



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 61 Number 7

July 2017

Sunday School at 9:30 A.M. (when school is in session)
 Sunday Worship at 10:45 A.M. 700 Poyntz Avenue
 Second Helping Dinner at 6:00 P.M. Manhattan, Kansas 66502
 Thursday Evening Taizé at 7:00 P.M. telephone 785-537-7006
www.uccmanhattan.org

Finding a Way Together at General Synod

Greetings from Baltimore! As you read this piece, I am gathered at the 2017 General Synod of the United Church of Christ with thousands of other UCCers from all over the nation. This biennial event pulls together delegates, visitors, and people from across the nation to consider the issues facing our 21st century church. This is the second time I've had an opportunity to attend a General Synod - the first time was 10 years ago for the 50th anniversary celebration in Hartford. You might also recall that our congregation sent Kerri Keller and Amanda Tross as delegates to the 2015 Synod.

My colleague, the Rev. Heidi Carrington Heath recently shared with me this helpful information: "the word 'synod' comes from the Greek 'sun' (together) and 'hodos' (way) = 'sunodos' (meeting) which, in time evolved to the word synod in Middle English. It generally refers to a gathering of clergy [continued pg. 2]"

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or church-types. But I appreciate its Greek origins, because so much of what we are doing is finding a 'way together.'"

This "finding a way together" is one of the things I cherish about our denomination. We are all travelers together, seeking to live into the Ways of Jesus. We claim Christ as our head and take seriously the call to be in covenant with one another - holding community as sacred even across differences of opinion. Speaking of differences of opinion - those happen at General Synod! There is much diversity in the UCC - we represent many geographical areas, cultures, races, political and theological viewpoints. We share varied understandings of what it means to "be the church" in the 21st century.

Synod is a time for careful discernment. One of the things that happens at Synod is committee work around various resolutions for our consideration. We explore contemporary issues and the Synod makes decisions about what kinds of things we want our churches to consider in the future. Unlike other denominations with a "top-down" governance model, the Synod does not tell individual churches how to follow Christ, but it does bear witness to what we collectively discern to be important and worthy of consideration. I've frequently heard it said that the Synod does not speak FOR the UCC, but it does speak TO the UCC. I find that distinction helpful!

Synod is also a time for celebration. We will have opportunities to worship, hear about what's happening in the wider church, and be engaged by thoughtful preachers and speakers. I am particularly looking forward to hearing the Rev. Dr. William Barber, the Rev. Traci Blackmon, and Glennon Doyle (Melton). You can learn more about the full schedule and stream many of the worship services at speakers via the Synod website.

Finally, Synod is a time for connection. I am looking forward to meeting up with friends and colleagues that I've known for years AND meeting new people. I will be attending as a part of the Next Generation Leadership Initiative (NGLI) so I'll be spending time with my cohort and talking shop about what we observe and how it might affect our own ministry. If you have a moment to pray for the stamina of everyone attending, we'd surely appreciate it. The days are long - often beginning before 7am and ending well after 10pm. We cram a lot of work into the week!

I encourage you to visit the Synod website to read and learn more about what we'll be studying, praying about, and voting on. You can find that here: <http://synod.uccpages.org/> I'll also be sharing updates via our social media during the week, so please be on the lookout!

Pastor Caela

Pastor Caela will be out of the office from Friday, June 23rd through Saturday, July 8th. She will be spending a week on vacation with her family and then travel to Baltimore to attend the UCC General Synod with the Next Generation Leadership Initiative. If you are in need of pastoral care during this time, please contact our Pastoral Associate Sue Zschoche.

Finding Pastor Caela This Summer



Summer brings a different rhythm in our community and congregation. Pastor Caela will be using the summer months as an opportunity to focus more intentionally on soul-feeding activities that will enhance her ministry in the busy months ahead. She is hoping to spend more time practicing spiritual disciplines such as prayer, time in nature, holy reading. Summer will also be a time to dream about the future and read books that will fuel preaching and leadership. As always, much of the pastor's work happens outside of the office and outside of the regular 9-5 time-frame. If you would like to meet with Pastor Caela, the best practice is always to contact her directly to set up an appointment.

