



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 64 Number 8

August 2020

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

telephone 785-537-7006

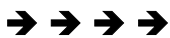
[www.uccmanhattan.org](http://www.uccmanhattan.org)

## Seasons Change: God's Love Remains

As we wrap up a summer like no other we've ever experienced...that comes after a spring like no other we've ever experienced...we are heading into a fall like no other we've ever experienced. I recently said to my spiritual director something like this, "I feel like every day this year is an opportunity for growth and development...whether I want to or not!"

We are all flexing our spiritual and emotional muscles in 2020...whether we want to or not. Tasks that used to seem simple have to be completely reinvented. And we are often doing the work of being human with reduced energy and stamina. Some days we feel victorious as we tap into reserves of strength we never knew we had...and other days we feel overwhelmed and inadequate.

One of my great joys in 2020 has been talking with many of you one-on-one and in small groups in phone calls and video chats. As I'm talking to you, I am hearing some of the same things over and over again: *[continued pg. 2]*



### Inside this Newsletter



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- Some days are hard, some days are okay (and some days are even great)
- We are learning to be grateful for so many things we once took for granted
- Connection with one another is so vital right now...and we are grateful for phone calls, notes in the mail, porch drops, and the technology that allows us to stay connected
- We are finding new ways to deepen our relationship with the Holy
- We are learning to trust that the Spirit can move through ANYTHING and is still very much alive and well....surprising us with her tenacity throughout this year

My hope and prayer for each of you during this summer-turning-into-fall time is simple and heartfelt: may you experience God's deep and abiding love for you as real and true, may you seek moments each day to rest in the comfort and care of Christ's abiding presence, and may you remain ever open to the Spirit's sneaky movements in your life, in your family's life, in our congregation, in our community, and in our world. And may you know that you are not alone on this journey....the people of First Congregational are right there with you and only a phone call away when you need a companion on the Way.

*Pastor Caela*

## **Vacation**

Pastor Caela will be on vacation from Monday, August 31 through Sunday, September 6th. During this time she will not be checking e-mail, text messages, or voicemail.

If you have a pastoral care need during this time, please contact one of our Ministers of Care, the church office, or Pastor Sue for assistance.

## Sharing and Caring

### *Prayers and Concerns*

- For more information, please contact the church office.

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



## Building Updates

Our staff members continue to work from home, but the office phone is being rerouted during office hours so please use the church phone number for questions (785-537-7006). Office mail is also being forwarded so donations may be mailed to the church at 700 Poyntz Avenue, Manhattan KS 66502. Please don't drop items off through the mail slot at the church, as it is not being monitored regularly. Please ensure that you write a return name and address on any correspondence you send. We do not open mail that is missing a return address and we want to make sure your letter reaches its intended recipient.

The only things happening in the building right now are Second Helping preparations and the 12-step recovery groups that meet in our building are beginning to meet again in person with safety precautions. We also have two church leaders who walk through the building each week to make sure everything is in order. As the COVID task force continues to make decisions about reopening our building we will keep everyone informed using the church e-mail list.

## Staying In Touch

“The church not a building, the church is not a steeple, the church is not a resting place....the church is the PEOPLE!” As we seek to continue to Be the Church we will continue to pass the peace in new ways. This week, think about the people who sit beside, behind, and in front of you in church. Connect with them by phone, email, or text to pass the peace of Christ and offer support and encouragement. Many people in our congregation are still mostly physically isolated, so checking in with one another to say hello is so important these days.

If you are not already up-to-speed on how to use our online church directory, please see the instructions on our website – [www.uccmanhattan.org/church-directory](http://www.uccmanhattan.org/church-directory) – and contact the church office for the password. You can also contact the church office to have a paper copy mailed to you.

# Blessing Box News

A local organization called the Food and Farm Council is partnering with Cristine Glendening, who manages the local Facebook Blessing Box page, to increase the number of Blessing Boxes in the Flint Hills area. They have enlisted our very own Bert Allen to build some of these Blessing Boxes. Bert's first two boxes have been put up at Peace Lutheran Church on Kimball Avenue and in Leonardville. Plus, he is working on more: one for Rock Hills Church, another in Leonardville, and one in Randolph. As new Blessing Boxes are requested and put up, you can go to the Facebook page and see where they are located.

First Congregational had the first church-supported Blessing Box in Manhattan, and we have been advocating through Common Table and the Food and Farm Council to have more organizations sponsor Blessing Boxes because the need is so great. Many thanks to the Food and Farm Council for taking on this project to help people in our area who have food insufficiency, and many thanks to Bert for his building skills, and many thanks to you, First Congregationalists, for keeping our Blessing Box well-supplied!

# Virtual Offering Plate

**While we may not be together on Sunday, the work and mission of First Congregational UCC continues.** Please continue to financially support the church as we offer sanctuary and support to each other and the wider community.



