Congregational United Church of Christ

Sunday Schedule
9:00am Conversations that Matter Discussion Group
10:00am Worship Service & Children’s Church
11:00am Coffee Hour

MODERATOR’S MOMENT

DID YOU KNOW that our word “church” is derived from the Greek (language of the New Testament) word “ekklesia”? Ekklesia translates as a “gathering” or an “assembly” of people, referring back to the early church when first century Christians were often forced to meet or gather in secret, mostly in peoples’ homes, for fear of persecution. Actual church buildings came along much later, of course.

I was glad to be reminded of these facts in my recent reading, because it drives home the point that “church” is about people—about all of us as part of the community of believers, as followers of Christ. We are the Body of Christ; if He is the head (Ephesians 1:22-23) then we become His hands and feet to provide food and drink to the hungry and the thirsty, to visit the sick and imprisoned, to welcome the stranger and clothe the naked. I can think of examples, and I bet you can too, of individuals and groups serving our church community, as well as our broader community, that have done all these things and more as committed individuals. We have joined forces with Habitat for Humanity and Kairos and other local groups, as well as contributed through the Five for Five Outreach offerings. These are just some of our efforts over CUCC’s 140 years of working together.

While it is good to glance over our collective shoulders, we are facing a new challenge. We need to be thinking about where we want to be as a church in the future. I can assure you that your concerns are being addressed by the appropriate teams/committees. Help is also being enlisted from the Rocky Mountain Conference to assist with conflict resolution and visioning. We need to be asking ourselves such things as: what is our vision for the future? What can we do to collectively and individually foster healing from within? Can we continue to live in covenant with one another? Can we still come together to enjoy the blessings of being together, praying together, singing together, and yes, eating together?

An old friend who knows more about the Bible than I ever will brought me these words from Paul’s letter to the Hebrews: And let us consider each other carefully for the purpose of sparking love and good deeds. Don’t stop meeting together with other believers which some people have gotten into the habit of doing. Instead, encouraging each other, especially as you see the day drawing near. Hebrews 10:24-25

Common English Bible

May God bless us all on this journey and may all of our efforts please Him.

Kathy Roman, Moderator

Need to get in touch with me?? I welcome your calls to 395-6812 or 395-5301 and emails to kroman@bresnan.net.

PASTOR CHATS—3:00pm-5:00pm Tuesdays

Pastor Rebecca will hold “Drop-In Hours” at the Office every Tuesday, if possible.

Feel free to drop by for a healthy dialogue, with the understanding that someone might be there ahead of you.

Please knock on the door to let Pastor Rebecca know you’re waiting.

For a quality, fully-focused, confidential conversation, please make an appointment.

Pastor Rebecca will gladly meet with you during the week (and after Coffee Hour on Sundays) at the office, or over coffee (or lunch or wine!), or come to your home.
PASTOR’S ARTICLE, March, 2020
From our message from January 26, “Blessed Are You In All You Do.”

BLESSED ARE YOU—CUCC!

*Blessed are you who plan, coordinate and teach Children’s Church—nurturing and guiding our beloved children in the faith and learning from them as well.

*Blessed is our food! All the food and fellowship ministries of this church family, which are many and take many hands and hours. Blessed are our celebrations! Birthdays and anniversaries and births and celebrations of life—all the times we share life together.

*Blessed are all who contribute to the communications ministry of this church and community, for knowing what’s going on in our lives and in the life of the church—is truly the lifeblood of our journey together.

*Blessed are you when you build up, and belove, to inform and educate, converse and clarify rather than argue and kibbutz.

When you embrace newcomers from many walks of life, background experiences, and faith traditions, welcoming them into the membership and full participation in the life of the church and its leadership, and when you open your minds and hearts to new ideas, traditions, spiritual explorations, and practices.

When you find the courage to try new structures, revise the Bylaws, experiment with new ways of governance, when you step up, step in and step forward, saying YES to serving in these new structures and being part of the teams, and serving in a collaborative spirit on those Teams.

*Blessed are we when we embrace all ages with love—participating in worship and sharing the faith.

*Blessed are you when you live as a congregation in deep gratitude and generosity, not being afraid to talk about money in church, citing Jesus are your example, and knowing where your treasure is going on in our lives and in the life of the church.

