No matter who you are, no matter where you are in life’s journey, you are welcome here at the Congregational United Church of Christ in Buena Vista.

**MODERATOR’S MOMENT**

**“LOVE IS STILL THE WAY”**

**“The Touch of the Master’s Hand”**

“Make love your aim and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts.”

My soul was deeply touched on Sunday, July 8th, as Janet, our MSG group, guest violinist Dennis, vocalist Matthew, and our Pastor Rebecca led us to experience the song, “The Touch of the Master’s Hand,” a musical story. This music, a favorite of Janet Steiner’s, tells the story of a violin that was up for auction. She told us about the composer and the quick inspiration that brought it into being. My own joy in following God’s call on my life in a quick moment of guidance was restored and renewed by the sacred moments of the music.

The master’s hand was seen in another way during this past few weeks on the other side of the world in Thailand, as 12 boys, ages 12 to 16, and their soccer couch were rescued miraculously from a deep mountain cave where they had been trapped for 17 days. Thanks be to God and the team of divers and other men and women who worked tirelessly to release them from the cave. Stories of how they could survive for such a long time with little food and drinking water are still coming forward. The news program “20/20” carried quite a detailed story. We celebrate with the boys, their families, and the village high in the mountains of Thailand that has welcomed them back. The world is rejoicing that these boys have been saved.

This story has reminded me that when adversity comes, it is not enough to weep in fear and curse the darkness! Instead, we must recover our courage, take our belief in hope and, putting it beside the word love, try to live the Christian life we believe in, no matter what the challenges! The Apostle Paul’s words can guide us. “And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. Make love your aim and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts.” (1 Corinthians 13:13-14:1) I believe that as a Church God’s hand is leading us.

I wrote last month about an Identity Statement that articulates our core values as a congregation. I would like to share the 2nd Section of that statement with you.

**Growing Spiritually By:**

- Committing ourselves to life-long learning
- Deepening our relationship with God through prayer, worship and study of scripture and other sources
- Opening ourselves to teachings and insights from many sources
- Cherishing and teaching our church community’s children and youth
- Strengthening family relationships
- Openly discussing important issues
- Honoring tradition while embracing new ideas

These are actions we believe in and act on; can we increase our desire for a Closer Walk With God? What spiritual growth ideas would you like to explore?

Walking together in faith, hope and love!

Marjorie Erickson, Moderator
PASTOR’S ARTICLE, August, 2018
Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. (I Thess 5:11)

A CONGREGATION: SOULS IN COVENANT WITH ONE ANOTHER

We’ve been talking about Covenant this past year, as we round the bend into ten years together as pastor and congregation, and consider our next chapter in ministry and mission and what it holds. We see covenants of many kinds in the Bible, and find there examples of how to live and move and minister together with each other as the priesthood of all believers, following in the Way of Jesus, as Christians in beloved community.

As we continue to explore the nature of our covenant at CUCC, I share some resources and insights from the wider church world here in the newsletter. Part One – The Local Church and Part Two – The Pastor. I hope you will reflect together with me on our covenantal commitments in all our relationships—our communications and relations, decision-making processes, service and support to each other and our wider community, and how we uphold and encourage one another as we fulfill our purpose and calling.

Theological Grounding for Covenant

God calls us into holy relationship with one another, sharing our joys and sorrows, building each other up in truth and love, and exhorting us to forgive and seek forgiveness. The Bible is full of passages and stories that speak to these values, particularly in a congregational context. In particular, the importance of honest, direct communication within a congregation. How people treat one another within the church reflects on how people tend to treat others outside the walls of the church.

Much of the time, congregants treat each other with kindness and grace, observing boundaries of appropriate behavior and striving to respond to conflict faithfully. Such graces include the importance of telling one’s own truth and listening respectfully to others’ truths, holding confidences appropriately, assuming good intent, seeking reconciliation directly from one who has hurt another, and approaching matters in a spirit of prayer. Sometimes, however certain behaviors undercut the values the congregation professes to hold, such as gossip, slander, “parking lot” conversations that denigrate decisions made or those who made them, and inappropriate comments to or about another one (including pastoral leadership or the wider church).

