



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 64 Number 1

January 2020

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

2020: A Year for Kindness

After graduating from college, I was blessed with many, many excellent supervisors. They taught me about work-life balance, professionalism, teamwork, and so much more. Because I worked at a university there were often decisions that came from much higher up the chain-of-command that were frustrating or didn't seem to make sense. When my boss's boss, Jenna, had to tell us about these decisions she would often say, "I have to say, I don't quite understand this new policy and I'm going to work to get more information for us. But I will assume the person who made this decision had good intentions unless I see evidence to the contrary."

Assume other people have good intentions. For those of us who tend to be more cynical in nature, it's a radical idea. Not everyone HAS good intentions, of course. But Jenna's words have always stayed with me. Assume people mean well UNLESS you've seen evidence to the contrary. Work to understand *[continued pg. 2]*

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other people's point of view. Wonder, often, about their motivations and try to see things from their vantage point.

I recently read an article in the Christian Science Monitor about studies that show the use of words like "love," "patience," "faithfulness," "humility," "modesty," and "kindness" have decreased 50% in the modern age. People don't talk or write about these virtues as much as they used to. Friends, this is why the work we are doing together is so very important. Sometimes, I prepare a sermon and think to myself, "Caela, just how many sermons can you preach about God being Love? You sound like a broken record."

But the thing is...we can't talk about love too much these days. The world NEEDS us to talk about love and DO love again and again and again. The world NEEDS us to Love Unconditionally, Challenge Spiritually, and Minister Fervently on a daily basis. The Church is one of the places in our society that continues to talk about and model the importance of love, patience, faithfulness, humility, modesty, and kindness.

As we head into 2020 together, will you join me in making a recommitment to embodying kindness this year? Not the easy, polite kind of niceness that absolves us of the status quo....but the fierce, radical, transformative, life-and-society altering kindness of Jesus. In 2020, let's seek to live ever more fully into Jesus's call to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. It's not easy work...but it's the kind of work that truly matters.

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 January 8

We join together in an opportunity to get to know one another, Wednesday, January 8 at Bluestem Grill in the KSU Foundation building (1880 Kimball Ave). Everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m.



Ministry of the Decorative Scissors

The Ministry of the Decorative Scissors meets January 9-11. 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.

Annual Reports due Monday, Jan. 6

Please have your annual reports to the office as early as possible. You are encouraged to turn in your report by Dec. 31 if at all possible. All reports should be received by **Monday, January 6, 2020** in order to be included in the Annual Report Book.

Please join us January 5 immediately following the service to help with holiday undecorating. Many hands will make quick work of the task.

Thanks!

Leadership Kick Off, Jan. 15th

A reminder that all new and returning board and committee members have Board Orientation on Wednesday, Jan. 15th from 6-8 pm. Dinner will be provided. Please RSVP regrets to Sue Gerth (sgerth@ksu.edu) to help us plan. We look forward to sharing an evening of fellowship and learning more about being leaders in our congregation. This is a great opportunity to answer questions that you didn't even know that you have!

Congratulations 2019 December Graduate



Janet George, Master of Science in Adult Learning and Leadership, Kansas State University

Annual Meeting and Recognition of Church Officers Sunday, January 26

Please join us on Sunday, January 26 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 vote on the budget for 2020. The 2020 budget will be available on January 12.

2020 Elections

As we enter 2020 (yikes! How can this be?), we will be inundated with information about upcoming elections. **As a Church**, there are rules that we must follow due to our tax exempt status. We, as a church, cannot endorse candidates or political parties in any way. We also cannot campaign against any candidates seeking office. We can, of course, discuss or endorse issues, but not candidates.

Sue Gerth, Moderator

Bylaws Update

Do you know how pulling down that old wallpaper also reminds you that those cabinets really need refinishing too? Just like a “minor” kitchen update, that’s how a major update of First Congregational’s bylaws came to be during this last year. You are invited to consider the updates – approved by Cabinet in its December meeting – and to join others at the annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 26, 2020 to vote on the proposed changes.