*Blessed are we when we share music! In worship, in practice, in our lives together. Even when snow threatens and icy, dangerous parking lots glare at us! Choir, MSG, Ensembles, piano, organ—all!

*Blessed when we say, “Come!” In worship, in practice, in our lives together. Even when snow threatens and icy, dangerous parking lots glare at us! Choir, MSG, Ensembles, piano, organ—all!

*When you keep faithfully making beautiful music for worship and even writing fun songs for every occasion!

When we support and empower music and the arts in our midst.

*Please don’t put cardboard trash/dumpster in the trash/dumpster. Instead, put them in the Office Work, and place them at Rebecca!  

*When you remember, together, who we are and Whose we are—everyday—as a person beloved by God and as a church, called by the Holy Spirit.

*Blessed are we, when we are tempted to think we can do no great things with a small and aging group, we remember the words of M. Theresa: “We can do no great things; only small things with great love!”

*When we walk arm in arm through conflict, not getting derailed from who we are. When we seek daily to bear, build up, and below, to inform and educate, converse and clarify rather than argue and kibbutz.

*When we “clothe ourselves in mercy and kindness, humility, meekness and prayer.” (Col 3)

*Blessed are we to have one another—this church family—serving and loving together in Christ’s name, serving not only ourselves, but for the good and uplift of the whole community and beyond! Blessed are we when at the end of the day we can lie down on our beds knowing we have chosen blessing; knowing deep down that this town, this valley, and this world would not be the same place whatsoever this church did not exist. For 140 years, and going strong for many, many more! Amen.

Blessings, Rebecca

Kudos Column

To every soul in the CUCC Family—near and far—dedicating their positive energy, resources, and efforts to the building up of the Body in all ways! You rock!

CHURCH SOUND TECH #4 NEEDED!

Would you like to drink coffee and eat cookies during the service? We currently have three sound board operators who take turns running the system one Sunday a month, but need a 4th for that 4th Sunday! You just have to push a few buttons and put batteries in the mics so we can all hear what’s going on. Written, illustrated instructions and free lesson are provided. See one of us at a Sunday service.

If we can do it, anyone can!

- Matthew, Jeff, Ron

CUCC CARES FOR CREATION

Please don’t put cardboard trash/dumpster. Instead, put them in the office or give them to Rebecca.

GIVE BACK A BOX

Retailers such as Amazon are teaming up with local charities to use empty shipping boxes and get rid of clutter filling homes. After removing your order from your shipping box, fill it with clothes, etc. that you want to donate, & visit GiveBackBox.com to print a free shipping label. The box can be dropped off with USPS or picked up. You can also print a receipt for tax use.

LA PUENTA HYGIENE BAGS

It’s time to fill 25 hygiene bags! The Women’s Missionary Society will deliver them to La Puenta the first week of April. Place your contributions in the WMS box in the narthex.

Needed: towels, washcloths, soap, socks, toothpaste, razors, lotion, men’s & women’s toiletries, etc.

Talk to a WMS member for more information.

Thank you for your generous support of this worthy cause!

Our Daily Bread

The spring—March, April, May—daily devotional is in. Please pick one up from the basket in the narthex.
**CUCC Special Dates**

### BIRTHDAYS
- March 6—Barb Grey
- March 6—Lucille Habec
- March 6—Ron Rak
- March 8—Rick Fagerberg
- March 13—Joe Holub
- March 15—Tyler Keidel
- March 16—Skylar Tucker
- March 17—Millie Meardon
- March 20—Bob E. Smith
- March 20—Arlene Waldorf
- March 22—Lyynthia Nelson
- March 26—Ruthann Schoefield
- March 23—Matthew Maloney
- March 27—Barb Wilder

### ANNIVERSARIES
- March 1—Rick & Lesley Fagerberg
- March 8—Mike & Ruthann Schoefield
- March 14—Farrell & Dorothy Coy
- March 22—Bill & Arlene Waldorf
- March 24—Bill & Elizabeth Shelby
- March 27—Del & Janet Jones

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**Please Remember in Your Prayers**