I particularly loved these “conversation and relationship norms” for a Congregational Covenant. I see us at CUCC practicing many of these and striving to live into these ideals even as we move into God’s preferred future for us.

- Be fully present, extending and presuming welcome to and from others.
- Listen generously and suspend judgment about another’s story. Hold stories with care and respect.
- Author your own story and share your own gifts.
- Wonder. Welcome discomfort. Love the questions.
- Be mindful and respectful of time.
- Practice hospitality and inclusion, especially when diverse cultures meet. There are many excellent methods for discernment, but not all of them model intercultural awareness; therefore, be discerning about discernment together: appreciate many ways of hearing God together.
- Believe that it is possible to emerge from our time together refreshed, surprised, and less burdened than when we came.

(A Sure Foundation: Resources for the relationship between pastors and congregations, Ministerial Excellence Team, UCC)

Next month, I will share with you my understanding of pastoral covenant, sense of mission, and my call to ministry in this place, working and serving with you. Happy August!

Blessings, Rebecca
CUCC Special Dates

BIRTHDAYS
August 2—Jim Amster
August 4—Betsy Neas
August 6—Liz Anderson
August 6—Bev Liddle
August 10—Tom Meardon
August 12—Les Messamer
August 14—Linda Carpenter
August 14—Charlie Terrill
August 15—Glynne Smith
August 17—Elvin Frantz
August 17—Elizabeth Shelby
August 20—Lew Lowe
August 25—Marge Dorfmeister
August 29—Jenna McMurry
August 30—Rhonda Funston
August 31—Bill Shelby

ANNIVERSARIES
August 5—Charles & Tricia Blake
August 9—Bart & Loretta Cain
August 15—Butch & Noel Ekin
August 18—Mark & Alice Wolters
August 26—Bowie & Helen Duncan
August 26—Keith & Joan Sovereign

Don’t see your special day listed? Please contact the office at 395-2544 or office.bvcucc@gmail.com.

Part of our church family who would enjoy Prayers, Cards, or perhaps a Visit
Diane Bails (720) 505-6540
21833 Saddlebrooke Court, Parker, CO 80138

Nan Bohe (719) 207-4850
Columbine Manor
530 W. 16th Street, Salida, CO 81201

Jean Brody (303) 720-9595
8271 South Continental Divide Road
Sterling House #505

Gerry & Jean Venard (719) 966-8586
PO Box 718

Charlie Terrill (719) 395-8586
PO Box 718
28300 C. R. 301, Buena Vista, CO 81211

Gerry and Jean Venard (719) 966-9524
3377 Mill Vista Road, Unit #3205
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

Wilma and Angie Williams (719) 395-2702
PO Box 1808
208 S. Colorado, Buena Vista, CO 81211

Adva Morrison (970) 481-2287
Columbine Manor
530 W. 16th Street, Salida, CO 81201

Lew and Jean Lowe (719) 490-2287
318 Pinon Street, Buena Vista, CO 81211

Nan Bohe (719) 207-4850
Columbine Manor
530 W. 16th Street, Salida, CO 81201

Jean Brody (303) 720-9595
8271 South Continental Divide Road
Sterling House #505

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Please Remember in Your Prayers
Nan Bohe—Healing
Mary Lou Bouman—Healing
Marcy Adams—Healing
Linda Baldwin—Healing
Kim Hughes (Doyle Nyberg’s cousin)—Healing
Bryce Kelly—Healing
Liz Carpenter (Kay Allinger’s sister-in-law)—Healing
Sarah Struthers—Healing
Jordan Conradson—Healing
Terri Holloway McNorton—Healing
Randy Wagner—Healing
The Family of Janice Fletcher (Jeff Keidel’s sister)—Comfort
Codi Miller—Healing
Rod & Sarah Struthers & Family—Comfort in the loss of grandson-in-law
Lindsey Fagerberg—Healing
Maryanne Wells (Janet Jonas’ sister-in-law)—Healing
Marlene Summers (Janet Steiner’s sister)—Healing
Krissa Ferguson (Jean & Steve Ferguson’s daughter-in-law)—Healing
Mark Russell (Marge Dorfmeister’s nephew)—Healing
Courtney Shucker—Healing

