



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 63 Number 2

February 2019

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.

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## Love Incarnate

In January, I went to my fourth and final year of classes with NGLI (Next Generation Leadership Initiative) in Arizona. I will continue with NGLI for six more years, but my learning plan will be individualized, which means I won't be headed to Arizona on January 3rd each year. It also means I won't be spending two weeks a year with my NGLI Cohort, which has come to be an incredibly important part of my life.

Together the fourteen of us have dreamed, schemed, laughed, and cried as we've shared struggles, celebrations, times of vulnerability and joy. In our closing circle we had an opportunity to bless one another and I thanked the group for "being Church" for me. A place where I can show up with my mistakes and accomplishments, weary or exhilarated....and know that I will be loved unconditionally because of God's love.

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So many of our interactions as humans feel like transactions. It is immensely difficult to find places where we can simply be present as our full selves and trust that Love will hold us. When the Church is at its best, it is an embodiment of the One we call Love. It is a place where we can let down our guard a bit, knowing we are Beloved even when we feel like we've messed up. A place where:

*We covenant with God and with one another  
to seek the mind of Christ,  
to be open to the new light and truth God has for us,  
to bear each other's burdens and share each other's joys,  
to pray for each other, to serve in the name of Christ,  
to give to this church and its mission,  
and to take our stand for justice and peace,  
confident God's concern embraces the whole world.*

Friends, this not-small, challenging, courageous act of being Love Incarnate for and with one another has the power to transform the world. If we accomplish nothing else but loving well, we will be following Christ faithfully. Because loving isn't only about blithely choosing kindness...it's also about speaking the truth in love, encouraging and pushing one another as we grow, rest, take risks, and rejoice. Sometimes we get it right, sometimes we fall short. But always, always we wake again each day knowing that Love still holds us gently and invites us into the radical act of loving one another - confident God's concern embraces the whole world. May it be so.

*Pastor Caela*

**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.



## 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.

### **Lunch Bunch February 6**

We join together in an opportunity to get to know one another, Wednesday, February 6 at Little Apple Brewing Co. (1110 Westloop). Everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m.



### **Sandy on Vacation Feb. 4-8**

Sandy will be away from the office from Monday, Feb. 4 – Friday, Feb. 8. The office will generally be closed while she is away. Email and the phone message machine will be monitored periodically in her absence.

## **Recommend Substitute Preachers**

Pastor Caela will be on sabbatical from May 1 - August 15, 2019. The Deacons are seeking both worship leaders and preachers for a number of weeks during this period. If you are willing to serve in either capacity, have questions, or you'd like to recommend a guest speaker/preacher, please contact Gina Davidson. The Deacons will consider all submissions and will try to set a tentative schedule by March, so please make your submission prior to the end of February.

## **Ministry of the Decorative Scissors**

The Ministry of the Decorative Scissors meets February 7-9. 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.

## **Save the Dates: Lent and Easter 2019**

Lent is the 40 days preceding Easter and is a time when Christians traditionally cultivate their faith in more intensive ways. For some this may include giving something up or adding in a new spiritual practice. As a gathered community, we always include additional focused opportunities for worship and communal prayer. Because Easter is a movable feast (meaning, the date changes each year based on moon cycles), the dates for Lent change each year.

In 2019, the following dates will guide our journey through Lent and Eastertide:

March 6: Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent

March 10: First Sunday of Lent

April 14: Palm Sunday

April 18: Maundy Thursday

April 19: Good Friday

April 20: Holy Saturday

April 21: Easter Sunday

June 9: Pentecost Sunday, which ends Eastertide

# Welcome New Members

**Diane Hinrichs and Jackie Toburen**

## Christian Education

### *Sunday School Opportunities for Adults and Youth*

*All classes are at 9:30 a.m. The nursery is open for babies and toddlers. Sunday School classes for preschoolers and elementary-schoolers take place on the second floor. Middle-schoolers and high-schoolers are invited to the adult classes or may be interested in helping teach younger children. Please contact Brandy McDonald ([brandy@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:brandy@uccmanhattan.org)) or Brittani Shank ([brittani@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:brittani@uccmanhattan.org)) for more information about options for children and youth.*

## Spring 2019: Sunday School Opportunities for Adults

**January 20-March 3**

**The Creeds**

**Led by Ross Allen**

Beginning January 20th, Ross Allen takes us on a guided tour of the “creeds,” the statements of faith that have been central to centuries of Christianity and are a central part of our legacy from the Protestant Reformation. The class takes a close look at the Apostle’s Creed (and/or the Nicene Creed) and explores where the ideas expressed came from, how they are historically situated, and, in particular, examines how, in a non-dogmatic church such as ours, these statements speak to us today.

