



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 59 Number 1

January 2015

Sunday School at 9:30 A.M.
Sunday Worship at 10:45 A.M.
Second Helping Dinner at 5:15 P.M.
Thursday Evening Taizé at 7:00 P.M.

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Examining Ourselves and Our Work Together

Since June, a core group of church leaders have been working behind the scenes on some important things. Before I arrived, I asked to have a Transition Team appointed to work on a few critical tasks. We needed to create a position description for me as your Pastor and I knew I would need help getting acclimated and thought it would be nice to have a dedicated group of people I could pester with all my questions.

I am so thankful for the work of Craig Weston, Kerri Keller, Ann Smit, and Bill Pallett on the Transition Team. We've been meeting monthly and have done more than just write a position description. I'd like to tell you a bit about our work, as it is now coming to an end.

First, I do have a position description...and it is great. It was written in a way that honors our work together and will help me make determinations about how I spend my time and where I place my energy. I am especially pleased that *[continued pg. 2]*



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it includes a desire that I spend time in the community, connecting with folks outside our walls. And I love the portions we created about how I can best support all of you as church leaders in your work here. The Cabinet approved the description a few months ago and Sandy would be happy to pull a copy for you if you'd like to know more.

Along the way, we discovered several other big questions that we felt needed to be addressed. We asked the Cabinet for permission to work on creating some recommendations in these areas and Cabinet said, "What? You want to do more work? Go for it!" Our additional work focused on how we evaluate ourselves and our ministry – How is the pastor evaluated? How about other staff? What about all of us? We also spent some time talking about the role of the Pastoral Relations Committee and how that group might best be equipped to do their work.

In the next month or so, you'll see some potential bylaws changes coming your way for consideration. I won't get into the nitty gritty here, but do want to highlight just a few changes that Cabinet is going to recommend for us to consider. First, we would like to move the responsibility for assessing our ministries over to the Cabinet. Currently, that task resides with Deacons, but since the Cabinet is the group that is responsible for the full picture of what we do as a church, this seems to be a more logical place. We have some ideas about how to make this a truly useful exercise and look forward to what we can learn about how we are working to fulfill our mission. This will mean that Cabinet will move towards a greater focus on "the big picture" and will have less time for the small details. I think this is a good thing...and it will also be a challenge for us. But, hey, we can do hard things.

Second, the make-up of the Pastoral Relations Committee will change a bit, though their overall function will remain the same. This group meets at least quarterly and is a sub-committee of the Cabinet. Their role is to support the congregation and pastor in our work together. They do not supervise or evaluate the pastor. We are suggesting that the group be made up of four people – two appointed by Cabinet and two appointed by the pastor – and that none of those people hold major leadership roles in the church (so they are best able to be unbiased if any conflicts arise.)

This is probably quite enough from me about administration, huh? I hope this gives you a glimpse of some of the important work your church leaders are doing on behalf of all of us each and every day. I know that administration is not a riveting subject for many, but it is crucial to have structures in place to support our work together and to regularly review those structures and make improvements. I have been so thankful our leadership's dedication and skill as we wade through these tasks together. I hope you'll take time to attend information sessions and talk openly with our Cabinet members and me as we approach these potential changes to our Bylaws.

Pastor Caela

Beyond the Dream: The Life and Legacy of MLK for Contemporary Christians

Too often we remember only one speech of Dr. King's, but he was so much more than the I Have a Dream speech. This brilliant activist and scholar wrote on broad topics over the course of his life and many of his writings were far more radical than the Dream speech.

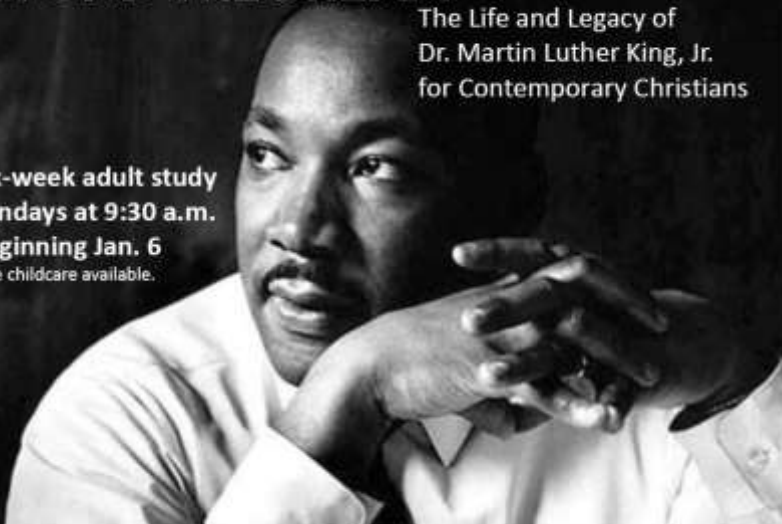
Join us for an in-depth look at Dr. King's life and legacy... beyond the dream.

