

KENT

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE

An Open and Affirming, Accessible to All Congregation

A Message from Our Pastor, the Rev. Amy Gopp



Beloved of God,

Grace and peace to you all in the name of Jesus Christ! I miss you all so very much. If you had asked me a year ago if I thought I would be preaching to a camera instead of a sanctuary with all of you there, I would have never believed it. I do see all of your faces in my mind's eye as I lead worship in an empty room or outside. But it is, of course, not at all the same. So please know that you are with me, your spirits and stories accompany me just as I hope you feel my deep love and affection for you.

Even though we find ourselves experiencing a summer like no other, we have so much to celebrate! There have been milestone wedding anniversaries and birthdays. We have memorialized loved ones in creative and visual ways we never thought possible before, celebrating the lives of those who impacted ours. We rejoice in the marriage of Maddie Otterson and Brandon Ciriello! And we rejoice in the joining together of Kelley Gifford and Joy Loper as they exchange their sacred vows in our back parking lot via an FM transmitter. Their dog, Maggie, is the ring bearer. Guests will be in their cars tuning into the service on the radio; the receiving line a parade of vehicles wishing the happy couple well. We look forward to confirming our current class of confirmands this fall just as we begin a new confirmation class for the upcoming church year. While we may not be able to meet in person, this does not stop our learning and growing together as a community of faith. Last, I know you will all join me in honoring Kim Nagy on her official ordination at the end of this month. Although the ceremony will be on Zoom, I invite us all to “lay our hands” on Kim by sending her our love, pride and support as she publicly professes a lifetime call and commitment to the Christian ministry.

As we continue to adapt to the times and face challenges, we have much for which to be grateful. Our creativity and resourcefulness have been called upon, and I am thankful for all the ways we continue to minister to those in need and to study, fellowship and worship in new ways. None of us know what the future holds. I invite us all to be ever-open and receptive to the movement of the Spirit in our midst as we will undoubtedly be called upon to further adapt to new ways of Being the Church in this Kairos moment. Through it all, know that I am here, and that God never leaves us, for “the steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness!” Blessings to you all!

Moderator's Message – Jaime Baughman

Greetings Friends!

I hope you are able to enjoy the warmth and sunshine of these summer days!

As you are hopefully aware, we instituted "Phase 1" of our reopening plan in June. As a part of that plan, Council voted to maintain virtual worship services through Labor Day weekend. Phase 1 also allows for small-group gatherings (10 or fewer people) for funerals/memorial services and weddings and for outside gatherings on our church property as long as social distancing is practiced and the building is not accessed.

Our COVID-19 response team had their first meeting as a group in July and are currently working on suggestions on how we can proceed after Labor Day. They will bring their recommendations to Council at a meeting on August 18. We will endeavor to communicate that information to you as soon as possible after the meeting.



I'm sure you will agree the recent news regarding the pandemic has not been encouraging. We need to proceed cautiously for the sake of the physical well-being of our congregation, staff and community. Fortunately, we know that with God's help, we will continue to "Be the Church" regardless of where and how we are gathering. God Bless!

Hungerford Tapestry Update

Just in case you ever wondered what it looked like behind the tapestry that hangs behind our cross, here's a photo! The tapestry was removed for cleaning and repair in June. We will keep you posted about its progress!

Bicentennial Year in Review

Thanks to all our founders who participated in our June 13 Founders' Day worship service! It has been a year for the history books, in more ways than we can count! Click [here](#) for our "Bicentennial Year in Review" to look back on our festive and memorable celebration.

Time Capsule Project Begins – Jaime Baughman, Bicentennial Chairperson

We are living in challenging, changing and interesting times, and it comes on the heels of our 200th birthday celebration. Thus, as a final "bicentennial" project, we will be creating a time capsule of this year's events for our future congregation. Everyone is invited to participate.

Over the next few months, think about what you would want to have in a time capsule. A newspaper article about COVID-19? A photo of the "Black Lives Matter" sign in your front yard

or of our UYF members participating in a protest in downtown Kent? A mask? When we come back together, we will collect these mementos and bury a time capsule.

I'm extremely excited about this project and I hope you will be too. This is certainly a project for the ages!

Faith Formation News – Kim Nagy

This summer's faith formation hasn't been "normal." As my Facebook memories remind me of impactful summer youth mission trips, weeks of faith-filled Vacation Bible School programs, and wider United Church of Christ youth events, I have come to realize that this summer has been just as busy, but it's just been a different kind of busy. Those summer activities always reminded me in the best way that flexibility is of the highest value in ministry, as plans can change at a moment's notice...

