



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 61 Number 5

May 2017

Sunday School at 9:30 A.M. (when school is in session)

Sunday Worship at 10:45 A.M.

Second Helping Dinner at 6:00 P.M.

Thursday Evening Taizé at 7:00 P.M.

700 Poyntz Avenue

Manhattan, Kansas 66502

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www.uccmanhattan.org

Challenged Spiritually

As the school year comes to a close, the rhythms of life in a college town begin to shift. We will be sharing in our annual recognition of Christian Education staff and volunteers during worship on Sunday, May 21st. We will thank those who teach children, youth, and adults. I hope you'll be able to join us.

We will also be thanking all the learners in our congregation. Which is, of course, all of us. On the 21st we will be particularly recognizing those who have spent time outside of worship participating in Sunday School, youth group, small groups, and more.

I am so thankful to be a part of a congregation that takes seriously our mission to Challenge Spiritually....at every age level. I have been amazed to hear the things my own young children have learned in their Sunday School classes each week. One night at dinner we decided to say the Prayer of Jesus and I was surprised that my kids knew it, since they aren't usually in *[continued pg. 2]*



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worship at that point in the service. They had learned it in Sunday School, of course! When our family watches Bible-themed movies like *The Prince of Egypt* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*, my kids eagerly tell me the stories before they unfold. Because they've learned them in Sunday School. I am thankful for all the parents who are able to bring their kids to church at 9:30 every Sunday morning to create a community of learners as our children grow in the faith together.

It has been an honor and joy to spend additional time with our youth this spring in Confirmation Classes. I have had the pleasure of seeing these youth people ask challenging questions and support one another in important ways. Throughout the school year, they've not only learned about the Bible but learned about many contemporary issues of social justice through art and ritual. I've seen them promise to pray for one another and trust one another with important part of their lives.

God is Still Speaking and our adults are Still Learning, too. We have had so many wonderful conversations in adult Sunday School this school year as we've tackled racism, grace, other faiths, gender identity, aging, the Bible and more. The group is ever-changing, but the consistency comes in the joy of gathering with people who aren't afraid to really engage with the subject and challenge each other spiritually to grow. Speaking of growth - I hope you'll have a chance to sit down with one of more of our recent Disciple graduates and ask them how they've growth this year. They've read the entire Bible over the course of nine months, engaging in individual prayer and study six days a week and meeting for 2.5 hours every Sunday afternoon to learn together. Wow!

As we shift gears into summer, I hope you'll consider a Spiritual Challenge for these summer months: Sabbath. Perhaps we can all make a concentrated effort to say "no" more often, do less, and carve out time and space for rejuvenation. It is often in these items of creative rest that we find new questions and insights that will encourage our spiritual growth when we return to classes and small groups in the fall.

Pastor Caela

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.



Pastor Caela on Vacation

Caela will be on vacation from Monday, May 15 - Saturday, May 20. Our pastoral associate, Sue Zschoche, will be on call for any pastoral care needs that might arise.

Sharing and Caring

Prayers and Concern

- For more information please contact the church office.

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.

Ministry of the Decorative Scissors



The next retreat of the Ministry of the Decorative Scissors is from 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 4 until 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 6 in Andover Hall. Everyone is welcome. There are no guarantees 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.

Celebration Concert Thank You

I am so grateful to my church for your participation in and attendance at our initial Celebration Concert on Sunday, April 23. Pastor Caela has encouraged a sense of open hospitality in our community, particularly in reaching out to our neighbors at Bethel A.M.E. church, and you responded with your characteristically loving spirit.

First thanks go to our wonderful choir and keyboard artists, who did their usual outstanding work, and special thanks to Craig Weston and Paul Hunt for doing double duty by contributing their talents as jazz musicians as well. We had a great time making music with our fellow musicians from Bethel, and making new friends as we shared our musical traditions.

