



Presbyterian
Community Church
of the Rockies

March 2025 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 13, Number 3





PCCR Directory

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. 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 April Newsletter deadline is **Tuesday, March 18**. Please send your pictures and stories to: office@pccrusa.org Thanks!



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Worship Schedule

Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary:

March 2 — 10:00am Joyful Bells; Guest Organist Jill Hunt

Guest Minister Rev. Michael Fitzsimmons

March 5 — 5:00pm Ash Wednesday Service; Chancel Choir

March 9 — 10:00am Chancel Bells

March 16 — 10:00am Chancel Choir

March 23 — 10:00am Bells

March 30 — 10:00am Joyful Bells; Chancel Choir Basses & Tenors

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".

Time for a New Church Directory

The office is working on a new church directory and we need your help!

- ⇒ Are you in the current directory?
- ⇒ Has your phone number changed?
 - ⇒ Is your e mail different?
- ⇒ Have you moved? Is your address correct?
- ⇒ Does your picture look like the church logo? Would you like an update to your current picture? If so, please see Peter Plaut before or after worship to have your picture taken

Let the church office know as soon as possible (970-586-4404 or office@pccrusa.org) if you have any changes to your contact information. Thanks!

March 2025

Message from Pastor Christine Dempsey . . .

Dear friends,

Lent is here! This year, I am adopting the phrase “blessed to be a blessing.” As we enter the season of Lent, I would like this to be our guiding principle. Why? After all, aren’t we supposed to think of Lent in terms of sacrifice, penitence and contrition? Isn’t this a time when we give up something to bring awareness to Christ’s suffering? Well, it can be and the early church often focused on this aspect of Lent, but Lent is also a time to connect us with the depth of God’s love for us and an opportunity for us to practice “paying it forward.”



We use the term “Lent” with some confidence as the forty days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. The term itself comes from the Old English term which means spring and is associated with the lengthening of days. The time anticipates the renewal of the church on Easter Sunday. There is a tension between as we walk with Jesus to Jerusalem towards his death on the cross and the promise of new life in Christ. As you can guess from the term itself, Lent, that the practice of Lent developed with the early liturgy of the church. Scholars do not know the details of the earliest practices of Lent but have determined that by the fourth century, the remembrance of forty days was standard practice. During this period, Christians dedicated themselves to practices of self-denial and contemplation.

Many of us in response to the Lenten period have adopted practices tied to the Lenten fast. The idea of fasting or denying oneself became tied into the simpler practice of giving up something for Lent. I’m sure we all have given up something in an effort to walk along with Jesus; and, of course, many Christian traditions give up meat on Fridays as part of this same practice of self-denial. While these practices can help us identify with Christ’s sacrifice, they miss the other side of the Lenten tradition which is the love. This is love that God sends to us to show us how to thrive and to live in community with each other. This is the love that we celebrate on Sundays, the reminder that Jesus is Risen, a reminder that we are loved by God, embraced by God and reclaimed to God.

So, this year, I want us to focus on the ways that God blesses us and the ways that we can bless others. I want us to see Lent through the eyes of love for God and one another and think about the ways that we show each other love. I encourage you therefore to take up a practice of intentionality to ask God how you can bless others. Here are a few ideas: you pledge to send three notes of encouragement a week, ask a new friend to lunch, intentionally welcome a visitor at worship, find a new volunteer opportunity. Be intentional. Be aware of how others bless you, and ask God how you are blessed to be a blessing.

Grace and peace,

Christine

Worship in February



**Benefit Concert for
Salud
February 23**

***Voices United in
Harmony***

**Oratorio Society of Estes Park
Chorus
Estes Park Chorale
Estes Valley Chamber Singers**



**Daylight Saving Time Begins
Sunday, March 9th**

**Remember to set your
clocks forward**

***One Great Hour of Sharing
Isaiah 58***



Have you ever felt helpless after a disaster, such as Hurricane Helene or the fires in Southern California? Do you want to do something to help but are not sure what to do or which organization to support? The good news is the One Great Hour of Sharing offering collected during Lent, provides money immediately to those recovering from such disasters. This same offering helps feed the hungry in our country and around the world and provides skill development and advocacy in low-income communities so they can overcome oppression and injustice.

