



Presbyterian
Community Church
of the Rockies

February 2024 Newsletter

Estes Park's historic mainline Protestant congregation founded in 1907.

Core Value: The Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies is a Sacred Community formed around Jesus the Christ where we experience God's presence in our lives and service together.

Volume 12, Number 2



*"Use whatever gift
you have received..."*

1 Peter 4:10



PCCR Directory

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm; closed Fridays

Office Phone: 970-586-4404

Church Website: pccrusa.org

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Christine Dempsey,,
pastor@pccrusa.org

Financial Manager: Carolyn Hull,
finance@pccrusa.org

Office Administrator:
Meredith Ishida, office@pccrusa.org

Handbell Director: Patti Dolezal,
music@pccrusa.org

Choir Director: Rich Dixon

Organist: Larry Gillum



Paper copies of the newsletter are available in the narthex.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue of the newsletter—whether it be your service in this church or providing a written article or photo.

We appreciate your input!

The March Newsletter deadline is Tuesday, February 20. Please send your pictures and stories to: office@pccrusa.org Thanks!



© Contents copyright by the Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies 2015-2024 and may not be used for any commercial purpose without written permission from PCCR.

Worship Schedule



Worship in the Sanctuary:

February 4 — 10:00 am, Welcome New Members!

February 11 — 10:00 am, Communion

February 14 — 5:30 pm, Ash Wednesday Service

February 18 — 10:00 am

February 25 — 10:00 am

The Rev. Dr. Christine Dempsey, pastor **Larry Gillum, organist**

View through Livestream service on our website:

Open the website, <https://pccrusa.org> on the Home page. The livestream player is to the right, below the opening pictures.

The player will automatically start when the service begins.

Sunday Bulletin: The current worship bulletin appears directly below the livestream and video recordings box. Simply click on “View Bulletin”.

Please Look...

- ⇒ Are you in the current church directory?
- ⇒ Has your phone number changed?
- ⇒ Is your email different?
- ⇒ Any family member changes?
- ⇒ Have you moved? Is your address correct?
- ⇒ Would you like your photo updated?

Let the church office know (970-586-4404) if and when you have any changes to your contact information. Thanks!

Check us out on Facebook!

Facebook is a branch of our outreach ministry, a way we invite others to be a part of our church family as well as keep our own members informed.

Check out our page (you don't need a Facebook account) for the most recent updates and articles. <https://www.facebook.com/PCCR1>



Coming Up in Worship

Welcome New Members: February 4

Transfiguration Sunday: February 11

Ash Wednesday: February 14 (5:30 pm)

February 2024

Message from Pastor Christine Dempsey . . .

Dear Friends,

Did you know that in this year of 2024 that Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day fall on the same day? Probably very few of us! The reality is that in our modern world, we are more in tune with the dates in our secular calendar than our sacred calendar, except for Christmas and Easter. Many of us have marked the calendar with the dates of the Oscar awards ceremony, the Superbowl, and Tax Day but have all but forgotten our liturgical calendar and days such as Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and Transfiguration Sunday. Our faith traditions have taken a back seat to our secular lives.

This year, I want to invite you into the liturgical calendar as we enter the season of Lent. Just as our secular calendar provides yearly benchmarks for our lives, so too can the liturgical calendar. Following the liturgical calendar and the practices of each season can help us grow in our faith and, of course, our response to our faith. It makes us aware of the events in Jesus' life in a very real way and invites us to experience the living Christ anew. The promise of new life in Easter is so much more meaningful when we walk with Jesus through his last week in Jerusalem and when we delve into the experience of self-reflection during the forty days of Lent.

As we prepare for this somber liturgical season, I want to encourage you all to participate in a couple of special services that will help prepare us for this season. First, I want to invite you to Transfiguration Sunday on February 11. This is one of the major events in Jesus' life, referenced in all our gospels and central to his story. The transfiguration refers to Jesus' ascent to the top of the mountain with Peter, James and John and which changes him by God in front of them. As Mark says, "he was transfigured before them and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them." (Mark 9:2-3) Yet, the transfiguration is often overlooked in our church practice. This year, I want to make a special effort to have you join in this worship service. In marking this mountaintop experience in worship, we will find ourselves ready to begin our walk with Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem.