- Del Jones—Healing
- Sarah Strathers—Healing
- Pam Hughes—Healing
- Shirly Holloway—Healing
- Mary Messmer—Healing
- Linette Williams—Healing
- Dwight Griggs—Healing
- Warren Montgomery—Healing
- Maryanne Wells (Janet Jones’ sister-in-law)—Healing
- Norma Hughes (sunit of Doyle & Leonard Nyberg)—Healing
- Brooke Davis (cousin of Doyle & Leonard Nyberg)—Healing
- Mardy Cason (brother of Roger Cason)—Healing
- Brendan Stuart (niece of Molly Stuart)—Healing
- Diana Lynn Hilt (Lucille Habec’s daughter)—Healing
- Kayleigh & Family (friends of Barb Wilder)—Healing
- Jarron Davis (cousin of Doyle & Leonard Nyberg)—Healing
- Junita Womack (friend of Kay Allinger)—Healing
- Wisdom and Transformation for the People of Earth
- Frank Russell (Marc Dorfmeister’s nephew)—Healing
- Nancy Russell (Marc Dorfmeister’s sister-in-law)—Healing
- The Family of Betty Stevens (Bob Stevens’ mother)—Healing
- Carolyn and Barry Hayes (friends of VirJeanne Williams and Rhonda Funston)—Healing
- The Family of Tim Wasmer (Carolyn & Barry Hayes’ friends)—Healing
- Nancy Russell (Marc Dorfmeister’s nephew)—Healing
- The Family of Betty Stevens (Bob Stevens’ mother)—Healing
- Carolyn and Barry Hayes (friends of VirJeanne Williams and Rhonda Funston)—Healing

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

The word “Patient,” according to the dictionary, means “manifesting forbearance under provoke or strain, not hasty or impetuous.”

I would not say my strong suit is forbearance. Admittedly, I am quick to act, a poor waiter, and under strain all my feelings pour out. I am a very poor example of patience. Oh, if I’m talking with or helping someone else, I’m always patient. It's myself I’m not patient with. When I do something, I demand of myself that I do it right the first time. Waiting for results is really against my nature. How about waiting for an important phone call or visit? It drives me nuts!

When I was ill for five weeks with double pneumonia, it seemed like I’d never feel better, get my strength back, or stop coughing the deepest cough I’ve ever had. One of my care givers who helped me through it kept using that word patience. "It’s going to take time, rest, work, Jean. You have to be patient.” So I looked inside myself and there was very little patience for me to use. I wanted to be well and strong right now. But guess what? I learned to be more patient with my progress. When I went from walking one-half of one lap to sixteen laps, I realized I’d been quite patient with myself. Hallelujah.

While sitting here in front of an open window and mulling, I asked myself, “What is the best example I know of patience?” And here’s what I recalled.

While at the Mayo Clinic one time, Gene and I were walking down this long hallway to visit my cardiologist. About halfway down I noticed an elderly couple who had stopped walking. She was in a wheelchair, he in a chair. The lady was sobbing out loud and he was devoted to finding out what was so wrong all of the sudden. Then I overheard her cry out, “Oh, we have to go home. My hair is a terrible mess and I can’t let the doctor see me like this.” Did the husband laugh? Did he say, “We’ll be late if we go back?” or “Your hair looks just fine!” or even “Doctors don’t care how we look!”? No no—that precious elderly man put his face close to hers and, with his fingers, he began wiping her tears away. Then he stroked her thinning white hair back from her face with his hand. He sort of straightened her blouse and he fussed over her from the waist up. She used all of the feathery and fuzzy cat toys for the decorations, and when she used them all, she took them all off him and put them on the floor. Perfectly still. Never had I ever seen any cat allow such goings on. They are never known for their patience with each other or people. But there, for forty-five minutes, sat P, my cat at the time, in that toy box while a little girl decorated every inch of his shining black body and head. I mean, not once did he try to get out or even move. He seemed to understand he must be perfectly still. Never had I ever seen any cat allow such goings-on.

She used all of the feathery and fuzzy cat toys for the decorations, and when she used them all, she took them all off him and started all over again. He watched every move she made and I honestly do believe he understood about patience.

Now I want to go and visit two new residents. When I first started doing this, I mainly welcomed them and then explained the offered activities and times for meals and so forth. Now, however, I know how to really welcome them. Because I remember so well how upset and sad I was to start my new life in assisted living, all I truly wanted and needed was for somebody to understand the care I needed and to try to help me. Listening takes patience. I do not chime in with my feelings, but rather I might hold her hand or nod my head. Mainly, I listen with my heart.

So, the elderly man and the ten-year-old tuxedo cat both gave their time and their patience to make someone happy. What precious examples for the rest of us.

