



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 65 Number 9

September 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

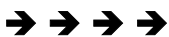
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## Gratitude as a New Year Begins

In a college town, September often feels like the beginning of a new year. As students return to Manhattan and many of our schedules shift for the season, I am pausing to give thanks for you. Over the summer, as we've transitioned back into being able to have some in-person gatherings, so many people in our congregation have put in many hours of prayer and preparation to make this a reality. We know, of course, that we are so very grateful for our tech team volunteers who worked with creativity and ingenuity to figure out how to make our hybrid worship (and now classes!) possible. This small but mighty team enables us to worship in our sanctuary AND online every week, and for that we are grateful! I recently spoke to one of our members who moved away a few years ago. They haven't yet found a new church home where they live and they expressed their gratitude for being able to worship with us on Sunday mornings. *[cont. pg. 2]*



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On Sunday mornings, we are also blessed by many other volunteers, of course. From Zoom greeters to sanctuary greeters, scripture readers and musicians, Zoom screen sharers and flower-bringers...we have so many people who serve on Sunday morning. I am grateful for those of you who show up on Zoom and give us grace when technical glitches get in the way. And I am grateful for the ways those of you in the sanctuary have faithfully and graciously followed our health and safety requirements. I know no one particularly \*enjoys\* wearing a mask, and, at the same time, we know that masks help us all stay healthier right now, especially those of us who cannot be vaccinated or are high-risk or immunocompromised. Thank you for loving your neighbor as yourself by continuing to take these precautions, even when your upper lip gets a bit sweaty or you can't figure out how to scratch that itch on your nose.

Sunday mornings barely touches it, of course, as there are so many things to give thanks for on other days of the week, too. All of our incredible Second Helping volunteers, of course. And also those who come in to fill the Blessing Box, mow the lawn, care for our building, organize vaccine clinics, plan for Sunday School for all ages, attend committee and board meetings, partner with other area groups to work for justice...and on and on.

As we continue to faithfully discern how to Be the Church in 2021, please know that your pastor is grateful for you and all the ways you "show up" online and in-person. Watching our congregation rally around those who have been going through ongoing health challenges this summer has been a gift. And please know that we all go through seasons where we don't have the energy, time, or resources to do as much as we'd like. Maybe we haven't been able to show up at all lately. That happens as a part of life. If you're in a season where you're struggling, please know that you can reach out to me and I would love to be in prayer with you and our church wants to support you in this season of your life, too.

Thank you for all that you do. But, mostly, thank you for who you are - beloved, beautiful, imperfect, ever-growing humans, made in God's image.

*Pastor Caela*

## Sharing and Caring

### *Prayers and Concerns*

For more information, please contact the church office

The family of Julia Bosma will celebrate her life on Sept. 25, 2021 in Grand Haven, MI, where Julia grew up. Julia died in February, 2020, but services were delayed for pandemic reasons. Please keep David and Ann Smit and the rest of Julia's family in your prayers as they gather.

## Celebration of Life

**Tod Kerstetter**

Saturday, September 4 at 2:00 p.m.  
at All Faiths Chapel, K-State

## From your moderators

One of the cabinet's goals this year was to address the large deficit in this year's budget. When we presented the budget in January for approval, we said that we would review the budget and explore ways to bring the deficit down. We are pleased to report that at this point in August we have a positive income vs. expenditure bottom line. It is our belief that by the end of the year, we will have decreased the expected deficit significantly although the year.

One reason this will be possible is the fact that we have not spent budgeted funds in several areas involving personnel and program because of COVID-19. This is the result of not having our traditional Sunday worship and not having child-care through the first half of the year. Money budgeted to provide video services will not be spent since we are back in the building and on-line for services. That along with savings in each board because of basically being closed to all activities for a good part of the year should impact our deficit positively. We also have been fortunate to have received grants and additional funding through the GrowGreen Initiative that have helped reduce the expected deficit.

We also have had many parishioners step forward to volunteer so we can provide exceptional Sunday services in the Sanctuary and by Zoom. It takes many hands to have a successful Sunday experience and those volunteers who give their time and energy are to be commended. From those trained now to run the video equipment that allows us to zoom the service to those who serve as hosts, readers, and technicians during the zoom service to those in the Sanctuary who serve where needed; all are essential to our program and greatly appreciated.

