

First Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)  
2230 13th Street  
Greeley, CO 80631



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# The Christian Caller

Monthly Publication of  
First Christian Church  
Greeley, Colorado

970/352-1292  
www.fccgreeley.com  
Rev. Tim Bobbitt, Senior Minister  
Rev. Linda Harding, Associate Minister

First Christian Church—Called by  
Christ's transforming grace and love  
to share hope and life in community.

## December 2011

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#### Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ

**As we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through  
Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. II Corinthians 1: 5**

I awaited the arrival of the group with excitement—it seemed a little like the anticipation of gifts at Christmas time! I always enjoy accompanying the groups that come to visit the Salvadoran Lutheran Church. When a group comes, there are many gifts, like the friendships that grow into *hermandad*, a Spanish word that means "partnership", but that doesn't catch the whole sense. Think of partnership, brotherhood, and sisterhood all mixed up in the same pupusa, a traditional Salvadoran food. In the same way that the pupusa contains beans, cheese, and ground pork all mashed together into a corn tortilla, *hermandad* contains different cultures, lifestyles, languages, and backgrounds all mashed together in a common faith and hope.

A few weeks ago I was awaiting the arrival of some of the friends I had made in the Iglesia Misión Cristiana of Nicaragua. They were coming to meet with church leaders involved in similar mission projects. In both countries, as economic struggles rise, access to basic needs becomes more and more difficult, and the ability for families to provide their own food becomes more and more necessary. Churches in both countries have programs which aim to feed families in several communities by helping them grow their own food. The more each group shared with the other, the greater their excitement grew, and the more they helped solve their own challenges. At the end of the visit, both groups had learned so much from each other. They committed to getting together again next year to advance and deepen their work, and *hermandad*.

We pray that *hermandad* grows in our congregations and the inspiration of sharing in God's love.

*Nicholas Green serves as a long-term volunteer with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of El Salvador.*

The Gifts of Sharing Ideas

Joy to the  
World!



The Lord  
Is Come!

## A Moment With Tim

**“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.” Isaiah 9:2**

Although we have left Thanksgiving behind as we rush toward Christmas, I am not quite done giving thanks yet. I give thanks for family and friends. I give thanks for God’s loving Spirit, which guides us daily. I give thanks for each and every member of our congregation. I give thanks for those who have stepped into leadership roles. I give thanks for this special time of year, a time of grateful expectations.

The four weeks prior to Christmas, known as Advent, are a time of expectation. This year we celebrate this special time with themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. Plan to join us each Sunday of Advent. On December 4th the children will lead us in worship. On December 11<sup>th</sup> the choir will lead us in worship. We will have special moments in worship on the other two Sundays as well. Plan to join us at our Christmas Eve service at 6:00 p.m. on the 24<sup>th</sup> and on Christmas morning as we celebrate a “come as you are” breakfast and worship (9:45 and 10:30).

Our Advent worship will be filled with the expectation of the coming celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior. The growing expectation will be seen as the light grows on our Advent Wreath. The expectation will also grow as we prepare ourselves by the reading of our Advent Devotionals, as we dedicate time to prayer, and as we serve others. Amid all the rush of the season, take time to let the expectation wash over you.

It is a time not merely of expectation, but of grateful expectation because the birth we will celebrate has already changed our lives. The birth we will celebrate has already brought light to our world. The birth we will celebrate invites us to already live in ways of hope, peace, joy, and love. We give thanks even as we wait. We give thanks, for in the darkness the light in present.

Bendiciones (Blessings),

*Jim*



## A Very Big Thank You ~

~ to the following ladies who helped construct 40 curtain panels for the Tennyson Center at Colorado Christian Home:



Sandy Beiser	Sue Campbell	Margaret Crawford
Carla Ikenouye	Nancy Kurtz	Von Prichard
LaVonne Rogakis	Carolyn Schroeder	Veronica Thomas

We worked all day one day and several returned to finish up one morning. Sandy also took some home to work on. It was a big job and I really appreciate the dedication of those who answered the call for “HELP”! These are curtains for the Cottages at TCC and will be greatly appreciated. They will also brighten up the rooms they will be hung in and make them much more cheery.

