

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



June 2020

For everyone born, a place at the table

"Earth Stewardship"

—Richard Bunch

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

—Genesis 1:1–2 NRSV

Among my richest and most treasured blessings is the opportunity to serve as a volunteer interpreter/naturalist in my city's preserved natural areas and nearby state park. I literally feel this is a calling to serve and minister to family groups, young adults, children, and special needs populations through nature walks and environmental education programs. This ministry has been expanded for me with involvement in the World Church Earth Stewardship Team, for which I am privileged and appreciative. At the same time, I feel obligated to call other disciples to the task of caring for earth's resources.

The natural world is a cathedral to me, filled with the sounds, sights, and smells of worship. It is made sacred by the presence of the Divine Spirit of created wonder. I have sensed that Spirit in quiet walks through aspen forests arrayed in the brilliant hues of autumn's cloak and in the thundering voice of Niagara's cascade. I have experienced awe in trekking across Tahiti and camping at the base of the island's highest mountain while breathing in the scent of orange and tiare Tahiti blossoms.

I have observed that Spirit in the quiet morning, gliding on a wilderness lake with the water dripping from the paddle's blade and the mist rising to reveal the reflection of the trees on the lake's glassy surface. I have seen that



Spirit in ascending Mount Taitaa on Tubuai, witnessing the clouds as they engulfed us and thinking that must have been Moses' feeling at the top of Sinai.

The crowning moment of recognition of the sacredness in creation came to me, however, a short while ago as I was leading a nature program for a group of Hispanic children. We were at the edge of a lake watching for birds. In the tree above us perched a noisy blue jay soon joined by a bright yellow goldfinch. The young girl beside me reached up, took my hand, looked up at me with flashing brown eyes, and asked, "Didn't God make a wonderful world?" Sacredness of creation? We are not separate from it. It's ours for the adventure of discovery.

Online Zoom Meetings

We have had several online Zoom Sunday Worship Services during the month of May. It is good to see the number of people that have gotten “tech savvy” and have been able to connect to these services using desktop computers (with or without a webcam), laptop computers, iPads, smart phones, etc. Persons can also participate in the services using their telephone if they do not have any of these devices.

For those of you that have attended the Zoom services, we would like to have your feedback regarding the services and what you have especially appreciated.

Since it appears that we may be meeting and gathering this way for a while, we would also like for you to tell us what else you would like to see in the worship services as well as what other activities you would like to see occur during the week that we could possibly incorporate into the Zoom platform.

Please send your responses and ideas via email or USPS to Gary Chatburn or Rich Kohlman.

A Letter of Gratitude from “Love Will Find A Way” (Saturday Morning) To Everyone at Community of Christ Church,

To church leaders, all staff and volunteers, and all members,

We, the volunteers of Saturday Morning, want to extend our deepest gratitude. We have been so blessed to be able to do the work we love. It would not be possible without your sharing your beautiful church and welcoming space.

We have been with you now for five years. I don't know the number of people we have served exactly, but there have been many who have come, and the number grows every year. A place

to serve a warm breakfast, to offer showers and room to rest, to have space to give snacks and warm clothes to wear ... these things have been possible through your generosity.

We hope you accept this token of appreciation, which we offer with gratitude.

We, of course, don't know when we will be able to return to our work with you, but we do know that what you do at your church has made a real difference in the lives of those in need.

We hope you all are safe and healthy and hope to see you soon.

(Signed) The Team of Saturday Morning

Liz, Leonard, Milo, Cheryl, and many wonderful volunteers who say thank you!

Note: A donation of \$500.00 was received with this letter of gratitude.



A Novel Bunch **No more meetings until the fall.**

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First Presidency Statement Update to COVID-19 Virus Pandemic 21 May 2020

The First Presidency has continued to monitor the progression of COVID-19 and the recommendations from professional health organizations and local governments. While health organizations continue to express caution, local governments are beginning to relax stay-at-home orders and make provisions for businesses and churches to reopen with modified in-person gatherings. The Presidency has been prayerful in how to guide the church in this next phase of reopening of society.

After consulting the World Church Leadership Council, which provides a global perspective, we are offering the following recommendations:

1. Guidelines for reopening in-person congregational gatherings will be shared with mission center officers within the next week. We are advising congregations not to feel pressured to immediately reopen in-person gatherings. Caring for the welfare of the most vulnerable in our congregations and communities continues to be a paramount principle we uphold during this pandemic. Careful consideration must be given at the local jurisdictional level before any plan or action is implemented to reopen in-person gatherings. Apostles will work with mission center officers on next steps.