The concert would not have been nearly as much fun, however, without all of you who gave up your late Sunday afternoon to attend the concert and the fellowship hour afterward; many, many thanks to all who attended and to all who provided cookies and other delicious edibles. Your enthusiastic response has led us to consider this the first of many joint musical efforts between the two churches.

A final special thanks goes to Jennifer Edwards, who was the original facilitator for the concert, organized both the concert and the reception afterwards, and even provided the lovely flowers on the tables. Thank you, thank you! — *Gretchen Lewis*

Mrunch, May 6

The Mrunch group will meet Saturday, May 6, from 9-11am at Sparrow Specialty Coffee (219 S. 4th St, Manhattan). Childcare will be provided at the church if needed - please let me know a week in advance so that nursery staff can be arranged. Mrunch is a time for mothers of elementary aged kids and younger (even if you are just expecting) to come and enjoy a peaceful supportive environment with other mothers in the same season of life. If you have questions or need childcare, contact Andrea Chamberlain.

Worship in the Park and Blessing of the Animals

Join us for our annual blessing of the animals! On Sunday, May 7 we'll gather at 10:45 a.m. in (shady) Long's Park. Please note: there will be NO SUNDAY SCHOOL this day. Please bring along your own chair if you've got one.

During worship, we'll bless our pets. Childcare staff will be on hand to care for young kids who want to explore the playground or the rest of the park.

After worship, stick around for a good ol' fashioned potluck. Bring a dish to share and your own table service. Drinks will be provided by our Board of Deacons.



News from the Board of Trustees

Good afternoon. Bear with me for a second as I want to take you on a little trip. I want to take you to a place, a very special place, that's near and dear to all of our hearts. Get comfy, settle in, close your eyes, and we'll be on our way. Imagine for a moment that we are meeting at the best place in town, any town and any place will do, just so it's the best place. The reason for the gathering isn't terribly important; maybe we are getting together for fancy \$100 per plate fundraiser to raise money for the worthiest cause we can think of or maybe we are joining together to celebrate a special couple's fiftieth anniversary. Or, maybe we are simply getting together for a quick snack and some friendly conversation after church service. We're still meeting at a very special place, a place that has welcomed folks regardless of all those things that other places exclude, a place where we feel at home, loved, cared for, and most of all, welcome.

Friends, it's time to let you in on a secret; this place I'm describing is ours. Our church is special to all of us in very different ways. With each other we have loved, laughed, suffered loss, experienced joy, and welcomed new lives and new friends inside these stone walls. Our church is an imprint of God, made by the hands and hearts of our congregation and shared with the larger community or anyone else that may need it. Many years ago, before I was a member, the congregation came together and made possible an updated, modern sanctuary, a kitchen capable of making many meals to help sustain people in our community, an elevator, and a nursery for members-in-training to enjoy a safe place of learning. The time has come again to make some additional upgrades. You may know by now that the Board of Trustees has been in conversation, gathering facts, and sorting through details for flooring upgrades in Pioneer Hall, Blachly Hall and the kitchen/foyer areas. At some point in their tenure most board members have crawled in, peered through, talked with professionals, and even had experts volunteer time to crawl around with us as we sought to learn what it takes to preserve, yet make functional, a historic structure that seems to bend the hands of time as we walk around it.

We've taken the first step on the project by hiring Cameron Tross Architecture to create professional drawings of our spaces and to help consult as a trusted friend of the church on issues that will undoubtedly arise during construction. This step is important, but it is only a first step. There will be many steps to follow that will include you as a congregation for input and donations, but also a chance for you to look around and take note of the reflections you see in our walls – where you have left your mark, or maybe how you can in the future.

I am honored to preside over the Board that kicks this project off. It gives me a deeper connection to our building, and through that a deeper connection to you, my fellow congregants. Thank you for listening and taking this trip with me. You may open your eyes now!