**March 10 - April 7**

**Lenten Book Study on *The Last Week* by Borg and Crossan**

**Led by Jim Mock**

From the publisher: "Using the gospel of Mark as their guide, Borg and Crossan present a day-by-day account of Jesus's final week of life. They begin their story on Palm Sunday with two triumphal entries into Jerusalem. The first entry, that of Roman governor Pontius Pilate leading Roman soldiers into the city, symbolized military strength. The second heralded a new kind of moral hero who was praised by the people as he rode in on a humble donkey. The Jesus introduced by Borg and Crossan is this new moral hero, a more dangerous Jesus than the one enshrined in the church's traditional teachings." **Please contact the church office by March 4 if you'd like us to order you a copy of the book.**

**April 14 - NO CLASS, Palm Sunday Parade from City Park**  
**April 21 - NO CLASS, Easter Potluck Breakfast**

**April 28 - May 19**

**Fierce Women of the Bible: Part Two**

**Led by Sara K Kearns**

We didn't get a chance to discuss this book as thoroughly as we wanted to in the fall semester, so we're bringing it back! From the publisher: "Women in the Bible - some of their names we know, others we've only heard, and others are tragically unnamed." Pastor and provocateur Alice Connor introduces these women and invites us to see them not as players in a man's story - as victims or tempters - nor as morality archetypes, teaching us to be better wives and mothers, but as fierce foremothers of the faith. These women's stories are messy, challenging, and beautiful. When we read their stories, we can see not only their particular, fearsome lives but also our own." **Please contact the church office by April 22 if you'd like us to order you a copy of the book.**

**Mid-Week Bible Study**

**"Who Do You Say I Am?," Part 2**

**Tuesdays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. with Pastor Sue**

On January 22, the mid-week Bible Study resumed exploration of the historical Jesus. Our subject is the still unresolved question of who the historical Jesus was and how he was understood in his own time. Did his listeners see him primarily as a miracle worker? As a teacher of Wisdom? Was he a prophet of the end times? Or was his message perceived as more political? Was he seen as someone seeking to overthrow the Roman Empire? Bible scholars continue to debate this question and our study will attempt to unravel the question.

We are reading Marcus Borg's book, *Jesus: The Life, Teaching, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary*. Please know that attendance at Part 1 this past fall is NOT a requirement for participation in this class.

The class meets on Tuesdays from 11:30 to 1:00 and we will continue for as long as it takes to get through the book. I hope that you will consider joining what has proven to be a lively discussion. Bring your lunch if you like, and we promise that coffee, tea, and lots of chocolate will be provided. — *Sue Zschoche*

## Cobb Corner — Going Green

“The best way to protect the future is to create it.”

– Denis Gabor

Sound pretentious? I tend to leave matters of creation to God. But maybe we can do something about enormous problems.

It was only 45 years ago that scientists discovered a giant hole in the ozone that threatened to unleash dangerous radiation that could cause huge numbers of deadly skin cancers and cataracts. The hole was caused by manmade chemicals, especially CFCs found in billions of aerosol containers.

What happened? The nations of the world proceeded to ban the chemicals in the 1987 Montreal Protocol which was rapidly ratified by 190 nations. (EPA). Today the hole has closed and at very little inconvenience to most of us.

What modest decisions could we make now that could be significant yet available to every one of us? Let’s start with some that benefit us as individuals and the environment:

1. Time reported (January 28, 2019, p.53) that if people switched from beef to other proteins, including other meats “global greenhouse gas emissions would fall by 25% and diet-related deaths would drop by 5% in wealthy countries.”
2. If Americans stopped using straws except for medical reasons and sharing milkshakes, we could substantially reduce the single most common source of plastic pollution in our oceans and the agonizing deaths of billions of aquatic animals. (Ocean Conservancy) It also reduces the likelihood of minuscule plastic bits in the fish we eat or the sea salt we use.
3. If we resist the impulse to buy SUVs and trucks just because gas prices have dropped, we’d save a lot of money, a lot of gas, and a lot of carbon in the atmosphere. Automakers are dropping lines of sedans and going for more massive vehicles betting against our common sense. This at a time when U.S. families are smaller than ever! Are we as foolish as the industry assumes?

