



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Volume 53 Number 16

August 26, 2009

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

Health and Wholeness

Many of you have asked, and the answer is: Yes, I had a great time while I was away. The two weeks spent at Oxford University studying with about four dozen people from across the globe was enriching, refreshing, and stimulating. Doing so at the oldest English-speaking university in the world was a bit of a trip in itself. For any Harry Potter film fans out there, dining in Hall at Christ Church College each day is every bit as impressive in person as in the film—and the food was great. I am especially grateful for the congregation’s support of my continuing education through both time away and financial support.

Likewise, the two weeks of vacation was delightful and refreshing. Down time, play time, vacation, whatever we call it, I think it is essential to living fully into God’s grace. But I am aware that it is for many a luxury—just as I am aware that for many, health care is a luxury. Being out of the country for a month meant that I was spared some of the *[continued page 2]*

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health care “debate,” though from what I can tell, it seems to be more of a shouting match than a debate. Either way, I suspect we would benefit more from a listening. Folks who have always been able to have health insurance coverage need to hear from those 47 million Americans who have to go without. Those demanding that they not lose their “premier” health care might want to listen with a wider viewpoint—like the statistics that tell us the United States actually ranks 37th in overall health care according to the World Health Organization, and 45th in life expectancy. The only category in which we rank first is cost.

The United Church of Christ and many other faith groups are working hard in Washington to advocate for the uninsured and the underinsured, and for a fair and equitable system of health care for all citizens. Unfortunately, such groups do not have the deep pockets that self-interested lobbies like the insurance industry and pharmaceutical companies have. Thus, every call and letter and e-mail from a constituent matters.

What would Jesus do? It doesn’t seem too much of a mystery to me—*What you did to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you did to me.*

And while we are on the subject of health and wholeness, I want to note that this fall we begin a journey of exploration in the area of human sexuality. In this Newsletter, you will find further information about the launch of the *Our Whole Lives* curriculum in our children’s education program. This award-winning material was developed by the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association and has been used in hundreds of congregation since its introduction a few years ago.

We live in a world where we are confronted by sex and sexuality everywhere. Advertising knows it sells and every product, it seems, gets sexualized in one way or another. Media of every kind bombards us with sexually infused material—to the point that we have become numb to the constant onslaught. But the church is mighty quiet about it.

This Sunday, the lectionary brings us the only visitation of the Song of Solomon in the three year cycle of scripture readings.

Song of Solomon (sometimes called Song of Songs) is a book of passionate, playful, rapturous love poetry. No amount of allegorizing can avoid that reality. But it seems that the majority of preachers do their best to allegorize it or avoid it altogether. Talking about sex and erotic love in church in a positive way remains taboo for most folks.

That's rather bizarre in a religion that celebrates God made flesh at it's very core. If we take incarnation seriously, if we take our creation *imago Dei* (in God's image) seriously, how can we set aside such a core part of the human experience as sex and declare it off limits in church? The truth is we can't in good conscience.

Thomas Dipko, longtime leader in the United Church of Christ, writes that "The church, informed by the Bible, celebrates the gift of human sexuality as intrinsic to our identity as loving persons. It also recognizes, through the witness of the prophets and the teaching of Jesus Christ, the ethics and justice issues raised by our exercise of that divine gift."

In a world where our children will learn about sex from a myriad of different places—television, the internet, the playground, and friends, the church is irresponsible if it does not enter the conversation. *Our Whole Lives* seeks to do so in a responsible, age-appropriate manner, in consultation with parents and in conversation with our faith values.

We have invested in the training of teachers for this program with the help of the Fenton Lay Education Fund. The Board of Christian Education has considered and endorsed the undertaking. This fall the time has come for us to begin. We will start with the Grades 4-6 level this fall. Kindergarten-2nd grade will follow in the spring. For you adults who were heard to say, "What about us?" plans are underway. We'll keep you posted.

Grace & Peace,



Sharing and Caring

Prayers and Concerns

- Please call the church office for further information.

Congratulations

- To **Christy Crenshaw** as she prepares to begin her new role as Director of Admissions at Oklahoma State University. We will miss Christy—especially her support of The Second Helping, but she's not severing all her ties to the Flint Hills. We look forward to her visiting when she is able and wish her well in her new job.

Thank You

- Many thanks to everyone who helped make Feast and Festival a success. Thank you to everyone who helped set up, clean up, cook, and serve. Thank you to all who baked goodies for the cakewalk. And most of all, thank you to the Board of Deacons for their organizational skill!