Besides accomplishing a great project, we had great fellowship, food and fun! Thank you again and God Bless. ~ Connie Harbert

## To Our Church Family ~

~ for remembering us at the Thanksgiving dinner. We really enjoyed all the delicious food.

We thank each one of you and also Nita White, who delivered the food. God bless all.

In Christian love,

Jack & Bernie  
Holland



## Thank You

To those who came and helped me move yard ornaments and boxes!!  
“A special thank you. I’d still be moving were it not for you.

~Marie Caster

## Thank You

We would like to thank all of FCC Family who attended Porschia and Derek’s baby shower and those who were unable to attend for all of your support and the gifts that you have sent. Please accept our sincerest gratitude.

Michelle Gray & Carol Reynolds

## Calling All Delilah Group Members!!

We will be meeting for supper on Tuesday, December 6th, at the Eaton Country Club at 6:00 p.m. We’ll meet at the church at 5:30 p.m. and carpool to Eaton. Any questions? Please call Charlotte, at 352-3317.

## Sanctuary Poinsettias

Orders for poinsettias in honor or memory of loved ones should be placed by Sunday, December 11th. Order forms will be inserted in the bulletins on December 4th and December 11th. Poinsettias cost \$15. Questions? See Nancy Kurtz.



## Thank You for Advent Devotionals

The Worship Ministry Team would like to thank each and every one who contributed in one way or another to our Advent Devotionals this year. As we give of ourselves and share with our church family about what Advent and Christmas mean to us through scripture, we are truly sharing a part in the Good News. We are taking risks and giving back. Your risk-taking is greatly appreciated! Merry Christmas to Everyone and God’s Blessings to All.

~The Worship  
Ministry Team



## Progressive Dinner/White Elephant

Make plans now to participate in what’s proved to be a popular event as part of the church’s Christmas season. The Giggles and Grins Group will engage in the 22nd annual Progressive Dinner on Saturday, December 17. The group will meet at 5:30 p.m. at the Weiler home for Appetizers, Salad & Main Dish. We then will adjourn to the Warntz home for Dessert and White Elephant Gifts. Recycled gifts from years past have a way of showing up on this night. Please be prepared. Giggles and Grins (formerly the GIFT Group) is made up of fun people who like to have a good time with other fun people. If you qualify, let us know you’re attending and what you can bring, on the sign-up sheet in the south hall.

## Join Us for Caroling



We will meet at church on Sunday, December 11th, at 4:30 p.m. to go caroling at some of the assisted living homes in Greeley. This is an event for all ages and all musical skill levels. Following caroling (about 6:30), we will return to the church for hot chocolate and cookies. Join with us to share some holiday cheer.

## LAFF Christmas Festivities



The Life After Fifty-Five Group is invited to a Chili Supper at Guaranty Bank, a Bus Tour of Holiday Lighting Displays, and Dessert at Phyllis Hansberry’s home on Monday, December 19. See the sign-up sheet in the south hall. There is a limit of 20 (first-come basis). Please sign up by December 15th. Phyllis will call you with details.

## Another December LAFF Activity



If you signed up to attend *HARVEY*, a great classic play, at UNC’s Langworthy Theatre, with the LAFF (Life After Fifty-Five) Group, you are reminded to join us on Sunday, December 4th, at 2:00 p.m. We will eat at the church before we leave. Please contact Connie Harbert if you have questions.

**Pastor Linda's Ponderings**

**“What then shall we say? When you come together, everyone has a hymn or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.”**

I Corinthians 14:26

I read an article recently that asked the question: How much is your church worth to the community that it serves? This really is a great question. What is the dollar value of a group of folks who learn to live together in community? A vacation Bible school that introduces a child to the love of God? A counseling session that saves a marriage? A mission trip where youth learn there is so much more to life than their own little word? A gathering with the community that reduces isolation and loneliness?

