



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

The Epistle

July 2024

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

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



★ Pondering Pastor Reflects on RMC Annual Celebration ★

★ This year Kathy G., Jan Z., Jacean G., and Pastor Kelli attended the Rocky Mountain Conference (RMC) Annual Celebration at the RMC Camp La Foret in the Black Forest of Colorado. Our congregation is part of the Rocky Mountain Conference. It is a "celebration" because we come together to celebrate our covenant with other congregations and the conference. Jacean G. spoke to you in worship about his experience with the youth track of the meeting. Personally, I have to say that the closing worship that was designed and led by our youth was one of the highlights! Another was seeing La Foret where I had never been. It is truly a special place.

★ Each year we have a business meeting at Annual Celebration. This year the business meeting went smoothly even if the financial news was not great. Our Conference is operating with a budget that has a \$153,121 deficit. The Conference approved a proposed plan to have Rev. Erin Gilmore serve as our Acting Conference Minister for the next three years as the Conference explores what type of leadership it wants and needs going forward.

★ What church looks like in the future is very much a question the Conference has been wrestling with. Part of this is because the pandemic changed many things about society including how people relate to church. Declining finances across all settings of the church is another trend. That led to a presentation by Rev. Dr. Courtney Stange-Tregear, Vice President, Chief Relationship Officer of Cornerstone Fund. She spoke about "God's Math" and how churches are leveraging their investments and property to build housing and other projects for the good of their communities and their budgets. Often talks about money at church lead to despair, but she led us to hope.

★ This year's Annual Celebration's theme was "Blessed Flexibility" We spoke about how to be church into the future and we celebrated 50 years of the Rocky Mountain Conference. The subtheme was that "its a lot" to be church but all that is worth it to do the mission God is calling us to.

★ Part of the mission the Conference felt called to was to create a statement to respond in real time to a Colorado political leader's call for violence at Pride events and the burning of Pride flags. The RMC condemned that idea. The statement has been signed by hundreds of people in the Conference. It is posted on our bulletin board.

★ In covenant, Pastor Kelli Parrish Lucas



1275 Adams Ave
Rock Springs, WY 82901
307-362-3530
Office Hours: Mon 3:30-4:30 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

July 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 BIBLE STUDY 2PM	2	3	4 OFFICE CLOSED!	5	6
7 WORSHIP 10:30 AM GROWING FAITH SUNDAY NOISY CHANGE MISSIONS AFTER WORSHIP	8 BIBLE STUDY 2 PM	9	10 ---RayChelle Gone---	11 Men's Fellowship 6:30 pm	12	13
14 WORSHIP 10:30 AM	15 BIBLE STUDY 2PM	16 ---RayChelle Gone---	17 TRUSTEE MEETING 5PM	18	19	20
21 WORSHIP 10:30 AM CONGREGA- TIONAL MEETING TO FOLLOW	22 BIBLE STUDY 2 PM	23	24 TRUSTEE MEETING 5PM COUNCIL 6PM	25 Fellowship Dinner 6 PM	26	27
28 WORSHIP 10:30 AM	29 BIBLE STUDY 2PM	30	31	WEEKLY CHURCH USE: LA HERMOSA- TH 7:00 PM, SAT & SUN 3:00 PM BOYSCOUTS- TUES 6:00 PM MIA's LEARNING TREE: Mon-Fri 8 am-2 pm		

FCC represented for the Rock Springs City Proclamation of June as Pride Month



RS Pride Supply Drive 2024

What did we collect?

- 280 liners
- 208 tampons
- 108 pads
- 72 rolls of toilet paper
- 36 adult diapers
- 30 rolls of paper towels
- 12 toothpastes
- 12 deodorants
- beauty items
- 8 containers of floss
- 7 shampoos, 5 travel size
- 6 toothbrushes
- 6 soap boxes and bars of soap
- 6 sunscreen tubes
- 6 perfumes
- 4 razors
- 2 lotions
- 2 packs of baby wipes
- 1 sugar scrub
- 1 oral anesthetic
- 1 pack child diapers
- 1 pack of Clorox wipes

Where did it go?

- Sweetwater County Food Bank
- YWCA Women's shelter
- YWCA Youth Home
- Diaper Bank / United Way
- First Congregational Church



ROCK SPRINGS PRIDE



GREEN RIVER PRIDE



Save the dates!

August 4 Red Canyon Worship! (No worship at FCC)

August 9-10 Intermountain Association of the UCC meets in Green River

August 11 Back to School Sunday

August 20 FCC will be a polling place for the primary election.
VOTE!



Community Garden!

The first raised garden bed was completed in April. May brought the installation of deer fencing, shade cloth, gate, and the first planting of the garden! Stop by and peek in at the growing plants!

Drip irrigation has been installed to the garden and the trees around the labyrinth.

Thank you to the Visioning Committee for bringing us the project and to Linden O., and Paul L. for completing the fencing and irrigation!



**It's that time of year again!
Please sign up to Mow the Lawn!**



Food Pantry

We have not given an update on the food pantry in a few months. We continue to average 24 requests for food feeding about 70 people a month. Each request is responded to with pantry food for 3 to 4 meals for the family size requesting help. At this time the food pantry is adequately stocked. We currently have donations from church and non-church community members coming in on a regular basis. Current funds will allow us to restock as needed. One thing just donated that we were out of is plastic utensils for those without a place to cook. Thank you to the "cereal fairy" and the "pasta fairy" who restock those items as needed. Thank you for giving space to this ministry.

Please Pay Per Capita Dues!

