



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 62 Number 5

May 2018

Sunday School at 9:30 A.M. (when school is in session)

Sunday Worship at 10:45 A.M.

Second Helping Dinner at 6:00 P.M.

Thursday Evening Taizé at 7:00 P.M.

700 Poyntz Avenue

Manhattan, Kansas 66502

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[www.uccmanhattan.org](http://www.uccmanhattan.org)

## Invitation to Summer Spiritual Practices with First Congregational

Summer in a college town often marks a change of pace, even for those of us who aren't affiliated with the university. The town empties out a bit and it's easier to park in Aggieville, go for a stroll downtown, or simply rest in any of our beautiful natural areas near Manhattan. In the years that I've been at First Congregational, we've often focused on a communal spiritual practice each summer. In 2014, when I first arrived as your pastor, I spent the summer meeting with about 75 of you one-on-one. Together, we practiced the holy act of "holding space" as I was able to hear your stories and we started to get to know each other. In 2015, we had several social meet ups around town – going for walks, having drinks, playing at the playground. *[continued pg. 2]*



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Again, we “held space” in community – laughing together and swapping stories. Last summer we focused our attention on Keeping Sabbath. Our boards and committees each took a month off and we found breathing space in our shared ministry.

Additionally, I made an intentional shift in how I focused my own time, carving out more space for my own spiritual practices, big dreaming and pondering, Bible study, and more. My guess is that focus on making space for Sabbath will continue in the summer of 2018....and that the Holy Spirit is probably smiling about that.

This summer, the Deacons and I want to present two new options for your consideration. Both are very minimal and flexible time commitments. Both would be a blessing to you. Both would deepen your sense of connection with God. I hope you'll consider participating in one of these spiritual practices with us this summer. If you have any questions, please do reach out!

Prayer Partners: Are you interested in learning to pray, deepening your faith, or connecting more intentionally with someone else at First Congregational? You are encouraged to sign up for a summer Prayer Partner. You and your partner will check in on a weekly basis in-person, via phone, or text. You can simply share prayer concerns with one another or spend time in prayer together. The Deacons will send tips as you begin your partnership so you won't be confused. We will also host an optional kickoff event at 6pm on Wednesday, May 30 for participants. Prayer Partnerships will begin June 1 and wrap up mid-August. **Visit our website ([uccmanhattan.org](http://uccmanhattan.org)) or contact the church office to sign up by May 21<sup>st</sup>.**

Weekday Blessings: We would love to send someone from our congregation to pray with you or simply give a brief blessing at your workplace or home during the week. Beginning June 1 there will be an online sign up to reserve your time slot, or you can contact the church office. One of our pastors and/or a Deacon will visit you at the time and location you select to offer a blessing.

*Pastor Caela*

# Pastor Caela Traveling for Continuing Education

May 14-21, Pastor Caela will be traveling to San Francisco for continuing education with NGLI (Next Generation Leadership Initiative). Participants will be attending the Maker Faire and learning about Human-Centered Design. While Caela is gone, our Pastoral Associate Sue Zschoche will be on call for any pastoral care needs that arise.

## Sharing and Caring

### *Prayers and Concerns*

- For more information please contact the church office.

### *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 the church office. It is a quick and easy way to stay up to date with your church family.



## Lunch Bunch May 2



We join together in an opportunity to get to know one another. Wednesday, May 2 at **Cox Brothers BBQ** (223 McCall Rd). 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.com](http://www.uccmanhattan.com).)

## Ministry of the Decorative Scissors



The Ministry of the Decorative Scissors meets May 17-19. 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 .

## Living Room Worship Night Sunday, May 6, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

A casual evening of acoustic guitar, singing, prayer, and fellowship.

If you are hungry to deepen your connection to God and each other, join us in the living room!



## Connecting With Pastor Caela

Pastor Caela keeps her own calendar, so if you'd like to get together the simplest thing is to e-mail, call, or text to set up a time. Mondays through Wednesdays are typically best for routine meetings, as Thursdays are used for sermon and worship preparation and Friday-Saturday are her days off. Caela tries to honor work-life balance by responding to non-urgent text and voicemail messages only during regular work hours. Please note that if you ever have an emergency between the hours of 10pm-7am you will need to **CALL** Pastor Caela, not rely on text messages, as she does not receive them overnight.

# 2019 Pastoral Sabbatical Update

Our application for the National Clergy Renewal Program through the Center for Pastoral Excellence at Christian Theological Seminary is complete! Many, many thanks to Dale Stearns and Andrea Chamberlain who worked on this application with Pastor Caela for many months. We also give thanks to everyone who was able to give suggestions and input as the grant was crafted. We will be notified in late August about the status of our application, which you are welcome to review (a copy is available in the church office). Regardless of whether or not we receive the grant, Pastor Caela will be on sabbatical during the summer of 2019. The moderator group (Dave Smit, Kerri Keller, and Julie Hunt) is working with Pastor Caela, Pastor Sue, and the Cabinet to begin plans for staff coverage during Caela's sabbatical.

## Dinner Discussion with the Ministry of the Decorative Scissors

Friday, May 18 • 6:00 p.m.



