

The Spire

From Your Pastor

January 2024

It's with great joy that I use my "above the fold" space here to announce (if you haven't heard yet) and welcome Eden Casteel as our newly called Minister of Music. Eden is not new to our church or our hearts; she has been serving as Interim Music Director for a little over a year. We have fallen in love with each other—musician and congregation—over that year and we felt God's hand in bringing us together. Discerning that this might actually be a match made in heaven, we had probing conversations about what it would be like to make our partnership permanent. Eden, as many know, has a vibrant performing, teaching and producing career as well as playing and leading worship here at KCC. A full-time Sunday "gig" is a stretch for an artist who sometimes travels to NYC or Chicago to take her music on the road. Over the last year we made accommodations for her other commitments by bringing in talented substitutes and found we could live with this arrangement. So, when our Board of Music began to talk about selecting a "settled" church musician, the first question we asked ourselves was, "What would it take to have Eden stay?" Could we find a balance between meeting the needs of our congregation and Eden's career goals? To that end, myself, the Board of Music and the Church Council approved a new job description that serves both. Eden will have up to (an average of) one Sunday a month off. We will have her here for three out of four! Our same talented subs will support our rich worship life the weeks Eden is not in attendance. With this arrangement, she will continue to bring her energy, vision and talent to our worship life in substantial ways and we can support her in sharing her musical talent with the world. We have also changed the job title to "Minister of Music" to reflect a broader focus, leveraging Eden's programming and pastoral gifts for weaving music into many areas of our church life. We have asked her to (quoting the new position description): "help KCC bring music to the wider community and bring the wider community to KCC through the ministry of music." Hence, you'll see in the newsletter promotion for a new music series, "KCC Concerts," which will kick off with the wonderful Kim Trusty singing gospel, soul and blues in Fellowship Hall on Friday, January 12 at 7 pm. Eden is already helping KCC use one of its best and most beloved gifts—music—to reach new ears and audiences!



I am so glad to welcome Eden to our church staff as Minister of Music! I look forward to many years of joyful, beautiful and adventurous ministry together!

Grace&Peace, Rev. Jan

Sundays in January

Sunday, January 7 (Epiphany observed) – Matthew 2:1-20

Having spent all Advent and Christmas seasons with Luke's nativity story, we now close out our seasonal celebrations with a large slice of Matthew's version. Nothing so tame as shepherds and cattle stalls! Matthew brings exotic, foreign, pagans to the cradle of the Christ child! The very heavens are rearranged to announce the birth of this "new king" and the political establishment mounts a violent suppression.

Sunday, January 14 – The Baptism of Jesus – Mark 1:4-11

Each year at the beginning of our calendar year we revisit the story of Jesus' baptism at the start of his ministry. All four gospels tell the story of the baptism of Jesus by John. This story was seminal to the early Church's understanding of just who Jesus was/is: the One who joins us in our human search for second chances, who shares us our thirst for new beginnings. We remember the words of blessing spoken over Jesus and claim them for ourselves: "This is my child, my beloved, in whom I am well-pleased."



Sunday, January 21 – Mark 1:14-20

Jesus begins his work in the world by calling a community to join him in his ministry. The first to join the new rabbi in his effort are the fishermen, Simon and Andrew, then James and John. What an interesting choice! If you were starting a religious revolution, would it start with fishermen? He invites them to come follow him and "fish for people."

Sunday, January 28 – Mark 1:21-28

The first miracle reported in Mark's story of Jesus is the healing of a man "with an unclean spirit". "Jesus is clear, direct and unflinching in the face of destructive forces: "Come out of him!" Where in our world, let alone our hearts, have "unclean spirits" come to live? Our love of violence, even for entertainment? Our vilification of our opponents and hatred for our adversaries? Our willingness to dehumanize whole groups of "others?" It's not that we don't know these things are destructive and wrong, but need God's power and Jesus' clarity to expel them from our lives.

