



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 59 Number 3

March 2015

Sunday School at 9:30 A.M.
Sunday Worship at 10:45 A.M.
Second Helping Dinner at 5:15 P.M.
Thursday Evening Taizé at 7:00 P.M.

700 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, Kansas 66502
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www.uccmanhattan.org

Confirmed in Love

In our congregation, we are blessed to have youth and families from many different religious traditions and backgrounds. The act of Confirmation means lots of different things in different settings, so as we prepare to begin Confirmation Class on March 1, I wanted to share a bit about my philosophy of Confirmation.

First, I think Confirmation is a powerful and important coming of age ritual. Being a teenager is hard work. Kids struggle as they move from childhood into adulthood. I'm guessing this has always been the case and most cultures have created rituals to aid that transition. I think Confirmation is one of those rituals. It is a time where we publicly bear witness to the fact that these children, whom we have known and loved since they were babies, are growing up. They are becoming adults. We give thanks for that reality and celebrate it together.

Second, churches like ours are congregational in polity. This is basically a fancy churchified way of saying we are democracies. We make big decisions by voting. We vote to elect our officers, approve our budget, call our pastor, and make *[continued pg. 2]*



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other major decisions in congregational meetings. At Confirmation, youth who have been confirmed are welcomed as full members of the church and are invited to vote in future congregational meetings.

Third, I see Confirmation as an opportunity for the church to, once again, confirm what we know to be true: that God knows and loves each of these youth, that God blesses their lives, and that nothing can break that bond. We confirm that we, the church, are committed to loving them during this time of transition from childhood to adulthood. We accept them for who they are. We recognize and celebrate their gifts. We know they will make mistakes, just like us, and we will love them through it. We are confirming them in our continuing love, which is rooted in the love of God.

Those of you who grew up in the Church and were confirmed may notice something is missing here. I didn't say anything about Confirmation as a time for kids to recite a catechism or make a profession of faith. In many traditions, Confirmation is seen as a time where the pastor teaches confirmands "what we believe as Christians" and then the youth decide whether they agree. If they do, they are Confirmed. If they don't, they aren't. In some traditions, youth write their own statement of faith. Regardless, Confirmation is primarily about "what we believe" and whether or not you want to opt in and be a part of us.

I'm not a fan of this (in case you couldn't tell!). First of all, I think it is laughable to try and define "what we believe" as Christians because there is such a diversity of belief. Second, I think what each individual believes is evolving over time. It's not that we won't talk about what we believe - we will, of course, but, to me Confirmation is more about being a place to open up and begin those conversations that will (hopefully) last a lifetime. Not a place to come to final conclusions. Perhaps more importantly, I don't think Confirmation is about deciding who's in and who's out. We're all in, of course. Regardless of our beliefs or actions, we are all loved by God and it is my sincere hope that Confirmation can be a time when the youth realize this even more fully.

A final note and then I'm done! Confirmation is also an amazing opportunity for me, as the Pastor. It is a privilege to be able to sit with these wise young-old souls and learn with and from them. It is

a joy to get to know these people more fully. In a position where I am often pulled in several direction at once, I cherish the opportunity to more fully focus on the youth as they are confirmed and spend uninterrupted time with them.

Pastor Caela

Pastor Caela on Vacation

Pastor Caela will be on vacation from Friday, March 20 through Wednesday, March. 25. During this time, if you have a pastoral care need, please contact the church office or Stacy Shaffer, Presiding Officer of Deacons. Fr. Patrick Funston of St. Paul's Episcopal Church is on call to provide pastoral care and Sandy or Stacy can help you get in touch with Fr. Funston.

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.



Spring Ahead
Sunday, March 8
Daylight Saving Time begins.

Be sure to set your clock ahead one hour on Saturday night.

Sharing and Caring

Prayers and Concerns

- For more information, please contact the church office at 537-7006 or office@uccmanhattan.org.

Helping

- **Need a ride to church?** Contact one of our transportation volunteers: Jim & Carolyn Hodgson, Bill Pallett, or Jeff Keller.
- **Home Communion Visits** The Deacons can bring communion to your home on the first Sunday of the month. Visits at other times can be arranged with the pastor.