Second, I want to invite you to our Ash Wednesday service. The period of Lent is marked by Ash Wednesday, and it is a season of sorrow where we reflect on the sacrifice of Christ. We will remember this day with a special worship service on February 14th at 5:30 pm. The service will include choir, piano and a message and the marking of the ashes. Traditionally, the ashes have come from the burned palmed leaves from the previous year reminding us of the cyclical nature of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. When I apply the ashes to each participant, I will repeat the words, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." The imposition of the ashes is somber, they are a reminder of our limited time here on earth, and they are a sign of Christ's sacrifice. As we live through the forty days marked by the ashes, we are challenged to think how our thoughts and actions impact others and we are encouraged to adopt a new practice that reflects how Christ gave of himself for us.

Come and join us as we experience the traditional practices of the church. This can shape your spiritual life. If we all apply ourselves to an orientation of selflessness by taking on a new way to serve others, a heightened practice of prayer for one another or even the traditional Lenten practice of self-denial, we will find that our celebration of Easter will be more spirit filled and so much richer.

Grace and peace,

Christine



A Return to Malawi

After Worship on January 14, Carol and Jim Nussbaumer gave a presentation on their mission work in Africa. Last year marked their 25th year of service to the people of Malawi. Carol recounted stories of her work with the children at Embangweni Schools for the Deaf. Jim explained the details of the wells that Marion Medical Mission installs to bring clean water to impoverished areas and how he supported the manufacture of the pumps.

Jim and Carol, thank you for your service! And thank you for sharing your work with us.



New Photos

Have you had a desire recently to get dressed up and say "Cheese?" Perhaps not, but here is your chance! Please consider updating your photo for the directory. We would love to get a recent photo of you and/or your family. Peter Plaut would be happy to take your picture and he does wonderful work making us all look good. Email office@pccrusa.org or call 970-586-4404 to arrange a time to get your picture taken.

Attention: A New Program for Our Church! Community Church Connection Friends

The Stephen Ministers along with the Deacons, have formed a group who will be available to make visits to the homes of those who desire a personal connection with someone in the church and/or those who find it difficult to come physically to the church. These visits are not structured for any purpose other than to share conversation and friendship. These visits may be only one visit or several depending on the participants. If this is something you would be interested in, please call the church office.

Glezen Dinner

On January 21st, PCCR members and friends enjoyed a time of feasting and fellowship during the annual Glezen Dinner, sponsored by the Presbyterian Women. This year, attendees enjoyed potluck dishes ranging from potatoes to desserts, as well as ham and turkey from PW. Most of all, it was a time to reconnect with old friends and make new connections.



A Series on Planning Your Own Memorial Service

Dear friends,

In the next few newsletters, I am going to talk a little bit about funeral planning. I know that this is a difficult topic to address, but I hope that these ideas will help our families as we think about and plan for this transition. Walking with you through death is part of my call, and it is one that I cherish. Providing a plan for your own service and that of loved ones can help our family and friends strengthen their bonds with one another and can help them with the grieving process. Funerals used to be an expected practice. It was something important enough for the bereaved to miss work for a day, for the community to stop for a funeral procession, and for neighbors to offer condolences and prayers for the family. Yet we are in an era where more and more people are skipping this step and opting for no service and no community witness. This reflects a trend where people think that their lives are not important enough, or they think that they are putting too much burden on their extended family and friends. There is much confusion and emotional strain. People are grieving but are swayed from the process that helps them grieve.

I recommend not only having a service, but that also you and your loved ones plan a service in advance. Doing so provides your family with guidelines for services and gives them permission to remember well. I like to quote Psalm 139, "For it was you, God, who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." This scripture is a reminder that all are sent by God and that all are reclaimed by God. I believe that our lives here are part of God's plan and in remembering our loved ones well we are also celebrating God. Here are the topics I will cover in the next few newsletters. Please let me know if you have any questions.

