

## **Council Report for May 2021**

### **Rev. Kim Nagy, Minister of Faith Formation**

#### **Christian Education**

Weekly videos and emails continue to be made available for families with young children. As I plan to go on parental leave, these videos will transition to Snapchat videos in worship services and, ultimately, back to Snapchat in-person and Sunday school classes when safe, in-person worship resumes. I have purchased Illustrated Ministry materials that follow the lectionary that will drive topics for this summer's videos and emails. Thank you so much to Sue Hetrick and Eileen West who provided videos for the children's church videos this year. I am hopeful that our families found them helpful as they led their own faith formation activities at home.

Rhuna Wall coordinated a few children to share what they love about their moms for the May 9 service. Many thanks to Rhuna as well for sharing music videos for children's church videos this year. Rhuna is graduating from Kent State with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing this summer and moving to Portsmouth, Ohio. She will be leaving her position with us as the Children's Director of Worship and the Arts at the end of May. Consequently, the Personnel Committee has been made aware that conversation needs to begin about the future of this position.

I sent emails to several families in our congregation asking if they'd feel comfortable sending their children to an outdoor-only, COVID-safe Vacation Bible School this summer, and all of them said, "YES!" Therefore, I am working with Emily Roeger to plan something that will be meaningful for our families this summer. Mark your calendars for July 5-8. Emily will fill in for me in case baby Nagy decides to make an early appearance!

#### **J-Walkers (Middle School)**

Our J-Walkers met on May 23 for their final gathering of the year. We invited incoming 6th graders to join us for games, a COVID grief activity, lunch, and the anointing of our 8th graders as they plan to move up to United Youth Force in the fall. Our group is still small but mighty, with a heavy emphasis on young men!

#### **Confirmation**

It has been an incredibly busy month as Pastor Amy and I prepare to confirm five new members into the life of Kent United Church of Christ on Sunday, May 30. Our confirmation class met for their last class on Sunday, May 2 to share their confirmation projects and ask any lingering questions they had. This was a particularly special group of young adults that I was thrilled to work with this year as they navigated what their

faith means to them. Pastor Amy baptized three at the river on May 23, and we held a Rite of Confirmation Zoom later that morning. The confirmation worship service will air Sunday, May 30 with a coffee hour following at 11:15 a.m. on Zoom! Since our confirmands weren't able to have a banquet or fellowship hour, we hope many members of our congregation will join in to congratulate them and welcome them into the flock!

### **United Youth Force**

United Youth Force has been winding down for the program year. Three youth gathered on May 2 to talk about Mental Health Month and plan our walk to support NAMI on May 23. They took May 9 off to spend time with the mother figures in their lives. Four youth helped pack and serve meals to the community on May 16. As I write this report, we are planning to walk downtown and back to the church on May 23 to raise awareness for mental health and the Portage County chapter of NAMI. On June 6, we will celebrate our UYF seniors in the back parking lot with a drive through celebration. We are also planning a weekend of local service to take the place of this year's mission trip. I am also in conversation with an organization called BorderLinks to arrange a trip to the United States-Mexico border for our 2022 mission trip.

### **Adult Education**

Two adult education classes finished this month: *Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Challenge to the Church* and *Re-Membering the Church: Conversations Around Mental Health and Addiction Recovery*. *Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Challenge to the Church* was a three-week series on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s principles and how we can adapt them as a majority-white congregation. Sunny Matthews led this class and considered options with us on how we can be more helpful in the movement toward anti-racism as people of faith.

*Remembering the Church* was a six-week class led by our Mental Health Ministry and WISE Team that helped us have informative and compassionate conversations around mental health that will drive the WISE Team's covenant as we become a WISE congregation.

Both classes were well-attended.

The anti-racism book group that has been meeting regularly for almost a year now will continue on as one of our church's small groups. They are reading *The New Jim Crow* next; that class will begin May 20 and end at the beginning of July. This class draws in members from the church and community.

Our regular adult education classes will take a break for the summer and begin again in the fall!

### **All Church/Worship**

I organized and led worship on Sunday, May 2 while Pastor Amy took a much-deserved vacation. The first Sunday in May is traditionally immigrant rights' Sunday in the United Church of Christ, and since immigration is a passion of mine, I wanted to take the opportunity to lift up the immigrants in our country (and in our own church community!). Pastor Amy also asked me to lead the pastoral prayer on May 9. We worked together to create the Confirmation Sunday worship service which will air on Sunday, May 30.

### **Wider Church**

I continue to meet monthly with my Community of Practice, which is a group of ministers in youth and faith formation that gather to share struggles and ideas. This has been a wonderful group especially during this pandemic year. This month I also had a Heartland Conference Faith Formation Network meeting.

### **Ecumenical/Interfaith**

I attended the United Christian Ministries board meeting on May 17; it was the last one of the school year.

We hosted Adam Zucker, filmmaker, for a discussion of his documentary, *American Muslim*, on Wednesday, May 19 at 7 p.m.

### **Parental Leave Updates**

#### **Potential dates (IF the baby comes on time :) -- July 18-September 11**

Our baby is due July 18, and I am planning to take 8 weeks of leave as outlined in my call agreement. That means I will spend the next few months organizing people to help take over aspects of my regular faith formation work during those weeks. Thank you for this time to adjust to life with a new baby!