



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 63 Number 6

June 2019

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

Looking Back Looking Forward

By the time you read this, we will have survived the whole first month of Pastor Caela’s sabbatical! Glory be! Oh my, if you only knew the shenanigans behind the scenes. Maybe your church leadership team will share some of those for a good laugh post-sabbatical.

As we were planning for the pastor’s sabbatical, I agreed to provide an article for the June newsletter about our recent congregational survey. I would have liked more time to think deeply about the survey responses before putting pen to paper about them. However, these are OUR responses so it’s right that we all think deeply now about the responses. You may remember the Cabinet decided to replicate a survey that was distributed to the congregation in 2012 to inform our calling for a pastor. Let’s look at who we were then and who we appear to be seven years later.

In 2012, 61 respondents to the congregational survey indicated that the top five factors in their decision to attend First Congregational were the quality of the sermons, *[continued pg. 2]*

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fellowship of the people, warm welcome, open and affirming commitment and the pastor. For 80 respondents in 2019, many of these same factors remain at the top but in a slightly different order with the leading factors our open and affirming commitment, the pastor, quality of sermons, social justice and fellowship. While there's never been any doubt that we called a fantastic pastor, it fills my heart with joy to know that we in fact did find a pastor who is "an unwavering ONA supporter, inspiring preacher who can reach the heart and mind of people, and someone who has courage for overturning the tables of the temple" (Church Profile, 2012). Isn't it something to know that Pastor Caela conducted the first legally recognized same-sex marriage in Riley County!

While not surprising, social justice is an overall theme of importance among the current congregation. Over 97% of the 2019 survey respondents rated social justice as very important or important. Respondents also rated worship services equally important. Behind that was Christian education for youth with 85% of respondents rating that as very important or important.

I see that covering the survey results is probably going to require a second and maybe even a third installment. I'll close this one with a response notably different from seven years ago. In 2012, 35% of respondents indicated that they set aside time for prayer or meditation on a daily or weekly basis. That number has grown to 51% of the 2019 respondents. What might we attribute that change to? Experiencing new prayer practices, adopting prayer as a wellness strategy, responding to societal changes – I suppose the list could go on. But what a great strength as we envision the way ahead. Let's all pray for guidance as we consider future ways to witness God's inclusive love, justice and peace.

Kerri Keller

Moderator

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.

Free Money!

Do you participate in our Dillons fundraiser? Link your shopper card at 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, 565-8247 or drm.mhk.ks@gmail.com, and let him know of your interest.



Ministry of the Decorative Scissors

The Ministry of the Decorative Scissors meets June 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.



Lunch Bunch June 5

We join together in an opportunity to get to know one another, Wednesday, June 5 at Tanner's on Moro in Aggieville. Everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m.



Save the Date

Backpack blessing: August 18, 2019

Feast & Festival: August 18, 2019

Congratulations 2019 Graduates



Nadiyah Gamble, Manhattan High School.

Diane Hinrichs, PhD in Higher Education Administration, Kansas State University.

Jeremy Hinrichs, Manhattan High School.

Martha Hunt, MS in Food Science, Kansas State University.

Mary Hunt, PhD in Family Studies, University of Arkansas.

Did we miss your graduate? Please contact the church office to announce the information in the July newsletter.

Christian Education

Please contact Brandy McDonald (brandy@uccmanhattan.org) or Brittani Shank (brittani@uccmanhattan.org) for more information about options for children and youth.

June Children's Ministry Schedule

Sunday school, yoga, and children's choir are on break for the summer! See you in the fall!

Because we are low on childcare staff and currently without a Kids Worship leader, we will be playing each Sunday by ear as far as Sacred Space and Kids Worship availability goes so that we are able to serve the most kids each Sunday. We will let you know what's available at the end of the Word for Children. Thanks for your patience as I work on getting some more staff hired!

We are hoping to plan a few get-togethers for our families over the summer, so watch your emails for any plans!

Midweek Bible Class is doing Summer School!

