



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 51 Number 1

January 10, 2007

Sunday School for all ages 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.	e-mail ucc@interkan.net

Oaths of Office

By now you have probably heard about newly-elected Congressman Keith Ellison's desire to take the oath of office with his hand on a Qur'an (Ellison is a Muslim). Dennis Prager, a conservative talk radio host in Los Angeles responded, "America is interested in only one book, the Bible. If you are incapable of taking an oath on that book, don't serve in Congress." I suppose that would not be quite as disturbing except that Prager (who is Jewish) serves on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. And never mind the constitutional provision that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any Office of public Trust under the United States."

Now the firestorm has died down, and Ellison was sworn in last week with his hand on the two-volume copy of the Qur'an that belonged to Thomas Jefferson, loaned for the ceremony by the Library of Congress. Nevertheless, that there was a controversy at all is a strong reminder of our polarized times. *[continued page 2]*

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In case you are interested in such religious trivia, the new Congress includes not only its first Muslim in history, but its first two Buddhists. There are now more Jews than Episcopalians, and Nevada Senator and majority leader Harry Reid is the highest ranking Mormon in Congressional history. All of this suggests a congress that is more representative of the religious plurality of our country's population—although mainline white Anglo-Saxon Protestants remain over-represented, and the UCC has 5 senators and 4 representatives in the new Congress though it represents less than 1% of the U.S. population. But nothing lies (or bores) like statistics. What I really wanted to share was another oath of office story that did not make the headlines in most papers:

On January 4, Massachusetts Governor-elect Deval Patrick took the oath of office by placing his hand on a Bible that was given to John Quincy Adams by the Africans held captive aboard the Amistad trade ship. Patrick is an African-American.

Many black and white Congregationalists in New England formed the Amistad Support Committee that aided the illegally captured and traded Africans aboard the Amistad. Adams, a Congregationalist and former U.S. President, argued on behalf of the Africans in front of the U.S. Supreme Court and secured their freedom in 1841. The committee continued its anti-racism work as the American Missionary Association, an organization that became part of the Justice and Witness Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

As for Ellison, he was hardly the first to forgo a Bible when taking the oath of office. Theodore Roosevelt used no Bible in 1901, but did in 1905. Herbert Hoover, because he was a Quaker, affirmed his oath rather than swearing it, but did use a Bible.

As for John Quincy Adams, in 1825 he had not yet received his Bible from the Amistad captives, but a good Congregationalist surely had a copy or two. Nevertheless he took the oath of office with his hand resting on a legal volume. Food for thought.

Sharing and Caring

Prayers and Concerns

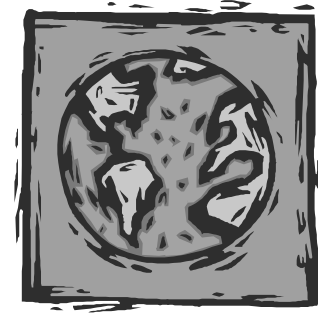
These items are not viewable on this website. Please call the church office for further information

Thank You

- This year our congregation has generously contributed **\$1642.00** to **The Christmas Fund** special appeal of the United Church of Christ. Your gifts will help those who have served the church faithfully through pension supplementation, emergency gifts, and health insurance premium supplementation for retired pastors, spouses and families who need help making ends meet. Thank you for your gifts. —*the Board of Mission and Outreach*

Congregations Connecting through Global Partnership

February 2, 2007 from 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.
& February 3, 2007 from 9:00A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
St. Andrew's Christian Church
13890 West 127th Street, Olathe, Kansas

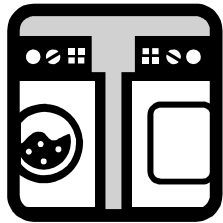


The United Church of Christ and Christian Church Disciples of Christ Ecumenical Task Force in cooperation with the Common Global Ministries of the UCC/DOC, invites you to a day to explore, learn about, and celebrate congregational global partnerships. Global partnerships are the pairing of one or more American congregations with a particular local church, agency, or mission in another country for the purpose of together serving God and one another. This event will feature stories from congregations involved in successful global partnerships. Cost: \$25 for the 1st person, \$15 each additional person from the same congregation. Pastor Kent and other members of the congregation are planning to attend. If you are interested, please contact the church office by January 22.

NOTICE: The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 28, 2007, following the worship service.

The meeting will include action on the 2007 budget. Child Care will be provided during the meeting.

