

The Spire

From Your Pastor

November 2023

Resist Fear: Stay Grounded in Trust, Joy, Gratitude and Generosity

In times like these—with old and new wars, current crises and constant squabbles abounding—it might be a good time to remember that the most frequent command in the Bible is not “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength,” or “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” though those are “the greatest” ones according to Jesus. No, the most *frequent* command in the Bible is, “Be not afraid,” or “Do not fear.” While so much about our world has changed dramatically in the years since those biblical words were written, human nature has not. Anxiety and worry are still our worst enemies. They gnaw at our well-being and erode our confidence. All the spiritual advice in the world to “live in the moment,” to “leave tomorrow’s troubles for tomorrow,” to “cast our cares upon God,” can fall on dull ears when the “what ifs” are clanging in our heads and hearts. In the face of fear, we find it hard to trust. God invites us—some might say “commands” us—to choose trust.

Fear also dampens our joy. Joy comes from appreciating the intangible gifts in our lives: love, beauty, meaning, connection, truth, freedom, worth. When we recognize and name these spiritual qualities that inhabit our everyday lives, we are filled with joy. Joy runs deeper than happiness, for joy has to do with our bedrock well-being that cannot be easily shaken. Happiness comes and goes, even moment by moment, as the surface realities of our lives fluctuate. Fear has a way of so narrowing our focus that we miss the deeper sources of joy all around us, so vigilant to detect possible threats to our happiness.

Therefore, another casualty of fear is gratitude. Hyperalert to risks and dangers, doubts and uncertainties, we tend to discount the joyful abundance that fills our lives. But the world is chock full of beauty and delight! Jesus said, “Consider the lilies of the field... the birds of the air.” Look no further for proof of God’s prodigal grace and generous provision.

When fear clouds our vision, we suffer not only a deficit of trust, joy and gratitude, we also tend to attenuate our own generosity. Trust, joy and gratitude are the key to generosity! Fear keeps us bound, our fists clenched, living in a defensive posture. No wonder the Bible is relentless in encouraging us to resist fear!

Trust, joy, gratitude are qualities of life that people of faith are uniquely equipped for and called to. We have been assured our lives have meaning, our gifts are needed, our hurts are counted, our hurts are healed, our sins are forgiven, our lives are saved from meaninglessness, despair and oblivion. That should make us uniquely generous as well. We can trust God to give us what we need; we know the joy of real blessedness; we recognize the gracious abundance of our lives as coming from God and so are grateful. This month as we invoke a spirit of thanksgiving, let’s remember we can make a choice to turn from fear—and its toxic effects. We are not naïve or foolish; we are simply grounded in trust, joy, gratitude and generosity.

Grace&Peace, Rev. Jan

Upcoming Sunday Worship Themes:

According to the Christian calendar, we are entering the last month of our Christian year. The Christian year starts with Advent (which begins December 3 this year). The Christian calendar culminates every year with the Reign of Christ Sunday (this year November 26), *crowning* the year with images of Jesus “lifted up” (on throne and cross). As we move through these last weeks of our liturgical year, we are with Jesus in the final days of his earthly ministry according to the Gospel of Matthew.

Sunday, November 5: Micah 3:5-11; Matthew 23:1-12. *To What End?* Jesus, joining the prophets of old, has little tolerance for those who use religious position and privilege to serve themselves. The purpose of religious life and leadership is servanthood. As a church, we are the “religious authorities” of our time and Jesus invites us to ask ourselves: “Who are *we* serving?” Ourselves? Our members? Our preferences? Our privilege?

Sunday, November 12: *Guest Preacher/Worship Leader: Tom Brillat.* Rev. Jan is away with the Confirmation class on retreat.

Sunday, November 19: Matthew 25:14-30. *Return on Investment.* One of the last parables of Jesus ministry is the Parable of the Talents. A man leaves his servants with resources to invest and use, “talents,” a division of currency, in his absence. He expects a return on investment. When he returns, he praises those who take risks and use their “talents.” He has some harsh words for those who aren’t willing to take risks and instead “save” their resources. Thanksgiving Sunday.