Helping

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

E-MAIL PRAYER CHAIN

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



TAIZÉ WORSHIP

After a four-week sabbath to give leaders a break, Taizé worship has resumed. Join us on Thursday evenings at 7:00 P.M. for Taizé—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.

First Congregational UCC at Purple Power Play on Poyntz

It's a tongue twister, but the Vitality Team is organizing a booth for this community celebration—be sure to look for us if you come to the celebration.

Sunday September 27th ECM Potato Bar

An outreach meal to show our appreciation to First Congregational for all you do for ECM.



Menu

Baked Potato with fixings
(chili, broccoli, cheese, sour cream, butter)

Drinks -- Dessert

Our Whole Lives: Sexuality & Our Faith

As you may well remember, we have begun the introduction of the curriculum series: **Our Whole Lives: Sexuality and Our Faith**. Due to unforeseen circumstances we were unable to host Parents Meetings and Parent/Child orientations last semester. However, this semester is a whole different story. We have procured the materials required for parents meeting and plan to include the *Our Whole Lives* curriculum series in conjunction with the normal Sunday school curriculum this year: **Gather Round**.

Parents, it's vitally important that you remember the following dates and attend these meetings to allow your children to attend this course.

Grades 4-6 Parents Meeting on *Our Whole Lives*

Date: 13 September, 2009

Time: 12:30 to 2:00 P.M.

NB: Light lunch will be served.

Grades 4-6 Parent/Child Orientation on *Our Whole Lives*

Date: 27 September, 2009

Time: 1:00 to 3:00 P.M.

We will begin after enjoying the ECM Potato Bar lunch

Grades 4-6 Our Whole Lives: Sexuality and Our Faith classes

Date: October through November, 2009

Duration: 8 weeks

Teachers: Angela Hubler and Grizelda MacDonald

For those parents of Primary grades K-2, a parents meeting and parent/child orientation will be hosted in January 2010. Class will follow in February 2010 for 8 weeks.

Below is a brief introduction on the Program Values of Our Whole Lives: Sexuality and Our Faith. Please read the information to familiarize you with the program. All questions will be addressed at the parents meeting.

Our Whole Lives Curriculum Series Program Values

Self Worth

- Every person is entitled to dignity and self-worth, and to his or her own attitudes and beliefs about sexuality.

Sexual Health

- Knowledge about human sexuality is helpful, not harmful. Every individual has the right to accurate information about sexuality and to have her or his questions answered.
- Healthy sexual relationships are:
 - consensual (both people consent)
 - nonexploitative (equal in terms of power, neither person is pressuring or forcing the other into activities or behaviors).
 - Mutually pleasurable (both receive pleasure)
 - Safe (no or low risk of unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and emotional pain)
 - Developmentally appropriate (appropriate to the age and maturity of persons involved)
 - Based on mutual expectations and caring
 - Respectful (including the values of honesty and keeping commitments made to others).
- Sexual intercourse is only one of the many valid ways of expressing sexual feelings with a partner. It is healthier for young adolescents to postpone sexual intercourse.

Responsibility

- We are called to enrich our lives by expressing sexuality in ways that enhance human wholeness and fulfillment and express love, commitment, delight and pleasure.
- All persons have the right and obligation to make responsible sexual choices.

Justice and Inclusivity

- We need to avoid double standards. People of all ages, genders, races, backgrounds, income levels, physical and mental abilities and sexual orientations must have equal value and rights.
- Sexual relationships should never be coercive or exploitative.
- Being romantically and sexually attracted to two genders (bisexual), the same gender (homosexual) or another gender (heterosexual) are all natural in the range of human sexual experience.

Coming Event for Children

Sunday School Games Day—Sunday, September 6

It's Labor Day Weekend, but if you are in town we hope you'll join us for the fun.

Adult Forum Sundays at 9:30 A.M.

Sunday, August 30 – UCC General Synod XXVI

Pastor Kent will lead a presentation and discussion on this summer's General Synod of the United Church of Christ held in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Sunday, September 6 –

Beginning a Sacred Conversation on Race

What would a "sacred conversation" on race look and sound like? What does each of us bring to it? What are our hopes and fears? During our 2009-2010 forums, there will be several intentional opportunities to engage in this sacred conversation. This session will provide an introduction and opportunity to raise questions and issues for further discussion.

Women of the Church

Lunch Bunch September 2

Women of the Church will host Lunch Bunch at Applebee's Restaurant (at Manhattan Town Center) on Wednesday, September 2. Everyone is welcome to join us for lunch at 11:30 A.M.

