



The Communicator

Two-Way Trust



Sharon Troyer, pastor

I had the privilege of attending Christmas Eve worship at St. John's Episcopal Cathedral in Denver. Of course, I expected to appreciate the exceptional beauty of the gorgeous building, the wonderful music, and the breathtaking greens and candlelight.....but what I enjoyed the most was the succinct homily by the Rev. Peter Eaton, rector and dean of the cathedral. I don't have it in writing to quote, but it is still perking within me as a message my heart needed to hear!

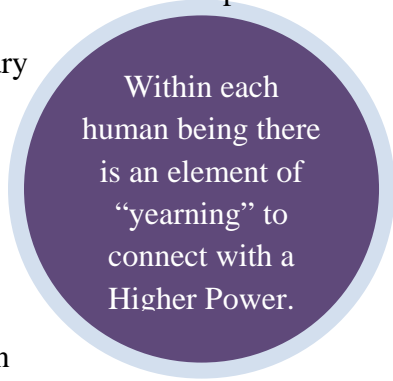
Rev. Eaton talked about how we, as Christians, are constantly reminded to **trust God** to remain "with us" always, and that is one reason we keep celebrating the Incarnation and Nativity story each year. That made perfect sense to me, because, like many of you, I easily forget that I can rely on God to "walk with me in the now" of every day. I can easily slip back into the illusion of thinking I can fix things or bring change without relying on God as the only Source of lasting healing and transformation.

The surprise in the short Christmas Eve message that keeps nagging at me, however, is not only that *we are invited to trust God*, but that **God is willing to trust us**. God doesn't take away our free will. God just asks us to recognize that when we rely on the Holy Spirit, we become empowered in a new way,

to do and be what we cannot do alone! I don't know why I hadn't thought of it quite that way before, but, as I pondered, I realized that if we want to live in alignment with God's will, we have to believe that God does trust us to continue to enrich our relationship with the Divine Source. In Community of Christ, some refer to this as being "in Christ," or being followers of Jesus whose ministry and presence shows us the way.

I have long believed that within each human being there is an element of "yearning" to connect with a Higher Power. For me, that is the essence of spirituality. In healthy religion we practice that yearning together and celebrate being part of the "body of Christ." But for many people, religion hasn't provided that deep inner connection with God. Religion has instead been about belief systems, rules, and regulations. I am so proud to be part of a congregation that wants, by God's grace, to become more fully a "sanctuary of peace" where all are loved and welcomed. I am committed to walk with you in this process of discerning God's will for us. I anticipate that our retreat the last weekend in February will open amazing windows of understanding about this journey.

I am humbled to begin the last seven months of serving as your pastor. My three-year contract will end in July,



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and though I was deeply touched at being offered an opportunity to serve longer, I have made the decision to focus my energy in some other areas, including my private practice in the Center for Change and Spiritual Growth. I plan to remain an active part of this wonderful congregation, serving where and how I am able. I look forward to participating with you and the Leadership Team as you make decisions about your future pastoral needs. Feel free to talk with me, Kay Bunch, Gary Gordier, and/or Shandra Newcom, our RMMC Pastoral Support Minister, in the months to come. I wish each and every one of you great joy and prosperity in the new year!



Evangelist Congregational Blessing

WAIT! A familiar word to all of us in these days! However, for many of us it can be a frustrating experience to wait for what we want. We all know of examples of this in our daily routines. However, I have come to realize that waiting is not so bad. It is in the spirit of Advent that we wait. Something special is coming. Waiting can be a productive experience! I often recall the scripture from Isaiah 40:31—"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Waiting means time to gather knowledge, time to reflect, time to develop new insights that open our spiritual eyes, time to listen to each other's stories, and time to appreciate the gifts of all persons in our congregation. It is a preparation time. It is like this with the Evangelist Congregational Blessing that we have been waiting to experience. There is much preparation to be done by the congregation and the evangelists. You will be hearing more about this in the next few issues of the *Communicator*. As for now,

here are a few points to ponder concerning this experience we will share together about the *purposes* of the Congregational Blessing.

