



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 68 Number 8

August 2024

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**
Third Thursday Prayers at 7:00 P.M. **telephone 785-537-7006**
www.uccmanhattan.org

Summer Sabbatical: A Break from Church, Not from God

For many, summer is a time of relaxation, vacations, and a break from the routine. As the days grow longer and the weather invites us outdoors, many people find themselves taking a break from their usual commitments, including attending church. This phenomenon can be likened to a sabbatical rather than a departure from one's relationship with God. Like our own Pastor Caela, who we hope has been enjoying her sabbatical time to rest and renew her physical, emotional, and spiritual self, I hope each of you have experienced some level of sabbatical in your life this summer as well.

During this summer, my family has spent many weekends camping or on vacation. These times provide us with togetherness as a unit and moments of solitude as well. A time to explore our personal faith and relationship with God. Faith is deeply personal and not confined to the physical space of a church. Over the summer, people often find new ways to connect with their spirituality. A walk in the woods, a moment of gratitude at the beach, or a quiet evening under the stars can become profound *(continued pg 2)*



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spiritual experiences. These moments of connection remind us that God is present everywhere, not just in the sanctified spaces of worship.

August brings an end to many of our sabbaticals and a change in most of our day-to-day lives. For those who are involved in education in any way, either personally or through their children, the realization that the days of freedom are quickly coming to an end has become a reality. If you aren't involved with education but just live or frequent the city of Manhattan, the beginning of August is a reminder that the 10-minute commute across town or the ability to eat in an Aggieville restaurant without having to wait is also coming to an end.

As we transition from the leisurely pace of summer back to our regular routines, let us carry forward the spiritual nourishment we have found in these months. The essence of our faith is not tied to a single place or practice but is enriched by the diversity of experiences we encounter. Let the memories of serene walks, the gratitude felt in nature, and the quiet, star-filled nights guide us in our daily lives. In returning to our church community, may we bring with us renewed spirits, ready to share our experiences and grow together in faith. For in every season, whether in the quiet of summer or the bustle of August, our relationship with God remains a constant, grounding us and inspiring us to live with grace and purpose.

Di Hinrichs-Toburen, Past Moderator

Sabbatical Coverage

During Pastor Caela's sabbatical (May 1 - August 17) we have designated Ministers of Care who are on call to assist you with any pastoral care needs that might arise. If an urgent situation occurs outside our regular office hours, please contact the Minister of Care who is on call for assistance. Please note: you should leave a voicemail if they do not answer their phone, as many of us receive a high volume of spam calls and do not pick up when the number is unknown. The Minister of Care who is on call for the month of August is Brent M.

Sharing and Caring

Prayer Requests

For more information, please contact the church office.

Helping

- **Need a ride to church?** Contact one of our transportation volunteers: Jim/Carolyn Hodgson or Bill Pallett.
- **Home Communion Visits** If you would like to receive Communion at home, please reach out to Pastor Caela or a Deacon to make arrangements.

Lunch Bunch: August 4 @ Chen's Chinese Restaurant

We join together in an opportunity to get to know one another, Wednesday, August 4 at Chen's Chinese Restaurant (2704 Anderson Ave.). Everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m.



E-MAIL PRAYER CHAIN – If you wish to be added to the First Congregational e-mail prayer chain, please contact the church office. It is a quick and easy way to stay up to date with your church family.



Backpack and Educator Blessing – August 18

Join us in worship on August 18 for our annual Back to School blessing. We'll be blessing learners and educators of all ages. Kids and grown ups who are students, please bring along your backpacks to receive a blessing. Educators, please bring along your work bag or another object that represents your work.

A big thank you to the Ministry of the Decorative Scissors for creating backpack tags again this year. We will be handing out backpack tags for students and educators of all ages during worship in the sanctuary, but if you worship online or are out of town, please contact brandy@uccmanhattan.org to request your tag.



Connection Points

Sundays: Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. for adults (hybrid) and children (in-person only) | visit uccmanhattan.org/online for the Zoom link. (*When school is in session.*)

Worship at 10:45 a.m. in our Sanctuary or via Zoom | visit uccmanhattan.org/online for the Zoom link.

Fellowship Hour immediately following worship in-person or via Zoom | visit uccmanhattan.org/online for the Zoom link

Tuesdays: Tuesday Book Group from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. via Zoom | visit uccmanhattan.org/online for the Zoom link

Third Thursdays: Taizé at 7:00 p.m. in-person

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

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.



TAKE TIME FOR TAIZÉ

Join us on third Thursdays 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.

Options for Giving

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

Options for giving:

- 1) Place in the plate on Sunday morning or mail your contribution to 700 Poyntz Ave., Manhattan, KS 66502.
- 2) Donate online. Go to uccmanhattan.org/giving.
- 3) Set up a recurring online gift. It is a convenient way to provide consistent financial support to the church. Your bank may be able to do this for you OR you may contact the church office for a copy of our authorization form, and we can set it up for you.

Thank you for your continued support and please contact the office if you have questions.

Christian Education

Please contact Brandy McDonald (brandy@uccmanhattan.org) for more information about options for children and youth.

Believe it or not, it is time for Sunday School to return!