The cabinet has explored several options to address the budget:

1. We considered outside help with budgeting and have found nothing to this point but will continue to seek outside guidance through the next year.
2. We did review the Policy on investments and decided to continue to support the policy as it is.
3. We have reviewed and discussed information provided by our treasurer concerning the budget and how it operates
4. We have discussed ways to increase income.

5. We have passed a proposal to provide clear guidance to boards when they work on compensation for employees.
6. We held an extensive review of the budget at the August Cabinet meeting to gauge where we are and to provide some guidance to boards as they prepare next year's budget.

It is our hope that we can continue to serve the congregation and the community with the extensive programming that we provide. It is also our belief that those who serve the church from the Pastor to the part-time childcare helpers do a fantastic job and should be rewarded for their commitment and service. We will continue to seek ways to ensure that we can serve all the people that we touch. We will continue to monitor the budget for the remainder of this year. The board is committed to making the budget a priority in the coming years.

Your Moderators:

*Jeff Watson, Craig Weston, and Sue Gerth*

## Important Note About Staff Availability

Sandy will be away from the office September 14-21 on a family vacation.

During this time she will not be checking e-mail or voicemail.



## Connecting with Pastor Caela

Caela keeps her own calendar, so if you'd like to connect, 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.

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



## Building and Staffing Reminders

The office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. - Noon and 1:00-3:00 p.m. If you need access to the building during the week, please buzz at the office door and we will let you in. Please visit the welcome table in the lobby to sanitize your hands and grab a mask if you need one. Sandy may have her door closed, but please just knock if you need to speak with her. If you need to talk with staff, they might suggest that you visit in a larger space than their offices to ensure six feet of distance can be maintained.

We are still receiving mail at 700 Poyntz. 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.

You can find the most recent COVID-related updates and policies at [uccmanhattan.org/COVID](https://uccmanhattan.org/COVID).

## Options for Giving

We are grateful for your financial support as we continue to Love Unconditionally, Challenge Spiritually, and Minister Fervently together.

### Options for giving:

- 1) Place in the plate on Sunday morning or mail your contribution to 700 Poyntz Ave., Manhattan, KS 66502.
- 2) Donate online via PayPal (no login required). Go to [uccmanhattan.org](https://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.



# Kansas-Oklahoma Conference Updates

This is a critical time in the life of the Conference, in our local churches, our communities and our world. Nothing is as it has always been. Bold, courageous leadership is needed to speak on behalf of the most vulnerable; to look to the future with hope, and to step outside the lines of the what others might deem acceptable.

## What does it mean to live our lives faithfully and unafraid?

You are invited to join us for all or part of the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference Annual Meeting online, October 5-8, as we explore this question together. Our congregation will be sending two lay delegates plus Pastors Caela and Sue AND you are welcome to join as a visitor for free. Just go to <https://www.kocucc.org/annualmeeting> to learn more and register as a visitor.

## Thanking Dr. Edith Guffey

At Annual Meeting we will also be celebrating the ministry of Conference Minister Edith Guffey as she prepares for her upcoming retirement. You are invited to join us on Friday evening, Oct. 8th for her retirement celebration online. Our new Conference Minister, Lorraine Cenicerros, will join us in December and she and Edith will share about a month of overlap before Edith's retirement.

Edith will also be joining us in worship at First Congregational THIS month. She'll be in our pulpit on Sunday, September 12th to preach and we hope you'll be able to join us in-person or online that morning.

## Helpful Masking Tips

As we continue to love our neighbors as ourselves by masking up when indoors, a reminder that our masks only work properly when they fit us well. Masks must cover our noses and mouths at all times when we are together in the building. If you notice someone's mask has slipped down on Sunday morning, you can be a helper by gently reminding them (a friendly gesture to your own nose, or saying something like, "Your mask slipped down a bit!"). If you need tips on how to get a better fit with your mask, consider checking out the video Pastor Caela posted on our YouTube channel [uccmanhattan.org/youtube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/uccmanhattan.org/youtube).