Starting on Tuesday, 4 June, the Midweek Bible Class will resume and meet weekly throughout June and July. Our book this summer will be Richard Rohr's new book *The Universal Christ*. The book's jacket notes describe it this way:

“Drawing on scripture, history, and spiritual practice, Rohr articulates a transformative view of Jesus Christ as a portrait of God's constant, unfolding work in the world. ‘God loves things by becoming them,’ he writes, and Jesus' life was meant to declare that humanity has never been separate from God—except by its own negative choice. When we recover this fundamental truth, faith becomes less about proving Jesus was God, and more about learning to recognize the Creator's presence all around us, and in everyone we meet.”

We are so hopeful that you can join us for good fellowship, a LOT of chocolate, and active discussion about this thought-provoking book. That's Tuesdays, this summer, from 11:30 to 1:00.

**Volunteer by going to
uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups**

Cobb Corner — Going Green

“Love all God’s creation, the whole of it, every grain of sand....” – Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, in *The Green Bible*, 1-107.

Global environmental conditions continue to be grim, but millions are fighting back. One effort we all can make is to eliminate waste of all kinds. As often noted, more than 40% of food in the U.S. is wasted and with it all the energy that created, cared for and transported it.

One major problem is that people put too much emphasis on the “Best by” or “Use by” date. The margin can be several years if cans are not dented or with acidic contents. When in doubt, call KSU extension!

Increasingly, grocery stores are fighting needless waste by bundling produce for quick sale at incredibly low prices. Deane Lehmann also uses the mesh bags from such produce, cutting the mesh and weaving it into mats! Ask her for details.

Growing our own food, swapping the excess or patronizing the local farmer’s market is another way to get perishables that haven’t traveled the average 1200 miles to the grocery store.

I’m not fond of gadgets but I love my dehydrator which allows me to buy in bulk and preserve the excess. Banana chips, dried tomatoes and mango slices are a treat in winter. What are **your** tips for avoiding food waste?

Finally, I need your help with two items on my June “to do” list: First, how about a campaign to ditch the leaf blower? James Fallows in a recent *Atlantic* issue tells how he and others in his homeowners’ association managed to ban leaf blowers in a suburb of Washington, D.C. The gas models use 80-year old technology, damage hearing, annoy neighbors and are incredibly polluting. California has banned them, noting they cause more pollution than all the cars in the state! Moreover, I fail to see how they improve on a quiet, non-polluting rake!

Secondly, the Richters must thin out perennials and divide houseplants. Does anyone want daylilies? Peonies in the fall? Iris in late July or house plants in the next month? Call me.

If you have read *The Secret Life of Nature*, you know we can’t just toss plants. They have to go to new and loving habitats!

—Linda Richter

Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter.

Strengthen the Church Offering: Sunday, June 23

On Sunday, June 23, we will take the second of our denominational offerings, Strengthen the Church. This special offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities. In 2018, your support of this offering increased church vitality by awarding 12 grants totaling \$350,000 through the New and Renewing Spiritual Communities program. This program strengthened UCC congregations by providing funds to assist in community revitalization and supported new churches. Strengthen the Church also designates a portion of the offering to go towards Youth and Young Adult leadership development in the United Church of Christ.

Spring clean-up/work day

Saturday, June 8, 2019 • 9 AM - 11 AM

Join the trustees for the annual spring clean-up/work day on Saturday, June 8. We plan on cleaning up the outside of the church and complete some projects that need to be done. Weeding, cutting shrubs, cleaning winter and spring debris as well as some painting is planned. Bring tools that you feel are appropriate. We look forward to seeing you.

Contact Jeff Watson with questions.



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.

Thank you for keeping your pledge current during the summer months.

Ministers of Care On Call

During Pastor Caela's sabbatical (May 1 - August 15) we have designated Ministers of Care who are on call to assist you with any pastoral care needs that might arise. The Minister of Care who is on call for assistance during the month of June is Gretchen Lewis. (Please note: you should leave a voicemail if the Minister of Care doesn't answer her phone, as many of us receive a high volume of spam calls and do not pick up when the telephone number is unknown. You are also welcome to call Pastor Sue or the church office; the office telephone line is being monitored fairly often until our Administrative Assistant Sandy Nelson is able to be back in the office more frequently.