August 18: First day of Sunday School for the Fall- Welcome Party and Brainstorming for Service Sunday ideas

August 25: Service Sunday- Church Service and Acolyte Training



Tuesday Book Study

The Tuesday Book Club regularly meets each Tuesday from 11:30 to 1:00 via Zoom. Together, we read books with spiritual relevance. Our past readings have included works about the life of Jesus, Celtic Christianity, the life of Mary Magdalene, the Sermon on the Mount, and many more topics. Conversations are always marked by lively questions and deep contemplation of what we have read, and the group is known for its loving support of each other. If you are interested in joining our book study, please contact Pastor Sue: sue@uccmanhattan.org.

Youth Group Summer Fun

Calling all youth! Join us for our August events:

- **Sat, Aug 10, 12:00n-2:00pm**
Bowling Party, with Greg Eiselein and Courtney Hochman. Meet at K-State Student Union bowling alley at noon for bowling and some mouthwatering pizza.
- **Sun, Aug 25, 1:00-3:00pm**
River Walk, with Pastor Caela and Greg Eiselein. Meet at Fairmont Park for some river walking.

For more information or questions, contact Greg Eiselein, anytime.



Please fill out the appropriate form your child(ren) for the 24-25 school year.

Please note that we need different information for the different programs, so please make sure you fill out the correct form for each child.

Any questions? Ask Brandy



*Child sign up
(birth- grade 5)*



*Youth sign up
(grades 6-12)*

Thinking of You...

Is there someone in our congregation that you haven't seen in a while and you'd like to let them know you're thinking of them? Consider dropping them a note using the green postcards in the pew backs. You can write your message and then the church office will address and stamp the card and get it in the mail. Please be sure to include YOUR name so they know who it's from! Just drop it in the offering plate any time.

Nametags = Hospitality

Nametags are such an important way to show hospitality on Sunday mornings. They help visitors and guests as they are getting to know our names AND they are very important aids for those in our congregation who are living with memory loss. Use the UPC code on the back of the nametag to sign in



before services. Please do remember to grab your nametag when you come into the building on Sunday mornings and if you need a nametag, please contact office@uccmanhattan.org to request one!

Whether you worship at home or on Zoom, please be on the lookout for newcomers and greet them warmly. It can be so hard to show up in a place for the first time and we want to ensure every person who comes into our sanctuary or Zoom room on Sunday morning is welcomed like Christ. You can say hello to someone in the chat on Zoom or introduce yourself after worship in the sanctuary. A simple, "I'm not sure if we've met before. My name is _____" is a simple way to get the conversation going.

Sunday Parking

Reminder: Parking on Poyntz is somewhat limited on Sunday mornings. There is a sign at the west end of the block that reads "Parallel parking except Sunday AM." You are encouraged to park at an angle to allow for more spaces on Sunday mornings, however, don't leave your car too long after the noon deadline or you will receive a ticket.



Time is Running Out

If you've been thinking about volunteering to cook or crew for Second Helping (2H), NOW is the time. The Common Table venue for the community meals at the Lincoln Educational Center (MHS-East campus) will be available, hopefully, by the first of the year. That means if you want to volunteer with First Congregational UCC's Second Helping, the longest running community meal in MHK (30 years!), you have about 6 months left before the move, when the meals will be coordinated through Common Table. We'll all still be helping with the meals, but they won't be "Second Helping". We really need cooks, crew, and greeters – very few spaces are filled out on the volunteer form on Sign-up Genius for the summer.

- Cooks – Head cooks (must be trained) manage the meal prep and service. Starting at 4 PM, Head Cook plus another cook helper prepare the meal using the menu and instructions sent to them by Linda, the 2H Meal Coordinator. They dish up the To Go hot meals and organize the food line for our guests. The Head Cook is the last to leave the building at around 7:30, assuring that everything is clean and put away.
- Crew – Volunteers come at 5 PM to finish prepping lunches (assembled by the awesome lunch volunteers), help set up the dining area, dish up desserts, and other tasks needed for the meal. Help might be needed to make salads or run the dishwasher. Crew serve the food and help clean up afterward. Usually a cook or crew member is a "runner", taking hot food to the buffet line, making more To Go meals if needed, dishing up more salads, and in general keeping the evening running smoothly (which it does sometimes).
- Greeter – This important volunteer role includes welcoming guests to the church and checking to see if they are going to dine with us or need a To Go meal. The greeter hands out To Go meals, tallies number of To Go meals, and keeps an eye on the church entry. Often the greeter lends a listening ear to those who want to talk or need a friendly word.
- Other volunteers are needed to prepare the lunches (any time between Wednesday and Sunday at 4) and to make desserts. Sign up with Sign-up Genius on the church web page.

Questions? Check with Linda, Meal Coordinator; Les, Volunteer Coordinator; or Shari, Lunch Coordinator. More information about Common Table and the move to the Lincoln Center is forthcoming.

Second Helping Volunteers Needed

Our Second Helping ministry continues to be a wonderful way in which our church extends its mission to the community of Manhattan. We regularly serve 60-70 people each week. Many of you have helped with this mission in a variety of ways, and that is much appreciated!



Currently we are hoping to add some more volunteers to our list of "regulars." If you are interested in learning more about cooking, staffing, or volunteering in other ways, please contact: Les Kuhlman, Second Helping Volunteer Coordinator.

Current Second Helping needs:

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

Summer Bounty

There was a bounty of produce on the “free” table at 2nd Helping recently! Linda Thurston’s friend Sandy Cravens sent a bushel of cucumbers and about 40 bags of cleaned green beans. The Mocks brought in a basket of cucumbers and eggplants right before we opened the doors.



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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
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