



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

# The Epistle

March 2026

"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

*"But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'"*  
~Matthew 14:27

The message "do not be afraid" appears in the scriptures almost more than any other. (It has been said that caring for the poor is the only thing we are told to do more often in the scripture than not to fear.) We have entered the season of Lent, a season in which we prepare once again to be witnesses of the Crucified and Risen Christ.

"Do not be afraid" is what the angel tells Joseph about marrying the pregnant Mary. "Do not be afraid" is what the transfigured Jesus tells the disciples on the mountain top. "Do not be afraid" is what Jesus tells the disciples when he walks on water and they assume he is a ghost. "Do not be afraid" is what the angels say to the women who find the tomb empty. "Do not be afraid" is what the Risen Christ says to the disciples.

Throughout scripture God, the angels, and Jesus Christ all tell us not to be afraid. Sometimes that is easier to say than it is to do. We live in a world in which many are afraid. People who live in poverty fear losing housing or having enough to eat. People worry about their health and losing their lives. People worry about speaking out for justice. The world we live in gives us reason to worry, and even to fear. There is very little help for those who lose their housing. It can start a spiral that takes a long time to recover from. People worry about health crises that can affect not only their physical but also financial health. These are all valid worries and concerns.

When we are afraid it is often because we feel alone, or forgotten, or ignored. The divine interjects itself into these moments of life and death, awe and fear and tells us "do not fear". It is a reminder that come what may--health, wealth, unimaginable violence, or unimaginable awe. God is with us. Which does not mean everything will be as we wish, but it does mean we will never have reason to fear because we are not alone!

Be of Good Courage,

Pastor Kelli

1275 Adams Ave  
Rock Springs, WY 82901  
307-362-3530

Church Email: [churchfirstrock@gmail.com](mailto:churchfirstrock@gmail.com)  
[www.firstrockucc.org](http://www.firstrockucc.org)

Office Hours: Mon 3:30-4:30 Tues-Thurs 12:30-4:30

Worship: Sunday 10:30 a.m.

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:  
MONDAY 3:30-4:30 PM, TUESDAY-THURSDAY 12:30-4:30 PM**

# *March 2026*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <b>WORSHIP</b> <b>10:30 AM</b> <b>GROWING FAITH</b> <b>NOISY CHANGE</b>	<b>2</b> <b>BIBLE STUDY</b> <b>2PM</b>  <b>LENTEN STUDY</b> <b>6PM @ HC</b>	<b>3</b>  <b>Prayer Shawl Group</b> <b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>  <b>DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME</b> <b>SET CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR AT BEDTIME!</b>
<b>8</b> <b>DECONS</b> <b>9:15 AM</b>  <b>WORSHIP</b> <b>10:30 AM</b>  <b>MOO OPEN HOUSE</b> <b>12-2 PM</b>	<b>9</b> <b>WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> <b>BIBLE STUDY</b> <b>2PM</b> <b>LENTEN STUDY</b> <b>6PM @ HC</b>	<b>10</b>  <b>Prayer Shawl Group</b> <b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>  <b>MEN'S FELLOWSHIP</b> <b>6:30 PM FH</b>	<b>13</b>  <b>FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES FUNDRAISER</b> <b>5-9 PM @PARISH CENTER</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b>  <b>WORSHIP</b> <b>10:30 AM</b>  <b>MISSIONS</b> <b>11:45</b>	<b>16</b>  <b>BIBLE STUDY</b> <b>2 PM</b>  <b>LENTEN STUDY</b> <b>6PM @ HC</b>	<b>17</b>  <b>Prayer Shawl Group</b> <b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>  <b>TRUSTEES</b> <b>6:30 pm</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b>  <b>WORSHIP</b> <b>10:30 AM</b>  <b>ST. CHRIS HYWY</b> <b>5PM @HC</b>	<b>23</b>  <b>BIBLE STUDY</b> <b>2 PM</b>  <b>LENTEN STUDY</b> <b>6PM @ HC</b>	<b>24</b>  <b>Prayer Shawl Group</b> <b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>25</b>  <b>COUNCIL</b> <b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>26</b>  <b>PUB THEOLOGY</b> <b>NELL'S CAFE</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b>  <b>WORSHIP</b> <b>10:30 AM</b>  <b>EASTER CANDY DUE</b>	<b>30</b>  <b>BIBLE STUDY</b> <b>2 PM</b>  <b>LENTEN STUDY</b> <b>6PM @ HC</b>	<b>31</b>  <b>Prayer Shawl Group</b> <b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>WEEKLY CHURCH USE:</b> <b>LA HERMOSA– TH 7:00 PM ;</b> <b>SAT &amp; SUN 3:00 PM</b> <b>BOY SCOUT TROOP 4– TUES 6:00 PM</b> <b>MIA'S LEARNING TREE: MON-FRI 8-2 P.M.</b>			

