



THE CHURCH PROFILE

Kent United Church of Christ
1400 East Main Street, Kent, OH 44240
330-673-9534
www.kentucc.org

ABOUT THE CHURCH

1. How might a member or visitor describe your church?

Entering Kent UCC feels like a homecoming. The moment a person walks into our church, they are welcomed and immediately folded into our beloved church community much like the return of the Prodigal son. There is a sense that the church and community are waiting expectantly for your arrival as if it was assumed you were meant to be here and included. You are welcomed and loved for who you are, just as God created you. Our church grounds itself in a wellspring of deep spiritual care as we grapple with questions: how can we quiet down the outside world and seek, listen, and find? What does it mean to be a Christian today? From this deep spiritual foundation, we then act from a place of value and belonging as a child of God. This ontological grounding guides us as we work to make our faith come alive with motion and creativity. Our church is not a stagnant pond of Christian faith but an ever flowing river as we are seeking, responding, and acting in our community and world in ways to bring forth justice, care, and love of our neighbor.

2. What provision has been made to educate the congregation in this church's mission goals?

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

Kent UCC lives out its mission and vision through a variety of means, including worship, faith formation, care, fellowship, mission and outreach. We are an Open and Affirming (ONA), Accessible to All (A2A), W.I.S.E. (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged with persons living with mental health challenges and their families), and Creation Justice Congregation.

The church's Worship and Arts Ministry works in conjunction with the ministerial staff and music personnel to coordinate worship services and to provide complementary support for worship themes and church seasons.

In the area of faith formation, the church provides numerous opportunities for members to deepen their faith through classes, retreats, book studies, and other programs. Our youth participate in church school, vacation Bible School, and annual mission trips. Deacons and Stephen Ministry members provide care and support to members in need of assistance. Fun and Fellowship provide opportunities for members to gather and socialize. Outreach and Social Justice impact many lives locally and globally through a variety of donations and volunteer hours.

3. What joys, frustrations, key events, or celebrations illustrate what it's like to be a part of this church?

Beyond the traditional Advent and Lenten seasons, each with its own special programming, Kent UCC enjoys a variety of educational, social and entertaining events. The Social Justice, Creation Justice and Mental Health groups host educational sessions throughout the year. Fun and Fellowship coordinate social opportunities including an annual fall cookout, a summer picnic, and a special Founders Day recognition. Musical guests and special presentations by the Chancel Choir entertain and delight.



4. In what ways is the music program of the church affected by the community? In what ways does the program involve the community?

We have enjoyed a decades-long relationship with the Kent State University Glauser School of Music, conveniently located adjacent to our building. The music program involves the community by inviting local musicians, often Kent State staff, students, and alumni, to perform as part of worship service and performances.

The community attends music performances prepared and performed by the church's music program. As more community members attend, they may offer feedback on the types or performances they particularly enjoyed or ones that they wish to see more. Community members visiting KUCC during a worship service might be affected by the music offered during the service.

The community is also welcomed to attend special music events throughout the year, including the annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.



5. What opportunities and challenges does your congregation offer to a Music Director, Organist or Minister of Music?

The congregation of KUCC holds its music director and organist to high expectations that have been cultivated over many decades. These expectations present both opportunities and challenges for the music director. Church members are appreciative of high-quality and diverse music being presented during worship services and performances. The music director can select and prepare music offerings that appeal to this level of appreciation and inclusion without fear that the congregation won't appreciate its musical value or rightful place in worship. Due to this assumption of high-quality music and variety, the music director is challenged to plan, rehearse, and perform music that aligns with the congregation's musical desires.

ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Located in Portage County, Kent has a population of 28,000 and is the 54th largest city in Ohio. It spans more than 9 square miles and has a population density of 3,052 people per square mile. The average income in Kent is \$54,753 with a poverty rate of 22.3%. The downtown hosts many small businesses, restaurants, and bars.

It lies between the cities of Cleveland and Akron and is home to Kent State University, which has an enrollment of roughly 33,530 including over 25,000 on the main Kent campus, six percent of which are international students representing over 100 countries. A convenient large Esplanade extension provides easy walking access between the downtown area and Kent State University. The university provides a host of educational and cultural opportunities for its Kent residents to enjoy!

MEMBERSHIP

Current Church Membership: 389

Membership Five Years Ago: 359

Average Worship Attendance: 125

Christian Education enrollment: 68

Average CE attendance: between 10 and 20 for Church School; about 14 for youth groups.

Ages	Worship	Christian Education	Music Program
0-4	9	9	2
5-12	33	33	11
13-18	15	26	-
19-25	8		
26-40	24		
41-65	81		
Over 65	150		

Number of staff persons serving the church: 3 full time/2 part time

Staff Positions:

Senior Pastor: Rev. Amy C. Gopp

Associate Minister of Faith Formation: Rev. Emily Culp Ashby

Office Administrator: Leah Davis

There is also a part-time Custodian and several stipend staff (AV Staff, Student Singers, and Bell Ringers)

MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR CONGREGATION

Chancel Choir– Chancel Choir is a group of between 15 and 25 adult singers. There are four paid section leaders. The group rehearses on Thursday evenings starting in late August and continuing through late May. From September through May, they sing during worship three out of four Sundays a month and for Founders Day, usually the second or third Sunday in June. They also sing for a couple of special events over the course of the year.

Bell Choir– Bell Choir practices after worship on Sunday for approximately an hour to one and one half hours. There are 10 to 12 in the group, some of whom are stipend staff. The group plays in church once a month. The current director is intending to retire in June.

Chimes– The Children’s Chimes program has recently been divided into two groups: Beginning Chimes for ages four to third grade and Intermediate Chimes for those in fourth grade and above. The groups rehearse on Sunday mornings for several weeks prior to participating in worship. They are currently directed by a member of the Christian Education Ministry.

Liturgical Dance– The liturgical dance program strives to include a variety of ages and abilities in worship appropriate movement that supports the liturgy. It is usually presented four to five times a year and has included special processions, dramatic interpretations of scripture and dance. Rehearsals are scheduled at the convenience of the participants. Its director is a volunteer and member of the church.



MUSIC AND INSTRUMENTS

- The choral library is categorized in the [Kent UCC Choral Library Google Sheets spreadsheet](#). Volunteer librarians update it as new music is added.

ORGAN

History

- Builder: Holtkamp (Cleveland, OH)
 - [Specification](#)
- 2011 – Console updated by Schantz (Orville, OH)
- 1974 – Large addition and renovation of organ
- 1944 – Original instrument (including pipe work from 1872)

Possible Restoration and Updates

- In 2019 and 2020, several organ builders assessed the organ and offered several restoration and update quotes
- [See proposals and other documents HERE](#)
- Other printed documents are in the Director of Music office files.

PIANOS

1. Sanctuary – Boston Baby Grand (purchased in early 2010s)
2. Chapel – Boston Baby Grand (donated by the family of Walter and Barb Watson in 2017)
3. Choir Room – Yamaha grand Clavinova (Originally purchased for use in Chapel in early 2000s)
4. Choir Library/Director of Music Office – Upright
5. Children's Choir Room (downstairs) – Upright

BELLS/CHIMES

Malmark

4 Octaves, ring at 2.5 to 3 level

50+ years old, excellent condition. They have been maintained and refurbished.

Music is extensive.