We will begin an adult Sunday School class on Jan. 11 at 9:30 a.m. This six-week class, developed and led by Pastor Caela, will focus on Dr. King as a pastor and Christian activist. We will talk about Dr. King's commitment to dismantling what he called the "giant triplets" of racism, militarism, and consumerism. No book required; we will explore these topics through Dr. King's speeches, sermons, and writings (available online).

If you plan on participating in the class, please let Pastor Caela know so she can send you the readings via e-mail.

Community MLK Celebration

As we continue working for racial justice, one important thing we can do is show up and celebrate Dr. King's holiday with other members of our community. This is an excellent opportunity to learn more about Dr. King and meet others in Manhattan who value his life and work. Please plan on attending the Community MLK Celebration on Saturday, Jan. 17 from 6:30-8:30pm at Flint Hills Christian School (3905 Green Valley Road). Pastor Caela will be there, so you'll know at least one familiar face!



BEYOND THE DREAM

The Life and Legacy of
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
for Contemporary Christians

Six-week adult study
Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
Beginning Jan. 6
Free childcare available.

First Congregational UCC | 700 Poyntz | uccmanhattan.org

E-MAIL PRAYER CHAIN

If you wish to be added to the First Congregational e-mail prayer chain, please contact the church office at office@uccmanhattan.org. It is a quick and easy way to stay up to date with your church family.



Sharing and Caring

Prayers and Concerns

- For more information , please contact the church office at office@uccmanhattan.org or 785-537-7006.

Helping

- **Need a ride to church?** Contact one of our transportation volunteers: Jim & Carolyn Hodgson, Bill Pallett, or Jeff Keller.
- **Home Communion Visits** The Deacons can bring communion to your home on the first Sunday of the month. Visits at other times can be arranged with the pastor.

Annual Reports due Monday, Jan. 5

Please have your annual reports to the office as early as possible. We encourage you to turn in your report before the end of the year if at all possible. All reports should be received by **January 5, 2015** in order to be included in the Annual Report Book.

Lunch Bunch January 7

Join the Women of the Church for Lunch Bunch on Wednesday, January 7 at the Mr. K's (3901 Vanesta Dr. - Colbert Hills area). It's not for women only—everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 A.M. (See all the Lunch Bunch locations for the year by going to the church website at www.uccmanhattan.org and then clicking on Fellowship/Events/Event Calendar.)



Annual Meeting & Recognition of Church Officers

We hope you will join us on Sunday, January 25 as we begin our new church year. First, during the worship service there will be a special blessing of outgoing and incoming church officers. Then following worship we will hold our annual meeting. At that time, we will briefly review the annual report, and our 2015 budget.

MOVIE NIGHT

Friday, January 16 7:00 p.m.

Popcorn, drinks, other snacks and more will be provided. Drop off your kids and their friends for a fun evening. Hope to see you!

**First Congregational UCC | 700 Doyntz
Manhattan, KS
uccmanhattan.org**



Ministry of the Decorative Scissors

The next retreat of the Ministry of the Decorative Scissors will be a three-day event held from 6 p.m. on Thursday, January 8, until 7 p.m. on Saturday, January 10, in Andover Hall. We'll break at midnight Thursday and Friday to go home and get a good night's rest but start up again in the morning at 7:00 a.m. We welcome everyone to come and experience a joy-filled time for crafting, eating, and laughing. Bring your UFOs (UnFinished Objects) and work on them in an atmosphere of fellowship. We do not guarantee that you will complete any projects, but you will have fun and meet delightful people. Come for an hour or for all 49! Feel free to bring a snack to share. For more information, contact Sue Gerth.



