

Wednesday Night Fellowship!

Join us for an exciting evening of Wednesday Night Fellowship every Wednesday night throughout Advent, starting November 29th, at 5:30 PM! Our gatherings will kick off with a delicious meal, courtesy of various church groups. Post-dinner, we will enjoy singing together before dividing into focused groups at 6:00 PM. Our four breakout sessions include a missions and crafts group (children in 1st grade and below require adult accompaniment), an Advent Bible study, prayer group title: "Care and Prayer," and a fun-filled games group. Interested in volunteering with any of these groups? Please reach out to the church office. We look forward to seeing you there!



Evening Book Club

The FCC Book Club is now reading *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett. The group will meet Monday, December 4, at 6:00 p.m. in the church parlor to discuss the novel.

First Christian Church Governance

CWF Board, 9:30 am: Dec 14
General Board, 5:30 pm: Dec 21

Speaking of FCC Governance...

First Christian Church-Greeley's annual congregational meeting is right after the worship service on December 10, 2023. The congregation will vote on committee nominees and the 2024 budget. Please attend if you can!

Calling all Youth!

Wednesday Night Fellowship on Dec 6 needs youth to help serve and help out from 5:00- 6:30 pm.

This month, youth groups will be having a Christmas party with games and a gift exchange (\$5.00 gifts). Plan on having a great time! Talk with Todd for more details about the party. Starting in January 2024, youth group for 2nd to 6th graders will meet after coffee hour on the first Sunday of the month for games, fellowship, and snacks. Older youth, 7th grade-high school seniors, will meet on the second Sunday.

On the 3rd Sunday of each month, the older youth will continue to serve at the Guadalupe Shelter at (TIME?) Sign up with Todd for this opportunity. Also, give Todd your schedules for games, plays and other school activities so we can come and support you. Thanks.

See you soon!

Todd

5 Dozen Blankets!

Diana Laws and Theresa Rusher hand-made 60 fleece blankets to donate to Children's Hospital in Denver. They made both small blankets for babies and little kids and full-size blankets for teens. Thanks, congratulations, and admiration go to Diana and Theresa!

But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah the Lord.

-Luke 2:10-11



First Christian Church

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2230 13th St, Greeley, CO 970-352-1292 fccgreeley.com

The Christian Caller Newsletter

2023 December

A MESSAGE FROM VINCE

I was recently reminiscing with my family over our favorite Christmas gifts of the past. My oldest son, Christopher, remembered a game that he apparently played for hours with us and with friends from school. Charlie remembered some Hulk Hand gloves his mother and I got him when he was 6. He used those hands to beat up on everyone in the house for days before they mysteriously disappeared. I recalled a gift my parents bought for the whole family one Christmas when we all visited them. It was a rocket, the kind that comes with a parachute so that it can be shot off over and over again. We took it out to the field behind my parent's house. We all stood around to watch – my dad, me and my two boys, and my brothers and their kids. We all watched as my brother lit it and as it took off. As it reached the highest part of its journey, it released the parachute and started its descent. The wind carried it a little bit, but we were all sure we knew exactly where it landed. We all ran after it. We did not find it. In fact, we never saw it again. This was not for lack of searching. We searched for hours. We formed search committees. We combed the entire field. It was gone. I can't remember anything else I got that Christmas, or most Christmases for that matter. But I remember that rocket – as does everyone else who was there.

As my family was talking about our favorite Christmas presents over the years, it occurred to me that all of them had one thing in common – they were presents that we shared with others. As you think of giving gifts this season, I encourage you to seek out gifts that build relationships: a gift certificate to a restaurant you can go to together, a book you can read together, a project you work on together, a cookbook you can use together. At the heart of the Christmas story is that God loved us so much he gave nothing less than himself so that he might be in relationship with us. On the first Christmas, God did not give us something to keep us entertained; he did not give something to experience on our own. He gave himself that all of humankind might be united in him ("Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" [Luke 2:10]). A gift does not get its value just because it is given; it gets its value through the relationship that it fosters.

First Christian Church Greeley (Disciples of Christ) holds Sunday worship services in the sanctuary at 10:00 am.

Childcare is provided during the service.

Find more information at www.fccgreeley.com



Contact Us

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Christian Women's Fellowship

The holidays are upon us! CWF will be honoring this holy season at their General Meeting, December 1 at 1:30 pm in the chapel. Evening group is in charge of the program and refreshments. All women of the church and their guests are encouraged to come celebrate Christ's birth. Funds collected will go to the Children's Christmas at the Tennyson Center in Denver.

On December 14 at 10:30 am, Phyllis Hansberry is hosting a covered dish luncheon for CWF women at her home. Please RSVP to Phyllis, LaVonne, or Sandy.