The most notable changes relate to—

- Transferring legal responsibility from the Board of Trustees to Cabinet.
- Renaming the Board of Trustees as the Board of Facilities given the transfer of legal and financial responsibility to Cabinet.

continued next page

- Changing the scope of the Vitality Committee and renaming it as the Board of Justice and Witness to match what the national setting of the UCC calls social justice work like ours.
- Replacing the Nominating Committee with a Membership Engagement Committee that will continue to facilitate the nomination process and take on new membership duties of the former Vitality Committee.
- Creating a new Finance Committee to align financial responsibilities with the corporate responsibilities of Cabinet rather than the Trustees.
- Renaming the Audit Committee as the Financial Oversight Committee and clarifying responsibilities based on feedback from the last financial review completed in 2018.

For more details about the changes and their rationale, see the Summary of Bylaws Updates on the church website under Community Life in the Members' Area. To review the complete 12-page bylaw document approved by Cabinet, please see a printed copy in the church office or one of the copies that will be available during church services on January 12 and 19, 2020. To discuss the changes and learn more about the update process, please join your Moderators at an info session on one of the following dates—

January 5, 2020 at 9:30am during Adult Sunday School

January 12, 2020 immediately following the Sunday service

January 19, 2020 immediately following the Sunday service

Most importantly, please attend the **Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 26** to vote on the 2020 budget and the bylaw updates. Thank you!

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 and let him know of your interest.

Christian Education

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

December Children's Ministry Schedule

Jan 5th- Yoga

Jan 12th and 19th- Deep Blue and Submerge Sunday School

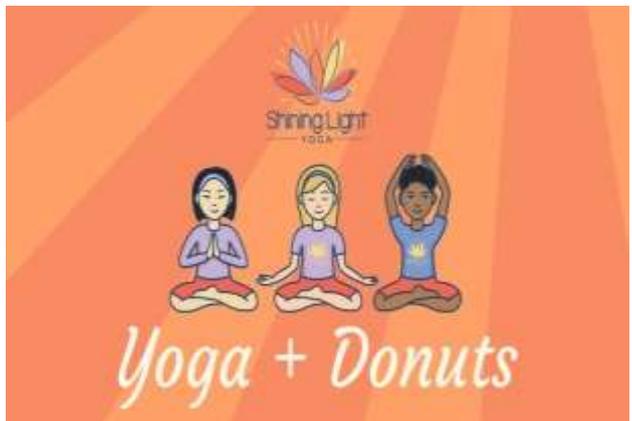
Jan 26- Children's Choir

With the busyness of the holidays over, we'd love to have another gathering of parents with young children soon! If you are interested in hosting or have an idea for something you'd like to do, please contact Brandy at brandy@uccmanhattan.org.

Shining Light Yoga Updates

We continue to welcome children from the community into our building each month for yoga. We gather at 9:30am on the first Sunday of each month and have had 20-30 kids participating each time. Our team of volunteer teachers offer three age-based classes for kids aged 3 through 6th grade. You can learn more about the program and view photos on our new website: shininglightmhk.com. We also encourage you to follow us on Facebook!

If you'd like to get involved with this ministry, contact Brandy. We can always use help checking kids in, monitoring the lobby to welcome latecomers, and preparing fruit for each Sunday that we gather.



January 10th-Late Night Lock in @ Plymouth UCC in Lawrence

This is a middle school students only event

We'll be leaving Manhattan from the church @ 3:30PM
(transportation is provided)
and there is no cost.

The event goes from 5:00PM-11:00PM. We can discuss leaving earlier if parents do not want their children home that late. Brittani can drop off students at their houses when we get back to Manhattan, if that's easier for parents.

Youth are asked to wear comfy clothes. There will be glow in the dark toilet paper dodge ball and glow in the dark devotion, along with many other activities!

Please let Brittani know by January 3rd if your child would like to attend, as we have to let Plymouth know how many we are bringing.

YGG FCUCC

FEB 2
9:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH ROOM

.....

MAR 15
9:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH ROOM

.....

APR 5
9:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH ROOM

.....

MAY 3
9:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH ROOM

“
SPRING 2020
REGULAR SCHEDULE
”

ALL EVENTS ARE
AT FCUCC UNLESS
OTHERWISE NOTED

.....