# First Congregational Common Read: Fall 2021

Do you find yourself struggling to feel compassion for those who hold different values than you? Are you exhausted from trying to stay grounded and loving in the midst of turbulent times? Join us this fall as we sort through some of these complex realities together, guided by Valarie Kaur's book, *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love*. Beginning September 19th, we will use Kaur's book in conversation with scripture texts from the Narrative Lectionary in worship for our fall sermon series.

- Grab a copy of the book and read along with us....
- OR just come to worship to get a taste of the powerful concepts from the book.
- You can also explore the Revolutionary Love concepts online at <https://valariekaur.com/learninghub/>.
- For an introduction to Valarie Kaur and her work, consider watching the viral video that catapulted her into the national spotlight in 2016 or her TED talks. Go to YouTube and search for "Valarie Kaur Watch Night 2016" or "Valarie Kaur Revolutionary Love TED Talk."

## *More about the book from the publisher:*

Valarie Kaur — renowned Sikh activist, filmmaker, and civil rights lawyer — has ignited the hearts of millions around the globe, making “Breathe and Push!” a mantra in movements for social change. Now in her stunning debut, Kaur declares revolutionary love is the call of our times, a radical, joyful practice that extends in three directions: to others, to our opponents, and to ourselves. It enjoins us to see no stranger but instead look at others and say: You are a part of me I do not yet know.

Drawing from the wisdom of sages, scientists, and activists— and her own riveting journey as a brown girl growing up in California farmland; as a young adult galvanized by the murders of Sikhs after 9/11; as a law student fighting injustices in American prisons and on Guantánamo Bay; as an activist working with communities recovering from xenophobic attacks; and as a woman trying to heal from her own experiences with sexual assault and police violence – Kaur discovers practices of revolutionary love to bring us longevity, resilience, and joy.



See No Stranger is a practical guide to changing the world, a synthesis of wisdom, a chronicle of personal and communal history—all joined together by a story of awakening. Revolutionary love is medicine for our times. It just might be our best chance for our collective future.

## Screen Sharers Needed For Worship

Recently, we spoke to a member of our congregation who has moved away and hasn't been able to find a church in their new community. They attend worship with us online almost every week and expressed their gratitude that we are continuing to provide this option. One of the ways we show hospitality to the 20 or so people who join us on Zoom each week is by making sure they can see the hymn lyrics, scripture readings, prayers, etc. To make this happen, we need a volunteer screen sharer each Sunday. Is this something you'd be willing to do?

Screen sharers need to be comfortable with Zoom and Power Point. You can share from home on your own computer/laptop (but not a tablet) as long as you have Power Point on your machine and a strong internet connection. Alternatively, you can use one of the church's laptops and screen share from the sanctuary on Sunday morning.

To sign up to be a screen sharer or Zoom greeter, please visit [uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups](http://uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups). Questions? Check in with the church office.

## 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.

# Board of Facilities Custodial Services Update

Hello friends,

It has been a while since I have had a chance to sit and chat with you all and give an update on the building status and a noteworthy change to our beloved sacred space. I hope everyone is well, and that you've had a good summer. I can say, for me, working through this pandemic has been all over the map. I've spent days scared, anxious, worried, angry, and many other unpleasant feelings that still surface every now and again, but as time went on, I developed a deep sense of calm about the situation. Knowing that times like these have occurred in our past and the earth kept spinning and folks worse off than us suffered very trying times yet humanity persisted has helped. Mostly I think my connection with you all, my work within the church building, and the Facilities Board has brought me a sense of peaceful purpose and has helped me pass the time. But enough of that, this is about you, this is about the building and our Church.

Earlier this summer we said goodbye to some very good friends. Nancy and Jenny Holmes, who have cleaned our building for many many years, have moved on to devote time to other interests. They have provided years of outstanding service to our congregation cleaning our spaces which helped us achieve the friendly, welcoming atmosphere that greets us and our guests when walking through the doors. I hope you will all join me in a heartfelt thank you to the Holmes ladies for their hard, behind the scenes work. True unsung heroes of our operations staff.