Fourth Quarter Financial Statements are being distributed. These reports will provide a weekly detail of your fourth quarter giving and a summary of total giving for 2006. Please check this report when you receive it, as it serves as an audit of the accuracy of the Financial Secretary's records. If you find any omissions or questionable entries, please contact the church office immediately. Thank You. — *Joy Schell*, Financial Secretary



Ecumenical Campus Ministry at KSU needs to replace its washer and dryer. If you have been thinking about upgrading your machines and would like to donate your old washer and dryer to the ministry, please contact David or Sarah at 539-4281

PRUDENCE

- Prudence**—1 : the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason
- 2 : sagacity or shrewdness in the management of affairs
- 3 : skill and good judgment in the use of resources
- 4 : caution or circumspection as to danger or risk
(from Merriam-Webster Dictionary online)

Prudence—that's what the Trustees are asking of everyone, especially definitions 3 and 4 above. Specifically, we are asking everyone to be vigilant about turning off lights in the church when they are not in use, and vigilance in making sure that outside doors get locked. The security issue is particularly important because some of the outside doors don't automatically latch themselves when they are opened and closed. So PLEASE, be PRUDENT and check all the doors when you leave the building at the conclusion of your meeting or event. — *The Board of Trustees*



Surprise Open House for Don Gibson

Saturday, January 20, 1:30-4:00 P.M. at Vine Congregational Church, UCC, 1800 Twin Ridge Road, Lincoln Nebraska
1927 must have been a great year because that's when Don Gibson entered the world! That's right, 80 years ago this January. If there is any way you could possibly be a part of a Celebration either in person or by way of a note or card, I know he would be greatly touched. If possible could you please RSVP to Julie at 537-7006. No gifts please, your presence in person or by note will be appreciated more than you can imagine. — *Julie Gibson*



Ministry Volunteers for Fellowship Hour

We need several people to manage Fellowship Hour for a week or two in the months ahead. You can sign up on the sheet on the refrigerator in the kitchen or be seeing Chantel Vogel before or after church. Volunteers are needed beginning January 21.

Baking isn't necessary. Although some volunteers bring goodies from home to serve, others use the supplies of store-bought cookies that are kept in the kitchen.

For those who may feel intimidated by the process in an unfamiliar kitchen:

- ◆ Clear directions are posted in the kitchen for every aspect of the job.
- ◆ Numerous "old timers" would be glad to answer specific questions (e.g., where are the trays kept).
- ◆ A good way to "get up to speed" is to shadow or assist another volunteer to see how manageable the job really is. **Let Chantel Vogel or Jerry Hanna know if you are willing to assist once or twice to see how it works.**



Organ & Friends *A Musical Valentine*

Sunday, February 11 at 2:30 P.M.

Area Organists and their friends share a program of music for organ, voices, and other instruments at First Congregational UCC. Mark your calendar--Invite your sweetheart. A freewill offering will be received.

Youth Corner

Wanted: Three separate residences to host the youth for their 3rd annual progressive dinner in February. This is a very fun time for all and something that the youth really enjoy and look forward to each year. If interested in hosting and preparing the appetizer, main course or dessert, please call Tracey Weston at 770-8551.

The youth will be coordinating the February 4, Souper Bowl of Caring collections. This will be done slightly differently this year by accepting donations through the month of January. Monetary donations will be given to the Flint Hills Community Clinic, and all food donations will be split between the Flint Hills Breadbasket and The Second Helping ministry of our congregation.

Now that the holidays are over, the youth have resumed Sunday School with discussion of a book entitled *Life Strategies for Teens*. Join us Sundays at 9:30 A.M. in the Youth Room. Donuts provided!



The Workers-R-Us program will continue throughout the year as needed. If you have something that needs to be done and would like one or more of the youth to help you, please call Tracey Weston at 537-7006.

— Tracey Weston, Youth Ministry Coordinator

Christian Education for Kids

This month the children will be exploring the ideas represented by the Samaritan woman at the well. As a Samaritan, she was not wholly accepted by the Jews, and as a woman, she lacked standing as a member of the community. How often do we define other people as different in some way from ourselves, and not as brothers and sisters created by the same God. This month honors the life of Martin Luther King on the fifteenth—also known as Human Rights Day. We have many activities and interesting lessons planned to encourage understanding of our common human condition and how Christ's love guides us to becoming more understanding and spiritually complete people.