...like the summer we took our youth to Chicago for a mission trip and arrived late at night only to find out the church where we were staying had forgotten to send someone to open the doors for us. After spending an hour and a half trying to get a hold of someone, we stayed overnight in a hotel in a nearby suburb. It rained all night, and I discovered in the morning I had left my car windows down. We finally got a hold of the pastor and stayed at the church that week, where our sleeping quarters flooded after several nights of unprecedented rains.

...or like the mission trip to Philadelphia where we returned to the camp where we were staying to a staff member eager to meet us at the door to tell us e coli had been discovered in the drinking water system where we'd been staying all week.

...or the Vacation Bible School where we had a child choke during snack time and thankfully had a capable volunteer jump into immediate action to give the Heimlich maneuver.

I certainly never expected to help minister a congregation through a global pandemic, but we have been navigating it beautifully, in my opinion. This summer, we've committed to learning about Black life in America and unraveling the systems of oppression that have shaken us all to our core. Our kids have been learning how to embody the qualities of compassion at Compassion Camp, which plays such a huge role in being anti-racist. We've been watching documentaries and videos, reading books, talking to each other, and learning how to equip ourselves with the words needed to have courageous conversations.

I'm amazed, Kent UCC. You have taken a summer that could have been cancelled plan after cancelled plan, and you've been flexible, willingly committing to learning, reading, and meeting on Zoom to engage your faith formation in ways that are changing the world. *Your flexibility has been my joy.* I look forward to where we will go from here--through the pandemic and beyond.

In this together,
Kim Nagy

Confirmation Will Begin!

Our 2020-2021 Confirmation year is about to begin! If you have a student who will be in 8th-12th grade and wishes to participate in this year’s program, please email Kim Nagy and plan to attend the informational parent/student meeting on **Sunday, August 16** at **12:30** p.m. via Zoom.

Blessing of the Backpacks and Devices: Pictures Needed by August 12!

As we look forward to the beginning of a new school year, we know that it will potentially look very different than it ever has before. We will bless our students and teachers during worship on August 16 by blessing backpacks and devices. Please email Kim Nagy (knagy@kentucc.org) a picture of your backpack, briefcase, teacher bag, laptop, tablet, or whatever will get the most use this school year by August 12. She’ll compile the pictures into a collage for our blessing. Thank you!

Racial Diversity: Children’s Book Suggestions

We’ve had various opportunities for adults to learn more about racial justice issues. One issue we’ve discussed is the need for children to read books by African American authors and books that feature Black children. Thanks to Sue Otterson for responding to this need by compiling a great list of books for children and youth.

<i>Children's Books</i>
Black, White, Just Right! by Marguerite W. Davol
Let the Children March by Monica Clark-Robinson
Layla's Happiness by Maria Hadessa Ekere Tallie
Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut by Derrick Barnes
Whoosh!: Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions by Chris Barton
Thank You, Omu! by Oge Mora
Going Down Home with Daddy by Kelly Starling Lyons
I Am Loved: A Poetry Collection by Nikki Giovanni
Hair Love by Matthew A. Cherry
Chocolate Me! by Taye Diggs
Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Boy by Tony Medina
The Undefeated by Kwame Alexander
<i>Middle Reader Books</i>
The Crossover by Kwame Alexander
Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson
As Brave as You by Jason Reynolds
New Kid by Jerry Craft
Genesis Begins Again by Alicia D. Williams

Social Justice and Advocacy Ministry – Black Lives Matter Signs

Thank you to all who purchased one of our Black Lives Matter yard signs! We're seeing them all over town in the yards of church members and other community residents. They make such a positive statement! If you have a sign in your yard, please take a picture and send it to Leah Davis (ldavis@kentucc.org) for use in a future worship service.

The proceeds beyond the cost of the signs went to the Social Justice and Advocacy Ministry for programming and donations to social justice causes. We recently made a donation to Hartville Migrant Ministry toward purchasing school supplies. You can help with this cause, too; see the following article for details.

Hartville Migrant Ministry Needs Our Help with School Supplies!



One of Hartville Migrant Ministry's most pressing needs involves the precious students in the community. This year, the ministry is working to provide back-to-school supplies for over 70 students. They've typically been able to provide the supplies through grants, but since they did not receive those grants this year, they're asking for our help.

School supply lists are very detailed and very specific. Because of that, they've broken down their students' needs by grade and school. Would you consider sponsoring-a-student, or even sponsoring-a-grade level (3 to 10 students per grade level) and committing to providing the desperately needed school supplies **by August 5**?