2. Based on the continued risk for the spread of the virus, we are recommending the cancellation of camps, reunions, vacation Bible schools, and other extended large-group gatherings during July and August. Many mission centers already have done this. With the added challenges, risks, and cost to implement safety guidelines, it is advisable to cancel these events to protect the children, youth, and adults.

If a mission center believes it is in a low-risk jurisdiction and the local government allows for day or overnight camps, the mission center president can request an exception for Community of Christ camps or rental groups. Any exception will need to demonstrate how it will meet the guidelines we have established for congregation in-person gatherings. The Office of General Counsel also has developed an Event Use agreement that can be considered during this pandemic. A request for an exception will be submitted to the field apostle, who will consult with the Presiding Bishopric and director of Field Ministries.

All World Church sites will remain closed to the public and World Church-sponsored events canceled through at least 31 August 2020. This

includes the Temple Complex, Peace Pavilion, and all historic sites.

We understand that our recommendation to cancel camps will place increased financial pressure on many campgrounds. For this we are sorry. But based on the concerns and recommendations from the leading health organizations, and our core principle to care for the welfare of all human life, we believe the decision to cancel camps is wise and responsible during this pandemic.

We continue to hold all the church in our prayers as we endeavor to learn from this life-changing experience. Thank you for all the creative ways you are sharing your ministry and service that has offered wonderful blessings to many. Together, let us collectively persist in our hope and prayers as we patiently, but responsibly, plan for the opportunities to be with one another in-person.

—The First Presidency

June Birthdays



Oceana Alcoser	6/4
Bret Remmenga	6/5
Kate Ytell	6/9
Don Struble	6/9
Gary Jones	6/17
Marc McKenzie	6/26
Max Coopwood	6/29
Swayze Bridwell	6/30

Second-Sunday Social for June

is canceled.

Zoom and Avaya Space and other



Watch for weekly emails to see what services are available online and how to connect to them.

Speakers, Planners, Keyboard, Greeters, and Nursery (All on ZOOM for June)

Speakers

- ❖ June 7: Rick Bunch
- ❖ June 14:
- ❖ June 21:
- ❖ June 28: Shirley Remmenga

Planners

- ❖ June 7: Kay Bunch
- ❖ June 14: Stephanie Gustave
- ❖ June 21: Ruth Chatburn
- ❖ June 28: Donna Clark



June Calendar



Check the website:

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

- June 3: 6:00 p.m. Leadership Council
By ZOOM
- June 7: 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Worship Service
Communion Sunday
First-Sunday Giving
- June 14: 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Worship Service
Second-Sunday Offering
Second-Sunday Social
(Canceled)
- June 21: 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Worship Service
Communicator items due.
FATHER'S DAY
- June 28: 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Worship Service
June 2020 Communicator

Not Everything Is Canceled

- Sunshine is not canceled
- Spring is not canceled
- Love is not canceled
- Relationships are not canceled
- Reading is not canceled
- Naps are not canceled
- Devotion is not canceled
- Music is not canceled
- Imagination is not canceled
- Kindness is not canceled
- Conversations are not canceled
- Humor is not canceled
- Hope is not canceled

**Per the recommendation of
World Headquarters, the Rocky
Mountain Mission Center will be
canceling the following 2020
summer events
due to the ongoing concerns
with COVID-19.**

June 4-7 Big Spruce Junior Camp
June 7-13 Big Spruce Jr. & Sr. High Camp
June 14-17 Paradise Junior Camp
June 14-20 Paradise Jr. High Camp
June 19-21 Women's Retreat @ Big Spruce
June 26-28 Paradise Fellowship Camp
July 18-25 Spectacular @ Graceland
July 4-11 Big Spruce Reunion
July 29-Aug. 2 Rockies Family Camp
Aug. 21-23 Western Slope Retreat

**Letter of Counsel
about
World Church Leadership**

Preface

The guidance and information in this letter of counsel follows prayerful consideration of individual circumstances and the needs of the church during challenging times. I am grateful for the companionship of the Holy Spirit, which provides insight and assurance in these matters. The transitions presented in this letter do not require any action by the World Conference.