Sunday, November 26: Matthew 22:31-46. *When Did We See You?* The final parable of Matthew’s gospel. The final teaching moment of Jesus’ earthly ministry. He tells a story about the “final judgment” of all peoples and nations. “Eternal life” and “eternal punishment” won’t come down to doctrine, piety, conversion or church membership; it will only hinge on “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Reign of Christ Sunday.

Looking Ahead to Advent:

Advent Sundays: December 3, 10, 17 and 24th (morning service on 24th will be 4th Advent; evening service will be Christmas Eve).

We will again be using the wonderful resources from *A Sanctified Art*© whose worship images, words, music and liturgies blend the biblical story with the beauty and brilliance of contemporary art and writing. Their resources include Sunday morning worship resources, as well as a daily devotional (printed or online); an Advent daily calendar (for adult/youth and children); a “Longest Night Service” (Dec. 20, 7 pm); an outline for a Christmas pageant. More details to come in the December *Spire*.

Looking for Crafty People!

Our Advent/Christmas/Epiphany worship resource from *A Sanctified Art* comes with instructions for making a large, paper lace banner with the season’s’ artistic logo. We need a few folks willing to work about 3-4 hours on tracing then cutting out the pattern. See picture:

If you would like to help with this communal, creative project, please let Rev. Jan know by November 15. Advent begins December 3rd.



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

November's Deacon of the Month is Michelle Davis. (michelle.l.davis817@gmail.com)

In Sympathy

The congregation expresses deepest condolences to the Letcher family on the death of Tina Letcher who died on July 16th. A memorial service will be held in the sanctuary on November 18th at 4:00 pm.

The congregation expresses deepest condolences to Gordon Johnson and family on the death of his wife, Barbara Johnson who died on October 3rd. A memorial will be held in the sanctuary on November 4th at 11:00 am.

Christmas Greens and Advent Wreath Sale

This year we will be assembling and selling Advent wreaths (with candles) and Christmas arrangements during the Kingston Fair on Saturday, December 2 in Fellowship Hall and during the tree trimming event on Sunday, December 3. Donations of greens would be most appreciated-last year we had such wonderful varieties of greens! Greens can be dropped off in Fellowship Hall November 26, or could be picked up, if needed. Also, we would love any donations of Christmas-themed containers that would be good for filling with greens. Do you have any mugs, buckets, bowls, or baskets that would be festive with greens? Do you have any Christmas ribbon, pine cones or other Christmas craft items that you don't need? There will be a box in Fellowship Hall for donations for this project.

Are you crafty? We will need some assistance in getting the arrangements put together. We will meet Wednesday, November 29 and Friday, December 1 from 9am-Noon in the Fellowship Hall to assemble the arrangements. There will be some project ideas to work off. There will be sign-up sheets in Fellowship Hall to indicate if you can offer your help! Thank you for your donations and support! Any questions, please contact Cindy Anderson at rhodymom3@gmail.com.

Save the date: December 3, 2023...KCC Tree Trimming

Come join the Fellowship Board as we decorate our enormous Christmas Tree in Fellowship Hall following Sunday worship. There will be ornament making for all ages, advent wreath sales, door wreath and greenery sales, tasty treats and hot cocoa.

Save the Date: Saturday, December 2nd 2023 Kingston Village Christmas Fair

This year, the South Kingstown 300 year anniversary event calendar will wrap up with the Kingston Village Christmas Fair. We expect a wide audience from the area to visit and welcome in the 2023 Holiday Season! Come stroll the village and visit our unique blend of community groups and small businesses, each offering varied opportunities to celebrate this festive season. See all the activities happening throughout the village at <https://www.kingstonvillagefair.org>.

Please help us get ready for this event at KCC!

