

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

April
2022

First Congregational United Church of Christ
1200 Clark Street,
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701
605) 342-5787 uccoffice@rushmore.com rcfirstucc.com

**Seeking, practicing and sharing
Christ's ministry of inclusive love,
justice and compassion**

A Change of Seasons

Rev. Dr. Mark Lee, Interim Minister

"There is a season for everything, and a time for every matter under the heavens:

A time for giving birth and a time for dying,

A time for planting and a time for uprooting what was planted,

A time for killing and a time for healing,

A time for tearing down and a time for building up,

A time for crying and a time for laughing....." (Ecclesiastes 3:1-4, CEB)

And I might add:

"A time of stability and a time of change,

A time to start and a time to finish,

A time of greeting and a time of parting."

Now my season as your Interim Minister is drawing to a close and this is my final Call article. I have accepted a position as Director of Adult Christian Formation and Discipleship (and Library Director) at First United Methodist Church in Fort Collins to start in June. This will let me move back home to our little goat ranch. And while for none of us there will be a "going back to how it was before the pandemic" it will have some return to familiar places and rhythms of life. You will have a gap period before your new settled minister is in place, and your church will step faithfully into your own next season of service to your community.

I had said of my previous interim ministry that it was both the hardest and the most rewarding ministry of my career. My work with you fits that description as well. I think that is the nature of interim ministry—by definition, one is there to push the limits, and invite people to grapple with history and patterns and systems they'd rather ignore. The ancient saying about preaching needing to "Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable" applies doubly to interim ministry. On one hand, people need comfort in the grief of losing the past ministers, what in their service that was good and poor alike, and put the past into the wider perspective



REFLECTIONS FROM THE PASTOR

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS ISSUE

A Change of Seasons.....1

Board, Departments3

Church News.....5

Christian Education .6

Kids Korner7

Member News8

Prayer Concerns9

Mission News10

Calendar11

BH Assoc Meeting .12

of the church's long history. On the other hand, dysfunctional ways of church life that have grown familiar, patterns that inhibit imagination, growth and service, need to be exposed and begin to change, a process often very uncomfortable. Our work has had the added complications of the vast social and political changes of the pandemic, though we need to be careful about what we blame on that and what we own as our responsibilities. The interim relationship is something like a therapist; one doesn't need to be loved, just respected. I believe that in my work with you I have been blessed to have some of both.

There have been times I have disappointed you. Some was by design, as I pushed you to take up ministry responsibilities that had slid away from laity onto professional staff. It was easy for your past ministers to pick up tasks that otherwise might have been dropped. I've been more inclined to let you vote with your feet: if there is a "great idea" that nobody wants to actually do, then it likely is not as important as claimed. Paring down the expectations the congregation has of its clergy (especially considering that you went from two ministers to one) has been an important part of our work – and inevitably led to some disappointments. However, there are disappointments that were not by design, but by my own personal and pastoral failures, where I did not step up as I should have. I know some of you were hurt. I am sorry, and ask your grace and forgiveness. I give thanks for other members of the church body who stepped into the gaps and provided

ministry where I failed.

As I conclude my work among you, the deepest feeling I have is gratitude. I am thankful for the way you have welcomed me into your lives, even knowing that it was just for a time-limited season. Thank you for giving me the space to transition back into full time preaching and worship from my prior education ministry where I rarely did either. Thank you for grappling with the tough questions of congregational identity and purpose – through the survey, board retreats, the Search Committee process, and numberless individual conversations. Thank you for being willing to push the boundaries of your comfort zone, with online and outdoor and contemporary and humorous and different ways of worshiping. Thank you for making space in your life with me for Arrow, who though a Humane Society rescue dog assuredly actually rescued me. Thank you to those individuals who supported, cajoled, challenged, prayed-for, and laughed with me. Only eternity will reveal the importance of your work with me through our time together.