|-----RAYCHELLE ON VACATION-----|

## Save the dates:

**April 2, 2026**

Maundy Thursday--Simple Supper at 6 pm  
Worship in Fellowship Hall 7pm

**April 3, 2026**

Good Friday Worship at Holy Communion 7pm

**April 5, 2026**

Easter Worship 10:30 am  
Easter Egg Hunt to follow

**April 26, 2026**

Pastor Jenny's last Sunday at Union  
Congregational Church, Green River

## **Congratulations Mount of Olives!**

Mount of Olives Lutheran Church  
will celebrate their 50th  
Anniversary on March 8th.  
Worship at 10:30,  
Open House noon-2pm.  
RSVP to Mark Kot.



## Sermons

Pastor Kelli has started providing printed  
copies of the sermon for those who find  
that helpful. If you are not able to join us  
on Sunday mornings and you would like the  
sermons please contact the church office.

## Football Square Winners!

Thank you to everyone who bought a square  
on the SuperBowl Board! This has become  
our most popular fundraiser for the  
discretionary fund! The winners this year  
were Robin R., Sharon P., Amy R., &  
Deanne A. Congratulations to them!

**Please sign up to shovel snow,  
lead worship, host coffee hour,  
or share your art!**



## **WORSHIP & SCRIPTURES FOR MARCH**

**March 1, 2026**

Romans 5:1-11

John 3:1-21

**March 8, 2026**

John 4:5-42

Exodus 17:1-7

**March 15, 2026**

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

**March 22, 2026**

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

**March 29, 2026**

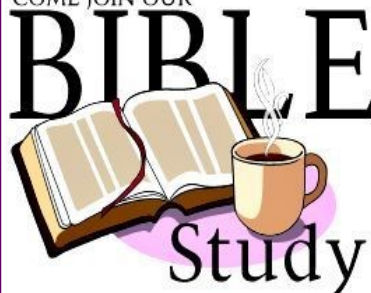
Matthew 21:1-11

Matthew 26:14-27:66

## Lenten Study

We will gather with Holy Communion Episcopal Church, and Mt. of Olives Lutheran Church for a Lenten study. Monday nights, February 23rd-March 23 at Holy Communion's Parish Hall. We will be reading Meeting Jesus at the Table by Cynthia Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr. We will meet for dinner at 6pm and start the book discussion at 6:30.

COME JOIN OUR



The Bible Study group is meeting  
on Mondays at 2pm.  
We are reading Psalms.  
Please join us!

## IT TAKES A WHOLE COMMUNITY TO RUN OUR CHURCH! MANY THANKS TO...

- ◆ Growing Faith, Terry M. & Mary Ruth P. for being worship leaders.
- ◆ Jan Z., Joy C., Kathy G., Amy R. and Bill & Cheryl Willmetti for hosting fellowship.
- ◆ Terry M for displaying John Bunning's art in February
- ◆ All those who give to the food pantry.
- ◆ To all those who bought and sold Super Bowl squares!
- ◆ Bill W., Paul L., John R. for removing snow.

Thank  
you



### MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

March 12th

6:30 PM

All men welcome to join

### Food Pantry

The food pantry continues to be called upon by local residents. It is pretty well stocked at the moment. Spaghetti sauce and canned fruits would be helpful if you are looking to donate items. We are well stocked for items for those living in hotels and traveling. We are out of tampons, which is the most requested item, but we do have a supply of pads. No hygiene drive is planned at this time.



Don't forget to....



Spring Forward!

Spring Ahead Daylight Savings begins Sunday, **March 8th**. Be sure to set your clock one hour ahead when you go to bed Saturday night, or you'll miss church all together. Oh no! You don't want to do that!

## Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will meet March 9, at 12:00 pm.  
All our welcome!



### FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES!

First Congregational Church and a few other congregations in town are known for helping those in need. The Sweetwater Family Resource Center (SFRC) is a secular service agency funded by many different grants that helps many families in need. They have helped thousands of families with housing needs, utility bills, prescriptions, bus tickets, and more. They also provide supervised visitation for families who need that support. We often ask people in need to seek assistance from the SFRC before they come to the church for assistance. SFRC runs out of funds about once a year. Local churches discussed this and decided that it was worth our time to raise money for the SFRC so they could help local residents in need, and thus free up the time individual congregations spent doing this.

