



**Presbyterian
Community Church
of the Rockies**

December 2024 Newsletter

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

Mission Statement: Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies is a welcoming community united by faith in Jesus Christ; we seek to serve others, share God's love, and engage all people.

Volume 12, Number 12





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:

Brenda Dixon, 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 January Newsletter deadline is **Tuesday, December 17**. 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

Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary:

December 1 — 10:00am Chancel Choir;
Organist, Jill Hunt; Message: "Be on Guard"

December 8 — 10:00am Chancel Choir
Message: "Preparing the Way"

December 15 — 10:00am Chancel Choir, PCCR Bells
Message: "Good News"

December 22 — 10:00am Chancel Choir
Message: "Leaping for Joy"

December 29 — 10:00am
Message: "No Longer Lost"

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".

Special Services for December

Blue Christmas Service

Wednesday, December 18th at 5:00pm

In those shortest days of the year, we come together for a chance to reflect and remember. It is sometimes hard to be filled with joy when we carry heavy burdens in our hearts. On this night, we can pray and perhaps grieve in a quiet, simple space.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Tuesday, December 24th at 5:00pm

Please come, and invite your family and friends for this poignant time of worship. The Hospitality Committee will serve hot chocolate and cookies in the Fellowship Hall afterwards!

December 2024

Message from Pastor Christine Dempsey . . .

Preparing for the Coming of Christ once again

What do you do to prepare for the Christmas holiday? For me, it's all about what I am going to cook. My menu needs to have a combination of traditional foods including turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, cherry pie and Mike's chicken dumplings. But, it also needs to have a new dish such as Candied Brussel Sprouts, Rhubarb Pannacotta, and even Tuna Mango Sushi. This combination of old and new is what keeps me motivated and fresh during this season.

This combination of old and new is also important for our spiritual lives, as we prepare for Christmas once again this year. For many of us, our "new" might be forced on us by the loss of a loved one, or in welcoming a newborn baby. For others, our "new" might be a decision to do something different for Christmas this year. What is important is that our Christmas is a renewal. This means that our Christmas is to be "new" again and filled with the joy, amazement, and anticipation that we hold in our Christmas memories.

But how do we renew our spiritual selves to Christmas once again? I suggest that you all try something new in your spiritual practices as you prepare for the season. These can be as varied as your imagination, be it a new prayer practice, a commitment to reaching out to someone in need, reading scripture, or joining with friends in fellowship. We also have some opportunities at the church that might be the perfect opportunity.

1. The Wednesday noon Bible study will be continuing a study on the Covenants to culminate on the New Covenant for the December 18th Study. This is a wonderful opportunity to dig into God's relationship with humanity and understand the significance of the coming of Christ in the context of covenantal history.
2. We have two sections of our Advent Study, *Calling All Angels; An Advent Study of Fearlessness and Strength* by Erin Wathan. Thursday morning at 10:00 and Wednesday at 5:00pm. Call the church office right away if you would like to participate.
3. PCCR is sponsoring the Chamber Singers "An Estes Christmas" on December 7 at 2:00. It is a chance to enjoy the sounds of the season.
4. Blue Christmas on December 18th at 5:00 is a chance to come and reflect on the Christmas season. This is for those who have lost a loved one, are feeling so jostled by the Christmas hubbub that they need a sense of peace, or are needing a chance to reflect quietly on the unique hope that it is Christ Jesus.
5. Advent services – Every Sunday in December at 10:00 is a Advent Sunday, a chance to anticipate the coming of Christ. Worshipping together, we will prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus.
6. Christmas Eve at PCCR at 5:00– Finally, Christmas Eve is the night for ushering in the Christ Child once again. Come and celebrate with your family, light candles together and sing our favorite Christmas hymns. Then stay for cookies and hot chocolate.

Friends, I am wishing you a happy preparation for the coming of Christ. I pray that in your preparation you find something new.

Grace and peace,
Christine



Worship in



Merry Marthas Handmade creations



Donations headed to Crossroads!



PW Thank Offering

It is with grateful hearts that Presbyterian Women thank the members and friends of the Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies for their generous donations to support this year's Thank Offering. Our congregation has so far donated \$1,288.00 to this offering. Because of the generosity of our congregation, women and children both in the United States and internationally will receive the care, support and sustenance they need to move forward with their lives.