There will be a gap period after I leave and before your new settled minister comes. Think of it as a sabbatical from having a specific minister, an opportunity for the whole church to exercise its ministry as Christ's body. I have helped set up some pulpit supply, and there is a committee under the Worship Department that will carry on that work. In the case of pastoral emergencies or funerals, your Licensed Minister and Retired Clergy, and if needed, neighboring clergy from kindred congregations, will be able to come

alongside you. Your various Departments will carry on week in, week out ministries of education, community outreach, hospitality, financial management, worship, and facilities maintenance, and continue to coordinate their work through the Board. Humanly speaking, you are in good and competent hands. Spiritually speaking, as the Body of Christ, you are in the best hands.

At the close of his earthly ministry, the disciples were understandably worried about how they would get along without Jesus leading them. While our parting is not nearly so dire as that, I think the hope is the same. At the Last Supper, he reassured them, "I won't leave you as

orphans.... The Companion, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I told you. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I give to you not as the world gives; don't be troubled or afraid." (John 14:18, 26-27)

As we part, keep on Being Church: Trusting in the love of God who created you in God's own image, in the peace of Christ who lived, died and rose for you, and in the power of the Holy Spirit who sustains you through any situation. Amen.

BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS

Moderator's Moment

by Chuck Rounds

I begin this month's message with the devastating news of the sudden death of Bruce Herrboldt, the long time pastor of South Park UCC Church. He was the pastor of that church for even longer than Pastors Ted and Susan were at our church. Our church will need to support South Park in any way we can. We need to keep the family and the church family in our prayers. We now have both of the UCC churches in Rapid City without a settled pastor.

Your church board met on March 15, 2022. As usual, we had many items to discuss. A contract has been issued to raise the choir loft railing to meet code. This was required when we installed the lift to the choir loft. This work will begin in the coming weeks. A discussion was had about the covid procedures and it was decided to con-

tinue for another month to recommend mask wearing but not making it required. We will also continue coffee hour and allow outside groups to use the church and serve food and drink.

It has become clear that we will not have a settled pastor until at least late summer. That makes it necessary to find others to fill the pulpit. The worship department has appointed a committee to fill the pulpit and handle weddings and funerals as necessary. Those on the committee are Bonnie Edwards (chairperson), Chuck Rounds, Susie Kelts, Becky Fleming, Rob Burton, and Laura Boyd. Any person may lead a worship service or a combination of people could do it, so if you have a desire to lead a service or do part of a service or give a sermon contact one of the committee members.

On March 20th we were privileged to have the Red Sea Pedestrians, Placerville Camp's praise band, play for our service. They may be available for

more of our services. We enjoyed the largest number of folks present for that service that we've had for a long time and that included a good number of the young people and some first-time visitors. We need to keep growing and meeting new people and letting them know that "no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here".

Pastoral Search Committee by Eileen Rossow

The Pastoral Search Committee has been working diligently on reviewing candidate profiles and doing zoom interviews. We were very optimistic about a candidate and had been negotiating a "look see" trip for the candidate and spouse. Unfortunately, recent family illness has caused the candidate to have to withdraw from the search process. The committee is once again open to receiving candidate pro-

BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS CONTINUED

files. We do not see this as a setback, but rather an opportunity to find the right pastor for our church. We ask that the members of First Congregational Church be patient with the process and keep the Pastoral Search Committee in your prayers.

Stewardship and Budget by Pat Lebrun

The Stewardship and Budget Committee thanks all who have made a pledge to keep our church operating. However, pledges received as of February 28 were behind the budgeted amount by \$8,885.22. Fortunately, utility and grounds expenses were also under budget due to the mild winter. As the year goes on, expenses are likely to catch up with the budgeted amounts. The committee is hopeful that pledge income will also catch up to the budget. Change is happening! On Sunday March 20 church attendance was at its highest level in months due to the warm weather and the prospect of hearing upbeat music provided for

the service by the Red Sea Pedestrians. Coffee hour and Adult Forum have restarted with mask wearing now optional due to reported COVID numbers falling. We are hopeful that as things return to normal church attendance and pledge receipts also will continue to improve. Your financial support of First Congregational is greatly appreciated.

