



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 64 Number 9

September 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

#BeTheChurch – Giving Thanks for your Ministry

I want to thank you for your ministry. A congregation like ours is able to #BeTheChurch because of YOU and your participation and commitment to our shared ministry. These past five months I've had many people say to me, "Your job must have changed a lot with the pandemic, huh?" And, yes, that's true. But it's also true that everyone's relationship with our congregation has shifted.

Our leaders have met and prayed and continue to work hard to guide us faithfully in this new world. People have stepped up to volunteer in new capacities - becoming Second Helping volunteers, learning to record music and spoken words for worship, leading classes and prayer on Zoom and Facebook Live. Others among us have become more deeply committed to things we were already doing before - teaching our children, filling the Blessing Box, showing up at board and committee meetings [continued pg. 2]



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to do the important work of dreaming and planning. Many of you have told me about how you've been more intentional about your own prayer life and about checking in with others around you who might need some additional care and connection.

You've learned to use Zoom or Facebook. You've been patient as we've learned how to worship in new ways. You've been willing to try things you never would have thought you'd try before. You've set up recurring giving or faithfully mailed your financial gifts. You've porch-dropped brownies, notes of care, fresh veggies, and more. You've continued to show up in ways big and small to ensure our congregation continues to be a "wellspring of support" in our community.

I am so very grateful for the ways you've shown up for one another and for our congregation. And if you haven't been able to "show up" much these past few months because you've been overwhelmed, I also want to say: that's okay, too. I hope you'll reach out to me or someone else in the congregation so we can help support you.

Whatever your life looks like right now, it is my hope and prayer that you will know and feel God's magnificent, overflowing, ridiculous, boundless love....and that you will continue to find ways to share that love with those around you. The world needs each and every one of us to allow ourselves to be loved by God and to share that great love with others. You are a force for health and peace in this congregation, our community, and our world. I give thanks to God for you.

Pastor Caela

Vacation

Pastor Caela is on vacation from Monday, August 31 through Sunday, September 6th. During this time she is not 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.

Update on Neighborhood Groups

As we move into a new school year and schedules shift and change, most of our Neighborhood Groups will probably become a bit quieter. If your group is chatty and wants to keep connecting on a regular basis, please do! And, of course, if you have needs at any time, your Neighborhood Group is still a great place to start. Feeling the need for more connection? We would be happy to make connections for folks who want to connect via text, email, postal mail or other creative ideas you have. You can send a message to the church office to let us know.

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



Congregational Meetings Are Coming Soon

Our annual Congregational Meetings will soon be upon us. The Fall meeting will be November 15. The time has not yet been set. At that meeting the slate of officers and committee members as well as a proposed budget will be presented. In this new age of Coronavirus, we will be making some adjustments so that the meetings can go on safely and efficiently within the parameters of our Covid-19 policies.

We will not meet in-person for the meetings but will be hosting a Zoom meeting inviting all members to take part in the informational part of the meeting. All documents and information that will be shared on Zoom will also be published and made available to those unable to access Zoom or not be able to attend that day.

How to vote is still in the planning stage. It is important to the church leadership that everyone eligible will have the opportunity to vote so we are exploring ways to proceed. We welcome any ideas or thoughts that can help us devise the best system to make sure all members can vote on items presented at the meeting.

The cabinet will discuss and decide on exactly how the Congregational meetings will take place and how voting will be done at their September meeting, so any thoughts need to be shared as soon as soon as possible. Please contact Sara K. Kearns or Janet George to offer suggestions or if you have questions. The deadline for submitting suggestions is September 9.

It is our goal that all members have a chance to be part of the Congregational meeting.

Your Moderators

Worship Road Trip – Sun., Sept. 6th

We will be going on a road trip for worship on Sunday, Sep. 6th. We will be worshipping with Plymouth Congregational Church (UCC) in Lawrence. Like us, Plymouth is a part of the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference of the UCC and is a progressive, Open & Affirming congregation that believes following Jesus means standing up for justice and advocating for those on the margins.

How to worship on September 6th:

Plymouth's service will be livestreamed here at 9:30 a.m. at <https://www.plymouthlawrence.com/livestream>) on Sunday morning. We will also share a link to the service on our Facebook page on Sunday morning. If you prefer to worship at our regular time of 10:45 a.m. you can visit Plymouth's website to watch the service when you're ready.

