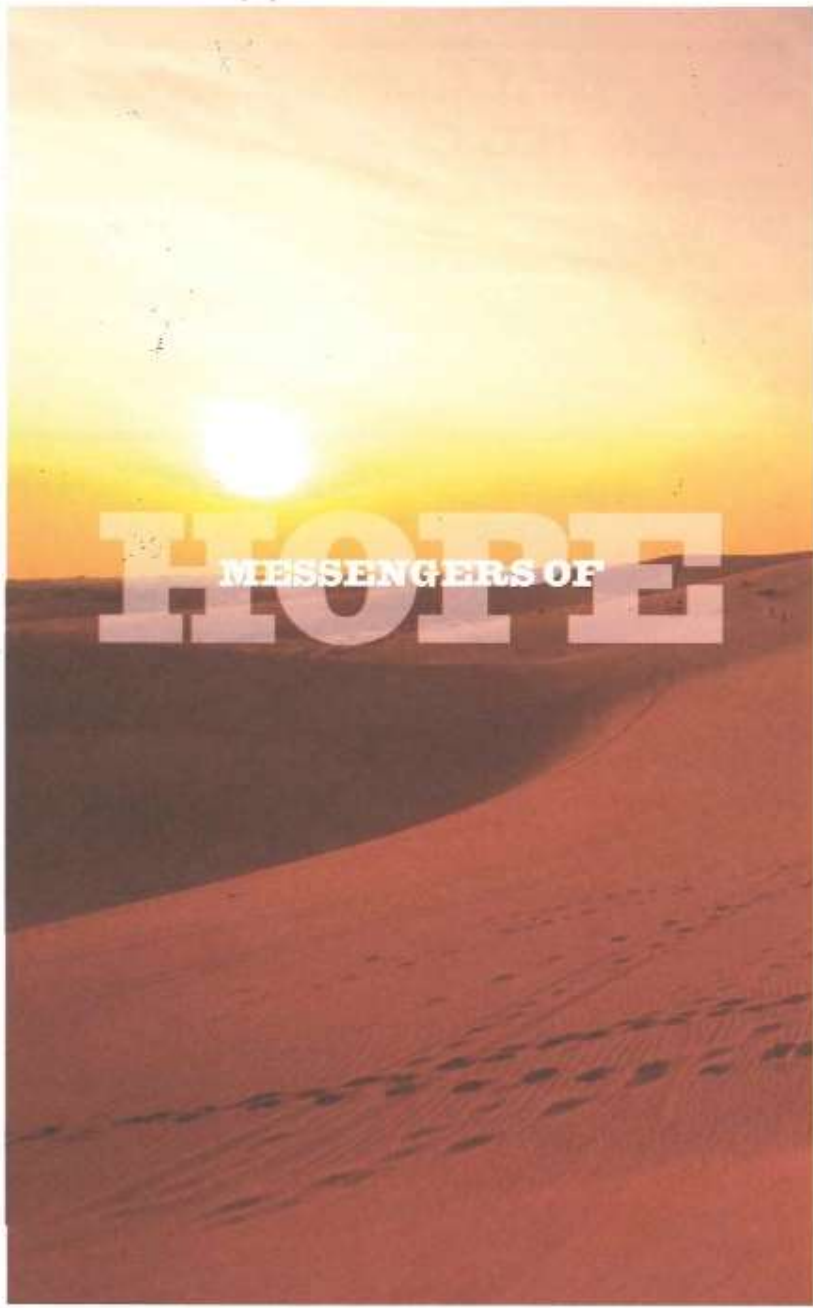




First Congregational United Church of Christ
Manhattan, Kansas

where God is still speaking.



