



Presbyterian  
Community Church  
of the Rockies

## March 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 3

***You shall return...***

***Genesis 3:19***



## 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](http://pccrusa.org)

### Church Staff

**Pastor:** Rev. Dr. Christine Dempsey,,  
[pastor@pccrusa.org](mailto:pastor@pccrusa.org)

**Financial Manager:** Carolyn Hull,  
[finance@pccrusa.org](mailto:finance@pccrusa.org)

**Office Administrator:**  
Meredith Ishida, [office@pccrusa.org](mailto:office@pccrusa.org)

**Handbell Director:** Patti Dolezal,  
[music@pccrusa.org](mailto: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 April Newsletter deadline is Tuesday, March 19. Please send your pictures and stories to: [office@pccrusa.org](mailto:office@pccrusa.org) Thanks!**



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## Worship Schedule



### Worship in the Sanctuary:

**March 3 — 10:00 am, Communion**

**March 10 — 10:00 am**

**March 17 — 10:00 am**

**March 24 — 10:00 am, Palm Sunday Service**

**March 28— 5:30 pm, Maundy Thursday Service**

**March 29— 12:00 noon, Good Friday Tenebrae Service**

**March 31— 10:00 am, Easter Sunday Worship**

**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.

## 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>



## Website Suggestions

Help us update our website!

When you have a moment, navigate to [pccrusa.org](http://pccrusa.org) and take a look at the church website. The Communications Committee is looking for suggestions, corrections, and additions to the website, as well as new content and photos. Email [office@pccrusa.org](mailto:office@pccrusa.org), or contact Peter Plaut.



**March 2024**

**Message from Pastor Christine Dempsey . . .**

Dear PCCR family,

Welcome to Lent. I think for most of us Lent is a time in the church calendar that we know exists, but we have trouble relating to it. Is it a time of sadness? A time of solitude? We obviously recognize great joy in our celebration of Easter, but the emotion of Lent is harder to describe. According to our church tradition, Lent is a time of forty days in which we are to journey with Jesus toward Jerusalem, recognizing that he will sacrifice his life for us. In response, many give up something that they miss to help them identify with Christ's sacrifice, to give them a physical experience of being without. This is not just the practice of giving up chocolate or even meat on Fridays, but rather something that causes the experience of being without.

While fasting and other means of denying us of our physical comforts are certainly ways to experience the season of Lent, there are other ways to grow closer to Christ. This year, we are emphasizing love, the love of God for creation and the sending of Jesus to show us how to love. When we concentrate merely on Christ's sacrifice, we forget about the lessons of how to live. We forget about the living Christ who comes to us now. So this year, I am encouraging you to adopt a practice of love, a practice that will connect you both to God and the people around you. There are many ways that you can respond to God in love, be it faith in action, acts of kindness, or Bible study. All are practices that draw us into God's redemptive mission.

I will be examining some of these on the Sundays during Lent. On March 3, we will be looking at prayer. In honor of this important spiritual discipline, we will be introducing a prayer card into the pews that you can use to request prayers for yourself or a loved one. Knowing that the names of those in need are held up in prayer is one of the most powerful actions of our faith. On March 10, we will look at forgiveness. On this day we will emphasize not only what it means to forgive but what it means to be forgiven. By being people who both forgive and accept forgiveness, we live into the wholeness that God desires for us. On March 17, we will look at giving, and like forgiveness, giving is not only something we do but something we receive. When we view the world through the lens of giving to others, we experience what it means to receive their gratitude. What a powerful way to transform the world.

Finally, we will move into the full liturgical practice of Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday. On Thursday, we will have a Maundy Thursday service at 5:30 with communion by intinction. Good Friday will be a Tenebrae service at noon reminding us of the sorrow on the day of Christ's death. On Easter Sunday, we can gather together in the Sanctuary to celebrate the Risen Lord. The musicians and worship leaders have worked hard to help us walk with Jesus so that we might experience both the sorrow of Jesus' death and the exultation of Easter Sunday. By participating in this passion week, we can experience the fullness of our human emotion and ultimately, fully embrace the joy that is in Easter Sunday!