We'll meet in Pioneer and Blachly halls to enjoy a simple meal with friends and do some craft projects to take home.

## Sandy on Vacation April 30 – May 9

Sandy will be away from the office May 1-9 but will continue to check email and work remotely. Open office hours will depend on Paster Caela's meeting schedule. Please call the church before coming to be sure that someone is there.



# Important Information about May Worship Dates

**May 6** - Join us at First Christian Church (115 Courthouse Plaza) at 10:45am for a shared worship service featuring the Thundering Cats Big Band! Our pastors will lead worship together and we will all enjoy this special service of beautiful music. Communion will be shared and the table is open to all. Sunday School will still take place at First Congregational at 9:30am. Additionally, the Thundering Cats are hosting a special benefit concert that same afternoon at 2pm, also at First Christian Church. A free-will offering for ECM (Ecumenical Campus Ministry) will be received at the afternoon concert.

**PLEASE NOTE:** We will have Sunday School on May 6th in our regular location (700 Poyntz). Adults will finish up the We Sing Freedom! class and nursery care/Sunday School is also available for the kids. May 6th is the final day of Sunday School before we take a break for the summer.

**May 13** - Join us at Long's Park for our annual worship in the park and blessing of the animals. Please bring along your own chair if you've got one. During worship, we'll bless our pets. Childcare staff will be on hand to care for young kids who want to explore the playground or the rest of the park. After worship, stick around for a good ol' fashioned potluck. Bring a dish to share and your own plates/silverware. Drinks will be provided by our Board of Deacons.

**May 20** - It's Pentecost! We celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit in worship on this Sunday each year and you are encouraged to wear red, yellow, or orange to worship so we can make a flame together. This year, Pentecost is also Christian Education Recognition Sunday. We will celebrate and bless children, youth, and adults who have participated in or led education activities. After worship, we will dedicate our new flooring during Fellowship Hour. Don't miss it!

# 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).

## Education Update

May 6th is the final Sunday for adult, youth, and children's Sunday School until August.

May 20th we thank all our Christian Education teachers and participants and celebrate them in worship

Are you coming to church May 20?

Not sure yet. Why?

Pentecost! Christian Education recognition Sunday! Plus, we're dedicating the new floors!

See you there!



## Vitality News

### Vitality Committee Award

On May 9 the First Congregational Church's Vitality Committee will receive the "Faith Into Action" Award from KIFA (Kansas Inter Faith Action) at their annual dinner. The Vitality Committee is being recognized in particular for their work on racism dialogues in Manhattan, Stand with Muslim Neighbors activities and the Underground Railroad Tour.

The keynote speaker this year will be Rev. Kristin Stoneking of Epworth United Methodist Church in Berkeley, California. Rev. Stoneking completed a four year term as executive director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the nation's oldest interfaith peace and justice organization, which includes over 60 local chapters and affiliates across the country.

The event will take place at First Christian Church in Topeka on Wednesday, May 9 at 6:30. For tickets see the KIFA website ([www.kansasinterfaithaction.org](http://www.kansasinterfaithaction.org)). The Vitality Committee will help arrange carpools to the event.





## Cobb Corner — Going Green

*“For the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and humans have no advantages over the animals; for all is vanity” – Ecclesiastes, 3: 19-21. The Green Bible.*

May 6-12 is Be Kind to Animals Week, though kindness should be a habit not only one week a year. On May 13th the church will have its annual animal blessing in Long’s Park. Hopefully, the potluck that follows the blessing will not include less lucky animals.

Certainly it would be better for the environment. The amount of grain and water needed to produce one pound of hamburger is staggering. The pollution and stench from feedlots, pig farms, and the chicken factories is a growing problem even without consideration of ethics and aesthetics.

If I had to kill the animals I’ve eaten or served to others I suspect I would have become an “opportunistic vegetarian” sooner. Definition: Someone who doesn’t buy or serve meat but who assumes all pepperoni and meatballs to be soy! Many others are probably equally conflicted about leaving the slaughter to others.

Then there’s the cost of meat. We never bought much meat or costly cuts, but not buying meat for the two of us saves at least \$2500 a year. Add the health benefits of avoiding red meat and the calculus for at least reducing consumption of meat becomes still more persuasive.

But there are many other ways to be kind to animals. Taking Purina pet food and other supplies to the church or the Riley County Shelter can be of great assistance. It’s kitten and puppy season at the shelter so please help with your donations, volunteering, or fostering pets. For even more blessings and unconditional love, take home one or two of the inmates!

*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.

