



First United Methodist Church

Manhattan, Kansas

CONNECTING to Christ | GROWING in Community | SERVING the World



VOLUME 94 | NO. 1 | JANUARY 2026

Here it is again: the beginning of a new year. How many of these have you seen? Do you remember any one in particular? Perhaps you remember the New Year of 1960 and the promise that was riding on the shoulders of a young, new president. Or maybe you remember the muted New Year celebration that followed the tragedy of 9/11. Maybe it's a personal New Year that comes quickly to mind. Do you remember the first New Year with your spouse? With your first-born child? Do you remember the New Year that saw you prepare to move on to college or to your first job?

I'll bet that you have as many New Year memories as there are years to count. More important than the beginning of those years, however, were the days that followed and made each year what it became. The things that happened to us and how the days were lived, both good and bad, were not written on the first day of the year but were to be found in the days that lay ahead. History was yet to be written.

And here we are again. Life stretches before us and however we think of this beginning; chances are that it will look different 365 days from now. What lies before us is life itself: opportunities to rise and to fall, to take a chance or to play it safe, to let go or to hold on (come to think of it, go to Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 for the full list). Contained within these days and the choices we make are some important questions: How will we run the race that is set before us? Will we be conformed to this world or "be transformed by the renewal of our minds?" Will the "same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus, who humbled himself..."?

What will happen cannot be known, but there is something that each one of us should remember as we take our first steps into the future: The God who made heaven and earth is a God who is present with us in life. The One who keeps Israel will not slumber or sleep. (read Psalm 121).



My New Year's prayer for each of you is a year full of LIFE! May your walk in it be grounded in love. May you have eyes to see God's blessings. May you have ears to hear the good news of His grace. And may you have the heart to love God with your whole heart, mind, soul, and strength and every neighbor as yourself.

Happy New Year!
Pax, Mike

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Worship in-person or live on our website. Replays will also be available on our website.

8:45 am - Contemporary Worship

9:45 am - Fellowship Time

10:00 am - Discipleship Time

11:00 am - Traditional Worship

11:30 am - Radio Broadcast on
KMAN 1350 AM, 93.3, or 93.7 FM

The church office is open Monday through Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm and on Sunday Mornings.

The church office will be CLOSED
Monday, January 19
in recognition of
Martin Luther King Day

Please use the double doors from the parking lot into the Connecting Link during the week for all meetings and to visit the office. Thank you.

The newsletter is published monthly on the 28th for the following month. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. If you have items for the congregation, please send them to Cathlene Higgins, Connections Coordinator, at fumc@fumcmanhattan.com.

When the newsletter is available you will receive a notification via email with a link to our website. If you prefer to receive a paper copy in the mail, please contact the office at 785-776-8821. If you have items for the bulletin, website, or Sunday morning worship screens, those should also be sent to Cathlene, fumc@fumcmanhattan.com.



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www.fumcmanhattan.com | fumc@fumcmanhattan.com |

785-776-8821

Solana Ridge recently celebrated her birthday in a truly inspiring way! Instead of traditional gifts, she asked her guests to bring supplies to assemble Birthday Cake Boxes, simple kits containing all the essentials needed to make a birthday cake, to donate to local food pantries. This thoughtful idea helps ensure that families in need can still enjoy special celebrations, even when resources are tight

Together with her friends and family, Solana helped put together 68 birthday cake boxes. Of these, 30 were donated to the FUMC Food Pantry, with the remaining boxes delivered to the Flinthills Breadbasket to spread the joy even further.

Thank you, Solana, for your generous heart and for bringing your community together in service! Your efforts will help others create memorable celebrations — and that's the sweetest gift of all.

Happy Birthday from all of us at FUMC!



TRY SOMETHING NEW IN 2026

Have you made a New Year's resolution to try something new?
Or to retry a hobby that you put aside? Want to join a small
group that has a great time and makes music together?

We'd love to have you join the bell choir!

Music-reading is helpful, but not a prerequisite. We have 4
adult bell choirs - including NoStress Bells, a group that rings,
but does not play in worship.

If interested, contact any of the current ringers or one of our
directors, Nancy Monical (nmonicalks@gmail.com) or Kathy
Leonard (kantink@gmail.com) for more information.



PAD THE PANTRY REQUEST FOR JANUARY

Pasta Sauce



Chunky Soups



ALL DONATIONS CAN BE PUT BEHIND THE
WELCOME DESK IN THE CONNECTING LINK

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GROUP

WED. EVENINGS @ 6:30
CLASSROOMS 1 & 2

Student Ministries



CHILDREN'S
MINISTRY **FUMC**

Jeff Cunningham, Director of Youth Ministries
jcunningham@fumcmanhattan.com

Misti LeMoine, Director of Children's Ministries
children@fumcmanhattan.com



First Families

First Ever Family Feud !!