Open and Affirming Report by Sybil Rounds

The Open and Affirming task force is very grateful to our congregational members for their positive vote which made us an official Open and Affirming congregation! Thank you to those who came to the meeting and voted to approve our covenant. This task force is now a standing committee in the Department of Ministries. We would like to make this information available to you: Transgender Day of Visibility was celebrated on March 31 and was dedicated to the resilience of the transgender community. The hope for this day is to encourage moral responsibility and tolerance and to lift the restrictions on the rights of transgender people. As an Open and Affirming congregation, we are encouraged to celebrate the accomplishments of transgender people as well as to seek understanding of the many difficulties that are experienced simply because of who they are. We are encouraged to educate ourselves and make others aware of

how transgender people have left a notable mark on our world.

Dept of Worship

by Bonnie Edwards

Worship Department met on March 10. There will be greeters for Palm Sunday and Easter. Ten-ebrae service for Maundy Thursday was planned. There will be a Good Friday noon service. Pastor Mark discussed the pulpit service for the first few months after his leaving our congregation. If anyone would like to do a sermon during the summer, please notify Pastor Mark before he leaves and he will prepare the Call to Worship, Reconciliation, etc. for you.

Dept of Ministries

by Sheila Long

With the decrease in Covid we will once again be serving in-person at the Mission. Our next Mission meal is Friday April 30, 2022. We will serve at 5:30pm. If you are interested in serving please let the office know. And as always we are looking for cookie donations. Please bring them to the church by April 30th, marked for the Dept of Ministries.

Pulpit Supply Committee by Becky Fleming

A new Committee has convened to keep the organization and integrity of our Sunday Worship services, as well as funeral and wedding services, in place while our Interim pastor



moves onto his new role and before we have a newly called minister. This group will work together to protect the continuity of services. In this, we ask that each of you considers how you can help with services. Have you always wanted to lead a children's moment? Are you brave enough to lead a worship service? Does writing a sermon seem like a great idea? Do you have prayers just wanting to be spoken aloud? If any of this sounds like something you are willing to try, please reach out to Bonnie Edwards, Chuck Rounds, Susie Kelts, Rob Burton, Laura Boyd, or Becky Fleming.

Most importantly, share our congregations search for a called minister or those willing to fill the pulpit some-

times. As we enter into another time of transition, please make sure to keep the church office and Becky Fleming (blrfleming1973@gmail.com or 605-484-3194) aware of health needs, prayer requests, needs for visits, and upcoming moves or transitions in care. This communication is crucial to the care of us all as a congregation. If you hear of a concern, please make sure it is known about for follow up. This allows for permission to be obtained for release of information for the prayer chain, for print in the bulletin, and/or announcement during services. If those are not desired, it allows the visiting team or pastors to know how to best support the person and family.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCH



Altar Guild

The Altar Guild will be selling Easter Lilies March 27-April 10 during Fellowship Hour. These lilies will be used to decorate the sanctuary for Easter Sunday.

Women's Fellowship-Rummage Sale

Thank you to everyone who made the annual spring sale a success. We had a few new workers who got on board quickly and were a tremendous help. Old hands took their stations and got right to work. The time of women-only rummage sales at our church is long gone, and our men deserve a ton of credit for a successful sale.

We felt that the number of donations and the number of workers were both less than in the past, but the quality of donations and workers was super and we had the best March sale since 2017. A preliminary count shows a profit of \$5632 and there are still some beautiful items posted online.

The summer sale is scheduled for August 18-19, and maybe by then we can work without masks. The community response to the mask requirement was a non-issue; just a couple of people refused to shop if they had to be masked.