- Women's Fellowship will be hosting a charity fundraiser from 9am to 1pm, with Bake Sale items, handmade fabric bags, and Christmas Greens and Advent Wreaths
- The Fellowship Board will be hosting a warming soup and salad luncheon from 11am - 1pm, for \$5.

Bake Sale & Christmas Greens Sale Volunteers needed:

All proceeds from the fundraiser will be donated by Women's Fellowship to local charities in 2024. See Michelle Girasole or Cindy Anderson to help out.

Bakers - donate delicious baked goods, sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/KCCbake22>

If you're not a baker, consider donating purchased pies, breads, or other baked items and/or donating 2+ hours of your time to help that day!



If you are interested in joining a KCC Circle, the first Circle is taking shape and will be held on first Fridays, 2-4 pm. If this day/time does not work for you, stay tuned; we will launch other Circles in the near future. This Circle will be facilitated by Cheryl von Ehrenkrook. At the first meeting (Nov. 3) members will begin to get to know one another AND talk about what they would like their "faith focus" to be. Every Circle will follow this general outline:

First hour: get-to-know-you/check in/fellowship.

Second hour: faith focus (decided on by group: could take form of reading a book, diving into a topic, studying a book of the Bible, sharing faith journeys, "Faith Question of the Day," exploring a faith practice, like prayer, meditation, etc.)

Each Circle has a maximum membership of 12 people. This first Circle is filling up. Each Circle agrees to meet for six months (six monthly meetings). After six months, members can decide to continue, discontinue, welcome new members or disband. Faith focus can change, too, every six months.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THIS CIRCLE (OR WAIT FOR ANOTHER THAT WORKS FOR YOUR SCHEDULE) by emailing Rev. Jan at revjan@kingconchurch.org.

**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, November 19, 2023

10:45 a.m.

Frank Lenox, Secretary

Tentative Agenda

1. Call to Order Sharon Davis, President
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of Annual Meeting of May 21, 2023
4. Report of the President Sharon Davis
5. Report of the Treasurer Doug Kraus
6. Reports of Boards and Committees
7. Old Business – Room Rental Update
8. New Business – By-laws Update
9. Pastor's Comments & Closing Prayer Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier
10. Adjourn

Congregational Meeting
Kingston Congregational Church, UCC
Sunday, May 21, 2023

1. Call to Order by Moderator, Joyce Stevos (11:00 am)
 - a. 4 handouts: Agenda with Minutes from Jan 22, 2023; Investment Committee Report; Proposed Annual Budget; Balance Sheet/Treasurer's Report;
 - b. Quorum declared by Moderator (in-person)
2. Adoption of Agenda (handout #1)
 - a. **Motion** to adopt the revised agenda, **M/S/P**
3. Approval of Minutes of January 22, 2023 Congregational Meeting,
 - a. Approved as distributed.
4. Report of the President, Sharon Davis
 - A year of transition as we prepare to review the Bylaws. Please share any comments with members of Council.
5. Investment Committee Report, Dick Geisler (handout #2)
 - a. the purpose of the Endowment is to act in perpetuity
 - b. Investment Policy statement: distribute 4-5% of endowment value over a 7-year rolling average.
 - last 14 years (since 2009) we have been drawing 5.7%
 - recommending \$57k - 72k for this fiscal year
6. Report of the Treasurer, Doug Kraus
 - a. Budget Proposed Annual Budget (handout #3)
 - requires \$90k from the Endowment
 - **Motion** to adopt the proposed budget, **M/S/P**
 1. discussion of budget
 2. concerns were raised regarding procedures for establishing amounts and notification of boards regarding changes
7. Reports of Boards and Committees
 - a. CE - Rem
 - **Proposed Resolution:** We will consider the environmental impacts of our decisions as a congregation. **M/S/P**
 - b. Deacons – Frank Lenox
 - This year has been a pleasure working with Rev. Jan to prepare for services and special events.
 - c. Missions - Lisa Bowe
 - \$8500 contributed by the congregation
 - Summer "Fill the Pew" event

d. Music Board

- thank you to Eden Casteel; she has been fantastic to work with as interim and we want to encourage her to apply for the Music Director position

e. Trustees - Wayne Lee

- upstairs bathrooms renovated
- leak in the Church Office building has been repaired
- AC in sanctuary has been installed thanks to Jim McCauley

f. SCRIP - Andrea Richardson

- only distributed \$4k this year, please consider purchasing through SCRIP
- looking for a member to fill a position