- Why a service?
- Witness to the Resurrection
- Remembering well
- Sharing plans with family
- PCCR funeral policy

—Pastor Christine Dempsey



Blessings

"There was a bomb threat at the school. I have to go get Sparkle and I'm leaving River with you if that's ok. Bye," I said to Office Volunteer Brenda Gillum one weekday morning last month at PCCR. Brenda, blessed with the ability to roll with whatever life throws at her, remained calm and nodded as if this were an everyday occurrence. And I was grateful; I wasn't about to take my baby, who was still coughing at nights after recovering from covid, out into the 18 degree wind. Not if I didn't have to.

At the Event Center, to which the entire Estes Park Elementary, Middle and High Schools had been evacuated, I parked and started striding quickly towards the door. Although it was windy and cold, I



didn't mind being in short sleeves; my adrenaline was pumping so I figured I would just run in, grab Sparkle, and jump back in the car. It turned out, however, that my plan was a bit naïve; a line two blocks long, of silent, worried parents waiting to pick up their children, already stretched across the sidewalks. When I finally found the end of the line, which wasn't moving an inch, I started doubting my outfit selection as goosebumps raised on my arms. So I headed back to the car to see if I could find at least a stray sweater of Sparkle's or something. On the way, I ran into Tom, the father of one of Sparkle's friends. "Where's your coat?!" he yelled across the heads of the crowd. "I don't know!" I replied. "I've got blankets," he said, "Want to borrow?" After a quick trip to his truck, from which he pulled out a windbreaker and hat, work gloves with holes and a scarf, we both got back into a line that grew only longer. We stood in the wind, occasionally needing to double-step due to an especially fierce gust.

Now this Tom, in the manner of he who possesses an incredibly intelligent mind, tends to make connections much more quickly and frequently than the average person. He started bringing up seemingly (to my more average mind, anyway) random tidbits of information and micro-stories. I tried to follow along and make little remarks of affirmation and approval at what I hoped were appropriate moments. I was only somewhat successful; mostly my attention was caught up in the fact that I was violently shivering but with no viable choice except to stay there and continue waiting with hundreds of other frozen souls on Hypothermia Avenue.

Tom remained cheery, though. At some point he reached into his pocket to find a package of Cinnamon Mentos and, delighted, started munching through the roll. No matter that they appeared approximately 5 to 7 years old; when you're cold, fuel is fuel, I guess.

Sometime around the time I had convinced myself that I was definitely entering Stage 1 Hypothermia, he paused in the middle of a story, turned and looked directly into my eyes. What he said next struck deep. "Let's assume that those who give are then blessed. So if I offer you a mento" - and at this point he tore back the roll, offering me a frozen candy - "and you refuse, then you're denying me a blessing."

I looked at him, taken aback. Was this unlikely sage correct? Is our pride, our stubborn refusal of help, actually an offense of sorts? Or, conversely, by accepting help from one another, are we actually blessing one another? Is this what that Lilla Watson quote is about, the one that mentions your salvation being tied with mine?



continued on following page...

I'm not sure, but from what I saw that day, if he was right, there were a lot of folks receiving blessings among the bomb threats. I saw stressed-out mothers with infants escorted to the front of the line, and no one complained. I watched a cop hug a slightly shell-shocked woman. When Tom's thin windbreaker could no longer cut it, Dennis Jacobs drove over from PCCR and brought my coat. Law Enforcement in bulletproof vests walked the line placing cups of coffee and cocoa in half-frozen hands. Our own Auxiliary Officer Mike Moon shepherded reunited families out of the Event Center. Strangers passed blankets back and forth. A National Park service ranger removed his coat to lend it to a young girl. Who was liberating who that day?

And meanwhile back at the church, I knew my own baby was, if not entirely happy, at least warm and safe from the wind and biting cold. After an hour and half, when I had finally collected a very relieved Sparkle, we returned to PCCR to find Brenda holding River against her neck, rocking her and gently patting her back. Neither was entirely pleased with my being gone nearly two hours, but they appeared no worse for the wear, perhaps even bonded in some strange way. Once again, who was giving? Who was receiving?