Nancy and Jenny were gracious enough to stay on as we sought a replacement cleaning contractor, this provided the much-needed time for us to a seamless transition to our new friends. Marta's and Son Inc. has been selected to fill the big shoes left by Nancy and Jenny. They are a well-respected company, with an ever-growing footprint in the area and I am grateful for the time Cesar spent with me during the bidding process, making me comfortable and confident that he and his crew will provide outstanding professional service. So, if you see new faces in our halls, working feverishly to provide a clean and tidy church environment feel free

to say hi, and most importantly welcome them into our First Congregational family.

If its one thing that I've learned this past year it is that change is inevitable and it's how we react to that change that determines the outcome. I will be providing more frequent updates to the building related changes now that we have resumed some in person activities. Stay tuned for some very exciting news! (they won't all be plumbing related I promise)

Yours in service

*Steve Bishop, PO, Board of Facilities*

## Thoughts on Stewardship

This fall we will have our campaign for you to make a financial pledge to First Congregational for 2022. Our thoughts will turn to questions like: Why is First Congregational important to me? Why do I give to the Church? How do I feel about pledging and giving? Can I do more? Let me take this opportunity to add another question to your thoughts: Why Care About OCWM? The following is an article prepared by Mayflower United Church of Christ in the Minnesota Conference.

“What is OCWM?” could well be a question in a United Church of Christ trivia contest, a question many of us at First Congregational might not be able to answer correctly. Acronyms aside, OCWM (Our Church’s Wider Mission) is an important part of the covenant which binds individual members, congregations, Conferences, and the National setting together to form the United Church of Christ.

OCWM is the annual contribution congregations make to the UCC to fund all the ways we strive together to make a more just world for all. OCWM dollars fund the wide range of resources and services that undergird the ministry we do together at First Congregational from providing the foundation for the search and call process that brings us our clergy leaders to nourishing and eventually authorizing our members preparing for ordained ministry, from developing and making available a wide variety of resources for justice work and faith formation to providing training and support for those using the resources, from raising up prophetic voices on the state and national

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level to facilitating structures and alliances that amplify the justice work of First Congregation's members.

As a congregation rich in resources, both financial and human, First Congregational could find it easy to minimize its relation to the



wider church and be a beacon on our own little hill, but by maintaining a strong commitment to the UCC, both by strong support of OCWM and by the efforts of individual members actively engaged in

wider church ministries, First Congregational honors its covenant. With the assistance of OCWM, members of the UCC gave scholarships to 32 theological and medical students in China and Africa, offered 87 mission trips within the USA (attended by 3,354 volunteers), developed the White Privilege: Let's Talk curriculum that was downloaded 3,475 times from the UCC website, endorsed and credentialed 55 military chaplains, provided micro-loans in Africa that assisted 350 families and so much more. OCWM reflects the wisdom that "In isolation, no single UCC congregation can be the church the world needs today. To be that world-changing church, we work together through Our Church's Wider Mission to support and inspire each other."

Other special offerings (Neighbors in Need, One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, The Christmas Fund) provide opportunities for individual members to contribute to the work of the wider UCC and its ecumenical partners, OCWM is the vehicle for First Congregational as a congregation to live out its covenantal promise of support. So when you see OCWM as a line item in First Congregation's budget, rejoice both because you know what OCWM is and, more importantly, because you belong, through First Congregational, to a much larger and world-changing church, the United Church of Christ.

*Dale Stearns, member of our Stewardship committee*

# Board of Mission Update

The Board of Mission has concentrated its activities on food insecurity and encouraging COVID vaccinations during the summer months. Our Second Helping numbers are higher than they were a year ago, and we are continuing to serve meals on a take-out basis. We seem to be seeing more families with children. Our participation in Common Table continues, and Board member Martha Mather represented our church as part of the Common Table display at the Every Body Counts event at the Douglass Center on August 8.