If you are longing to experience the fullness of God's love, I encourage you to embrace a period of Lent dedicated to practicing spiritual disciplines that reflect God's love. For it is God's love that is embodied in Christ's life, death, and resurrection. And, it is God's love that is the basis for very creation. As we are reminded in 1 John 4:7-8 "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love."

Grace and peace,

Christine







## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

On February 13, the last day before Lent, PCCR hosted a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. 46 members of Grace and Grub participated by donating money and/or cooking and serving the meal. We fed 120 people, many of whom were not members of PCCR.

We raised \$872 which will be donated to Crossroads. It was a very festive evening with great food, rousing music, and a lot of good conversation.



# Celebrating Patti Dolezal's 25 Years of Ministry

On February 1, 1999, after several years of volunteering, Patti Dolezal began working as an employee at the Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies. Her responsibilities have included directing two Bell Choirs, overseeing the music department, and serving as the primary liturgist. She has always approached her calling with a sense of determination, hard work, kindness, and a sense of humor.



In addition to her many hours of behind-the-scenes (as well as up front) in the realms of Music and Worship, Patti Dolezal has been a strength and a rock for many of us in the role of Stephen Minister. She was present for many in their times of need.

On Sunday, February 25, we celebrated Patti with a few remarks during worship as well as cake afterwards in the Fellowship Hall. Patti, we are grateful for your service!





## Attention: A New Program for Our Church!

### Community Church Connection Friends

The Stephen Ministers, along with the Deacons, have formed a group of people 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.

### New Donate Page on the Church Website



Our website has a new page for contributing through electronic payments. The update also consolidates donations to the church and the foundation on one page. It adds a section for making payments for special offerings and activities of the church, such as contributing to the One Great Hour of Sharing and pledge payments for activities such as Presbyterian Women. Contributions by check and cash are always welcome – the new page just makes it simpler and convenient to use electronic services. In addition to the traditional credit card charge, the page now includes the capability to use Apple Pay, Google Pay and a bank check. See the accompanying brochure for more information.

### Annual Congregational Meeting

#### of the Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies



Our Annual Meeting took place on February 4, 2024. During this time, we heard from Bob Holcomb about church finances and Mike Warren regarding the Foundation. Jan Boatman reported on Pastor Christine's updated Terms of Call, which were approved by the Congregation. Thank you to all who submitted Annual Reports for their committees or groups for the Annual Report.

# February Worship at PCCR

Worship this month included welcoming four new members, an Ordination and Installation of an Elder, and, as always, plenty of wonderful music by our talented and hardworking Organist, Bell Choir and Chancel Choirs.





## Funeral Planning: Why A Service

This is part 2 of my series on remembering well and planning a funeral.

One of the main questions I receive these days regarding death and dying is, "Why should we hold a service?" There may be many reasons why families don't have a service for a loved one. First, sometimes the deceased has asked not to have a service. Second, the family decides that a service is unnecessary and are worried that no one is left that remembers their loved one. Third, families are worried about the hassle of a service thinking that it would be a burden for family and friends to attend. Beyond family, I have also heard is that we are never supposed to intervene with someone's wishes or even encourage people to remember their loved ones in a service. Well, that is part of my job as your pastor, and I will always encourage you to have a service of some kind, to remember your loved one well, and to be embraced by the love of your Christian family.

I find that our trend towards not having a service is falling into a tradition of our fear and our unwillingness to confront death. We are in a culture where we don't like to talk about death; we fear it and we no longer honor it. Many years ago, when I was participating on an immersion trip with the Winnebago Tribe, I participated in a wake where the body of the deceased was accompanied for four days by members of the tribe. It included active prayer and observable mourning. It was not only part of the tribe's tradition, but it also embodied a deep respect for the dead. Unlike the Winnebago people, I think secular society has forgotten to honor the dead. It seems that people today even fail to stop for the funeral procession, if there is one.

Conversely, in recognizing death and publicly celebrating someone's life, we acknowledge that our loved one is a child of God, and that the same loved one has completed their journey here and has now returned to God. It is a completion of their baptism, a public event now sealed in death. Therefore, a service allows not only the family to remember but also for the community to celebrate the life lived and to be a witness to the hope that we have in life everlasting.

