

Our mission is to faithfully witness of Jesus Christ so that:

- Our relationship with God can be nurtured,
- Our discipleship can be strengthened,
- The dignity and worth of persons can be valued,
- The recognition and contribution of others is accepted,
- We become aware of and respond to the needs of the community, and
- We will respect and care for God's earth.



Communicator

A monthly newsletter of

Community of Christ

Fort Collins, Colorado

A Welcoming Congregation



February 2021

For everyone born, a place at the table

"The Challenge Ahead"

By Stephanie Gustave

2020: Remember the excitement about entering a new decade with matching numbers? A good sign, right? A new era! New hope for the future! And then, BAM! First, Covid-19: isolation, illness, loss of loved ones by the thousands—hundreds of thousands. Then, fires and floods. Followed closely by the country turning toward the upcoming election. Chaos beyond our imagination.

2021: With 2020 behind us, we became excited about a new beginning—again. Then, January turned into another situation of chaos: we were engaged in an “uncivil war” as stated by our newly-elected POTUS. When does it end? Well, actually, with us. At the same time, we found out some things about ourselves: new ways to gather in worship, in caring and sharing, in participating in the Sacraments. We learned we could sing, pray, laugh, and share together in new ways. And now, our discussion has turned **to who we are, where we are, what comes next.** Excitement for some, sadness and frustration for others. I suggest we take in the words of a beautiful hymn (CCS 636).

*I have called you by your name, you are mine;
I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.
I will not abandon you; all my promises are true.
You are gifted, called, and chosen; you are mine.*

Yes, we have launched ourselves into a fresh, exciting—as well as a serious, unnerving—

discussion about who, where, and what we were, as well as who, where, and what we want to be. This congregation has accomplished many great things within and without the building. However, the going forward has not been easy. Our views are not always aligned with others whom we love. Sometimes, we seem to be going in circles, sometimes at the next level, but sometimes at the “same old, same old.” And yet, we *must* remember we are gifted, called, and chosen. The caveat? We are *not* all gifted, called, and chosen *for the same purposes.* Exciting and unsettling all at the same time. Whew!

We must remember there is diversity in unity and unity in diversity. We are called to be certain ALL voices are heard. I want to express and assure you that, as we continue this process in prayer and respectful conversation, we will arrive at that place we are called to be. Which is filled with new adventures and beginnings while remembering and valuing our steadfastness and stability. Hats off to the cherished past, and sleeves rolled up to face our future. And just how do we do that? First and foremost, being open to one another and the Holy Spirit. Our challenge?

*I have given you a name, it is mine;
I have given you my Spirit as a sign.
With my wonder in your soul, make my
wounded children whole;
go and tell my precious people they are mine.*

(Continued on page 2)

And so, I leave you with this. As Jesus told his eleven disciples before his ascension, he also says to us, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations [communities], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:18–20, NRSV)*



Online Zoom Worship Services

Our Sunday morning online worship services via Zoom have provided us with the means to stay in touch with each other and to worship together during this time of COVID-19. We miss the in-person togetherness, but we can still connect thru our Zoom worship services and other meetings. If you are not attending our Zoom services, we want you to know that we miss your attendance. These Zoom services are beneficial in keeping us connected during this time of separation. So, if you have not joined with us for an online worship service, we would encourage you to do so and get reconnected to your congregation. Also, you will most likely meet new friends, as well as old friends, from other parts of the United States that have been joining us for worship. At the end of our services there is time to share and chat with each other about what is going on in our lives, as well as to share joys and concerns. If you are having trouble connecting or gaining access to these online services, please call Gary Chatburn for assistance. If you do not have computer or phone devices, or your computer hardware and other devices are not adequate, you can talk to Gary and he can check on possible solutions for you. We want to be able to include everyone in our congregational worship and activities.

Notes from the CFO's Desk

Delay in Distributing Contribution Receipts for 2020

Around January 20, 2021, some of the World Church computer data servers went off-line. During a network investigation conducted by the Community of Christ Information Systems Team and outside security consultants, a security incident involving malware was detected. The outside security consultants are familiar with scenarios like this and are working diligently with Community of Christ IT personnel to determine the scope of the situation. It is anticipated that it may take several weeks or more to complete the review and analysis. After the review has been completed, any necessary network rebuilding, restoring of remote access, etc., may cause the computer servers to be down for an additional period of time. So, there is a real possibility that it may be mid-February 2021 or later before we can print the contribution receipts for 2020.

Also, if you have an e-Tithing account, be mindful of ongoing phishing scams asking you to change your password. Always check the sender's email address to help spot phishing scams and report them to the Rocky Mountain Mission Center.

Since the computer data servers remain down, we are not able to print your 2020 Contribution Receipts. ***If you are in immediate need of a receipt, please contact Ruth Chatburn and she will see if there is an interim solution available to meet your need.*** We will try to the best of our ability to keep you updated on this situation.

Contributions during the Continued Closure of Our Facilities:

Contributions have remained fairly stable with a slight dropping off in contributions the last couple of months. We are doing our best to minimize as much expense as possible and remain within our budgets. We want to thank everyone for their continued financial support

and let you know that we are very appreciative of the funds that are received each month. Please continue to send your offerings and contributions to Ruth and Gary Chatburn, congregation financial officers, so that your "Disciples' Generous Response" can be processed into the accounts that you designate.

Also remember that **cash offerings** like the **Second-Sunday Offering** are not being received as normally, so you might want to add that to the offerings you are sending to Ruth and Gary.