The next CWF Board meeting will be January 11, 2024 at 10:30 am at the church.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Sandy Beiser and LaVonne Rogakis, Co-chairs, CWF



FCC Finances

As of October 31, 2023

Income YTD \$196310.27
includes \$33694.00 Working
Capital (Trustees)

Expenses YTD \$217890.44

December Birthdays

- 01 Shawn Loschen
- 02 Sarah Beiser
- 03 Marshall Gray
- 08 Jim Thomas
- 10 Alicia Loschen
- 10 Bill Rusher
- 11 Carolyn Rainbolt
- 13 Helen Herman
- 15 Carol Hypes
- 25 Lynn Teixeira
- 30 Harold Carlson

Elder's Message

-Colleen Heitman

The Wonder of Christmas

In the true spirit of the Christmas season and the celebration of the birth of our Savior, we find symbols and traditions all around us. In joyful gatherings with family and friends, carols that inspire, sights, sounds and smells that remind us of this holy Advent, take time to praise God for all that is so dear. Whether in your favorite hymns or songs: "Oh Come All Ye Faithful," "Jingle Bells," or "Silent Night," or in the smells of baked and decorated cookies, spiced apple cider, and turkey; loud, boisterous family around a table for food and games; our Christmas traditions and observances are wonderful in our hearts.

As we celebrate the wonders of this season remember the significance of it all. The Star of Bethlehem was the sign that appeared leading the Wisemen and shepherds to the baby Jesus. This light brought the world out of darkness and into the light through His birth. The Christmas Angel symbolizes the announcement of the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. The Christmas Advent wreath is a never-ending circle of evergreen representing the countdown of the weeks leading up to the birth of Jesus. The Christmas tree was brought into our home as a symbol of everlasting life. The candle of light during the holiday signifies hope and warmth as it lights the path for Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem. Now, it reminds us of Jesus' coming into our world and our lives.

The colors of red and green are used at Christmas in many symbols. The holly berries were white, but the crown of thorns mixed with holly was placed on Jesus' head and turned red with blood and now grows this way, just as the green of the plant signifies everlasting light and life. The candy cane symbolizes Jesus: J represents the precious name of Jesus, and the staff used by the shepherds in caring for their sheep; and how Jesus is our "Good Shepherd." The red stands for God's love that sent Jesus to give His life for us on the cross. The white represents the purity of his birth, and the stripes reflect his suffering in the crown of thorns, wounds in His feet and hands, and on the cross. The poinsettia, "the Flower of the Holy Night," is thought to have the shape of the Star of Bethlehem which led the Wisemen to Bethlehem. The white flower is His purity and the red flower His blood shed for the world. For the Christian celebration of Christmas, the viewing of the Nativity play is one of the oldest Christmastime traditions, with the first reenactment of the Nativity of Jesus taking place in A.D. 1223.

Christmastime brings great joy into our hearts. God's love especially shines as we remember the birth of Jesus. Like many of the world's people, we all have developed our own Christmas traditions and observances. May the spirit of Christmas endure forever as we celebrate these wonders and blessings, and may our hearts be ever grateful for the precious gift sent from above, Heaven's perfect gift, Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

Mission Matters

"Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"
2 Corinthians 9:15

Bundle Up Tree – December

'Tis the season to decorate a tree in the narthex with the gift of warmth for children in our community. **Gloves (preferably insulated), hats, scarves, and socks** are needed. Items will be delivered to the School District 6 Family Center to be distributed among all the Greeley-Evans schools.



Marine Toys for Tots – Until Dec. 14

FCC will once again be partnering with the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program to bring Christmas cheer to children throughout Weld County. Toys for Tots collaborates with over 40 agencies, non-profits, and faith organizations to collect and distribute **new unwrapped Christmas gifts** to children and youth ages 2-18. There is a special need for **gifts for teens**, such as earbuds, makeup, board games, books, art supplies, Lego sets, small electronics, or sporting equipment (basketball, soccer ball, or football). Look for the Toys for Tots toy box in the narthex. Toys must be at the church by **Thursday, Dec. 14**.



Habitat Cookie Walk – Dec. 16

Greeley-Weld Habitat for Humanity will hold their annual Cookie Walk on Saturday, Dec. 16, from 9:00 a.m. to noon at Zoe's Café (715 10th St.). **They need cookie bakers and cookie buyers! We pledged 15 dozen cookies from our church.** If you would like to donate homemade Christmas cookies, please bring the cookies to the FCC kitchen by **Thursday, Dec. 14**. See you at the Cookie Walk!



Special Offerings

-Right Here, Right Now Benevolence Fund – Dec5

All \$1 bills and checks written to FCC with "RH/RN" in the memo line go toward meeting immediate needs within our church family and community. (Donations to RHRN are also accepted throughout the month).

- Christmas Special Offering – Dec. 17 & 24

Our annual Christmas Special Offering will be collected Dec. 17 and 24. Donations support the **Central Rocky Mountain Region** of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Please write checks to FCC with "Christmas Offering" in the memo line.

-Christmas Eve Offering – Dec. 24

Our Christmas Eve offering will go to Week of Compassion to aid those affected by the Middle East Crisis. Please write checks to FCC with "Christmas Eve" in the memo line.



More Opportunities to Share the Joy of Christmas!

- Meals on Wheels needs [volunteers](#) to deliver noon meals M-F
- Greeley Tribune [Make a Senior's Wish Come True](#) – through Dec. 8
- Sponsor a family through the Tennyson Center's [Operation Giving](#) – by Dec. 12

If you have a heart for mission and would like to join the Mission Ministry Team, please talk to Diana Laws or Bill Rusher.