Sharing and Caring

Prayers and Concern

- For more information, please contact the church office.

Congratulations

- News has been received that **Don Longbottom** was called by the people of South Central Conference of the UCC to be their Conference Minister. Said Don via Facebook, "I am both humbled and honored. I will to the upmost of my ability serve and lead to the great purposes we have discussed. The best is yet to be!"

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.

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



Mrunch

Mrunch (moms group) will be taking a break from meeting this summer. We'll look forward to starting up again in the Fall! If you have questions, contact Andrea Chamberlain.

Connect with us during the week!

Did you know our church has a vital presence on social media? We currently have over 500 people following our church's facebook page for updates about what's happening in our community. Follow us at <http://facebook.com/uccmanhattanks>. You can find the same content on Twitter @UCCManhattan.



Additionally, if you are a regular attender or member, you're invited to join our closed Facebook group - a place for dialogue and conversation with people you know. Search for "First Congregational UCC Members and Friends" or ask a friend who is in the group to add you.

We also send out updates every Friday with helpful information about what's coming up in our congregation. If you don't already receive those updates, please send your e-mail address to Sandy at office@uccmanhattan or visit <http://www.uccmanhattan.org/news-and-updates> to sign up.

Did you miss a sermon? Pastor Caela's sermon manuscripts are posted online each week by Monday on her personal sermon blog (revcaela.blogspot.com) or you can watch for them on our Facebook page.

Lunch Bunch July 5

We join together with Bethel AME Church in an opportunity for members of our two congregations to get to know one another. Wednesday, July 5 at **Harry's Deli** (418 Poyntz). It's not for women only—everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m. (Find monthly Lunch Bunch locations by clicking on Community Life/Events Calendar on the church website at www.uccmanhattan.)



Happy 95th Birthday to Grace McKay !

A belated Happy Birthday to Grace McKay who turned 95 years young on June 30.

Congratulations Grace!



Upcoming Dates of Interest at First Congregational:

August 6: Jazz Worship

August 13: Choir returns

August 20: Blessing of the Backpacks, Sunday School for all ages begins, Feast and Festival

September 23: Welcoming Dinner for those new to our congregation

November 12: Guest preacher Stephanie Mott

Upcoming Sermon Series

July 9 - August 6: "Epic Love" series on our faith ancestors in Genesis

August 14 - September 9: "Back to School: Jesus the Teacher" series on Jesus's teachings in the Gospel of Matthew

September 17 - October 8: "Young, Scrappy, and Hungry" series on the Joseph narrative from Genesis

Free Money!

Do you participate in our Dillons fundraiser? It's easy! Just go to dillons.com to link your shopper card. If you need help, contact the church office. (Our organization number is #10145.) Check your enrollment by checking the very bottom of your Dillons receipt. You should see "...donating to First Congregational UCC."

An Opportunity to Advance the Mission of the Church

The Atina and Gerry Hanna memorial fund was set up several years ago to advance the mission of the church. Specifically, the Hanna family asked that up to \$1,500 be set aside each year through 2020 for church member-initiated projects. In the past these funds have been used to support the intern who started the church's 2nd Helping garden in 2015, and for the Roots of Justice training in early 2016. If you would like to propose a project for 2017, please contact any member of the Gifts, Endowments, and Investments Committee (Ann Smit, Brent Maner, or Bill Pallett).

Ministry of the Decorative Scissors

The Ministry of the Decorative Scissors meets July 13-15. Everyone is welcome. There are no guarantees that you will complete any projects, but you will have fun and meet delightful people. Come for an hour or for the whole time! Feel free to bring a snack to share. For more information, contact Sue Gerth.



Picture Directory is Here

If you have an email address on file with our church office, you should have received an email with instructions on how to log on to InstantChurchDirectory.com to access the new online picture directory. If you need a refresher, please contact Sandy in the office and she'll walk you through the process.