The Jim Close Memorial Garden is thriving. Despite a dearth of rain and with a learning curve that comes with any new project, the garden has sprung to life with both vegetables and carefully chosen flowering plants to serve as natural insecticides. 16 of the 24 plots are being used by approximately 16 individuals taking part. Initially, the local Boys and Girls Club was offered space, but while interested, they didn’t have the transportation necessary to ferry the kids back and forth and so had to decline. Most of the plots are being used by CUCC congregants, but there are at least two outside community members involved. The deer fence is working well and the sign on the main gate is very attractive. It’s been encouraging to have the gardeners bring their issues and suggestions to the church’s attention so that together we can make the garden better and better.

In fact, one of the gardeners organized a meeting of the group to discuss whatever was on their mind in relation to the garden. Having them take ownership of this project was something unlooked for and yet highly gratifying.

Just some of our enthusiastic gardeners!

Do you remember what it stands for? No, you’re not being graded!

1. BV CUCC has a personal connection to the Smithsonian. One of our former members, Marilyn Johnson, who passed away in 2002, was an expert tole painter. Many of our church family have some of her wonderful pieces. She received the honor of having one of her creations placed in the Smithsonian! Research hasn’t given any information about where it might be displayed or if it still is, but if you’re there, you now might know what to watch for.

2. Would you like to play shuffle board in our church? Well, you can!! Unfortunately, though, you would have to pull up the carpet in the sanctuary. Before the fellowship hall was created and the extended hallway was added, the sanctuary was tiled with game designs. Everything was held in the sanctuary—lots of tables were carried and set up for potlucks, the bazaar was all in one room, and the kitchen faced into the area. After all these years, it’s hard to remember, but that’s the truth!!!
View from the Mountain

“The Souls of Animals”

Do animals have souls? This has been a controversial subject for as long as I can remember, and though I personally believe they do, I’ve never found proof. Then, in December of 1994, my lifelong friend Holly VanMeter, gave me a book, *The Souls of Animals*. In this little gem of a book I found all of the proof I needed. Let’s talk about this.

First of all, what is a soul? The word ‘animal’ comes from a Latin root that means ‘soul.’ It is the channel through which we become conscious of the essence—the inward beauty—that dwells within all living beings.

To me, animals have all of the traits indicative of souls. We can’t see souls, but we surely can see outward manifestations like when they are sad or happy or show courage and generosity and, certainly, forgiveness. If we humans open our hearts to other creatures and allow ourselves to feel their joys and struggles, you will find they have the power to touch us—even transform us.

If we let ourselves listen closely, we can learn from animals. In fact, “Ask the beasts and they will teach you,” counsels the book of Job. They have lived on earth much longer than humans. Their instincts about how to live are often smarter and more proven, in certain cases, than ours.

One aspect of the presence of souls is being aware of death. The consciousness of our own mortality is part of what makes us human and a spiritual creature. There is much evidence among animal species that they both understand and honor death—their own and the death of their group members.

*The Souls of Animals* goes into detail of the elephants, the gorilla, and some species of birds and their consciousness of death. It tells of documented true stories of how they grieve, bury, and deal with the deep depression.

A number of years ago my daughter Phoebe and her husband Steve had two wonderful horses—Sunny and Dandy. They were best of friends, playing together constantly and always staying close. But two days before Christmas, with no warning of illness, Sunny just dropped dead in the field. It was minus twenty degrees at the time, but for the next three days his beloved friend never left his side. He wouldn’t leave, wouldn’t eat or drink. Until the man came to remove the frozen body, he never moved.

It’s a wonder it didn’t kill Dandy as well.

Don’t tell me animals don’t love and mourn at the loss of a loved one—a animal or human. Here’s what I want you to do after you read this. I want you to look deeply into the eyes of an animal. As you become aware that this cat, dog, elephant, etc., is not like you, but not wholly unlike you either, it will be easier—realizing this creature is one hundred percent unique and a work of art just as we are.

