



First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

The Epistle

APRIL 2024

"Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

(Paul's Epistle to the Philippians 1:2)

God is Still Speaking



Pondering Pastor

"And he said to them, 'Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation'" Mark 16:15

In the season of Easter, I often find myself wondering how this gospel about Jesus found its way around the world? How is it we know about it? The answer of course is evangelism. Evangelism means sharing the good news.

Evangelism is too often treated as a bad word these days, and I get it. In America, *evangelical Christianity* has come to be associated with social movements we might resist. That is cultural but not the only understanding of *evangelicalism*. As a United Church of Christ congregation, we know our denomination merged with the Evangelical-Reformed Church in 1957. Since that time there have been schisms within the evangelical movement outside the UCC. As a result, *evangelical* culturally has come to mean something that some members of our denomination would not identify with. However, what the term now stands for often defines American Christianity. So how do we reclaim/assert our understanding of the gospel? That was a topic of discussion at the last Pub Theology. Spoiler: we did not solve it, so join us to help figure it out.

Christianity would not exist if it were not for evangelists who talked about Jesus. Jesus commands us all to share the good news with the world. And yet, we shy away from doing this. I am not saying this is a problem limited to our congregation, it is a problem throughout western culture. Did you know that the majority of Christians now live south of the equator and that Christianity continues to grow most rapidly in the global south?

As we live into the Easter season, I am pondering why this all is. Why are we so shy about sharing our faith with others? Why are we so shy about inviting people to church, or telling them about Jesus? Why do we wonder where the conversation is headed when someone brings their faith up with us? It is true our American culture is to separate our faith from our public lives. But the Risen Christ commanded us to do otherwise. How might we live into that command?

Go Proclaim,
Pastor Kelli

1275 Adams Ave
Rock Springs, WY 82901
307-362-3530
Office Hours: Mon 2:45-4:30 Tues-Thurs 12:30-4:30

Church Email: churchfirstrock@gmail.com
www.firstrockucc.org
Twitter: [@ChurchFirstRock](https://twitter.com/ChurchFirstRock)
Worship: Sunday 10:30 a.m.

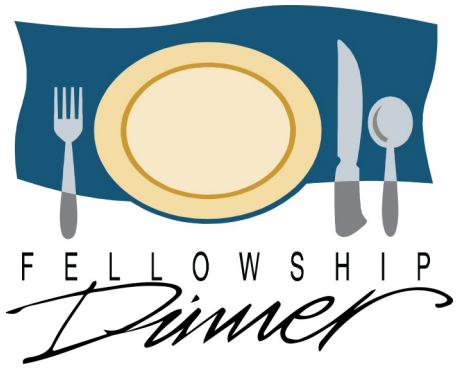
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:
 MONDAY 2:45-4:30 PM, TUESDAY-THURSDAY 12:30-4:30 PM

April 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 BIBLE STUDY 2 PM	2	3	4	5	6
7 WORSHIP 10:30 AM GROWING FAITH SUNDAY NOISY CHANGE	8 WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP @ FH 12 BIBLE STUDY 2 PM	9 Fellowship Dinner 6 PM @ Marty's	10	11 Men's Fellowship 6:30 pm	12 INTER- MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION MEETING ZOOM 10AM	13
14 DEACONS 9:15 AM WORSHIP 10:30 AM	15 BIBLE STUDY 2PM GARDEN MEETING 6:30 PM	16	17	18 PUB THEOLOGY 6PM LOS CABOS	19	20
21 WORSHIP 10:30 AM MISSIONS 11:30 AM	22 BIBLE STUDY 2 PM	23	24 TRUSTEES 5 PM COUNCIL 6 PM	25	26	27
28 WORSHIP 10:30 AM	29 BIBLE STUDY 2 PM	30	WEEKLY CHURCH USE: LA HERMOSA– TH 7:00 PM, SAT & SUN 3:00 PM BOYSCOUTS– TUES 6:00 PM CUBSCOUTS– WED 5:30 PM MIA's LEARNING TREE: Mon-Fri 8 am-2 pm			

FOOD PANTRY

Our food pantry continues to support local families in need of help with food. Your donations to the food pantry budget allowed us to refill the pantry when the case sale started last week. For those who wish to shop for the pantry the things we can never have too much of include: canned soup, canned beans, canned spaghetti sauce, tuna, and peanut butter.



TUESDAY
April 9th
@ 6:00 pm @ Marty's.

Women's Fellowship



April 8 @ Noon



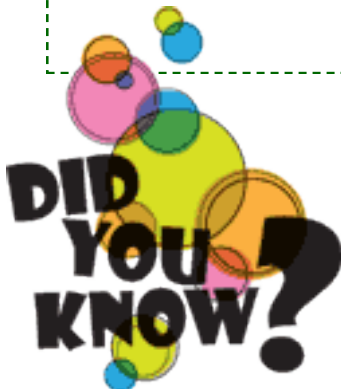
Pub Theology
April 18th
@ 6PM

Join us with our friends from Holy Communion for a night at Los Cabos, 6pm.

COLLECTING CANS AND BOTTLES

We continue to collect cans and bottles for recycling. The funds from this collection are add to our discretionary fund.

Remember to take your tabs off the cans and bring them to the office for the Ronald McDonald House.



Recycling just 40 aluminum cans has the effect of reducing gasoline consumption by a single gallon.

