



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 64 Number 3

March 2020

Sunday School at 9:30 A.M. (when school is in session)
 Sunday Worship at 10:45 A.M. 700 Poyntz Avenue
 Second Helping Dinner at 6:00 P.M. Manhattan, Kansas 66502
 Thursday Evening Taizé at 7:00 P.M. telephone 785-537-7006
www.uccmanhattan.org

Lent: Into the Wilderness

The Sanctified Art Creative Team (which prepared our gorgeous, chock-full-of-Spirit-wisdom Lenten Devotionals) defines wilderness as “state of the wild.” The season of Lent has its ancient roots in the story of Jesus’s wilderness journey at the beginning of his ministry. A time of struggle, perseverance, trial, and transformation. During this season in the wild, Jesus was formed and forged for all the ministry that was to come.

Lent is a time of fresh starts and wilderness growth for any who dare to accept the Spirit’s invitation to surrender into this holy season. We are offered the opportunity to seek clarity on a particular question that’s been nagging us deep in our bones. Others will use this time as space for clearing aside the underbrush which can choke new growth - whittling away the extraneous to focus on what matters most. Lenten practices might include cutting out the extra chatter in our lives or listening more intently to the voices which give life. Some of us will *[continued pg. 2]*

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choose to abstain from something during this season while others might choose to add a new practice into our daily routine.

There is not a singular, “right” way to do Lent. There is only the invitation to step into the wilderness.

We don’t necessarily know what will happen to us during our time out there in the wild. The stars overhead at night can be beautiful, but as the chill of evening sets in we might also start to feel worried or afraid. Gazing at the horizon, we put one foot in front of the other even though we’re not sure exactly where we’re headed.

In Lent, the journey itself is often the destination.

But we go forth into this season in confidence. Confident that if we surrender ourselves to the wide open spaces the Spirit will move within and among us, bringing new light and life as the days lengthen. Confident that we are not alone. We journey into the wild places with fellow travelers of The Way. We go, also, with the assurance that there is no place too wild or barren for God’s accompaniment. We travel into the wilderness with Christ as our model, knowing that if the wilderness was good enough for him....well, surely it holds promises for us, as well.

Let go. Surrender. Make a bold (or tentative) movement into the wilderness. Jesus is waiting for us in the desert places, the wide-open spaces, the wild.

Pastor Caela

Pastor Caela on Vacation

Pastor Caela will both be traveling during Spring Break. If you have a pastoral care need between March 7-11, please contact Sandy in the office during weekdays or Pastor Sue if after hours.

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.



Sharing and Caring

Prayers and Concerns

- 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.

Needed: On-Call Host Volunteers for Second Helping

Second Helping is one of this church's most important ministries to the community. One thing that has helped us succeed as the need has grown was securing the services of a Permanent Host, Reggie Moore, who provides a familiar face to our guests. Reggie is very faithful in coming; however, no one can make it every single week! We would like to recruit a few volunteers who would serve as on-call hosts who could assist at Second Helpin on Sundays when Reggie cannot come. Please contact Pastor Caela if you are interested.

Yoga for Lent

Napoleon said, “The best cure for the body is a quiet mind.”

Come join us on Monday and/or Wednesday at 5:15 pm in Andover Hall (basement) for an hour of peace and stretching.

Never done yoga before? Anybody who breathes can do yoga. We love beginners!

Don't have a yoga mat? We have extras.

Don't know what to wear? Anything you can move in easily. No shoes required.

Our classes are about breathing, feeling, listening to our bodies, and letting go of competition, judgement and expectations.

This class is open to the community and taught by Donna Keyser. (\$5 donation for each session welcome but not required)

Note: No class on March 2 and 4, April 6 and 8

2020 Ecumenical Lenten Lunches: Faith in Unexpected Places

Faith testimonies and experiences from leaders within the medical field, public law, university, family life and city of Manhattan.

The Manhattan Ministerial Association invites you to participate in this year's Lenten Lunch series. We'll gather in the First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall 12-1pm each Wednesday in Lent (March 4 – April 8) to hear an inspiring faith testimony from local leaders involved in fields ranging from medical to arts and humanities. This is an exciting opportunity to meet fellow Manhattanites and think of faith and public service in new ways.

The cost of the meal is \$8 accepted via cash or check. Please RSVP to the meal by calling (785)776-8821 or emailing fumc@fumcmanhattan.com the Monday prior to each Wednesday lunch. You may register for multiple meals at once. Further Questions? Email Pastor Melanie Nord at mnord@fumcmanhattan.com.

Lunch Bunch March 4

We join together in an opportunity to get to know one another, Wednesday, March 4 at Happy Valley Chinese Restaurant (Blue Hills Shopping Center). Everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m.