Do you see in its eyes all of the days of living within those eyes through memory? They remember good and bad, scares, abandonment, just like us.

As you look deeper, pay attention to what you can’t see—the inwardness of this being. Now, what you are seeing is living spirit.

Greet and respect that spirit. Appreciate it.

As you look deeper into the eyes of an animal you will become conscious of the essence—the inward beauty—that dwells within all living beings.

Jean Brody
Summer Song and Psalm Series!

August Scriptures
Sunday, August 5 TBA
Sunday, August 12 TBA
Sunday, August 19 TBA
Sunday, August 26 TBA

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As always, cash donations are appreciated, too!

Meet and play in worship!

If you have special music or a drama idea to share this summer, please let Pastor Rebecca know!

We have bins in the office and Fellowship Hall to make it easy. Please do not put cardboard boxes in the dumpster. Flatten and put next to the recycle bin in the FH or give to Pastor Rebecca.

Affairs in Order?
Don’t forget your church!
CUCC has a form for "Memorial Instructions." This is a helpful tool for you, your family, and your pastor to know your wishes for your memorial service and memorials. See Pastor Rebecca or the office for a form, email for a copy to office.bvcucc@gmail.com, or pick one up in the kiosk at church.

Summer Song Series continues!!

Send song titles that are meaningful to you and comments about why to Pastor Rebecca—or email to Revbecca@icloud.com.

Backpack Program
Food items always in demand:
* Shelf-stable milk (Horizon milk in cartons on shelf at Walmart, white or chocolate)
* Fruit cups (individual)
* Chef Boyardee, pasta, etc.
* Pudding Cups
* Granola or Cereal Bars

As always, cash donations are appreciated, too!

If you are going to be away traveling, please let us know as well!

Let’s Be Green!!!
Please recycle everything possible at CUCC. We have bins in the office and Fellowship Hall to make it easy. Please do not put cardboard boxes in the dumpster. Flatten and put next to the recycle bin in the FH or give to Pastor Rebecca.

A Little Help in BV!
Informational Meeting
Thursday, August 9
10:00am-11:00am, CUCC

Please come learn more about A Little Help.
For more information, call 719-966-7366 or email sara@alittlehelp.org.

Proceeds benefit Optimist Club BV youth projects!

Did you know?
Sermons can be received via email each week or found in the file box outside the office door, sorted by date.
Email office.bvcucc@gmail.com or call 395-2544 to receive a copy. Also available in large print before the service—ask a greeter.

Gold Rush Days
Pancake Breakfast in Columbine Park!
Presented by the Optimist Club
Saturday, August 11
8:00am—10:30am

All you can eat!
Best pancakes in town!
Pancakes, sausage, OJ, coffee, milk
$7 for 12 & up
$3 for kids 5-11
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A Sunday School teacher asked her class to draw pictures of their favorite Bible stories. She was puzzled by one drawing—it showed four people on an airplane!

Teacher: “What Bible story is that?”

Kid: “It’s the flight to Egypt.”

Teacher: “I see. And that must be Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. But who is the fourth person?”

Kid: “Oh, that’s Pontius, the pilot.”

The Legendary Blue Danube River Cruise
11-Day River Cruise Holiday
Hungary • Slovakia • Austria • Germany • Czech Republic
Departs September 5, 2019
For reservations or information contact Barb Rudolf with E-Travel Unlimited at 303-792-9225 or barb@etravelunlimited.com.

Educational Tour of the Holy Land
December 29, 2018-January 10, 2019
Former CUCC members, Rod and Sharie Schofield, are leading a post Christmas trip to the Holy Land. They will be visiting holy sites throughout Israel and Palestine, as well as worshipping at Redeemer in Jerusalem.

If you are interested, please contact Rod and Sharie at rodshoefield89@gmail.com to receive an email brochure and video of a trip Rod led this past January.

CUCC Newsletter — New and Improved!!
It’s Going Green!
As part of our going green efforts and in order to use our budget in the wisest manner we can, this August newsletter will be the last one mailed out in bulk to all. Beginning in September, printed newsletters will be available in the Narthex and at Coffee Hour. A link to the online version can be found on the website at www.bvcucc.org (News and Events page) and will be sent each week in the email blast.

