Kirkwood United Church of Christ

Our Welcoming Covenant
Kirkwood United Church of Christ is called by God to be an open, diverse and caring community of Jesus’ disciples. In following Christ's commandment to love one another, we welcome all who wish to share in fellowship, membership, leadership, worship, ministry, sacraments, rites, responsibilities and blessings of our faith community. As we affirm every person is a child of God, no one is excluded, regardless of race, ethnic or socio-economic background, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical or mental ability, nationality or faith background. We are an Open and Affirming and an Immigrant Welcoming congregation. All are welcome here!

A Word from the Pastor – November 2020

“My refuge and my strength; in You alone will I trust...
I will not fear the shadows of the night, nor the confusion that comes by day,
Nor the dreams that awaken me from sleep,
nor the daily changes that life brings.”
Psalm 91:2, 5-6, Psalms for Praying

I’ve read this and other versions, of Psalm 91 in the past, and have always found them beautiful and reassuring. The Psalms for Praying version, written by Nan Merrill, is especially meaningful for today, I think.

Many of us have experienced difficult times in our lives, of course: perhaps fear of depression during winter days, or the effects of addiction, or abusive employers; perhaps confusion or disorientation from a death, divorce, relocation, or job change; perhaps nightmares in the midst of stress - some repeating themselves over and over again; or, changes of routine caused by illness, a child going away to college, the loss of a vehicle...
Do any of these sound familiar?

Shadows of the night, confusion by day, bad dreams, chaos...these are part and parcel of being human, of living in a hectic, consumer-driven culture.

What is new to us, however - at least to those of us living in 2020 - is having all of the psalmist’s woes hitting us at the very same time. As I write this we are anticipating one of the most contentious elections in modern times, and the anxiety is palpable. But the anxiety does not stop there: in addition to Election Day itself, we’re wondering how long it will take to know the results, and what kind of suffering and craziness might occur in the meantime. We’re concerned about violence ensuing, no matter what the result. And we’re worried about family members and friends who are sick from, or susceptible to, a wild virus.
All of these stressors placed on our shoulders and in our hearts at one time are not part and parcel to being human, and, quite honestly, we are not fully prepared for it. Our bodies, souls and spirits are over-burdened, whether we consciously realize it or not.

These are exactly the moments when something grander than ourselves - let’s call that something God, Creator, Spirit, Eternal One, whatever works for you - beckons us toward refuge and strength. These are exactly the times God calls us to prayer, to reconnect with the Holy One in ways that otherwise elude us. I don’t suggest this casually; I do so with great urging. We cannot do this life without holy inspiration and still remain a healthy humanity.

The psalmist knew this. The psalmist also knew that such surrendering was counter to culture:

“Though a thousand may deride this radical trust,
ten thousand laugh as I seek to do your Will,
Yet I will surrender myself to You,
abandoning myself into your hands without reserve.”

Find a way to pray. Whatever way works for you. Bring yourself closer to something bigger than all of us. I don’t suggest this casually; I do so with great urging.

God’s peace, Betsy
Adult Education at Kirkwood United Church of Christ

November 8, 22, 29, & December 6 & 13, 2020 at 11:00am via Zoom.

The Universal Christ,
How a forgotten reality can change everything we see, hope for, and believe.

By Richard Rohr will be the focus of our study during this time. Father Rohr, a Franciscan Priest and the founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, NM writes this book as a culmination of his work in discovering what he calls an “Alternative Orthodoxy” to the current teachings of the Church. Drawing on the wisdom of the ancient teachers of the church and melding it with modern science he lays out for us a basic teaching, found in scripture, that will give you a new perspective on our faith and our action in the twenty first century.

This will be a Contemplative Study, facilitated by Lev Reynolds, on the basics of Rohr’s view of the Universal Christ. Lev has found in reading this book, as well as other books by Rohr and other ancient writers of the Christian Church, that he has grown in his appreciation of this mystical approach to our lives as Christians. In a Contemplative Study we will seek ways that we integrate and react to the concepts of the book. Our goal is not to debate or compare but to understand and to grow. Through reading and reflecting on the book and on scripture; through sharing and discussion; and through quiet contemplation we will unfold the “Alternative Orthodoxy” of the Universal Christ. We will also be using contemplative practices that will help us grow in our faith.

In order for you to fully participate in the class it will be helpful if you own a copy of the book so that you can read the chapters ahead of time to become familiar with his themes. The book is available online from the Center For Action and Contemplation Bookstore (cac.org) on sale for $20 right now or it is available on Amazon ($16.29 in hardcover, $13.96 in paperback). It is also available in a Kindle edition. Please indicate to Lev via email to LeveringR@aol.com that you will be attending so that he can send you the study guides for each week.