Now more than ever the community is turning to our sale for good items at rock bottom prices. Help us continue this event by helping out in August. Thanks!!

Good Morning Circle

Women will gather on April 20 at 9:30 to enjoy a return to more normal meeting format. Masks are recommended but not required. Bonnie Edwards will provide a program, and a discussion about serving food and drinks will take place. Please join us if you can!

Adult Education

Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week by Amy-Jill Levine is the text for our 2022 adult Lenten study. We meet Wednesdays in the church parlor from **3:00-4:30 p.m.** our final meetings will be April 7 and 13. All are welcome to join this group. For more information, contact Kathleen Batchelder or the church office.

Adult Forums

Adult Forum Speakers for April and May

April 3 —Judge Craig Pfeifle will discuss the MacArthur Foundation

May 3 —Charity Doyle will share information about One Heart: A Place for Hope and Healing

May 15—Karen Mortimer will explain the Mniluzahan Okolalciciyapi Ambassadors

Our forum meets in the Fellowship Hall following worship. Take time to have coffee or tea, to buy grocery certificates, and to chat a few minutes before these programs begin. If you have ideas for forum presentations, contact Kathleen Batchelder, Gene Lebrun, or the church office



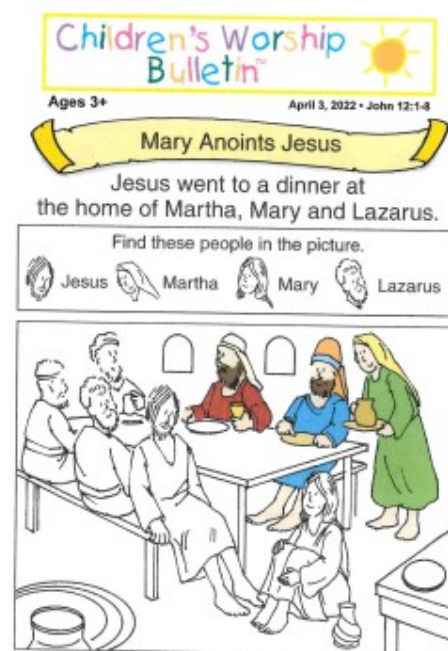
Dept of Education

A “TOP-O-THE-DAY” good time was had by all during the Sunday Afternoon Activities for our children in March. We learned about the history and life of St. Patrick; created St. Patrick cards for our members who can’t attend often; assembled CARE Packages for those kids currently attending college; decorated St. Patrick Day cookies; and had a special lesson and musical treat by an Irishman who played bagpipes for us. A “TIP-OF-THE-HAT” thanks to Brent Long for sharing his time and talent with his bagpipes. We were all in awe! Special thanks to the members of the Christian Ed. Board who made this afternoon a wonderful experience. I heard one little girl say, “I’m not ready to go home yet!”

We hope to continue our fun on April 3rd, from 3pm-5pm, when we celebrate the Easter Story; utilize an extra-special art form in decorating Easter Eggs; create a beautiful jeweled cross; share in fun games and eat yummy treats. We will end the afternoon with an Easter Fun Bag for each child. Our appreciation to Ingrid Arlton for her talent in helping to make exceptional eggs to take home for our kiddos. Come join in our fun on April 3, 2022, from 3-5PM.

Sunday School is continuing to grow in number, as we are enlightened each Sunday morning with Becky, Sue, and Sharon, except for Communion Sunday. We are grateful for their dedication and ability to generate excitement in sharing God’s word.

Just a little FYI...We ordered Children’s Bulletins that are filled with fun activities to do. Each child may pick one up from the ushers, as their parent pick up their bulletin. There two options, one for ages 3-7 and one for ages 7 and up. Ask any user for help to locate them and ENJOY!.



SAVE THE DATE

April 3rd 3pm to 5pm

Easter stories, crafts and games.