Please call Nancy at the office (719-395-2544) to:
  a) Be sure you’re on the Weekly Blast email list and
  b) Request a paper copy by mail if picking one up or reading it online is not an option.

A Little Help—Let Me Introduce Myself
Hello! I’m Sara Ward and I’m the new Chaffee County Coordinator for A Little Help, having started this past May. I’m excited for this new role and hope to meet all of our volunteers and members in the near future.

My family moved to Salida in 1984 from Southeast Colorado. After attending the Salida schools, in 1996 I began studies at the College of Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, and then moved to Ecuador to do landscape design and teach English, returning to Chaffee County in 2006 to be closer to family. Since then, my sister and I started a small business doing landscaping and managing private properties. Through this line of work, I have met a lot of people in the area, both long-timers and newcomers.

I enjoy meeting new people and hearing their stories. I like being part of the process of connecting people to the resources they need. One of my goals is to grow A Little Help in the Buena Vista community. I have a lot to learn and am excited to be working with A Little Help Chaffee County.

Who we are:
A Little Help is a Colorado nonprofit that connects neighbors to help seniors thrive. To that end, we equip neighbors of all ages to volunteer for direct services to empower the elders in our communities to live interdependently and with a high quality of life. Volunteers provide services including transportation, yard work, technology and handy help, companionship, and caregiver respite among others. As we’ve implemented our good neighbor model over the past ten years, we have honed our systems, have built our capacity, and have seen the gaps in service that our members and other area seniors find in their efforts to age well in Colorado.

What is going on locally:
A Little Help came to Salida in 2015, and we currently have around 40 members, over 100 volunteers, an advising branch team, and one paid coordinator position. We work hard to fulfill our member requests, have social gatherings, and do two Service Saturdays per year. I would really like to see this model grow into the Buena Vista community. I am envisioning a local branch team that can aid in the functioning of BV’s community needs. We currently have eight volunteers and six members for ALH in BV.

A Little Help has no body now but mine. He prays in me, works in me, looks through my eyes, speaks through my words, works through my hands, walks with my feet and loves with my heart.

~ St. Teresa of Avila
Kudos Kolumn

4th of July PIE SALE in McPhelemy Park!!

Many CUCCers planned, baked, brought, sliced, served, sold, bought and ate pie. We raised almost $950 for church activities and missions! Nancy’s husband James thoroughly enjoyed the cherry pie he took home and Rebecca ate one of the best apple pies she’s had in her life!

Thank you, Kay Allinger, for all you do for CUCC and WMS! M&M extends a special thanks and kudos to you for sending Thank You notes to all contributors to the Backpack Program.

And we aren’t forgetting Jean Buster and Doyle Nyberg! Thank you, too, for sending out get-well, thinking-of-you, and condolences cards on behalf of CUCC. You are appreciated!

Have you noticed that the church grounds are looking beautiful? Thanks to all the tenders, mowers, waterers and weeders—too many to name! And to those who fix the irrigation systems at the church and parsonage to make it all possible—many thanks!

La Puente Hygiene Bag report

On July 10, 29 hygiene bags were delivered to La Puente, along with pillows, a box of sheets, a bag of stuffed animals, two boxes of miscellaneous hygiene items, and two large garbage-size bags of bedding.

They were very happy to receive all of these items, especially as the need has been greater recently due to the fires.

Thank you to everyone who contributed items! WMS appreciates you immensely!!

New Senior’s Exam (for people who are newly-become seniors?)

You only need to get 4 correct out of 10 questions to pass!

Questions:
1) How long did the Hundred Years’ War last?
2) Which country makes Panama hats?
3) From which animal do we get cat gut?
4) In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
5) What is a camel’s hair brush made of?
6) The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
7) What was King George VI’s first name?
8) What color is a purple finch?
9) Where are Chinese gooseberries from?
10) What is the color of the black box in a commercial airplane?

Remember, you need only 4 correct answers to pass.