CONTACT BRITTANI
@ 785-643-3104 OR
BRITTANI@UCCMANHATTAN.ORG

January 26th-Rev. Traci Blackmon workshop @ Plymouth UCC in Lawrence

We'll be leaving Manhattan from the church @ 2:30PM
(transportation is provided) and there is no cost.

The event goes from 4:00PM-6:00PM.

This is a part of a weekend event Plymouth is hosting, and youth are invited to this workshop specifically, which is being put on by Rev. Blackmon. Learn more about Rev. Traci Blackmon at https://www.ucc.org/about-us_meet-our-officers.

Adult Sunday School

Holy Envy

Sundays, Jan. 12 through Jan. 26th (3 weeks) at 9:30am

Led by Pastor Sue

Join us in January as we finish up our study of *Holy Envy: Finding Faith in the God of Others* by Barbara Brown Taylor. Holy Envy is an exploration of Taylor's very personal journey in exploring the world's religions as she teaches a class on the faiths of the world. Even if you missed the first half of the book this past Fall, you are very welcome to join us in January. This is the type of class it's easy to jump into at any time. Our first topic will be Islam.

Living Fully Expressed In Love: A Four-Week Conversation on Life and Worship

Sundays at 9:30am, Feb. 2-23

What is worship? And what does it have to do with what happens from Monday through Saturday? Join us for this four-week series, led by Pastor Caela. Each week we will view a short film from TheWorkOfThePeople.com and share in a rich conversation together. From the publisher: "As we experience the divine wisdom blown through the incredible insight of Sara Miles, Ian Morgan Cron, Marlon Hall, Jonathan Brooks and Soong-Chan Rah, we'll engage our intellect, our emotions, and our bodies through guided conversational sessions. There is no expectation for what we will learn, only the hope that we will encounter a new space for learning and growth, and see what happens when we stretch into it." No need to do anything to prepare....just show up and let the Spirit lead

Tuesday Bible Book Club

On January 28 we begin reading *The First Paul* by Marcus Borg and Dominic Crossan.

We are so hopeful that you can join us for good fellowship, a LOT of chocolate, and active discussion each Tuesday from 11:30 to 1:00. Contact Pastor Sue with any questions.

Connect with us during the week!

Did you know our church has a vital presence on social media? We currently have over 600 people following our church's facebook page for updates about what's happening in our community. Follow us at [facebook.com/uccmanhattank](https://www.facebook.com/uccmanhattank)s. We are also on Instagram (@UCCManhattanKS) and 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 on her personal sermon blog (revcaela.blogspot.com) or you can watch for them on our Facebook page.

Second Helping

In November, Second Helping served 161 Sunday suppers and distributed 170 sack breakfast/lunches (that's 501 meals!). Volunteers who helped by cooking, planning, making desserts, and crewing totaled 49! Unfortunately, our numbers are increasing and we are no longer receiving Recovery food from the K-State training table. What to help? Besides donating cereal bars and oatmeal packets, we need creamed soups, pasta and pasta sauce, and canned vegetables. Like to bake? We could use cookies for our sack lunches. You can pack your homemade cookies, place in freezer proof bags, label, and stick in the freezer in the kitchen. Homemade are so much better! You can also sign up for bringing dessert some Sunday.

Cobb Corner — Going Green

Happy New Year! 2020 is a good opportunity to challenge ourselves toward positive and critically important action.

“You’ll never be bored
When you try something new
There’s really no limit
To what you can do!”
– Dr. Seuss

Charles Lindbergh was only 25 in 1927 when he made his solo flight across the Atlantic to become not only the first but also the youngest to be named *Time* magazine’s Person of the Year. Until this year when Swedish 16-year old Greta Thunberg became this year’s Person of the Year for her amazing work promoting urgent efforts to combat climate change.

Greta has sworn off flying, citing the emissions crisis surrounding flight. In Europe rail travel has soared and flights have decreased significantly. She has also inspired millions of school children around the world to strike for action on the climate crisis.

I think Charles Lindbergh would have been supportive. In his later years he became an environmentalist. “If I had to chose, “he said,” I would rather have birds than airplanes.” *Time*, December 23-30, 2019, p. 10.