You can sign up to help us Hartville Migrant Ministry meet this need for their migrant students here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/805094ca9a62aa7fb6-10th1>

If buying the specific supplies may not be feasible, donations of \$25 Walmart gift cards to use towards supplies, backpacks, and gym shoes would also be an incredible blessing.

School supplies can be dropped off at Hartville Migrant Ministry, 3980 Swamp Street, Hartville, OH 44632. Gift cards or checks can be mailed to P.O. Box 682, Hartville, OH 44632. Please earmark any checks for school supplies.

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Maurer, Volunteer Coordinator, at (330) 877-2983. Thank you!

Rummage Sale Cancelled – Glenn Hanniford

After reviewing the prospect of being able to have a safe and manageable rummage sale this September with the COVID-19 virus still around, the Rummage Sale Committee decided we should not pursue a sale this year. While we were disappointed, this the right thing to do. The decision is in line with the church's policy of not using the church building through Labor Day and possibly beyond, the Association's recommendations about using the church for group meetings, and the State of Ohio's rules about large gathering. We have tentatively set September 17 and 18, 2021 as sale dates for next year. Hopefully COVID-19 will be a memory!

If you have been saving donations for the rummage sale, thank you. If you are willing to store items until next year please do so; otherwise you might want to donate your items to an appropriate local agency for repurposing.

Stewardship News - Karen Carmany

The “Generosity and Stewardship Festival” that was originally scheduled to take place at Kent UCC has been moved online and is set for August 22. “Can Money be Sacred?” will feature dynamic keynote speaker Rev. Michael Piazza. Treasurers, Finance and Stewardship ministries, pastors, lay leaders, all are invited to participate.

Join to discuss and hear from an expert:

- Stewardship is about cultivating generosity and giving
- Money can be sacred, a gift to change and heal the world
- Money is not about the budget but about ministry and mission
- Giving can be exciting as we continue to discover new ways to be generous

Learn more on the flyer that follows this article and about Michael Piazza at:

<https://www.agilechurch.com/> Register at Living Water Association 330-904-2220ext.100 OR online at livingwaterone.org. Registration information can also be found in the Streams of Connection newsletter.

GENEROSITY AND STEWARDSHIP FESTIVAL

CAN MONEY BE SACRED?

WITH REV. MICHAEL S. PIAZZA

Rescheduled :
August 22, 2020 • Online
9 am - 1 pm
Registrants will receive a zoom link closer to the date.

Rev Michael Piazza is a spiritual visionary, author, pastor and social justice advocate. A native of Georgia Michael holds a BA in history and psychology from Valdosta State University, an MDiv from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta and a doctorate from Hartford Seminary, where he is an adjunct professor teaching church growth. He is the author of numerous books including *Liberating Word* and *Vital Vintage Church: How Traditional Congregations Thrive*.

Ministers and congregational leaders, come and learn how to create a culture of generosity, inspired by how the church is making a difference in the world. Learn how to build a budget that reflects your ministry, how to make giving easy and convenient, and shape a community that sees money as a gift that can heal and change the world.

Hospitality and Membership Update – Eileen West and Gayle Wall

Hello from Hospitality and Membership! OH BABY! Please consider playing our fun (and funny) baby picture game. Send in a baby or youth picture of yourself to Gayle Wall at: 330-221-8001 (text) or Linnea Stafford at linnea_carlson@yahoo.com (email attachment). This is simple—find an old photo album, take a picture with your cell phone of the cutest picture of yourself you can find, and send it in! We are compiling them and will send them out for your viewing and guessing pleasure. I can tell you that the ones I have received are so adorable. One church member even revealed that they won a cute baby contest many years ago from their photo! This is our way of keeping us connected during these tough times. Also in the works from Hospitality and Membership are small group game nights that can be held virtually or outdoors with the appropriate social distancing. Any ideas you have for our committee to help keep us together and in touch during this time of COVID, please contact Gayle Wall or Eileen West. Hope you are all well!

Community Meal Update – Gayle Wall

We have been continuing to hold our 3rd Sunday meal every month since COVID began in March 2020. We are still packaging “To Go” style meals and giving them to community members outdoors, as they walk up or drive through. Sadly, our numbers have gone down since the virus started. We are passing out between 35 and 50 meals currently. We have advertised at Kent Social Services and Center of Hope in Ravenna to make sure people know we are still serving our meal. Any extra meals we have are donated to Kent Social Services, and we are taking meals to church members who are finding it challenging to get out during this pandemic. If you would like a 3rd Sunday Meal or know of a church member who could use a visit/meal, please contact Gayle Wall 330-221-8001 and we will make sure to get one delivered. We have a small crew who works to assemble and pass out the meals, gloved and masked! Shout out to the Ray, Silver, and Werstler families for facilitating this process! Thanks to all of the people who have donated side dishes and desserts as well since March! UYF and J-Walkers are supporting the meal in July (donating desserts / sides and providing a small work crew) and will be in the near future, as we continue this outreach ministry during COVID 19 times.