We want to make sense out of tragedy, to say things happen for a reason. That's a mere band aid for a broken limb. Even in this case, "just" a threat, there is no way to redeem the act of terrifying several hundred children and thousands of family members, shattering the sense of peace that usually prevails in a small town. At the same time, though, these events do allow us opportunities, for the strong among us to be weak and the short to stand tall, to give and to take, to step into the unfamiliar role of hero or victim or just another human. And maybe we need that every once in a while.

—Meredith Ishida

A Penny and a Prayer - Fellowship of the Least Coin

Can a penny combined with a prayer really make a difference in people's lives? Have you been looking for a way to support peace in our world? Presbyterian Women join with women around the world to support the Fellowship of the Least Coin, a prayer movement started in 1956. To participate, women pray for peace and wholeness for all people, then give their "least coin" as a symbol of that prayer. The basic tenets of the movement appeared in the November/December Horizons magazine (pg. 30) and are shared below.

"The Fellowship of the Least Coin brings Christian women together in a fellowship of prayer without any discrimination of race, nationality, culture or denomination. Christian women of the world demonstrate solidarity with each other through their common concern and love for humankind and creation. They are bound together in both giving and receiving.

The offering is unique because all—regardless of income, education, nationality or home—give only the smallest coin of their currency. All are within the same discipline and share the common concerns of women around the world.

It is stewardship, both of the idea and the funds. The least coins, when put together, become a large amount in the same way individual prayers offered by many members throughout the world become a strong force in bringing about reconciliation, peace and justice."

Gifts to the Fellowship of the Least Coin provide several types of grants, including grants to support ecumenical solidarity, emergency grants for disaster relief and rehabilitation and scholarships for women of all ages. Even if you do not participate in the PW Circle, you can join in this movement by regularly praying for peace, justice and reconciliation and by setting aside a least coin (bigger coins and bills are perfectly fine, too!) each time you pray. What better way to deal with all those extra pennies, than to add a prayer for peace and give the pennies for the Fellowship of the Least Coin. If you would like to participate, just leave your pennies in the PW mailbox (clearly marked for the Fellowship of the Least Coin) and we will add them to those collected on the days PW Circle meets.

—Karen Daugherty



Groups and Events

Bible Study with the Pastor—Wednesdays at Noon

Please join Pastor Christine and friends for our continued study of the Book of Mark! "God is Doing Stuff!"

Annual Meeting—Sunday, February 4

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation for the Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies will be held on Sunday, February 4, directly following worship. Annual Reports have been sent electronically. Paper copies are available in the Narthex. Please contact the office if you still need an Annual Report.

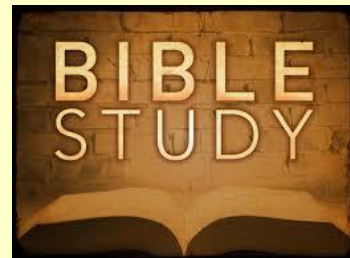
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Tuesday, February 13, 2024



PCCR's Grace and Grub Group will host a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 13 at the church. Pancakes, ham, and blueberries, will be served from 4:30 until 6:00. There will be festive piano and trombone music to accompany the supper. This event is free, but it is a fundraiser for Crossroads Ministry, so your contributions are welcomed. Community members are welcome to join in the fun and fellowship as we anticipate the arrival of Lent.

Sunday Bible Study

The adult Bible study group continues to meet at 8:15 Sunday morning in the lounge. We always welcome anyone interested in studying the Faith from a different perspective. Classes are on video and nearly always give a few moments of "I didn't know that" or "I never thought of it like that".



Coming up in February: we will complete a 30-lesson course on "Listening to the Land" which has helped interpret Biblical events as the geography has impacted them.