In the summer of 2010 a professor from the University of Pennsylvania and a secular research group searched for a monetary response to that question. The answer they came up with may surprise you: \$50 million in annual economic benefits!

This discovery helps us understand that our ministry and mission has real value to the community around us. In our worship services, Christian education, youth programs and counseling services, we have some true treasures, and we are reminded that we need to share those treasures with the community around us.

Our congregations have value because they provide us with personal and spiritual growth—something we cannot obtain from other resources in our community. When calculating the true worth of a church, we need to look outward and think of the ways that it extends the blessings of the Good News to others—through our words and actions.

Without our congregation and the many volunteers who give of their time, talents and treasures, many needs would go unmet. I am truly amazed and thankful when I look at all the volunteer hours that our community provides to the bigger community of Greeley, Weld County. and really even beyond those borders.

Continued. . .

**Ponderings, Cont.**

Living together as community is not always easy, but just think about what this world would be like without the church. When we really think about it there is no way to put a price on meeting human needs and building relationships – really the church is priceless.

**Simpsons Videos**



If you have episodes of *The Simpsons* on DVD or video tape, and would be willing to lend them to the Sr. High Sunday School, contact David Haining at 353-7613. We are studying the Bible and religious concepts through this T.V. series.



**Save the Date**

The Regional Assembly will take place next May 4th–6th in Denver. Our keynote speaker will be the Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins!

**Church Financial Update**

Budgeted Income Year to Date \$224,363.86  
 Actual Income as of 10/31/11 \$208,731.33  
 Budgeted Expense Year to Date \$224,363.86  
 Actual Expense as of 10/31/11 \$211,043.06  
 Reconciliation Special Offering \$296.00

**Tennyson Center Needs for December**

- Hair Gel
- Shampoo
- Scotch Tape
- Body Wash (Kids')
- Slim Fit Tampons
- Night Lights (Flat)
- Plastic Shoe Boxes
- Deodorant (Boys' and Girls')



**~ Youth News for December ~**



**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. . .” John 3:16.**

I have a friend named Charlie. He said to me one time, “Even if God never did anything for me ever again—knowing that he sent Jesus to this world would be enough for me.” I think about that often, especially when I get frustrated with God and feel that God is not listening to me and how I would like things to work out for me. This sentiment helps me move forward, knowing that God really does provide what we need—it might not necessarily be what we want, but God will always provide what we need. My prayer is that during this season of giving we would stop and reflect upon what God has already given us—the people God has put into our lives: parents, teachers, adult leaders; those material things God has provided: shelter, food, education, health care; and, of course, let us not forget Jesus—the one who lights the way for us in the darkness. Thanks be to God!

**December 2011 Events**

**4<sup>th</sup>** 4:30-6:30 pm - Crazy Love series plus fellowship, fun and food! Don't forget, parents, the kids of all ages will be leading in worship with an Advent Program!

**11<sup>th</sup>** No Youth Group - All-church caroling! Come with your family and meet at the church at 4:30. We will be going to several local assisted-living homes in Greeley! There will be hot chocolate and cookies at the church afterwards.

**18<sup>th</sup>** 4:30-6:30 pm - Christmas Party!

**25<sup>th</sup>** - No Youth Group. Merry Christmas!

**Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>** - No Youth Group. Happy New Year!

*Linda*



**Camp Information for Summer 2012**

Camp	Dates	Cost	
Discovery Camp (1st, 2nd & 3rd grade)	June 21-23	\$135.00	Camp forms including physicals and money are due to Pastor Linda by April 1st—no exceptions. The Region will not accept late forms or process forms that are incomplete. If you have any questions or concerns, contact Pastor Linda.
Junior Camp (3rd, 4th & 5th grade)	June 10-16	\$350.00	
Chi Rho Camp (Middle School)	June 17-23	\$385.00	
CYF (High School)	June 10-16	\$390.00	