K-O Women's "FALL ASSEMBLY" at White Memorial Camp, September 11-12-13th

Please mark your calendars, spread the word to others in your church, and register for this year's K-O Women's "FALL ASSEMBLY" retreat experience at White Memorial Camp, September 11-12-13th! Registration forms are available in the church office.

With the theme, "**Freely on a Journey of Faith,**" we all will have an opportunity to learn and grow. Our keynote speakers:

The Rev. Dr. Kathy McCallie will be enlightening us on the relationships between the Book of Joshua and issues in the Middle East yet today and how people of faith should prayerfully respond.

Deborah Bailey, Minister of Women's Concerns in the UCC will also be with us, sharing her experiences on the Global Ministries Women-to-Women-Worldwide trip to Israel and Palestine last fall and the concerns of women globally.

Many other activities are planned during our carefree stay at White Memorial Camp during this weekend event. **Don't miss it!**

Registration forms should be returned by **September 1st** for the early bird rate.

Attention All Youth - Grades 7-12!

Youth @ Annual Meeting! October 2nd & 3rd

Cost: \$60 Early Registration Deadline: September 1st

After September 1st, a late fee of \$25 will be charged.

Please bring \$15-20 to pay for meals.

Youth Registration: Friday, October 2nd, 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.

The Conference-Wide Youth Ministry Committee has submitted a resolution to the Annual Meeting declaring 2010 to be the year of the youth and declaring support for revitalizing the youth program of the K-O Conference.

Come to Annual Meeting and be a part of this exciting period of rebirth! We will be presenting the resolution during Saturday morning's business session and the vote will take place Saturday afternoon. Youth-led worship will begin at 8:00 A.M. Saturday morning, followed by a youth-led workshop about the program we are trying to build. We have a suite reserved again this year for games and fellowship. We also hope to organize a mission project in Wichita that the youth can participate in. This is a great opportunity to meet youth from across the K-O Conference and make your voice heard.

The registration form is under the Annual Meeting section at www.kocucc.com. Please remember that one adult must be in every hotel room. Please consider youth rooming with delegates from your church.

Please spread the word about this! We are going to have an awesome annual meeting!

K-O Conference Wide Youth Ministry Committee (CWYMC)
Sean Weston, Presiding Officer

K-O Conference Communications Coordinator
Nancy A. Wolfe
kofocus@yahoo.com
785-806-4580

Worship & Church Volunteers

August 30, 2009

Flowers.....Don Cannon
Greeters.....Mike & Martha Miller, *Volunteer Needed*
Scripture Reader.....Gretchen Lewis
Word for Children...*Volunteer Needed*
Fellowship Hour.....Jim & Judy Ahrens
Lawn Mowing.....Jim Ahrens (*through September 5*)

September 6, 2009

Flowers.....Barbara Withee
Greeters.....Chantel Vogel, *Volunteer Needed*,
Scripture Reader.....Sue Zschoche
Word for Children...*Volunteer Needed*
Fellowship Hour.....Sue Zschoche & Judy Davis
Lawn Mowing.....Dave Smit (*through September 12*)

September 13, 2009

Flowers.....Jim, Marilynn & Kathryn Mock
Greeters.....Jim Mock, *Volunteer Needed*
Scripture Reader.....Ann Smit
Word for Children...*Volunteer Needed*
Fellowship Hour.....Carolyn Hodgson
Lawn Mowing.....Al Cochran (*through September 19*)

September 20, 2009

Flowers.....*Volunteer Needed*
Greeters.....*Volunteers Needed*
Scripture Reader.....Jim Mock
Word for Children...*Volunteer Needed*
Fellowship Hour.....*Volunteer Needed*
Lawn Mowing.....Brad Logan (*through September 26*)

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 Mandy Strawn at 537-7006.



August 30, 2009

Chief CookSandy O’Grady
Volunteers*Volunteers Needed*
Dessert*Volunteer Needed*

September 6, 2009

Chief Cook
Volunteers
Dessert

September 13, 2009

Chief Cook
Volunteers
Dessert

September 20, 2009

Chief Cook
Volunteers
Dessert

Community News

The Crisis Center

Thirty years ago this month, the Crisis Center’s founders began providing free, confidential services for domestic violence and sexual assault in the region. It would be two be two years before our organization was formally incorporated, but those passionate, committed citizens did not wait. Instead, with a donated file cabinet, a telephone, and their collective talent, energy, and vision, they just did it: designed, promoted and delivered victim-centered services, and laid the foundation on which we have flourished for all these years.

