

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



April 2020

For everyone born, a place at the table



By Stephanie Gustave

Please observe a new logo on the top-right of the *Communicator*. Let me explain.

In July 2018, the boards of directors of Gay and Lesbian Acceptance (GALA) and Welcoming Community Network (WCN) officially approved a merger. In September 2018, the membership of GALA approved the merger, and on February 20, 2019, the merger was completed and filed with the state of Missouri. As a result, the merging of the two organizations will be better prepared to serve the changing needs of LGBTQ members and friends of Community of Christ. The following is a brief history of GALA and WCN.

GALA: In 1982, informal meetings were initiated by two gay church members—Bob Swoffer and Arthur Butler. At the 1984 World Conference, members were brought together again, and that fall about 40 people met at a retreat under the leadership of Swoffer, Butler, Ginger Farley, Stephen Hackett, and David Gilfillan. It was at this retreat that the name Gay and Lesbian Acceptance (GALA) was chosen. In January 1986, the first newsletter was published where it was reported that GALA was a group formed by then RLDS members in the USA and Canada. This group continued to

meet, and from 1982–2019, GALA existed to provide a spirit of welcome and support for LGBTQ church members.

WCN: In 1999, John Billings, an outspoken and active advocate for GALA, began having conversations with an informal, ecumenical organization in Chicago, Illinois, where he was serving as a church appointee. The major denominations participating were United Church of Christ, United Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran ELCA in what leaders named the Welcoming Community Network. In June 2003, WCN held an international workshop held during a World Church event called “Launch Out,” led by Billings and Butler. From 2002–2006, WCN was a part of GALA with a mission of advocacy for change in the life of the church, which would allow the LGBTQ members to fully participate in the life of the church as member as well as through ordination and marriage. From 2002–2019, WCN was an independent, nonprofit organization separate from GALA.

Part of the merger agreement involved renaming the new organization to ensure a more equitable path forward. Managed by a group named the Rebranding Committee, which was made up of members, board members, and a third-party branding expert, the name Harmony was chosen. A new mission was proposed to better meet the needs of a changing church, membership, and world. As a

result, a new Harmony board was elected, and a more concise mission statement was developed that will not only guide the new organization forward, but will also serve members, partners, and supporters for years to come. If you have additional questions or comments, please feel free to contact me, Tom Beck, Max Coopwood, and/or Sharon Troyer.

From Your Facilities Management Team

Facilities Closure: As most of you are now aware, our facilities became completely closed March 15, 2020, to all congregation and third-party meetings. This is being done for the protection of all of us as well as the need to follow government directives for safe health. For now, the facilities are closed thru the end of April 2020. It is very likely, though, that the facilities closure will be extended thru May 2020 when we reevaluate the coronavirus conditions toward the end of April 2020.

It should be noted that the City of Fort Collins Seasonal Overnight Shelter for Women is still operating in the Activity Center (gym area). Catholic Charities and the City of Fort Collins are closely monitoring the women each night when they enter our facility. They, as well as us, want to try our best to guard against an outbreak of the coronavirus among the women.

We, as the facilities provider, have taken extra precautions to try and guard against a virus outbreak. In consultation with our cleaning services provider, we changed our cleaning schedule and started extensive daily cleaning of the entire Activity Center (gym area, restrooms, all doors and handles, light switches, wall outlet covers, stair railings, floors, etc.). Prior to this time, we were only cleaning on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in these areas. As you have probably heard numerous times from grocery stores, commercial businesses, etc., our cleaning services provider is also following CDC guidelines as well as the state of Colorado directives when they clean our facilities.

When we have more information available on our facilities status, we will present it to you. In the meantime, stay well and be safe.

Regards,
Gary Chatburn, Fort Collins Co-Congregational Financial Officer

Project Status: All current projects have been suspended at this time pending the impact and outcome of the COVID-19 coronavirus situation in the state of Colorado and the United States.