## Options for giving:

- 1) Mail your contribution to 700 Poyntz Ave., Manhattan, KS 66502.
- 2) Donate online via PayPal (no login required). Go to [uccmanhattan.org](http://uccmanhattan.org) and scroll down to the DONATE button.
- 3) Setting up a recurring online gift is a convenient way to provide consistent financial support to the church. Your bank may be able to do this for you OR you may contact the church office for a copy of our authorization form and we can set it up for you.

Thank you for your continued support and please contact the office if you have questions.

# Weekly Connection Points

**Practice Physical Distancing....not Social or Spiritual Distancing. Join us online! If you have trouble accessing any of these resources, please contact the church office so we can assist.**

**Sundays:** Worship at 10:45 a.m. via Facebook Live or call 1-669-900-6833 (toll call) and dial meeting ID 921-954-012# at the prompt for audio only. Meeting password is 66502. To find us on Facebook: go to our Facebook Page at 10:45 a.m. and scroll down until you see the most recent post. Look for the read box that says "Live" or "Premiere."

Fellowship Hour immediately following worship via Zoom | visit [uccmanhattan.org/online](http://uccmanhattan.org/online) for the Zoom link

**Mondays:** Monday night fellowship from 6:30-8:00 led by Deane Lehmann. Stop in and say hi or stay the whole time, show us your projects, color with us, hang out. | visit [uccmanhattan.org/online](http://uccmanhattan.org/online) for the Zoom link

**Tuesdays:** Tuesday Book Group from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. via Zoom | visit [uccmanhattan.org/online](http://uccmanhattan.org/online) for the Zoom link

**Wednesdays:** Youth Group for middle and high school youth from 7:00-8:30 p.m. via Zoom | visit [uccmanhattan.org/online](http://uccmanhattan.org/online) for the Zoom link

**Thursdays:** Prayers & Fellowship at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom | visit [uccmanhattan.org/online](http://uccmanhattan.org/online) for the Zoom link

Kids are also meeting (but not weekly) and Brandy sends out e-mail to families to share resources. If you're not receiving those updates, please email [brandy@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:brandy@uccmanhattan.org).



# Coping with Covid-19: A Personal Perspective

A friend of Bill Pallet's recently wrote a reflection on his experience living with COVID-19 and what he found to be most helpful in terms of support from his church community. We hope you'll take a moment to read the reflection from Larry A. Braskamp and learn from his experiences. We are grateful that he shared them with us. You can find a copy in the Friday Update e-mail dated July 31, 2020 or call/email the church office to request a copy via email or mail.

# Back to School Blessing: Your Photos Needed

Even though Back to School is going to look very different this year, we would like to include a special blessing in our church service on August 16th. As part of the blessing, we are planning a slideshow showing our teachers and students. To be included, please send a picture of whatever "back to school" means for you or your student this year. It could be a picture with a backpack, at a desk, with a computer- anything that represents what this looks like for you this year.

Not heading back to school? Those who are could use your PRAYERS. We invite you to drive near a school in our community and pause to pray for the students and all who work there. After you've prayed, snap a photo of the building or grounds and submit it to be used during our Back to School Blessing in worship.

**Please upload your photos via the church website at [uccmanhattan.org/upload-portal](https://uccmanhattan.org/upload-portal) OR e-mail to [office@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:office@uccmanhattan.org) by August 10.**

We also want to say THANK YOU to the Ministry of the Decorative Scissors who lovingly prepared backpack tags for our students again this year. Students, look for your tag in the mail sometime in August and know that your church family is praying for you as you return to school.

# Guest Preacher on August 9: The Rev. Brett Roes

Our Board of Deacons invites you to join us for worship on Sunday, August 9th as we welcome the Rev. Brett Roes to our (online) pulpit. Several people in our congregation know Brett well and we are excited to welcome them to worship with us.

## **About Brett:**

Brett Roes is a Little Apple native, but currently serves as Teaching Pastor at Canyon Lake United Methodist Church in Rapid City, SD. They've tried on many professional hats, but at the heart of it all, they are a storyteller. In 2015, they published a book, *My Name is Brett: Truths from a Trans Christian*, which has given them the privilege of visiting churches, schools, and conferences all across the country. Brett is a hubster to Pam, a dada to Bastian and Braely, a coffee connoisseur, and a seeker of beautiful words. If there's one thing they want you to know, it's this: God loves you.



## 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.



## Christian Education

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

### Midweek Bible Book Club

Tuesdays from 11:30am-1pm via Zoom  
Led by Sue Zschoche

The Tuesday book group is currently in-between books but still gathering for fellowship on Zoom at 11:30am every Tuesday and you're welcome to stop in. In September, they anticipate they will do a couple of weeks on Eastern Orthodoxy, led by Pastor Sue. Later in the fall they will likely be studying womanist theology with a book to be determined. All are welcome to join via Zoom and if you'd like more information, please reach out to [sue@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:sue@uccmanhattan.org).

