

MARCH 2018

“IN THE FIRST PLACE”

First Congregational United Church of Christ
An Open & Affirming Congregation
Mankato MN 56001
(507) 387-6592
www.mankatoucc.org
Check us out on Facebook!

JOIN US ON SUNDAYS:

Worship 9:30 am Children’s Faith-Learning Community 9:45 am
Nursery available Fellowship following Worship

March 29th: Maundy Thursday, 7pm **Service of Communion and Tenebrae**

This evening we’ll share communion and remember together Jesus’ commandment to love one another. Following this, we will read contemporary writings and gospel words about Jesus’ last days and experience the darkness that falls in and around us as he nears death. It’s a solemn evening in which music and candlelight play a meaningful role.

March 30th: Good Friday

1-3pm *Our sanctuary is a quiet place for personal prayer on this day when the world is dark. With the psalmist we each ask, from where will my help come?
Written prayers and suggestions for meditation will be available.*

6-7pm *An informal gathering in Fellowship Hall. We’ll learn a variety of spiritual practices as we wait together for the return of the light.*

April 1st: Easter Day Alleluia!

9:30am Worship

8:30am All Church Breakfast and Children’s Activities

10:30am Fellowship and Children’s Easter Egg Hunt

March 2018 Worship Highlights **And Common Lectionary Readings**

Each Sunday, as we journey through Lent, we’ll extinguish one of the candles at the front of our sanctuary. The light will slowly fade into darkness, for we are retelling the story of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem. We do this not to be morbid, but because in the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection, in the amazing transformation of death into life, God is revealed.

*** March 4 Third Sunday in Lent**
Communion
Musicians: Choir

Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

* **March 11 Fourth Sunday in Lent**

Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-2, 17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21

* **March 18 Fifth Sunday in Lent**

Musicians: Centering Strings

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16; Hebrews 5:5-10;
John 12:20-33

* **March 25 Palm to Passion Sunday**

Musicians: Choir

Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Isaiah 50:4-9a;
Palms 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)

The Centering Strings:

The Centering Strings are getting together for rehearsals and will be participating in worship service this winter and spring. We are inviting anyone interested in joining us to contact Diana S.

Make A Joyful Noise!

All are welcome to join in our choir! Please see the schedule of rehearsals and worship participation on the kiosk in the narthex and talk with our director Angie.

INTER-GENERATIONAL LENTEN PROJECT!

INTERGENERATIONAL LENTEN PROJECT

Well, here we are: stepping out in faith at the beginning of Lent. We've put away our Alleluias, and it's time for our Inter-generational Lenten Project which invites us to reflect on our blessings and to share our resources with those in need in our local community, throughout Minnesota, and internationally. May this Lent be for us a time of recognizing ourselves as an essential part of this astonishing world.

Toward this end, between **March 4th and March 23rd**, please prayerfully consider contributing to any or all of the project's components listed below:

1. First, as we have done in years past, we will be participating in **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**. This is an offering of Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ and provides support to people in need in over 80 countries. When you make an offering, you become a partner in the efforts of the UCC in the United States and abroad.

Through One Great Hour of Sharing:

- A. Disaster victims quickly receive shelter, food, water, and medical supplies
- B. Local communities develop secure sources of food and clean water
- C. Minds and bodies grown stronger with new schools and medical clinics
- D. Refugees receive housing and long-term help to construct new lives
- E. Women and communities are empowered through micro-credit loans and community development opportunities

(To contribute, please make your check out to 1st Congregational UCC, and write OGHS in the memo line, and place it in the Sunday offering plate, or drop it off in the office at any time.)

2. Second, we'll be collecting products and funds for OPEN DOOR HEALTH CENTER.

A. We'll be collecting food and cleaning products for the OPEN DOOR food pantry. Our Earthwise work-group has come up with a list of earth-friendly cleaning products. And we also have a list of culturally appropriate foods for stocking the clinic's shelves. We'll be working in teams to fill 6 huge baskets!

(Please see the kiosk in the narthex or talk with Pat T. for further information).

B. We'll also be collecting funds during this time to help the Center purchase a second refrigerator. The refrigerator will be used in the medical pod to store medications and vaccines that are critical to medical care. Their current refrigerator needs to be updated as it lacks feature to insure consistent, reliable cooling.

(To contribute, please make your check out to 1st Congregational UCC and write Open Door in the memo line, and place it in the Sunday offering plate, or drop it off at any time in the church office.)

