



Community of Christ

The Communicator

Lent: A Significant Prelude to Easter

March 1st is the first Sunday of Lent. As I child I wasn't taught about this time of the church calendar, primarily because it might have made "us" look too much like "other" denominations...in a time when it was still fiercely important to be "ruggedly different". I knew Catholic children who "gave up certain foods or activities...for Lent", but I had no spiritual maturity to see significance in that symbolism. I was in my 50's before I could appreciate Lent as a unique time of "letting go", of strengthening my relationship with God. Today Community of Christ responds to the prophetic call to takes its "unique place in the circle of those who call on the name of Jesus Christ" by joining in this important prelude to Easter as an invitation for an inner journey. It is intentional time to let the Holy Spirit show us things that could "die" within us, so that new life can be born. Wendy M. Wright, in *The Rising* (Upper Room Books, 1994, p. 17), writes, the forty days of Lent celebrate the dismembering, disequilibrium and dying that are preludes to the creative transformation of Eastertide. It is a **season of being changed** and emptied so that new life might come to birth in us and resurrection be found in us as well. Lent is about change: of heart, of perspective, of focus, of the death that precedes life.

Immediately after his baptism by John the Baptist, Jesus went off to the

wilderness to be alone. Frederick Buechner, in *Listening to Your Life*, speculates that Jesus "spent forty days communing with God and asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus." Buechner says Christians are invited to ask one another "**what it means to be themselves.**" This desire for authenticity as human beings is important, because it frees us from bondage of barriers that prevent giving and receiving the love of God, in whose image we are so uniquely made.

On Friday evening, March 27th, and all day Saturday, the 28th, you are invited to spend time at a special retreat. We are calling it an "In-Town Retreat", because with the economy as it is, we decided not to spend funds for an "out of town" location. Nonetheless, we are creating this "time away" from our busy lives, where we can reflect on what it is to be fully human, revealing the mystery of the Divine within each one of us. Our theme is ***The Enneagram: A Path to Authenticity and Sharing the Peace of Christ***. Enneagram is pronounced ANY-a-gram, and stems from the Greek word for "nine"; it describes nine distinct ways of looking at the world. Some say it is about discovering nine faces of the soul. In the many reunions, retreats, congregational classes and workshops I have taught the Enneagram, most participants say it helps them understand their motivations for lifelong habitual behaviors, and at the same time, reduces judgment toward others.

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March Calendar

March 1st

Hunger Challenge
9:30 a.m. Pancake Breakfast
10:30 a.m. Outreach International
11:00 a.m. Worship Service

March 4th

7 p.m. Worship Coord. Team Mtg.

March 8th

2 cents a meal
5 p.m. Second Sunday Social

March 12th

1 p.m. Afternoon Women's Group

March 19th

7 p.m. Leadership Meeting

March 22nd

4th Sunday Children's Activity
Communicator Items Due

March 27th-March 28th

Enneagram Retreat



We saw it in the Paper!!

The Community of Christ received a thumbs up and thanks for opening its community room to the Winter Day Shelter for the homeless.

Gary and Debra Jones bought property on Laurel Street.

Maria Swall, development director for the Boys & Girls Clubs was quoted in an article about donations being flat for non profits. There are large increases in attendance, but they're working extra hard to bring the money in. (North Forty News)

Our prayers continue to be with the family of Jimmy Schleiger (Debbie Jones and Rebekah Troyer's cousin) who passed away January 22.

Joan Green was one of the storytellers at the adult storytime at the library on February 6. (Thanks to Nancy Mendenhall for spotting this.)

Several local members were listed as donors to Graceland University.

The 65th Anniversary picture of Jack and Irene Rees (Cheyenne, WY) was in the February Herald.

From the Larimer County Food Bank: Our Donations to the Food Bank

Poundage Report for 2008
Total Pounds Donated 1,108
Total Value Based on National Grocers' Price Index: \$1,650.92



March Birthdays

Bianca Clark	03/01
Chris Higgins	03/03
Aubrey Hake	03/08
Taylor Bridwell	03/15
Sara Rolfe	03/15
Marta Remmenga	03/16
Steve Thomas	03/17
Kelly Jackson	03/22
Pam Webb	03/24
Lee Cook	03/24
Bill Florom	03/25
Ashley McKenzie	03/27
Doug Yarrington	03/28
Stephanie Clark	03/29
Luella Foster	03/31
Jared Clark	03/31

ATTENDANCE HISTORY

Starting in 2003 Jon Mendenhall began compiling records on attendance at our Worship Services as provided by the PA operators. For your information the average attendance for the last six years in summarized below.