Notes from the CFO's Desk

1st Quarter Contribution Receipts: Receipts for your 1st quarter 2020 contributions will be available toward the end of April 2020. Considering the current COVID-19 coronavirus situation, we will plan to hold your receipt in lieu of mailing it right now. However, if you need your receipt now, please let Ruth Chatburn know (970-833-0570), and she will mail it to you.

Contributions During Facilities Closure



While our facilities are closed, we still have ongoing expenses that we must cover. As has been previously published, you have a couple of options for continuing your contributions during this time. (1) You can set aside your offering funds each month and contribute them when we are able to meet together again at the church, or (2) you can mail a check in line with your "normal giving process" to Gary or Ruth Chatburn. We will still be making trips to the bank to deposit funds, albeit not as often. If you do send us a check in the mail, it would probably be a good idea if you would let us know so we could be watching for it. When we receive your check, we will notify you via email or telephone conversation that we have received it. As always, should you have any questions, please feel free to contact either Gary or Ruth.

Financial Income and Expense Report

The financial income and expense report summary for the financial period January 2020 – March 2020 will be published in the May 2020 *Communicator*. If you have any questions about the congregation's financial condition before then, please contact Gary or Ruth Chatburn, Fort Collins Co-Financial Officers.



A Novel Bunch

April Meeting

Date: April 16 (May need changing with the Larimer County lockdown)

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Host: Pat Miner

Book: *The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck

First Presidency Updated Statement Response to COVID-19 Virus 20 March 2020

The First Presidency is extending the recommended suspension of church gatherings around the world through at least Friday, May 1, 2020. Church gatherings are worship services, meals, conferences, funerals, and other group activities. The Presidency continues to monitor guidance from government and public health agencies around the globe related to the estimated spread and duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, if local government and public health guidance is more restrictive than the Presidency's recommendation, follow local guidance. As new information is available, it will be released and posted at www.CofChrist.org/covid-19.

Second-Sunday Social for April

Is canceled.

April Calendar



Check the website:

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

- Apr. 1: 5:30 p.m. Worship Coordinators (Canceled)
6:00 p.m. Leadership Council (Canceled)
- Apr. 5: 9:30 a.m. (Canceled)
10:30 a.m. (Canceled)
Communion Sunday
First-Sunday Giving
- Apr. 12: 9:30 a.m. (Canceled)
10:30 a.m. (Canceled)
Second-Sunday Offering
Youth and Children's Classes (Baptism Classes)
Second-Sunday Social (Canceled)
- Mar. 12: 10:00–noon Take-Away Lunch volunteers at Murphy Center (Canceled)
- Apr. 16: 2:00 p.m. A Novel Bunch meets (May be canceled)
- Apr. 19: 9:30 a.m. (Canceled)
10:30 a.m. (Canceled)
Communicator items due.
- Apr. 25: 8:00 a.m. Saturday Morning Homeless Breakfast (Canceled)
- Apr. 26: 9:30 a.m. (Canceled)
10:30 a.m. (Canceled)
Youth and Children's Classes (Baptism Classes)

April Birthdays



Tonia Watts	04/01
Rachel Muir	04/05
Ryder Jackson	04/06
Dave Simons	04/19
Cinnamon Garner	04/23
Kay Bunch	04/25
Avery Dicke	04/25
Bettie Miller	04/30

Seasonal Overflow Shelter

Our seasonal overflow shelter is now operating from November 1 through April 30. It is again operated by Catholic Charities and utilizes our Activity Center. It is serving only women again this year. It operates seven days a week depending on need.