Board of Mission

The Board of Missions is seeking two volunteers. The Board of Missions has an open position on the Board. The Board usually meets at 5:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month.

A second opportunity is to represent our church for the Voice of Justice group. This is a group of civic and religious organizations concerned with the welfare of local undocumented immigrants, helping with the DACA waiver applications and other needs. Jerry Hanna served as this church's representative last year. This group usually meets on Sundays at 2 p.m. about every other month.

Please contact Jan Lange if you are interested in serving First Congregational UCC on either of these two groups. Many thanks to Kerri Keller who volunteered to be our third church representative to the ECM Board of Directors

Lent and Holy Week

Throughout Lent we will join with other Christians for worship and lunch each Wednesday during Lent. The services will be held at First Christian Church (115 Courthouse Plaza) at Noon and will consist of a 30-minute time of worship and a simple lunch. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with people from other congregations in town.

We will also join with others from the downtown churches on Palm Sunday, March 29th at 9:30 a.m. There will be a Palm Processional for all ages from City Park down Poyntz Ave. On Maundy Thursday, April 2, we will gather in Pioneer-Blachly at 6:00 p.m. for a simple meal, worship, and Holy Communion. Plans are in the works for some kind of ecumenical Good Friday commemoration as well.

On Easter morning, Sunday, April 5, you are invited to a potluck breakfast hosted by Vitality & Outreach. After worship we will have our annual Easter egg hunt on the church lawn.

Ministers of Care Team Forming

When we join in covenant as members of First Congregational UCC, we make a commitment "...to bear each other's burdens and share each other's joys, to pray for each other, to serve in the name of Christ..." One of the ways we can do this is by caring for those who are temporarily nor chronically home-bound, hospitalized, or otherwise unable to attend worship regularly. It is important that these people are visited regularly by the Pastor and by members of the congregation.

Pastor Caela and the Deacons are working to recruit and train a team of volunteer ministers to regularly visit our members who are unable to attend worship regularly. Minister of Care can expect to make 1-3 visits a month and will receive training and support from the pastor. Do you know someone who would make a great Minister of Care? Do you know of someone who is home-bound and should be visited regularly? Please contact Pastor Caela and let her know.

Lunch Bunch March 4



Join the Women of the Church for Lunch Bunch on Wednesday, March 4 at Meadowlark (2121 Meadowlark Road). It's not for women only—everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30

A.M. (See individual Lunch Bunch locations for the year by going to the church website at www.uccmanhattan.org and then clicking on Fellowship/Events/ Event Calendar.)

Thanks to UCC Shoppers

We have received two nice additions to the February income. This winter you were invited to shop at Box Lab for toys and gifts with 15% of sales designated to Second Helping. We were sent \$279.18 !!! Recent returns from regular shopping at Dillons earned us \$501.00. Thanks for your participation in these projects.

News from the Cabinet

In December, The Transition Team made several recommendations to Cabinet regarding support of our pastor and evaluation of ministry. The first recommendation was to reshape the Pastoral Relations Committee so that it can be maximally helpful to the Pastor. In order to do this, a bylaws change was proposed to and has since been accepted by Cabinet—changing the number of appointees from 3 to 4 members as well as having the pastor appoint two members and cabinet appoint two members.

In addition, the Transition Team proposed changes to the annual evaluation of our ministry. The Cabinet is now seeking ways to make this process a more effective and meaningful part of our planning and visioning work for the church. Currently Cabinet is reflecting on a proposed bylaws change to move the responsibility for pastoral and ministry evaluation from the Deacons to the Cabinet.

We are planning to have a congregational meeting in April or May to vote on all of these bylaws changes at one time. In the meantime, we plan to move ahead with the new configuration of the Pastoral Relations Committee. Please feel free to contact a member of Cabinet if you have questions or concerns about this process.

— *Mary Ellen Barkley, Moderator*

Ministry of the Decorative Scissors

The next retreat of the Ministry of the Decorative Scissors will be a three-day event held from 7 a.m. on Thursday, March 5, until 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 7, in Andover Hall. We'll break at midnight Thursday and Friday to go home and get a good night's rest but start up again in the morning at 7:00 a.m. We welcome everyone to come and experience a joy-filled time for crafting, eating, and laughing. Bring your UFOs (UnFinished Objects) and work on them in an atmosphere of fellowship. We do not guarantee that you will complete any projects, but you will have fun and meet delightful people. Come for an hour or for the whole time! Feel free to bring a snack to share. For more information, contact Sue Gerth.