A constantly updated PDF version of the directory is also available at uccmanhattan.org (contact the office for the password). If you aren't techy, no worries. A printed copy (with photos!) is available from the office.

Please help us keep the directory updated and submit your photo now. Take a selfie! Or have a friend, neighbor, or relative take your picture and email it to the office at office@uccmanhattan.org. Or bring in a hard copy of a photo for Sandy to scan.



Christian Education

Thank you all for your words of encouragement, practical help and gifts of service, support, patience, prayers, and love as this divorce process drags on for my family. I find in my heart a new depth of concern for all of us and our children as we grow in navigating the painful, difficult experiences that are part of our journeys in this life, as well as a passion to learn to truly soak in the joy of sacred moments without being robbed by the fear that says they could be taken away so we better not feel too much. As Dave Smit recently shared in the Word for Children, "family is everybody all together." Friends, I celebrate your family, and I have deep gratitude for you celebrating mine even as it changes shape from what I had imagined the picture in the frame would look like.

Moving forward with Summer plans for Kid's Worship, Seth Dills has joined our Children's Ministry staff, and will spend several of the upcoming weeks leading children ages 3 through early elementary in a worship practice that includes prayer stations, music, media, hands on learning, and messages from Bible stories and faith themes. Seth is a recent graduate of MCC and currently studies elementary education at K-State, sharing with us a depth of chasing the mystery of God through theology, and a love of teaching, learning, and connecting with children in a group setting.

Fall Sunday School classes begin August 20 and we plan for 11 weeks of education with one class for children in Pre-K through 1st grade, and one for children in 2nd through 4th grade. We will begin Christmas Pageant Rehearsals on November 5th during the Sunday School hour.

Andria Anderson

Director of Children's Ministries

children@uccmanhattan.org

Our Whole Lives Training

Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Young Adults and Adults is a curriculum created by the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalists. The *Our Whole Lives* program was developed to create a positive and comprehensive lifespan educational program that helps participants gain the knowledge, values and skills they need to lead sexually healthy, responsible lives. The Adult sessions provide a time to learn about extraordinarily rich and complex area of human behavior, and opportunity to better understand sexuality and self and a space for growth beyond present limits and concerns.

There will be a facilitator training session in Olathe, KS on July 21-23 (starts late Friday and ends Sunday afternoon). If you are interested in being trained as a facilitator, this is a wonderful opportunity. Please contact Tracey Weston if you are interested. After completion of the training, it is the goal to offer some Adult workshops in combination with our church and the Unitarian Fellowship later this fall/winter, and to coordinate Young Adult workshops at Ecumenical Christian Ministries.



Ministers of Care

The Ministers of Care provide care and encourage the wider congregation to provide care for those in our congregation who are unable to regularly make it to worship, are in need of additional connection and support, or are going through a major life transition.

When we become aware that someone is in need of additional support, we will ensure that they have a point person from the Ministers of Care. That person may visit in person, call on the phone, send notes, or otherwise check in to see what this person might need. When it seems appropriate they will also expand the circle of care by inviting others in the congregation to show support in whatever way needed (notes, visits, prayers, meals, etc.).

If you know of someone in our congregation who is in a time of transition or needs additional support, please contact one of the Ministers of Care or the church office.

Current ministers of care: Andrea Chamberlain, Elaine de Smedt, Gayle Doll, Jean Hill, Carolyn and Jim Hodgson, Gretchen Lewis, Brent Maner, Martha Miller, and Dona Sidorfsky.

