!

TRUNK OR TREATING

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30TH at 5 pm

EVERYONE is invited to participate in our Halloween Celebration- bring your friends and neighbors... everyone is invited.

ADULTS- Bring your car and decorate your trunk in a festive way with pumpkins, streamers or whatever you desire and then hand out treats to the children.

If you do not feel creative but still want to help, feel free to donate treats.

CHILDREN- go from trunk to trunk to gather treats.

Afterwards we will gather in the fellowship Hall for a POTLUCK SUPPER and of course dessert!

So, wear your costumes and enjoy the fun with your friends and King Cong family.

There will be 4 sign-up sheets on the Harvest Table:

- 1) Attendance 2) decorating your trunk 3) Food you will bring to share 4) Set up / Clean up

Remember to invite friends and neighbors - and get your trunks opened!!!

More information Ms. Cindy Dirce@kingconchurch.org



SPOOKY SLEEP-OVER

Is the church haunted? Are you brave enough?

Who dares to go there? (All Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers)

Join us at King Cong on Saturday, October 29th

From 8pm– Sunday after church.

Late night snack and breakfast will be provided as well as

Spooktacular entertainment! Feel free to bring a Fearless Friend!

More information to follow in weekly newsletter.

Or contact Ms. Cindy dirce@kingconchurch.org

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will meet in the Fellowship Hall for a POTLUCK and Conversation on Tuesday, October 18 at 6 pm. Please join us with or without food!

World Communion Sunday

On Sunday, October 2nd, KCC will join Christian churches around the world in celebrating World Communion Sunday. This started in 1936 as a way to celebrate the diverse languages, cultures, and traditions that are practiced by Christians around the world. Through World Communion Sunday, we recognize that we are all united in the body of Christ on this day of remembrance. We are asking the members of KCC to submit a photo of a place of Christian worship that is meaningful to you. This can be in Rhode Island, in the US, or around the world (we have already included KCC). Please e-mail a photo (either one you took or one from the internet) with its name and location to Katie at Katharine.howe1@gmail.com, by Friday, September 30th.

Witness Stones Project:

A KCC Witness Stones Project (WSP) is now planned for winter/spring of 2023. In conjunction with middle schoolers at The Compass School in Kingston, KCC members and friends can help to amplify the story of a local enslaved person connected to our community, if not our church. The WSP entails learning about the history of slavery in Rhode Island, using primary documents (like wills, birth and death certificates, baptism and marriage records, etc.) to create a narrative to tell the story of a particular individual, and then installing a stone bearing their name, descriptors, and dates on our property. Public history like this helps to expand our understanding of who lived, worshipped, worked and contributed to the building of our communities. Paying tribute in a public way more fully and truly represents our history and our evolving story. Stay tuned for ways to be part of this effort in the new year.



KCC Volunteer Survey Summary

Hello KCC Friends!

Last spring, you were invited to participate in a KCC Volunteer Survey that was designed to give us, the Board of Missions, a snapshot picture of how involved members were in volunteer activities in the recent past, your present activities and how interested you are in new volunteer opportunities. The results will help us plan how to best serve the church and our wider community. Here are some of the results:

31 People responded to the survey, all were 45 and older with the majority 65 years old or older.

Thinking of the past 3 years, how frequently did you engage in volunteer activities/community service?

Less than 10% said they had NOT volunteered in past 3 year, and a whopping 39% reported volunteering once or twice a week and 13% volunteer daily!

What are the community ISSUES KCC members are involved in?

No surprise, the number one response was “religious” volunteer efforts which may include committees, boards, church school, nursery, etc. The second most popular response was “Poverty” with “Cultural Events” and “Political” volunteer efforts also being popular.

What FUTURE volunteer efforts might you want to be involved in considering ISSUES?

The most popular response was “Immigration/Refugee” needs, followed by “Education”, then “Health” and “Nature”.

What ORGANIZATIONS might you be interested in volunteering for in the future?

The most popular answers were “KCC” and “Food Bank/Jonnycake Center”, followed by Habitat for Humanity, Dorcas International and Save The Bay.

When asked about how much time you would be willing to dedicate to a new volunteer activity:

The most popular answer was a willingness to do a monthly commitment, while over 18% said they’d consider a weekly commitment.

Thank you so much for your participation!
Sue Davis, for Board of Missions

2022 'Faith Matters' Voting Challenge

Voting is one of the most - if not the most - powerful tools we have as people of faith.

Why?

Because essentially voting takes your caring values into the public square and thereby into other people's lives.



Your vote matters, not just in the big national election years, but in all the local and state elections in between, because **politicians pay attention to the priorities of people who vote.**

The Southern New England Conference of UCC (SNEUCC) Environmental Ministries Team has partnered with the **Environmental Voter Project (EVP)** to promote the SNEUCC **Creation Care Voter Pledge** and put love into action for every living creature and for every economically or racially marginalized community that suffers from environmental harm.

By signing the Pledge, you are saying that you “pledge to be a consistent voter” and “always prioritize caring for God’s creation in how I vote.” By providing your contact information you will receive periodic reminders of upcoming elections. The EVP does not endorse candidates or tell people how to vote.

Sooner or later, every justice issue intersects with the disruption that arises from the climate emergency. That is why your vote as a person of faith who cares about important issues - like inflation and racism and immigration and rising prescription costs and voter suppression - matters.

The **Board of Missions and Social Justice** invites all KCC members and friends to sign the **Creation Care Voter Pledge**. Can you help us meet a goal of 50 pledges before the November 8th midterm election? Find out more [here](#) or at <https://www.sneucc.org/creation-care-voter-pledge>.