8. New Business

a. Nominating Task Force Report, Frank Lenox

- apologies for not having printed Ballot
- additions to the Boards were read
- **Motion** to adopt the Boards Ballot, **M/S/P**

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

- Looking for Director of Communications
- Witness Stones Project -
 - Ceremony for Stones Installation (Silvie, Cuffe Torrey) Monday, 6/5
- Serving as pastor of this church has been fulfilling and rewarding
- New directions in the year to come (e.g. office rental,

10. Meeting Adjourned: 12:18 am

Respectfully submitted,
Francis Lenox, Secretary



COOKING & DINING EXPERIENCE WITH A LOCAL CHEF

COOK FRESH! EAT WELL! DO GOOD! TO BENEFIT THE HUNGRY

Welcome to "Beneficent Banquets" at KingCongChurch!

Join Chef Jack Piemonte, from Cap'n Jacks restaurant located in Wakefield, RI, as he guides up to 12 friends in a special night of pasta-making and dining in Kingston! You will learn to cook fresh cuisine, then enjoy this 4-course dinner together, to benefit local organizations that combat food insecurity as well as help fund our free community meals at our church.

Donation, \$100

November 6, 2023 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Reserve your spot at the table:

401-783-5330



**KINGSTON
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH** EST.1695

2610 Kingstown Road, Kingston, RI 02881
www.KingCongChurch.org



Blue Jean Sunday

Everyone is encouraged to stay after church on November 12th to help the Trustees and Andy spruce up the church and grounds, working for two hours at most. Refreshments will be available for all helpers.

Join us at Kingston Congregational Church

Sunday, 6:00 p.m.

November 19th* and December 17th*

**Note: Normally the last Sunday of each month,
our last two in 2023 are earlier, due to the holidays.*



We look forward to offering warm hospitality to anyone in the community that would enjoy a free, fresh-cooked meal. Hope to see you there!

Questions, call the church office: 401-783-5330

Communications Update:

In an effort to ensure the consistency and effectiveness of our KCC communications, the KCC staff is asking that you use ONE email address for ALL communications requests (for Sunday Announcements, or *The Spire*, or Weekly Email Newsletter, or Website). Please send ALL communication updates and requests to Communications@kingcongchurch.org (versus sending separately to Shirley, Jillian or other staff). Indicate when and how you'd like your event/appeal/news item shared. Please take note of these deadlines:

Weekly newsletter: by Thursday @10am

Monthly Spire: by 15th of every month

Order of Worship: by Wednesday morning

From The Director of Christian Education

November
HAPPENINGS



**SPOOKY SLEEPOVER
FOR 6TH-12TH GRADERS**

STARTING ON NOVEMBER 4TH

8:00PM- 8:00AM

RSVP TO MS. CINDY BY NOV. 1ST

dirce@kingconchurch.org

**Come and
join us for:**



November 19th from 4-6pm

**We will be celebrating a Friendsgiving by exploring friends and the
harvest season.**

**If you would like to help with this event, please
contact Ms. Cindy for more information**

dirce@kingconchurch.org

Edesia Visit

On Wednesday September 20, the Board of Missions and Social Justice and friends toured Edesia Nutrition, a manufacturer of ready-to-use foods (RUFs) in North Kingstown. Edesia is a non-profit, social enterprise that makes life-saving RUFs to help end the global malnutrition crisis.