To the church:

Jeffrey A. Naylor, in harmony with his request, will be released as a member of the Presiding Bishopric on September 30, 2020. His request is in response “to professional, personal, and family responsibilities that he must prioritize.” Jeff has been serving as a self-sustaining member of the Presiding Bishopric. However, in evaluating current demands and future needs, he will not be able to serve the church as

he had hoped or expected. Fortunately, Jeff will continue to be available to provide support to the Presiding Bishopric through professional consultation and special assignments. The church is grateful for Jeff’s self-sustaining service in the Presiding Bishopric during a challenging time. The Presiding Bishopric looks forward to Jeff’s continued support and ministry.

The resulting vacancy in the Presiding Bishopric will not be filled at this time. It may be filled in the future as circumstances permit.

Additional Information

David N. Anderson has decided to retire from full-time World Church employment effective June 1, 2020. However, at the request of the First Presidency, Dave will continue to serve as president of the High Priests Quorum and, in that role, as a member of the World Church Leadership Council. The Presidency is grateful for Dave’s willingness to serve in these important leadership roles as a self-sustaining minister. Reimbursement for official expenses related to his continuing leadership responsibilities will be provided.

John S. Wight has decided to retire from full-time World Church employment effective January 1, 2021. However, at the request of the First Presidency, John will continue to serve as a president of seventy assigned to a quorum and as the senior president of seventy. As senior president of seventy, John will serve as a member of the World Church Leadership Council. The Presidency is grateful for John’s willingness to serve in these important leadership roles as a self-sustaining minister. Reimbursement for official expenses related to his continuing leadership responsibilities will be provided.

The church deeply appreciates all those who express their discipleship through servant leadership roles as volunteers, self-sustaining

ministers, and employees throughout our worldwide faith community. Thank you for your devoted service in the likeness of Jesus Christ.

In the peace of Christ,

Stephen M. Veazey, president of the church

Local and Worldwide Budgets

With Mission Tithes significantly down and other income lost for 2020, World Church leaders are concerned about congregational, mission center, campground, and World Church budgets and cash flow. In deciding how to use resources to navigate these complex times, World Church leaders, in partnership with local leaders, are taking a holistic look at financial needs across the church. Together, we must balance the needs of local budgets with World Church operations, so one is not sacrificed unfairly for the other.

World Church leaders are deeply grateful for the continuing support individuals, families, and jurisdictions share through Local and Worldwide Mission Tithes. However, the pandemic has hastened the 30-plus-year trend of declining Local and Worldwide Mission Tithes.

Historically, 80 percent of Mission Tithes are shared through passing the offering plate during worship. Therefore, the need to suspend physical gatherings for worship has reduced Mission Tithes significantly. At this point, we do not have enough information to forecast accurately what to expect in Mission Tithes in 2020 and beyond or how the pandemic will impact the Bridge of Hope Project.

World Church leaders encourage all who can to maintain or increase, as capacity allows, their giving to Local and Worldwide Mission Tithes. This is accomplished easily through eTithing, other electronic-giving means, or by sending funds by mail to their congregational financial

officer. We hope other contributors affected financially by the pandemic will have the capacity to return to previous levels of giving to Local and Worldwide Mission Tithes in the coming months. We also hope that plans created to raise funds for the Bridge of Hope—retirement responsibility can be fulfilled. Only time will tell. Even if Worldwide Mission Tithes return to previous levels, the church still is facing a more-than-30-year declining trend in Worldwide Mission Tithes.

The World Church Finance Board discussed how to respond to the financial unpredictability introduced by the pandemic. To offset a significant decline in income, the World Church received a USA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan of \$1,533,900. The World Church decided to apply for the PPP loan to ensure cash flow would cover payroll while income was significantly reduced during the eight-week period of 9 April 2020 through 4 June 2020. The World Church is using the funds in eligible ways so the loan will be forgiven by the USA Small Business Administration. Any funds not needed for eligible purposes will be returned in June. The Bishop of Canada applied to the Canadian pandemic relief program, but the church has not received notice about the status of this application.

World Church leaders will continue to watch income, analyze projections, and cut non-staff expenses in 2020 where possible. Also, in the near term, World Church leaders will not fill positions when retirements or resignations occur with positions that are covered in the new budget levels. Depending on what happens with Worldwide Mission Tithes during the pandemic, more position cuts may be needed toward the end of 2020 or early in 2021.