— Cheryl Poister, Christian Education Director

New Adult Forum Class starts Now

Testimony: Talking Ourselves into Being Christian

That's the title of a book by renowned teacher and preacher Thomas G. Long and it's the topic for our Adult Forum through mid-March. Join us Sundays at 9:30 A.M. in Pioneer Hall.

Christianity is not just about belief, it's also about practice, and we will focus on the practice of talking about our faith. That's not always easy for any of us, but it's one of the best ways we have of telling our good news story as followers of Jesus. Long's book will help us think about how we can thoughtfully, considerately, and effectively talk about what our faith and our church mean to us. We will also practice what we are studying with activities designed to get us talking faithfully and having fun while we're at it! The class is being lead by Pastor Kent and is part of our Church Vitality initiative.

Copies of the book *Testimony: Talking Ourselves into Being Christian* can be reserved by calling the church office. The cost is \$16 for each book. You don't have to read the book to participate, but it's any easy and thoughtful read.

Worship & Church Volunteers

January 14, 2007

Sanctuary Flowers... Chantel Vogel
Greeters Eldon Epp; Jean Hill
Scripture Reader Craig Weston
Acolyte Kyle Weston and Vincent Hanna
Word for Children .. Eldon Epp
Fellowship Hour Brad Logan & Lauren Ritterbush
Snow Removal Leo Schell (*through January 20*)

January 21, 2007

Sanctuary Flowers... Judy Ahrens
Greeters Jim Ahrens; Carolyn Schwab
Scripture Reader Jo Foy
Acolyte Paul Hargrove
Word for Children ..
Fellowship Hour *Volunteers Needed*
Snow Removal Leo Schell (*through January 27*)

January 28, 2007

Sanctuary Flowers... Atina Hanna
Greeters 4th, 5th, & 6th Graders;
Susan Scott & Lilly Marshall
Scripture Reader Jim Hodgson
Acolyte Jack Dayton
Word for Children .. Atina Hanna
Fellowship Hour Christy Crenshaw
Snow Removal Jim Hodgson (*through February 3*)

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 Marian Fuller 537-7006.



January 14, 2007

Chief Cook Brent Maner
Volunteers Brent's friends, Christine Davis,
..... Ann Gleason
Dessert Ann Smit

January 21, 2007

Chief Cook Jean Hill
Volunteers ESA Sorority
Dessert Ann Smit

January 28, 2007

Chief Cook Ann Smit
Volunteers Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Ann Gleason
Dessert Ann Smit

HAVE WE GOT A DEAL FOR YOU!

How would you like to make about 20-25 people happy on a Sunday afternoon every couple of months? How would you like to make yourself happy as well? Being a cook for Second Helping is a win/win situation!

We need several more cooks. It's not hard, Ann Smit will show you all you need to know, and she'll provide the menu, recipes, and ingredients. You'll have plenty of helpers who will do whatever you ask.

Please call Marian Fuller, 537-7006

Community News

Becoming an Instrument of Peace

Problem Solving Workshop for Congregations & Families

College Avenue United Methodist Church, 1609 College Avenue
February 10, 2007, 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Each of us, as well as the congregations and families of which we are part, has experienced the tension and challenge of managing interpersonal disagreements. This workshop is designed to encourage a re-thinking of biblical foundations for handling conflict, and to learn and practice cooperative problem-solving tools for interpersonal and group interactions.

Handel's Messiah

Saturday January 20, 2007 at 7:30 P.M.

All Faith's Chapel, KSU Campus

Please join us for a performance of Handel's Messiah, a joint program of Side by Side Theater & Music and the Manhattan Arts Center. Singers and audience are requested to make a donation at the door or to bring cans for the Breadbasket. Questions? Call 537-4420 or e-mail director@manhattanarts.org.

Volunteer at Mercy Regional Health Center

Volunteers' schedules, abilities, gifts and interests are matched with the hospital's needs, either on a weekly schedule or for special projects. Whether you like to directly serve patients and their families or work on more behind-the-scenes tasks, Mercy Regional Health Center has a place for you.

Head Start Opportunity Preschool, serving the Manhattan-Ogden, and Riley County School Districts, is accepting applications for the 2006-2007 school year. Head Start is a free, federally funded early childhood program that serves families with low income. To apply, a child must be 3 years old by August 31, 2006 but not yet kindergarten age eligible. For more information call 587-2045 or stop by Head Start at 1700 Leavenworth.