How to fellowship on September 6th:

We will still gather for our regular Zoom Fellowship Hour at 11:45 a.m. Go to www.uccmanhattan.org/online.html to connect We hope you can join us for a time of conversation and connection!

Even with all of the challenges of 2020 it can be uplifting to take advantage of some of the things we can do now that we couldn't before...worshiping online with another congregation over 200 miles from here is certainly one of those things.



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). U.S. Mail is being picked up several times a week, so you can send correspondence to 700 Poyntz Avenue, Manhattan KS 66502. 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

Welcome New Members



Nell and Rachael King

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 – and contact the church office for the password. You can also contact the church office to have a paper copy mailed to you.

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 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 for the Zoom link

Mondays: "Monday School" for children at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Contact Brandy for all the details.

Tuesdays: Tuesday Book Group from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. via Zoom | visit 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 for the Zoom link

Thursdays: Prayers & Fellowship at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom | visit 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.

WEEKLY CONNECTION POINTS

- Sundays: Adult Sunday School, Worship & Fellowship Hour
- Mondays: "Monday School" for Kids via Zoom
- Tuesdays: Bible Book Club via Zoom
- Wednesdays: Youth Group via Zoom
- Thursdays: Prayers & Fellowship via Zoom

UCCMANHATTAN.ORG/ONLINE

Learn about Black Lives Movement (BLM MHK)

The Justice and Witness Board is collaborating with Black Lives Movement (BLM MHK) in Manhattan. BLM MHK is currently focusing on voter registration and collaborating with community organizations and leaders to gather allies. “One of the biggest issues that we would like to tackle is to make sure people are heard and acknowledged, and that we have allies who are aware of certain issues that are affecting marginalized communities, and getting people mobilized to help” Teresa Parks, BLM MHK Co-founder.

We invite you to join our very own Jennifer Edwards to meet Teresa Parks & Jaynae Cole, co-founders of BLM MHK, and learn more about how we can be more involved in anti-racism work here in Manhattan. There are two video interviews posted on our website in the News & Updates section. We hope you’ll watch them and share with your friends.

KO Class on White Privilege

Our friends at Plymouth UCC in Lawrence are inviting anyone in the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference to join them for an online class using the UCC's White Privilege Curriculum. Space is limited, so please sign up soon if you're interested. Classes will be on Wednesday evenings beginning September. 16th. You'll find more details and can sign up here: <https://kocucc.org/ucc-white-privilege-curriculum-lets-talk/>



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.

Children's Sunday School is back... on Monday evenings starting September 7th!

First and third Sunday Cassidy and Tracey will be utilizing a special Beatitudes curriculum to take our kids through these important bible lessons (groups will be divided age 3-3rd grade and 4th-6th grade). On the other Mondays, we will join for a laid back time of games, fellowship, and catching up. Zoom meeting details will go out with the weekly children's ministry emails. If you aren't receiving these and would like to be, or have any other questions, please email Brandy at brandy@uccmanhattan.org.

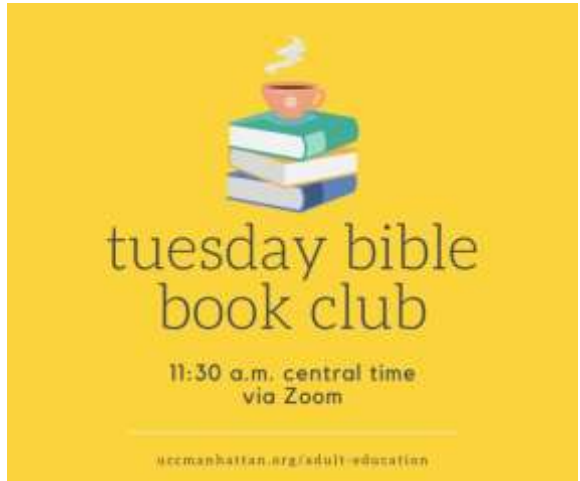


Midweek Bible Book Study

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.



Adult Sunday School

9:30 a.m. via Zoom (link available at uccmanhattan.org/online)

September 6 - NO CLASS - Labor Day Weekend

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. Please contact the church office if you need assistance finding a copy of the book. We'd be happy to order it for you.

Cobb Corner — Going Green

“I believe in my heart that faith in Jesus Christ can and will lead us beyond an exclusive concern for the well-being of other human beings to the broader concern for ... every other living creature on the face of the earth.”