MEMBER NEWS AND NOTES

Change of Address

Evelyn Bradshaw
133 Texas St. #140
Rapid City, SD 57701

Bruce and Tish Wilkerson
4825 Jericho Way Apt. #113
Rapid City, SD 57702

Church Keys

The church is running low on front door keys. If you have a church front door key that you no longer



WE'VE
MOVED!

use, please return to the church office to save the cost of having more keys cut. Thank you.

Welcome to our New Members

On March 20th we had four new

members join our congregation. Please welcome them as you see them.

- * **Ron and Kim (Bell) Wynia**
- * **Erin Erickson**
- * **Amy Richards**

Thank you

Thank you to the Worship Committee for planning the Contemporary Service and bringing in the Red Sea Pedestrians. This was a great Sunday for worship and I truly enjoyed it.

Sheila Long



April 1 Andy Knight

April 3 Brendan Lyons

April 4 Laura Smith

April 6 Corrin Burke
Jakob Nickel

April 7 Heather Heinert

April 8 Jane Glover
Tish Wilkinson

April 9 Peggy Nielsen

April 11 Chad Tipton

April 12 Lynn Grauman
Nick Strampe

April 14 Patricia Sutliff
Lisa Trana

April 15 Roberta Gallentine
Salim Golden
Noelle Schendzielos

April 17 Jet Cruz

April 19 Jeanne Berry

April 20 Courtney Strampe

April 21 Robin Franson
Dick Green
Brad Heinert

April 22 Marcin McMacken

April 26 Tracy Downs
Bertie Roberts

April 27 Arie LaCroix
Lynari Pettit

April 29 Sophia Diedtrich

April 30 Benjamin Tipton

MEMBER NEWS AND NOTES

Prayer Concerns

- Prayers for the congregation of South Park UCC on the passing of their pastor **Rev. Bruce Herrboldt**.
- Prayers for **Kalsy Brinkmans** whose grandmother, Betty Fritz, who passed away recently.
- Prayers for **Cindy Ledford's** mom, **Dorothy**, who is in the hospital in Scottsbluff, NE., recovering from a fall.
- Prayers for **Joan Dyrdaahl** who had hip surgery on March 29. Prayers and cards appreciated.

Our prayers are with those who are dealing with health concerns.

- **Jane Ireland** who is recovering at West Hills Healthcare Unit.
- **Nadine Zeller** is recovering from health concerns.
- **Eunice Johnson**, who is dealing with health concerns. She is home now and would love visitors.
- **Deb Tompkins** health is improving, yet still on oxygen
- **Lee Boyles** is dealing with health concerns
- **Jane Ireland's** son-in-law, **Pat Kearney**, continues treatment for cancer
- **Jill Kundtz** is facing health concerns.

We pray with those in care centers and all who are isolated in their homes, including:

- **Shirley Baumgartner**
- **Dona Cheney**
- **Vivian Dittmer**
- **Wes Humke**
- **Bob Jonas**
- **Eunice Johnson**
- **Chuck Knowlton**
- **Merrie Miller**
- **Marrelyce Seaman**
- **Lorraine Slocum**
- **Helen Snyder**
- **Elena Van Pelt**

Healing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we pray that You will lay your healing Hands upon all those who are sick. We beg You to have compassion on all those who are suffering so that they may be delivered from their pitiful circumstances.

*In Jesus, we pray.
Amen.*

MISSION AND OUTREACH

News from los Guido

In a recent email Pastor Dorotea shared that her whole family has been infected (all have been vaccinated) with the Omicron variant. She was the first to fall ill at the end of February, and had high fever, sore throat, and a bad cough for 10 days. Her daughter Sarvia followed with the same symptoms. In March grandson Noah became ill, but is a bit better by now. Gady (Noah's mother and Dorotea's daughter) was the last to fall ill with the same symptoms. The virus is obviously still very active and there are many people in severe condition in the clinics and hospitals.

