



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 54 Number 21

December 1, 2010

Sunday School at 9:30 A.M.	700 Poyntz Avenue
Sunday Worship at 10:45 A.M.	Manhattan, Kansas 66502
Second Helping Dinner at 5:15 P.M.	telephone 785-537-7006
Thursday Evening Taizé at 7:00 P.M.	www.uccmanhattan.org

The Political Side of Advent

If you think Advent is not political, you have not been reading Isaiah. Often called the prophet of the Advent, Isaiah does not mince words about the political situation of his own day and ours and the promise that God has something better in mind. Isaiah dreams God’s dreams: Weapons of war transformed into tools for the production of food. The rod of the oppressor broken. Boots of warriors and garments rolled in blood burned. Prince of Peace. Neither shall they learn war anymore. It’s all Isaiah.

This Advent seems no less political—and as they say, all politics is local. Next Tuesday the City Commission will take up the revision of the Human Rights Ordinance once again. The proposed change is to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Plenty of folks have been speaking against the ordinance based on their Christian faith. Those of us who come to a different conclusion have been, well, less noisy. But that sends a message also. *[continued page 2]*

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In a poll released in October of this year, the results were clear. Almost three quarters (72%) of Americans say religious messages about homosexuality contribute to “negative views” of gays and lesbians. Almost two thirds (65%) see a connection to higher rates of suicide among gay youths. (from PRRI/RNS Religion News) For some the message is deadly.

As an Open and Affirming congregation, First Congregational UCC has prophetic words of hope to speak in this season of Advent and they need to be heard. Our boards have changed their meeting night this month to enable our presence to be seen at a rally. Our moderator has written a letter to the editor of the *Mercury*. I plan to speak at the commission meeting next week. The message that God loves and includes needs to be heard now more than ever. So does the message that civil rights are not to be determined by religion or by the majority in our civil society. Yes, it’s political. Like Isaiah. Like Jesus. Like Advent. God dreams big dreams when it comes to justice.

Living Wage is also in the news. You’ll note in the community news that there is a drive for signatures on a petition calling on the city to require businesses receiving economic development assistance (which comes from our tax dollars) to pay a living wage (currently about \$12 per hour in Manhattan) and to provide 70% of health insurance cost for permanent employees. Yes it’s political. It’s also about the same sort of justice issues that Isaiah faced. And John the Baptist. And Jesus.

None of this is to say that we may all come to the same conclusion about every issue. It is to say that we ought to let our faith weigh in on the issues and then not be afraid to do something about it, whether that something is signing a petition, or attending a rally, or writing a letter to the editor or a congress person or a city commissioner, or simply speaking to a neighbor about what we think and why. Plenty of Christians do that. Unfortunately some of us are rather shy about it. I’m not saying you have to behave like John the Baptist, but then he did get a lot of attention. Honey dipped locusts anyone?

Grace and Peace,

Sharing and Caring

Prayers and Concerns

- Please call the church office for more information 537-7006.

Helping

- **Need a ride to church?** Contact one of our transportation volunteers: Jim & Carolyn Hodgson, Bill Pallett, Jeff Keller, or Mike & Martha Miller.
- **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.

E-MAIL PRAYER CHAIN

If you wish to be added to the First Congregational e-mail prayer chain, please contact the church office at 537-7006 or office@uccmanhattan.org.



Thank You

To the Second Helping volunteers:

On behalf of me, my friend, and all of the other people who have been blessed by coming here on Sunday evenings, thank you all very, very much for your time and effort and years of Christian service that you have participated in by organizing, preparing, and serving the Sunday evening meals. Jesus fed thousands of people and so you honor Him by following His example. It was this church that started the community meals (in 1998, I think), which the other churches have started doing, as well. By doing so, you have made this community a better place to live! We really, really appreciate your time and effort!

Merry Christmas!