At a service and reception, the family has a chance to heal by sharing stories about their loved one. It also provides all present with a chance to thank God for their brother or sister in Christ and embrace their unique connection to that person. When we don't have a service, we deny the whole community a chance to grieve together and a time to be the body of Christ.

While I will support you in whatever choice you make regarding end of life, I do encourage you to think about the beauty, the tradition, and the theological significance of providing a Christian benediction for your loved one.

Grace and peace,

Christine <3





# Ash Wednesday





## Why Give a Pledge to Presbyterian Women?



In February, pledge letters were distributed to all women who are members and friends of the Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies. This is an opportunity for the women of our church, regardless of whether or not they attend the PW Bible Study, to support the ongoing mission and ministry of Presbyterian Women. Your pledge helps support the denomination's evangelism, church planting, education and justice work as well as ministry to children, youth, older adults, new immigrants, rural, urban and suburban populations across the United States and around the world.

The support for our church is divided among Presbyterian Women churchwide, in the Synod and in the Presbytery. Our local PW pledge to these missions is \$1,750. At the end of each year, we also give to local organizations, focusing on helping those groups that provide support to women and children in the Estes Valley. Your pledge ensures that our caring community of women can continue its witness to the promise of God's kingdom. Your pledge can be paid with either a check to PCCR with PW pledge on the memo line, or through the website using the new "Donate" page. We are truly grateful for your generous support.



## Embangweni Secondary School for the Deaf

The church office recently received anonymous donations designated to support girls at the Embangweni, Malawi, Secondary School for the Deaf. These funds have been sent and the following received from Headteacher Mr. Benson Mhone:

"So glad to hear about the donation for scholarship. On behalf of the school, I would like to ask you to relay our heartfelt gratitude to the sponsor. The following students have been given full sponsorship. Francesca Mpola – Form 5, Tionge Mafuleka – Form 3, Grace Malinga – Form 2 and Evalister Zimba – Form 1."

Because of the devaluation of the Malawian Kwacha, fees are now about \$180 per term; average annual income is \$480. Without the gifts from outsiders, most of these students could not attend school. As an honorary teacher at this school, I add my sincere thanks to these donors!

—Carol Nussbaumer





## One Great Hour of Sharing

### Repairing the Breach

#### Isaiah 58

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering is now in its 75<sup>th</sup> year and is the single largest way Presbyterians come together to help restore hope to the hopeless, provide food for the hungry and walk alongside the poor and oppressed. Presbyterians join with seven other denominations to support this offering, which in turn responds to the needs of people in over 100 countries, including the U.S. and Canada.



The caring and compassion of people supporting this effort reflect the call in Isaiah 58 for God's people to be "repairers of the breach." This is accomplished through the three programs supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing. The **Presbyterian Hunger Program** provides people in need with more and better food by providing seeds and animals along with the skills needed to produce their own food. Over 875 chickens were distributed in Guatemala and Columbia and 40 goats were provided in Yemen. We stood in solidarity with the most vulnerable, when we supported the development of a bakery in Malawi providing self-employment for 105 women. To create a more livable environment, 75 potable water filters were distributed in Guatemala and 40 water retention tanks were provided in Bolivia. The **Self-Development of People** program works with low-income communities to overcome oppression and injustice. We partner with projects nationally and internationally to provide advocacy, youth-led initiatives, skills development and much more. Examples include an Afghan Cattle Cooperative in Virginia where the project raises and sells cattle to improve the lives of families living below the poverty line. Members raise livestock and teach their children animal husbandry and related life skills. The **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** program not only responds to natural disasters both in the U.S. and internationally, but also works with the Migration Accompaniment Ministry to implement humanitarian responses for such groups as displaced Ukrainians and refugees evacuated from Afghanistan.