In spite of the seriousness of the virus, all students are back in the classroom at all levels from elementary to college.

Please add the people of los Guido to your prayers, and thank you for your continued financial and prayer support.

Habitat for Humanity

Black Hills Habitat for Humanity will be having a "Tees for Keys" Golf Tournament on **Thursday, June 2, 2022**. With your registration funds are raised to provide strength, stability, & self-reliance through shelter. Early bird pricing available now through April 30, 2022. For more information visit their website— blackhillshabitat.org/tees-for-keys or call 605-348-9196.

Holy Week Services

Sunday, April 10 Palm Sunday

9:30 am: Worship Service

Noon: Community Palms Parade (meet at Faith Temple and will walk, waving palms, to Trinity Lutheran)

Thursday, April 14th Maundy Thursday

7:00 pm: Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service

Friday, April 15th Good Friday

Noon Good Friday Prayer Service

Sunday, April 17th EASTER

6:00 am: Community Easter Sunrise Service at Main St. Square

9:30 am: Easter Service



CALENDAR

The calendar changes often, so please check the weekly email and/or online calendar on our church website. Rcfirstucc.com

April 1

10:00 am: Watercolor Painting
1:00 pm: Stained Glass Group

April 3

9:30 am: Worship Service
10:30 am: Fellowship Hour
10:30 am: Grocery Card Sales
10:45 am: Adult Forum
3:00 pm: Activities for youth

April 5

1:00 pm: Craft Day
3:30 pm: Discernment Committee

April 6

3:00 pm: Adult Lenten Study
7:00 pm: Choir Practice

April 7

4:30 pm: Dept of Worship

April 8

10:00 am: Watercolor Painting
1:00 pm: Stained Glass Group

April 10

9:30 am: Worship Service
10:30 am: Fellowship Hour
10:45 am: Dept of Ed meeting
12:00 pm: Community Palm Sunday Parade

April 12

9:30 am: PEO/CC Meeting
12:00 pm: PEO/BF Meeting
1:00 pm: Craft Day

April 13

10:00 am: Women's Fellowship
3:00 pm: Adult Lenten Study
6:30 pm: Stewardship & Budget
7:00 pm: Choir Practice

April 14

10:00 am: Altar Guild Meeting
7:00 pm: Maundy Thursday Service.

April 15

10:00 am: Watercolor Painting
12:00 pm: Good Friday Prayer Service
1:00 pm: Stained Glass Group

April 17

6:00 am: Easter Sunrise Service-Main St. Square
9:30 am: Easter Worship Service
10:30 am: Fellowship Hour

April 19

1:00 pm: Craft Day
3:30 pm: Discernment Committee
4:15 pm: Trust Committee Meeting
7:00 pm: Church Board Meeting

April 20

9:30 am: Good Morning Circle
6:30 pm: Good Evening Circle
7:00 pm: Choir Practice

April 22

10:00 am: Watercolor Painting
1:00 pm: Stained Glass Group

April 24

9:30 am: Worship Service
10:30 am: Fellowship Hour
10:30 am: Farewell Party for Mark

April 26

1:00 pm: Craft Day

April 27

7:00 pm: Choir Practice

April 28

1:30 pm: Memoir Writing Group

April 29

10:00am: Watercolor Painting
1:00 pm: Stained Glass Group

April 30

10:30 am: PEO Reciprocity Luncheon

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
1200 Clark Street
Rapid City SD 57701

Black Hills Assoc Annual Meeting

Join us for our spring-time Annual Meeting
at Placerville Camp
on April 24th beginning at 3:00 pm.

Delegates and visitors are welcome! We share in worship, elect officers, receive reports and other business.

Please *RSVP* to either **Kerry Steever** at Placerville Camp (uccplace@hotmail.com) or our vice-moderator, **Rev. Chuck Aurand** (caurand3@gmail.com or call at 605-569-3131).