The One Great Hour of sharing supports three life-saving programs: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) and the Self-Development of People (SDPO). During the season of Lent the Mission Committee will be sharing the many ways in which these three programs have already provided hope to those in need.

In Isaiah 58 we are called to “loose the chains of injustice; set the oppressed free; share our food with the hungry; provide shelter for the wanderer.” Helen Keller reminded us that “alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” Let us join together to follow the call of Isaiah 58 and provide support to those in need and help improve the lives of people in these challenging situations.



PC(USA) Cuts Mission Staffing in Denominational Restructuring

By Daue Thomas
Retired PC(USA) Mission Co-Worker (2001-2012)
Former Regional Liaison for México

Significant changes are currently being made within our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA). Starting back in November, 2024, Presbyterian News Service was reporting on the new Interim Unified Agency of the PC(USA), as several programs were being reconfigured (Theology & Worship Office; Peace & Justice; Vital Congregations Program; Presbyterian Historical Society; and several others).

According to Rev. Jihyun Oh, Executive Director and Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of PC(USA), "We are moving toward sustainable ministries that better align with our vision and values, as well as mission and ministry priorities."

One of the many agencies being affected dramatically is Presbyterian World Mission. In January, the Presbyterian Outlook magazine reported "In a significant move that marks a drastic shift in its approach to international mission work, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) leadership recently shared plans with World Mission staff to reduce the number of mission co-workers serving abroad by at least 50%, from 60 to no more than 30.

Twenty-five years ago, when Sue and I were selected to serve alongside our partner denomination in México, PC(USA) had more than 250 mission co-workers serving globally. As the Outlook reported, "For decades, the PC(USA) has prioritized a collaborative model of international mission, sending co-workers at the invitation of global partners to serve under their leadership. This approach attempted to move away from what was perceived as a paternalistic colonial style of mission work and toward more authentic partnerships."

Those anticipated staff reductions have begun, and some have been made public. Chenoa Stock, mission co-worker serving in Peru and supported by PCCR, has been notified that her position has been eliminated. She told me "Our last day is mid/late March and then we have some months of severance, etc., to discern our next steps." She added: "We have not been told any other details as to how this new office will relate with partners or which partners or anything in that regard. I know some mission co-workers have been invited to work in a newly-forming ecumenical and interfaith office and they will carry out



the new model of relating to global partners and congregations. I think 18-19 were invited to stay on; the rest (over 40, I think) were eliminated/let go."

Rev. Tyler Holm, also supported by PCCR and serving in Malawi, told me "I can say that my position will be eliminated; more details beyond that will be shared soon, I hope." He added, "Thank you for your understanding and patience as we navigate this time. It is difficult to balance the responsibilities to allow PC(USA) leadership to have the space to develop their new vision and to keep yourself and all others informed."



On February 5th, Presbyterian News Service reported the following: "Under the new plan, a select group of staff who are currently serving as mission co-workers and in administrative roles within World Mission will transition into a new role as Global Ecumenical Liaisons. The Liaisons will be deployed internationally and across the United States to serve as a connecting and ambassadorial resource with PC(USA) partners around the world. The new role will require working closely with congregations, mid councils and new worshiping communities that are partnered with worldwide ministries. They will also serve as facilitator support for partner programs, relationships, and activities, and will implement local, regional and/or global strategies."

On February 7, Presbyterian News Service issued another news release about the changes to World Mission, saying:

Since at least World War II, the way the PC(USA) engages in global mission has been continuously evolving beyond that former practice of sending "the West to the rest" to save humanity. Our global partners keep telling us we have further to go to "de-colonize" our theology, missiology and practical engagement. We've made significant progress in this regard since World War II. For instance, decades ago we shifted to the language of "mission co-worker" to reflect this mutuality from past iterations such as "missionary."

Presbyterian News Service concluded its February 7th reporting on the massive changes within World Mission with this statement:

In the next few weeks, we anticipate sharing more about shifts to be made and how the evolving approach will work. But for now, please pray for God's wisdom and guidance for everyone involved taking these steps!