Name Tags = Hospitality

As we prepare to welcome newcomers this fall, a quick reminder to please wear your name tag each Sunday during worship. Name tags help new people learn our names and faces quickly. They also make it easier for you to identify a new person when they are attending worship - and welcome them warmly! If you do not have a permanent name tag, please contact the church office to ask for one. When new name tags are made, they "debut" in the lobby near the kitchen so you can find them easily. If you see a new person, please ask them if they'd like a name tag and let them know they can simply make a note of it in the attendance pad on Sunday morning. Another way you can greet our visitors warmly is to offer them a bag of popcorn and thank them for "popping in." The popcorn is located in the small table in the narthex (the entry off Poyntz). If you see families with young children, be sure to help them by showing them the pew cards with information about our children's ministries. And, as always, it's always lovely to offer to walk someone into coffee hour after worship, visit for a few minutes, and then introduce them to someone new. Thanks for making First Congregational UCC a warm and welcoming place for newcomers.



Office Hours

Sandy will be on vacation Wednesday, July 19-Monday, July 24. The office will be open Monday-Wednesday, but hours might be dependent on Pastor Caela's meeting schedule. Please call the church before coming to be sure that someone is there. The office will be closed on Thursday, July 20 and Friday, July 21. Sandy returns to the office on Tuesday, July 25.

ECM Notebook

Ecumenical Campus Ministry is a cooperative ministry at K-State supported by the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). www.ksu.edu/ecm

One of the many positive changes resulting from the Ecumenical Campus Ministry's move two years ago was the expansion of our "housing ministry" with students. Instead of having two students live at ECM, we now provide housing for a dozen K-State students each year—eight at the new building at 904 Sunset Avenue and four at our house at 908 Sunset Avenue. Students living at ECM pledge to be involved in some aspect of the campus ministry and engage in covenantal living within one of our three four-person households. Each household writes their own covenant, and a member of the ECM staff meets regularly with the households to equip the students to hold each other accountable. This coming year, we'll have four young men and eight young women living at ECM. Six are undergraduate students, six are graduate students. Four are international students. Of the twelve, eight are Christian in one its many expressions, one is Buddhist, one is Muslim and two are religiously unaffiliated—thus providing a wonderful "laboratory" for student tenants to explore their faith.



Fill the Breadbasket for Second Helping

The Second Helping is funded through our operating budget and special gifts to this ministry. On the first Sunday of each month we "Fill the Breadbasket" during worship. You are invited to bring a cash donation or items for our lunch sacks, such as individual flavored oatmeal packets, granola bars, or individually-wrapped snack crackers (such as cheese or peanut butter).

Cobb Corner — Going Green

“God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue. It is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience.” Pope Francis, as quoted in the *Kansas City Star*, May 26, 2017, p.15a.

Writing on the environment for a Christian congregation is getting harder these days. Consider: From 2008-2015, 172 million people around the globe abandoned their homes because of sea level rise, droughts, wildfires, sinkholes and mudslides associated with climate change. (*Population Connection*, June, 2017).

President Trump is attempting to take the U.S. out of the non-binding, voluntary Paris Climate Accord. Only two other nations are not in the agreement: Nicaragua, which decided the agreement wasn’t strong enough and Syria which has more immediate survival concerns.

During the presidential campaign of 2016, Trump stated that climate change was a hoax perpetrated by the Chinese. The Pontifical Academy of Science disagrees as does Pope Francis who gave the President the 2015 book *Laudato Si or Care for Our Common Home* during the Trump visit in May to the Vatican.

Either the President hasn’t read it or he’s not persuaded because he now argues “the tiny, tiny increase” in the earth’s temperature isn’t worth the fuss. I guess 172 million climate exiles and 195 nations just didn’t get the memo.

If you are less sanguine about the future than the President you may want to reconsider that old cliché “Think globally, act locally.” Please share your suggestions about what you are doing to protect the planet. Already, other nations are forging ahead and over 165 American cities are acting to meet the targets the U.S agreed to in 2016. Renewable energy jobs are soaring and the technology surrounding carbon capture and plastic re-purposing as well as other environmental initiatives are encouraging.

If the last paragraph seems considerably less angry than the remarks above, it’s because it was written a week later. Since then I’ve re-read the 23rd Psalm and am reading Michael Bloomberg and Carl Pope’s new book, *Climate of Hope*. I recommend both for your mental health!