During the season of Lent, each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people worldwide who face challenging and seemingly hopeless situations while offering Presbyterians a way to share God's love and care with our neighbors in need. Please consider sharing your gifts to support people around the world seeking food, shelter and better lives. Envelopes for the offering can be found in the pews each Sunday during Lent with the final offering received on Palm Sunday, March 24. You can also support this offering by going to the new "Donate" page on PCCR's website and checking the box by OGHS which includes several payment options. Thank you for your support.

## Spring Flowers for Easter

In celebration of Easter, you can help fill the Sanctuary with fresh bright color when you purchase a flower or donate to One Great Hour of Sharing in honor or in memory of loved ones. Flowers are \$20 each.

**The deadline for ordering flowers is Sunday, March 24. Contact the PCCR Office if you would like to order.**

***All gifts will be acknowledged in the bulletin on Easter morning.***





# 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!"

## Palm Sunday Celebration

The Hospitality Committee is planning a Palm Sunday Celebration on March 24 immediately after our regular church service. Ham, rolls, and potatoes will be provided, and each family is asked to bring a dish to feed at least 8 people:

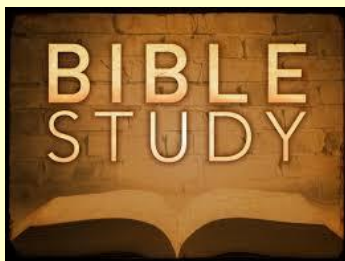
Side Dishes (no potatoes)—Last Names A-R

Dessert—Last Names S-Z

We'll enjoy fellowship as we come to the end of Lent and anticipate Easter.



## Sunday Bible Study



We have just completed an in-depth study of the geography of the Holy Land and how it shaped and impacted the events recorded in Scripture. For the next few weeks we are changing course and will be viewing short Roundtable discussions. Because each of these stands alone, this is an excellent time for you to come join us at 8:15 Sunday morning in the Lounge.

We finish in time for choir and bell ringers to make their before-worship practices.

- February 25 and March 3: Dr. Michael Satlow "Why is the Bible Called Holy?"
- March 10, 17 and 24: Dr. Jodi Magness "Archeology in the Holy Land"
- No class on Easter!

After Easter we will be starting a study on the book of Acts, led by Dr. Pinchas Shir. "This first part ...focuses on Chapters 1-5 as disciples are emboldened by the Holy Spirit.... Explore the perspective of believers who worshipped in the Temple and met from home to home in anticipation of Yeshua's (Jesus's) return."



## Journeys

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=UG5OWk5yV1R2b1lCVmtENnUxTCtIU09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8457412756?pwd=UG5OWk5yV1R2b1lCVmtENnUxTCtIU09)

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



The program schedule for March is:

March 4	Marcus Borg: Why I am still a Christian
March 11	Painting the Stars: Evolutionary Christianity
March 18	Painting the Stars: Imagining a Future
March 25	Painting the Stars: An Evolving Spirituality - Mysticism
March 31	No Meeting

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.

## PW Bible Study – March 18, 2024

### Sacred Encounters – Lesson Seven

On Monday, March 18, Renee Warren will lead the Bible study discussion from *Sacred Encounters*, titled “An Ethiopian Eunuch Encounters the Good News of Jesus.” Lesson 7 is based on Acts 8:26-40 and starts on page 61 in our study book. According to the lesson, Philip demonstrates how to share faith with kindness and courage by baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch and thus provides a preview of the diverse and inclusive church that is to come. We will gather at 11:30 a.m. in the church library for a brief social time, with the lesson beginning at 12 noon. You are welcome to bring a sack lunch to eat during the meeting. The meeting will also be available via Zoom. All women of the church are invited to participate in this study. We hope you can join us.





## Session Highlights ~ February 29, 2024

- ◆ Heard a report from our Presbytery commissioners, noting that the theme for the 2024 Presbytery meetings is “Partners in Christ’s Service”.
- ◆ Noted that the new Stewardship Task Force is wanting volunteers to help develop this program. Interested persons should contact Sue Yowell.
- ◆ Authorized Building and Grounds to plan for and remove the existing playground equipment on PCCR property.
- ◆ Held a two-day Retreat with Deacons at Highland Camp in order to make plans for the coming year and to strengthen bonds between Session and Deacons.