Feb 4: "Jesus in Context: Jerusalem" and "Passion Week (part 1)"

Feb 11: "Passion Week (part 2)"

Feb 18: "From Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria and to the Uttermost Parts"

Feb 25: To be decided

Journeys

WHAT DEFINES YOUR MOST SACRED MOMENTS?

Sacred moments are essential to the deepening of our spiritual life. What defines a sacred space or a sacred place can be different for each of us. Journeys will set aside the first two weeks in February to explore this important topic.

For the last two Sundays, Journeys will return to the video series *Painting the Stars*, produced by the Living the Questions group. These Sundays will focus on developing our faith, our Christianity, in a changing world.



Journeys meets Sunday mornings in the Church library. Gathering begins at 8:15 a.m., with the program starting at 8:30.

For those who are unable to attend in person, there is an opportunity to join the gathering remotely. Since Journeys is primarily a discussion group, the Zoom platform is used for remote access. The Zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8457412756?pwd=UG5OWk5yV1R2b1lCVmtENnUxTctlUT09>

Meeting ID: 845 741 2756 and Passcode: 80517 (only if necessary)

The program schedule for February is:

February 4	Sacred Spaces
February 11	Sacred Spaces
February 18	Painting the Stars: An Evolving Faith
February 25	Painting the Stars: Evolutionary Christianity



Journeys also hosts a once a month in-person gathering called Soulful Stories. It takes place on the second Thursday of the month at 3 p.m. in the library. These gatherings consist of sharing of stories and casual conversation related to one's individual spiritual practices and spiritual growth.

Journeys sends out a weekly email with details about the plans for each week. If you would like to be on this email list, let the Church office know or contact Jim Daugherty at: jk@daughertys.us.



Sacred Encounters – PW Bible Study Lesson Six Monday, February 19, 2024 – Twelve Noon

In lesson six of the Horizons Bible study, we are reminded that “God calls us to affirm that each person is a child of God who should be treated with dignity and equality.” Sue Yowell will lead us through this lesson, based on Acts 3:1-10, which focuses on Peter and John healing a lame man in the name of Jesus. We will gather at 11:30 a.m. in the church library for a brief social time, with the lesson beginning at 12 noon. Because the meeting occurs during the lunch hour, you are welcome to bring a sack lunch to eat during the meeting. If you don't yet have a study book, please contact either Karen Daugherty (jk@daughertys.us) or Renee Warren and we will make sure you receive one. The meeting will also be available via Zoom. The Zoom link is: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5046760289> and the password is 80517. All women of the church are invited to participate in this study. We hope you can join us!

Session Highlights ~ January 2024

- ◇ Learned that Presbytery is requiring all church boards and committees to have Boundaries training. Watch for further information regarding this matter.
- ◇ Approved the revised Proposed Budget. PCCR will receive another payment in 2024 from the Employee Retention Tax Credit fund.
- ◇ Approved the annual Statistical Report for submission to Presbytery.
- ◇ Noted that the Membership and Hospitality committee has now been divided into two separate committees.
- ◇ Scheduled future New Membership Discussion groups for January, April, July and October.
- ◇ Approved the appointment of Leslie Hauser, Barb Slicker, Lois Sumey and Renee Warren to the Mission and Outreach committee.
- ◇ Approved the appointment of Jim Whiteneck to the Personnel committee.
- ◇ Approved the establishment of a Task Force to investigate the possibility of PCCR becoming an Emergency Evacuation Location for the schools in the event of a weather or civil emergency requiring the evacuation of a school or schools.
- ◇ Appointed Chuck Bonza, Kent Meyer, and Sue Yowell to chair the Task Force.
- ◇ Approved a Letter of Transfer for Carolyn Kramer who has moved out of town and wishes to join a church in her new location.
- ◇ Approved dates for Communion services for the year.
- ◇ Elected Sue Yowell, Jim Nussbaumer, and Pat Waltermire as our Commissioners to Presbytery.
- ◇ Confirmed that the Session/Deacons Retreat will be held at Highlands Camp on February 28-29.