Speakers, Planners, Keyboard, Greeters, and Nursery

(All on ZOOM for February)

Speakers

- ❖ Feb. 7: Rich Kohlman
- ❖ Feb. 14: No ZOOM Service
- ❖ Feb. 21: James Speer
- ❖ Feb. 28: Sharing Service

Planners

- ❖ Feb. 7: Dave Simons
- ❖ Feb. 14: No ZOOM Service
- ❖ Feb. 21: Mary Kohlman
- ❖ Feb. 28: Deb Friesz & Shirley Remmenga



A Novel Bunch

Date: February 18

Time: 2:00 p.m. on ZOOM

Book: *American Dirt*

by Jeanine Cummins

Everyone is welcome. For ZOOM connection information contact Kay Bunch or Donna Clark.

February Calendar



Check the website:

<http://cofchristrm.org/FortCollins/>

- Feb. 3: 6:00 p.m. **NO** Leadership Council Meeting
- Feb. 7: 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Worship Service
Communion Sunday
First-Sunday Giving
- Feb. 8: 7:00 p.m. ZOOM Priesthood Meeting
- Feb. 14: 10:30 a.m. No ZOOM Worship
Second-Sunday Offering
No Second-Sunday Social
- Feb. 18: 2:00 p.m. Novel Bunch on ZOOM
- Feb. 21: 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Worship Service
(Communicator items due)
- Feb. 28: 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Worship Service

February Birthdays



Susanna Garner	2/4
Marie Ytell	2/5
Hoss Davis	2/5
Jacee Davis	2/5
Donna Palmer	2/6
Don Worthington	2/10
Brett McKenzie	2/14
Janny Kay McKenzie	2/16
Gene Bridwell	2/17
Jean Newman	2/19
Teri Bridwell	2/20
Ruth Chatburn	2/20
Marcia Bridwell	2/22
Joyce Worthington	2/24
Elias Bencomo	2/28

Priesthood Meeting

There will be a priesthood meeting on Monday, February 8, at 7:00 p.m. Connection information via ZOOM will be emailed to you prior to the meeting.

Herald-in-Every-Home

Help support the Herald-in-Every-Home program by making an extra donation to the operating fund of \$32 to cover the cost of one subscription. Our recently approved budget calls for \$600 to be raised for this endeavor this year. Please mark Herald on your envelope or check.

“The Hill We Climb”

By Amanda Gorman as recited at the inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris



When day comes we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade? The loss we carry, a sea we must wade. We've braved the belly of the beast. We've learned that quiet isn't always peace. In the norms and notions of what "just is" isn't always justice.

And yet, the dawn is ours before we knew it. Somehow, we do it. Somehow, we've weathered and witnessed a nation that isn't broken, but simply unfinished. We, the successors of a country and a time where a skinny Black girl descended from slaves and raised by a single mother can dream of becoming president, only to find herself reciting for one.

And, yes, we are far from polished, far from pristine, but that doesn't mean we are striving to form a union that is perfect. We are striving to forge our union with purpose, to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and conditions of man.

And so, we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us. We close the divide because we know to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside. We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another. We seek harm to none and harmony for all. Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true. That even as we grieved, we grew. That even as we hurt, we hoped. That even as we tired, we tried. That we'll forever be tied together, victorious. Not because we will never again know defeat, but because we will never again sow division.

Scripture tells us to envision that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid. If we're to live up to our own time, then victory won't lie in the blade, but in all the bridges we've made. That is the promise to glade, the hill we climb if only we dare. Because being American is more than a pride we inherit; it's the past we step into and how we repair it. We've seen a force that would shatter our nation rather than share it. Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy. And this effort very nearly succeeded.

But while democracy can be periodically delayed, it can never be permanently defeated. In this truth, in this faith we trust, for while we have our eyes on the future, history has its eyes on us. This is the era of just redemption. We feared it at its inception. We did not feel prepared to be the heirs of such a terrifying hour, But within it, we found the power to author a new chapter, to offer hope and laughter to ourselves.

So, while once we asked: "How could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?" Now we

assert, “How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?”

We will not march back to what was, but move to what shall be: a country that is bruised but whole; benevolent but bold; fierce and free. We will not be turned around or interrupted by intimidation, because we know our inaction and inertia will be the inheritance of the next generation. Our blunders become their burdens. But one thing is certain, if we merge mercy with might and might with right, then love becomes our legacy and change our children’s birthright.

So, let us leave behind a country better than one we were left. With every breath from my bronze-pounded chest, we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one. We will rise from the golden hills of the West. We will rise from the windswept Northeast where our forefathers first realized revolution. We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the Midwestern states. We will rise from the sunbaked South. We will rebuild, reconcile, and recover in every known nook of our nation, in every corner called our country, our people diverse and beautiful, will emerge battered and beautiful.

When day comes, we step out of the shade aflame and unafraid. The new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it.



Are We Moving Toward Jesus?

Register for Online Discussion 1 February

As we continue to study the guiding question, *Are We Moving Toward Jesus, the Peaceful One?*, a yearlong series of linked Herald magazine articles, videos, and live online discussions is underway.

Join us on 1 February at 12:00 p.m. (CST) for the next discussion with authors David Anderson and Robyn Luffman.

- Read the next *Herald* article "[Toward the Peaceful One: Worth of All Persons](#)"
- [Register](#) now to participate in the online discussion group. Zoom links will be sent to all registrants.