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**May 6, 2018**

**Dessert:** *volunteer needed*

**Volunteers:** Manhattan Mennonite Church

**Chief Cook:** Bob Atchison

**Church Host:** Tracey Weston

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**May 13, 2018**

**Dessert:** *volunteer needed*

**Volunteers:** Rita & Mike Henry and crew

**Chief Cook:** Andy Barkley

**Church Host:** Mary Ellen Barkley

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**May 20, 2018**

**Dessert:** *volunteer needed*

**Volunteers:** Jane Marshall, Mary Ash, Brenda Mayberry

**Chief Cook:** Linda Thurston

**Church Host:** Kathy Bleam

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**May 27, 2018**

**Dessert:** *volunteer needed*

**Volunteers:** ESA Sorority

**Chief Cook:** Gretchen Lewis

**Church Host:** Jim Lewis

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**Volunteer by going to  
[uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups](http://uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups)**

## 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.

**Our Blessing Box** on the south corner of the parking lot is regularly visited. Thank you to all who have brought food and toiletries for stocking the box. Our supplies are low right now and we'd welcome donations of non-perishable food and toiletries. Need ideas of what to bring? Rebecca Bishop's list can help:

Food Items: granola bars, breakfast cereal (individual boxes/cups), instant oatmeal (cups/packets), dry soup (packets/cups), ramen, mac & cheese (cups/boxes), peanut butter & cracker packs, cheese & cracker packs, instant coffee singles, hot cocoa packets, koolaid mixes, pasta, dry pasta sauce mixes, crackers, chips (individual bags), rice, dried beans, boxed/bagged rice/noodle/potato dishes, seasoning packets, dry milk, pudding/jello cups, jelly, canned fruit/vegetables, canned pasta sauce, peanut butter.

Personal Items: bar soap, deodorant, wet wipes, razors, shaving cream, laundry soap powder (small boxes), toothpaste, tooth brushes, gloves, stocking hats, hand warmers, tissues, toilet paper, feminine sanitary products, shampoo, lotion, dish soap.



## **Summer Camps 2018**

**WhiteMemorialCamp.com**

Summer is coming and White Memorial Camp is a great place to experience the joys of summer camp. Kids and youth who have completed grades K-12 can attend camp near Council Grove. Some scholarships are available for First Congregational members. Please check with the church office for more information about scholarships. To register for camp, visit [whitememorialcamp.com](http://whitememorialcamp.com).

### **Family Camp**

(all ages)

*July 27-July 30*

### **Young Adventurer's Camp**

(grades K-3)

*July 29-July 31*

### **Last Blast!**

(grades 4-12)

*July 29-August 4*

Register at [www.whitememorialcamp.com](http://www.whitememorialcamp.com).

## Help Stock Donation Closet: May 20

Our neighbors at First Lutheran Church opened their kitchen and fellowship hall to allow us to continue serving our Second Helping Meals while our floors are under renovation. We are serving there on April 15 and 22. In return, the Board of Missions is encouraging us to help in their mission by bringing personal items to our church on Sunday, May 20; we'll take them to the Lutheran Church to help stock their Donation Closet, from which their guests can choose two personal items each week. Since the First Lutheran Church serves an average of 60 people each week, we feel this would be an appropriate way to partner with them in mission to our local community. Items of special need include packages of toilet paper, soap, feminine hygiene products, razors, and regular-sized containers of shaving cream, deodorant, and toothpaste. Plan ahead, and thank you!

## Community News

Saturday, May 12 is the annual National Association of Letter Carrier's "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive. On this day, letter carriers across the nation collect non-perishable food items from postal customer's mailboxes to help fill local food pantries. It comes at a crucial time to restock supplies as donations tend to drop off after the winter holidays. In Manhattan, donations will be taken to the Flint Hills Breadbasket.



## Timeless A Cappella Free Concert

May 15  
7:30 p.m.

Manhattan Arts Center  
1520 Poyntz Ave.

# Gold China Silent Auction

Own a piece of church history! For offer are two place settings of England Bone China with coffee pot, creamer and sugar bowl. The dishes are white with a gold band and there are six pieces to each place setting. Accompanying the china are two sets of golden flatware. Perfect for that upcoming special celebration, they'll make a lovely addition to your home.



For your bidding, the items will be on display Sunday, May 20 and Sunday May 27. You may view the dishes during the week during office hours.



## Sunday, May 20

After worship, we will dedicate our new flooring during Fellowship Hour. Don't miss it!

SHARED WORSHIP  
| AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
SUNDAY,  
MAY 6  
— @ —  
10:45AM

# Ministry Opportunities *(May edition)*



**Second Helping is in need of additional church hosts.** The church host greets the guests, makes sure people have what they need, and generally monitors the progress of the meal. Volunteers will be paired with an experienced host until they feel comfortable with the position. The church hosts often get to know the guests over time, which is a privilege of the host position. If you would like to serve in this important role, please indicate your name and contact information on the line.

**Grounds care** in spring, summer, and fall requires mowing the church lawn, in addition to the church garden lot adjacent to the alley, prior to Sunday's worship (Thursday, Friday, or Saturday). In the winter it's a little different. Sign up for a whole week – Monday-Sunday – and if it snows, you "win" what is affectionately called the snow lottery. You've got to clear the walkways with the church snow blower.

**Worship** volunteers have many Sunday morning tasks. They greet at the door, read scripture, host fellowship hour, usher, contribute flowers, and offer the Word for Children. Sign up is easy!

**Want to be a part of the ministry opportunities? Circle the paragraph that interests you and drop this paper in the collection plate with your name and contact information.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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