



Overland Park Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ) ☩

7600 West 75th Street
Overland Park, KS 66204
913.677.4646

www.opccdoc.org • www.facebook.com/opccdoc • @opccdoc (Twitter)

Tension

Tension is everywhere. It keeps the roof above our head, the bridge underneath our cars, our guitars and pianos playing on key, our ecosystems balanced, and our bodies healthy. Tension is good! Tension can also be bad. I can imagine that you might think, “the tension of today’s society is not the same tension as those other things; it is bad, and hard.”

The way in which tension is created influences how it actually feels and whether it actually leads to engagement or shutting down, and so when we are facing particularly tense times, we need to look at how that tension was created. Can we lean into that tension and help it help us? Can we lean into the creation of that tension and guide it towards something more fruitful?

There’s lots of tension right now around “getting back to normal,” but as I said in my sermon on June 28, “when are we getting back to the way it was?” isn’t the faithful question. If we can reframe the situation to ask instead, “how is God moving with us in this new way of being church?” then it reframes the question and the tension. Suddenly it’s good tension, it’s exciting tension. How could this need to worship online change how we exist as Overland Park Christian? How could our beginnings of not even having a building remind us of what it means to be church within an entire community?

The weeks since the killing of George Floyd have seen a lot of tension with some of the most sustained protests in US history, swelling outrage at racial injustice, and a growing acknowledgment of the reality of systemic racism throughout society. We in the church may celebrate the promise of justice so rapidly pooling and beginning to roll down. Yet as a pastor of a majority white church, I also wonder what it means that this has happened at this particular time — when so many of our church buildings are closed.

Alan Sherouse, the senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Greensboro, North Carolina, posits that this has happened, in part, because the “safety” of our buildings is closed to us, and we are being forced to live out our faith in new and different ways. When asking, “why are so many white Christians suddenly standing up for racial justice?” he suggests in his article in the Christian Century that “it might help that our pews aren’t available to sit in and pray.” The closing of our buildings have left us unable to respond in ways we might traditionally respond — ways that historically have served to moderate tension and neutralize the moment.

Let’s reframe all of this tension.

We can’t currently worship in our building, so tension; what new and amazing ways of sharing God’s love can we engage in when we’re not depending on a building?

Systemic racism is being uncovered in ways we never imagined, antithetical to the Gospel that reminds us there is an image of God in each human being that walks this earth, so tension; how can this push to reform give us opportunity to reform our systems in divinely inspired ways? Can we use this tension to grow God’s love in the world, reforming how the church exists for all of God’s children?

(continued on next page)

When you're feeling stressed about the tension in our current events, remember that you can create good tension yourself, tension that moves us forward as individuals and as a church. Maybe it's reading a book about racial justice; maybe it's finally figuring out that tablet your grandkids got you so that you can watch worship online; maybe it's having a conversation—a genuine time of listening—with someone with whom you disagree politically. We all have different tension thresholds, and so maybe right now is not the time for you, but maybe it is. If you can harness the tension, remembering the goodness and light that came from the tension and chaos of creation, then we can all move forward, engaging God's word in new and life-giving ways. May it be so.

Jana



Yes, a slight play on words, we in fact found God's presence in the community that gathered at a movie theater! Overland Park Christian Church began by meeting in a movie theater, the Rio Theater in downtown Overland Park, in the summer of 1950. In 1975 our congregation "found God" in the movies by expanding the worship experience to include a drive-in worship at the Fox Theater (now demolished).

For the last four weeks, and continuing over the next three, we are exploring God at the Movies, looking at the theological themes present in a movie from each decade we've been sharing the Good News. We're not equating the movie to God, or even to the Gospel. Yet, we also know that God's big story of redemption and salvation is larger than just the Bible. The themes of salvation, reconciliation, forgiveness, welcome, the eternal pull of good and evil, and more are present in so many books, movies, and TV shows throughout time, because those Biblical themes are timeless. God's presence is limitless.

In addition to referencing these movies in our worship experiences, we invite you to follow along and watch them if you are able. Many are available through the library, or on many streaming services.

- July 5 – *The Lion King*
- July 12 – *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*
- July 19 – *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*

OPCC Worship Online Through July

On Monday, June 22nd, Governor Laura Kelly, along with officials with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, recommended that communities STAY IN PHASE 3 for at least two more weeks to mitigate the coronavirus that has unfortunately seen an increase in disease spread in recent days. Governor Kelly originally shared *Ad Astra: A Plan to Reopen Kansas* on April 30th, offering various phases of engagement and protocol to keep our community safe. Remaining in Phase 3 through *at least* July 6 limits gatherings to no more than forty-five (45) individuals, while also continuing to recommend frequent hand washing, *wearing a cloth face mask when in public*, and remaining home when sick or running a fever.

Also on Monday, June 22nd, the Overland Park Christian Church Board decided that our worship services and education will be held virtually (not in-person) through July.

Your board continues to meet virtually for its regular monthly meetings, with additional weekly check-ins to guide these kinds of decisions. This prayerful discernment has guided the direction of our community through the end of July.

Re-Opening Committee and Survey

A specific date for in-person worship and activities has not yet been determined. As OPCC looks to 're-open' in the future, our OPCC Board has named a task force to guide these decisions. Kathy Kinder, Emerson Hartzler, Alan Felton, and Lee Sprinkle have faithfully considered best practices as advised by public health policies, other worship communities, and our local authorities.

They continue to finalize a 're-opening plan' for Overland Park Christian Church, and sought your help in doing so.

By now you should have received a survey, either by email (Survey Monkey) or a pre-stamped paper copy that you mail back to the church. If you have not yet filled out this survey, please do so at your earliest convenience to help our Re-Opening Committee and OPCC Board make some important decisions.

OPCC will re-open in phases, much like our county and state, only when safe and with precautions. It will not *look* the same for quite some time, but *we are still the Church*. As the sermon last week reminded us, it is not faithful to continue hoping for "back to the way it was," because we have a future filled with hope and God's presence ahead of us. It is our hope that this survey and continued discernment allows us to transition back to a "new normal" that may be different in many ways, but also allows you to experience many of the familiar touchstones that make OPCC feel like home.

Worship by Phone

Are you still struggling to join us for virtual worship on your computer, tablet or smart phone? Or maybe you don't use a smart phone, tablet, or computer? Have no fear! Beginning July 5, you can LISTEN to a portion of our worship on your phone just by dialing this local phone number:



913-299-9002

There are no other numbers to input, and no other computer programs to learn.

Call in on Sunday morning, or any time throughout the week when you are available, to listen to the scripture, meditation, prayer, and songs on your phone! You can even call in as many times as you would like to listen to the service again.

MORE²

METRO ORGANIZATION FOR
RACIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY

As part of our Outreach-Mission efforts at Overland Park Christian Church, we are a partner organization with MORE² (Metropolitan Organization for Racial and Economic Equity).

Please join in one of the following events to find out how you can be involved:

- Each Thursday, a MORE² group gathers at the Wyandotte County Unified Government building (701 N 7th St, KCK) at 6:30 for an ongoing protest to continue to voice significant demands: police accountability, victim support, and community safety. All are invited to this *socially distanced* and safe protest; *please wear a mask*.
- **Safe and Welcoming Wyandotte**
Wyandotte residents can now contact your local officials (Mayor Alvey and your At-Large and Local Commissioners) to share your support of Safe and Welcoming Wyandotte, which would create a municipal ID system and restrict the cooperation of local law enforcement with ICE. [The link to the easy letter writing campaign can be found by clicking here.](#)
- Kansas Issues Night – we decide the work that is important to us and discuss how we can work toward racial and economic equity.
 - July 12th at 6:30 p.m. by Zoom – [Contact Rev. Laura for the Zoom link](#)
- MORE² Board Meeting – MORE² leaders determine the direction of the organization and implement strategic planning to see this important work to fruition. OPCC has two spots available on the MORE² board – won't you take part in directing this important work?
 - July 28th 6:00 – 7:30pm by Zoom – [Contact Rev. Laura for the Zoom link](#)

ANOTHER Important Zoom Update

Last month we reminded you to UPDATE YOUR ZOOM PASSWORD. As Zoom has increased its own security, it has updated the program, and so all of its users must also update their passwords. Make sure you've changed your Zoom password recently.

This month we remind you that the links to many Zoom experiences have likely changed. Zoom now requires a password for meetings to take place; this shouldn't affect too many people as you can still simply click on the link(s) below, but make sure you are using the most up to date link/meeting ID.

You can join Zoom in one of two ways. Both manners of joining will allow you to participate with the various meetings listed throughout this newsletter.

- You can download Zoom to your computer, tablet, or cell phone, and after creating an account, you can join the meetings by clicking on each weblink.
- You can call into Zoom from your phone (home or cell), to any of these numbers below and utilize the Meeting ID listed in the newsletter to join that specific meeting.
 - (346) 248 7799
 - (301) 715 8592
 - (312) 626 6799

OPCC Virtual Community

Please continue to check out our OPCC Website and Facebook pages for information on how to “be community” even when we aren't physically in the same space. Nearly everything we are doing virtually is available on our website, www.opccdoc.org. There are three blogs in particular that you will want to visit.

- <http://www.opccdoc.org/worship-this-week-blog> (Weekly Worship available here!)
- <http://www.opccdoc.org/families-youth--children-during-covid-19> (For Families)
- <http://www.opccdoc.org/a-community-of-voices-blog> (General/Community)

You can also [visit our Facebook page](#) where these same things are being shared. By visiting these events and information through Facebook, it gives an interactive aspect to worship. However, we are aware that not everyone enjoys Facebook, and so we will continue to share our information and opportunities on both our website and Facebook page.

OPCC Food Pantry

It's a Small World

The other day, Eileen received a call in the church office from a lady that was associated with a service organization that had face masks to donate. Her group was making and selling them as a fundraiser. They decided for every mask sold, they would donate one. These people didn't just take a square, fold the ends and insert two rubber bands. They were made from lovely new fabric with pockets to hold coffee filters for extra protection. Also the sewers made them in sizes for children through adults, men, women and veterans. Eileen gave me her phone number and of course, I said, "Yes! We would love to give them to our Food Pantry Guests." She and I arranged to meet at the church. As she was telling me about her group, she did seem a little familiar, but I didn't know why. Finally she mentioned that she grew up at Overland Park Christian Church and her parents were very active. Her mother was involved in several groups as was her dad. In fact, her dad had been the custodian at one time. Can you guess who she is? I was talking to Mary McCune. Long time church members will remember Al, Margaret and Mary. If you have an old directory, they will be in there.

Our pantry guests were so very grateful and touched to receive them. Two ladies, a mother and daughter were giggling about who would get the purple one and who would get the one with stripes. When I saw them ten minutes later I could see their shining eyes over their new masks. Thank you to Mary McCune and the members of the Pilot's Club for making such a warm gesture to our neighbors.

Jane Fletcher

Food Pantry Volunteer Needs

July Pantries will be Tuesday, July 14, 5:30–7:30pm and Saturday, July 25, 9:30–11:30am. We will again serve by placing pre-packaged foods into people's vehicles. If you can help out, please contact Jane Fletcher at (913) 449-5785.

We know there are still people out there who need a little help. Are you willing to pass along our pantry hours and contact information?

Please spend some time and prayer creating your contact list of potential pantry guests.

Then [email our church office](#) and we will reply to you with a message that you can forward to others with the pertinent information. If you would prefer a text message, we can offer that as well.

Choir and Bells

We invite all members of the Chalice Chancel Choir and Reverberations Bell Choir to join us online via Zoom for some reconnection time and an opportunity to share ideas for music in our upcoming online worship videos. Tune in every other Wednesday at **7:00 pm** (July 8 and 22).

- Choir and Bell Members please look in your emails for the code to tune in every other Wednesday in July!
- Please [email Interim Music Director Mary Beth Boucher](#) to find out how to connect with this gathering of our music ministry!

If you are not currently involved in RBC or CCC and have a musical gift to offer our congregation, please [contact Mary Beth Boucher by email](#), or by phone at 913.488.7796.

Men's Fellowship Group

The Men's Fellowship Group continues to meet over Zoom, on the first Saturdays at 9:00am:

- Please [email our church office](#) to find out how to connect with the Men's Fellowship

Youth Group

The OPCC Youth Group has continued their meetings over Zoom, each Sunday evening at 7:30pm. Join us for fun, games, discussion, prayer, and more!

- Please [email our church office](#) to find out how to connect with the OPCC Youth Group

Girlfriends

The Girlfriends Group has concluded their weekly meetings until September. Girlfriends will resume Wednesday, September 9, 7:00 - 8:30pm, hopefully in the OPCC Fireside Room.

Empty Nesters

We are cancelling the August 28 trip to the Chestnut Theater. We will try to re-schedule most of our events for 2020 to 2021.

Middlers CE Class

The Middlers Sunday School class will TAKE A BREAK FOR THE MONTH OF JULY. If we are still closed to face-to-face worship and meetings in August, we will resume meeting by Zoom on Sunday mornings at 9:00am on August 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30. Or if possible, the Middlers will meet again in person. Time will tell.

Family Ministry Updates

Dear OPCC Families,

May God be with you....This is my prayer for you.

We here at OPCC want to partner with you and your family while we continue to stay apart but we are together in spirit. Here are some ways we want to share how we can continue to be church:

1. Books to read in response to the Black Lives Matter movement:
<https://www.docfamiliesandchildren.org/multicultural-stories>
2. How to talk about Racism? Here is a pdf with age appropriate responses and more links for resources: <http://www.childrenscommunityschool.org/social-justice-resources/>
3. Please visit our OPCCDOC website: www.opccdoc.org and click on the **Resources for Faith Formation for Family, Children and Youth** on the front page to help you stay connected to the CW&W stories told by our CW&W storytellers.
4. **In-Person Tall Oaks Camp** has been cancelled for this year. However, they are offering a way to experience camp at home. Check out all the details here: <https://www.talloaks.org/camps>. Remember that OPCC will help cover the registration fees.
5. **Vacation Bible School** continues on Wednesday evenings at 5:00 through July via Zoom. Please contact us for the Zoom Meeting ID/Password. Our Theme: **The Lord's Prayer**. Do not worry if you have not been able to join us — go to our website and check out what we've been doing!

Remember I am here for you and your families. Please do not hesitate to call if you need anything, even if we just pray together.



Grace and Peace,
Pastor Lisa Engelken
lengelken@dhm.disciples.org

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to the 2020-2021 Greater Kansas City Regional Youth Cabinet that was recently selected – including three of our own OPCC Youth! RYC is the group of high school juniors/seniors and adults that plans and leads our Region's camps and retreats from high school youth. Congratulations Christy Reiter, Emily Turner, and Rilee Morrow — we are excited to see where the Holy Spirit leads you in 2020-2021.

2020-2021 Youth Members (serving 1-year terms):

Emma Becker - Smithville FCC
Christian Chamberlain - Peace CC/UCC
Brock Chura - Blue Springs FCC
Audrey Culver - Liberty CC
Virginia Fullerton - Park Hill CC
Kate Grundy - Liberty CC
Maddie Holt - North Oak CC
Adison Lowman - Smithville FCC
Rilee Morrow - Overland Park CC
Christy Reiter - Overland Park CC
Jordan Riley - Lees Summit CC
Jacob Steitz - Community CC
Phoebe Stripling - North Oak CC
Aislinn Sullivan - Country Club CC
Emily Turner - Heartland Community Church/Overland Park CC

2020-2021 Adult Members (serving staggered 2-year terms):

Jenna Beck - Family of Faith CC - (1 year remaining) (daughter of Lisa Engelken)
Adam Kelley - Platte City CC - (2 years)
Rev. Chuck Pickrel - St Andrew CC - (1 year remaining)
Amy Traylor - Hillcrest CC - (2 years)

Prayer List

Prayers of Concern

- ♥ Marian Bilyea & Rick Everist
- ♥ Pat Brennan (Maurica Campbell's friend)
- ♥ Maurica Campbell
- ♥ Harper Claar (Roger & Vicki Claar's granddaughter)
- ♥ Phyllis Cooke
- ♥ Julie Dean
- ♥ Bud & Sara Reiter Donaldson (Wally Reiter's step-father & mother)
- ♥ Lorraine Hartnett
- ♥ Carol Huffman (Peggy Fach's sister-in-law)
- ♥ Barbara Killion
- ♥ Audrey Lavelly
- ♥ Calvin McBride
- ♥ Rhonda Phelps (Roger Claar's sister)
- ♥ Ada Phillips (Teresa Phillips' mother)
- ♥ Randy Phillips (Laura Phillips' father)
- ♥ Earl Sheldon
- ♥ Lee Sprinkle
- ♥ Billie Warden
- ♥ Joe & Jean Zacher

Continued Prayers

- ♥ Mary Aelmore
- ♥ Margo Brown
- ♥ Frances Bruning
- ♥ Nancy Coffman
- ♥ Barb Collins
- ♥ Nancy Corbin
- ♥ Lawana Degraffenreid
- ♥ Gary Eilert (Jan & Ed Eilert's son)
- ♥ Jan Eilert
- ♥ Laurel Elliott
- ♥ June Faltermeier (Nancy Coffman's sister)
- ♥ Pat Frisbie (Maurica Campbell's friend)
- ♥ Pat Gray
- ♥ Donna & Marshall Howard
- ♥ Rowena Hutchinson
- ♥ Ina Fern McBride
- ♥ Shirley McGee
- ♥ Florene Miele
- ♥ Pat Phillips (Laura Phillips' mother)
- ♥ Teresa Phillips
- ♥ Lori Rapoff (Laurel Elliott's daughter)
- ♥ Ann Sandler
- ♥ Sandy Teeple
- ♥ Gordon & Iline Toms
- ♥ Wilma Townsend
- ♥ Doris Watts
- ♥ Evan Yoder (Cassy and Bob Evans' grandson)
- ♥ Judy Zeman

Military Prayer List

- ⊗ Jamie Crowe (Bo & Chris Crowe's son)
- ⊗ Cameron McDonough (Cathy Wilson's son)
- ⊗ SSG Edward Pinkelman, Jr. (Ed & Kathy Pinkelman's son)

Condolences

- ♥ to Ed & Jan Eilert and family on the death of Ed's mother, Thelma Eilert, on June 12.
- ♥ to Rich & Dian Guthrie (Sharon McBride's friends) on the death of their son last week.
- ♥ to Earl & Barbara Sheldon and family on the death of Nadine Sheldon on June 29.

Coronavirus Prayer List

- ♥ Charmaine Cherrell (Monica Fuentes' friend)
- ♥ Christina & Jonathan Clements and family (Jane Fletcher's daughter & son-in-law)
- ♥ Garden Terrace
- ♥ Lakeview Community
- ♥ Carma & Matt Roberts (Jimmy & Edith Reynolds' daughter & son-in-law)
- ♥ Heather King Smith (Dan Horton's friend)
- ♥ Villa St Francis Care Center (Barb McCoy is a resident there)

To add or remove persons from this or any of the prayer lists, please contact Michelle Reiter at ext. 223 or michelle@opccdoc.org

Thank You!

Jan and I would like to thank you for all of your thoughts, prayers, and cards during my past hospitalization and now recovery at home. Please continue the prayers as I have six weeks of quarantine before my next chest CT scan.