At the encouragement of our own Kendra Kuhlman and the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation, we applied for and received a \$2000 grant from the Kansas Beats the Virus initiative to incentivize COVID vaccinations at our Second Helping meal. We advertised that folks receiving the Johnson and Johnson shot would receive gift cards from Walmart at two separate events. The Riley County Health department administered 6 vaccinations on August 8, and 11 vaccinations on August 22, for a total of 17 vaccinations to previously unvaccinated folks. We would have liked more, of course, but that is 17 people who are now protected against the virus who were not previously protected, and that is a good thing!

Thanks to the Riley County Health Department for sending nurses out on a Sunday evening. Thanks also to Second Helping Meal Coordinator Linda Thurston, who provided ice cream bars and lemonade as a further incentive. I would also like to add a heartfelt thank-you to the Mission Board itself. Shari Tedford, Jean Steiner, Mary Ellen Titus, and Carolyn Hodgson represented us in person at the vaccination events, and Martha Mather would have been there had we needed her. Everyone worked hard to publicize the event, as we needed to guarantee at least ten vaccinations for the second event. Thank you!

*Gretchen Lewis, PO, Board of 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.

**Children's Sunday school and nursery are back in full swing!**  
Kids ages 3-5th grade are welcome to join any and all Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

**1st Sunday of the month:** Children's Bell Choir

**2nd and 3rd Sunday of the month:** Traditional Sunday school

**4th and 5th Sundays:** Service

We are also excited to reopen our nursery for ages birth through 3, and provide Kids Worship during the service for ages 3-1st grade.

Please note that all children participating will be required to wear masks, do a temperature check, and have parents fill out a screening form. For all our precautions or for any more information, please contact Brandy at [brandy@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:brandy@uccmanhattan.org).

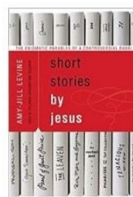
Not ready to return in person? Make sure you are on our email list, Brandy will be sending out weekly videos and materials so you can continue faith formation at home.

Finally, if you have children ages birth through 5th grade and are not currently getting Brandy's emails, please contact her at [brandy@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:brandy@uccmanhattan.org).

## Adult Sunday School Fall 2021

On September 5 we finish up our series of parables from *Short Stories by Jesus* by Amy-Jill Levine.

September 5: The Rich Man and Lazarus.  
(In-person AND on Zoom.)

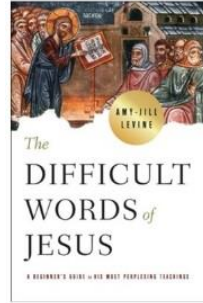


We are in the process of developing classes to help us explore and define what it means to be a progressive church. We are also working on classes based on the work of Rob Bell and the Nooma series. Would you be interested in leading a class? Please let us know!

# The Tuesday Bible Book Club

11:30 to 1:00 every Tuesday via Zoom

The Tuesday Bible Club will resume its meetings on August 24th. Our first book of the fall will be Amy Jill Levine's new book, *The Difficult Words of Jesus*. In this book, Levine takes on six of the most confounding words spoken by Jesus -- words that both challenge and confuse us (e.g., are we really supposed to sell all our possessions and give all the proceeds to the poor?!). Levine helps us to understand how those words would have been understood when Jesus first spoke them. And she helps us to grapple with the meaning of those words for our own times. Best of all, the class will include short video comments from Levine herself. Please join us! For more information, contact Pastor Sue at [sue@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:sue@uccmanhattan.org).



## Cobb Corner — Going Green

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” — *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss

The news on the environment is getting rapidly worse: Drought, wildfires, floods, earthquakes, pollution, wildlife die-offs and extinction of species: The list goes on.

We have no Planet B. It’s up to us. Take trees, no don’t! The average American’s consumption habits cost a loss of 5 trees a year. In China, it’s 1/10th that. (*Harper’s*, July, 2021). What can we do? Plant trees, support the Arbor Foundation, skip purely ornamental wood fires in winter, scratch some remodeling projects. What else? Remember the city will plant fine trees near the curbs of your home. We have enjoyed several of these. Ask Extension for advice on best trees for fruit, shade and overall success elsewhere in your yard.

Protecting trees is also critical for drought prevention and wildlife survival. Only 3% of the earth’s land has not been affected by human-caused species loss! (*Harper’s*, July, 2021) I can only imagine our impact on the earth’s water.