The view from the mountain is wondrous! 

~ Jean Brody
The Team participated in a two-hour video conference call with Erin Gilmore from the RMC to discuss how the Conference assistance we requested can be facilitated in a way that would be most helpful to us. We concluded that it would be more beneficial if a group of four Conference representatives held 20–30 minute individual listening sessions with as many people as possible, compiled their findings, provided feedback in a meeting of all interested individuals, and worked from there with officers and team members. The Team is contacting each congregant. It’s important that the Conference representatives hear as many different views as possible. It is crucial that everyone express his/her vision for the next steps in the life of the church. The RMC Listening event will happen March 29-31 at CUCC.

Our officers this year are Bob as chair, Ann vice-chair, and Judy continuing as secretary.

Worship Team Notes

Added to our Worship Team were Debby Cason and Vivian York. We still have an opening for anyone who is willing to volunteer. Assignments were made to the different duties of our team. We always need help with the Ushers, Greeters, Fellowship Hour, and Altar Flowers. We do appreciate all the help everyone does for our church.

We discussed the Valentine Potluck and the dedication of the windows. We will continue discussing Easter and the upcoming events. For Good Friday we have been invited to join Grace church at noon for the Stations of the Cross. We encourage everyone to come. We won't be having the Good Friday vigil. We will have the SonRise service and the annual Easter breakfast. Lilies will be ordered.

Next meeting will be Sunday, March 8th at 11:30am.

Submitted by Linda Rak

The Faith Education Team—Faith Education for Everyone

At our February meeting we assigned new opportunities to serve on the team. Kathy Kiedel and Betsy Neas will be co-chairs. Donna Maloney is secretary for the team. We will meet on the second Sunday of the month after church.

We'd love to have some new members for the team—think about joining us!

Kathy will be scheduling the leaders for Children's Church. New leaders for that group are always welcome. How about teaching a class with the kids sometime? They're great kids!

The team decided to explore new programs such as a women's Bible Study, a men's Bible Study, and Vacation Bible School with an art theme. If you have any ideas about something you would like to have our church sponsor, let the team know.

CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER
Sundays, 9:00-9:45, Adult Ed Room

We're talking about the book, "The Jesus Path." It is an interesting and challenging book. There is always a lively discussion, so come join us!

STEWARDSHIP/VISIONING TEAM NEWS

The Team participated in a two-hour video conference call with Erin Gilmore from the RMC to discuss how the Conference assistance we requested can be facilitated in a way that would be most helpful to us. We concluded that it would be more beneficial if a group of four Conference representatives held 20–30 minute individual listening sessions with as many people as possible, compiled their findings, provided feedback in a meeting of all interested individuals, and worked from there with officers and team members. The Team is contacting each congregant. It’s important that the Conference representatives hear as many different views as possible. It is crucial that everyone express his/her vision for the next steps in the life of the church. The RMC Listening event will happen March 29-31 at CUCC.

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Stewardship/Visioning Team—Bob Stocker, Judy Hassell, Bowie Duncan, Bill Waldorf, Ann Condra

FACILITIES TEAM NEWS

Front Door security: The video security systems are installed and operational.

Hazard TreeTrimming: Still working on options on this project. We will prepare for some action in the spring.

Team: Our team is still only five with room for one more. Consider joining us!

2020 Exterior Staining: It appears it will take over $1,800 to buy the stain. There will be incidental expenses on top of that for brushes, cleaning, etc.

LED Lighting: Priority for LED upgrades will be the kitchen, the pulpit area, and the fellowship hall; it will be completed in stages as money is available. Depending upon audit findings, we will also consider LED upgrades in the parsonage.

Respectfully submitted, Ron Hassell, Chair

CUCC Lent & Easter Season

Lenten Services/Soup Suppers, 6:00pm
Wednesday, March 4, Grace Church

Wednesday, March 11, CUCC w/Living Gift Market/Heifer International

Wednesday, March 18, Grace Church

Wednesday, March 25, CUCC

Wednesday, April 1, Grace Church

Palm Sunday Service, April 5, 10:00am

Maundy Thursday Service, April 9, 7:00pm

Good Friday Service, April 10, 12:00pm (noon), Grace Church, “Stations of the Cross”

Easter SonRise Service, Sunday, April 12, 7:00am

Easter Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt, Sunday, April 12, 8:00am

Easter Celebration Service, Sunday, April 12, 10:00am

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE GOOD FRIDAY “STATIONS OF THE CROSS” SERVICE WILL BE HELD AT GRACE CHURCH AT THEIR KIND INVITATION.
TELLS
Tuesday Evening Ladies
Literary Society
Tuesdays, 7:00pm
held at members’ homes

All women are invited!
We read and discuss books, share life, joys, and concerns, and enjoy snacks!

