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 – January 2021

“Early in the morning, well before sunrise, Jesus rose and went to a deserted place where he could be alone in prayer.”
Mark 1:35 (Common English Bible)

In the gospel of Mark, which tells the Jesus story in lickety-split fashion, it doesn’t take long for Jesus to become overwhelmed with the healing tasks that are being presented to him. Before the first chapter even ends, Jesus is looking for a little “alone time” away from the others. To make this happen, he must rise well before the crack of dawn and sneak off to a deserted place for prayer. Can you relate?

That need for prayerful time, alone time, is not contextual - it’s a human thing, a reflection of how humanity is created by God in God's image. Some of you are currently responsible for healing in overarching and tangible ways. We lift you in awe and prayer, trying to imagine the depth and breadth of overwhelming-ness you face each day. Others of us have more contained responsibilities for healing, either through assisting another, or taking care of ourselves. In the midst of that we are surrounded by stories of others in need, or dying; and we’re all still dealing with the pervasive stress about our democracy and how we'll move forward as a nation. It's all overwhelming. It all is. Let’s name it and say it out loud. These are difficult times.

During these past couple of weeks, I’ve heard four of our members share that they’d recently visited KUCC’s church sanctuary, just to sit, think, pray or do nothing but “be” in the space they miss so much. Each of them has noted how much being in the sanctuary meant to them, both spiritually and emotionally.

It dawned on me that I have not encouraged this enough - or at all! - during these past several months. We may not be able to gather in our sanctuary collectively for months to come (I’m sorry - that is the reality...), but we ARE able to use this beautiful space as Jesus did - to get away for some alone time, to pray, think or just “be” in the presence of the Holy.
A Word from the Pastor – Continued

So...I'm encouraging you to take advantage of this space. The sanctuary temperature is set at 60 degrees, and honestly, it's pretty comfortable in there at that temperature. What we ask is that you wear a mask while in the building, and wipe down with a sanitizing wipe any surfaces you’ve touched while visiting. As soon as you walk into the sanctuary, the wipes and hand sanitizer are on a table to your left. If you really want to be like Jesus and visit before the crack of dawn, there is a light switch on the wall to your left, as soon as you walk into the sanctuary.

What you'll need to make this happen is the code to the building, which you enter onto the keypad to the left of our entrances. Because this note will be published electronically, I can't share that code with you here. BUT, all you have to do is send me a note at bfhappel@gmail.com, or text me at (314) 882-4629, and I'll give you the code. Please identify yourself when you text.

I hope and pray you will take advantage of the gift of this space. If you do, you will leave within it a piece of your heart and soul, which will be received and embraced by all who visit after you. We are better together. And that doesn’t mean just physically.

God’s peace, Betsy
Worship at Kirkwood United Church of Christ
“Making Lemonade”
January 10 - February 14

This past year has been one for the ages: epoch experiences that few of us have encountered before, bringing forth uncertainty, anxiety, suffering, loneliness.
In the midst of it, we’ve learned profound holy lessons about ourselves, others, our earth and our God.
Unbeknownst to us, we’re being transformed spiritually.
We’re finding blessings in the simplest moments of life.
We’re learning to adapt, to innovate and be resourceful.
We’re making lemonade out of pandemic lemons, and the Holy Spirit is guiding us each step of the way.

All worship services will be held on Zoom at 9:30 am.

Sunday Jan 10  For the beauty of the earth
           Leviticus 25:1-7
           with holy communion

Sunday Jan 17  Pulling on the thread of justice
           Amos 5:24 and Psalm 85:8-13
           Jerri Davenport, guest preacher

Sunday Jan 24  Resourcefulness and creativity: nothing is impossible
           Mark 6:30-44

Sunday Jan 31  A fuller picture of God
           Philippians 2:1-13

Sunday Feb 7   Rituals of release
           Luke 23:50-56
           with holy communion

Sunday Feb 14  The power of kindness
           1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Kirkwood United Church of Christ

All Church Officers, Ministry Teams, Councils and Committees for 2021
Election and Appointment

**Church Council**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Blaser</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Amsler</td>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dawn Volmert</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sue Laughlin</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>(appointed by Council)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr. Lev Reynolds</td>
<td>Denominational Liaison</td>
<td>2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Lucas</td>
<td>Worship and Music</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marie Andel</td>
<td>Nurture and Education</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Fine</td>
<td>Mission and Outreach</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ken Heuermann</td>
<td>Buildings and Grounds</td>
<td>2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barb Harris</td>
<td>Stewardship and Finance</td>
<td>2021</td>
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**Ministry Team Coordinators**

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<tr>
<th>Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Worship and Music</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Nurture and Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judy Kamper</td>
<td>Mission and Outreach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carrie Mershon</td>
<td>Stewardship and Finance</td>
<td>2022</td>
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**Financial Secretaries**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vicki Short</td>
<td>Financial Secretary</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rose Brockhouse</td>
<td>Assistant Financial Secretary*</td>
<td>2021</td>
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**Endowment Council**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Enderling</td>
<td>2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Losciale</td>
<td>2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clint Bauer</td>
<td>2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellen Smith</td>
<td>2023</td>
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**Personnel Committee**