Lev has found that this book has helped him bring together many threads of his faith into one unifying concept, it has better equipped him for a life of faith today that is both impacting his own personal life and is equipping him for action in today’s world. We hope you will join us in this study. If you have further questions don’t hesitate to contact Lev at LeveringR@aol.com or at 507-254-763.

Here is a video of Richard Rohr introducing you to The Universal Christ
**I believe, even when...**

During these difficult times, our senses of faith and tradition are being challenged in a variety of ways. Do you still believe in the power of God, and the spirit of Christ in our midst? Or, do you need a little pick-me-up in that department?

Advent marks the period of time in the Church calendar - celebrated on the four Sundays before Christmas - when we focus in anticipation on the birth of Jesus. This year our Advent season will begin on Sunday, November 29, centering around the theme, “I believe, even when...” Our worship experiences will be virtual, but no less meaningful. And that includes a children’s Christmas play planned for Sunday, December 13 - all virtual!

The Worship & Music team will be sharing details about KUCC’s Advent and Christmas Eve celebrations in mid-November. Stay tuned...

---

**SOUL COLLAGE - NOVEMBER 18 at 7 pm on Zoom**

Soul Collage* is an easy collage process that uses limited space (a 5x8” card) and a limited number of images to create a collage that intuitively expresses what’s resting in your soul at the moment. Those who have participated in this spiritual practice seem to agree: something so small can be amazingly meaningful and thought-provoking.

Betsy will lead the collage-making on Zoom on Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00 pm.

In order to participate, it will be helpful for you to have a packet of materials prepared ahead of time by Betsy. Betsy will be at KUCC on Friday, 11/13 and Tuesday, 11/17 between 2:00 and 2:30 pm to safely distribute packets to those who would like to participate. Just drive up to the doors off the back parking lot. All you’ll need on your own is a pair of scissors. If you aren’t able to make a trip to the church, let Betsy know and a packet will be delivered to you!

The Zoom link will be sent out the week before for all who would like to participate. Questions? Contact Betsy at bfhappel@gmail.com. We hope you’ll be able to join us!

* Soul Collage is a copyrighted art method
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Nurture and Education is excited to be offering these opportunities for our KUCC Families with children PreK through 8th Grade (older youth in your home are always welcome):

VIRTUAL LOGOS
Thursdays, November 12 and December 10
6:00-7:15PM
Watch for more information via email. Plan to have dinner with your family at 6:00PM AND your KUCC LOGOS family via Zoom. We'll provide you with table talk questions that coordinate with the session’s theme. You'll join other families via Zoom for dinner together or possibly in a breakout space. At 6:15 we'll gather for Recreation (virtual game or family craft), Bible Study and Worship Arts sometimes all together but also with the option of breakouts groups by age....

The Nurture and Ed Team and our LOGOS Volunteers are really, really, really looking forward to our time together! Hope to see you there!

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
Sunday Worship @ 9:30 am on Zoom
see details on our website www.kirkwooducc.org

If you are unable to participate in KUCC Sunday Worship you can go to KUCC website https://www.kirkwooducc.org/, or the Kirkwood UCC Facebook page, and watch the entire service. These are posted every Monday morning.

MISSION IN ACTION UPDATE
Go to our Mission in Action page on KUCC website to see the latest ways you can take action for social justice. www.kirkwooducc.org/mission-action
A note about financial giving for KUCC during these extraordinary times:
We are grateful for the many ways KUCC members and friends support our wonderful faith community. Truly, we are a body of Christ’s spirit, and our connected with each other, and the world around us, will hold strong. We recognize that the financial realities of some of us will change in the weeks to come. If you are able to continue supporting KUCC financially as you have, thank you. If you find yourself unable to do so, we ask that you give as you are able. We’ll get through this and make temporary adjustments as necessary. Every little bit will help in order to maintain KUCC outreach ministries (needed more than ever), staff compensation, church facility utilities, etc. **There are three ways for you to give financially to KUCC:**
- through the GIVE button on the home page of our website, [www.kirkwooducc.org](http://www.kirkwooducc.org).
- through automatic deductions from your checking account, established through your own bank.
- by sending a check to the church at 1603 Dougherty Ferry Rd., Kirkwood, 63122. The mail is being checked regularly.
**We thank you for your support!**

**KIRKCARE IS IN NEED** of non-perishable goods for their food pantry. If you are shopping for your own grocery needs and could purchase a few extra items for KirkCare, it would be greatly appreciated. Food items can be left on Rose and Doug Brockhouse’s front stoop, 612 Rosewood Lane, Kirkwood, 63122. Or, you can send a check donation to the church, indicating KirkCare on the memo line. Or, you can make a donation on the Kirkwood UCC website ([www.kirkwooducc.org](http://www.kirkwooducc.org)) and send an email to Carol Bender, one of our Financial Secretaries, cbender218@charter.net indicating the purpose of the donation. Thank you!