The group is reading “The Rock That Is Higher Than I” by Madeline L’Engle.
See Pastor Rebecca to get on the email list.

MONDAY MORNING MEN’S GROUP
Mondays at 8:00am
Grace Church Annex

Men of CUCC are invited to join men of Grace Church for this class. They have now begun studying “The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World” by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama.
The sessions last one to one and one-half hours and are open to men of CUCC and the community.

MIDLAND HIKER ART SHOW—Invites CUCC Attendees and Artists!
Saturday, April 4, 10:00am-2:00pm

Once again this year, the Midland Hikers group is planning an art show in the CUCC fellowship hall on April 3-4. This informal show is a chance for conversation and fellowship among friends who hike and also make art.
The group welcomes CUCC folks to participate in the show at a table and wall space designated especially for you. If you have always wanted to get your creative work out into the public, this is a friendly, fun way to do it! If you are interested in participating (you will need to be available both days to help with set-up and take-down), contact Deb Hannigan at (719) 339-3205 or by email at debhannigan5@gmail.com. Even if you are not a participant, we hope you will join us to tour the show!

WOMEN’S MISSIONARY SOCIETY NEWS
The WMS Yearbooks are all finished and available from the little basket just inside the kitchen. Our Thursday, March 26 speaker will be Bobby Lewis from the Link School. All women are welcome to join us at 1:00pm here at CUCC.

As of mid-February, we are still looking for more volunteers to fill out our committees:
1-2 for Christian Social Action/Kitchen
1 for Publicity
1 for Material Aid
3 for Nominating

Thank you for considering these fun and important tasks!
~Merilee Daugherty

FOOD 4 KIDS
Backpack Program

*Chef Boyardee, pasta, etc.—ready-to-eat meals are the best!
*Rudding Cups
*Fruit cups (individual)
*Granola or Cereal Bars

Cash donations are always appreciated, too!

Outreach/Community & World Team News
March greetings!

Please join us on Wednesday, March 11th, for our second hosted Lenten Soup Supper with Grace Church joining us. The 6:00pm service will be followed by:

A LIVING GIFT MARKET/HEIFER INTERNATIONAL: help donate animals, bees, and trees to poor communities seeking to better their lives. It’s the gift that keeps on giving!!
One Great Hour of Sharing (one of the “Five-for-Five” UCC offerings) will be taken on March 15th and March 22nd.
Don’t forget to contribute peanut butter and jelly to the Ark-Valley Christian Mission in the special bin in the narthex.
The Bob Dwyer Children’s Fund always needs your change. You can drop it into the glass jar in the entrance hall on Sundays or in the office during the week.

COLLEGIATE PEAKS FORUM SERIES
Rev. Dr. Bruce Epperly
“Walk the Earth Lightly: Guideposts for Interspiritual Pilgrims”Friday, April 17
7:00pm, BV Community Center
In our spiritually pluralistic and evolving world, we need to grow in wisdom and stature. Our faiths are growing as we grow. Dr. Epperly, pastor and teacher, South Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Centerville, MA, will explore intellectual and spiritual resources for creative transformation in our pluralistic age.
Dr. Epperly will join us to preach and discuss at CUCC on Sunday, April 19th!

“Spirituality in the Ordinary Life” Sunday, April 19, 10:00 am
Preview discussion at Conversations That Matter, 9:00 am, Adult Education Room

GOAT
A goat is one tough animal. Goats can survive in almost any conditions, due in part to their open-minded approach to eating. Almost anything green (or tan) is a goat’s favorite! They are curious, affectionate, hardy, smart, and fun!

LAMA
Lamas are happy-go-lucky animals. They are known for their gentle nature and are often used in therapy programs.

HONEY BEES
The practice of collecting honey dates back to the Stone Age. Bees have found uses for honey in ancient Egyptian tombs and were used to protect the body from decay. To this day, honey is used for its anti-inflammatory and healing properties.