Want to learn more about First Congregational UCC? **FREE LUNCH** **DECEMBER 5**

Be our guest at an Inquirer's Lunch on Sunday December 5. The lunch is for both those who would like to become members of First Congregational UCC and those who just want to learn more about the history and ministries of this congregation. You will have the opportunity to meet new and long-time members. We'll all share our own stories and hopes, and share food and fellowship. Questions? Talk to the pastor or call the church office at 537-7006.

Child Care is available upon request. Please call 537-7006 by Thursday, December 2, and let us know how many children and their ages.

Celebrate the Season

At First Congregational United Church of Christ

Sunday, December 5 at 10:45 A.M.

Advent II Service of Word and Sacrament—bring gifts of food, Kent Cormack preaching.

Sunday, December 12 at 10:45 A.M.

Advent III Children's Christmas Pageant: "Away from the Manger".

Sunday, December 19 at 10:45 A.M.

Advent IV Music by the Chancel Choir: Choruses from the Christmas portion of G.F. Handel's *Messiah*.

Friday, December 24 at 8:00 P.M. -- Prelude at 7:45 P.M.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion

A service for all ages with stories, carols, and communion.

Sunday, December 26 at 10:45 A.M.

Christmas I Service of Word and Music, Kent Cormack preaching; Carols and Hymns for all to sing.

Sunday, January 2 at 10:45 A.M.

Christmas/Epiphany Celebration Service of Word & Sacrament, R. Kent Cormack preaching

The Christmas Fund

Proceeds from the Christmas Fund Offering are used to provide gifts to clergy and lay employees in all stages of their lives and ministries to and through the UCC. Gifts to the Christmas Fund go directly to those who serve or have served the church, in their moments of critical need. In 2009 The Christmas Fund received over \$1,500,000 from across the United Church of Christ, and nearly 1,600 families were assisted. Our goal is to be able to provide at least \$1,650,000 in assistance from the 2010 appeal.



Amidst the depressed economic climate which continues to drag on, your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. An envelope is enclosed in this newsletter for your gift. You can mail it to the church or place it in the offering at worship. All offerings received at the Christmas Eve service are directed to The Christmas Fund. The Board of Mission and Outreach thanks you for your support of The Christmas Fund.

*You are invited to a
Christmas Party Open House*

*from 4:00 to 9:00 P.M. on Sunday, December 19,
at the home of Kent Cormack & Bill Pugh*

We hope you can join us for a bit of Christmas cheer!

Christian Education

**The Sunday School Christmas pageant,
Away from the Manger,
will be presented on December 12
during the morning worship service.**

Stewardship 2011

Our Stewardship Goal: 60 pledges \$150,000
As of December 1: 40 Pledges \$103,339

Have you returned your Commitment Card for 2011?

Advent Poinsettias

The Advent season brings the opportunity to provide Poinsettias in memory of or to honor someone as we decorate the church for the Christmas season. There's still time to reserve your poinsettia. Call the church office at 537-7006 or pick up a pink slip at church, fill it out, and attach a check for \$10 per plant.



Shop Smart Grocery Certificates

It's the easy way to make a donation to the Church. Purchase your certificates after worship to use when you buy groceries. Buy the coupons at face value, spend them like cash, and the church receives a donation. Certificates are available for HyVee, Dillon's, and Ray's.



Annual Reports Please have your annual reports to the office as early as possible. If you are able to complete your report before the end of December, that is very helpful. All reports should be in the office no later than January 7. Thanks for your help.

Worship & Church Volunteers

December 5, 2010

Flowers Advent Poinsettias
Greeters Lesley Noble, *volunteer needed*
Scripture Reader Judy Ahrens
Word for Children ... Bridgett Moreland
Fellowship Hour Brent Maner
Snow Removal Jim Hodgson (*through December 11*)

December 12, 2010

Flowers Advent Poinsettias
Greeters *volunteers needed*
Scripture Reader Sue Zschoche
Word for Children ... *volunteer needed*
Fellowship Hour Brad Logan & Lauren Ritterbush
Snow Removal Mike Miller (*through December 18*)