3. Third, in Fellowship Hall we will have a card to sign for our U.S. Senators and Representatives, asking them to be sure to include funding for our Community Development Block Grant which provides so many life saving services to the vulnerable in our community; for example: funding for homeless shelters and affordable housing, VINE (Meals on Wheels and Chore Services), Echo Food Shelf, the Backpack Program, Open Door Health Center and Tapestry Program (providing medical care to the poor and assistance to refugees). This funding is proposed to be eliminated in the 2019 budget.

Our Senators and Representatives will be giving input from their constituents to the Appropriations Committee which will be working on the Fiscal Budget.

Surely our gifts will meet needs while also bringing the blessing of compassion into our own lives!

YOUTH FAITH FORMATION...

CONFIRMATION (8th grade):

Wednesdays: March 14th and 28th (6-7:15pm)

Thursday: March 29th, Maundy Thursday Worship, 7pm

(Confirmation Youth will be participating in worship)

Friday, March 23, 4:30-7pm, CREDO writing & supper, Fellowship Hall

SYNERGY YOUTH (4-6th grades):

Wednesday: March 21st (6-7:15pm)

Thursday: March 29th, Maundy Thursday Worship, 7pm
(Synergy Youth will be serving as ushers and greeters)

CHILDREN'S FAITH-LEARNING COMMUNITY

ALL CHILDREN AGE 3-6TH GRADE ARE WELCOME!

This year's Sunday program for children will involve learning through children's literature, bible stories, and thematic activities, and will focus on helping the older children develop leadership skills.

- **March 4 – Communion Sunday:** Children attend worship with family
- **March 11 – Theme:** Prayer
- **March 18 – Book:** The Recess Queen
Bible Story Scripture: Palm Sunday, Luke 19:29-40
- **March 25 – Book:** The Invisible Thread
Palm Sunday Parade/Holy Week

Service to the Church - Acolytes

The children from the Children's Faith-Learning Community enjoy helping during worship. Families are signing up as Acolytes and helping prepare the congregation for worship by lighting the candles. If you would like a turn to help, please sign up on the Acolyte list found on the kiosk or text/call Pat T. with a date that works for your family. Thank you.

BIBLE/BOOK STUDY

Sunday, March 18th, 3:30-5pm

will be our last gathering around

Living The Questions: The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity
(Felton and Procter -Murphy).

We'll explore the last two chapters: *Creative Transformation and Embracing Mystery*, and also be looking at different versions of the Lord's Prayer,

so come even if this gathering is new for you!

POET SERIES:

Thursday, March 15th, 3-4pm; Fellowship Hall

Open to the whole local community!

The MSU Good Thunder Reading Series continues...

Come talk with Stephen Graham Jones, a Blackfeet Native American writer whose work includes science fiction and comic books as he creates characters who confront both literal monsters, and the monster within.

MISSION MINISTRY

**FILM NIGHTS coming soon...
IN APRIL...**

WHO IS DAYANI CRISTAL?

We'll have a second viewing of this powerful film, as many of you have requested!

This documentary film by Gael Garcia Bernal and Marc Silver is a Sundance Film Festival and NY Film Festival award winner that will touch hearts and open minds!

Here's a bit about it:

The body of an unidentified migrant is found in the Arizona desert. In an attempt to retrace his path and discover his story, director Marc Silver and actor/filmmaker Gael Garcia Bernal embedded themselves among the migrant travelers on their own mission to cross the border. This film provides rare insight into the human stories that are so often ignored in the immigration debate.

JUST EAT IT: A FOOD WASTE STORY

A documentary about the food we eat, and the incredible amount of food that goes uneaten! Here's what's been said...

Filmmakers and food lovers, Jen and Grant, dive into the issue of food waste from farm to retail, right to the back of their own frig. In a deliciously entertaining challenge, they pledge to quit grocery shopping and survive only on discarded food.

TUTORING at the Mankato Islamic Center Continues... New volunteers are always welcome!

The Basics: Mondays and Thursdays from 4-6pm

Tutors choose one of the days that works best for them.

There are some young people that we work with who have lived in Mankato for much of their lives, and others who have just arrived from Somalia and other war-torn countries. For some, language is the first challenge. They are all in school, the older students come with their computers from school, and there are three learning groups:

- younger children (k-1) who are working on reading and basic arithmetic;
- 3rd-5th graders who are, as you can imagine, all over! Math, science, social studies;
- 6th-9th graders are focused on math and science

The hope is to have two tutors for each learning group -- tutors will keep the same group so relationships can build!