WATER BUFFALO
Water buffalo are gentle giants that help farmers plow fields and transport goods. They are known for their calm nature and are often used in rural areas.

COW
Cows are big animals. They are known for their gentle nature and are often used for dairy products.

WOMEN’S MISSIONARY SOCIETY NEWS
The WMS Yearbooks are all finished and available from the little basket just inside the kitchen. Our Thursday, March 26 speaker will be Bobby Lewis from the Link School. All women are welcome to join us at 1:00pm here at CUCC.

As of mid-February, we are still looking for more volunteers to fill out our committees:
1-2 for Christian Social Action/Kitchen
1 for Publicity
1 for Material Aid
3 for Nominating

Thank you for considering these fun and important tasks!
~Merilee Daugherty
Dear Skyler,

Each year, during Youth Appreciation Week, the Optimist club of Buena Vista presents an award to selected outstanding students in the Buena Vista area schools.

It is our pleasure to inform you that you have been selected as "AN OUTSTANDING" student of your class for the 2019-2020 school year.

You and your immediate family are invited to an awards breakfast, hosted by the Optimist Club on Thursday, February 6, 2020. The breakfast will be held at the Congregational United Church of Christ located at 217 Crossman at 7:00am.

Congratulations on being selected for this honor. We look forward to meeting you and your family.

Sincerely,

Don Caskey
Youth Appreciation Week Awards Committee Chair

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NEW YEAR, NEW WAYS:
THOUGHTS FROM ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTER REV. ERIN GILLMORE

A couple of years ago we took Abby, our daughter, ice skating at the outdoor ice rink at Centerra. We thought we would be there for a couple of hours. Five hours later we had to convince her it was time to go home. Given the enthusiasm of that day, we decided to sign Abby up for ice skating lessons this year. Turns out there was also an adult class happening at the same time, so I decided to sign up too. Why not? I had taken lessons as a kid, and something in me got excited about being on the ice again. I think it was during the third class when I was trying to turn on an outside edge that my right foot caught the ice and I went down, landing hard right on my knee. After catching my breath, I shook it off and finished the lesson.

Later that night, after sitting through dinner and watching some TV, I stood up to go downstairs and my knee throbbed with pain. The next morning it felt worse. A thought momentarily ran through my head that even though I was having fun with it, perhaps a 46-year-old shouldn’t try to learn to ice skate. And then I went to Spiritual Direction and another thought came to me. Learning how to do something new is not going to be pain-free. It sounds so obvious and yet how often do I/we avoid learning something new because I/we really want to avoid the pain that comes with it. This got me wondering about the church, and about this moment in which we find ourselves.

We are being called to learn new ways of doing and being church. Whether we are a 20-year-old church or a 200-year-old church or a nearly 60-year-old conference, this moment is asking us to try new things. And this, like learning to ice skate, isn’t going to be pain free. In fact, as I work with churches these days, a lot of what I am doing is helping communities manage the pain that comes with having to “get on the rink” so to speak and try something that hasn’t been tried before. Be it a new way to worship. Or a new ministry with a community partner. Or a conversation about selling the building. Or unpacking privilege. Or examining patterns. Or creating a Conference Wide Committee on Ministry. Trying new things means being willing to risk falling. Maybe even falling hard. Not if, but when that happens, my hope is that we will not say, “maybe this means we are too old to learn something new,” and instead catch our breath, help one another get back up, figure out what adjustments can be made, and try again.

We aren’t going to learn how to be and do church differently without also navigating some pain along the way. Thankfully we aren’t going to learn how to do something new is not going to be pain free. In fact, as I work with churches these days, a lot of what I am doing is helping communities manage the pain that comes with having to “get on the rink” so to speak and try something that hasn’t been tried before. Be it a new way to worship. Or a new ministry with a community partner. Or a conversation about selling the building. Or unpacking privilege. Or examining patterns. Or creating a Conference Wide Committee on Ministry. Trying new things means being willing to risk falling. Maybe even falling hard. Not if, but when that happens, my hope is that we will not say, “maybe this means we are too old to learn something new,” and instead catch our breath, help one another get back up, figure out what adjustments can be made, and try again.