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

700 Poyntz Avenue

Manhattan, Kansas 66502

The Rev. Caela Simmons Wood, Pastor

Julie Hunt, Moderator

Tai Amri Spann-Wilson, Youth Ministry

Andria Anderson, Director of Children's Ministries

Sue Zschoche, Pastoral Associate

Sandy Nelson, Administrative Assistant

telephone 785-537-7006

www.uccmanhattan.org

Gretchen Lewis, Choir Director

Robert Edwards, Mary Ellen Sutton, Organists

The Rev. Christian Watkins, Campus Pastor

Dave Smit, Treasurer

Jeff Keller, Financial Secretary

Nancy Holmes, Custodian

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 10, 2017, AT 10:45 A.M.

Welcome! If you are worshipping with us for the first time, we hope that you will find God's presence among us. Your presence with us enriches our vision of the Body of Christ, and we give thanks that you have joined us today. We hope you will sign the register pad when it is passed. Immediately following worship, refreshments are served at **Fellowship Hour** in Pioneer and Blachly Halls. Just exit the doors to the left of the pulpit and follow the crowd. Enjoy a cup of fair trade coffee. We look forward to greeting you there. If you have questions, please ask.

If you have special needs, please let one of the ushers know. Hearing assist devices, wheelchairs, and walkers are available. The elevator provides access to all three floors of the building. Restrooms are located on each floor. Our lower level has wheelchair accessible, all gender restrooms.

Children are welcome in worship (and we know they may need to wiggle!). If you'd prefer, we do offer activities upstairs. Children ages 3 and under are welcome in the Nursery at any time. After the Word for Children, children 3 and up are invited to join us in the theater for Kids Worship - a worship service that mirrors our service in the Sanctuary. Please check out our website for information about Sunday School for children and adults at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays during the school year.

---- Assisting in Today's Worship ----

Greeters: Bill & Linda Richter

Sanctuary Flowers: poinsettias

Fellowship Hour: TBA

Word for Children: Sue Gerth

Reading Scripture: Jim Lewis

Grounds Care: TBA

WORDS OF WELCOME

PRELUDE

"Improvisation on Puer Natus Est"

Robert Edwards, organ
Everett Titcomb

LITANY OF THE ADVENT WREATH

One: peace
is the absence of conflict;

Many: **or**
peace
is a spiritual connection;

One: or better still
peace
is a way of living,
a commitment to something important; but

Many: **peace**
as a wild eyed radical
screaming its way
to revolution

One: isn't quite the peace
we had in mind...
is it?

Many: **we light a candle for peace.**

"praying for peace at Christmas" by Katherine Hawker

Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Reflection

Judy Willingham

Congregational Choral Response

(Sung to the tune of "We Three Kings")

To our strife-torn world God gives saints for such a time as this.

Justice daring, kindness bearing, new ways for us to live.

O come, rejoice, prepare a way! Christ is coming, watch and pray!

Candles burning, spirits yearning: Peace shall be our path today.

Text: Adapted from Sara Olson Dean, 2014

Tune: KINGS OF ORIENT, John Henry Hopkins, Jr., 1857

Advent Prayer of Beginning (Unison)

Holy One,

As we journey down this Advent road, grant us the courage to make peace.

Peace in our hearts,

Peace in our homes,

Peace in our communities.

Amen.

Katherine Hawker

✦ **HYMN 116** (*The New Century Hymnal located in pew backs.*)

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" vv. 1, 2, 6, 7

Veni Emmanuel

✦ *Indicates all who are able, please stand.*

EXCHANGING THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

As a sign of our reconciliation, please greet those around you with words such as: "Peace be with you. / And also with you."

✦ **ACT OF PRAISE**

(all join in singing Hymn #85)

"I Woke Up This Morning"

I woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus,

Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus,

Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus,

Hallelu, hallelu, hallelujah.

Singing and praying with my mind stayed on Jesus,

Singing and praying with my mind stayed on Jesus,

Singing and praying with my mind stayed on Jesus,

Hallelu, hallelu, hallelujah.

LISTENING

for our Still-speaking God

WORD FOR CHILDREN

Sue Gerth

If your child is going to the Nursery or Kids' Worship for the first time today, please fill out a Child Information Card (located in the back of the pew) and deliver it to one of our staff members upstairs.