Steve Bishop
Board of Trustees

White Memorial Camp Scholarships for Children and Youth

White Memorial Camp, a United Church of Christ affiliated camp just north of Council Grove provides wonderful summer camp experiences for children, youth and families. Please use the link from our Church's website to learn about White Memorial Camp at www.uccmanhattan.org/white-memorial-camp.html.

The Board of Christian Education is pleased to make scholarships available for children and youth to attend White Memorial Camp. The scholarships are up to 50% of the registration cost, depending on available funds and the number of requests. Requests for camp scholarships should be made to Sandy in the Church office.

Campers registering by May 5th save \$50 on the registration cost.
Campers registering by June 2nd save \$25 on the registration cost.
Make your summer camp plans.
You can register online.



Adult Education Updates

April 23, 30, May 14, 21 (4 weeks) - adult Sunday School at 9:30am
“Faith through the Seasons” with Sean Weston.

Each season of life brings different questions of faith, meaning, and understanding our place in the world. At every age, there are amazing opportunities for growth and tough challenges. This four-week series starting April 23, led by Sean Weston, will explore the questions and struggles people face on their faith journeys in each decade of life. Based on the experiences of those who participate as well as research on faith development, we will seek to be strengthened in our faith journeys and grow in our understandings of ourselves and people of all ages. NOTE: no class on May 7 due to Worship in the Park.

Monday, May 22 at 7pm in the Conference Room
“Telling Your Faith Story” Workshop

Do you feel awkward when faith comes up in conversation? Do you struggle to find the “right” words? Are you worried about coming across badly? You’re not alone. But telling our stories is powerful, and you never know how your story will help somebody else. To help each other discover, explore, and share our stories, Sean Weston will be hosting two stand-alone “Telling Your Faith Story” workshops. We’ll explore our own stories and learn how to share them with others, either in 15 seconds or in long conversation.

Sunday, May 21st

Christian Education Recognition during worship

Summer Break

May 9th - Caela’s final “out-of-the-office hours” at Radina’s

May 21st - Final day for Sunday School (kids, youth, adults)

**May 21st is the final Sunday
for adult, youth, and children's
Sunday School until August.**

Youth Ministries

Dear Families:

This has been a beautiful year for our youth. Three of our youth, Nadiyah Gamble, Dean Kinderknecht and Tahjai Gamble, have gone through the process of learning about our church and the UCC in the Confirmation Class. They have shared their spiritual journey and learned about the spiritual journeys of members of our own congregation. Their last class was Sunday, April 23rd, and we will be celebrating them on Sunday, April 30th. Please join us at worship at 10:45 AM to pray them into our congregation in a new way and stay afterwards for fellowship where we will continue to surround them in faith and joy.

After Confirmation Sunday, there are only two more days of youth group. They are as follows:

4:00-6:30 Sun., May 7 Miyazaki Movie Night: Spirited Away
4:00-6:30 Sun., May 14 Last Day Party

Many blessings,
Tai Amri

Finding Pastor Caela This Summer



Summer brings a different rhythm in our community and congregation. Pastor Caela will be using the summer months as an opportunity to focus more intentionally on soul-feeding activities that will enhance her ministry in the busy months ahead. She is hoping to spend more time practicing spiritual disciplines such as prayer, time in nature, holy reading. Summer will also be a time to dream about the future and read books that will fuel preaching and leadership. As always, much of the pastor's work happens outside of the office and outside of the regular 9-5 time-frame. If you would like to meet with Pastor Caela, the best practice is always to contact her directly to set up an appointment.