### Financial Information January 2024










	December	Year to Date—Budget
Total Revenues	\$25,582	\$32,832
Total Expenses	\$30,572	\$39,413
Net Total	-\$4,990	-\$6,581



Session and Deacons enjoyed a retreat at Highlands camp from February 28-29!



# March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 11:00am-Annual Meeting-S 5:00pm-Oratorio Society-FH	4 11:00am-Worship and Music-L 1:00pm-Membership-L 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 6:15pm-Girl Scout Cadettes* 6:30pm-Oratorio Orch-S	5 11:45am-AA Group* 12:30pm-PEO AV-L 6:30pm-Chamber Singers-Music Room 6:45pm-Hispanic Women's Bible Study*	6 12:00pm-Bible Study-L 3:00pm- Brownies* 4:00pm-Joyful Bells-FH 5:30pm-Estes Park 6:30pm-Estes Park 6:30pm-Oratorio Orch-S	7 11:45am-AA Group* 4:00pm-Chancel Bells-FH 5:00pm-EVICS* 6:30pm-Chancel Choir-Music Rm	8 7:00pm-Oratorio Orchestra Concert-S 	9 9:30am-Card-Making Group-FH 2:00pm-Oratorio Orchestra Concert-S
10 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 10:00am-Worship 5:00pm-Oratorio Society-FH 	11 9:00am-Finance-L 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 	12 10:00am-Building & Grounds-L 11:45am-AA Group* 1:00pm-Personnel-L 6:30pm-Chamber Singers-Music Room 6:45pm- Hispanic Women's Bible Study* 7:00pm-Deacons-L	13 10:00am-Mission and Outreach-L 12:00pm-Bible Study-L 1:00pm-Grief Group-L 3:00pm- Brownies* 4:00pm-Joyful Bells-FH 5:30pm-Ash Weds Service 5:30pm-Estes Park 6:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-FH	14 8:30am-EPNRC Board* 11:45am-AA Group* 3:00pm-Journeys: Soul Work Group-L 4:00pm-Chancel Bells-FH 5:00pm-EVICS* 6:30pm-Chancel Choir-Music Rm	15 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 3:30pm-GS Daisies* 	16 
17 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 10:00am-Worship 5:00pm-Oratorio Society-FH	18 11:30am-PW-L 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 6:15pm-Girl Scout Cadettes* 6:30pm-Session-L	19 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 11:45am-AA Group* 12:30pm-PEO-L 4:00pm-Stephen Ministers-L 6:30pm-Chamber Singers-Music Room 6:45pm- Hispanic Women's Bible Study*	20 12:00pm-Bible Study-L 3:00pm- Brownies* 4:00pm-Joyful Bells-FH 5:30pm-Estes Park 6:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-FH	21 11:45am-AA Group* 3:00pm-Columbarium-L 4:00pm-Chancel Bells-FH 5:00pm-EVICS* 6:30pm-Chancel Choir-Music Rm	22 9:30am-Merry Marthas-FH 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 	23 10:30am-Bev Henderson Memorial
24 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 10:00am-Worship 11:00am-Palm Sunday Luncheon-FH 5:00pm-Oratorio Society-FH	25 9:00am-Hospitality-L 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 	26 11:45am-AA Group* 6:30pm-Chamber Singers-Music Room 6:45pm- Hispanic Women's Bible Study*	27 12:00pm-Bible Study-L 1:00pm-Grief Group-L 3:00pm- Brownies* 4:00pm-Joyful Bells-FH 5:30pm-Estes Park 6:30pm-Estes Park Chorale-Music Rm Chorale-FH	28 11:45am-AA Group* 4:00pm-Chancel Bells-FH 5:30pm-Maundy Thursday Worship-S 6:30pm-Chancel Choir-Music Rm	29 12:00pm-Good Friday Worship-S 3:30pm-Ballet Class-FH 3:30pm-GS Daisies* 	30
31 8:15am-Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am-Journeys-L 10:00am-Easter Worship 5:00pm-Oratorio Society-FH						

Note: Calendar events subject to change \*Downstairs Room 6