We have occupied our safe shelter since 1982. Built early in the 20th century, the house continues to provide safety, security, and comfort to victims and their children. From July of 2008 through June of 2009, our shelter served as a temporary home for an average of 28 women and children each month. Although “only” 10 to 12 percent of the victims we serve each year require safe shelter — thanks to important public policy changes of the past decade—for those who cannot sleep safely in their own beds, the shelter is a lifeline.

In the current economy, we are grateful for the space we have and for the generous community support that sustains our shelter and all of the Center’s programs. You can support our safe shelter program by contributing disposable diapers, cleaning and laundry supplies, or paper products and of course monetary donations.

Upcoming Event: Domestic Violence/ Sexual Assault Workshop and Volunteer Training

Dates: September 12th and 19th
Time: 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. both days
Location: First Presbyterian Church
801 Leavenworth, Manhattan KS
Fee: \$15.00
Call: 539-7935 to reserve your spot at the training.

Medicare Basics

September 3, 10 and 17 from 5:30 P.M. -7:00 P.M.

Are you turning 65 in the next 6 months tot a year? Do you assist your parents with medical issues? Does the word Medicare send a shiver down your spine? Are you confused about your options and what to expect once your insurance changes? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then the Medicare Basics series is for you. This 3-class series will help you gain the knowledge you need to make informed decisions. You may sign up for one or for all three. Class fee \$5.00 per class or \$10 for all three. Fee covers handouts and a light snack.

September 3 The Medicare Maze
September 10 Supplemental Insurance
September 17 Medicare Part D

Please send fee to
Riley County Extension Council
Attn: Jennifer Wilson
110 Courthouse Plaza, Room B220
Manhattan, KS 66502

You may also register online at www.riley.ksu.edu
Registration is due by August 31.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

First Congregational United Church of Christ

1

2

11:30 Lunch
Bunch

3

4

9:00 Crisis Center
Meeting

5

6:00 Storytime

7:00 Board
Meetings

7:00 Taizé

6

8:30 Choir Rehearsal
9:30 Church School
10:45 Worship & Communion
Fill the Breadbasket
12:00 Fellowship Hour
5:15 Second Helping

7 Labor Day

Office Closed

8

9

10

7:00 Taizé

11

9:00 Crisis Center
Meeting

6:00 Storytime

K-O Women's Fall Assembly

12

10:00 N.C. Assn.
Committee on
Ministry

13

8:30 Choir Rehearsal
9:30 Church School
10:45 Worship
12:00 Fellowship Hour
12:30 OWL Parent Meeting
5:15 Second Helping

14

12:00 Newsletter
Deadline

15

10:00 N.C. Assn.
Clergy Meeting

7:00 PFLAG

16

6:00 Vitality Team
7:30 Cabinet

17

7:00 Taizé

18

9:00 Crisis Center
Meeting

6:00 Storytime

19

20 Neighbors in Need

8:30 Choir Rehearsal
9:30 Church School
10:45 Worship
12:00 Fellowship Hour
5:15 Second Helping

21

22

23

24

7:00 Taizé

25

9:00 Crisis Center
Meeting

6:00 Storytime

26

27

8:30 Choir Rehearsal
9:30 Church School
10:45 Worship & Baptism
12:00 ECM Potato Bar Lunch
1:00 OWL Orientation
5:15 Second Helping

28

12:00 Newsletter
Deadline

29

30

September 2009

Birthdays

1	Eldon Epp	21	Dale Stearns
3	Jim Fuller	23	Laura Beth Cochran
8	Tim Jones	23	Dory Ann Cochran
11	Mikala Douglas-Eikhoff	23	Caren Knicklebine
13	Tammi Yeager	24	Gabriel Tross
17	Marjorie Johnson	25	Jenny Lee Vaughn
18	Tom Hawk	28	Edith Doerry
19	Jan Allen	28	Zack Schwab
19	Tyler Cochran	29	Mike Miller
20	David Sauer	30	Jim Flak

Anniversaries

2	Al & Sue Gerth
4	Frank & Dona Sidorfsky
6	Chris & Kelly Getty
7	Joe & Mandy Strawn
14	Brad Logan & Lauren Ritterbush
16	Kent Cormack & Bill Pugh
16	Gladys & Theresa Hanna-White
17	Ken & Janet Schroeder
24	Susan Allen & Kay Garrett

September

Dates to Remember

September 2	Lunch Bunch Board Meetings
September 6	Fill the Breadbasket
September 7	Labor Day
September 14	Newsletter Deadline
September 16	Vitality Team Meeting Cabinet Meeting
September 20	Neighbors in Need
September 27	ECM Potato Bar Lunch
September 28	Newsletter Deadline