ADVENT WAITING

We wait in silence and prepare our hearts to receive the gifts God offers to us this day.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Jim Lewis

Isaiah 40:1-11 (*Old Testament page 633 in the pew Bible*)

Luke 1: 26-40 (*New Testament page 53 in the pew Bible*)

THE WORD IN MUSIC

"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"

Chancel Choir
Claude Guidimel

SERMON

"When Whispers Gather"

Rev. Caela Simmons Wood

RESPONDING

in hope and thanksgiving

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Prefer to make an electronic contribution? Visit the Giving Station located in the back of the Sanctuary to make a credit or debit card gift or set up recurring contributions from your bank account.

MUSIC AT THE OFFERTORY

"Magnificat"

Patricia Thompson, mezzo soprano
Randall Thompson

✦ **DOXOLOGY** (*Hymn 128 "In the Bleak Midwinter" v. 4*)

What can I offer, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.

If I were a wise one, I would do my part;

But what can I offer: all my heart.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

You are invited to share your prayer aloud. If you would prefer to have your prayer read by the worship leader, please fill out a blue card located in the pew back and place it in the offering plate.

*We respond: Merciful God....**hear our prayer.***

PRAYER OF JESUS *(said in unison)*

“Our Father” is the traditional way this prayer begins. For many, however, the traditional language is a hindrance to the intimacy of their relationship with God. You are invited to use whatever name for God you find most meaningful (Mother, Father, Creator, God, Friend, etc.). Together, our names for God will create a beautiful chorus reaching out to the Holy.

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

GOING FORTH

to Be the Church

✦ **HYMN 122** *(The New Century Hymnal located in pew backs.)*

“Come O Long Expected Jesus”

Stuttgart

**SHARING OPPORTUNITIES TO LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY.
CHALLENGE SPIRITUALLY. MINISTER FERVENTLY.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

One: Be people of peace.

Many: **Let peace live in your heart and share the peace of Christ with all you meet.**

One: Share peace by acting out of compassion and not fear.

Many: **Share peace by listening to all sides of the story**

One: Share peace by praying for our world.

Many: **In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share peace.**

One: As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share peace and hope with those you meet.

Many: **Amen.**

From LiturgyLink.net

✦ CONGREGATIONAL CHORAL BENEDICTION

"All Earth is Waiting" (Hymn 121 v. 1 and 3)

All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
and open furrows, the sowing of our God.

All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.

Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain;
open new highways, new highways for our God,
Who is now coming closer, so come all and see,
and open the door ways as wide as wide can be.

Thank you to the Christmas Brass Ensemble

Trumpets: Craig Parker, Lucas Johnson

French Horn: Carol Sevin

Trombones: Paul Hunt, Julie Hunt, Brent Maner

Euphonium: Jim Lewis

Tuba: Anne Fredrickson



TAKE TIME FOR TAIZÉ

Join us on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. for Taizé Worship. Taizé is a 30 minute service of singing, scripture, prayer and silence based on the pattern of worship in use at the ecumenical community at Taizé, France.

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

THIS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

- 8:30 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
- 10:45 a.m. Service of the Word
- 12:00 p.m. Fellowship Hour
- 6:00 p.m. Second Helping
- 7:00 p.m. Ecumenical Blue Christmas, Sanctuary

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

- 7:30 p.m. MOA Narcotics Anonymous meeting, Art Room

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

- 7:00 p.m. KSU concert and reception, Pioneer Hall

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

- 5:30 p.m. Board of Mission, Conference Room
- 6:30 p.m. Board of Christian Education, Blachly Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Vitality and Outreach Committee, Conference Room
- 7:00 p.m. Turning Point AA meeting, Andover Hall

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

- 9:00 a.m. Ministry of the Decorative Scissors, Andover Hall (thru Sat.)
- 7:00 p.m. National Vigil to #EndGunViolence and Taizé Service, Pioneer Hall
- 8:00 p.m. MOA Narcotics Anonymous meeting, Conference Room