As those who have been tutoring have expressed, this project is gift giving all around. It is definitely a cross cultural experience! The plan as we look forward this coming year is to also work with mothers of these young people...

Please connect with Pastor Dana for more information.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

The Men's Group: Saturday, March 10th, 8:00 am at the WOW! Zone

The Women's Group: Saturday, March 10th, 9:00 am at the WOW! Zone

Dinner Out: Saturday, March 24, La Terraza on Madison Ave at 5:30 pm. Sign up on the kiosk in the church narthex. Hope to see you there!

HEALTH MINISTRIES

Blood Pressure Check:

Blood pressure check will be on **March 4th**. The Parish Nurse will be in the church **Library** after worship service.

Assistance Available:

There are crutches, a walker and a wheel chair available for loan if someone has a need.

ALL IN THE CHURCH FAMILY:

Prayer Requests:

We lift up to God's healing presence all those struggling in body, mind and spirit and pray for all caregivers and all those serving to bring peace and justice to our community, our nation and our world.

PASTORAL CONTACT:

Pastor Dana Mann can be reached at: dana@mankatoucc.org
(507) 387-6592 ext.1 or her cell: 1-917-202-3738

FROM THE OFFICE COORDINATOR:

Church Office Hours: Monday 10:30 am - noon & 1-3 pm

Tuesday - Thursday 9:00 am - noon & 1-3 pm

Friday 9:00 am - noon

First Congregational United Church of Christ, 150 Stadium Court, Mankato, 56001

Phone: 507/387-6592 E-mail katoucc@mankatoucc.org

Web Page www.mankatoucc.org

Pastor: Rev. Dana J Mann dana@mankatoucc.org

Moderator: Silas D.

Choir Director: Angie BH

Organist: Diana S.

Director of Christian Education: Pat T.

Parish Nurse: Rochelle M.

Office Coordinator: Diane B. katoucc@mankatoucc.org

Financial Secretary: Donna S.

March 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 4-6 pm Tutoring at Mankato Islamic Center	2	3
4 9&11 am Chair Reh 9:30 AM Communion, Choir 10:30 AM Fellows Hip & Blood Pressure Check 5:00 PM Homeless Work Group Meeting	5 4-6 pm Tutoring at Mankato Islamic Center	6 6:00 PM Earthwise Work Group Meeting	7 5:30 PM -6:45 PM Children's Lenten Talk & Pizza Supper 7:00 PM -9:00 PM Musicorum Rehearsal	8 4-6 pm Tutoring at Mankato Islamic Center 5:30 PM Musician's Meeting 6:00 PM DV Quilters	9	10 8:00 AM Men's Gr @ WOW Zone 9:00 AM Women's Gr @ WOW Zone
11 9:30 AM Worship, SS 10:30 AM Fellows Hip 11:00 AM Immigrant Welcoming	12 4-6 pm Tutoring at Mankato Islamic Center	13 4:45 PM Worship Ministry Team	14 6:00 PM Choir Reh 6:00 PM -7:15 PM Confirmation Class 7:00 PM -9:00 PM Musicorum Rehearsal	15 4-6 pm Tutoring at Mankato Islamic Center 11:30 AM UCC Clergy Cluster 3:00 PM -4:00 PM MSU Poetry Series - Native American Writer "Monsters Within or Without"	16	17
18 9:30 AM Worship, SS, Centering Strings 10:30 AM Fellows Hip 11:00 AM Chair Reh 3:30 PM Book/Bible Study with Pastor Dana	19 4-6 pm Tutoring at Mankato Islamic Center	20 Deadline for April Newsletter 2:00 PM Parkinson's Support Group 5:30 PM -9:30 PM Moms of Multiples 6:30 PM Trustee Board	21 6:00 PM Synergy 7:00 PM -9:00 PM Musicorum Rehearsal	22 4-6 pm Tutoring at Mankato Islamic Center 6:00 PM Church Council Meeting 6:00 PM Mission Ministry Team	23 4:30 - 7 pm Confirmation, CREDO/Supper	24 5:30 PM Dinner Out Gathering @ La Terraza on Madison Avenue
25 Palm Sunday 9&11 am Chair Reh 9:30 AM Worship, SS, Choir 10:30 AM Fellows Hip	26 4-6 pm Tutoring at Mankato Islamic Center	27	28 6:00 PM -7:15 PM Confirmation 7:00 PM -9:00 PM (?) Musicorum Rehearsal	29 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service, Special Music	30 1-3 PM Personal Prayer in the Sanctuary 6:00 PM Informal Gathering in the Fellowship Hall	31