As we consider trees, let’s try to reduce our impact by lessening our dependence on paper products. Using *[continued next page]*

inexpensive cloth napkins, often available in thrift stores, Bill and I save about \$30-40 a year. Multiply that by the 30 years we've done that and we're talking a tree and about \$1000 saved! How much can your family save? I've found cloth napkins add very little to a load of wash.

By cutting into rags t-shirts too yucky to recycle, you can avoid paper towels. In fact, it took paper towels 100 years to compete with rags! (*Manhattan Magazine*, Spring, 2021). For messy jobs consider recyclable towels like Seventh Generation and Green Forest. In response to consumer demand, Target sells Everspring, which is 100% recyclable!

Small Steps has recyclable toilet paper, but I haven't seen it locally recently. In any case, save the cardboard rolls for the zoo. They make great enrichment projects for the animals.

Bringing your totes when shopping helps to avoid the plastic or paper dilemma. You will also save 5 cents a gallon per bag on gas at Hy-Vee and you won't have to pay for bags at Aldi.

These suggestions are probably obvious, but have they become *habits*? Do they remind you of other things we could routinely do to save trees, reduce plastic? Please share your ideas!

— *Linda Richter*

*Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter.*

## Weekly Connection Points

**Sundays:** Worship at 10:45 a.m. in our Sanctuary or via Zoom | visit [uccmanhattan.org/online](https://uccmanhattan.org/online) for the Zoom link.

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

**Wednesdays:** Youth Group at 6:30 p.m.



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

For more information about kids and youth activities, contact [Brandy@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:Brandy@uccmanhattan.org) (age 3 through 5th grade) or [Brittani@uccmanhattan.org](mailto:Brittani@uccmanhattan.org) (6th-12th grades).



# Report from the Music Coordinator

## **Music Conference**

In early July, I attended the biennial Conference of UCC Musicians, held virtually from Hartford, CT. The event began with a music reading session on Thursday evening July 8, and ended with a concert on Saturday afternoon. The first workshop I attended featured the amazing 80-something year-old Miriam Therese Winter, poet, songwriter, and member of the Medical Mission Sisters, who shared some of her songs with us. Other workshops I found stimulating included some huge puppets by Sue Aziz, an exploration of global hymnody in North American worship led by Patrick Evans, and my personal favorite, a presentation on the use of percussion ensembles in worship, led by Michelle Horsley. She offered very practical advice on starting a basic inter-generation percussion ensemble in the local church, and I'm mulling over the possibilities of beginning one here at First Congregational later in the fall. If you're interested, talk to me.

## **Choir is on Hold**

We had sincerely hoped to bring the choir back to our Sunday morning worship, beginning in September, but the resurgence of the COVID pandemic, and the particular virulence of the Delta strain, has put a hold on that activity. While we seem to be doing okay with quiet congregational singing in the pews (one hymn a Sunday, alas!), the prospect of rehearsing and performing as a choral ensemble in an inside space is not yet a safe one. Our church's COVID Task Force will re-evaluate the situation in October, and we'll see if we can reassemble later this fall.

## **Handbells!!**

If we can't sing, we can play handbells! We have a beautiful 3-octave set of Malmark Handbells that have been under-utilized for the past fifteen years or so, and now seems to be a great time to try to start a handbell choir. If you are middle-school aged or older, can read music reasonably well, and know your right hand from your left, this could be the musical opportunity you have been waiting for!! Please let me know if you're interested, or if you think you could be interested, in learning to ring handbells. It's lots of fun, and it's a great opportunity for fellowship and music making. See me at church or email me. Tentatively, an organizational meeting and introductory rehearsal is on September 12, after church at 12:15 up in the Conference Room.

*–Gretchen Lewis*

## Second Helping Update

*“Part of cooking encompasses the science of taking care of others and hand washing is where that begins.” Bill Penzy*

Bill Penzy, the awesome CEO of Penzy’s Spices, said that he intended to “loot” his own store in Kenosha and give away spices and seasonings to food pantries. *“Property can be replaced”,* he said, *“life can’t.”* In our church kitchen, you may see bumper stickers, magnets and dish towels that say “Heal the world, cook dinner tonight” or “Love people. Cook them tasty food.” Those are from Penzy’s.