Deacon Highlights ~ January 2024

- ◇ Deacons met on Tuesday, January 9th.
- ◇ Welcomed new members and thanked class of 2023.
- ◇ Explained committees to new members.
- ◇ Discussed communion procedures.
- ◇ Discussed new ways to communicate with members.









Financial Information December 2023

	December	Jan-Dec	Year to Date—Budget
Total Revenues*	\$34,302	\$397,599	\$361,630
Total Expenses	\$58,831	\$410,132	\$463,330
Net Total	-\$24,529	-\$12,533	-\$101,700

*Revenue includes \$16,011 Employee Retention Tax Credit



FEBRUARY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>4 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 10:00am-Worship: Welcome New Members! 11:00am-Annual Meeting-S</p>	<p>5 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 6:15pm-Girl Scout Cadettes*</p> 	<p>6 11:45am-AA Group* 12:30pm-PEO AV-L 6:45pm-EVICS Group*</p>	<p>7 12:00pm-Bible Study-L 3:00pm-Girl Scout Brownies* 4:00pm-Joyful Bells-FH 5:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-Music Rm 6:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-FH</p>	<p>8 8:30am-EPNRC Board* 11:45am-AA Group* 1:00pm-Foundation 3:00pm-Journeys: Soul Work Group-L 4:00pm-Chancel Bells-FH 5:00pm-EVICS Mom's*</p>	<p>9 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH</p> 	<p>10 9:00am-Card-Making Group-FH</p> 
<p>11 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 10:00am-Worship</p> 	<p>12 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH</p> 	<p>13 10:00am-Building & Grounds-L 11:45am-AA Group* 1:00pm-Personnel-L 4:30pm-Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper-FH 6:30pm-Chamber Singers-Music Room 6:45pm-EVICS Group*</p>	<p>14 10:30am-Mission and Outreach-L 12:00pm-Bible Study-L 3:00pm-Girl Scout Brownies* 4:00pm-Joyful Bells-FH 5:30pm-Ash Weds Service 5:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-Music Rm 6:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-FH</p>	<p>15 11:45am-AA Group* 3:00pm-Columbarium-L 4:00pm-Chancel Bells-FH 5:00pm-EVICS Mom's* 6:30pm-Chancel Choir-Music Rm</p>	<p>16 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH</p> 	<p>17 Ice Cream Cone</p>
<p>18 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 8:30am-Girl Scout Cookie Sales-Narthex 10:00am-Worship 5:00pm-Oratorio Society-FH</p>	<p>19 11:30am-PW-L 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 6:15pm-Girl Scout Cadettes*</p>	<p>20 Newsletter Deadline 11:45am-AA Group* 12:30pm-PEO-L 4:00pm-Stephen Ministers-L 6:30pm-Chamber Singers-Music Room 6:45pm-EVICS Group*</p>	<p>21 12:00pm-Bible Study-L 3:00pm-Girl Scout Brownies* 4:00pm-Joyful Bells-FH 5:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-Music Rm 6:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-FH</p>	<p>22 11:45am-AA Group* 4:00pm-Chancel Bells-FH 6:30pm-Chancel Choir-Music Rm</p>	<p>23 9:30am-Merry Marthas-FH 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 10:00am-Worship 11:00am-Celebrating Patti Dolezal's 25 Years of Ministry-FH 5:00pm-Oratorio Society-FH</p>	<p>26 9:00am-Hospitality-L 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH</p>	<p>27 11:45am-AA Group* 6:30pm-Chamber Singers-Music Room 6:45pm-EVICS Group*</p>	<p>28 12:00pm-Bible Study-L 3:00pm-Girl Scout Brownies* 4:00pm-Joyful Bells-FH 4:00pm-Session and Deacon Retreat-Highlands 5:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-Music Rm 6:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-FH</p>	<p>29 8:00am-Session and Deacon Retreat-Highlands Camp 11:45am-AA Group* 4:00pm-Chancel Bells-FH 6:30pm-Chancel Choir-Music Rm</p>		

Note: Calendar events subject to change *Downstairs Room 6



**Worship January 7, 2024:
Installation and Ordination of Officers**

