

The Spire

From Your Pastor

January 2023

Epiphany = Vision

In the month of January, we move from the short twelve-day season of Christmas (Dec. 25-January 5) into the liturgical season of Epiphany. The word itself— “epiphany” —means “revelation,” or “vision,” or “unveiling.” The Church has traditionally used this season to celebrate the dawning understanding of just who this Word-Made-Flesh baby is. It begins with the Magi arriving in Bethlehem on January 6 (the Feast of Epiphany) and then moves quickly to the baptism of Jesus at the Jordan and the early days of his ministry, calling disciples, beginning to preach and teach and heal. Reading along with the calendar of Sunday scripture readings (see below), we begin to get a sense of just what this new incarnation of God looks like. It looks like nearness, and compassion, and healing, and humility, and justice, and grace. In the season of Epiphany, we are invited to see anew and follow again in the way of Jesus, invited into renewed discipleship.

Which means Epiphany is a fine time to open our eyes and hearts wide to welcome a new vision, an epiphany.

That is what our KCC President, Sharon Davis, and I are inviting us to do. We’ll begin with a ½ day retreat on Saturday, January 28, welcoming KCC leaders and interested members to come together to review where we’ve been, where we are and where we might be going. We’ll take a look at some previous self-assessments and goal setting that has been done in the last 10 or so years, and ask, “What was accomplished? What remains undone? What goals or directions need to be tweaked given where we find ourselves now (new pastor and three other new staff, world-wide pandemic, changing status of Church in society, etc.). We want to begin a conversation that will engage the whole congregation in seeking God’s vision so that we can “see anew and follow again in the way of Jesus...into renewed discipleship.” Building on strengths, celebrating accomplishments, assessing gaps and listening for the Spirit, we want to welcome God’s guiding light and follow it, like the Magi followed that star.

Please mark your calendar for Saturday, January 28, 9am-1pm, at the church, for our Epiphany retreat!

Grace&Peace, Rev. Jan

Worship Themes for January:

Sunday, January 1. Epiphany (Observed). Matthew 2:1-23. *From Generation to Generation We Keep Seeking.* Frank Lenox preaching and leading worship. Holy Communion. The Magi were seekers. Their seeking leads them to Jesus, the newborn king of another culture and religion. After the Magi go home by another way, Joseph is visited again by an angel in his dream. This time, the angel brings a warning, and like before, Joseph heeds the message. Fleeing from Herod's massacre, Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus seek refuge in Egypt; they remain there, living as immigrants, until Herod dies. Like the Magi, may we seek the divine and be willing to journey closer to God. Like the Holy Family, may we seek safety for all families who are under threat. This new year and every year to come, let us keep seeking— wisdom, justice, and a better world.

Sunday, January 8: The Baptism of Jesus. Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 3:13-17. Rev. Patricia Liberty preaching and leading worship. Once a year, early in the season after Epiphany we return to the Jordan River to join Jesus in his baptism. It's a chance to renew our own and hear again the blessing Jesus shares with us: "You are my child, my beloved, with you I am well-pleased." Cherished, chosen and called, Jesus is ready to launch into ministry. Are we?

Sunday, January 15: Isaiah 49:1-7; John 1:35-42. *Who God Knows Us to Be.* Jesus is called "Lamb of God" by John the Baptist; Jesus calls Peter his "rock." John recognizes Jesus as more than meets the eye. Jesus sees more than meets the eye in Peter. As we follow Jesus in the way of living love and justice we grow into just who God knows us to be: our true and best selves. Or, at least, we can. What gets in our way? What promotes our spiritual growth? How do we understand and live out our calling?

Sunday, January 22: Matthew 4:12-23. *Dragnet Discipleship.* Jesus continues to call disciples to join him in sharing the Good News of the kingdom of God. He invites the fishermen to join him in "fishing for people." How do we share the light, hope, and strength we have found in Jesus and God with others? What are our tools that can be repurposed for "living the love and justice of Jesus?" What do we need to leave behind?

Sunday January 29: Micah 6:1-8; Matthew 5:1-12. *Blessed Be.* Micah sums up God's requirements for us as "doing justice, loving kindness, walking humbly with God." Jesus kicks off his most famous sermon with nine paradoxical "blessings:" the Beatitudes. Both present us with a vision of what it means to be a friend of God. Both are holy and hard.

Inclement Weather Policy:

Should heavy weather raise the question of cancelling church services on a Sunday morning, we will send out an email to our Constant Contact mailing list and post a bulletin update on our web page. Please check those two sources if you have a question about whether or not in-person church is cancelled. Very likely, an on-line service of some sort will be offered even if in-person church is cancelled. As with every Sunday, that online service is available on our website and our YouTube channel.

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

January's Deacon of the Month is Karen Johnson (mysunnyone@gmail.com)

**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, January 22, 2023

10:45 a.m.

Frank Lenox, Secretary

Agenda

1. Call to Order Joyce Stevos, Moderator
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of Annual Meeting of October 23, 2022
4. Report of the President Sharon Davis
5. Report of the Treasurer Doug Kraus
6. Reports of Boards and Committees
7. Old Business
8. New Business Sharon Davis, President
Cheryl Wilga, Trustee

Strategic Planning Update and Retreat
Building Rental Update
9. Pastor's Comments & Closing Prayer Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier
10. Adjourn

**The Congregational Meeting
of
The Kingston Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
Sunday, October 23, 2022**