If you were unable to participate in the service on November 10, you can still contribute to the offering by writing a check to "PW of PCCR" and marking it for Thank Offering, or by going online and making a one-time donation, indicating it is for the Thank Offering. You are truly making a positive difference in the lives of those who will receive the benefits from this annual offering.



Christmas Dinner in Malawi

Each December, the Mission & Outreach committee (gratefully using congregational donations!) supports a Christmas Day dinner for the "poorest of the poor" in the northern area of Malawi. Some of these are also recipients of the blankets which are supplied also by funds from PCCR and are distributed in July. Mr. Leman Kayira oversees both projects, seeking out the elderly, the disabled, girls who should be in school but are in danger of being forced into marriage as early as age 11 and of course the very poorest in the area. We extend our heartfelt thanks to members of PCCR on behalf of the people of Malawi who will have a very good meal on Christmas!

The Crossroads Grocery Basket is waiting for donations!



Located inside the front doors on the 3rd Sunday of each month, your gift of non-perishable foods and essentials like toilet paper and personal hygiene supplies will make a very real difference in the lives of Estes Park residents who are barely making ends meet. If you tuck in a fabric shopping bag as well, that is even better as Crossroads no longer uses non-recyclable plastic bags.

Should you forget to bring items on the 3rd Sunday, the grocery cart is happy to take donations anytime in the library. So far in 2024, PCCR members and friends have donated **547 pounds of goods!** Let's try for 600 pounds!



PCCR supports Habitat for Humanity

Building Strength, Stability, and Self-Reliance through Shelter

For many years PCCR has supported Habitat for Humanity. In years past, many volunteers from this church participated in construction teams to build homes in the Estes Park area. For decades, Habitat has received annual financial support as a line item in the church's Mission & Outreach budget. In 2025, PCCR will provide \$1,000 to Habitat for Humanity for the St. Vrain Valley, which includes the local area.

This year, Habitat has been preparing for the construction of five single-family homes on Raven Avenue (near Ace Hardware), one each year for the next 5 years. Plans call for these to be 2-story houses with 3 or 4 bedrooms, to be built side by side on adjacent lots. The application process for the first homes closed in August, and excavation has already begun for foundations. Habitat homes are affordable, being built by volunteers working side-by-side with future homeowners who are first-time home buyers.

With these home construction projects getting underway, Habitat for Humanity of the St. Vrain Valley is seeking a motivated and experienced Construction Site Supervisor to oversee the on-site work...preparing the site for volunteers, managing volunteer work, and ensuring the safety of volunteers and staff. It's a part-time seasonal opportunity with an hourly wage of \$20 to \$23 per hour. Interested candidates should submit a résumé and cover letter detailing relevant experience to Mike Rodriguez at: Mrodriguez@stvrainhabitat.org.

Thank you notes

From First Baptist Church of Asheville

*"On behalf of the ministers and members of First Baptist Church of Asheville, thank you very much for your most generous contribution to our Church. Your gift is designated for Hurricane Helene Relief Fund.
In Appreciation, Gene McClure"*

From Estes Valley Crisis Advocates

"'Thank you' doesn't seem like enough gratitude for everything you have done for EVCA! We are so grateful to have your support.

Appreciatively, Estes Valley Crisis Advocates"

From Lynn and Craig Sumey

*"Thank you so much for your recent monetary support of our new ministry. We are grateful for your kindness during this time. With you, we are already working with a new generation of Church leaders in Scotland. We pray that they will bring hope to the people of Scotland and transformation to the global church.
We are honored to have your support and prayers!*

Blessings, Lynn and Craig"

From Estes Park Salud Foundation

"Thank you for your recent donation to the EP Salud Foundation. It is so gratifying to have your support which enables the Foundation to increase access to affordable health for the underserved members of our community. While lofty and understandable, this mission is devoid of the very unique and personal impact which your contribution provides to individual families. Your donation enables family members to receive the simple yet heretofore unaffordable service of an eye exam and glasses, receive free dental care for children, or reduced cost medical exams. And so much more.

On behalf of Salud patients and the Foundation, thank you for caring.