Answers:
1) How long did the Hundred Years War last? 116 years
2) Which country makes Panama hats? Ecuador
3) From which animal do we get cat gut? Sheep and Horses
4) In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution? November
5) What is a camel’s hair brush made of? Squirrel fur
6) The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal? Dogs
7) What was King George VI’s first name? Albert
8) What color is a purple finch? Crimson
9) Where are Chinese gooseberries from? New Zealand
10) What is the color of the black box in a commercial airplane? Orange

(Yeah, Nancy failed, too—but she did know there was some sort of trick to it!)

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Thank you to everyone who contributed items! WMS appreciates you immensely!!

WMS Program

The next one will be Thursday, September 27 at 1:00pm.

“Strengthening Ourselves” with Lacee Trusty

Enjoy your summer!
CUCU Council Minutes
June 27, 2018

Present: Marge Erickson, Ron Erickson, Doyle Nyberg, Lesley Fagerberg, Rebecca Kemper Poos, Bill Waldorf, Arlene Waldorf, Norma Smith, Kay Allinger, Betsy Neas, Ron Rak

Marge Erickson called the meeting to order at 7:03pm, opening with an inspiring Psalm reading. Marge reviewed a calendar in the Agenda for upcoming events through July 18, noting a change in the Stewardship/Task Force meeting to July 24 at 4:00pm.

General Business and Reports

Minutes from the May 16 Council Meeting prepared by Doyle were approved – Ron/Kay - as submitted and reviewed at the Council Meeting.

Clerk’s Report: Ron R. reported that 1) in June we received an official letter of transfer for Reggie and Judy Nelson from CUCU to Western Trail Cowboy Church in Texas and 2) in late May received an official letter of transfer for Stephan and Adele Jackson to CUCU.

Treasurer’s Report: Lesley, speaking for Treasurer Cindy Helm, highlighted the May 30 Financial Statement, which was concisely summarized on a one-page handout to Council members. Key financial points made were that General Contributions for May were under budget by $2,096.92 and total expenses YTD exceeded total income by $7,531.99. As requested by CE, a new line item was added to their budget recently: “CE Special Projects.” The Community Garden Fund showed a balance of $839, although most of the $1500 Garden Grant from the UCC has been spent. The recent Family Camp program was funded in large part by designated contributions, and Arlene commented that she did not feel that the program reduced general church giving for the month. Lesley warned to expect under-budget contributions through June, which may result in being $14,000 under budget, and possibly continuing through July and beyond, which could consume all of the $36,939 in the Contingency Fund.

Lesley suggested a plea to the Congregation to consider additional contributions. Bill and Lesley will announce the budget status at Sunday services through July. It was agreed that the Office Staff will also continue to include a bar graph presentation of the church budget in the weekly Sunday bulletin through July.

A suggestion was made by Arlene Waldorf to increase contributions by encouraging church members to pay an additional $14 per person, which is the $2 SEA and $12 RMC per capita payments, which for 153 members would amount to $2,142.

Moderator’s Report: The All-Church clean-up accomplished many of the needed tasks on Saturday June 16th, with a good crew of volunteers. Janet Steiner and others worked at cleaning the windows of the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, which led to a generous offer from Janet to start a fund to replace these windows with more energy efficient and easier to clean windows. This suggestion will be discussed at the Trustee meeting in July. The June 7-9 Rocky Mountain Conference Annual Celebration was held at La Foret and was well attended by the Rocky Mountain churches. Ron, Marge, and Rebecca attended.

Pastor’s Report: Rebecca suggested that we “look bigger” to solve our financial issues. Good examples of this approach were the recent Family Camp and the Community Garden “In the Mud Grant” programs, which reach out to the community and can result in immeasurable returns. She also noted that the Church Office is reducing mailing costs for the monthly newsletter by changing distribution methods, which will start in September.

Continuing Business

Community Garden Progress: Ron E. noted that the garden was fully operational and that good signage had been installed announcing that it is a “community garden,” not just for church members. 8 of 24 spaces remain to be taken.

