



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 65 Number 2

February 2021

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 Prayers at 7:00 P.M.

700 Poyntz Avenue

Manhattan, Kansas 66502

telephone 785-537-7006

www.uccmanhattan.org

“Lengthen Your Faith this Lent”

Many have joked that 2020 felt like the longest, Lentiest-Lent ever. When we’ve lost so much and struggled so mightily this past year, turning the calendar to see the season of Lent might cause us to groan if we think of this season primarily as one for fasting, giving things up, or making sacrifices. While all of those traditions are certainly a part of Lent, there are other ways to think of this season, too. Lent is a time when the days lengthen and when we think about seedlings stretching down deep into the soil to find nutrients for growth. Many Christians choose to add in a new spiritual practice or lean into one that’s already working for them. There’s no one “right way” to do Lent! If you’re interested in trying something new this year, we’ve curated some excellent options for you. *[continued pg. 2]*



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I hope you'll prayerfully consider leaning into one of these Lenten practices AND we invite you to take two minutes to tell us what your plans are by using the brief survey at uccmanhattan.org/lent. This will help us know how we can support you and help connect you to other people who might be doing the same thing (if you'd like).

Illustrated Ministry Family Prayer Devotional

Who: For those who like hands-on learning, talking through their faith with others, and especially great for kids/youth

What: Each week features a short passage of scripture, reflection, coloring pages, and an activity to do with family. Family can be the people in your household, extended family that lives far away, or your chosen family of church or other friends. Perhaps you'd like to plan a weekly Zoom gathering with your siblings who live far away, grandkids, or best friends from college days? Or maybe you'd like to find a couple of friends from our church family you can meet with on a weekly basis for the activities?

How: We will have them available at the Lent Pick Up with Drive Through Communion on Feb. 7th. Or you can e-mail the church office to get a PDF sent to you, pick up a hard copy of the devotional in the plastic literature box outside the church office after Feb. 7, or request a hard copy in the mail. Looking for a group to gather with? Fill out the survey at uccmanhattan.org/lent and we'll help connect you with others.

Center for Action and Contemplation Daily Meditation

Who: For those who love words, deep thoughts, theology, and contemplating their faith solo

What: Richard Rohr and friends provide a short, thought-provoking text each day from the Center for Action and Contemplation. Many in our congregation have used this devotional over the years and find it enriching. Can be used on your own or you might want to find a friend to partner with for discussion!

How: You can visit their website each day or sign up for a daily or weekly e-mail to arrive in your inbox. www.cac.org

Online Retreats with the Sophia Center in Atchison

Who: For those who might not be looking for a daily practice but would enjoy a one-time retreat

What: The Sophia Center in Atchison has done an amazing job pivoting to online offerings this past year, which means we can all benefit even though we live several hours away. Options include Praying with the Mystics, Guided Meditation, Dorothy Day & Thomas Merton, Music & Contemplation and more. Some are free and some have a suggested donation amount.

How: See the options and register online at <https://www.mountosb.org/program-offerings/>

Small Groups with First Congregational UCC

Who: For those who miss church friends, want to pray with others, or enjoy talking about their faith with a trusted group of amazing humans:

What: Consider joining a small group at church for the season of Lent. You could attend the Tuesday class on Zoom, make it a priority to come to Prayers & Fellowship every Thursday night on Zoom, or join the Lent Adult Sunday School class on Amy-jill Levine's book, Short Stories by Jesus.

How: You'll find the Zoom links at uccmanhattan.org/online. Or just contact us for more details

Curators of Inspiration

Who: For those who want to seek beauty, enjoy photography, poetry, music, and art; and spend time on Facebook

What: This group of Facebook users looks for inspiring music, art, poetry, photography and more that can be shared with others via our public Facebook page. We also love it when people share photos of places where they are inspired by beauty in their own day-to-day lives.

How: [Contact Pastor Caela](#) to learn more about this group and how it can be a rich spiritual practice in your life this Lent.

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.

Vacation

Pastor Caela will be on vacation from Monday, Feb. 8 through Sunday, Feb. 14. 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.