December 19, 2010

Flowers Advent Poinsettias
Greeters *volunteers needed*
Scripture Reader Judy Willingham
Word for Children ... Bridgett Moreland
Fellowship Hour Don Cannon
Snow Removal Jim Lewis (*through December 25*)

December 26, 2010

Flowers Advent Poinsettias
Greeters *volunteers needed*
Scripture Reader Atina Hanna
Word for Children ... Bridgett Moreland
Fellowship Hour *volunteer needed*
Snow Removal Jeff Keller (*through January 1*)

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

The Second Helping

The Second Helping is a local mission of First Congregational UCC. It serves a hot meal every Sunday evening and provides sack breakfast and lunch items to each guest. To volunteer, contact the church office at 537-7006 or office@uccmanhattan.org.



December 5, 2010

Chief CookGretchen Lewis
VolunteersAnn Gleason, Caren Knicklebine
Dessert*volunteer needed*

December 12, 2010

Chief Cook*volunteer needed*
VolunteersAnn Gleason
Dessert*volunteer needed*

December 19, 2010

Chief Cook*volunteer needed*
VolunteersAnn Gleason, Caren Knicklebine
Dessert*volunteer needed*

December 26, 2010

Chief Cook*volunteer needed*
Volunteers*volunteers needed*
Dessert*volunteer needed*

Community News

Coping with Holidays & Special Days

Homecare & Hospice is offering a bereavement session titled “Coping with Holidays and Special Days” for anyone who is grieving the loss of a loved one and is finding the upcoming holidays difficult. This free educational and grief support group is open to all who want to receive support, tips, and learn new coping skills.

You may choose ONE of the following session dates:

Tuesday, December 7 12:00 – 1:30 pm
Wednesday, December 8 5:00 – 6:30 pm

If you or someone you know would like to attend one of the group sessions, please contact Judine Mecseri at (785) 370-7912 or email at jmecseri@hcandh.org or Dan Clayton at (785) 370-7918 or email clayton@hcandh.org at the Homecare and Hospice office.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Art and Writing Contest 2011 Theme: Martin’s



Inspirations - focusing on people, places, and ideas which inspired or were inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- * Original works of art or writing should reflect this year’s theme linked with Dr. King’s message of non-violence, social justice, and building bridges between racial and ethnic divisions.
- * Over \$1000 in prizes to be awarded through individual prizes and educational supplies for winners’ classrooms!
- * Entry forms are available at the Manhattan Public Library

For more information, contact Janene Hill or Linda Knupp at 776-4741 or log onto www.manhattan.lib.ks.us.

Mayor's Holiday Food & Fund Drive

Once again, the Manhattan community is preparing to respond to the Mayor's Holiday Food and Fund Drive, a benefit for the Flint Hills Breadbasket. There are several ways that you can help. Food donations are greatly needed to fill holiday baskets that are distributed to hundreds of needy families in our community. Food is also needed to stock the shelves of the Breadbasket to ensure that struggling families have enough to eat through the rough winter months. Monetary contributions are also welcomed. It costs about \$38 to provide a food basket for a family of four. If you'd like to make a donation, please make checks payable to:

The Mayor's Holiday Drive

905 Yuma

Manhattan, KS 66502

Food donations are always welcome at the Flint Hills Breadbasket. For more information call the Breadbasket at 537-0730.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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

uccmanhattan.org



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Living Wage Coalition Hosts December 4 “Drive Thru and Sign” for the “\$12 Campaign”



The Manhattan Living Wage Coalition (MLWC) is making it easy to be part of its “\$12 Campaign.” It’s hosting a “drive thru and sign” event on Saturday, December 4 at the corner of 15th and Poyntz Avenue (the Manhattan Arts Center Creative Studio building lot, 1500 Poyntz) from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Manhattan registered voters can sign the petition to force a city commission vote on a Manhattan wage floor ordinance for economic development right from their cars.