Bonnie Thomas, the new administrative assistant, has now taken over keeping these attendance records. Thanks to the PA operators for recording attendance each week and passing it on to Bonnie.

YEAR	ADULTS	CHILDREN	TOTAL
2003	39.4	3.5	42.9
2004	35.6	3.2	38.8
2005	34.4	2.6	37.0
2006	33.8	4.6	38.4
2007	30.3	8.1	38.4
2008	37.3	8.9	46.2

From Church World Service:

We are please to send the enclosed contribution to the World Hunger Fund designated by Community of Christ, Fort Collins, CO. from their Fort Collins CROP Hunger Walk. The amount of the check totals \$342.00. Also be advised that a total of \$432.00 was sent to the Larimer County Food Bank from funds donated from the walk.

Thank you for you continued support and commitment to this important ministry and work.

In partnership,
Joanna Rendall
CFO, Church World Service



Welcoming Community Network

The Welcoming Community Network publishes a monthly electronic newsletter.

When Jon Mendenhall started as editor of the WCNnewsletter there were just over 100 E-mail subscribers. That list has grown to over 400 in the past 18 months.

In the February issue it was reported that the number of Community of Christ congregations that are officially open and affirming and WCN affiliated grew from 5 to 8 in 2008. A goal of 16 such congregations by the end of 2009 was set by the WCN Board at their annual meeting in January.

The Fort Collins WCN Group is very hopeful that our congregation will be one of those 16 by the end of the year.

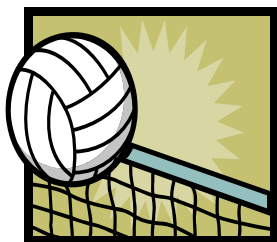
If you have questions about what it means to be a WCN congregation you can visit the WCN website at:

<http://www.welcomingcommunitynetwork.org/>

You can also subscribe to the WCNnewsletter there.

In addition you can always talk to any member of the Fort Collins WCN Group for more information.

The WCN Group: *Tom Beck, Kathy Bridwell; Kay Bunch, Rick Bunch, Max Coopwood; Dick Foster; Julie Foster; Bob Fulton, Sharon Fulton, Betty Jones, Jon Mendenhall, Nancy Mendenhall, Shirley Remmenga, Dave Simons, Voni Simons, Bonnie Thomas, & Steve Thomas*



Second Sunday Social

**March 8th
5 p.m.**

**Pot Luck & Volleyball
Bring a Main Dish and a Salad or
Dessert**

March Worship Schedule

Date	Planner	Presider	Speaker
3/1	Hunger Challenge		Karyn Wingard- Manuel
3/8	Tom Beck	Sharon Troyer	Tim Ashburn
3/15	Bob Fulton		Dave Simons
3/22	Pam Webb		Debbie Jones
3/29	Marilyn Garner		Jana Horner

**A more detailed worship schedule is on the
congregation webpage and in the church
office.**

Community of Christ
220 East Oak Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524

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It encourages our developing within ourselves a “compassionate witness” who can answer the question St. Paul asks in Romans, “Why is it that I do not do what I want to do but instead I do that very thing I do not want to do?”

Our retreat will include folks from various denominations in Ft. Collins, and is open to the Rocky Mountain Mission Center. **Please register as soon as possible, and no later than March 16th!** We will begin with Friday evening dinner at 6 p.m., and conclude at 5 p.m. on Saturday. Please let Bonnie Thomas know if you can host overnight guests.

Guest ministry will be provided by Jana and Andy Horner, and Kay Adams will coordinate a children’s program on Saturday. Dress comfortably and come prepared to relax, listen, learn, and yes, enjoy the playfulness of being in sacred community! See you there!

Pastor, Sharon Troyer