Connecting with Pastor Caela

Pastor Caela IS available to meet with you outdoors, masked, and socially distanced. She is also available on the phone or Zoom, of course. Caela keeps her own calendar, so if you'd like to talk the simplest thing is to e-mail, call, or text to set up a time. Mondays through Wednesdays are typically best for routine meetings, as Thursdays are used for sermon and worship preparation and Friday-Saturday are her days off. Caela tries to honor work-life balance by responding to non-urgent text and voicemail messages only during regular work hours. Please note that if you ever have an emergency between the hours of 10pm-7am you will need to CALL Pastor Caela, not rely on text messages, as she does not receive them overnight.

Sacred Music on Demand

Looking for some sacred music to get you through your day? We have a page on our website that features a selection of offerings from recent worship services. It also has a link to our YouTube channel where you'll find more music: www.uccmanhattan.org/music.html

Building and Staffing Reminders

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.

Second Helping preparations and the 12-step recovery groups that meet in our building continue to be the only events happening in our building. We also have two church leaders who walk through the building each week to make sure everything is in order. You can find the most recent COVID-related updates and policies at uccmanhattan.org/COVID.

New For 2021 - Join Us for First Sunday Zoom Worship Beginning Feb. 7

When we gathered for worship on Zoom during the Christmas season, many of us found we deeply enjoyed the sense of connection we felt as we saw familiar faces on our screens. The Deacons recently decided we'd like to try gathering for worship via Zoom on the FIRST Sunday of each month, beginning Feb. 7th. This will allow us to share Communion together in real time in a way that feels more intimate than our regular Facebook service. It also gives our worship leaders (staff and volunteers) a break from video production and allows us to save costs on video editing each month. Worshiping via Zoom also means those who aren't into doing pre-recorded videos can assist in leading worship by reading scripture or sharing the benediction or call to offering by simply unmuting! Glory!

We know that some folks will prefer our Facebook Live services and others Zoom. Each platform has its advantages and drawbacks. We are probably ALL in agreement that we long for the day when we can gather together safely in our Sanctuary. Until then, we will continue to faithfully and prayerfully gather for worship in new and creative ways, confident that the Holy Spirit can work with any platform.



Options for Giving

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.

Communion Options for February 7

We invite you to join us for Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month. Weather permitting, we will have two opportunities for receiving the elements:

- 1. Communion at Home @ 10:45 a.m. :** we will offer Communion during our Sunday morning online worship service which will be via ZOOM and you can bring your own elements to eat and drink. Meeting ID 899 1685 3476, Password 66502.
- 2. Drive Through Communion from 12:15-12:45 p.m.:** drive through the alley behind the church building to receive prepackaged Communion elements (no sign up needed). In case of inclement weather, an announcement will be made on our website, e-mail list, and social media on Sunday morning.

When you come through for Communion, it's also time for our Lent Pick Up. You can pick up ashes to use for Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17th) and a hard copy of the Illustrated Ministry Family Prayer Devotional. You can also drop off donations for the Second Helping as we "fill the breadbasket" the first Sunday of each month.



Lenten Devotionals Available Beginning February 7th

Our common Lenten devotional this year is the Illustrated Ministry Family Prayer Devotional. Each week of this free devotional features a short passage of scripture, reflection, coloring pages, and an activity to do with family. Family can be the people in your household, extended family that lives far away, or your chosen family of church or other friends. Perhaps you'd like to plan a weekly Zoom gathering with your siblings who live far away, grandkids, or best friends from college days? Or maybe you'd like to find a couple of friends from our church family you can meet with on a weekly basis for the activities?

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Lent Pick Up
Sunday, Feb. 7
12:15-12:45 p.m.

Pick up your ashes & at-home worship guide for Ash Wednesday and get a hard copy of the Illustrated Ministry Family Prayer Devotional.

see & know

uccmanhattan.org/lent

First Congregational on YouTube

We are now posting our weekly worship videos to our YouTube channel to make them easier for people to find. We would like to get a "custom URL" for our YouTube page but need 100+ subscribers to be eligible. Would you pop by our YouTube channel and subscribe to help us out? Thanks! Visit uccmanhattan.org/youtube to find the link to our channel and subscribe.