Stephen Ministry – Sue Otterson



Your Stephen Minister team is here to help you! Each of us has been trained to care for those in need in a variety of situations, and we are here to lend an ear to what concerns you may have. I invite you to reach out to me via email sueotterson@gmail.com, or phone: 234-417-2335. If you would like to be trained to be a Stephen Minister, or would like more information, reach out as well.

PFLAG August Meeting - Zoom

Please save the date for Tuesday, August 4 at 6 p.m. PFLAG Kent will be holding their August meeting virtually through Zoom. Brian Bond, Executive Director of PFLAG National will be speaking about the “Intersectionality of Racism and LGBTQ+”. Anyone wanting to attend should contact Michael Spayd at euchre1@roadrunner.com for login information. Any questions about PFLAG can be forwarded to Michael Spayd or Pastor Amy.

Adult Small Groups

We have several small groups that are a great way to build meaningful relationships and have fun! Given the virus outbreak, our groups generally will not meet in person, although some are meeting via Zoom. Look for future meetings for our women's fellowship groups, men's breakfasts, Men Baking Bread, book group, Bagels and Books, Mahjong, yoga, and more. We will all be so glad when it's safe to resume our gatherings!

Prayer Shawls – Sandy Roeger

Do you like to knit or crochet? Are you interested in creating prayer shawls? Prayer shawls are a gift of love given to someone who is going through change in their lives. Maybe an illness or a death in the family. Possibly a new job or a new baby. A prayer shawl can help a person's attitude about what they are facing and it can do the same for you as you create them.

To continue our prayer shawl ministry at the church, I would like to invite folks to join me to knit or crochet. When we are able to meet again, we can gather at the church once a month, put on a pot of coffee or tea and have fun together knitting or crocheting. Of course, you would keep working at home too. For right now you can start at home. It will keep you from being so bored while we are stuck in the house. If you are interested, please contact me and I can give you the instructions. When we get to meet, we can teach others to knit or crochet too.

Contact Sandy Roeger at 330-688-2331 or rroeger@neo.rr.com

p.s. They don't have to be perfect, only made with love. Remember nothing is perfect but God.

Treasurer's Report - Kay Hansford as of July 22, 2020

July income--\$29,672.75* YTD income--\$274,563.47**

July expenses--\$16,189.99 YTD expenses--\$222,756.50

July balance-- \$13,482.76 YTD balance \$51,806.97

**\$20,000 single pledge donation **Includes \$59,100 from PPP loan*

August Birthdays

01 Teddie Joeright, Kathryn Mahon 03 Linnea Stafford 05 Glenn Hanniford 06 Julie Wallace
07 Elizabeth Davey 08 Julie Dietz, Alan Frank 09 Ella Hassler, Emily Poulson 11 Courtney
Cates 12 Bill Peck 13 Ben Dunlap, Jim Dunlap 14 Scott Mackall 16 Jason Reeves 17 William
Blair 18 Jill Hutchison, Jeff Willis 19 Grace Brinker, Nick Dunlap, David Hassler, Leslie Madden
22 Lauren Willis 24 Peder Otterson 25 Arthur Wells 27 Sally Saltzman. 28 David Smith 29
Rick Buckley, Brenda Schneider 30 Tieeasha Foreman 31 Curt Vaught

Sundays in August

August 2: Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon by Pastor Amy

10:00 Worship on Facebook and YouTube

August 9: Tenth Sunday After Pentecost

Sermon by Minister of Faith Formation, Kim Nagy

10:00 Worship on Facebook and YouTube

August 16: Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon by Pastor Amy

10:00 Worship on Facebook and YouTube

August 23: HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY!

Sermon by Pastor Amy

10:00 Worship on Facebook and YouTube

August 30: Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon by Pastor Amy

10:00 Worship on Facebook and YouTube

How to Reach Us

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Office Hours: Staff are primarily working from home during Covid-19 crisis. Please note summer office hours are from 9am – 2pm.

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The Messenger is published monthly and circulated online and in print. Articles and other items for publication in this newsletter should be submitted to the church Administrative Assistant by e-mail to: LDavis@kentucc.org. The deadline for the September issue is Friday, August 21 at noon.

OUR MISSION:

Enlivened by the grace of Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, Kent United Church of Christ does justice, embraces faithful love, and walks humbly with our God to serve and transform lives, our community and the world. (Micah 6:8)