# December Birthdays



1 Nathan Bobbitt	5 Jim Townsend	15 Carol Hypes	
1 Annabelle Loschen	8 Jim Thomas	16 Martie Miller	21 Ray White
1 Nita White	10 Alicia Loschen	18 Merv Martin	25 Lynn Teixeira
3 Marshall Gray	11 Carolyn Rainbolt	19 Michael Meisner	28 JoAnn Nealy
4 Myrna Armes	12 Frank Stewart	20 Ryann Tjardes-Garcia	30 Bill Crawford

## ★ Advent/Christmas Schedule ★

December 4: Children's Advent Program  
8:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

December 11: Chancel Choir Program  
8:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

December 18: Sunday Worship  
Advent celebration of God's love coming  
into our world. 8:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

December 24: Saturday, Christmas Eve  
Scripture, Carols, Candles, Communion  
6:00 p.m.

December 25: "Come as You Are"  
Christmas Celebration 10:30 a.m.  
Breakfast 9:45 a.m.

## 🎀 Christmas Special Offering 🎀

An envelope is enclosed with this newsletter. The special offering will be received on December 11th & 18th.

## Book Club to Meet December 7th

The FCC Book Club is now reading *Beneath a Marble Sky: A Love Story* by John Shors. Princess Jahanara takes us to seventeenth-century Hindustan as she shares her life story, including the tale of the construction of the Taj Mahal, commissioned by her father as a mausoleum for his beloved wife. We will meet Wednesday, December 7, at 6:00 p.m. in the church parlor to discuss the book.



## Congregational Meeting

Please plan to join us for our annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 4, following the 10:30 service. The Plan for Mission and Ministry and the Ballot of Nominations for 2012 will be the major conversation items. The congregational meeting is the major decision-making process in the life of our church. We will plan to have an informative meeting where the Plan for Mission and Ministry and the Ballot of Nominations is shared following the 8:15 a.m. service on December 4, but voting will not take place.



## Thank You to the Painters!

We are very grateful to Carl England, Gary Ikenouye, Roger Harbert, and Kevin King for all their hard work in clearing out, painting, and restoring the middle office. It looks much better!



The FCC Staff

## FCC Christian Men's Fellowship

The FCC Christian Men's Fellowship will not meet during the month of December. We will resume our regular meetings on January 14.

Do you have a talent or hobby that might be of interest to other men? Or maybe you know of a good speaker who would have a relevant message to a group of Christian men. We are in need of some folks to help get some programs lined up for next year. If you would be willing to provide a program or to set one up for us, please contact David Haining at 353-7613.



## Elder's Message

The Christmas story began in Heaven when God had a plan to send His Son Jesus Christ to Bethlehem. The shepherds would leave their flocks to follow a star to a tiny manger that would cradle the Savior of the world.

Thirty-three years later, Jesus would give His life on a rugged cross to pay for the sins of all mankind. Three days following that, a woman would be the first to see a miraculous sight, her Savior Jesus Christ, victorious over death.

The manger, the cross, and the empty tomb have become symbols of the greatest reunion in history. For the Christmas story is a reunion story between our Heavenly Father and all who would accept His gift of eternal life.

~Diane Doyle, Elder

## Mitten Tree

Each Sunday in Advent we have been collecting items to share with those in need. During the Children's Moment we will collect mittens, hats, scarves, and socks to hang on the tree at the back of the Sanctuary. Our emphasis will be on a particular item each week, however, you are welcome to bring any of the items on any Sunday in Advent.