---

**Neighbors in Need 2020**

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is one of the special mission offerings Kirkwood UCC support with our Mission and Outreach funds. The NIN funds support ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One third of the NIN funds supports the UCC’s Council for American Indian Ministries. Two-thirds of funds contributed to NIN is used for the UCCs justice and witness ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts and direct service projects through grants. They provide grants to local churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. This year special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities.
THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VIGIL-ERS!
On Thursday, June 25, twenty-eight KUCC-ers gathered on the church’s front lawn to proclaim our support for the Black Lives Matter movement. For 18 more Thursdays, until darkness fell with the time-change, vigil-ers continued the practice between 5 and 6 pm. Despite a few nay-sayers (and some nastiness, we aren’t gonna lie...), it was clear the community around us were supportive, and even expected our appearance each week. The horn honks, waves, and cheers were prevalent. We knew we were doing something important to further the spirit of anti-racism in our world.

Thank you to all who came out and stood vigil. A HUGE thank you to Kristin Spradley, our fearless leader, for her coordination and inspiring poetry at the end of each vigil. We look forward to returning to our vigiling in the spring! (Bonus points if you can identify the five who braved the cold on 11/29 - see the final photo, below.)

(They are, l to r: Ellen Smith, Judy Kamper, Beth Heuermann, Kristin Spradley, and Mary Mohl.)
Happy Anniversary Celebration August 2020—Rita & Ron Hill

We want to thank KUCC and especially Pastor Betsy for allowing us to have a “mini” celebration for our 50th wedding anniversary using the parking lot. We were married at KUCC on August 15th, 1970 by Pastor Larry Watson & Pastor Ken Gottman in the sanctuary (without air conditioning and a few of you may remember the no air conditioning). It was a super hot Saturday evening in August with a reception with cake and punch in the dining room in the lower level. It was a packed house and as all weddings it includes great memories & a few challenges! So to be able to have our mini-celebration (rather than a big party that we had in mind before CoVid 19 blew that apart) on the parking lot, under the giant spreading tree was as close as we could get.

Once again Pastor Betsy, thanks so much and to any of the members who still remember us (and there are a few!) we think of you all very fondly.

Peace & Love, Rita & Ron Hill

Rita & Ron Hill  Our Memory Table  Rita & Ron with Pastors

James & Margaret

Our mini celebration with children, grandchildren, siblings & friends
TRANSPORTATION AND GROCERY GETTER
DRIVERS NEEDED

The Shepherd’s Center of Webster-Kirkwood is part of a national network of 57 centers. Since 1998, we have helped older adults to find enrichment, maintain independence and stay socially active. Over 300 volunteers help us fulfill our mission. We need you!

HOW WE SERVE OUR CLIENTS - TRANSPORTATION
• Free rides to medical appointments
• Ambulatory (no wheelchairs) older adults aged 55+
• Tuesdays, Wednesday, Thursdays
  • 9am to 3 pm
• Service area boundaries apply
• Round-trip service

HOW WE SERVE OUR CLIENTS - GROCERY GETTERS
• Grocery shopping and delivery (when volunteer drivers are shopping for themselves)
• Older adults aged 55+
• Service area boundaries apply

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE TEAM?
• Complete an application and online background check
• Attend one orientation meeting
• Once approved, sign-up for rides using our online RideScheduler system (or via telephone if you prefer)
• Minimum of one drive per month
• Social distancing, mask wearing and other St. Louis County Health Department required protocols discussed during training
• Contact Karen Zelle, Services Coordinator by email: kzelle@shepherdscenter-wk.org or phone 314-395-0988 to get started.
No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!

Sunday Worship @ 9:30 am on Zoom
see details on our website
www.kirkwooducc.org

KUCC STAFF

Betsy Happel, Pastor
(betsy@kirkwooducc.org)

Amelia Lloyd, Director of Music Ministry
(amelialloyd222@gmail.com)

Ron Bryant, Accompanist
(bigfaye1965@yahoo.com)

Gail Hintz Accompanist
(gaillee22@att.net)

Donna Bay, Administrative Assistant
(donna@kirkwooducc.org)

Jennifer Johnson, Nursery Care Giver

All articles for the next Newsletter are due to the church office at donna@kirkwooducc.org no later than November 22.