Churches Together, a network of Rock Springs congregations, will be holding a fundraiser called "Families Helping Families" on Friday, March 13th at the Parish Center to benefit SFRC. The event includes dinner (Fish and Chips by the Knights of Columbus, Mac and Cheese for those who don't eat fish), arts and crafts, a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, and musical performance by the EIO Band. Individual tickets are \$17, Family tickets are \$45. Please join us! If you can not attend you can still donate through FCC--mark it in the memo line of your check please!

# Families Helping Families Dinner & Crafts Fundraiser

SUPPORTING THE  
SWEETWATER FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

March 13<sup>th</sup> 5-9 PM  
624 Bridger Avenue  
\$17/person or \$45/ Family



PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND PLAN TO ATTEND A FISH FRY OR MACARONI AND CHEESE DINNER & CRAFT NIGHT SPONSORED BY CHURCHES TOGETHER TO HELP RAISE MONEY FOR THE SWEETWATER FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER. MEAL & 2 CRAFT ACTIVITIES ARE INCLUDED. SILENT AUCTION AND 50/50 RAFFLES WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE.



To donate please scan QR code

We need Easter candy to fill plastic eggs for our hunt on Easter Sunday. If your able please bring some to the church by March 29th.



## Prayer Shawl Group

*Create with your hands. Share with your heart.*

Join us every Tuesday at 1:30 PM

Shawls are lovingly made, blessed, and then delivered to the person or organization of your choice.

- All levels are welcome
- Knitters, crocheters, and weavers invited
- Materials optional—bring your own or just come learn
- Community, creativity, and compassion

First Congregational Church  
1275 Adams Ave., Rock Springs, WY

*Come for fellowship, stay for purpose.*

Everyone is welcome  
307-362-3530

## Rocky Mountain Conference

Our congregation is a member of the Rocky Mountain Conference of the UCC. The Rocky Mountain Conference is made up of 73 UCC congregations in Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado. As our Transitional Conference Minister, Rev. Erin Gilmore tells us WE are the conference. There are many ways to be involved with the work of our conference. The best way to start to is find out what is going on. Visit <https://rmcucc.org/get-connected/> to find out about the many ways to be involved in our conference or to just sign up for the conference newsletter. Did you know our Conference is looking for people to serve on the search committee for a new Conference Minister? Pray about if that is something you might be called to do. Let Pastor Kelli know if you are interested.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response. One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be March 15.



## COLLECTING CANS AND BOTTLES

We continue to collect cans and bottles for recycling. Please bring in rinsed-out food cans--we actually get a higher price for these than the drink cans. 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.\*



**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.**

**988**  
SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

The Trevor Project has stepped up to provide a suicide prevention hotline tailored to the needs of the LGBTQIA2+ community. Trevor Project: text 'START' to 678-678 or phone 1-866-488-7386.

**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

**St. Christopher's Highway Needs Volunteers!**  
**Please reach out to Pastor Kelli if you can volunteer to help this ministry!**

## UPDATES ON CHURCH BOARDS

Each January we elect members to our church boards. The boards run the church for the year. When the boards meet in February they choose their Chair for the year.

The Trustees are the legal representatives of the church. They are in charge of our building and budget issues. Trustees have decided not to name a Chair this year. There are only three Trustees and they would welcome more. Trustees include Jan Z., Rob W, and Liz S.. Trustees meet monthly on the third Thursday at 6:30 PM.

The Diaconate helps us with worship each week doing the many things you may not even notice need to be done, and they provide input into adult educational offerings. Diaconate includes Bill W., Marie H., Carol L., Penni H., and Amy R. Amy will be the Chair this year. Diaconate meets monthly before worship on the second Sunday.

The Growing Faith Board oversees Sunday School. They also help with Confirmation, Graduation, Mother's Day, and Father's Day celebrations. Cheryl is the leader of this Board and she could use a few other members. Growing Faith meets as needed.

The Mission Board helps with the Mission and Outreach of the congregation. This board is made up of Penni H., Paul L., Cheri H., Diana W., and Sharon P. They have a busy year planned and will ask for your help from time to time. Penni is the Chair. Mission meets monthly after church on the third Sunday.

Each of these boards sends a representative to Church Council. Church Council includes our Moderator Michele O., Vice Moderator Joy C., Clerk Liz S., At-Large member Linden O. and a member from each board. Church Council meets the fourth Wednesday of the month and we are still looking for another at-large member, please let us know if you'd like to be involved!

## FAITH AND SERVICE AWARD 2025

Each year, usually at our Annual Meeting we give a Faith and Service Award to a member of the congregation who has shown dedication to the church in extraordinary ways. Two awards were given for 2025. Joy C. and Kathy G. each received the award for their service to the congregation and the community.