**FCC "Looking Good" ~** The property team has been busy this spring and summer completing several projects. Roger Harbert was the coordinator for the paving of the parking lot and the replacement of the leaking roof membrane. The parking lot looks nice and is much safer (no cracks), and there are no more leaks in the sanctuary. Ray White was the coordinator for changing the church over to energy-saving lighting. With the receipt of the rebate from the power company and future energy savings, it not only looks better, we're also saving money. Carl England was the coordinator for the replacement and repair of the roof gutters. Carl and crew painted the boards under the gutters as well. It looks great and there should not be an ice buildup on the sidewalks this winter. Carl also coordinated the education wing hallway painting, which was completed by the education team. Paul Warntz was the coordinator for the repair of the two crosses on the outside of the Church. They had been off for so long that we had forgotten how inspirational they are at night. Rick Billings was the coordinator for our annual review of "too hot-too cold" climate concerns. Rick promises to please some of the people some of the time. Todd Loschen worked all summer fixing broken sprinkler lines and heads. Everything is working now and we are ready to shut down for the winter. All these things, of course, took money to complete, and we thank the trustees for their financial support. These projects are all part of our efforts to maintain the Church and grounds and keep things working well and looking nice.

~ Property Department



## Christian Women's Fellowship

The CWF general meeting will be a noon luncheon on Dec. 1 followed by "Let's Go Caroling," a group sing led by Gerre Tjardes and Gretchen Howland. December 1st is also the deadline for money for "Dress a Child" at the Tennyson Center, our December service project.

Thanks to Nancy Kurtz & Von Prichard for coordinating and delivering a meal for the Regional Youth Assembly held in Ft. Collins in November. Connie Harbert headed a project, "Curtains for Tennyson Center." Hats off to these women. They hauled sewing machines to Fellowship Hall on two mornings to sew. See Connie's thank-you for the list of volunteers. Thanks so very much, Ladies, what a great project.

## Youth Advent Program

The Youth Advent/Christmas Program will take place on December 4th during the 10:30 service. Join us!





## Enabling and Enhancing Our Ministry

As we strive to enable and enhance our ministry, the Capital Improvement Committee is working to meet the needs to: 1) attract new un-churched parishioners 2) enhance the worship experience: 3) improve accessibility for membership with special needs: 4) upgrade facilities. After interviewing and researching three design firms, we are happy to announce that we have chosen Lee Architects from Denver as the designers for Phase II of our capital improvement project. Lee has an extensive background in sacred space design; over 70% of their business has been associated with church architecture. Lee has worked on over 155 churches, including the remodel of the Greeley Wesleyan and First Presbyterian churches in Greeley. We will be negotiating an agreement with Lee over the next few weeks and would expect them to start their design process shortly after. We give thanks to Jim and Von Prichard for contributing a significant gift to help fund this portion of the project.

### Wanted – A Few Good Computers!

Do you have a good Windows 7 computer or a powerful Windows Vista computer that you would be willing to donate to the church? Our church's computers are very outdated and in need of a refresh. If you have a computer or would like to contribute toward the purchase of a new computer, please contact David Haining at 353-7613 or Rev. Tim.

### Thanks for your Extravagant Generosity

We give thanks to the Extravagant Generosity of this church. With pledges received through 11/16, the estimated giving is 101% of last year's estimated giving. Almost half of those who turned in pledge cards increased their giving from last year!

Unfortunately, our projected expenses continue to exceed our income. It should be noted that the projected expenses for 2012 still do not adequately fund many ministries and staff positions. In the past few years, we have used savings to fill the gap. However, this is not a sustainable approach and the stewardship committee and Board believe that we need to not balance the budget with savings and plan to submit an unbalanced budget to the congregation at the congregational meeting on December 4. Should the gap continue to exist in the first part of next year, a plan is being put in place to reduce expenses and request additional income to make sure we maintain a balanced budget next year. If you feel called to submit a pledge or increase your already submitted pledge to help fill next year's gap, please fill out a pledge form and turn it into the church office.