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<tr>
<th>Person</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Blaser, Chair**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kari Adams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beth Heuermann</td>
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<td>Gerry Proctor</td>
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**Nominating Committee**

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<th>Person</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Amsler, Chair**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Bradley</td>
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<td>Sharon Danyluck</td>
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* Positions are appointed for one year
** Chair by Bylaw provision
Adult Education at Kirkwood United Church of Christ

What’s to be done about Climate Change
January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

These presentations will focus on the ways in which humans can cope with and reverse some of the adverse consequences of 150 years of adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. We are at a turning point, with over 60% of the population understanding that climate change is real and needs to be dealt with. The ways in which this can be done are described and rated in a book called *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*, edited by Paul Hawken. Some of the ways require governmental action, but others are possible for individuals to implement. Most of the solutions suggested will, in addition, create security, improve health, save money, facilitate mobility, eliminate hunger, prevent pollution, restore soil, clean rivers, and more. There is no single solution to this complex problem. As Bill Nye says, “We must do everything all at once.” This course will be via Zoom and on the 5 Sundays in January. Our instructor will be Marlene Katz.

(Sound familiar? This series was started in March 2020 with the first session only; the rest were cancelled due to the pandemic. The first session will be repeated on January 3 as a refresher since 10 months will have elapsed since Marlene was last with us.)

Social Justice & Mental Health
February 7 & 14

In response to the 1999 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that prohibits states from forcing people with mental health disabilities to live in state mental institutions when they are capable of living in community settings, state governments turned to using jails and prisons instead. Although this trend continues today, there is very little evidence that prisoners with mental disabilities receive necessary treatment and services while incarcerated. – Prison Legal News (2012)

Public mental health is as much about politics and ideology as medicine and science. A world in which the wealth of a few is privileged over the welfare of the majority and where social justice and equity, both within and between nations, are not considered pre-eminent values to promote healthy populations, is one in which mental health problems will inevitably become more common. Public mental health must not only equip people and communities to better cope with the stressors created by a dysfunctional world, but also target the very drivers of this dysfunction. – World Psychiatry (2015)
Social Justice & Mental Health (continued)  
February 7 & 14

In the face of rising suicides and opioid deaths, mental health and substance use treatment is more urgently needed than ever. In 2016, Missouri lost 1,133 people to suicide. At 1,317 deaths, lethal drug overdoses were at an all-time high. Combined, there were over two and a half (259%) more suicides and overdose deaths than traffic fatalities. Professional help will save and restore lives. Yet even people with health insurance are hard pressed to access mental health and addiction treatment when they need it. – Missouri Federation of Behavioral Health Advocates. (2016)

These are a few articles that have been published on social justice & mental health. Mental health is a wide-spread epidemic formerly treated as anyone whose features and or body parts were not functioning as a mobile person. This silent killer is one of the most dangerous threats to our society, when not treated. My description of it is a sticky ball bouncing down a hill, catching whatever trash that attaches to it, piling on more and more debris until the weight of it sends it plummeting out of control and to a halt. There has been a number of stories in the media lately of the mentally disabled being shot down in their homes after a loved one calls for help to control the family member. My attempt is to bring some information to the Adult Education, because it has been a disability that has personally affected my family and I believe it is worth addressing as a whole in this country. Student pastor Joyce Haynes-McCowan will lead classes on February 7 & 14 on this subject that affects us all.

Civil Rights: Then & Now  
February 21 & 28

The American Reconstruction period generated a Civil Rights bill out of Congress that gradually eroded and vanished. Though there is a Civil Rights bill in force today, it has been said, “those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it.” – George Santayana. I will introduce to the Adult Education panel a look into this time period and how important it is today as it was in yesteryears. Student pastor Joyce Haynes-McCowan will lead these classes on February 21 & 28.
LOGOS 2021

LOGOS is built on the foundation of relationships. At KUCC, we believe that is it through relationships that we can best share the good news of Jesus! The pandemic has challenged us to find ways to stay connected. Join us in January, February and March, on the second and fourth Thursdays, as we take on the challenge of staying connected. We are hoping to see many more of YOU....

Each Thursday we’ll gather at 6:30PM via Zoom for Recreation, Bible Study and Worship Arts. We’re hoping some of YOU might be willing to lead us in games and fun (We can provide the activities, we’d love to give YOU the chance to lead!). For Bible Study, we plan to use the Breakout Rooms feature and have two rooms where we dive into the Bible with friends close to YOU in age. Finally, we’ll regather for Worship with Miss Amelia joining us occasionally for Music. Our good byes will be around 7:15 PM, sort of like LOGOS in high speed!