God's love and care,
Lee Sprinkle

Virtual Options for Funerals

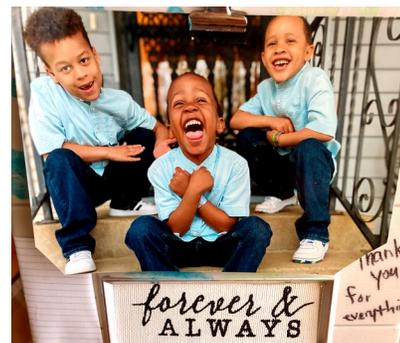
We recognize that it is incredibly hard to grieve "in" community when we cannot actually be *in* community much right now. To that end we hope you have taken the opportunity to join in the celebration of life services for our members who have passed away in the last several months. [We have a new page on our website for "Digital Funerals"](#) that provides an opportunity to watch each of these services from your computer, tablet, or smart phone. You can watch them on our [OPCC Facebook Page](#), or [visit our OPCC Digital Funerals Page](#) for more information.

Nadine Sheldon's Celebration of Life was live on Thursday, July 2 at 1:00pm. You can still watch this service on either our Facebook page or webpage as you pray for her family.

Coronavirus Fund Update

We are overjoyed to share with you that our OPCC Coronavirus Fund has received over \$25,000 in donations, and has been able to serve 26 different families, including 39 adults and 37 children. HOWEVER, the fund balance is now at \$0 and we would like to help more people!

Shortly after the US government announced the CARES Act that would result in a stimulus check to some US citizens and residents, but not all, the OPCC Board set up a Coronavirus Committee of 5 members to oversee the OPCC Coronavirus Fund to support our community members who may need more than the federal stimulus check can provide. If you or someone you know have been financially affected by the coronavirus and would like to apply as a recipient of this fund, please [email the church office](#), or call the church office (913-677-4646) and you will be given an application. Your confidentiality will be respected.



A few of our grateful Coronavirus Fund recipients!

As many of us have already or will soon be receiving the Federal stimulus check, and as you consider your own situation, we ask you to consider donating to the OPCC Coronavirus Fund.

You can donate online at <http://www.opccdoc.org/online-giving.html> or however you continue to financially support OPCC, and mark your donation for "OPCC Coronavirus Fund."

Thank you for all the ways you continue to keep OPCC in your prayers and support!

Giving to OPCC

You might consider setting up electronic payment of some kind from your account to the church account.

You can set up an auto-debit plan with *your* banking institution or use our secure online giving system (www.opccdoc.org/online-giving) so you can give more consistently without bringing it in-person regularly. Online giving is also great for individual donations if you aren't ready to put a weekly or monthly plan into place. We can also receive checks through the USPS mail if that is your preference.

If you have any questions about online giving or EFT transfers through your bank, contact Michelle (michelle@opccdoc.org or ext: 223) in the church office and we'll be happy to guide you through the process!

Your OPCC Staff

913-677-4646

info@opccdoc.org

(general church e-mail address)

Senior Pastor Laura Phillips

laura@opccdoc.org ext. 222

Congregational Care Sharon McBride

slmcbride19421965@gmail.com ext. 224

Interim Children's Pastor Lisa Engelken

lengelken@dhm.disciples.org

Interim Music Director Mary Beth Boucher

marybethboucher2@gmail.com ext. 229

Accompanist Julie Dean

missjupes@gmail.com

Communications Coordinator/

Bookkeeper Michelle Reiter

michelle@opccdoc.org ext. 223

Receptionist Eileen McIntyre

office@opccdoc.org ext. 221

Building & Grounds Lee Sprinkle

lee@opccdoc.org ext. 237

Your 2019-2020 OPCC Board of Directors

Barb Collins..... Chair

Jon Bivens Vice Chair

Terri BooklessSecretary

Pat Gilling Treasurer

Alan Felton..... Commission Liaison

Theresa Krebs Leadership Development

The OPCC Scene is generally published the first Thursday of each month.

Copy deadline for next issue is August 4 for August 6 mailing.

Help us reduce paper and postage costs!

If you would like to be removed from this mailing list or to receive this publication by e-mail, please contact Michelle Reiter at 913-677-4646, ext. 223, or

michelle@opccdoc.org