	<u>2011 Plan</u>	<u>2012 Plan</u>	<u>2012 plan includes:</u>
Revenue	\$269,937*	<b>\$259,070</b>	☞ Wage increases
Expenses	\$269,937*	<b>\$265,598</b>	☞ Reflects new increased minimum wage
	=====	=====	☞ Small token staff increases
Difference \$	0	<b>(\$ 6,528)</b>	☞ Praise band leader stipend
			☞ Reserve for future sabbatical
			☞ Funding for computer equipment
			☞ Full 10% tithing of income to outreach
			☞ Additional youth camp & retreat funding
			☞ No use of savings planned

\* 2011 plan includes \$12,500 use of savings

## Servers for the Month of December

December 4

December 11

December 18

December 25

### Christmas Eve Service

Deacons: Alicia Loschen, Andrew Bishop, Emilee Wolsey, Judi Ring, the Warntzes, the Teixeiras  
Elders: Roger Harbert, Kris King Sound Operator: Bruce Waldo

### 8:15 Chapel Service

Elder	Carl England	Kris King	Jim Prichard	
Diaconate	Deb Richardson	Deb Richardson	Deb Richardson	No Chapel Service
Worship Leader	N/A	N/A	Nita White	
Song Leader	Caren Renee Haining	Tessa Johnson	Gretchen Howland	
Pianist	Jodi Hartmann	Gretchen Howland	Nancy Kurtz	

### 9:30 Sanctuary Service

Elder: North	Jim Prichard	Nita White	Bob Corliss	Kris King
Elder: South	Kris King	Roger Harbert	Nita White	Jim Prichard
Worship Leader	N/A	Gerre Tjardes	Lynne Waldo	Cambrie Bishop
Song Leader	Rich Recor	Judi Ring	Connie Davis	Gerre Tjardes
Sound Operator	Bruce Waldo	Bruce Waldo	Caren Renee Haining	Gary Ikenouye
Van Driver	Jim Ploegstra	Gary Ikenouye	Paul Warntz	Fred Tjardes
Diaconate	Connie Harbert ±	Connie Harbert ■	Connie Harbert ⇐	Connie Harbert ▲
	Nick Harding ±	Nick Harding ■	Nick Harding ⇐	Nick Harding ▲
	Rick Billings ▲	Rick Billings ±	Rick Billings ■	Rick Billings ⇐
	Carolyn Rainbolt ▲	Carolyn Rainbolt ±	Carolyn Rainbolt ■	Carolyn Rainbolt ⇐
	Tom Teixeira ⇐	Jim Luecht ▲	Jim Luecht ±	Jim Luecht ■
	Lynn Teixeira ⇐	Susan Luecht ▲	Susan Luecht ±	Susan Luecht ■
	Shannon King ■	Shannon King ⇐	Shannon King ▲	Shannon King ±
	Daniel Recor ■	Daniel Recor ⇐	Daniel Recor ▲	Daniel Recor ±
Greeters	Darron, Debbie Berg	The Heatherlys	Julie Hoskins	Marilyn Lesser
	Ron, Charlotte Shetler	White Family	Norma Basey	Kathleen Davis
	Carl, Carolyn England	Darron, Debbie Berg	Marie Caster	Betty Jensen
Coffee Hour Host	Gibson, Hergert, Lund	Hartmann, Leh	White Family	Worship Team
Acolytes	Baylee Brems	Nathan Bobbitt	Weston Boyce	Austin Loschen
	Emilee Ploegstra	David King	Becky Boyce	Hunter Evans
Children's Moment	Erika Hartmann	Kris King	Cambrie Bishop	Rev. Linda Harding
Children's Church	N/A	N/A	Pachi Stanley	N/A
			Josh B., Ashley W.	

**KEY:** Preparation = ± Clean Up Sanctuary = ▲ No Extra Duties = ⇐ Clean Up Communion = ■

*If you are unable to serve on your designated Sunday, please make arrangements for a replacement. Please notify your team leader and the church of any changes.*