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

January's Deacon of the Month is Tom Brillat. (tom@brillat.net)

New Member Orientation

On Saturday, January 20, Rev. Jan and the church representatives will hold a New Member Orientation from 10:00 to Noon, at the church. Anyone who would like to become a full member of Kingston Congregational Church is welcome to attend. At this orientation we will get to know one another, the church and its mission better. Participants will learn more about our history and organization, our current ministry priorities and our United Church of Christ denomination. The goal is to help new members to feel fully equipped for and warmly welcomed into ministry with us at KCC. Please RSVP to Rev. Jan by calling the church office (401) 783-5330 or email her 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, January 21, 2024

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 Congregational Meeting of November 19, 2023
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
9. Pastor's Comments & Closing Prayer Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier
10. Adjourn

Congregational Meeting
Kingston Congregational Church, UCC
Sunday, November 19, 2023

1. Call to Order by President, Sharon Davis (10:56 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 President (in-person)
2. Adoption of Agenda (handout #1)
 - a. **Motion** to adopt the revised agenda, **M/S/P**
3. Approval of Minutes of May 21, 2023 Congregational Meeting,
 - a. Approved as distributed.
4. Report of the President, Sharon Davis
 - Thanks to everyone for your prayers and support during recovery.
 - Endorsement for Community Meals and Beneficent Banquet.
 - The Bylaws Task Force is still working on revisions to the bylaws.
5. Report of the Treasurer, Doug Kraus
 - a. Balance Sheet (handout #2)
6. Video: SNE UCC
7. Reports of Boards and Committees
 - a. Missions - Sue Davis
 - \$17k contributed by the congregation
 - Does not include other donations
 - Christmas Offering: RI Food Bank, Blessings & A Backpack, Third World Kitchen
 - January: Rhody Outpost contributions
 - CWS Legacy Award - Legacy Award (for \$100k in contributions)
 - b. Deacons – Frank Lenox
 - As stated in the Annual Report, it has been a pleasure working with Rev. Jan to prepare for services and special events.
 - Letter to Music Board endorsing Eden Casteel for Music Director.
 - Advent Wreath lighting
 - c. Trustees - Cheryl Wilga
 - Room Rental update
 - Painting is coming to completion; floors and electrical still need to be completed

- zoning of church needs to be addressed (residential → business)
 - Question about tax status of church due to additional income.
- d. CE - Rem
- 5 children regularly
 - ACE's material for Advent from Sanctified Arts
- e. Finance Board - Dick Geisler
- addressed Investment Committee Report (handout #3)
 - concerned about the \$90k
- f. Fellowship Board - Ann Lenox
- monthly events, Dec is the Kingston Fair
- g. SCRIP - Andrea Richardson
- only distributed \$4k this year, please consider purchasing through SCRIP
 - looking for a member to fill a position
8. Old Business
- a. Room Rental update - already
9. New Business
- a. Bylaws update
- Council created a Bylaws Task Force to suggest adjustments that reflect our vision, goals and ministries.
 - SNE Vision: "Living the Love and Justice of Jesus"
9. Pastor's Comments, Closing Prayer - Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier
- Feedback from the congregation about what makes us 'thankful'.
10. Meeting Adjourned: 11:44 am

Respectfully submitted,
Francis Lenox, Secretary

Young Adult and Adult Christian Education Opportunity

Our church buildings sit on land originally owned by Native People. A variety of cognitive and experiential activities related to Indigenous People in our area will be the theme of our Christian Educational sessions beginning this January. The topics will include 1) the history of pre-colonial indigenous culture as well as cherished traditions carried forward today from earlier cultures, 2) opportunities for justice, and 3) development of a KCC land acknowledgement document based on an examination of documents through the Pettaquamscutt Purchase. The book by local author, Linda Coombs, on *Race to the Truth, Colonization and the Wampanoag Story* will be the basis for our beginning discussions. It is written for young people as well as adults and is available through Amazon. The sessions will start on Sunday, January 28 at 11:00 a.m. in the Fireplace Room.

Two NEW Circles Launching in January!



On first Sundays and third Thursdays, two new KCC Circles will be starting up in the new year. KCC Circles meet for two hours monthly for six months, spending half their gathering in fellowship and half in faith sharing. The group decides together the focus of its second (faith sharing) hour. Each Circle is hosted by one member and facilitated by another.

Circles are designed for 8-10 members who will commit to monthly attendance for six months. After six months, members can “re-up” or graciously depart. The aim of the KCC Circles ministry is to offer smaller, more intimate community within the larger KCC community, to allow deepening of friendships and faith.

Second Sundays: Hosted by Cheryl Wilga; facilitated by Frank Lenox (Kingston).

Third Thursdays: Hosted by Ron Charpentier; facilitated by Jan Gregory-Charpentier (Richmond)

If you are interested in participating in either of these circles for this January-June session, please contact Rev. Jan at revjan@kingconchurch.org or by calling the church office.