Worship Road Trip - Sunday, Feb. 14th

While Pastor Caela is on vacation, the Deacons would like to invite you to join them for a "road trip" to Colonial UCC in Prairie Village on Sunday, Feb. 14th. While many churches in the KO Conference are continuing to worship online for safety reasons, it's a great opportunity to connect with other congregations in our conference and see the diversity in worship throughout Kansas and Oklahoma.

How to worship on Feb. 14th:

We hope you'll worship with Colonial UCC in real time at 8:30 or 10:30 a.m. You'll find their livestream at <https://colonialucc.online.church>. You can also worship on demand via Colonial's YouTube channel at <https://bit.ly/CCYouTubeVid>. Links to both of these options are available at <https://www.colonialucc.org>

How to fellowship on Feb. 14th:

We will still gather for our regular Zoom Fellowship Hour at 11:30 a.m. We hope you can join us for a time of conversation and connection! You'll find that Zoom link at uccmanhattan.org/online



Save the Dates: Lent and Easter 2021

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 2021, the following dates will guide our journey through Lent and Eastertide:

February 17: Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent

February 21: First Sunday of Lent

March 28: Palm Sunday

April 1: Maundy Thursday

April 2: Good Friday

April 3: Holy Saturday

April 4: Easter Sunday

May 23: Pentecost Sunday, which ends Eastertide

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.

See & Know –

Photos Needed For Lenten Worship

What is the Spirit inviting us to SEE during this holy season? What does God want us to KNOW deep in our bones? During Lent we will journey alongside Jesus in the Gospel of Luke - seeing what he sees and pondering what he might want us to know about how to live and love. We need YOUR help getting ready for worship! We are seeking:

1. Photos of open/outstretched hands - might be a photo of you or someone you know (make sure you have permission to use the photo!). These photos represent the invitation to SEE - to be open to receive what God wants to show us.
2. Photos of hands resting on your belly or heart - These photos represent what we hold close to our hearts and KNOW deep in our guts.
3. Photos that complete these two sentences. “I see....” and “I know....” Write down on a piece of paper your full sentence that begins, “I see...” Snap a photo. Write down on another piece of paper your full sentence that begins, “I know...” Snap a photo. Submit both photos and they may be used in worship or on social media. Examples: “I see people who lack access to food, clean water, health care.” “I know that God cares for the poor and wants us to build a more just world.”

Please share your photos at <http://www.uccmanhattan.org/upload-portal>.



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: Adult Sunday School via Zoom at 9:30 a.m. | visit uccmanhattan.org/online for the Zoom link.

Worship at 10:45 a.m. via Facebook Live. 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 red box that says "Live" or "Premiere." The worship service is also posted to the church's YouTube account each Sunday morning. Visit uccmanhattan.org/youtube for the link.

Fellowship Hour immediately following worship via Zoom | visit uccmanhattan.org/online for the Zoom link

Sunday School for kids aged 3 through 6th grade at 4:00 p.m. Contact Brandy@uccmanhattan.org for the link.

Tuesdays: Tuesday Book Group from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 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

For more information about kids and youth activities, contact Brandy@uccmanhattan.org (age 3 through 6th grade) or Brittani@uccmanhattan.org (6th-12th grades)."

WEEKLY CONNECTION POINTS

Sundays: Adult Sunday School, Worship & Fellowship Hour
Kids Gathering via Zoom

Tuesdays: Bible Book Club via Zoom

Thursdays: Prayers & Fellowship via Zoom

UCCMANHATTAN.ORG/ONLINE

Seeking new (and returning!) faces for offering, benediction, and scripture readings!

We have gotten to receive the gifts of many congregation members and friends sharing with us during the Sunday services. I know that one of my favorite parts of the service is getting to see these faces I miss so much. We would love to continue seeing the faces we have and add on new faces to our rotation!