ECM Notebook

Ecumenical Campus Ministry is a cooperative ministry at K-State supported by the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). www.ksu.edu/ecm

- Some of you may be aware that I recently celebrated my 20th anniversary as campus pastor at ECM. What you may not know, yet, is that I will be shifting my focus sometime this summer to development work—raising friends and funds to more firmly establish ECM’s financial sustainability for the next generation or more—and stepping away from the programming and daily operations of ECM in order to make way for the next generation of pastoral leadership. I won’t be retiring, just redirecting my energies in service to ECM’s mission.
- We hope to have the new campus pastor in place by July 1. With lots of involved students, continuing staff and dedicated Board members, all working to sustain our diverse program offerings and ministry of hospitality to all, building community and service to others, ECM is well-situated for a new campus pastor to come in, take something good and make it better!
- During this exciting time of transition and opportunity at ECM, your prayers are welcome. My only request is that you encourage, love and support the next ECM campus pastor as much as you have me these past twenty years!



– *David A. Jones, ECM Campus Pastor*

Free Money!

Do you participate in our Dillons fundraiser? It's easy! Just go to dillons.com to link your shopper card. If you need help, contact the church office. (Our organization number is #10145.) Check your enrollment by checking the very bottom of your Dillons receipt. You should see "...donating to First Congregational UCC."

Update from the Vitality and Outreach Committee

In April, UCC was a co-sponsor for many community events, including the Jewish Palestinian Voices for Peace, and Take Back Our Lives (Pastor Caela was a speaker and we had an information table). We had a dynamic UCC group at the Pride Rally and Festival (Pastor Caela was a speaker).

Coming up in May – Kansas Interfaith Action (KIFA) Annual Dinner at the Temple Beth Shalom in Topeka on May 24 **Sister Simone Campbell**, from Nuns on the Bus, will be the speaker. Our congregation supports KIFA and their work as the “voice of faith” for progressive policy in Kansas. The V&O Committee urges you to attend KIFA’s annual fundraiser and dinner and hear this excellent speaker! More information is on the website (kansasinterfaithaction.org) or Facebook page.

Cobb Corner — Going Green

“All are but parts of one stupendous whole
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul”

– Alexander Pope (1688-1744), “An Essay on Man,” *The Green Bible*, p. 1-105

Reminder: Have an Easter Lily and it’s finished blooming? Don’t throw it away! Plant it in a sunny spot or give it to someone else to plant. Lily Resurrection will come every June for decades!

As we look forward to the Animal Blessing May 7th, consider the potluck that follows. Does it bother anyone else that we’ve just had a beautiful blessing of our beloved pets minutes before we grill others following their inhumane existence on factory farms?

If so, bring a non-meat dish. I know from the delicious Easter breakfast that we have many excellent cooks who are expert at such dishes. Do the animals and the planet a favor as often as you can and perhaps your own health may benefit as well.

P.S. If a non-meat meal seems too extreme, it may help to know that pigs can learn to do video games better than pre-schoolers and Linda Richter! Now, can you put down that hot dog?

-- Linda Richter

Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter at lrichter@ksu.edu.

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.

May 7, 2017

Dessert: Greta Climenhaga

Volunteers: Mostafa Taghvaei, Kathy Bleam, Charlotte MacFarland, Dave MacFarland

Chief Cook: Craig Weston

Church Host: Tracey Weston

May 14, 2017

Dessert: Jennifer Edwards

Volunteers: First Christian Church

Chief Cook: Paul Allen

Church Host: Pastor Caela

May 21, 2017

Dessert: Joy Schell

Volunteers: Carol Seven, Stephanie Reeck, Eric Roberts, Joy Schell, Ann Smit

Chief Cook: Gretchen Lewis

Church Host: Jim Lewis

May 28, 2017

Dessert: Kerri Keller

Volunteers: ESA Sorority

Chief Cook: Brent Maner

Church Host: Martha Miller

**Volunteer by going to
uccmanhattan.org/sign-ups**

Worship & Volunteers

May 7, 2017

Greeters..... 2 volunteers needed
Scripture Reader volunteers needed
Communion Servers . volunteers needed
Fellowship Hour Potluck in the Park
Flowers volunteers needed
Grounds Care volunteer needed