1. Call to order by Moderator Joyce Stevos (10:45 AM)
 - a. quorum was declared (in-person-48 -and online)
 - b. Items handed out
 - c. 3* items listed on the agenda are eliminated (nominating report, Pastor's health insurance, and Evaluation of Ministries Survey Results)
2. Adoption of Agenda with changes
 - a. **Motion** to accept the new agenda, **M/S/P**
3. Approval of Minutes of Annual Meeting of June 26, 2022
 - a. Approved as written **M/S/P**
4. Report of the President Sharon Davis
 - a. See attached written report about "Evaluation of Ministry Task force" and the beginning of KCC's By-Laws' review in January
5. Report of the Treasurer Doug Kraus
 - a. Kraus reported on the attached written budget
 - b. He reported on meetings with the Finance Board
 - c. He discussed the endowment – 80% in equities and 20 % in bonds, dropped 20%, made up of 3 different endowments – KCC, music, and cemetery, etc.
6. Reports of Boards and Committees
 - A. Music – Margaret Bradley
 - a. KCC suffered a great loss in Enrico Garzilli's death, a celebration of his life was held on Oct. 1
 - b. Since his death, the Board has planned a week to week Sunday music program
 - c. Close to hiring an Interim music director and organist.
 - B. Christian Education - Rem Remington
 - a. Hiring of Cindy Dowgiallo as CE Director; Tony Jones as Communications Director
 - b. Working to get message out on KCC's CE programs

- C. Trustees – Wayne Lee
 - a. Courtyard work and repairing floor in the sanctuary completed
 - b. Fellowship Hall – delay of painting
 - c. Signs on restroom updated
 - d. Possibility of renting second floor in Church House –also possibility of volunteer donations
 - e. Nov. 13th – Blue Jean Sunday
- D. Missions – Lisa Bowe
 - a. With this year’s disastrous hurricanes and floods such as in Pakistan along with its yearly designated giving, Missions has had a very full agenda.
- E. Fellowship – Maria Burdett
 - a. The Board of Fellowship has a very active schedule planned for this year; this includes the usual KCC activities and a few new ones.
- 7. Old Business
 - None
- 8. New Business
 - None other than previously discussed
- 9. Pastor’s Comments & Closing Prayer – Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier
 - a. Rev. Jan discussed Messy Church activities and its monthly gatherings beginning Nov. 18, 2022
 - b. Also were thoughts that were being explored on how to raise income for the church such as room rentals, day care working as a URI satellite program, etc.
- 10. Meeting adjournment – 11:55 AM

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth McNab, Substitute Secretary



On behalf of The Board of Christian Education, myself and Katie Howe, we would like to thank all of you for your support and participation in our 2nd Messy Church event held on December 11th. From the organizer (Katie), to the crockpot providers, our fantastic cook, the activity center leaders, skit performers, our participants and the clean- up crew and especially to Rev. Jan for her support. We could not have done this without you. Stay tuned for our January event.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



Thanks for all our youths who participated in our Christmas pageant. What an adventure it was! Special thanks to the parents for providing transportation for their youth, Peace Dale Church for some costumes, and last but not least Rev. Jan and Katie for recording it and Tony for editing it.



Sunday, January 22nd 4pm-6pm

Messy Church is an experience for individuals and families who may or may not otherwise attend church to come together with creativity, celebration and hospitality. Our January theme will be The Good Samaritan. We will be discussing ways to be helpful to others through crafts, activities and stories. We hope you will join us on this faith journey and invite family, friends and neighbors too.

Thank you!

Many thanks to the scouts of Kingston Troops 1 and 2 for their leaf raking job in December. This was a big help to the church and to Andy who hauled away the leaves in his truck.



Winter Potluck

Nothing is better than the opportunity to share a meal with friends, especially in the winter when we tend to hibernate. Nothing says love like sharing food with a church family. Please join us for a Winter Pot Luck Dinner on Friday, January 13th. Please bring your prepared contribution and yourself to Fellowship Hall by 6pm. Your requested course to share will be determined by the first initial of your last name as follows:

A through F = bring salad or appetizer

G through S = bring entree

T through Z = bring dessert

There will be a sign-up sheet on the Welcome Table in Fellowship Hall so we know how many people to prepare for. We look forward to seeing you and experiencing home cooking together.

Sincerely,
Fellowship Board

Women's Fellowship - 2023 Save the Date!

Happy New Year! We thought a fun way to kick off a new calendar year is by turning back the pages of our KCC cookbooks and having an old-fashioned pot luck luncheon! Watch the harvest table for signups and recipe ideas from the 1995 KCC "Celebration Cookbook", commemorating 300 years at KCC. On Monday, January 16th, which is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, we will gather at noon in the Fellowship Hall to have a meal together and make bird feeders for our feathered friends to enjoy this winter. (We hope that by doing this during daylight hours, more women will be able to attend.)

Thank You

On behalf of the Boards of Fellowship and Membership, thank you to all who participated in the Advent Workshop and the annual Wreath sale. The buzz of laughter, the chatter of conversations and the smell of evergreen that filled Fellowship Hall was wonderful to experience and a fabulous way to begin the holiday season.

Flower Committee

The Flower Committee wishes to thank everyone who donated flowers in 2022 which kept our table beautiful and enabled us to give flowers away. Thanks also to those who purchased a memorial lily or poinsettia to keep Easter and Christmas colorful and special. Gratitude also to those who helped with decorations to go up and to come down and bins to and from attic! It takes a village, Happy New Year!

THANK YOU KCC for:

From the Board of Missions and Social Justice:

- \$1,610.00 in support of Blanket Sunday
- Donating four large bags of coats, gloves and hats in support of Buy Nothing Coat Exchange
- Contributing \$1,150 in gift cards for the Jonnycake Center Hope for the Holidays Program
- Filling the pew TWICE since the beginning of November with food and personal items to help those in need in our community

We are grateful for your generosity and support and for making a REAL difference in people's lives.

Happy New Year!