Lucky Bunco!

All-church bunco night hosted by Vitality and Outreach on Friday, March 13 at 6:00 p.m. If you have never played Bunco, it is an easy dice game that people of all ages can enjoy. Vitality and Outreach will provide pizza and lemonade and everyone can bring snacks to share. Join us for the fun!



Dinner Discussion

Join the Vitality committee for our second Dinner Discussion at 6:00 p.m. on March 27 at the church. Paul Hunt will lead a discussion on The Music of Louis Armstrong: What a Wonderful World. A light dinner will be provided. Please contact the church office if you need childcare.



Music Workshop & Concert

Bethel AME church is holding a music workshop and concert at their church on May 16 and 17. The workshop will be held on Saturday afternoon and the concert will be performed the following Sunday afternoon. They have invited our church members to participate in this event. If you are interested in joining their choir for this occasion (even if you don't sing in our choir), please see Julie Hunt or Gretchen Lewis.

Christian Education

Adult Sunday School

On Sunday, March 1 we will revisit Barbara Brown Taylor's book, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith*. Jim Mock will lead us in a five-week discussion on the second half of the book. Nora Gallagher says, "An Altar in the World is about how faith can be both practical and sensuous. In Barbara Brown Taylor's hands, the old division between heaven and earth is healed and both come alive. Your mind, your body and your soul will be well fed by this wonderful book."

Coming soon: Summer family events...

Even though it's cold and snowy outside now, summer will be here before we know it. This summer we will be offering weekly events for children and families during June and July. Be sure to follow the weekly parent email for more information! Email Barrett at cedirector@uccmanhattan.org to get on the weekly parent email list.

MOVIE NIGHT

Friday, March 20 7:30 p.m.

Popcorn, drinks, other snacks and more will be provided. Drop off your kids and their friends for a fun evening. Hope to see you!

**First Congregational UCC | 700 Poyntz
Manhattan, KS
uccmanhattan.org**

Youth Group

The youth had a great progressive dinner this year! Barbara Crooks and Sue Gerth provided the appetizers; Stacy Shaffer provided the main course; and Leo and Joy Schell provided the dessert and basement where everyone had a great time playing pinball, pool, and ping-pong. Thank you everyone!!!

Schedule

Mar 1	12:15 – Confirmation 6:30-8:30 – Our Whole Lives
Mar 8	12:15 – Confirmation 3:30 – Second Helping – Movie afterwards
Mar 15	No Confirmation or Youth Group
Mar 22	12:15 – Confirmation Class 6:30-8:30 – Our Whole Lives
Mar 28	9:00 pm – Lock -in
Mar 29	12:15 – Confirmation Class 6:30-8:30 – Our Whole Lives
Apr 5	No Confirmation Class 9:30 – Easter Breakfast Potluck; Fill Eggs and hide them during Church for Easter Egg Hunt
Apr 12	12:15 – Confirmation Class 3:30 – Second Helping – Movie afterwards
Apr 17-18	Camp White, Our Whole Lives (3 sessions)
Apr 19	12:15 – Confirmation Class 1:00 – Miniature Golf following Confirmation Class for all Youth Group
Apr 26	12:15 – Confirmation Class 6:30-8:30 – Our Whole Lives
May 3	12:15 – Confirmation Class 6:30-8:30 – Our Whole Lives
May 10	10:45 – Confirmation! During Church Service End of the Year Picnic – Location to be announced
May 31	3:30 – Second Helping

Cobb Corner — Going Green

“...you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.”

— *Green Bible*: [from Jesus’ parable of the talents], Matthew, 25:27.

Grow Green Match Day and the First Congregational UCC Endowment

Linda invited me to do this month’s Cobb column on a special aspect of going green.