Recording a video for worship is easy. You can use a computer, camera, or even phone to record your contribution, no high tech skills required. If you prefer to simply read something scripted, scripture reading or offering is a perfect fit for you! If you'd prefer to share something that you find, we are happy to provide resources for benediction (or you can share something that holds meaning for you!)

If you are interested in being put on the list for offering or benediction, please contact Brandy at brandy@uccmanhattan.org. Sign up for scripture reading can be found at <http://www.uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups.html>

If you think you might be interested but are feeling unsure, we are here to help! Contact Brandy and she can walk you through what you would need to do. Remember that no one is looking for perfection; we are just looking to see your face and hear your voice!



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.

Adult Sunday School Class

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

Watch for updated information in the weekly, Friday emails as well as online at www.uccmanhattan.org.

January 24-February 14: Galatians 5:22-23. Fruits of the Spirit, part one.

February 21-March 28: Short Stories by Jesus, Amy-Jill Levine.

April 11-May 9: Fruits of the Spirit, part two.



Midweek Bible Book Study

Tuesdays from 11:30am-1pm via Zoom

New book coming soon!

Led by Sue Zschoche




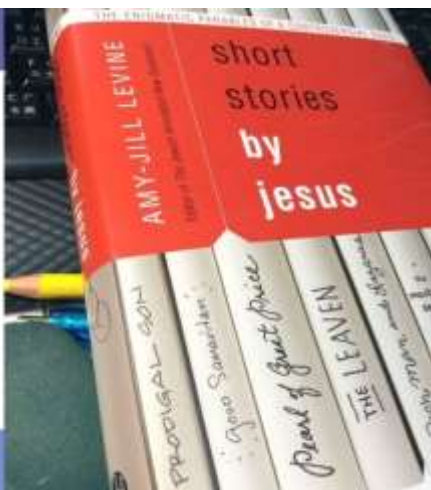
Contact Pastor Sue with any questions at sue@uccmanhattan.org.

LENTEN ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Short Stories by Jesus

by Amy-Jill Levine

Feb. 21 - Mar. 28 at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom
 UCCMANHATTAN.ORG/ADULT-EDUCATION

Contact Brandy at brandy@uccmanhattan.org for more information!

Kids are moving to Sundays at 4 pm on Zoom!




1st and 3rd Sunday



2nd, 4th, and 5th Sunday

Cobb Corner — Going Green

“E. O. Wilson said God made a mistake when he gave the highest intelligence to meat-eating humans. Dolphins and whales would have been wiser choices.”

– Jane Fonda, *What Can I Do*, 2020.

Speaking of animals, Valentine’s Day is coming up. I suggest we show some love to the T. Russell Reitz Animal Shelter and our Sunset Zoo. City revenues are down, zoo admissions have cratered, and the shelter could use our help.

Typically, several times a year our church will collect Purina food, treats, toys, towels and blankets, carriers and cleaning supplies for the shelter. We also collected toilet paper rolls and old spices for zoo animal enrichment. That didn’t happen in 2020. Let’s start the new year out with some donations in early February! You can take these yourself to the zoo and shelter or bring them to the Richters (2383 Grandview Terrace). Ring the doorbell and leave them on the front porch. We’ll deliver them in the name of our church.

Also, as we shelter in place at home, let’s once again consider the yard. An inordinate amount of land in the U.S. is devoted to manicured, pesticide-rich, fertilizer-laden lawns. Water, seed and weekends are also involved. In 1994, after my cancer surgery, we decided to simplify our lives. We started with the lawn. For the last 27 years our 2/3 of an acre now takes only about 20 minutes to mow.

We have saved money, have lots of flowers and perennials to share and an abundance of birds, monarchs, and bees. We do spend about as much time in the yard planting, weeding, and harvesting flowers and vegetables. We overdid the peonies so see us if you need some.

What if this spring we reduced our lawns by 10-20%? In their place we could put bushes and plants beloved by endangered bees, butterflies and some birds. Perhaps we add a tree. The city will provide excellent trees free and plant them if they are within about eight feet of the curb. They’ve planted three for us. A damaged one was removed by the city after a tornado and replaced with a lovely maple.