### Adult Sunday School

9:30 a.m. via Zoom

**August 23 and 30: The Work of the People**  
**Led by Deane Lehmann**

We begin the school year with a two-week session using videos from *The Work of the People*. Deane Lehmann will share the video and invite others into the discussion each week. The videos planned for the end of August include "Signs of Aliveness" with Walter Brueggemann and "Infinitely Trustworthy" with James Finley. You can learn more about these two sessions by visiting our website <http://www.uccmanhattan.org/adult-education.html>.

**September 13-October 11: Forgiveness, the BIG stuff.**  
**Led by Barb Crooks and Marcia McFarland**

Class is based on *The Book of Forgiving: the Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World* by Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu.

# Second Helping and Covid-19

The first Second Helping To Go meal was served to our guests on March 15, a cool cloudy evening that was just several degrees above freezing. Sharon Purvis and a team from the First Christian Church initiated our first Covid-19 protocols, with Linda Thurston as church host. As virus-related mandates changed, Second Helping operations changed. Our operations have streamlined and become more efficient. We are now managing the meals with only three volunteers – a Head Cook and assistant cook (co-habiting individuals) in the kitchen and one volunteer in the front room putting together the to go bags. Reggie, our permanent host, then hands the bags to our guests. He also distributes disposable masks for those who don't have one. Volunteers come in and make the lunches during the week. And others bring supper desserts, cookies for lunches, and items like dinner rolls, muffins and biscuits for the Sunday meals.

Since our first To Go meal in March, we have provided 825 Sunday suppers and 720 lunch bags (through June only). Wonder what we serve? Here are some examples of Second Helping meals:

Oven-fried chicken, green bean casserole, pineapple slaw, dessert

Pulled pork sandwiches, pasta salad, baked beans, dessert

Meat loaf, mashed potato casserole, corn, coleslaw, dessert

Roast turkey, cheesy broccoli-rice casserole, 3-bean salad, dessert

A huge thank you to the head cooks, supper crews, bakers and others who have contributed to our Second Helping mission and feed those in our community who need a hot meal on Sunday nights. And thanks to Jackie Hinrichs-Toburen for picking up our grocery orders, Sue Zschoche for ordering service supplies. We are using recyclable or compostable products, thanks to funding from the Manhattan Community Foundation via Common Table.

Thank you to these volunteers:

**Cooks:**

Sharon Purvis  
Craig and Tracy Weston  
Di and Jackie Hinrichs-Toburen  
Brent Maner and Janine Stines  
Bob and Melissa Atchison  
Amanda and Nick Campanella  
Gretchen and Jim Lewis  
Karen and Rod Franz  
Krista Danielson and Daniel Rolles

**Sunday supper crew:**

First Christian Church  
Kim Zito  
Stephanie Swank  
Brandy McDonald  
Carolyn Myers  
Debbie Smith  
DeAdre Strouts  
Maureen Wells  
Rob Caffey  
Krista Caffey  
Mennonite Church  
Martha Mather  
William Carter  
Elin Maki  
Alexis Wilson  
Judy Aherns

**Bakers**

Shari Tedford  
Linda Thurston  
Janice Dinkel  
Cindy Shuman  
Donna Schenk-Hamlin  
Sarah Kaufman  
Gayle Doll  
Kerri Keller  
Ann Smit  
Emily Brueseke  
Cassidy Moreau  
Sara K Kearns  
Jennifer Edwards  
Amanda Campanella  
Linda Lewis  
Sophie Rolles  
Jane Marshall

**Lunch duty volunteers:**

Judy Ahrens and Carolyn Myers  
Shari and Randy Tedford  
Linda Thurston and Jane Marshall  
Jennifer Edwards  
Gretchen and Jim Lewis  
Brent Maner  
Martha Mather  
Carol Sevin

Want to be part of this awesome group? To volunteer for Sunday supper, contact Di Hinrichs-Toburen. Interested in lunch duty or baking? Contact Linda Thurston. If you are willing to make Sunday dessert for our guests, sign up on the church Sign-up Genius. If you are unable to volunteer, donations are always welcome. Our numbers are up and we are not receiving donated food at this time. Another BIG THANK YOU to all Second Helping volunteers and to those who donate in so many other ways!

## Cobb Corner — Going Green

“Man has been endowed with reason, with the power to create....But up to now he hasn't been a creator, only a destroyer. Forests keep disappearing, rivers dry up, wildlife's become extinct, the climate's ruined....” – Anton Chekov (1860-1904) *Uncle Vanya*, in *The Green Bible*, 1-108.