-- Linda Richter

P.S. Thanks to Leo Schell for the information on the Pope’s efforts vis a vis the President.

Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter

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 office@uccmanhattan.org or (785) 537-7006.

July 2, 2017

Dessert: Ann Smit

Volunteers: Rita & Mike Henry, Dress Barn

Chief Cook: Gretchen Lewis

Church Host: Kathy Bleam

July 9, 2017

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Manhattan Mennonite Church

Chief Cook: Karen Franz

Church Host: Pastor Caela

July 16, 2017

Dessert: Kerri Keller

Volunteers: Cochran Family

Chief Cook: Alfred Cochran

Church Host: Martha Miller

July 23, 2017

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Mechelle Martinez, Rachel Whetstone, Caffey Family

Chief Cook: Linda Thurston

Church Host: Susanne Gilmore

July 30, 2017

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: ESA Sorority

Chief Cook: Andy Barkley

Church Host: Mary Ellen Barkley

Volunteer by going to
uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups

Worship & Volunteers

July 2, 2017

Greeters	Jennifer Edwards, Gina Davidson
Scripture Reader	Leslie Bell
Communion Servers .	Gina Davidson, Jess Girdler, <i>volunteer needed</i>
Fellowship Host	Ann Smit
Flowers	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Grounds Care	<i>volunteer needed</i>

July 9, 2017

Greeters	Julie & Jim Appino
Scripture Reader	Jim Mock
Fellowship Host	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Flowers	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Grounds Care	<i>volunteer needed</i>

July 16, 2017

Greeters	<i>2 volunteers needed</i>
Scripture Reader	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Fellowship Host	Julie Appino
Flowers	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Grounds Care	<i>volunteer needed</i>

July 23, 2017

Greeters	<i>2 volunteers needed</i>
Scripture Reader	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Fellowship Host	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Flowers	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Grounds Care	<i>volunteer needed</i>

July 30, 2017

Greeters	<i>2 volunteers needed</i>
Scripture Reader	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Fellowship Host	Gretchen Lewis
Flowers	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Grounds Care	<i>volunteer needed</i>

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

Congratulations 2017 Graduate



Shai Buelow, Bachelor of Science degree in business from Kansas State University

Community News

FIT Closet Closed for Summer – The FIT Closet is taking some time off for summer vacation. It will reopen in July for limited hours: Monday 9:00-noon and Wednesday 3:00-5:30. The closet resumes regular hours in August: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 9:00-noon; and Wednesday, Thursday 3:00-5:30.

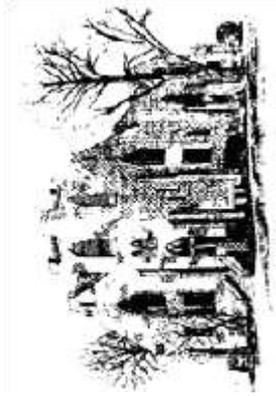
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:45 Worship & Communion <i>Fill the Breadbasket</i> 6:00 Second Helping	3 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	4 Independence Day Office Closed	5 11:30 Lunch Bunch 5:30 Mission 5:45 Deacons 7:00 Trustees 7:00 AA meeting	6 7:00 Taizé 8:00 NA mtg	7 7:30 NA mtg	8
Caela on vacation and at General Synod through July 8						
9 9:30 Christian Ed meeting 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	10 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	11	12 7:00 AA meeting	13 7:00 MLK mtg 7:00 Taizé 8:00 NA mtg	14 7:30 NA mtg	15
				Ministry of the Decorative Scissors		
16 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	17 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	18	19 7:00 Cabinet 7:00 AA meeting	20 7:00 Taizé 8:00 NA mtg	21 12:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 NA mtg	22
				Sandy on vacation through July 24		
23 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	24 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	25	26 7:00 AA meeting	27 7:00 Taizé 8:00 NA mtg	28 7:30 NA mtg	29
Sandy vacation						
30 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	31 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg					