

Council Report for January 2021

Kim Nagy, Minister of Faith Formation

Christian Education (Children)

The Advent and Christmas seasons may be over, but the excitement around our weekly children's church videos continues! During the month of January, I have been creating Mr. Roger's Neighborhood "spoof" videos for a series called, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" Each week, we have learned a good neighbor LOVES, CARES, SERVES, and IS A FRIEND. I've been sending weekly faith formation emails to families that correspond with the weekly videos and share some extra resources, too (i.e. a guide for talking to children about the Capitol insurrection on January 6).

I continue to update our Google classroom each week, though it seems very empty now that Advent has passed. I'm looking forward to the next season of Lent when it will be chock-full of resources once again. Speaking of Lent, I am planning children's church videos that will go along with the all-church theme. In addition, I am organizing some Lenten resources from Illustrated Ministry into a bound book for children and families to use throughout Lent to learn about the season and how they can make it meaningful.

Eileen West and Sue Hetrick continue to contribute regularly to children's church videos. Becky Dunlap has continued to design postcards I send the kids with monthly memory verses on them. Rhuna Wall will continue contributing worship and arts videos in February. We wouldn't have successful faith formation without these committed volunteers.

Finally, I met with Rhuna and Becky on Zoom to discuss the possibility of a virtual Holy Week pageant featuring our kids called, "The Upper Zoom." We are in the early stages of writing and preparing, but we are excited about this prospect.

J-Walkers

J-Walkers met virtually on January 17 and January 31. We usually have a game and a lesson, in addition to checking in.

Confirmation

Confirmation is moving right along. The class met January 10 to talk about the Bible and its origins. Students watched the Interfaith Youth Service from Temple Israel in Akron on January 15, something the synagogue usually hosts in-person each year. Confirmation students also attended the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 24 and debriefed with their mentors afterward.

United Youth Force

UYF members met January 10 to plan activities for winter and spring.

On January 24 they hosted a speaker on Zoom from United Against Human Trafficking for Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

Harold Hight will lead them in a Qi Gong class on January 31.

Five-six youth help each month at the community meal. They pack meals and distribute them.

Many of our youth (and their families) have had COVID-19 in the last few months. I've been keeping up with families on an individual basis to see if they need anything.

I am looking into mission trip opportunities for our youth this summer. DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection) has virtual opportunities to learn about racism and community organizing that I am hoping to turn into a hybrid trip that will engage us in some local mission work this summer. Families will be able to choose an option (virtual only or hybrid) that fits their comfort level.

Adult Education

During the month of January, a dozen adults participated in a Sunday morning adult education class that encouraged them to pick a star verse for the year and practice Lectio Divina. It has been a GREAT class!

I continue to participate in the antiracism book study on *How to be an Antiracist* led by Jen Case Thursday evenings. This study will wrap up January 29.

There are many exciting adult education opportunities coming up in the next few months, led by many members of our church in addition to Pastor Amy! I invite you to participate in one or more of these classes.

All Church/Worship

I helped lead Epiphany worship on January 3 with our youth and young adults.

Jackie Peck invited me to join in for the first gathering of the WISE team January 4. I am thrilled the team has asked several youth and young adults to help guide the church through this process.

In recent days I have been working on faith formation opportunities for Lent, including small groups, a devotional, kits to send to kids and their families, and at-home prayer stations. Stay tuned.

Wider Church

I will meet with my Community of Practice on January 28. I also met with the Faith Formation Working Group of the Heartland Conference as we prepare for our annual conference at the end of February. The planning team of the Great Lakes Association of United Church Educators also met to plan a virtual event in May around the book, *When Kids Ask Hard Questions*.

Ecumenical/Interfaith

Kent UCC was one of the few churches that participated in Temple Israel's Interfaith Youth Service in Akron. I hope to continue to engage our youth, and our church, in interfaith opportunities.

I attended the United Christian Ministries board meeting on January 25. I am working with the new Director of Advancement to secure a grant for UCM from the Living Water Association.

Thank You

Thank you so much for some extra time off around the holiday, the generous Christmas bonus you offered to me, and approving my amended call agreement. I appreciate it more than you know.