Save the Dates: Lent and Easter 2020

Lent is the 40 days preceding Easter and is a time when Christians traditionally cultivate their faith in more intensive ways. For some this may include giving something up or adding in a new spiritual practice. As a gathered community, we always include additional focused opportunities for worship and communal prayer. Because Easter is a movable feast (meaning, the date changes each year based on moon cycles), the dates for Lent change each year.

In 2020, the following dates will guide our journey through Lent and Eastertide:

March 1: First Sunday of Lent

April 5: Palm Sunday

April 9: Maundy Thursday

April 10: Good Friday

April 11: Holy Saturday

April 12: Easter Sunday

May 31: Pentecost Sunday, which ends Eastertide

Taizé Worship for Lent: A Special Invitation

"If God spoke in a still, soft voice, could you hear?" Sometimes the soul needs space and serenity, quiet and calm. Repetitive singing, silences for prayer, and Bible readings combine to create a stillness, a peacefulness, for a deep breath of time during Taizé worship.

If you're looking for corporate worship in an intimate setting, a midweek rejuvenation of the spirit, a place to heal, or to simply sit quietly and meditate, consider joining us for Taizé on Thursdays at 7:00 PM. Enter the double-doors near the parking lot and join us in Pioneer Hall.



Living Room Worship - Friday, March 20

Living Room Worship is casual evening of acoustic guitar, singing, prayer, and fellowship. If you are hungry to deepen your connection to God and each other, join us in the living room! We are trying out a new night of the week. Join us on FRIDAY, March 20 from 7:30-9:00pm at 421 Leavenworth, Manhattan. Questions? Talk to Kerry Priest.



Finding First Congregational Friends - Our Church Directory

Did you know we have a church directory where you can find contact information for other folks who are a part of our congregation? You can ask Sandy for a print copy OR access it online or via the free smartphone/tablet app. Instructions are available at www.uccmanhattan.org/church-directory. It's also important to be sure and keep YOUR information in the directory up to date and you are now able to change your information or upload a photo via the directory. When you do so, it sends a notification to the church office - groovy! If you need help, contact Sandy and she'll get you situated.



Pastor Caela's Out-of-the-Office Hours Return

Caela will be trying out something new this Spring...monthly out-of-the-office hours at rotating locations and times. Check the bulletin and website for information about upcoming opportunities to connect with Pastor Caela and other folks from our congregation. Stop by for conversation or prayer. Grab a quick blessing on your way somewhere else or stay for a spell.

Upcoming opportunities to connect:

- Monday, March 23, 5:00-6:30 p.m. at Little Apple Brewery
- Saturday, April 25, 9:00-10:30 a.m. at Radina's Bakehouse (Blue Earth)
- Sunday, May 17, 3:00-4:00 p.m. at K-State Gardens

Can't make it to one of these times? No problem.

Pastor Caela keeps her own calendar, so if you'd like to get together 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.

Ministry of the Decorative Scissors

The Ministry of the Decorative Scissors meets March 12-14. 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.



Name Tags = Hospitality

As we prepare to welcome newcomers this spring, a quick reminder to please wear your name tag each Sunday during worship.

Name tags help new people learn our names and faces quickly. They also make it easier for you to identify a new person when they are attending worship - and welcome them warmly!



If you do not have a permanent name tag, please contact the church office to ask for one. If you see a new person, please ask them if they'd like a name tag and let them know they can simply make a note of it in the attendance pad on Sunday morning.

Another way you can greet our visitors warmly is to offer them a bag of popcorn and thank them for "popping in." The popcorn is located in the small table in the narthex (the entry off Poyntz). If you see families with young children, be sure to help them by showing them the pew cards with information about our children's ministries. And, as always, it's always lovely to offer to walk someone into coffee hour after worship, visit for a few minutes, and then introduce them to someone new. Thanks for making First Congregational UCC a warm and welcoming place for newcomers.

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering: March 29

One Great Hour of Sharing is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC. The theme of the offering this year is Investing in Futures, and during the month of March, we will hear more during the Worship Hour about specific examples of our UCC denominational commitment to supporting people worldwide who suffer from emergencies, chronic poverty, and violence. We will receive this offering on March 29, and we hope you will continue to generously support this work. Thank you from the Board of Mission.

YGC FCUCC

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**SPRING 2020
REGULAR SCHEDULE**
”

ALL EVENTS ARE
AT FCUCC UNLESS
OTHERWISE NOTED

CONTACT BRITTANI
@ 785-643-2104 OR
BRITTANI@UCCMANHATTAN.ORG

FEB 2
9:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH ROOM

MAR 1ST
9:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH ROOM

APR 5
9:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH ROOM

MAY 3
9:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH ROOM

Christian Education

Please contact Brandy McDonald (brandy@uccmanhattan.org) or Brittani Frost-Shank (brittani@uccmanhattan.org) for more information about options for children and youth.