Today, tens of millions are devoted to action against the perils of climate change. “Chill, Greta, chill” tweeted President Trump, the globe’s foremost denier of climate science. But his stance is increasingly reminiscent of flat-earth proponents.

I’m no scientist , but as a young girl in the 1950s my fear was nuclear war. I never dreamed that life on earth could end as a consequence of inaction, indifference, obliviousness, and selfishness. In the 1980s, I started including study of global warming or as Tom Friedman more aptly called it “global weirding” in my public policy classes. Al Gore’s *Earth in the Balance* and later his film “An Inconvenient Truth” were added to my course. But it is only in the 2020 election campaign that climate change has become a major issue.

The majority of Americans in contrast to Europeans don’t recycle or compost. Many continue to idle their cars at drive-up windows rather than simply parking and [continued next page]

going inside. A majority, myself included, too often drive when we could more cheaply and safely use convenient public transit. Consider how few even carry recyclable bags when they shop. Will 2020 be any different?

Please send me YOUR New Year's Resolutions for planet- or grandchildren-friendly actions. Greta can't do it all!

– Linda Richter

Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter.

Board of Mission

The Blessing Box Still Needs Filling

During the post-holiday return-to-normalcy, please remember that hunger is still the "normal" for many people in Manhattan. Our Blessing Box serves our community on a daily basis, and many folks depend on it. Please make a habit of helping keep it filled by dropping off cans of soup during the week, and/or bringing gifts of food each Sunday. If all members and friends of our church family brought two or three items each week, we could go a long way towards fighting hunger in Manhattan.

Thank you from the Board of Mission

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 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.

January 5, 2020

Dessert: Kerri Keller

Volunteers: Walker Sheldon, Mike Henry, Rita Henry, Shari Tedford

Chief Cook: Linda Thurston

Church Host: Pastor Caela

January 12, 2020

Dessert: Ann Smit

Volunteers: Walker Sheldon, Target Team

Chief Cook: Martha Mather

Church Host: Jennifer Edwards

January 19, 2020

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Manhattan Mennonite Church

Chief Cook: Robert Atchison

Church Host: Kathy Bleam

January 26, 2020

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: ESA Sorority

Chief Cook: Gretchen Lewis

Church Host: Jim Lewis

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

Welcome New Members

For more information, please contact the church office.

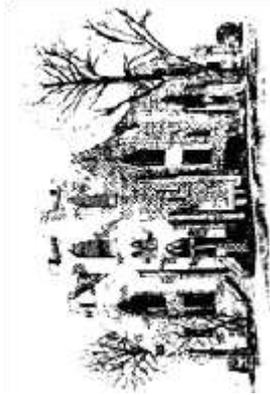
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>January</h1>			1 New Year's Day Offices Closed 5:15 Yoga 7:00 AA meeting	2 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	3 7:30 NA mtg	4
5 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Yoga+Donuts Bylaws Update 10:45 Worship and Communion <i>Fill the Breadbasket</i> 6:00 Second Helping	6 Epiphany 5:15 Yoga 7:30 NA mtg	7 11:30 Book Study 7:00 OWL info mtg	8 11:30 Lunch Bunch 5:15 Yoga 6:30 Vitality mtg 7:00 AA meeting	9 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	10 3:30 Lock In departure 7:30 NA mtg	11
12 Baptism of Christ 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Bylaws Update 6:00 Second Helping	13 5:15 Yoga 7:30 NA mtg	14 11:30 Book Study	15 5:15 Yoga 6:00 Leadership Kickoff 7:00 AA meeting	16 7:00 Taizé 7:00 MLK mtg 7:30 NA mtg	17 7:30 NA mtg	18
19 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Bylaws Update 6:00 Second Helping	20 MLK Jr. Day Offices Closed 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	21 11:30 Book Study	22 5:15 Yoga 7:00 Cabinet mtg 7:00 AA meeting	23 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	24 5:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 NA mtg	25
26 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Annual Meeting 2:30 Rev. Traci Blackmon wkshp (Lawrence) 6:00 Second Helping	27 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	28 11:30 Book Study	29 5:15 Yoga 7:00 AA meeting	30 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	31 7:30 NA mtg	

----- Ministry of the Decorative Scissors -----