This year First Congregational UCC will again participate in Grow Green Match Day on Earth Day, April 22. Grow Green is an event sponsored by the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation to help participating organizations grow their endowments as well as their operating resources. Every gift to an organization’s GMCF endowment will be matched 50% with a donation to the organization by a generous Manhattan donor. Endowment donations from \$25 to \$1000 per donor qualify for the match. As in the previous two years, Grow Green will take place 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., at Colony Square, 555 Poyntz Avenue. Cash, checks, and credit cards are all accepted, and donors may split their gifts among multiple participating organizations. In addition to our church, the Crisis Center, Shepherd’s Crossing, the Boys and Girls Club, and about thirty other organizations usually participate.

In the parable of the talents, Jesus noted the praise of the master for the servant who invested his resources wisely for future benefit. Endowments help to provide for the sustainability of organizations. The First Congregational UCC Endowed Fund at GMCF protects the principal of the donated funds and now pays the church several hundred dollars each year in unrestricted funds. We plan to participate in Grow Green again this year and know many others will take the opportunity to do so as well.

— *Bill Richter*

Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter.

Dillons Fundraiser Update

Time to register your card!

Great news! Rather than continually reloading a Dillons gift card to raise money for the church, you can now link your Plus Shopper Card to the First Congregational account and we will earn money every time you use your shopper card at Dillons. Please tell friends or family who might also want to register their cards. Here's what you need to do....and if you need help, just give Sandy a call.

1. Visit www.dillons.com/communityrewards
2. Sign in OR create a new account.
3. Click "enroll now."
4. Enter "First" or the 5 digit NPO for the church, which is 10145, and search.
5. Select the fully named entry (**First Congregational UCC**) and click "enroll."

You're all set! Thanks for supporting our shared life and work.

Take time for Taize

On Thursday evenings at 7 p.m., a small group of us meets for thirty minutes of quiet worship in scripture reading, contemplation and song. Those of us who attend feel moved and nourished by the opportunity to pray in silence and in community with others. We invite others to join us; you can come once in a while, once a month, or every week, and we'll always be happy to see you! We meet in Pioneer Hall.

Recycling at Church!

Bring your recyclable items with you to church and leave them at the collection point in the eastern passage between the Sanctuary and Blachly Hall. Please bring your things through Blachly Hall on Sunday mornings.

Please sort your items according to marked containers, paying special attention to numbered plastics. Also, all items should be rinsed *so they do not create odors or attract pests*.



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 25-35 people each week. Many of you have helped with this mission in a variety of ways, and that is much appreciated!



Currently we are hoping to add some more volunteers to our list of "regulars." We are particularly in need of individuals who would be willing to serve as Head Cook and Church Host. If you are interested in learning more about either of these positions, or volunteering in other ways, please contact the church office at 537-7006 or office@uccmanhattan.org.

March 1, 2015

Dessert: Judy Willingham

Volunteers: Zion UCC, Ann Gleason

Chief Cook: Gretchen Lewis

Church Host: Jim Lewis

March 8, 2015

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: First Congregational Youth Group, Ann Gleason

Chief Cook: Myles Alexander

Church Host: Tracey Weston

March 15, 2015

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Kathy Bleam, Bethany Parker, *2 volunteers needed*

Chief Cook: Andy Barkley

Church Host: Jim Lewis

March 22, 2015

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: ESA Sorority

Chief Cook: Ann Smit

Church Host: Dave Smit

March 29, 2015

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Natl. Society of Leadership Success

Chief Cook: Myles Alexander

Church Host: Pastor Caela

Worship & Volunteers

March 1, 2015

Greeters	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Scripture Reader	Myles Alexander
Word for Children .	Pastor Caela
Fellowship Hour	Kathy Bleam
Snow Removal	Brent Maner (<i>Feb 23-Mar 1</i>)

March 8, 2015

Greeters	Stacy Shaffer, Gina Davidson
Scripture Reader	Jonathan Mertz
Word for Children .	David Smit
Fellowship Hour	Greta Climenhaga
Snow Removal	Dave Smit (<i>Mar 2-8</i>)

March 15, 2015

Greeters	Carrie Lewis, Joy Schell
Scripture Reader	Jim Mock
Word for Children .	Leo Schell
Fellowship Hour	Amanda Tross
Snow Removal	Dave Manning (<i>Mar 9-15</i>)

March 22, 2015

Greeters	<i>volunteer needed</i>
Scripture Reader	Brent Maner
Word for Children .	Sarah Szopinski
Fellowship Hour	Judy Ahrens
Snow Removal	Jon Szopinski (<i>Mar 16-22</i>)

March 29, 2015

Greeters	Brent Maner
Scripture Reader	Gretchen Lewis
Word for Children .	Pastor Caela
Fellowship Hour	Gretchen Lewis
Snow Removal	Brad Logan (<i>Mar 23-29</i>)
Snow Removal	Jim Lewis (<i>Mar 30-Apr 5</i>)

To volunteer, please contact the church office at 537-7006 or office@uccmanhattan.org.

