



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

# The Epistle

## January 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**

*He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly (Luke 1:52)*

If you were able to be in church on the morning of Christmas Eve you witnessed the baptism of two young women. As they prepared for baptism, it occurred to me that remembering our baptism may be the best resolution for the new year.

What if we all went into 2024 determined to live out our baptismal promises? Whenever a person is baptized or confirmed they make promises to God and to the Church universal. (When we baptize babies the parents make those promises on behalf of the child.)

The first thing we ask at baptism is if someone wants to be part of the faith and family of God. What if this year, we recommitted ourselves to spending time with God either by ourselves, or in community at church? What if we committed ourselves to doing something new in the church community we had not done before, like joining a fellowship, study, or church board?

The next thing we ask those being baptized is if they renounce the power of evil and desire new life in Christ. What if we took that on for our task in 2024? What might it mean to renounce evil and turn toward the power of Christ in our daily life? We’d first have to define evil, which we can’t do in this space. But what if we rededicated ourselves to renouncing oppression like poverty, hopelessness, and exclusion? We find those almost everywhere in Rock Springs and the world beyond. How can we resist those? What if we sought just one answer to this in 2024?

Finally, we ask those being baptized if they profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It’s no small ask. Professing Jesus as Lord means accepting Jesus has spiritual and social power on earth and heaven. Professing Jesus’ power is a radical thing to do; it suggests that there is a power more powerful than those who think they have power in the world. Sometimes just suggesting that the powerful are not as powerful as they think can still get us into trouble. In the UCC we call that “good trouble.” It is the kind that Mary foresaw as she awaited the birth of Jesus. But what if we did that, too? What if we realized that God’s vision of the world, and our lives, was more important than any vision a human being had about it?

My New Year’s wish is that we all might ponder and live out our baptismal promises.

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

# January 2024

Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat

	1 <b>OFFICE CLOSED NO BIBLE STUDY</b>	2	3	4 <b>COUNCIL 6PM</b>	5	6 <b>ST. CHRIS. HYWY MEETING 10 AM @ HC</b>
7 <b>WORSHIP 10:30 AM GROWING FAITH SUNDAY NOISY CHANGE</b>	8 <b>Women's fellowship NOON BIBLE STUDY 2 PM</b>	9	10 <b>Youth Bible Study 4:30</b>	11 <b>MEN'S FELLOWSHIP 6:30 PM</b>	12	13
14 <b>DEACONS 9:15 AM WORSHIP 10:30 AM</b>	15 <b>OFFICE CLOSED BIBLE STUDY 2 PM</b>	16	17 <b>Youth Bible Study 4:30 Fellowship Dinner 6 PM @ Marty's</b>	18	19	20
21 <b>WORSHIP 10:30 AM MISSIONS AFTER WORSHIP</b>	22 <b>BIBLE STUDY 2 PM</b>	23	24 <b>TRUSTEES 3PM Youth Bible Study 4:30</b>	25 <b>PUB THEOLOGY 6PM LOS CABOS</b>	26	27
28 <b>WORSHIP 10:30 AM POTLUCK &amp; ANNUAL MEETING</b>	29 <b>BIBLE STUDY 2 PM</b>	30	31 <b>Youth Bible Study 4:30</b>	<b>WEEKLY CHURCH USE: LA HERMOSA- TH 7:00 PM, SAT &amp; SUN 3:00 PM BOYSCOUTS- TUES 6:00 PM CUBSCOUTS- WED 5:30 PM MIA's LEARNING TREE: Mon-Fri 8 am-2 pm</b>		

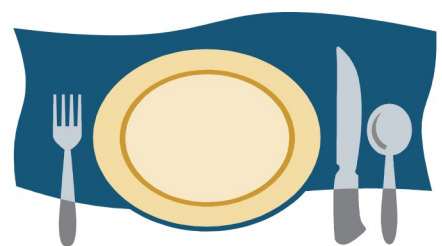
We would love the extra help taking down Christmas decorations after worship on January 7th.

## Women's Fellowship



**JANUARY 8TH AT NOON**

Women's Fellowship will meet at noon. Please bring a lunch. Dessert will be provided. All women welcome!



FELLOWSHIP  
*Dinner*

**Wednesday,  
January 17th  
@ 6pm @ Marty's.**



**Pub Theology  
JANUARY 25TH  
@ 6PM**

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

**ANNUAL MEETING  
JANUARY 28  
AFTER WORSHIP!**

### Would you like to Serve as a Deacon?

Our Deacons help lead the worship life of our congregation. They meet monthly to review plans for special services and special Lent/Advent events. They ensure that we have worship leaders and fellowship hosts. They check our worship candles to make sure the candles have enough oil, light the candles prior to services, and put them out at the end of services. They also turn on the sound system and hand out bulletins. Usually the deacons take turns doing this each Sunday, and sometimes they each do this for a month at a time.



We have some people who have agreed to serve as Deacons for the coming year. (We even have enough Deacons to meet the requirements of our by-laws.) However, experience tells us it is always better to have more Deacons. If you are interested in serving as a Deacon, or if you simply would be willing to do the Deacon duties on a Sunday but prefer not to serve on the board, please let Pastor Kelli know.

## Please sign up to shovel snow!

Sooner or later we will need help shoveling snow at the church. We shovel seven days of the week when needed to assist the preschool and other groups using the building. It works best if the office knows who to call when it needs to be shoveled. Please sign up for a week when you might be able to shovel snow from the walks at church, if needed.



**Pastor on vacation is coming.  
Pastor Kelli is planning to leave the snow for a week!  
Dates have been set for February 1-7th!**



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.

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!

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

## 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.\*



## SCRIPTURES FOR DECEMBER

JANUARY 7- MARK 2:1-22 & ACTS 10:34-43

JANUARY 14- Mark 4: 21-34  
Ezekiel 17:22-24

JANUARY 21- MARK 5:1-20 & 1 SAM 10:1-8

JANUARY 28- MARK 5:21-43 & 1 KINGS 17:17-24

# Thank You!

## THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

To the Trustees for completing the radon mitigation at the parsonage.

To Cheryl W. for helping with baptism preparations.

To Liz F. for loaning us a "font" for immersion baptism.

To John A. for displaying his art and calligraphy on the baptism certificates.

To Mary P., Michele O., Jeremiah F., and Julie G. for serving as worship leaders.

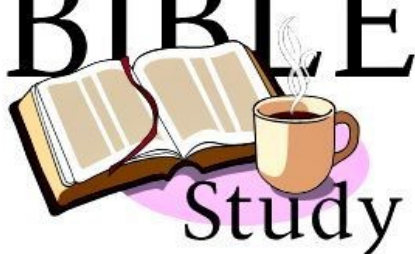
To Rie H., The Fennells, Joy C., Jana E., Cheryl W., and Sharon P. for hosting Fellowship.

To Mary Ruth P., Pastor Kelli, and Cheri H. for cleaning the church while Julie was on vacation.

To the Sunday School and parents for the Christmas Tableau

COME JOIN OUR

# BIBLE



## Study

PLEASE JOIN US!

We are meeting Mondays at 2 PM. We are currently reading The Gospel of Luke.



## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

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



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