Doug Frisbie, President"

A Letter from Chenoa Stock, mission co-worker serving in Peru

Dear friends,

When I last wrote about my visit to Peru in July with a U.S. youth delegation, we were with a Peruvian youth environmental team in the mountains of La Oroya. Together we planted trees of hope to bring light to the shadows caused by the contamination of the city by extractive industries.

After our mountaintop experience, we drove back down through the hairpin turns to the coast of Lima/Callao to visit more communities advocating and struggling for environmental justice. We first worshiped with Pastor Pedro Bullón and The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, which is a partner of the Peruvian Joining Hands Network. This congregation is small, mighty and mission focused. It is intentionally located in a marginalized community of Callao, so the church and its outreach are easily accessible to the community when needed. This congregation also accompanies communities in the Marquez District, where many of its members have lived for decades. After a beautiful service of bilingual hymns and an inspiring sermon by Pastor Bullón about caring for neighbors, we traveled a short distance to Marquez to learn first-hand about the congregation's commitment to this area.

The border of the Ventanilla and Marquez Districts is where the Pacific Ocean meets the Chillón River, whose mouth is located on Marquez Beach in Marquez. Throughout our visit, we were led by María Chirinos Trinidad and Zulamita Cortez Calsina, committed leaders of the Good Shepherd congregation, and this advocacy effort in Marquez. Upon our arrival, after taking only a few steps out of the van, one could see the trash and waste that overwhelmed and contaminated the land and the Chillón River that runs through the community. We saw a river whose waters did not look suitable for irrigation of parks and gardens, as the municipality currently uses them, nor as the second source of water for Lima, the neighboring capital city.

Forty-five years ago, María and many in her community used this river mouth as drinking water. Time, climate change, an increase in industrial output, and the growing indifference of politicians have changed this scenario greatly. As we walked the dirt road to the beach, the river ran alongside us, filled with industrial waste of heavy metals through clandestine drainage, as well as human waste and pollution. When we reached the beach, covered in trash as far as the eye could see, there was no questioning the fact that 200g of plastic is poured into the sea every second without regulation, condemning the Chillón River to be one of the most contaminated rivers in South America.

Our delegation was not there to solve or fix the horrific situation in which this community lived. Rather, we were there to listen to them and hear their stories about the negative impacts on the health of the children and adults, as well as the ecosystem. We were there to see with our own eyes the vulnerability in which they lived, such as the lack of containing walls to hold back overflowing water, making them susceptible to natural disasters. We were there to use our feet to walk through parts of the beach and clean up as much waste as we could in the time that we had together. We were there to use our hands to paint a mural of solidarity, reminding this community that they are not alone in their struggle for environmental justice and encouraging them to continue to advocate and educate in public spaces, when possible, being God's megaphone for Creation's cry for healing.

While there, we met with Israel, the governor of Marquez, who told us that we "are the window to the world about what is happening here." What a call for the return to the U.S.! We are the way in which others can learn about this injustice that is connected to a greater global system that goes well beyond the borders of Marquez or Peru. We are also responsible for letting others know about the faithful commitment and dedication of our partners in their ministry to confront this system through education that provides all with a deeper understanding of the situation, through advocacy for public policy that defends the environment, through activities of Creation care that work to mitigate high levels of contamination, and through a ministry that embodies God's love to walk with neighbors in need.

As we move toward Advent and are led by the shining Star, I invite us to reflect on how we can be windows for people who need accompaniment of solidarity, who need their voices to be heard, or who need to know that they are God's beloved.

Isaiah 58: 8-9

Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness [a] will go before you,
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.
Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and the Lord will say: Here am I.

Throughout this Advent and Christmas season and beyond, let us remember Israel's call to us in Marquez: that we may be windows through which to see situations of injustice, violence, inequality, and more, allowing God's Light to shine through and to let all know that the God of love and justice is here.

God's Light and Peace be with you,

Chenoa

Groups and Events

An Estes Christmas Saturday, Dec 7th 2:00pm at PCCR

The Estes Valley Chamber Singers directed by Rich Dixon, along with Larry Gillum, Patti Dolezal with the PCCR Bell Choirs, and the Highland Brass will be presenting their Christmas Concert. Come experience the music of the season!

No charge for admission but donations will be appreciated.