“We’ll come up to your car window, you can sign the petition and be on your way,” said Geri Simon, MLWC coordinator. “You can have a cup of hot chocolate to go, too.” “It’s our way of telling the City Commission that all we want for the holidays is a \$12 wage floor ordinance for economic development,” said Simon. The ordinance will require that any business getting city economic development assistance must pay \$12 an hour or more.

Sun

Mon

Tue

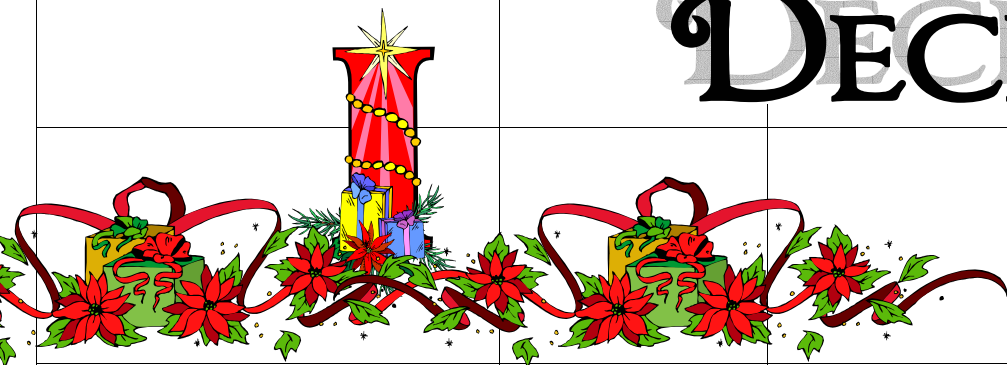
Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

DECEMBER



				1 World AIDS Day 11:30 Lunch Bunch	2 5:30 Bible Study 7:00 Taizé	3 9:00 Crisis Center Meeting 6:00 Story Time	4 9:00 Decorate Fellowship Halls
5 ADVENT 2 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship & Communion 12:00 Fellowship Hour 12:15 Inquirers Lunch 5:15 Second Helping	6	7 7:00 Confirmation Class	8 7:00 Board Meetings	9 5:30 Bible Study 7:00 Taizé	10 9:00 Crisis Center Meeting 6:00 Story Time	11	
12 ADVENT 3 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship-Children's Pageant 12:00 Fellowship Hour 5:15 Second Helping	13 12:00 Newsletter Deadline	14 7:00 Confirmation Class	15 6:00 Vitality Team 7:00 Cabinet	16 5:30 Bible Study 7:00 Taizé	17 9:00 Crisis Center Meeting 6:00 Story Time	18	
19 ADVENT 4 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Church School 10:45 Worship - <i>Messiah</i> Choruses 12:00 Fellowship Hour 4:00 Christmas Party 5:15 Second Helping	20	21 7:00 Confirmation Class	22	23 7:00 Taizé	24 8:00 Christmas Eve Service Church Offices Closed	25 Christmas Day	
26 CHRISTMAS 1 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Worship 12:00 Fellowship Hour 5:15 Second Helping	27	28	29	30 7:00 Taizé	31 9:00 Crisis Center Meeting 6:00 Story Time		

*Please submit Annual Reports
to the office*

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Geneva Denholm
1	Vincent Hanna
4	Jim Mock
5	Dona Sidorfsky
5	James Dunnigan
6	Bill Pallett
11	Simone Buelow
12	Robert Bauernfeind
15	Paula Caffey
16	Jane Hebert
16	Linda James
20	Joe Strawn
21	Karen Penner
26	Kerri Keller

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

23	Damien & Jane Hebert
25	Richard & Linda Hoag
30	William & Caren Knicklebine

D E C E M B E R

DATES TO REMEMBER

December 1	Lunch Bunch
December 4	Decorate Fellowship Halls
December 5	Fill the Breadbasket
December 8	Board Meetings
December 12	Children's Pageant
December 13	Newsletter Deadline
December 15	Vitality Team Meeting Cabinet Meeting
December 19	<i>Messiah</i> Choruses Christmas Party
December 24	Christmas Eve Service Church Offices Closed
December 25	Christmas Day