By integrating the wisdom of the past with the needs of the present and the possibilities of tomorrow, we are committed to advancing our collective mission in ways that are faithful, innovative, and impactful. This moment represents not an ending, but a beginning – a call to live into a renewed vision with courage, hope, and steadfast faith.

(The PCCR Mission Committee is apprised of this situation and will keep you updated on future developments.)

Groups and Events

Pancake Supper

Mark your calendar for the annual Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesday, March 4th.

The Grace and Grub group plans and serves the meal which is a fundraiser for Crossroads. The meal is free but there will be donation jars to collect your donations. Delicious pancakes, ham, and blueberries will be served. Enjoy the festive atmosphere with Mardi Gras decorations and New Orleans style music.

The meal will be served from 4:30 until 6:00. Plan to come and invite your family, neighbors and friends. Please join us for this fun event!



PW Bible Study –March 17th Let Justice Roll Down—Lesson 7

Presbyterian Women will gather on Monday, March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, for their monthly Bible study. Renee Warren will lead the discussion of lesson seven, "Economic Climate Justice," based on Deuteronomy 15:7-11.

While the Bible doesn't promise to eradicate poverty, we are provided with guidance on how we can help "reduce suffering and strengthen the entire social network." We will gather at 11:30am in the church library for a brief social time, with the lesson beginning at 12:00 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. Join us for this informative and timely study.





Palm Sunday Brunch

Mark Your Calendars!

You are invited to attend the annual Palm Sunday Brunch on Sunday, April 13, 2025, immediately following the worship service.

The Hospitality Committee will provide ham, potato casserole, rolls, and coffee/water.

The congregation is asked to bring a dish that will feed at least 8 people.

Last names beginning with A-R: side dishes, salads (no potatoes please)

Last names beginning with S-Z: desserts

We look forward to this special time of fellowship before Easter!



Are you not receiving emails from church and you know we have your address?



First, check to see if it is landing in your JUNK file. If you still do not receive the emails, let the office know and we can verify that we have your correct information.

Lenten Psalm Study

For Lent, we will be embarking on a practice called lectio divina. This is an ancient practice where we read, meditate and pray on scripture, listening to how it speaks to us. We will be using the same scripture for all 6 weeks, getting deeper and deeper into the text, using different translations and even thinking about the Hebrew. That text will be Psalm 86.

Join Pastor Christine on Mondays at 3:30pm beginning March 10th in the church Library.

All are Welcome!

SAVE the DATES!



The Malawi Mission Network (part of PCUSA) is happy to announce its 18th Annual Conference to be held at Mountain View Presbyterian Church in Loveland on July 31—August 3, 2025. You are invited to attend some or all of this event!

The Malawi Mission Network brings together Americans and Malawians each year for several days of fellowship, worship and information sharing. 2025 will be the first face-to-face meeting since 2019 and we are expecting attendees from across America and from Malawi. You are welcome to come for an hour or for the entire event. The host church will provide lunch and dinner each day except Thursday lunch. (Registration begins at 2:00pm)

If you are interested, talk with Jim or Carol Nussbaumer. We have a tentative agenda and registration is expected to begin in March. Car pooling is encouraged!

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 March, Journeys will conclude the video series: *First Light: Jesus and the Kingdom of God* by John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg. Then the class will move to a couple of personal development topics. The weekly schedule is:

March 2	First Light #12—America as the New Rome, led by Jim Daugherty
March 9	Dr. James Hollis: Soul, Meaning, and Three Heretics, led by Rick Taylor
March 16	Existentialism In Scripture, Literature & Philosophy, led by Robert Howard
March 23	Existentialism In Scripture, Literature & Philosophy, led by Robert Howard

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=UG50Wk5yV1R2b1lCVmtENnUxTctlUT09>

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

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



Wednesday Bible Study with the Pastor Christine

Wednesday Bible study will continue with a study on “Genesis—In the Beginning”, meeting in the church Library at 12:00 noon.

March 5—The Nephilim; Genesis 6:1-8

March 12—Noah and the Flood; Genesis 6:9-7:24

March 19—Covenant with Noah; Genesis 8-9:17

March 26—The Earth and its relationships; Genesis 9:18-11:31

All are welcome!