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We aren’t going to learn how to be and do church differently without also navigating some pain along the way. Thankfully we don’t have to navigate it alone. May God grant us the courage and strength to be those who are not afraid to become what God longs for us to be.
CUCC Council Minutes—February 19, 2020

Present: Moderator Kathy Roman, Vice Moderator Mark Wolters, Pastor Rebecca Poos; Merilee Daugherty, Paul Dorfmeister, Helen Duncan, Lesley Fagerberg, Cindy Helm, Kathy Keidel, Linda Rak, Ron Rak, Bob Stocker.

Visitors: Vivian York, Barb Grov.

Welcoming and Opening Prayer (7:20pm): Moderator Kathy Roman began the meeting with a prayer for God’s blessings to help and encourage us to work and carry out the mission.

Additions to the Agenda: Merilee requested consideration of Council to officially invite Cindy Helm as the church Assistant Treasurer. Moderator agreed and added the item to New Business.

GENERAL BUSINESS AND REPORTS

Minutes: from the January 15 Council Meeting were presented for corrections. Hearing none, Merilee moved/Mark seconded that the minutes be approved as written. Motion passed.

Clerk’s Report: Ron noted no changes since the January 15th meeting; however, Pastor Rebecca reported that two persons joined the church earlier this very day, Matthew and Donna Maloney, and she commented that six people have now joined the church since the beginning of the year. The Clerk’s record was updated.

Treasurer’s Report: Cindy reported that income and expenses were normal for this time of the year. The Finance and Budget Team will meet March 5 and again March 12 to continue work on the 2020 Church Budget.

Moderator’s Report: Kathy Roman had nothing specific to mention.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Facilities Team Report: Paul Dorfmeister reported on the recent Facilities Team decision and effort to sell the church van and cargo trailer, due to only slight use and budgetary concerns. He received a reasonable package deal offer of $8,000 for the two from a local rafting company and asked for Council’s direction on the sale. Vivian noted that the van was donated to the church 23 years ago by Pastor Fred Dare’s brother, such that the sale might require personal approval. Helen moved/Lesley seconded to proceed with the sale of the vehicles. Cindy raised the question of where to put the proceeds of the sale in the budget. Cindy suggested to deposit the funds into the Reserve Contingency Fund and also to move the $3,082 balance in the Van Maintenance Fund to the Contingency Fund. Merilee cautioned that the Boy Scout trailer was included in the church vehicle insurance, that the insurance would need to be cancelled on the sale vehicles but retained for the Scout trailer. Paul also wanted to make it clear that the vehicle contents of value were not included in the sale. Helen amended the motion to include the above discussion comments. Council approved the amended motion.

Paul continued with discussion of the Facilities Team’s second priority of improving energy efficiency of the church and parsonage. Items in the parsonage will include replacing thermally inefficient doors and two small windows on the south side of the parsonage. Items in the church include replacing thermally inefficient doors and two small windows on the south side of the Sanctuary.

Bylaws Revision Committee: The Moderator suggested we consider establishing a committee to begin reviewing the church bylaws and modify the bylaws before the end of the year, which is the end of the current triennial extension period. In discussion, it was decided to try to have the amended bylaws ready to present at the October – 3rd Quarter – Congregational meeting. Kathy Keidel emphasized that we should be sure to include references to Robert’s Rules of Order in the re-write. There was also discussion of the extent that Robert’s Rules are used in the Team meetings. The consensus was that the Team meetings are generally less formal, especially because there are no quorum rules for the Team meetings and the number of attendees can vary considerably. In order to conduct business, often decisions are made by two or three members, and the rest of the Team is informed soon thereafter by phone or email to confirm.

Conference Delegates: Ron and Linda Rak stated that they have been Alternate Delegates for two years and did not want to monopolize the position. They suggested the congregation be informed of the opening for replacements. It was thought that the Ericksen’s would continue as Primary Delegates for another year, but that needs to be verified. The first scheduled conference gathering this year is the RMC Annual Meeting on June 4 to 6.

Affiliates: The Moderator suggested we consider establishing a committee to begin reviewing the church bylaws and modify the bylaws before the end of the year, which is the end of the current triennial extension period. In discussion, it was decided to try to have the amended bylaws ready to present at the October – 3rd Quarter – Congregational meeting. Kathy Keidel emphasized that we should be sure to include references to Robert’s Rules of Order in the re-write. There was also discussion of the extent that Robert’s Rules are used in the Team meetings. The consensus was that the Team meetings are generally less formal, especially because there are no quorum rules for the Team meetings and the number of attendees can vary considerably. In order to conduct business, often decisions are made by two or three members, and the rest of the Team is informed soon thereafter by phone or email to confirm.