April 1—Zoom Meeting with Apostle Ron Harmon

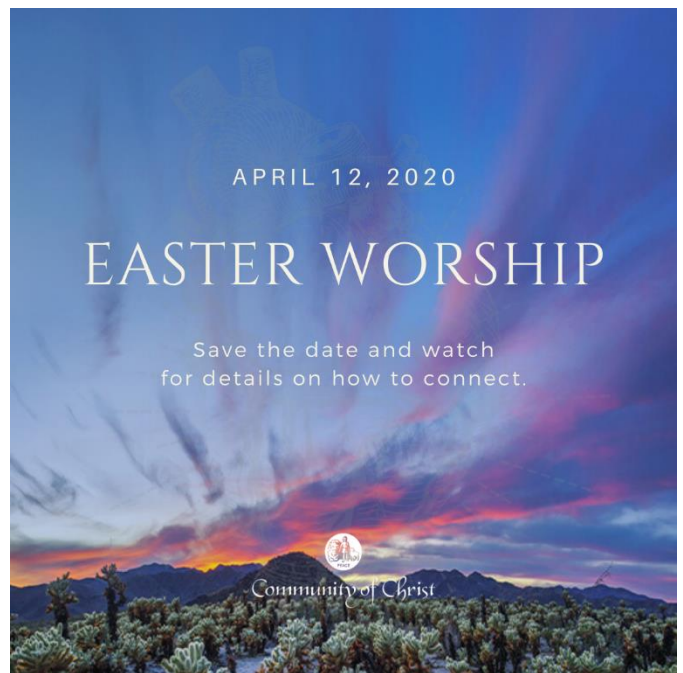
Please plan to participate in a special Zoom gathering with Apostle Ron Harmon at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1. We will have the opportunity to share in a brief worship experience, small group participation, and sharing of joys and concerns. Our theme for our time together is “Called to Loving Community.” Please plan to participate as this will be a wonderful opportunity to be together and to share with our good friend and brother, Ron. *Additional details concerning how to access this meeting via Zoom will be provided soon!*

Western Field Maundy Thursday Service April, 9, 2020, at 7:30 p.m. MDT

You are invited to attend what will be a special remote service of reflection as we journey to Easter!

Join us via Zoom and conference call for an evening of sharing and encounter as we reflect on the meaning of Holy Thursday. Ministry will be provided from across the Western Field as we reflect on the significance of the sacred meal shared then and now as we seek to embody Christ’s love in challenging times. In preparation, please read Mark 14:17–25 and John chapters 13–17, often called Jesus’s farewell discourse.

**Specifics on how to access this service will be shared soon.*



EARTH DAY



April 22 is to be celebrated as the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. Churches and businesses across the world will be remembering and thinking about the planet we call home, its resources, and protecting our environment. It is particularly important this year as we continue to trudge through the coronavirus and its effects on our everyday activities and personal health. We invite our congregation to extend some love to our planet

and to be intentional in consideration of opportunities to reduce our carbon footprint, conserve energy, reduce our consumption of goods, and recycle where possible. Simple things like replacing light bulbs with LED units, limited use of single-use plastic goods, combining various trips using our automobiles, following guidelines for time-of-day use of laundry and dish washing machines, and use of refillable water bottles are but a few ideas. Consider bringing your family together to plant a tree. Be creative in adding to the list of what can be done to make a difference. Please join in the recognition of the sacredness of the creation we all celebrate.



Speakers, Planners, Keyboard,
Greeters, and Nursery
(All Services Canceled for April)

March Second-Sunday Social Pics



**From Joel Cox,
Mission Center President**

Dear Friends,
I am pleased to forward a message prepared by our apostle, Ron Harmon. The video is brief, only about 2 ½ minutes, but in his message, Ron shares his support and deep desire that we remain in community, reaching out to others, during the challenging time.

I am grateful for the leadership that Ron provides as well as the discipleship and devotion so generously demonstrated by the leaders of our church. I continue to be amazed, but not surprised, by the ministry you are providing during this very challenging time. Thank you for your discipleship, devotion, and friendship. You are a blessing to me! May you dwell in the peace of Jesus Christ, always.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqddgMTSvng&feature=youtu.be>