March Children's Ministry Schedule

March 1st- Shining Light Yoga

March 8th & 15th- Traditional Sunday School

March 22nd- Children's Choir

March 29th- Service Sunday (more details on this to come!)

As always, if you have questions regarding the Children's Ministry offerings, please let don't hesitate to reach out to Brandy at brandy@uccmanhattan.org

I'm very excited to attend training in Lawrence February 28th-March 1st to become a facilitator for the Our Whole Lives program for grades K-1 and 4-6. I believe this is an important program to be offered to our children and thank you to the church for making it possible for me to attend this! You can learn more about the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program at <https://www.ucc.org/justice-sexuality-education-our-whole-lives>.

Brandy

Shining Light Yoga

We continue to welcome children from the community into our building each month for yoga. We gather at 9:30am on the first Sunday of each month and have had 20-30 kids participating each time. Our team of volunteer teachers offer three age-based classes for kids aged 3 through 6th grade. You can learn more about the program and view photos on our new website: shininglightmhk.com. We also encourage you to follow us on Facebook!

If you'd like to get involved with this ministry, contact Brandy. We can always use help checking kids in, monitoring the lobby to welcome latecomers, and preparing fruit for each Sunday that we gather.



Lenten Adult Sunday School

The Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery: A Biblical Reflection

Sundays in March at 9:30am

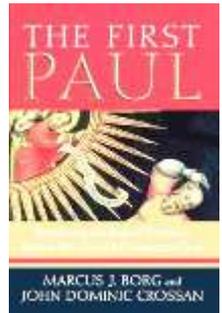
Led by Lisa Tatonetti and Craig Weston

Many Americans grow up learning that this continent was “discovered” by Christopher Columbus. The concept of discovery, as if the land was empty prior to arrival and its indigenous inhabitants were somehow “less than” the explorers is, at its heart, racism and cultural superiority. Using resources prepared by the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) and Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) of the United Church of Christ, we will use stories from our sacred texts as an entry point for discussion about the legacies of colonialism and genocide. We will examine the role of the Church in causing violence and theological foundations for repentance and reconciliation.

Tuesday Bible Book Club

On January 28 we began reading *The First Paul* by Marcus Borg and Dominic Crossan.

We are so hopeful that you can join us for good fellowship, a LOT of chocolate, and active discussion each Tuesday from 11:30 to 1:00. Contact Pastor Sue with any questions (sue@uccmanhattan.org).



Free Money!

Do you participate in our Dillons fundraiser? Link your shopper card at dillons.com. If you need help, contact the church office. (Our organization number is # QQ452.) Check your enrollment by checking the very bottom of your Dillons receipt. You should see “...donating to First Congregational UCC.”



If you ever shop at HyVee, the church can gain support through your use of pre-purchased gift cards from the church (which buys them at a 6% discount). Please contact Dave Manning and let him know of your interest.

Cobb Corner — Going Green

“Open your eyes and Behold! The whole world is full of God!”

– Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) *The Way to Christ* in *The Green Bible*, Intro-104.

Climate change is an issue that has come into its own in this election year. As such it is tricky to discuss without appearing partisan. It is important to note neither party has a monopoly of environmental virtue. For example, Republican Teddy Roosevelt created the first national park. Democrat Franklin Roosevelt put thousands to work building and maintaining parks during the great depression. Even Sunset Zoo has cement picnic tables built during that era.

Republican Richard Nixon set up the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and supported passage of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. Democrat Barack Obama expanded protective legislation and further developed our national parks.

Republican Donald Trump has taken a different approach, weakening the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts and dozens of other environmental protections. Most of these decisions are being contested in the courts. Several of his cabinet appointments are openly hostile to environmental issues. The President has taken the U.S. out of the Paris Climate Accord that has been adopted by over 185 countries.

Still, it is an election year. In the last six weeks, the President has referred to himself as “The Environmental President,” citing several actions he has taken which fact-checkers consider misleading or have been unable to confirm. Most recently he announced the One Trillion Trees Initiative in which the U.S. would plant billions of trees along with other unnamed nations. Some have noted the project is being supported by the timber and logging interests. The devil is in the details.

As campaigns go forward there may be lots of “greenwashing.” This occurs when decisions are extolled as environmentally friendly which aren’t. Meanwhile commentaries in the Green Bible urge readers to support environmental improvements and vote to make them a reality.

continued next page

Now for some good news. Our city plants and maintains trees within about 15 feet of the curb.

Free. Just ask. In a typical year, the city plants about 200 trees in residential areas and parks. Last year Manhattan Rotary club planted an additional 200 trees! In fact, Manhattan became a Tree City USA in just the second year (1977) of the Arbor Foundation's national program according to J. David Mattox, the head of the city's forestry program. (Interview, Feb.20, 2020.) Today, more than 3400 cities have become or are seeking the coveted designation. (arborfoundation.com.)