– John Wesley (1701-91) *The Green Bible*, Introduction-105

Good news for the environment! The Great Outdoors Act was signed into law providing significant funds to partially support our national parks. It begins to address years of bipartisan underfunding.

Unfortunately, the president recently repealed a regulation protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It is now immediately open for oil and gas exploitation – two commodities we have in surplus! Moreover, far more people are employed in alternative energy production than in oil and gas.

Thanks to the Schells, I received the incredible Earth Day double issue of the National Geographic (April, 2020). Half explores “How We Saved the World” and the other half “How We Lost the Planet.” Perhaps the most important advice in the optimistic portion : “We cannot solve the climate crisis by only being good consumers. But we can make things better by being good citizens.”

This is especially good advice during this pandemic and election year. By voting as if our planet depended on it we can make a difference. Consider a mail-in-ballot application from the county clerk’s office (537-6300). Evidence suggests mail-in-voting is not susceptible to fraud and not vulnerable to old, sometimes faulty, voting machines that our current Senate refuses to fund upgrading. If you voted by mail in the primary and also signed up for the general election, you should be set.

If you do go to the polls, try early voting when lines will be short. I prefer a paper ballot which like mail-in-ballots cannot be hacked. Finally, if you are not at high risk, consider working at the polls. There is an anticipated shortage of workers.

Finally, there is an expected higher than usual turnout of younger voters. *The National Geographic* notes their increased sense of vulnerability to the planet’s fate. – *Linda Richter*

Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter

Calling All Singers! KO Conference Virtual Choir

The Kansas-Oklahoma Conference of the United Church of Christ is recruiting singers for a conference-wide virtual choir. The first goal of this choir is to prepare pieces for airing during the virtual meeting of The KO Conference from October 9 - 11 this fall; video will be shown at the final worship service on Sunday morning, October 11.



This is a great opportunity for folks who love to sing, whether or not you've been in our church choir on Sunday mornings. There will be online choir rehearsals from 7 to 8 pm on Wednesday evenings, beginning either the last week of August or in early September. Please contact Gretchen Lewis if you would like to learn more.

KO Conference Updates

The Kansas-Oklahoma Conference of the UCC will be moving our annual meeting to a virtual format this year. Look for details in the conference eNews about how to participate in all or some of this event in mid-October.

The KO Conference made technology grants available to congregations to assist with new expenses related to online gatherings. We are pleased to report that we've received a grant of \$1500 to assist us with our video production for our online services.

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.

Conversations on Race and Reconciliation: Listening to Local Voices

Who's Thriving and Who's Surviving in MHK?
Experiences of Health and Economic Resources
in our Community.

Monday, September 14, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Virtual Event - On line registration required:
Registration and additional details to be posted on
Facebook: Conversations on Race and Reconciliation
www.facebook.com/manhattanksConversations
or: @manhattanksConversations

ALL ARE WELCOME

Deepening Understanding
Developing New Perspectives
Discussing Community Concerns

Sponsored in part by the Board of
Justice and Witness



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!



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

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 11:30 Book Study ----- Caela vacation -----	2 11:00 Lunch Bunch 5:15 Deacons 7:00 Youth Group 7:00 AA Meeting	3 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	4 7:30 NA mtg	5
6 10:45 Worship and Communion online with Plymouth Congregational 6:00 Second Helping	7 Labor Day Offices closed 6:00 Children's "Monday" School 7:30 NA mtg	8 11:30 Book Study	9 5:30 Mission, CE 6:30 Justice & Witness 7:00 Facilities 7:00 AA Meeting	10 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	11 7:30 NA mtg	12
13 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:45 Worship online 6:00 Second Helping	14 6:00 Children's "Monday" School 6:30 Conversations on Race Reconciliation 7:30 NA mtg	15 11:30 Book Study	16 7:00 Cabinet mtg 7:00 AA Meeting	17 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	18 7:30 NA mtg	19
20 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:45 Worship online 6:00 Second Helping	21 6:00 Children's "Monday" School 7:30 NA mtg	22 11:30 Book Study	23 7:00 AA Meeting	24 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA mtg	25 5:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 NA mtg	26
27 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:45 Worship online 6:00 Second Helping	28 6:00 Children's "Monday" School	29 11:30 Book Study	30 7:00 AA Meeting	<h1>September</h1>		