Additional Cleanup Day: Marge queried whether another cleanup day was needed in the fall, especially for grounds cleanup of fallen leaves.

New Business

Moderator: Marge presented the resignation of Marge Dorfmeister from the CE Board. Arlene moved/Betsy 2nd to accept the resignation with regrets. Council voted unanimously to accept. The CE Board has begun looking for a replacement, noting that Council must approve any nomination.

Reports of Boards, Affiliated Organizations, Committees

Trustees Report: Doyle noted that all pertinent financial information was in the published Trustees meeting minutes. A new need for a Christian Education: Ron E. emphasized that clutter in the church is a major issue. There is a problem of removing items without hurting peoples’ feelings and dignity. He noted it takes a great deal of communication to not hurt emotional ties individuals may have with particular items.

Regarding budget issues, Ron suggested that a lot of contributions to the church are unreported. It was also a concern that Bowie Duncan was currently in Puerto Rico on a humanitarian mission to rebuild house roofs damaged from last season’s hurricane Maria, and suggested recognizing Bowie’s efforts. (He was volunteering with a Chicago-based UCC church group).

Arlene expressed a sense of overload for CE with all the summer activities. One more activity remained: the 4th of July booth and pie sale in McPhelemy Park, and volunteers have been solicited. She emphasized that a major goal for the success of the Family Camp program was the donated food. Food is certainly a draw for people who work and don’t have the extra time for meal preparation during the program.

Discontinue: Doyle noted that Rebecca is on vacation the end of July and that she will substitute pastoral care and Sunday service was provided for. A similar situation for the week of August 26 was added. Newsletter costs and distribution were also discussed by Diacnostic to cut church expenses. The importance of Sunday coffee hour refreshments was noted and that efforts will be made to fill out a schedule of providers.

Mission and Ministry: Ron R. noted the successful completion of the recent BV Hope Restoration Banners program at the church and that BV Hope was very thankful for the church support of their program. Backpack program funding issues still exist, with the current budget for the program sufficient through the winter. However, the fund is steadily decreasing and additional contributors need to be identified to sustain the program through 2019. Ron E. queried whether the above BV Hope program was overly promoted to the Congregation, competing with the limited monies available in the Congregation for the UCC’s $505 programs. Ron noted that as an important point and that it will be discussed at the July M&M Meeting as considerations for future special outreach programs.

Women’s Missionary Society: Norma mentioned the upcoming June WMS Picnic, and added that a short business meeting will be included.

Stewardship/Visioning Task Force: Bill outlined the multi-facets of church reorganization being considered, such as changing Board names to Teams, considering whether “Team” members needed to be church members, and how many members are needed to make an effective team. The Task Force also felt that the Trustees functions need to be split into separate maintenance and finance. The Task Force suggests that the financial functions be moved to an “Executive Committee” composed of the church officers. It was also noted that the Church Annual Meeting is too perfunctory to adequately communicate the needs/expectations/ideas/direction of the church – additional Congregational meetings over the course of the year may be beneficial.

Announcements/Final Comments

Marge expressed an additional thought on church membership decline, suggesting that there is a change in people’s mindsets since the 50’s when the UCC was formed of how they want to belong to a church. We also need to be aware of more permeable interfaces in individuals and lifestyles in our modern society.

Marge Erickson adjourned the meeting with a unison reading of a portion of the Buena Vista United Church of Christ “Identity Statement.”

Next meeting is scheduled for August 15 at 7:00pm.

Prepared by Ron Rak, Clerk

Changing Lives—Our Church’s Wider Mission

Never place a period where God has placed a comma.

Because we believe in transformation, we believe the church’s mission is changing lives—individually, systemically, and globally.

*We support, encourage and uplift local churches where lives are being changed through worship, education, fellowship, mission, and justice advocacy.
*We identify, recruit, educate and support leaders who inspire others.
*We support churches and plant new churches as vital places of worship, learning, and justice advocacy.
*We change lives through our global partnerships, missionaries and advocacy.

Gifts to Our Church’s Wider Mission benefit the full range of the UCC’s mission across the country and around the globe.

“What concerns Jesus is what concerns us.”