The following is taken from *The Congregational Blessing* by the Order of Evangelists of the Community of Christ (with some added thoughts).

1. It strengthens the faith of the congregation in mission to be the Community of Christ.
2. It strengthens the bonds of love and commitment of each person to Christ and the community of the congregation.
3. This blessing can move the congregation forward in providing the kind of environment where people are safe in building relationships based on love, trust, compassion, and forgiveness.
4. Reconciliation can take place thus freeing individuals and the congregation for service to others and with each other.
5. The blessing will help identify the uniqueness of God's call and intent for the congregation in relationship to the larger community.
6. The blessing will touch the special and unique culture of the congregation, which includes children, youth, young adults, singles, and seniors.
7. It will challenge the congregation to reach out as a living witness of Christ in word and deed thus blessing others and being blessed.

So, waiting is important if we keep in mind that we will be blessed as we experience this Congregational Blessing. When the retreat comes for our congregation in February, more focus and attention will be given to this experience.

—Dick Foster, evangelist





Junior and Senior High Youth Group in Service

The youth group offered free babysitting to the congregation on Sunday, December 5, from 1–4 p.m. We had nine youth to care for eight children. The youth were wonderful with the children and played with them in the bubble/tunnel toy, and shared snacks of apples, grapes, cheese, crackers, popcorn, and cookies.

Joyce Jordeth set-up tables with free bazaar items so each child could select from them as gifts for their families. The youth helped each child wrap their packages. Carrie Newman, with the assistance of the youth, helped each child make cards to give to their parents. Thank you ladies for your volunteer efforts. The afternoon ended with the youth giving each child a stuffed animal to take home. The youth leaders were very impressed that the youth asked what they could do to clean up and did not leave until all the toys were put away, vacuuming was done, chairs were put away, and all the food was cleaned up. We have a terrific group of youth.

—Bill and Pat Miner



Directory Update

Les and Ets Cunningham have a new address:
1854-A East Seadrift Drive, Windsor, CO 80550.

Their new home phone is: (970) 460-0300.

Their cell phone is: (970) 980 -9012.



Congregational Retreat

February 25–27, 2011

Adventure on Common Ground

Following the Spirit

Save this date! Dave Schaal, a member of the First Presidency, has adjusted his calendar to be with us during the retreat.

We will begin on Friday night at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall with a pizza dinner and will end on Sunday morning at noon. Breakfast will be served on both Saturday and Sunday mornings. Meals will also be provided for Saturday noon and evening.

The Brighton congregation will be providing the service for our meals and assisting with some youth activities so every member of the congregation will be freed to attend the retreat.

We are looking forward to a meaningful experience as we continue to discover a sense of both individual and corporate mission.

We will be using Doctrine and Covenants 161:1b to help us focus our activities.

“Claim your unique and sacred place within the circle of those who call upon the name of Jesus Christ. Be faithful to the spirit of the Restoration, mindful that it is a spirit of adventure, openness, and searching. Walk proudly and with a quickened step. Be a joyful people. Laugh and play and sing, embodying the hope and freedom of the gospel.”

We look forward to seeing you at the retreat!



Dear Friends,
On behalf of the children and families of the Tecate Community of Christ in Baja California, Mexico, we thank you for your generous contribution to the Tecate Education Fund. Although public education is free in Mexico, students must provide their own school supplies, uniforms, and registration fees. These costs alone make even an elementary education unattainable for most children in this area.

Because of the generosity of people like you, every child who attends the Tecate Community of Christ is able to receive an education. We can only imagine what this will do to change the lives of these children and families, and to interrupt the cycle of poverty in this area. You are a blessing to the church in Tecate, which is vibrant and growing.

Very truly yours,
Terry A. Read



Upper Room Study Group

Meets every Wednesday, 9:30 a.m.