Second Helping welcomes newly trained cooks: Rachel Whestone, Mechelle Martinez, Lucas Shivers, and Les Kuhlman. They join a truly committed cadre of volunteers who cook, serve, and make lunches and desserts for our Sunday Supper guests. So far this quarter, Second Helping has provided 1,591 meals to the community. This includes the 623 Sunday supper guests who pick up to go meals and lunches. The number also counts 638 sack lunches, 105 second helpings, and 225 meals to other community groups.

**HELP NEEDED:** Sunday supper volunteers and desserts, homemade cookies for lunches, prayers for this mission, cash, pantry items such as breakfast bars, oatmeal packets, pasta, canned goods, and FRESH produce (let Linda know about the produce so we can plan it in the meals!)

We have new stoves! Look for more about donations, volunteers, and kitchen updates in the next newsletter!



*Linda Thurston, 2H Meal Coordinator*

### **Save the Date October 1st Potluck and Hymn Sing!**

Please plan to join your church family for a social event and hymn sing on October 1st, 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Long's Park. We'll start with a potluck at 6:00, and then share hymn favorites in an outdoor setting. Stay tuned for more information.

# 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:

Jean Steiner

Second Helping Volunteer Coordinator

If you are interested in being part of this important mission of our church, these are our needs:

- **shelf-stable food:** oatmeal packets, peanut butter snack crackers, cereal bars, canned vegetables (and we LOVE big cans) and slaw, ranch and Italian salad dressings.
- **cash donations:** for food items needed for meals and lunches and for To-Go supplies
- **Dessert Makers:** need homemade desserts for 60 every week. To sign up go to [www.uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups](http://www.uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups).
- **Head Cooks or cooking teams:** cooking teams in the kitchen are usually family members. Contact Di, Jean or Linda for info.
- **Sunday evening volunteers:** 2 or 3 volunteers on Sunday evenings. Contact Di or Jean
- **Lunch volunteers:** Making the sack lunches during any time before Sunday. Contact Shari. She also welcomes homemade goodies to put in the lunches.

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## Thank you Di Hinrichs

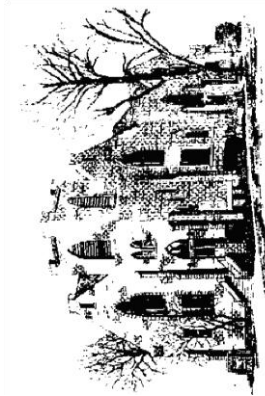
As of September 1, Di Hinrichs is retiring as our Second Helping Volunteer Coordinator. For over two years, she has faithfully served our church family here at FCUCC, recruiting head cooks and volunteers who have kept our Sunday night meal going through the tough times of the pandemic. We are so grateful for Di's service, and we will honor her in church on Sunday, September 19. Thank you, Di!!

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>September 2021</h1>			<b>1</b> 5:15 Deacons 7:00 AA Meeting	<b>2</b> 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA Meeting	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
			<b>5</b> 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship and Communion <i>Fill the breadbasket</i> 6:00 Second Helping	<b>6</b> <b>Labor Day</b> <b>Offices Closed</b>	<b>7</b> 11:30 Book Study	<b>8</b> 6:30 Justice & Witness, Mission 7:00 Facilities 7:00 AA Meeting
<b>12</b> 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 11:30 Book Study	<b>15</b> 7:00 Cabinet mtg 7:00 AA Meeting	<b>16</b> 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA Meeting	<b>17</b> --- Caela to Souljourners ---	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	<b>20</b> ----- Sandy vacation -----	<b>21</b> 11:30 Book Study	<b>22</b> 7:00 AA Meeting	<b>23</b> 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA Meeting	<b>24</b> Newsletter deadline	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 11:30 Book Study	<b>29</b> 7:00 AA Meeting	<b>30</b> 7:00 Prayers & Fellowship 7:30 NA Meeting		