In-Kind Giving

Many of you know that each year the church gives you a giving statement. This documents what you have given to the church. You can use this statement for any purpose you see fit, most people use it for taxes. But did you know that this statement can also include non-monetary gifts to the church? If, for example, you are giving food to the food pantry you can write "In Kind" on the receipt and turn in the receipt. The value of what you donate will be added to your contributions to the church. This may also be used if you are helping to do Trustee approved repairs and need to run to the store for a part or supplies.

Cookie Walk

Thanks to all who helped with the Cookie Walk, we brought in \$878.83!

St. Christopher's Highway Needs Volunteers!

FCC has partnered with our friends at Holy Communion Episcopal Church, Mount of Olives Lutheran Church and (now!) First Baptist Church to run St. Christopher's Highway. St. Christopher is a traveler's assistance program funded by the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming.

We are now in critical need of volunteers! Volunteers take the St. Christopher phone for a week at a time and provide travelers with gas cards, bus tickets, hotel rooms, or food according to need and volunteer discernment. Training is provided.

At this time we are discussing running this program only during the cold months due to a lack of volunteers. Please reach out to Pastor Kelli if you can volunteer to help this ministry!



Ronald McDonald House Charities*

Pick up the tab for the Ronald McDonald House Intermountain Area!

Your donation of pop tabs helps provide a home away from home for families of seriously ill or injured children receiving treatment from local medical facilities.

Please drop tabs off at the church.

St. Christopher's Highway

PO Box 567 Rock Springs, WY 82902

307-922-2380

Travel Assistance
Rock Springs & Green River



Type of Assistance:
Lodging Food
Transportation Clothing

Volunteer on call
7:00am - 9:00pm

In order for our Sunday worship to run smoothly we need your help! Please sign up to be a worship leader, coffee hour host, or show us your beautiful art work.



You can find the sign-up sheets in the lobby or call the church office.

Thank you to all of our volunteers. You are greatly appreciated!

SCRIPTURES FOR APRIL

APRIL 7	ACTS 1:1-14; MARK 16:9-20
APRIL 14	ACTS 3:1-10; EZEKIEL 47:1-12
APRIL 21	ACTS 17:1-9; 1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-22
APRIL 28	ACTS 18:1-11; 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-31

It takes a congregation to run a church, Thank You go to:

- To Women's Fellowship and all who cooked and baked for making the Cookie Walk a success!
- To Bill W., Neil F. and Paul L. for shoveling snow.
- To Growing Faith Students, Neil F., Terry M., Rob W., and Kathy G. for serving as worship leaders.
- To Michele and Linden O., The Godfreys, The Legerskis, Lynne F., Liz S., Rie H., and Men's Fellowship for hosting fellowship hour.
- To Mary Ruth P for displaying are in the narthex.
- To those who taught Sunday School.
- To the whole congregation for preparing the Easter Egg Hunt
- To all who have donated funds to the food pantry budget which refilled the pantry.

Thank
You



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

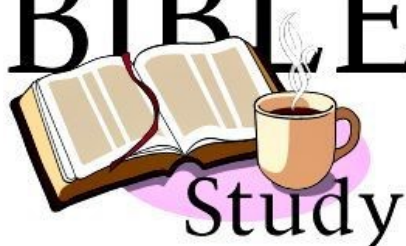
April 11th
AT 6:30 P.M.
AT THE CHURCH.
ALL MEN ARE
WELCOME TO JOIN!

Mission Activity

During fellowship on April 21 we will put together care packages for students and service members connected to our congregation, to lift them up before finals! More will be revealed in the Mission Moment on April 14th.

COME JOIN OUR

BIBLE



Study

We are meeting
Mondays at
2 PM.
**PLEASE JOIN
US!**

988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

Intermountain Association Meeting April 12th

Our Association will be holding its Spring Meeting on Zoom on April 12th at 10 am. This is a time of fellowship with other UCC congregations in the region. We also have business to tend to such as continuing to discern how we want to work together as a Church witness to the area now that we do not have the responsibility of a Church and Ministry Committee. The Association also has the responsibility of nominating representatives to serve on Conference Committees such as Finance and Budget, Personnel, and Committee on Ministry. You do not have to attend Association meetings to serve on Conference committees, you just have to be a member of FCC. FCC is represented at the Association meeting by Jan Z. (who is also the Association Secretary) and Penni H. if you might also be interested in zooming into the Association meeting to learn more, please let Pastor Kelli know.

Annual Celebration of the Rocky Mountain Conference

The Annual Celebration will be held at La Foret Conference Center in Colorado Springs, June 6-8th. FCC has already elected two representatives for this meeting. If any other members are interested in attending please speak to Pastor Kelli.

Garden

Our Garden Committee is aiming to put soil in the raised bed on April 21. Join us after fellowship at the garden to celebrate Earth Day!



One Great HOUR OF SHARING

Our congregation sent in \$947.50 for the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering! This offering supports disaster relief, refugee resettlement, and development ministries around the world. It is one of our "5 for 5" offerings.

Steve and I send our heartfelt "thanks" to the prayer warriors out there that supported and sustained us through Steve's recent health scare. He is now home recovering and regaining his strength.

PS- Men's Fellowship-he promises to bring snacks to a future meeting!

-Diana W.