Native grasses, perennial fruits like strawberries, and a summer vegetable garden can add variety. No yard? Plants and a bird feeder can enhance a front porch or balcony. Pots of basil, mint, and oregano are pretty – and their contents are tasty! In the process of saving water, energy and pesticides, we can provide a healthier environment for ourselves and our community. We can bring the extra to Second Helping!

These are tiny, not sufficient steps. Bold policies and world-wide implementation will be necessary to protect the earth. But here as we shelter at home we can make a start.

– Linda Richter

P.S. See “Our Campaign for Natural Landscaping,” *Mother Earth News*, Oct.-Nov. 2020 at MPL.

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. 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.

Introducing: Marlon Jackson, Second Helping Host

We are excited to share that Marlon Jackson has been serving as our staff host for Second Helping since the middle of November. He has lived in the Manhattan area for about two years and is currently in ministry in several other places in our community. First, Marlon works as the House Director at the Hezekiah House, which is a part of Working Men of Christ.



This partnership with Job Corps provides mentorship for young men who are seeking employment and transitioning to life as independent adults. Marlon also works at Be Able Community, a new nonprofit located downtown. Be Able engages with those in adversity by creating connections, cultivating skills, and opening doors of opportunity. Finally, Marlon works as the staff host at several other meal sites with Common Table. We are so fortunate that Marlon is so well-connected in our community and has existing relationships with many of our neighbors to come to Second Helping each week. When you see Marlon at Second Helping, please join us in giving him a warm welcome. Many thanks to the Board of Mission and the search committee who helped us fill this important position (Gretchen Lewis, Jean Steiner, Linda Thurston).

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 60-70 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." If you are interested in learning more about either of these positions, or volunteering in other ways, please contact:

Shari Tedford

Second Helping Volunteer Coordinator

tedfordsl@gmail.com

February 7, 2021

Head Cook: Bob Atchison

Asst Cook: Melissa Atchison

Crew Member: Sara Haggard

February 14, 2021

Head Cook: Amanda Campanella

Asst Cook: Nick Campanella

Crew Member: Martha Mather

February 21, 2021

Head Cook: Karen Franz

Asst Cook: Rod Franz

Crew Member: Linda Lewis

February 28, 2021

Head Cook: Gretchen Lewis

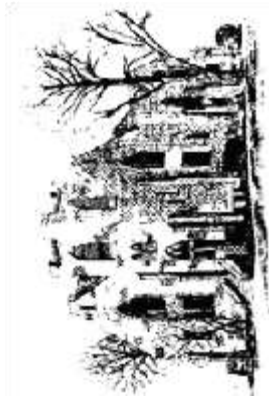
Asst Cook: Jim Lewis

Crew Member: ESA Sorority

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
700 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502
(785) 537-7006
uccmanhattan.org



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Calendar follows after blank page

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Return Service Requested

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:30 NA mtg	2	3 5:15 Deacons 7:00 AA Meeting	4 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA Meeting	5	6
7 Zoom Worship 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:45 Worship and Communion online 12:15 Drive-thru Communion <i>Fill the breadbasket, Lenten Pick-up</i> 4:00 Children's Sunday School 6:00 Second Helping	8 7:30 NA mtg	9	10 5:30 Christian Ed 6:30 Justice & Witness, Mission 7:00 Facilities 7:00 AA Meeting	11 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA Meeting	12	13
	----- Caela Vacation -----					
14 Road Trip 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:45 Worship online 4:00 Children's Sunday School 6:00 Second Helping ---- Caela Vacation ---	15 7:30 NA mtg	16	17 Ash Wednesday Lent Begins 7:00 Cabinet mtg 7:00 AA Meeting	18 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA Meeting	19 Newsletter deadline	20
21 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:45 Worship online 4:00 Children's Sunday School 6:00 Second Helping	22 7:30 NA mtg	23	24 7:00 AA Meeting	25 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA Meeting	26	27
28 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:45 Worship online 4:00 Children's Sunday School 6:00 Second Helping			<h1>February</h1>			