Contact Information

First Congregational United Church of Christ

700 Poyntz Ave., Manhattan, KS 66502

Church Office Phone: 785-537-7006

<http://www.uccmanhattan.org/>

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 30-40 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.

June 2, 2019

Dessert: HyVee

Volunteers: Martha Mather, *3 volunteers needed*

Chief Cook: Andy Barkley

Church Host: Mary Ellen Barkley

June 9, 2019

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Manhattan Mennonite Church

Chief Cook: Bob Atchison

Church Host: Kathy Bleam

June 16, 2019

Dessert: *Linda Thurston*

Volunteers: Jennifer Edwards, Stephanie Reeck, *2 volunteers needed*

Chief Cook: Craig Weston

Church Host: *volunteer needed*

June 23, 2019

Dessert: *Jennifer Edwards*

Volunteers: ESA Sorority

Chief Cook: Gretchen Lewis

Church Host: Jim Lewis

June 29, 2019

Dessert: *Kerri Keller*

Volunteers: Rita Henry, Mike Henry, *2 volunteers needed*

Chief Cook: Linda Thurston

Church Host: Tracey Weston

Community News

Summer at Camp White

Summer is coming which means it's time to get registered for camp!

Camp White is currently registering for this summer and early bird pricing deadlines are fast approaching. The

camp has an exciting lineup this summer. All ages can enjoy the tranquil setting on the lake in Council Grove. If you are interested in sending your child to Camp White, find camp information at:

<https://whitememorialcamp.com/youth-camps/> First

Congregational UCC offers scholarship assistance to campers.

Contact Sandy Nelson in the office if interested or contact Jeff Keller for more information.



Youth Leadership Day – June 8



The Youth Volunteer Corps is hosting the Youth Leadership Day on June 8th. This will be a day full of round table discussions and leadership building activities that will help develop local youth as leaders. More information and registration can be found at:

www.flinthillsvolunteercenter.com/youth-leadership-day/.

For more information, contact Stephanie McGivern, YVC Program Coordinator, Flint Hills Volunteer Center, 785-776-7787

Wear Orange Day – June 8

Manhattan Area Moms Demand Action provides youth a platform to stand up and speak out against gun violence at a local Wear Orange Event on Saturday, June 8 from 8-9 p.m. at the Riley County Courthouse Plaza.

Youth are invited to perform a poem, recitation, song, painting, drawing, dance, or other art that relates to how gun violence impacts youth. Please contact Carl Reed at 785 770-7116 or carl_reed@cox.net for more information.

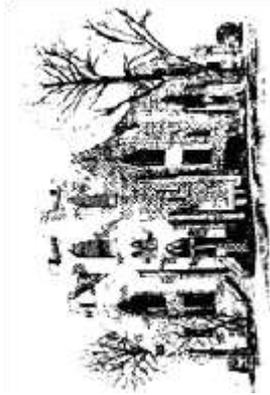
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:45 Worship and Communion <i>Fill the Breadbasket</i> 6:00 Second Helping	3 5:15 Yoga 7:30 NA mtg	4	5 11:30 Lunch Bunch 5:45 Deacons mtg 7:00 AA meeting	6 Office Closed 5:00 Community Acupuncture 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	7 7:30 NA mtg	8 Spring Work Day Wear Orange Day
9 Pentecost Sunday 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	10 5:15 Yoga 7:30 NA mtg	11	12 5:30 CE Board 5:30 Mission Board 6:30 Vitality 7:00 Trustees Board 7:00 AA meeting	13 5:00 Community Acupuncture 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg ----- Ministry of the Decorative Scissors -----	14 7:30 NA mtg	15
16 Trinity Sunday 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	17 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	18 10:00 NCA clergy	19 7:00 Cabinet mtg 7:00 AA meeting	20 5:00 Community Acupuncture 7:00 Taizé 7:00 MLK mtg 7:30 NA mtg	21 5:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 NA mtg	22
23 Strengthen the Church offering 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 5:00 Community Acupuncture 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	28 7:30 NA mtg	29
30 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping			June 2019			