Festive Feaster Sign Up begins January 11

Who are the Festive Feasters?

Festive Feasters are fellowship groups of 6 to 8 people from our church family who meet once a month from February through May for food and fellowship. The meeting place rotates each month as folks take turns hosting the event.

Who Can Be in Festive Feasters?

Couples and singles are all welcome to join.

What are the rules?

There are no rules! Meals can be in our homes, at a restaurant, in a park, or wherever you choose to meet. The group can choose to meet for breakfast, lunch, or dinner, or sometime in between.

Can I join even if I live in too small a place to host when it's my turn?

Yes, you can. Many times folks have acted as "hosts" in the home of another group member.

Can I bring my children?

You can choose when you sign up to be in a child-friendly group so that families can get together.

I'm a vegetarian or vegan; is there a group for me?

Yes, indeed. Just indicate your dietary preference when you sign up.

Why should I take time from my busy schedule to do this?

Festive Feasters is a great way for people to get to know one another in our church family. We have many "new faces" in the congregation; this is a different opportunity from Fellowship Hour after church to include and be included in our loving community of people!

How can I sign up?

Members of the Board of Deacons will be signing people up after church on the following Sundays: January 11, January 18, and January 25. If you forget to sign up after church, you can contact Gretchen Lewis.

We'd prefer that you sign up by the beginning of the last week in January so we can get the groups organized and ready for publication on February 1.

Cobb Corner — Going Green

“We shall awaken from our dullness and rise vigorously toward justice. If we fall in love with creation deeper and deeper, we will respond to its endangerment with passion.”

—Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) *The Green Bible*. I-102.

Hope you had a wonderful Christmas! If you still have a real tree consider putting it out in your backyard with popcorn, suet and seed on it. The birds will love it. Or take it to the Optimist tree lot in Long’s Park where it will be recycled for fish habitat in Tuttle Creek reservoir.

Want some good environmental news? Over the years 2002-2013 sales of hybrid vehicles grew 1277% while all vehicle sales dropped 9.3%. Assets in socially responsible investments grew 38.5% and U.S. consumption of renewable energy rose 55% while that of non-renewables fell 6%. (Green American, Winter 2014). Moreover, monarch butterflies increased for the first time in years.

Do your New Year’s Resolutions include a greener lifestyle? Please share them with the rest of us. On my free and easy list: (1) Share magazines with friends and doctors’ offices. (2) Leo Schell’s great suggestion: skip all drive-throughs. They all waste gas and pollute. I’ve often noted I can eat or bank or get meds faster inside than lined up outside. (3) Start a compost pile on a sunny winter’s day and by spring your cast-off garbage, leaves and a little dirt will be free fertilizer for your spring garden—no toxins, no chemicals, and less trash for the landfill.

Happy New Year!

— Linda Richter

Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter.

Recycling at Church!

Bring your recyclable items with you to church and leave them at the collection point in the eastern passage between the Sanctuary and Blachly Hall. Please bring your things through Blachly Hall on Sunday mornings.

Please sort your items according to marked containers, paying special attention to numbered plastics. Also, all items should be rinsed *so they do not create odors or attract pests.*



The Second Helping

Our Second Helping ministry continues to be a wonderful way in which our church extends its mission to the community of Manhattan. We regularly serve 25-35 people each week. Many of you have helped with this mission in a variety of ways, and that is much appreciated!



Currently we are hoping to add some more volunteers to our list of "regulars." We are particularly in need of individuals who would be willing to serve as Head Cook and Church Host. If you are interested in learning more about either of these positions, or volunteering in other ways, please contact the church office at 785-537-7006 or office@uccmanhattan.org.

January 4, 2015

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Manhattan Mennonite Church, Ann Gleason

Chief Cook: Karen Franz

Church Host: Pastor Caela

January 11, 2015

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Kathy, Blead, Susanne Gilmore, Ann Gleason,

2 volunteers needed

Chief Cook: Andy Barkley

Church Host: Mary Ellen Barkley

January 18, 2015

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Aimee & Annabelle McLendon, Carolyn & Jim Hodgson

Chief Cook: Gretchen Lewis

Church Host: Jim Lewis

January 25, 2015

Dessert: Donna Keyser

Volunteers: ESA Sorority

Chief Cook: Ann Smit

Church Host: Dave Smit

Take time for Taize On Thursday evenings at 7 p.m., a small group of us meets for thirty minutes of quiet worship in scripture reading, contemplation and song. Those of us who attend feel moved and nourished by the opportunity to pray in silence and in community with others. We invite others to join us; you can come once in a while, once a month, or every week, and we'll always be happy to see you! We meet in Pioneer Hall.