Clearly the problem is not new.

Feeling hot and cranky? Wishing you could take a cruise to the Arctic? Don't. All but 2 days this month it has been cooler in Kansas! Moreover, the Arctic heat has meant that millions of tons of permafrost are melting along with Greenland's ice sheet and Antarctica's melting which will accelerate flooding in coastal cities around the world. Many will submerge in the next 30 years.

Kansas may not sink but parts are in severe drought, the Ogallala aquifer is being dangerously depleted and some lakes and rivers are in poor condition from algae blooms and pollution.

So...President Trump has continued to gut major environmental legislation. In mid-July the President announced an executive order to exempt businesses and government from the 50-year old National Environmental Policy Act. It requires environmental impact review of such things as pipelines, fracking operations, power plants, coal mines, etc. Particularly hard hit will be poor communities. The decision is part of his promise to deregulate the economy.

Are we paying attention? What are we as supposed stewards of Planet Earth doing? Consider this small sample of cover stories and special issues in the mainstream press:

- *Time*: “Our Sinking Planet,” June 24,2019;
- *Audubon*: “Birds Can't Fight Climate Change. We Can” Fall, 2019;

- *The New York Times Magazine*, Special Issue: “Losing Earth: Thirty Years Ago We Could Have Saved the Planet,” July 30, 2018.
- *Mother Jones*: “Only Massive Climate Research and Development Can Save Us Now ;” Jan.-Feb., 2020.
- *Mother Jones*: “The Climate Syndrome: What Happens When You Know Too Much.” July-August, 2019.
- *National Geographic*: Nov.,2015, “Cool It, The Climate Issue”
- *Green American*: any issue
- *Consumer Reports*: “How to Eat Less Plastic: You May Be Consuming as Much as a Credit Card’s Worth of Plastic a Week,” June, 2020.

More hopeful is *Time*’s Special Climate Issue, Sept.23, 2019, “2050: How Earth Survived”

Less hopeful is *Time*’s new Special Climate Issue: July, 20/27, 2020: “The Defining Year for the Planet.”

You are welcome to borrow any of these issues from me. They are just the tip of the iceberg....

– *Linda Richter*

*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 40-50 people each week. Many of you have helped with this mission in a variety of ways, and that is much appreciated!



## New Volunteers Needed

I am seeking to find volunteers for the Sunday evening 2nd Helping dinners. Traditionally, many of our volunteers are more mature congregants or college students from K-State. Given the physical closure of the University and the high-risk factors associated with the Coronavirus, we are finding ourselves short on volunteers, therefore I am reaching out to ask each of you to consider your willingness to volunteer at 2nd Helping.

Currently, the meals are prepared in the church, but are distributed outside of the church in to-go containers to help minimize the risk to our outside volunteers and neighbors. There are also a number of other protocols being put into place for the purpose of safeguarding all involved with 2nd Helping.

Further, while we value anyone who is willing to volunteer, for the safety of all we ask you not to volunteer if you are exhibiting any symptoms of COVID meet any of the quarantine criteria below. We also strongly recommend that those in the high-risk category not volunteer as well.

**If you are unable to volunteer at Second Helping, we still welcome your support.** Monetary donations can be made via PayPal on the website or mailed to the church (First Congregational UCC, 700 Poyntz Ave., Manhattan, KS 66502). Thank you for your support of this important ministry,

Di Hinrichs-Toburen, Ph.D.  
Second Helping Volunteer Coordinator  
diane.hinrichs@pawnee.org

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
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[uccmanhattan.org](http://uccmanhattan.org)

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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<b>2</b> 10:45 Worship and Communion online 6:00 Second Helping	<b>3</b> 6:30 Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	<b>4</b> 11:30 Book Study	<b>5</b> 11:00 Lunch Bunch 5:15 Deacons 7:00 Youth Group 7:00 AA Meeting	<b>6</b> 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	<b>7</b> 7:30 NA mtg	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> 10:45 Worship online 6:00 Second Helping	<b>10</b> 6:30 Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	<b>11</b> 11:30 Book Study	<b>12</b> 5:30 Mission, CE 6:30 Justice & Witness 7:00 Facilities 7:00 AA Meeting	<b>13</b> 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	<b>14</b> 7:30 NA mtg	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> 10:45 Worship online 6:00 Second Helping	<b>17</b> 6:30 Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	<b>18</b> 11:30 Book Study	<b>19</b> 7:00 Cabinet mtg 7:00 AA Meeting	<b>20</b> 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	<b>21</b> 5:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 NA mtg	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:45 Worship online 6:00 Second Helping	<b>24</b> 6:30 Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	<b>25</b> 11:30 Book Study	<b>26</b> 7:00 AA Meeting	<b>27</b> 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	<b>28</b> 7:30 NA mtg	<b>29</b>
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