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will meet after church, at 11AM, Sunday January 7th. All women in the church are invited. Please bring an item of significance to you, such as a "family treasure", and share with us what it means to you or a story about it. We look forward to learning more about each other through this experience. Connie Fitzelle and Cindy Buxton will host this meeting. We hope to see you then.

The South County Social Justice Coalition

The South County Social Justice Coalition is open to all faith groups, individuals, and helping organizations who address issues of equity, diversity, cultural responsiveness, access and support at any level in South County. Read our **Goals**. Join the coalition by opting in to our communication network; receive a weekly email update of social justice needs and events in South County; please share our updates to your organizational network. The website is <https://sites.google.com/view/scsjcoalition/home>.

From the Director of Christian Education



to all the families and children as well as Rev. Jan for helping with our Christmas Puppet Show. It was definitely an all-hands-on deck!



Sunday, January 21st 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 join us on this faith journey and invite family, friends and neighbors too!

A Family Event for All of Those Involved in Church School is being planned for either January or February.
More details coming soon!!!



Join us at Kingston Congregational Church

Sunday, 6:00 p.m.

December 31

January 28

February 25



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

*"Better is a dinner of vegetables where love is
than a fattened ox and hatred with it." ~ Proverbs 15:17 NSRV*

As we prepare for our 2024 Community Dinner series, consider joining us. Whether you help by shopping for ingredients, cooking the meal, setting the table, sitting in conversation with our neighbors, or even just coming at the end to help clean up, it all matters. We do it with love, and would love to have your help.

We look forward to serving with you!

With love from your KCC Meal Team Captains,

Rev. Jan, Carolyn E., Tracy H, Judy P., Michelle G. and Cindy B.

KCC Concerts presents **KIM TRUSTY and Friends** in concert Friday, Jan. 12 7pm in the KCC Fellowship Hall.

Providence-based **Kim Trusty** is a powerful vocalist whose singing recalls Aretha Franklin, Etta James, and Anita Baker. An accomplished songwriter and guitarist, Kim has released several albums of original R & B and Gospel music. Her latest CD is "Blessed In All Things."

Joining Kim for the concert are **Joe Potenza**, bass; **George Dussault**, guitar; and **Eden Casteel**, keyboards. The KCC choir will join Kim for some of her songs as well.

Snacks and drinks will be available for purchase. This concert is suitable for all ages.

\$20 General Admission, \$10 for Seniors and Students. Buy tickets after KCC services or buy online: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/gospel-soul-and-blues-with-kim-trusty-friends-tickets-768704063547?aff=oddtcreator>



Fill the Pew for Rhody Outpost!

The Board of Missions and Social Justice is sponsoring our second annual donation drive for Rhody Outpost in January to help stock the food pantry's shelves in anticipation of the students' return at the end of the month. Below is a list of requested items. Bring your donations any Sunday in January and leave them in the front right pew. Thank you!

Food:

- Canned chicken breast, tuna, sardines,
- Canned tomato products (crushed, diced, sauce, paste)
- Canned chick peas and kidney beans
- Canned veggies (except green beans)
- Condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayo, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, dressings, etc.)
- Granola bars (especially Kashi or Kind brand)
- Cookies*, Crackers*, Chips*
- Shelf-stable milk (i.e. Parmalat) especially almond, skim, 1%, and whole
- Cooking oil (vegetable, canola, olive, coconut)
- Nuts/seeds*
- Raisins or other dried fruit*
- Boxed cereal (Honey Bunches of Oats, Honey Nut Cheerios, Chex)
- Popcorn (Microwave)
- Jerky (meat or vegetarian)
- **White** rice
- Coffee/tea/cocoa
- Ramen noodles
- Pasta
- Peanut butter and Jelly
- Oats (in large containers, not oatmeal packets) *individual containers/packages are most in demand!

Personal/household:

- Deodorant
- Toothpaste (adult/children)
- Toothbrushes (especially children's)
- Mouthwash (adult/children)
- Disinfectant wipes and Baby wipes
- Lip balm
- Lotion
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Dish sponges
- Laundry detergent
- Liquid hand soap
- Tissues

THE SPIRE

January 2024

**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

Minister of Music 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 January 7th,
Communion Sunday.**

Telephone: (401) 783-5330

Email: office@kingconchurch.org

Web address: www.kingconchurch.org

Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/kingconchurch

**Deadline for February *Spire*
Articles is January 15th.**

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