Worship & Volunteers

January 4, 2015

Greeters	<i>volunteers needed</i>
Scripture Reader	Pastor Caela
Word for Children .	Pastor Caela
Fellowship Hour	Wade Honey, Dan Barnes
Flowers	Advent Poinsettias
Snow Removal	Jeff Keller (<i>Dec 29-Jan 4</i>)

January 11, 2015

Greeters	Lauren Ritterbush, Brad Logan
Scripture Reader	Jim Mock
Word for Children .	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Fellowship Hour	Lauren Ritterbush, Brad Logan
Flowers	Rebecca and Steve Bishop
Snow Removal	Angela Hubler (<i>Jan 5-11</i>)

January 18, 2015

Greeters	Dan Barnes, <i>volunteer needed</i>
Scripture Reader	Marilynn Mock
Word for Children .	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Communion at Bethel AME	
Flowers	Kathy Bleam
Snow Removal	Jim Hodgson (<i>Jan 12-18</i>)

January 25, 2015

Greeters	<i>volunteers needed</i>
Scripture Reader	Mary Ellen Barkley
Word for Children .	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Fellowship Hour	Donna Keyser
Flowers	Wade Honey and Dan Barnes
Snow Removal	Craig Weston (<i>Jan 19-25</i>)

To volunteer contact the church office at 537-7006 or office@uccmanhattan.org

Children / Youth Ministry

Children's Sunday School is taking a break for the next few weeks. Sunday School starts back up on Sunday, January 11 at 9:30 a.m. Also, on January 4 there is no Kids' Worship as the worship service will have some exciting things happening that the kids will enjoy. The nursery will still be open! If you would like to receive the Parents' email from Barrett with information about upcoming events for Kids and Families be sure to email Barrett at CEDirector@uccmanhattan.org

Youth Group will meet on January 4 at 7:00 to plan the spring schedule and play board games. Bring your ideas--and favorite games!

Name Change - Barrett's position has undergone a name change to more accurately reflect the scope of his work. He is now the Director of Children's Ministries. Barrett works with ministries for children from birth through elementary school. Our Director of Youth Ministry, Tracey Weston, works with youth in middle and high school. The Board of Christian Education works closely with Pastor Caela to develop our educational ministries for adults.

Mission Statement

The Mission of First Congregational United Church of Christ is

- To love and accept others unconditionally as God loves and accepts us, and by example, to encourage others to do the same.
- To challenge ourselves to grow spiritually through worship, education, nurture, reflection, discussion, fellowship, and outreach.
- To minister to others locally, nationally, and globally with the same fervor as we minister to ourselves, through the sharing of our talents, gifts, and resources.

We hold ourselves accountable before God for this mission statement.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

700 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502
(785) 537-7006
uccmanhattan.org



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Calendar follows on next page

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Return Service Requested



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>January 2015</h1>				1 New Year's Day Offices Closed	2	3
				4 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Worship & Communion <i>Fill the Breadbasket</i> 12:00 Fellowship Hour 5:15 Second Helping	5 5:15 Yoga <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Annual Reports Due</div>	6 Epiphany
11 Baptism of Christ 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Fellowship Hour 5:15 Second Helping	12 5:15 Yoga	13	14 6:30 Board of Christian Ed Mtg 7:00 Vitality & Outreach	15 7:00 Taizé	16 7:00 Movie Night	17
18 2nd after Epiphany 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Communion at Bethel AME 5:15 Second Helping	19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Offices Closed 5:15 Yoga	20 10:00 N.C. Clergy Mtg. 7:00 PFLAG	21 7:00 Cabinet	22 7:00 Taizé	23 12:00 Newsletter Deadline	24
25 3rd after Epiphany 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Fellowship Hour 12:15 Annual Meeting 5:15 Second Helping	26 5:15 Yoga	27	28	29	30	31 