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15

- 7:30 p.m. MOA Narcotics Anonymous meeting, Conference Room

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

- 8:30 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
- 10:45 a.m. Service of the Word
- 12:00 p.m. Fellowship Hour
- 6:00 p.m. Second Helping



*Join us on Facebook at
[facebook.com/uccmanhattanks](https://www.facebook.com/uccmanhattanks)*

Ecumenical Campus Ministry at Kansas State University is a cooperative ministry supported by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Church of Christ, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). For more information on ECM's activities and schedules, please visit us on Facebook (ECM at K-State) or at www.ksu.edu/ecm.



Christmas Sacks – The Common Table would like to distribute Christmas sacks again this year to the neighbors who attend Common Table meals. One church will provide socks, another will provide caps, etc. First Congregational has been asked to provide unscented toiletries for the sacks. Body wash, shampoo, and deodorant would be particularly helpful, and we anticipate making up 50 sacks. The deadline is December 17, and there is a collection bin in the church entry. Thanks for everything you do for Second Helping and Common Table!

Ecumenical Blue Christmas Sunday Dec 10, 7pm

at First Congregational UCC – Not all of us are filled with joy, hope, peace and love this Holiday Season... and that is ok. At this service, we will acknowledge that there are times in life when we feel broken, confused and lost. God does not promise us an easy life, but God does promise that we will never walk through any season in life, even the holiday season, alone because God IS with us. Join us for this Blue Christmas Worship where we will also take part in the worldwide Compassionate Friends Candle Lighting to honor children who have died too soon. The service will be led by pastors and laity from First Congregational UCC, Peace Lutheran Church and First UMC.

National Vigil to #EndGunViolence – In partnership with a national movement coordinated by the Newtown Foundation, First Congregational will be holding a candlelight vigil on the 5th anniversary of the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. We will gather on Thursday, Dec. 14 at 7pm in Pioneer Hall. Using elements of ecumenical worship from the Taize community in France, we will spend time singing, listening to words of scripture, and leaving space for silence. There will be an extended prayer time focused on gun violence. Materials for those wanting to learn how they can connect with advocacy groups working to end gun violence will also be available. During this week of Advent Peace, we remember those whose peace has been shattered by violence and together we pray and work for a more peaceful world.

Christmas Eve is a time for singing carols by candlelight and remembering the gift that came to us in a tiny town all those years ago. Join us at 7:00 p.m. on December 24th as we celebrate the birth of Christ by hearing the story once again and sharing Communion at Christ's table (open to all!). People of all ages are welcome at this service. Pre service music will begin at 6:45pm. (Note: we will still be gathering for worship on Sunday morning at 10:45 a.m. Please join us for Lessons and Carols!)

Poetry and Pajamas - Christmas Sunday is Dec. 31st. The service will be centered around an offering of Christmas Poetry. If you are interested in volunteering to read poetry during worship, please contact Pastor Caela. Children are invited to come to worship in their pajamas on this low-key, comfy morning.

Thinking of You post cards... The “Thinking of You” cards located in the church pews are an awesome way to write a message to a member of our church family. It might be someone that you know is ill and needs some encouragement or someone you’ve missed seeing in church for awhile. All you have to do is write the person’s name on the front and the message on the back. Sign the card, then drop it in the offering plate and Sandy, our church secretary, will mail the card. It might brighten someone’s day beyond measure!