May 14, 2017

Greeters..... Leslie Bell, volunteer needed
Scripture Reader volunteers needed
Fellowship Hour volunteers needed
Flowers volunteers needed
Grounds Care volunteer needed

May 21, 2017

Greeters..... 2 volunteers needed
Scripture Reader Leslie Bell
Fellowship Hour volunteers needed
Flowers volunteers needed
Grounds Care volunteer needed

May 28, 2017

Greeters..... 2 volunteers needed
Scripture Reader volunteers needed
Fellowship Hour volunteer needed
Flowers volunteer needed
Grounds Care volunteer needed



Lunch Bunch May 3

We join together with Bethel AME Church in an opportunity for members of our two congregations to get to know one another. Wednesday, May 3 at **Longhorn Steakhouse (near HyVee)**. It's not for women only—everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m. (Find monthly Lunch Bunch locations by clicking on Community Life/Events Calendar on the church website at www.uccmanhattan.net.)

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

Strengthen the Church

On Sunday, May 21 we receive the Strengthen the Church special mission offering.

Strengthen the Church (STC) is a special mission offering to reimagine and build the future of the UCC. Shared at the conference and national levels, STC largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches in parts of the country where the UCC voice has not been heard.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults.

Additional information may be found at www.ucc.org/stc. Envelopes for your gifts will be in the pew backs in the sanctuary. Your gift can be placed in any Sunday offering or mailed to the church: 700 Poyntz Ave., Manhattan KS 66502.



— *The Board of Mission*

Church Calendar

Wondering what's happening at the church? Planning an event and you're not sure if the building is already booked? Sandy handles all of our building scheduling needs, but you can also go uccmanhattan.org/events-calendar to find out what's happening on site. If you'd like to reserve part of the building for an event, please contact Sandy (office@uccmanhattan.org, 537-7006).

Community News



Bike Month 2017

May 1 National Bike Challenge	May 19 Bike to Work Day
May 2 Bike Month Proclamation	May 20 Progressive Lunch
May 7 Little Apple Pedal	May 21 Women's Ride
May 7 Kids' Bike Swap	May 26 Final Friday Ride
May 10 Bike to School Day	May 28 Bike & Brunch
May 13 Gravel Ride	June 8-11 Kandango
May 16 Introduction to Mountain Biking	

👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 = Family Friendly

For event details & information visit cityofmhc.com/bikemonth

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

700 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502
(785) 537-7006

uccmanhattan.org



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Return Service Requested

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	2	3 11:30 Lunch Bunch 5:30 Mission 5:45 Deacons 7:00 AA meeting 7:00 Trustees	4 7:00 Taizé 8:00 NA mtg	5 7:30 NA mtg	6 9:00 Mrunch @Sparrow
				Ministry of the Decorative Scissors		
7 Worship in the Park Blessing of the Animals 9:00 Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Worship & Communion <i>Fill the Breadbasket</i> 1:00 Disciples Study 4:00 Youth Group movie 6:00 Second Helping	8 12:00 Leadership Lunch @KSU 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	9	10 6:30 Christian Ed 7:00 Vitality & Outreach 7:00 AA meeting	11 7:00 Taizé 8:00 NA mtg	12 7:30 NA mtg	13
14 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship 4:00 Youth Group Last Day Party 6:00 Second Helping	15 5:15 Yoga 6:00 USD383 mtg 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	16 10:00 NCA Clergy	17 7:00 Cabinet 7:00 AA meeting	18 7:00 MLK mtg 7:00 Taizé 8:00 NA mtg	19 7:30 NA mtg	20
	Caela on vacation					
21 Strengthen the Church 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship <i>Christian Education Recognition</i> 6:00 Second Helping	22 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:00 Telling Your Faith Story 7:30 NA mtg	23	24 7:00 AA meeting	25 7:00 Taizé 8:00 NA mtg	26 12:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 NA mtg	27
28 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	29 Memorial Day Offices closed 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	30	31 7:00 AA meeting	May 2017		