Joy Offering

The PCUSA Special Offering Christmas Joy will be taken on December 22. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we reflect God's perfect gift to us—His Son Jesus the Christ— and also remember the church leaders among us who have pointed us to God. This offering honors the faithfulness of current and retired church workers and their families in time of need in the form of financial support and grants. The offering also provides future church workers of color with assistance as they discover and pursue their professional goals. Support goes to Menaul School in Albuquerque (a diverse Christian high school with students from 15-20 countries represented each year), Presbyterian Pan American School in Kingsville, TX (with an international body representing 26 countries in the last 25 years; 100% of graduates are accepted into colleges and universities) and Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, AL (whose population is 87% first generation in college).

PW Bible Study – December 16, 2024 Let Justice Roll Down



Presbyterian Women will meet on December 16th, 2024 at 11:30am in the church Library to continue our study, "Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation." Lisa Plaut will lead Lesson Four, "Water Justice."

All women of the church are welcome to attend.

Congregational Meeting

On Sunday, December 8th, PCCR will hold a Congregational Meeting immediately following the worship service to elect officers (Elders, Deacons, and Nominating Committee) and to approve the Terms of Call for the Pastor.

Please plan on attending

**The Church Office will be closed
December 25 & 26 for Christmas
and closing at Noon on December 31 for
New Year's Eve.**

Cookies & Cocoa following the Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, December 24 at 5:00 p.m.

The Hospitality Committee invites you to share a Christmas Eve tradition with them as the PCCR family gathers for our beautiful Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m. on December 24. Afterwards we will enjoy a cup of hot cocoa and Christmas cookies to celebrate together the miracle of Christ's birth.



Plan to join us on Christmas Eve for this special worship service and fellowship with our PCCR family, friends and families.



Merry Christmas from the PCCR Staff



Brenda, Rich, Christine, Patti, Carolyn, Larry



Adult Sunday School/Bible Study Class

Beginning Sunday, December 1, Adult Study Group will engage in "A musical tour of daily readings for Advent and Christmas". Obviously, not daily readings, but the Sunday readings with prayer and musical selections (thank you, YouTube!) to guide our thinking through the week. Please join us at 8:15am Sundays in the Lounge. We will finish in time for bell ringers and choir singers to go to practice and the rest to find coffee and a nibble in Fellowship Hall before worship.

December 1: Introduction and "Advent Responsory" (adapted by G.P. da Palestrina ca. 1525-94)
Scripture: Matthew 25:31-33, 41-46

December 8: "Thou Whose Almighty Word" (Words John Marriott 1780-1825; Music MOSCOW, adapted from Felice Giardini 1716-96)
Scripture: Luke 12:35-38

Check the poster outside of the Lounge for the rest of the classes up to January 5, 2025.

Wednesday Bible Study with the Pastor Christine



Wednesday Bible study will continue the study of the Covenants. All are welcome. This Wednesday Bible study helps us understand the language of covenant and how God has worked throughout the ages to sustain, encourage and interact with God's people. For this month, we will look at the fractured state of ancient Israel and the development of the New Covenant in the coming of Jesus.

December 4—Reform Under Josiah: 2 Kings 22-23

December 11—The Exiles Return: Isaiah 42-43

December 18—The New Covenant of Christ

Bible Study meets at 12:00 noon in the church Library.

Journeys

Journeys is a "community of faith-travelers" working toward building a fellowship that supports each person as they seek spiritual wholeness. The discussions cover a broad range of topics. All are welcome.

In December, Journeys will begin a new study based on *First Light: Jesus and the Kingdom of God*. *First Light* is a 12-session video based exploration of the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God featuring John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg, two of the world's leading Jesus scholars, shot on location throughout Galilee and Jerusalem.

Journeys meets Sunday mornings in the church library. Gathering begins at 8:15am, 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)

(Journeys is a community-based study group led by independent facilitators.)



Choir Practice Come join the “family”

Rehearsal every Thursday from 6:30-8:00pm
in the Music Room

Directed by Rich Dixon



Plan for your December year end giving

Charitable contributions may be claimed in the year that they are delivered to our church, including checks mailed in the appropriate year. Donations made on our website are deductible in the year the donor makes the donation. As a note, our office will be closed December 25th and 26th and will be closing at noon on December 31st.

