

Council Report for June 2021

Rev. Kim Nagy, Minister of Faith Formation

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 weeks organizing people to help take over aspects of my regular faith formation work during that time. Thank you for this time to adjust to life with a new baby! Thank you also for the generous and thoughtful gifts you have given to us and the baby shower of meals and gift cards coming up on June 27! At this point, we feel the *most* unprepared for postpartum life, so we cannot tell you how much those meals mean to us. Your generosity is very, very appreciated.

Christian Education

I have continued to make weekly videos for children and families throughout the month of June. These will discontinue after June 27! Pastor Amy and I have spoken about the best way to include our (unvaccinated) children in outdoor, in-person worship. To minimize the number of people coming to the microphone each week, we will not hold Snapchat until we are back in the sanctuary. Instead, each week, there will be a children's worship bulletin and coloring/writing utensils available on the picnic table, so any child who would like to sit at the picnic table during worship may do so. I will staff the table up until my parental leave, and I will coordinate helpers to staff it during my leave.

In addition to monthly videos, I continue to send out weekly emails to parents that include a simple Sunday school lesson for the week. After June 27, the children's bulletin will simply be included in the adult bulletin emailed to the congregation, so parents can access the Sunday school lesson there.

Emily Roeger and I have been working on a *very simple*, outdoor-only Vacation Bible School for July 5-8 from 6-8:15 p.m. Jodi Stillisano from First Christian Church will help, too, and a few children from FCC will join us. I anticipate it being a small and intimate event. Each station will have its own canopy and space with which to work, and we will supply cleaning products for leaders to sanitize in between groups. I am so excited to see our children in person once again!

Diane Drewette will come back to be our nursery staff person in the fall. Corey Fowler and I are talking about the hiring of the Children's Director of Worship and the Arts for fall as well.

J-Walkers (Middle School)

Our J-Walkers are taking a break over the summer and will re-convene in September!

Confirmation

Many thanks to Pastor Amy, our mentors, and all of our Confirmation students and their families for making this year's Confirmation a joy! The service aired May 30, where

Pastor Amy baptized three youth, and we confirmed five. I hope you found the service meaningful and inspirational. These youth have such a passion for learning, and I am looking forward to where their faith journeys take them next! Over the summer, Pastor Amy will reach out to our Confirmation-aged youth and invite their families to an informational meeting regarding our 2021-2022 (!!!!!) Confirmation year. Any youth aged 8th grade-12th grade is welcome to join us for this meaningful exploration of faith.

United Youth Force

We celebrated our UYF seniors on Sunday, June 7 in the back parking lot. I admit I was disappointed that only three church families, Pastor Amy, and the seniors' parents drove through, but I am so thankful for the ones who did and made our youth feel celebrated and supported.

Our weekend of service was much more difficult than I anticipated! It is better, I think, for our youth to go away together on a mission trip or immersion experience and not have the distractions of work, road trips, and sports to take them away from our activities. We did have about 18 youth coming and going throughout the weekend as we cleaned up trash around Kent, shopped and packed boxes for the tent community living under Franklin Avenue bridge, and served the monthly community meal on Sunday. The youth are leading our final pre-recorded worship service on Sunday, June 27.

I am in conversation with an organization called BorderLinks to arrange a trip to the United States-Mexico border for our 2022 mission trip. We will begin fundraising for this trip in the fall.

Our UYF advisors, Kirk Gordon, Bill Arthur, Amy Rickelman, and Lynn and David Hassler, will take over some UYF responsibilities during my parental leave, including organizing youth volunteers for the community meal and the end-of-summer lock in.

Adult Education

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 began May 20 and end at the beginning of July. This class draws in members from the church and community. Jen Case organizes the details for the small group, but the group follows a discussion model called "The Circle Way," which allows everyone in the group to be a leader of the discussion during book studies.

Our regular adult education classes will take a break for the summer and begin again in the fall! I am looking forward to hosting in-person *and* virtual conversations around Rachel Held Evan's book, *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again*. I've heard many of our adults say they wished they knew the Bible better or what to do with some of the contradictory parts, so we will explore this!

All Church/Worship

As I mentioned above, Pastor Amy and I joined together to lead the Confirmation service on May 30, and UYF is leading worship on June 27. I also helped lead the Founder's Day worship service on June 13.

Wider Church

I had my first official board meeting as a member of the national board of the Association of United Church Educators, an organization that draws together UCC faith formation ministers and advocates from around the country. The Faith Formation team of the Heartland Conference also met this month to discuss next February's faith formation event. I missed my Community of Practice this month, as it fell in the middle of our UYF service week.

Ecumenical/Interfaith

I am so thankful that a few children from First Christian Church will join us for VBS this year! Jodi will also be taking a leadership role, helping with opening and closing activities.