First Congregational UCC, Manhattan—an Open and Affirming Congregation

In the spirit of love, openness, and inclusiveness we welcome persons of every race, culture, nationality, age, family configuration, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, and socio-economic status to participate fully in all aspects of our church’s life and ministry. *—from Open and Affirming Statement adopted May 11, 2003*

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

Weston Family Open House – Saturday, December 16 from 2 pm-?
Please join us for great conversation, to explore, or to just enjoy the peace and quiet during this holiday season. A variety of drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

**SAVE THE DATE & INVITE A FRIEND:
Advent and Christmas at First Congregational UCC**

- Dec. 3 - Dec. 17** - "Mind, Body, and Spirit" class for adults at 9:30am
- Dec. 10** - brass ensemble, 10:45am; Ecumenical Blue Christmas, 7pm
- Dec. 14** - Vigil to #EndGunViolence during Taize, 7pm
- Dec. 17** - Christmas Pageant, 10:45am
- Dec. 24** - Lessons and Carols, 10:45am; Christmas Eve worship at 7:00pm
(gathering music at 6:45pm)
- Dec. 31** - Christmas Poetry Worship, 10:45am

More details and a printable Advent calendar at uccmanhattan.org/christmas.

Ministry Opportunities

It's easy to get involved! Circle any of the below paragraphs, add your contact info, and drop into the collection plate. We'll be in touch soon to get you signed up or answer your questions. Thank you.

Second Helping is in need of additional church hosts. The church host greets the guests, makes sure people have what they need, and generally monitors the progress of the meal. Volunteers will be paired with an experienced host until they feel comfortable with the position. The church hosts often get to know the guests over time, which is a privilege of the host position. If you would like to serve in this important role, please indicate your name and contact information on the line.

Ministers of Care. Do you have a heart for listening and holding sacred space? The Ministers of Care provide care and encourage the wider congregation to provide care for those in our congregation who are unable to regularly make it to worship, are in need of additional connection and support, or are going through a major life transition.

Grounds care in spring, summer, and fall requires mowing the church lawn, in addition to the church garden lot adjacent to the alley, prior to Sunday's worship (Thursday, Friday, or Saturday). In the winter it's a little different. Sign up for a whole week - Monday-Sunday - and if it snows, you "win" what is affectionately called the snow lottery. You've got to clear the walkways with the church snow blower.

Worship volunteers have many Sunday morning tasks. They greet at the door, read scripture, host fellowship hour, usher, contribute flowers, and offer the Word for Children. Sign up is easy!

Want to be a part of the ministry opportunities? Circle the paragraph that interests you and drop this paper in the collection plate with your name and contact information.

Name: _____

Phone number(s): _____

Email: _____

Human Rights Day

It has been a hard year for human rights.

There have been times in our history when it has felt that indeed the arc of the moral universe was bending toward something greater than we were. Human beings built democracies, shared wealth, created opportunities and it seemed that we were progressing toward a new world. Then, racism, long bubbling beneath public discourse, resurfaced with new outfits but wearing the familiar symbols of hate. We saw that bedrock evil of white supremacy reanimating itself and marching on Charlottesville chanting the old loathsome slogans of bigotry. We saw the rebranding of these groups, and the normalizing of hate speech. We saw politics become a tool for leaders to embarrass themselves and all human beings with a fear-filled and bigoted reminder of what too many of our neighbors think. We saw many terrible things and we did not back away. In this awful year for human rights the United Church of Christ stood where it has always stood—with the messengers of hope.

It's Advent, right now, in the church of Jesus Christ. It is a time to imagine what is possible for human beings. It is a time to anticipate wonder and imagine what justice looks like. It is a time to remember that we ourselves are powerful witnesses. We are not fearful, not withering, not timid but outspoken on behalf of a God who comes to us from the underside, from the marginalized, from a stable in a faraway place and declares that evil will not prevail. Our God is born in hope. A hope that is as real as a chain of human beings putting their bodies on the line for love itself.

We, as a denomination long in the service of human rights, have seen our leadership shine.

Reverend Traci Blackmon, our UCC Executive Minister for Justice and Witness, was present in Charlottesville leading clergy in a peaceful and protesting line against hate. Our President and General Minister John Dorhauer said, "Charlottesville made it very clear that the United Church of Christ has not only something to say, but something transformative and critical for the movement . . . We will not be silenced, discouraged, and certainly not diminished. And love will win." Of course, love will win.