January 14: PAJAMA PARTY
Wear your pajamas! Supplies to have ready by 6:30: two dice, a small amount of (hand) lotion on a paper plate, cotton balls or cut out dimed circles of construction paper, about 5 for each person in your family. (Invite your family to LOGOS with us, especially Recreation!)

January 28: MYSTERY NIGHT
Supplies: small or medium bowl half filled with water.

We’re counting on YOU! We miss YOU! Plan to join us on January 14th at 6:30. Watch for reminder and Zoom link several days ahead.

KUCC Bookstore

We are not able to hold book sales during the pandemic, but you are welcome to shop at the KUCC bookstore. We have a wide variety of books, DVDs and CDs available. There are signs throughout the store with all of the prices listed and the contribution jar is located on the desk. Stop by and browse at your convenience.

We very much appreciate donations of gently used books, DVDs and CDs. Please do not donate: VHS tapes, cassette tapes, vinyl records or magazines.

Thank you for supporting our bookstore.
Join us for Soul Collage on Wednesday, January 27 at 7 pm

Sometimes the most interesting insights about life and soul can materialize in the simplest and most unexpected ways.

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. During these particularly stressful times, soul collage provides a unique opportunity to reflect and express your inner self in a creative way.

Betsy will lead the collage-making on Zoom on Wednesday, January 27 at 7 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, January 22 and Tuesday, January 26 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. If you aren’t able to make a trip to the church, let Betsy know and a packet will be delivered to you!

Questions? Contact Betsy at bfhappel@gmail.com.

* Soul Collage is a copyrighted art method
Happy Holidays,
I am just about wrapping up our Christmas giveaway 2020. We have served 85 families, with 243 kids. How awesome is that? I have not cleared my brain enough to complete my end of the year report. But I had to let you all know how wonderful it is to be able to serve that many of God’s children that are in need. My partnership with you all and blessings from God has made this all possible. Corona virus could not stop what God has given us to do…. Merry Christmas, and happy holidays to you all.

Thanks and blessings,
Janis Hutchinson
Coordinator - God’s Helping Hand
Thank you, KUCC!

Your generosity at Christmas and throughout the year never ceases to amaze!

Have a blessed New Year!
January Update on the Hernandez Family

The Hernandez family continues to live in a hostel in Tapachula, Mexico. They have been unable to find work there and hope to be able to travel to Tijuana where Jose has some job possibilities. They are now working with an individual from the Coalition for Humane Immigration to procure legal Mexican immigration papers. Nancy indicated this process would take 4-5 months. These papers would allow them to travel legally to Tijuana, where Jose believes he can find work. Nancy also has a sister living in Tijuana.

Judy Kamper continues to be in contact with the Hernandez family. Members and friends of KUCC have contributed funds that have been wired to the family in Mexico. This has provided them with food and some clothing for their growing boys. If you are interested in donating, you can do so by writing a check to KUCC and indicate it is for the Hernandez family or donate on-line and let Carol Bender know that your donation is for the family.

Judy receives almost daily messages from Nancy expressing her appreciation for the funds that they have received, and that God has put KUCC in their path so they can continue to have food. They send “Benedicion a la iglesia!”
**KUCC’s Relationship to the Hernandez family** – For those of you not familiar with the Hernandez family – here is their story. Nancy, her husband Jose, and sons Anderson (now 11) and Jefferson (age 6) traveled with a caravan from Honduras to Tijuana. Their goal was to be granted asylum in the United States, due to the extreme poverty and dangerous conditions in Honduras. KUCC was expecting to sponsor this family during the journey to seek asylum in the U.S. Judy Kamper was serving as their official sponsor. They waited for months to be granted permission to legally enter the U.S. On March 8, they were granted permission to enter because they had a sponsor. Attorneys from the National Lawyers Guild of the San Francisco Bay area filed papers requesting their Parole (release from detention). The hope was that the next step was a call from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to say they had been released and we should make plans for them to travel to Kirkwood. That would not prove to be the case.

While in detention, immigrants are not permitted any contact with people outside of the detention center. After two weeks organizations in San Francisco and Tijuana began to try to locate them. They were located on April 1 in a Residential Center near San Antonio TX. On April 13, Judy received a phone call from Nancy saying they had been deported to Honduras. During their six weeks stay in the custody of Border Patrol, they were moved four times – sometimes to detention centers, sometimes to local jails that are paid by Customs and Border Patrol to house the detainees. They never knew where or when they would be relocated. Their final destination was San Pedro Sula, Honduras. They arrived with no money and only the clothes they were wearing. They were told to buy bus tickets home. They managed to get to Nancy’s sister’s home. They have since traveled to Tapachula Mexico.
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!**

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**KIRK CARE 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!

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**JOIN US FOR WORSHIP**

Sunday Worship @ 9:30 am on Zoom see details on our website [www.kirkwooducc.org](http://www.kirkwooducc.org)

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

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**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](http://www.kirkwooducc.org/mission-action)
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)

Joyce Haynes McCowan, Student Pastor
(jhaynesmccowan@eden.edu)

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)

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