Community News

Walk MS

Register today for the annual Walk MS event at the Manhattan City Park Jon & Ruth Ann Wefald Pavilion and GTM Family Center on Saturday, April 4, 2015. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and the walk starts at 10 a.m. There is no cost for registration, however donations are appreciated. Teams are encouraged and fun! Register or make a donation online at www.walkms.org. Volunteers are also needed the day of this event. If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions please contact elisekdunnigan@gmail.com.

More than just a fundraising event, Walk MS is a celebration for our entire community. The money raised will provide funds for local programs and services and research on a national level. The event itself creates a hope-filled and enjoyable atmosphere for everyone affected by MS while generating a greater awareness of multiple sclerosis in the public at large. This event shows those living with MS and their families that our community cares and supports them.

Millions of people are affected by MS and the challenges of living with its unpredictable symptoms. Multiple sclerosis interrupts the flow of information between the brain and the body and it stops people from moving. Every hour in the United States, someone is newly diagnosed with MS, a disease of the central nervous system. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, but advances in research and treatment are moving us closer to a world free of MS.





KO Focus

Do you receive *KO Focus*, the E-Newsletter from the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference? It's easy to subscribe.

Just send an e-mail to

enews@kocucc.org and request to be added to the subscriber list.

Spring Break & Summer Camps 2015



It's all on the new website! - whitememorialcamp.com

Taking part in The Camp White Experience is the perfect way for your youth to make new friends, grow faith in God, learn new skills, and create lifetime memories in a safe, beautiful, natural environment. We offer 3-6 day residential camp sessions for a wide variety of ages and interests...and special weekend sessions for families. Register early to save! Discounts end April 15, 2015.

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 statement.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

700 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502
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uccmanhattan.org



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Return Service Requested

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship & Communion <i>Fill the Bread Basket</i> 12:00 Fellowship/Confirmation 5:15 Second Helping 6:30 OWL	2 5:15 Yoga	3	4 11:30 Lunch Bunch 12:00 Lenten Lunch & Worship @FC 3:45 CoMN mtg 5:30 Brd of Mission 7:00 Brd of Deacons, Brd of Trustees	5 7:00 Taizé	6	7 6:00 Welcoming Dinner
8 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Fellowship/Confirmation 3:30 Youth Group 5:15 Second Helping	Daylight Saving begins 9 5:15 Yoga 5:30 AAUW Dinner	10	11 12:00 Lenten Lunch & Worship @FC 6:30 Brd of Christian Education 7:00 Vitality & Outreach mtg	12 7:00 Taizé	13 6:00 Lucky Bunco	14 2:00 AA Anniversary Celebration
15 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Fellowship Hour 5:15 Second Helping	16 5:15 Yoga	17 10:00 N. Central Clergy Mtg.	18 12:00 Lenten Lunch & Worship @First Christian	19 7:00 Taizé	20 12:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 Movie Night	21
22 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship – <i>Sue Zschoche</i> 12:00 Fellowship/Confirmation 5:15 Second Helping 6:30 OWL	23 5:15 Yoga	24	25 12:00 Lenten Lunch & Worship @First Christian 7:00 Cabinet	26 7:00 Taizé	27 6:00 Dinner Discussion	28 9:00 Youth Lock-in
29 Palm Sunday 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School/Palm Processional 10:45 Worship 12:00 Fellowship/Confirmation 5:15 Second Helping 6:30 OWL	30 5:15 Yoga	31	<div data-bbox="1150 1323 1669 1453" data-label="Section-Header"> <h1>March</h1> </div> <div data-bbox="1759 1299 2041 1518" data-label="Image"> </div>			