RUFs produced by Edesia are single serve, nutrient-dense pastes used with a 2-year shelf life and do not require refrigeration or water, making them extremely adaptable and ideal for use in emergencies or in community-based nutrition and health programs throughout the developing world. Since 2010—through partnerships with UNICEF, World Food Program, USAID, and others—Edesia has nourished over 21 million children across 65 countries.

During the tour, we learned about production, packaging and distribution of these amazing products.

You can learn more about Edesia here: <https://vimeo.com/483654685>



Edesia is named after the Roman Goddess of Banquets.



Edesia makes seven different varieties of RUFs, each designed to target a specific nutritional need.



A prototype of a typical clinic in Africa where malnourished children receive medical care and Edesia RUF's.



Edesia's employee kitchen, constructed in a shipping container, a nod to the importance of these containers in delivering Edesia products around the world.



Courageous Conversations: Exploring Violent Extremism

FREE

Tuesdays, October 24, November 7, and November 14

7:00-8:15 pm

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of South County

27 North Road, Peace Dale

Facilitated by Nancy Richman and Barbara (Bina) Holtzman

*While these sessions build upon each other, it is not required to attend all three.
Come to one or the entire series!*

**Registration required. For questions or to register please email nrichman618@gmail.com.
Include your 1) name, 2) phone number, 3) dates you plan to attend.**

From back-to-back deadly shootings to the disturbing rise of antisemitism, racism, homophobia, and censorship, hate is fueling violence, polarization, and division.



With grant support from the Department of Homeland Security, the URI Media Education Lab developed the **Courageous RI** program to prevent rising violence and extremism in Rhode Island with respectful conversation.

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS, one component of Courageous RI, is a media literacy program developed to reduce the hate that leads to violence by building a coalition of empowered people who recognize, analyze, and resist harmful forms of expression and communication.

Thinking critically about what we hear, read, and see is important for people of every background, across the political spectrum. It is an ongoing process of listening, learning, and reflecting that has the power to stop hate in our communities. By participating in the UUCSC Courageous Conversation series, you will access practical tools and support that increase tolerance, problem solving, and appreciation of other points of view.

October 24: Why Media Literacy Matters

What is media literacy and how can it help people to respond to disinformation & hoaxes?

November 7: Preventing Violent Extremism

How is violent extremism affecting our society and what can we do about it?

November 14: Falling Down the Rabbit Hole

What can you do to support people in your life who may be moving towards radicalization?

Stay Curious, Not Furious!

THE SPIRE

November 2023

**Kingston Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
2610 Kingstown Road
Kingston, RI 02881**

Return Service Requested

Dated Material – Please Deliver Promptly

Mission Statement of the Kingston Congregational Church

**“We are a Christian Church that supports each person's spiritual journey
through the communal pursuit of worship, learning, and service.”**

(Voted on and approved by the Congregation on April 27, 2008)

Worship and Church School

9:30 am

Ministers

All members

Senior Pastor The Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier

Interim Music Director

Eden Casteel

Church School Director

Cindy Dowgiallo

Communications Coordinator

Jillian Seibold

Office Administrator

Shirley M. Schock

Sexton

Andy Cournoyer



Donate

**Don't forget to bring your
canned goods
on November 5th,
Communion Sunday.**

Telephone: (401) 783-5330

Email: office@kingconchurch.org

Web address: www.kingconchurch.org

Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/kingconchurch

**Deadline for December *Spire*
Articles is November 15th.**

**Office Hours: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm
Monday - Thursday**

CONCERT

TO BENEFIT
RHODY OUTPOST

URI's Basic Needs Pantry



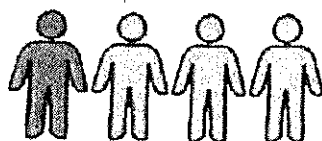
November 19, 2023

3 PM St. Augustine's Church

15 Lower College Road, Kingston

Admission: \$20 and
please bring a nonperishable
food item for the Outpost

*Concert participants include
URI students and
homegrown talent*



**MORE THAN 1 OUT OF 4 URI
STUDENTS ARE FOOD
INSECURE!**