Financial Information January 2025

	January		Year to Date—Budget
Total Revenues	\$62,180		\$34,598
Total Expenses	\$29,771		\$42,265
Net Total	\$32,409		-\$7,667

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
						8:30am Card Making Group - FH 10:00am Girl Scout Troop 70449-Rm6	
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2	1:00pm Membership Carmelike-L 8:30am Journeys-L 10:00am Workshop 6:30pm Ovation Society Orchestra-FH	12:00pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge 12:00pm PEO Chapter AV-L 4:30pm Pancake Supper-FH 6:30pm Estes Valley Chamber Singers-MR 6:45pm Hispanic Bible Study - Rm 6	12:00pm Bible Study-L 12:30pm Estes Neoplat Network-Rm 6 1:30pm The Good Girl Group-Lounge 4:00pm Joyful Bels-FH 5:00pm Ash Wed. Service 5:30pm Luciana Quartet-MR 6:30pm Estes Park Chorale-FH	12:00pm Stepping Stones At-Avon Group-Lounge 4:00pm Charcoal Bels-FH 5:30pm EVICS - Rm 6 6:30pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge	3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH	10:00am Girl Scout Troop 70449-Rm 6	
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9	9:30am France Carmelike 8:30am Journeys-L 10:00am Workshop 6:00pm Ovation Society Orchestra-FH	10:00am Building/Grounds-L 12:00pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge 1:00pm Personnel Comm-L 3:00pm Ballet Renaissance-FH 4:30pm Deacons-L 6:30pm EVCS -MR 6:45pm Hispanic Bible Study - Rm 6	10:30am Mission/Church-L 12:00pm Bible Study-L 4:00pm Joyful Bels-FH 5:30pm Girl Scout Troop 70455/7784-Rm6 5:30pm Luciana Quartet-MR 6:30pm Estes Park Chorale-FH	8:30am EPHHC Board Meeting 10:00am Christian Education-L 12:00pm Stepping Stones At-Avon Group-Lounge 3:00pm Journeys Inner Work-L 4:00pm Charcoal Bels-FH 5:00pm EVICS -Rm6 6:30pm Charcoal Choir -MR 6:30pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge	3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH	10:00am Girl Scout Troop 70449-Rm 6	
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16	8:15am Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am Journeys-L 10:00am Workshop Crossroads Donations 6:00pm Ovation Society Orchestra-FH	11:30am Presbyterian Women-L 12:00pm Lenten Psalm Study-L 3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH 4:00pm Session-L	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 18	12:00pm Bible Study-L 1:00pm The Good Girl Group-Lounge 4:00pm Joyful Bels-FH 5:30pm Luciana Quartet 6:30pm Estes Park Chorale-FH	12:00pm Stepping Stones At-Avon Group-Lounge 3:00pm Columbian Carmelike-L 4:00pm Charcoal Bels-FH 5:00pm EVICS-Rm6 6:30pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge 6:30pm Charcoal Choir-MR	3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH	10:00am Girl Scout Troop 70449-Rm 6 4:00pm Girl Scout Daisy Troop 78904-Rm 6
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23	8:15am Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am Journeys-L 10:00am Workshop 6:00pm Ovation Society Orchestra-FH	3:00pm Lenten Psalm Study-L 3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH	12:00pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge 5:30pm The Learning Place-FH 6:30pm Estes Valley Chamber Singers-MR 6:45pm Hispanic Bible Study - Rm 6	12:00pm Bible Study-L 4:00pm Joyful Bels-FH 5:30pm GST 70455/7784-Rm6 5:30pm Luciana Quartet-MR 6:30pm Estes Park Chorale-FH	12:00pm Stepping Stones At-Avon Group-Lounge 4:00pm Charcoal Bels-FH 6:30pm One Day at a Time AA Group-Lounge	6:30pm Mary Martin-FH 3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH	10:00am Girl Scout Troop 70449-Rm 6
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30	8:15am Adult Sunday School-Lounge 8:30am Journeys-L 10:00am Workshop 11:00am Membership Info 6:00pm Ovation Society Orchestra-FH	9:30am Hospitality-L 3:00pm Lenten Psalm Study-L 3:30pm Ballet Renaissance-FH					
31							