Vacancies on Teams: In polling, there appeared to be one opening on three different Teams, but all teams have at least five members. Possible candidates were suggested for consideration. Merilee asked the status of Judy Phelps as the current pianist.

Nominations: Bob Stocker presented a detailed emailed letter from the Conference Minister Erinn Gilmore affirming the dates of the Conference Listening and Conflict Resolution Team’s visit as March 29-31. They will spend a minimum of two days at CUCC and present their findings after the process concludes. The Stewardship/Visioning Team will need to set up appointments with members of the congregation. Stewardship/Visioning has established a procedure for transparency and will allow individuals or couples to have private meetings with the listening team. Bob encouraged Council to support what the Team has laid out. Helen asked whether there were provisions for church members not available on those dates. It was suggested that those affected could write a letter with their comments and suggestions.

Finance and Budget Team: Lesley reported on the Team’s Feb 17th meeting. Cindy agreed to continue to act as Treasurer during the current budget transition period (until a 2020 Budget is approved). A number of letters and emails have been received from the Team from congregation members identifying key problem issues with the church budget. Suggestions included ideas on increasing income, encouraging growth by evangelism, reducing expenses, reducing the Pastor’s benefits package, investing reserves at a better return, and cutting parsonage expenses. Kathy Keidel suggested that much more explanation of various items in the budget and Pastor’s package is desirable and needed to facilitate congregational approval. Mark and Lesley agreed and will direct the Finance Team to write detailed descriptions to accompany the revised budget. Finance Team will meet next on March 5 and March 12.

Faith Education: Kathy Keidel reported that activity books and materials including Easter materials were ordered for children’s Sunday School and with current light attendance, the Team has a very positive attitude for the year and stands ready for increased attendance.

Worship Team: Linda mentioned that Easter services preparations were well underway, including ordering lilies, considering flowers for the flower cross, palm branches for Palm Sunday, etc.

Outreach Team: Merilee reported that the Team has preparations in place for the upcoming Lenten Soup Suppers, and there is good coordination with Grace Church. The Heifer Project Living Gift Market will be a feature of the March 11 Supper, and Helen is having good cooperation setting up the program. Easter SonRise Breakfast is also planned for April 12. The first of the UCC 5-for-5 Special Offering programs is scheduled for March as well, and a newsletter article was submitted introducing it.

Global Ministries outreach supporting student Angelo is continuing well, and we expect written updates from the Philippines soon.

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Women’s Missionary Society: Merilee noted that the next meeting is scheduled for February 27, with Judy Pankow making a presentation on her recent trip to Africa. The group meets every month on the 4th Thursday.

PASTOR’S REPORT: Rebecca noted that The Lilly Endowment Program for Congregations has announced a new “Thriving Congregations Initiative,” offering funding opportunities for up to $1 million for a 5-year period to develop new or strengthen existing programs. There is an April 2020 deadline for submitting an Interest Form and a June 1, 2020 deadline for a complete proposal. All Teams should take these issues seriously.

In response to current church conflict issues, Rebecca offered a couple of handouts to make available to the teams concerning improving communication among members and reducing the spread of misinformation. She emphasized that we need to direct new communication with each other, rather than hearsay and third party pass-through sources. Rebecca also handed out a resource with two sides: “Signs of a Dying Church,” and on the back, “28 Non-Numerical Signs of a Healthy Church.” She encouraged us to listen and watch for signs, behaviors, and attitudes that might lead us down a path we don’t wish to follow—that of a dying church. Instead, we should strive for life-giving signs and characteristics of a growing, vital, and healthy church.

MODERATOR’S NOTE: Just prior to the start of the meeting, Kathy Roman distributed copies of an email she received earlier in the day from Arlene Waldorf, who requested that copies go to Council members. Kathy suggested that we read and think about it and that it is neither a discussion nor an action item.

THANK YOU FROM THE HAMILTONS

To Rebecca,

Thank you for all your prayers, contribution and love you have given us as a family.

Love,

Darell, Ruby, and Family

THANK YOU FROM CINDY

Thank you so much for the coffee hour and delicious cake celebrating my retirement from the Treasurer position. The kind words and thoughtful gifts are very much appreciated.

Cindy Helm