Let's make our own good news in the year ahead. April 22 will be the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day! What will You, Your Family, Your Workplace, Your Church do to recommit to the only planet we have? Or, as my sweatshirt says, "Save the world, we may need it later!"

– Linda Richter

Share ideas for future Cobb columns with Linda Richter .

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.

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 30-40 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 office@uccmanhattan.org or (785) 537-7006.

March 1, 2020

Dessert: Kerri Keller

Volunteers: Shari Tedford, Manhattan Mennonite Church

Head Cook: Robert Atchison

Church Host: Pastor Caela

March 8, 2020

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Vorhies Squadron of Arnold Air Society

Head Cook: *Volunteer needed*

Church Host: Kathy Bleam

March 15, 2020

Dessert: *volunteer needed*

Volunteers: Mogen Budde, First Christian Church

Head Cook: Sharon Purvis

Church Host: *volunteer needed*

March 22, 2020

Dessert: Gayle Doll

Volunteers: ESA Sorority

Head Cook: Craig Weston

Church Host: *volunteer needed*

March 29, 2020

Dessert: Gayle Doll

Volunteers: Martha Mather, Morgen Budde, Vet Med APO group

Head Cook: Gretchen Lewis

Church Host: Jim Lewis

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

Community News

KIFA Advocacy Day – March 18

Kansas Interfaith Action is holding a KIFA Advocacy Day on March 18. Advocacy days are set aside to lobby for Social Justice causes, most often having to do with legislation. Mark the date on your calendar. More information will be forthcoming.

Poverty Simulation – March 21

Poverty is a reality for many individuals and families. But unless you have experienced poverty, it's difficult to truly understand. Join us on March 21 at Presby Place Gym, First Presbyterian Church, 801 Leavenworth St. : Participants from **1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** and Volunteers (those who have experience working with people who are financially challenged) from **10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** for an interactive immersion experience that will help you understand the realities of living in poverty.

Volunteers (up to 30 accepted) register by Feb. 15

Participants (up to 80 accepted) register by March 15

Register online at: bit.ly/MHKpovertysimulation

If you have questions please contact Jennifer Edwards:

Joy Harjo, U.S. Poet Laureate Reading March 24

A Reading by U.S. **Poet Laureate Joy Harjo** is

sponsored by the Department of English, the Indigenous Faculty and Staff Alliance, the Dow Center for Multicultural and Community Studies at K-State Libraries, and the Beach Museum.

Tuesday March 24, 5:30 - 7:00 PM

K-State Alumni Center

1720 Anderson Ave, Manhattan KS

https://events.k-state.edu/event/reading_by_us_poet_laureate_joy_harjo#.XiDVB797m0J

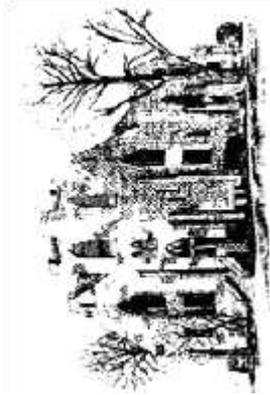
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 1st Sunday of Lent 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Yoga+Donuts 10:45 Worship and Communion <i>Fill the Breadbasket</i> 6:00 Second Helping	2 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	3 11:30 Book Study	4 11:30 Lunch Bunch 12:00 Lenten Lunch 5:15 Deacons 7:00 AA meeting	5 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	6 7:30 NA mtg	7
8 2nd Sunday of Lent 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	9 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	10 11:30 Book Study	11 12:00 Lenten Lunch 5:15 Yoga 5:30 Mission, CE 6:30 Justice & Witness 7:00 Facilities 7:00 AA meeting	12 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	13 7:30 NA mtg	14
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> ----- Caela vacation ----- </div>						
15 3rd Sunday of Lent 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	16 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	17 11:30 Book Study	18 12:00 Lenten Lunch 5:15 Yoga 7:00 Cabinet mtg 7:00 AA meeting	19 7:00 Taizé 7:00 MLK mtg 7:30 NA mtg	20 5:00 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 Living Room Worship 7:30 NA mtg	21 1:30 Poverty Simulation
22 4th Sunday of Lent 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	23 5:00 Out-of-the-Office 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	24 11:30 Book Study	25 12:00 Lenten Lunch 7:00 AA meeting	26 7:00 Taizé 7:30 NA mtg	27 7:30 NA mtg	28
29 5th Sunday of Lent 8:30 Choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 6:00 Second Helping	30 5:15 Yoga 6:45 A Cappella 7:30 NA mtg	31 11:30 Book Study				