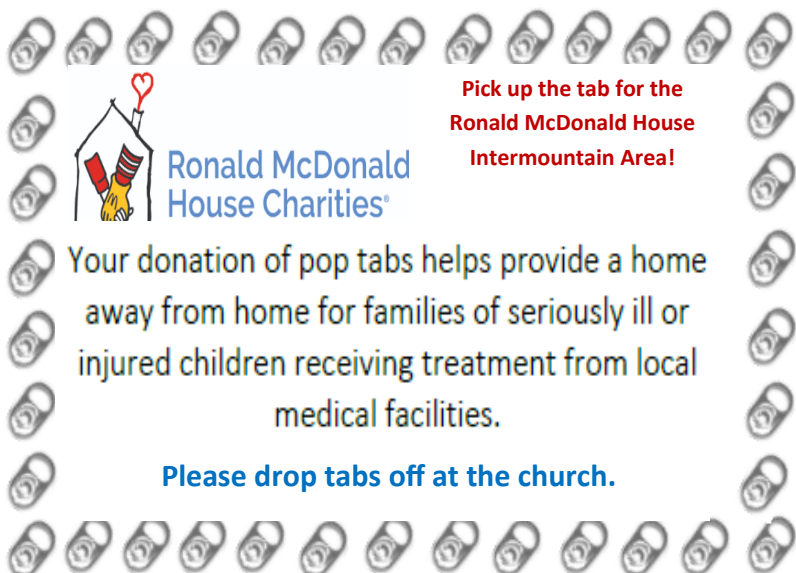
FCC pays \$15 per member per year to the Rocky Mountain Conference. We also pay \$2 per member per year to the Intermountain Association. These are our dues to the wider church and one of the ways we live our covenant. We ask all members of the church to pay \$17 in per capita per year so we don't have to pull the funds out of our budget.



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.



Did you Know?



Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for 3 hours

Or a 100 watt bulb for almost an entire day



Please Recycle!

Flaming Gorge Bus Tour

If you would like to take a tour of Flaming Gorge, Women's Fellowship is trying to get a group rate for a tour on Sept 14th. Several stops, lunch, and snacks would be included in the cost. We have an interest list going to see if we can get 20 people to do a group rate, so price TBD. Please contact Diana or call the office if you would like to join us. You do not need to be a member of the church or Women's Fellowship to join us.



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Thursday, July 11
6:30 PM

SCRIPTURES FOR JULY

JULY 7 Psalm 25 James 5:13-18

JULY 14 Psalm 137 2 Corinthians 1:8-11

JULY 21 Psalm 37 Matthew 5:5 and 12:33-37

JULY 28 1 Sam 12: 19:25 and Matthew 5: 38-48

In Memory of

Dr. Thomas E. Spicer

July 4, 1948 – June 15, 2024

Women's Fellowship



Joy will be hosting this month.
Please stay tuned for date & time.


Thank you

It takes a congregation to run a church
Thank You's go to:

- ♦ To Paul L. and Linden O. for working on the sprinkler system in the backyard.
- ♦ To John A. for providing art for the narthex.
- ♦ To Growing Faith, Penni H., and Mary Ruth P. for being worship leader
- ♦ To Rie H., Amy R., Jan Z., and Kim R. for hosting fellowship.
- ♦ To Jana E. for hosting Women's Fellowship.

COME JOIN OUR

BIBLE



Study

We are reading
the Book of
Deuteronomy.
**JOIN US MONDAYS
AT 2:00 PM!**

**NOISY CHANGE
SUNDAY IS NOW THE
1ST SUNDAY OF THE
MONTH!**



From the Mission Board by Penni H., Chair

Global Ministries

Did you know that each week our Global Ministries highlights one of the ministries that UCC is involved with around the world? Each week we are invited to pray with and for them. Check it out here: https://www.globalministries.org/topic/weekly_prayers/

National Mission Moment

<https://www.ucc.org/our-faith-our-vote/>

I feel that the most important mission we have at a national level right now is our right and responsibility as citizens to be informed voters. The votes you cast in the local races are often as important as the state and national races. Your county commissioners, school boards, and other local elected officials could have a profound effect on your community and the regulations you may have to live by. So, it is your mission to educate yourself about the candidates and issues that you will be voting for. AND then make sure you vote.

Local Mission Moment--Our own Pastor's Discretionary Fund

Our church is known in our community for the assistance we have been able to provide to residents in their time of emergency need. Our community outreach has, as has many other organizations, been stretched to its limits this past year. Money is tight! Costs are going up and the need is greater. Hotel rates have doubled and there is a significant lack of affordable housing in Sweetwater County. (This actually is a statewide problem.) It is our goal to be good stewards of the resources we have--to use your generosity as you would expect us to. We are no longer providing hotel assistance unless there is a weather emergency requiring shelter. Unless there is a heat emergency we are not housing people in motels when the weather is warm. When temperatures are freezing that assistance will be considered on a one-on-one basis. Rent assistance will be at a maximum of \$300 and then only if an eviction notice has been issued. We will provide information about the soup kitchen and offer canned food from our food pantry so that people can eat in their car or use our beautiful parks for their meals. Assistance to individuals is limited...1x every 6 months and records are kept to ensure that is enforced.

This year a congregation member donated \$100 of recreation center passes so that individuals could use the facilities for showering and personal grooming. That, and something like that, would be a good way to help the work of this fund. Also, we are asking for your help to find ideas for raising money--ideally it would be something that would involve the entire community so that the entire burden of financial support would not be on the shoulders of our congregation. If you have any thoughts and/or ideas about how to do this, you may speak to any Mission Board member and, of course, to Pastor Kelli.

One thing that all of us can do is to pray...pray that we will be able to continue this important project. Pray that God will lead us in our endeavors. Pray that we will make choices that reflect the values of our church and show the love of Christ. We can ALL pray!