This open group invites people to participate in a discussion where we share thoughts on our daily meditations. We use ***The Upper Room Disciplines: A Book of Daily Devotions*** as our study guide. Participants enjoy an exchange of ideas that vary from quiet, humble thoughts to creative, more expressive ideas! We listen to each other's interpretations, always with respect. Often we share personal experiences inspired by our daily devotional and scripture readings.

There is no requirement for "perfect attendance" every week; participants attend as they are able and according to their own schedules. As we complete our Upper Room Study Group for 2010, we are looking forward to beginning 2011! **We've ordered a few extra books. Do you want to join us?** How about helping set up an evening group that might work for those without daytime flexibility? Contact Shari Smith, Sharon Troyer, or Rich Kohlman for more information.

January Birthdays



Sierra Jones	01/01
Julie Foster	01/03
Glenn Smith	01/04
Laurie Stone	01/08
Brian Cole	01/09
Greyson Garner	01/11
David Garner	01/18
Sharon Fulton	01/19
Nancy Mendenhall	01/19
Bonnie Oberoi	01/26
Jessica Julch	01/29
Bob Fulton	01/29



Names in the News

Maria Swall, a Thumbs-up in the *Coloradoan*.

Janny McKenzi, a letter to the editor in the *Coloradoan*.

Sharon Troyer, an article in the December *Herald*.

Sharon Fulton, Kathy Graybill, Rick Bunch, and Tom Beck, in the Larimer Chorale Christmas Program.

Financial Report



November Income

World Church

World Ministries	\$1,571.50
Oblation	335.50
World Hunger	201.00

Local

Local Offering	\$8658.50
Building Fund	10.00
2 Cents a Meal	63.00
Family Assistance	55.00
Bazaar (for Building Fund)	41.00

—Betty Jones, CFO

Speakers, Keyboard, Greeters, and Nursery Schedules



Speakers

- ❖ January 2: Debbie Jones
- ❖ January 9: Sharon Troyer
- ❖ January 16: John Kafalas
- ❖ January 23: Tim Sundell
- ❖ January 30: Lindsay Melsen

Keyboard

- ❖ January 2: Sharon Troyer
- ❖ January 9: Sharon Fulton
- ❖ January 16: Tom Beck
- ❖ January 23: Jean Newman
- ❖ January 30: Kay Bunch

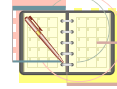
Greeters

- ❖ January 2: Bill and Pat Miner

Nursery

- ❖ January 2:
- ❖ January 9:
- ❖ January 16:
- ❖ January 23:
- ❖ January 30:

January Calendar



Check the website <http://cofchristrm.org/FortCollins>

- Jan. 2: Communion
First-Sunday Giving
- Jan 5: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Senior Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
Worship Coordinators, 7:00 p.m.
- Jan. 7: Senior Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
Retreat Planning, 1:00–2:30 p.m.
- Jan 9: Two-Cents-a-Meal Offering
- Jan. 12: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Senior Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
Prayer Shawl Group, 1:30 p.m.
- Jan. 14: Senior Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Jan. 19: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Senior Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Jan. 20: Leadership Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Jan. 21: Friday Morning Breakfast Club, 8:30 a.m.
Senior Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Jan. 23: *Communicator* items due.
- Jan. 26: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Senior Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Jan. 28: Senior Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Jan. 30: 5th Sunday Pancake Breakfast and Forum

Be Green

If you are receiving this newsletter by e-mail, thank you! If you are receiving a printed copy and do have e-mail, please consider receiving it by e-mail instead. Not only will you receive it in beautiful color, but you will be saving the congregation between \$.50 and \$.75: the cost of mailing, ink, paper, and labor. It's good stewardship for the earth and for the congregation. And, if you receive it by e-mail and need it printed, you can always print it on your printer and still save money for the congregation.

Thanks for your consideration. Contact Rich Kohlman: rkohlman@comcast.net to change to e-mail delivery.



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