Following **TOAST** in Fellowship Hall

@ **10 am**

Can your Family Guess the
most popular answers?



**Fellowship
Hall
January 4th
2026**

**All are
welcome**

**During Fellowship
Coffee Time
9:30AM**



colaborate

Methodist Confirmation

Confirmation classes begin January 4th at 2:30 in the Cool Lounge. It's not too late to join us. Contact Jeff for more information.



Student Ministries are excited to announce that we're back on January 7th with a fantastic lineup of activities. Join us for the Youth Hangout from 3:30 to 5:30 PM, where you can connect with friends, enjoy fun games, and relax in a welcoming environment. Following that, our Mid-Week Renewal runs from 5:30 to 6:30 PM, offering a chance to refresh and rejuvenate your spirit with inspiring messages and engaging discussions. Finally, from 6:30 to 7:30 PM, join us for Youth, JAM, and YUM sessions, where you'll dive deeper into spiritual growth and community. We can't wait to see you there and kick off the new year with enthusiasm and joy!



Thank You

A heartfelt thank you to the choir members and spouses who served the meal at Common Table on Monday, December 15. We are grateful for Elaine and Steve Johannes, Keith Eyestone, Tom Fish, and Barb and John Wright for giving their time and service.



2025 Worship Attendance

	In Person monthly average	Facebook	Youtube	Website	Notes
January	296	344	142	*	3 weeks due to snow storm
February	298	451	249	*	
March	294	334	350	*	
April	400	835	283	*	Lenton Services
May	246	195	182	*	Memorial Weekend
June	211	219	284	*	
July	195	163	152	*	Single Service
August	244	277	245	106	
September	349	248	377	145	Midweek Began
October	468	192	222	112	
November	283	285	286	116	
December					

November is updated to include the full month.

*New Website, prior numbers not avail

Facebook numbers are views over one minutes.



Scripture Focus for January

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week... Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." **John 20:19**

My very first email from Pastor Mike included his January newsletter article. I read it through and noticed he signed it, "Pax, Mike." Certain this was a typo, I did what I do best. I played dumb (please don't tell him). I replied, "Teach me, please. 'Pax' is new to me. Is it short for 'Pastor'?"

Friends, Pastor Mike wasted no time getting started educating me. He responded kindly, and thoroughly, with his first lesson of many lessons to be taught to acquired, nitwit staff member. But surely, I am not the only one who has not seen this sign-off though!

So, for the benefit of myself and anyone else who may have wondered, here's the scoop. "Pax" is the Latin word for peace, drawn from the ancient Christian greeting Pax vobiscum, which means "Peace be with you." (And no, it is not short for Pastor. I double checked.)

As it turns out, this greeting comes straight from Scripture. In John 20:19, the disciples are locked behind doors because they are afraid. Jesus has been crucified, and they fear they could be next. Their grief is mixed with anxiety, and they are unsure who can be trusted and unsure of what comes next.

They are afraid, confused, and probably replaying every decision they made over the last few days. Into that room, Jesus appears and says, "Peace be with you." Not, "Where were you?" Not, "Let's talk about this." Just peace. That detail matters. Jesus does not wait for the disciples to calm down, get organized, or fully understand what is happening. He meets them exactly as they are. Fearful. Tired. Locked in. And his first gift to them is peace.

If that sounds familiar, it might be because many of us live behind metaphorically locked doors

of our own. Busy schedules. Uncertain futures. Church calendars that fill up faster than we expect. Change can be exciting, but it can also be unsettling. Even good change can make us wonder what comes next.

Which is why this greeting feels especially appropriate as we welcome a new pastor. "Peace be with you" is not a promise that everything will be perfect or predictable. It is a promise that Christ is present, already standing among us, even when we are still figuring things out.

So when Pastor Mike signs his messages with Pax, he is offering more than a stylish signature or a fun vocabulary word. He is reminding us of a truth the Church has carried for centuries. Peace is not something we create by doing everything right. It is something we receive. May the peace of Christ be with us as we worship, serve, laugh, learn, and grow together in this new season.

May it follow us into meetings, rehearsals, and conversations. And may it gently remind us, especially on the days we feel a little unsure, that God is already here.

Pax, Cathlene Higgins
Connections Coordinator



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Editor: Cathlene Higgins

Return Service Requested

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Midweek 
Renewal

Returns
Wednesday, Jan. 7

Dinner at 5:30
Devotion at 6:00
All Ministry Activities at 6:30