Let’s not behave as if the current national environmental setbacks excuse us from making and supporting those individual acts that can create a healthier future for all of us!

—Linda Richter

*Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter.*



# Free Money!

Do you participate in our Dillons fundraiser? Link your shopper card at [dillons.com](http://dillons.com). If you need help, contact the church office. (Our organization number is # QQ452.) Check your enrollment by checking the very bottom of your Dillons receipt. You should see “...donating to First Congregational UCC.”

If you ever shop at HyVee, the church can gain support through your use of pre-purchased gift cards from the church (which buys them at a 6% discount). Please contact Dave Manning and let him know of your interest.

## 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.



# 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 Mary Ellen Barkley.

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## ***February 3, 2019***

**Dessert:** Gayle Doll

**Volunteers:** Manhattan Mennonite Church

**Chief Cook:** Bob Atchison

**Church Host:** Pastor Caela

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## ***February 10, 2019***

**Dessert:** *volunteer needed*

**Volunteers:** Kathy Bleam, Stephanie Reeck, Jayson Carswell & Friend,  
*1 volunteer needed*

**Chief Cook:** Craig Weston

**Church Host:** Tracey Weston

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## ***February 17, 2019***

**Dessert:** *volunteer needed*

**Volunteers:** *4 volunteers needed*

**Chief Cook:** Andy Barkley

**Church Host:** Mary Ellen Barkley

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## ***February 24, 2019***

**Dessert:** Ann Smit

**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)**

### Faith and Public Policy Forum

Monday, February 11, 6:30 PM

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Manhattan,  
481 Zeandale Rd, Manhattan

How we as a society collect and spend our common resources, and whether and how we care for the less fortunate, are issues with profound moral significance. Public advocacy itself is an act of faith - a belief that the actions we take can change the world for the better.

KIFA is continuing its series of "Faith and Public Policy" Forums around the state during the 2019 legislative session. These nonpartisan panels will give good, solid, factual information on issues of vital importance to Kansans of faith and conscience.

The panel will include advocates and activists who work daily on the vital issues facing voters in Kansas: the current state of Kansas' budget and finances; voter participation and criminal justice reform; and more. Panelists will give remarks and there will be time for questions.

Panelists: Annie McKay – Kansas Action for Children ; Sheldon Weisgrau - Alliance for a Healthy Kansas; Ellen Glover - ACLU of Kansas; Rabbi Moti Rieber – Kansas Interfaith Action (KIFA)

### From Loss to New Life

Homecare & Hospice invites you to participate in a free five-week grief and loss support group titled "From Loss to New Life". The group

meets twice a week from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Homecare & Hospice conference room located at 3801 Vanesta Drive in Manhattan.

The first meeting is Tuesday, February 5 and the last meeting is Thursday, March 7.

If you or someone you know could benefit from attending a grief support group, please share this information or contact Dan Clayton at Homecare & Hospice: 785-537-0688.



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Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

# February\*

					<b>1</b> 7:30 NA mtg	<b>2</b> 8:30 KSU Choir retreat
<b>3</b> 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Yoga & Donuts 10:45 Worship and Communion <i>Fill the Breadbasket</i> 6:00 Second Helping	<b>4</b> 5:15 Yoga 7:30 NA mtg	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 11:30 Lunch Bunch 5:45 Deacons mtg 7:00 AA meeting	<b>7</b> 5:00 Community Acupuncture 7:00 Taizé 7:00 MLK mtg 7:30 NA mtg	<b>8</b> 7:30 NA mtg	<b>9</b>
----- Ministry of the Decorative Scissors ----- ----- Sandy Vacation -----						
<b>10</b> 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	<b>11</b> 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 5:30 CE Board 5:30 Mission Board 6:30 Vitality 7:00 Trustees Board 7:00 AA meeting	<b>14</b> 5:00 Community Acupuncture 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	<b>15</b> 7:30 NA mtg	<b>16</b> 12:00 MAPJ retreat
<b>17</b> 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	<b>18</b> 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	<b>19</b> 10:00 NCA clergy	<b>20</b> 7:00 Cabinet mtg 7:00 AA meeting	<b>21</b> 5:00 Community Acupuncture 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	<b>22</b> 5:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 NA mtg	<b>23</b> Haymaker/ Parsons wedding
<b>24</b> 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	<b>25</b> 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 7:00 AA meeting	<b>28</b> 5:00 Community Acupuncture 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg		