

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

The Epistle

October 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

So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.~ James 2:17

I have been thinking about numbers. And I don't mean the Book of Numbers in the Bible (this time). I have been thinking about how we as people quantify things to show that actions, or missions, or ministry have worth. I like spreadsheets, information, and data. I recently printed out a spreadsheet for our Mission Board so they would have an idea of how many requests our food pantry is getting and what the discretionary fund is used for.

The problem with numbers though is that they don't tell stories as well as we think they do. I can look at that mission spreadsheet and tell you our congregation helped pay two utility bills, but that won't tell you the story that got utility service turned back on for 13 people. We can look to see how many people request food from the food pantry, but that won't tell you the story of how another pastor came to me and told me how a family that picked up food from our pantry requested prayers of thanksgiving for that food at the other church's Sunday morning service. I think often of a woman who called sobbing for help with utility bills a few years ago, and how being able to help her with that and seemed to me to be suicide prevention. I think often of the man who died under the bridge last winter because he had no funds for a hotel and didn't feel he could go home. As the only congregation in Rock Springs that formally welcomes LGBTQIA people, I don't think we can ever know the numbers of lives we touch, or save.

When I say I have been thinking about numbers, what I mean is I have been thinking about all the stories that numbers don't tell. The season will soon be upon us to talk about stewardship for the coming church year. Often we forget that behind the numbers of our church budget are many stories that don't show up as line items in the church budget. The benefit that families get from Mia's Learning Tree Preschool's affordable use of our building does not appear in our line item for utilities. The time RayChelle and I spend answering the phone, filling food bags, and paying bills for those in need does not show up in our line item for personnel. Numbers are important only because of the stories they point to. Stories that are important to understanding how we live our faith.

In Mission, Pastor Kelli

> 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 <u>www.firstrockucc.org</u> Twitter: **@ChurchFirstRock** Worship: Sunday 10:30 a.m.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

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

October 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 WORSHIP 10:30 AM GROWING FAITH SUNDAY NOISY CHANGE 5for5 LUNCH AFTER	7 BIBLE STUDY 3 PM	8	9	Men's Fellowship 6:30 pm	11	12
13 BLESSING OF THE PETS WORSHIP 10:30 AM	14 WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NOON BIBLE STUDY 2PM	15	16 CHURCHES TOGETHER MEETING 6:30 PM FELLOWSHIP HALL	17	18	19
20 WORSHIP 10:30 AM MISSIONS 11:15 AM STROLL CANDY DONATIONS DUE	21	22 ————PASTO	23 TRUSTEE MEETING 5PM COUNCIL 6PM OR KELLI GONE	24	25	26 HALLOWEEN STROLL BROADWAY BARGAINS DOWNTOWN 10AM
27 WORSHIP 10:30 AM	28 BIBLE STUDY 2PM	29	30 BAZAAR BASKETS DUE	31	LA HERMOSA SAT & SUI BOYSCOUTS- MIA's LEAR	IURCH USE: – TH 7:00 PM, N 3:00 PM TUES 6:00 PM NING TREE: 30 AM– 2:00 PM

Sloppy Joe Luncheon

Supporting our

5 for 5 Mission Offerings

Hosted by: Mission Board
October 6th—After Worship
First Congregational Church UCC
1275 Adams Ave. Bock Springs

FREE WILL OFFERING

All donotions will benefit our 5 for 5 Mission Offerings



(Neighbors in Need: supports in direct service by UCC congregations, and the Council for American Indian Ministries, Christmas Fund Offering, supporting retired clergy and church employees on limited income, Strengthen the Church, supporting youth ministry and church renewal, and One Great Hour of Sharing: supporting global missions disaster relief, and refugees.)

Can you help cook?

The Mission Board needs 1-3 people to help cook for the 5 for 5 Luncheon.

We will be cooking Saturday
October 5th at 10am!
Let Penni H. or Pastor Kelli know
if you can help!

Save the dates

November 3- All Saints Sunday, please bring a

photo of your loved one who has

entered the heavenly kingdom.

November 6- St Christopher meeting at Holy

Communion 7pm

November 9- "Celebrating Jesus through Art and

Music" at LDS Church on Edgar

November 16- Holiday Harvest Bazaar!

November 27- Thanksgiving Eve Service 7pm

Worship and Scriptures for October

October 6— Mark 10: 13-16 and Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-13

October 13— Genesis 2:18-24 and Hebrews 4:12-16

October 20— Job 38:1-7, 34-41 and Hebrews 5:1-10

October 27— TBD



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Thursday October 10th 6:30 PM



GATHERING OCTOBER 14 AT NOON

Women's Fellowship met Sept 9th to organize and plan the Fall Bazaar. This year, the bazaar will be held on **Nov. 16th from 10:30-1:30.**Lunch will be served for both seated and carry out.

In order to promote and display raffle baskets (pictured on our ticket sales flyer), baskets to be included in the raffle must be in the church office by **Wednesday, Oct. 30th** at noon. Baskets coming in after

the deadline will be priced to sell at the bazaar or placed in a silent auction.



It takes a congregation to run a church Thank Yous go to:

Kailyn G. for displaying her art in the Narthex.

Sharon P., Growing Faith, Kathy G., and Mary Ruth P. for being worship leaders.

Cheryl and Bill W., Jeremy and Amy W., our Youth, and Rie for helping hosting Fellowship.

Paul L., Linden O., John C., and Bill W. for helping keep up the grounds.







We are reading the Gospel of John.

JOIN US MONDAYS AT 2:00 PM!

NO BIBLE STUDY OCTOBER 21



Blessing of the Pets

OCTOBER 13, 2024 10:30 AM WORSHIP

First Congregational Church UCC 1275 Adams Ave, Rock Springs

You are invited to bring well-behaved pets for a blessing. If you wish to not bring your pet a picture of your animal friends are welcome to be blessed.

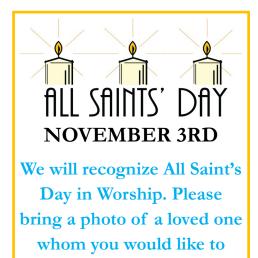
Our worship will focus on our connection with animals.



BROADWAY STROLL

Each year the community has a Broadway Stroll so kids can safely trick or treat from the businesses along Broadway Ave. Broadway Bargains is one of the stores that hands out candy, if you have any candy to donate please bring it to church by Sunday, October 20th.





remember in worship.

www.everythingbagsinc.com

An aluminum can that is thrown away today will still be an aluminum can 500 years from now

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT





500 YEARS LATER..

Food Pantry Update!

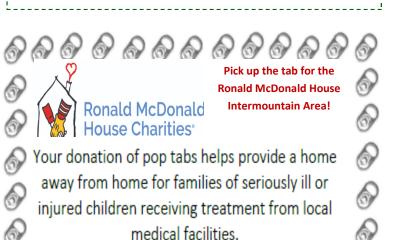
Thank you for your continued support of the food pantry. People outside the congregation continue to support the pantry as well. We have funds and are expecting a case sale to stock up for the winter. Should the case sale start and you'd like to pick something up, great choices include: peanut butter, canned soup, canned beans, canned/pouch tuna, canned fruit, and canned veggies. Small noncase sale items that are especially handy to help people in hotels or traveling are: saltines, individual fruit cups, or individual veggie cups. Thank You!

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.





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

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

Neighbors in Need

Each year, our congregation holds our 5 For 5 Luncheon on the day most congregations collect the Neighbors in Need offering. Our congregation holds one luncheon and collects for 4 of the 5 special offerings the United Church of Christ collects each year; we including giving to Our Church's Wider Mission in our annual budget. This year our luncheon will be October 6th, all free will offerings will be distributed by the Mission Board to Neighbors in Need, One Great Hour of Sharing, The Christmas Fund, and Strengthen the Church.

The Neighbors in Need offering supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Love of Church Unit to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through the national Love of Church Unit, https://tinyurl.com/2bfytatb, you can find resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues.

Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), the Love of Church Unit continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice.

Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hocak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

Sock'em!

Each November, our Conference invites local churches to gather socks, and to see who can gather the most. This year our Mission Board is asking us to help. From November 3rd-24th we will be collecting all sizes of WARM new socks.

These will then be given to the Sweetwater Family Resource Center to give to those in need. Did you know that socks are the #1 needed item by people who are homeless?

Socks can literally save feet.





We are hoping as a congregation to fill a day of bell ringing at Smiths! Mission Board has chosen **Saturday**,

November 30th as FCC's day to "Ring the Bell" from 9a-5p. People are usually asked to sign up for two hours at a time, but if you can do one hour that would be great!



Seeking Raffle Baskets and Items

As we plan for the fall bazaar, we are seeking people to sponsor baskets and items for our raffle. If you'd like to donate a basket or raffle item, have it at the church office by October 30th! This allows us to advertise them and sell more raffle tickets! Thanks!