Contact Carolyn Hull at finance@pccrusa.org with any questions

Financial Information October 2024			
	October	Jan-Oct	Year to Date—Budget
Total Revenues	\$19,956	\$463,699	\$328,317
Total Expenses	\$35,536	\$530,436	\$394,134
Net Total	-\$15,580	-\$66,737	-\$65,817

*Revenues and Expenses numbers for May include donation from PCCR Foundation \$155,792 for the lower parking lot project.

December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>8-11:5am Adult Sunday School -Lounge 10:00am Worship</p>	<p>11:00am Highland Brass Rehearsal-S 1:00pm Membership Committee-L 2:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH</p>	<p>12:00pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Rm 6 6:30pm Estes Valley Chamber Singers-MR 6:45pm Hispanic Bible Study</p>	<p>12:00pm Bible Study-L 1:00pm The Good Grief Group-Lounge 3:00pm CST 70449-Rm 6 4:00pm Joyful Belts-JH 5:00pm Joyful Belts-JH 5:00pm Advent Study Group-L 5:30pm EP Choral Quartet-MR 6:30pm Estes Park Choral-FH</p>	<p>10:00am Advent Study Group at Meyers 4:00pm Chancel Belts-JH 5:00pm EVCS-Rm 6 6:30pm Chancel Choir-MR 6:30pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge</p>	<p>3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH 6:00pm Estes Park Choral Rehearsal-S</p>	<p>10:00am Grace & Grub Christmas Brunch-FH 2:00pm Estes Valley Chamber Singers Concert-S</p>
<p>8-11:5am Adult Sunday School -Lounge 8:30am Journeys-L 10:00am Worship followed by Congregational Meeting</p>	<p>9:30am Finance Committee-L 9:30am Hospitality Christmas Party at Palmers 11:00 Communications-L 2:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH</p>	<p>10:00am Building/Oversees-L 12:00pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Rm 6 1:00pm Personal Comm-L 3:00pm Worship & Music-L 4:20pm Deacons-L 6:45pm Hispanic Bible Study-Rm 6</p>	<p>10:30am Mission Outreach-L 12:00pm Bible Study-L 3:00pm CST 70449-Rm 6 4:00pm Joyful Belts-JH 5:00pm Advent Study Group-L 5:30pm Oil Social Troop 70455/7734-Rm 6</p>	<p>8:30am EP/RC Board-Rm 10:00am Advent Study Group at Meyers 3:00pm Journeys Inner Work Group-L 4:00pm Chancel Belts-JH 5:00pm EVCS-Rm 6 6:30pm Chancel Choir-MR 6:30pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge</p>	<p>3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH 6:00pm Estes Park Choral Rehearsal-S</p>	<p>9:30am Card Making Group-Rm 6 2:00pm Estes Park Choral Concert-S</p>
<p>8-11:5am Adult Sunday School -Lounge 8:30am Journeys-L 10:00am Worship Crosroads Donations</p>	<p>11:00am Presbyterian Women-L 2:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH 6:30pm Session-L</p>	<p>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 12:00pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Rm 6 5:00pm Stephen Ministers at Mama Rose's 5:30pm The Learning Place Family Cate-FH 6:45pm Hispanic Bible Study-Rm 6</p>	<p>12:00pm Bible Study-L 1:00pm The Good Grief Group-Lounge 3:00pm CST 70449-Rm 6 4:00pm Joyful Belts-JH 5:00pm Blue Christmas Service-S</p>	<p>10:00am Advent Study Group at Meyers 3:00pm Catechism Comm-L 3:00pm Ballet Renaissance Rehearsal-FH 4:00pm Chancel Belts-JH 5:00pm EVCS-Rm 6 6:30pm Chancel Choir-MR 6:30pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge</p>	<p>6:30pm Ballet Renaissance Christmas Performance-FH</p>	
<p>8-11:5am Adult Sunday School -Lounge 8:30am Journeys-L 10:00am Worship</p>	<p>2:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH</p>	<p>12:00pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Rm 6 6:00pm Christmas Eve Service-S 6:45pm Hispanic Bible Study-Rm 6</p>	<p>Christmas Day-Office Closed</p>	<p>Church Office Closed 6:30pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge</p>		
<p>8-11:5am Adult Sunday School -Lounge 10:00am Worship</p>						

Revised 11/26/24