

2023



Celebration Time

10:00 AM Sundays

*"We are God's
People Sharing the
Love of Christ!"*

Website:

www.fumcgreeley.org

Email:

office@fumcgreeley.org

Pastor's Letter,

Although we are a month from turning our calendars to 2024, Advent is the beginning of the Christian year. Even as we move through the activities and expectations of the holiday season with a mix of excitement and exhaustion, there is also the spirit of change in the air. There is the hope that God is up to something new within us, around us, and through us. We look at the weary world, where there is a constant barrage of bad news: war and violence; soaring costs of housing, food, prescriptions, medical care, and childcare; unprecedented storms and climate events; increased reports of loneliness, isolation, and anxiety; a more entrenched polarization related to politics, religion, and lifestyle. We know that nothing short of earth-shaking will bring the change, the realignment, the peace, and the drawing nearer for which we pray.

We, like the weary souls oppressed by the Roman empire and the religious elite some 2,000 years ago, are waiting for God to come as Messiah and reorder the world into one that the prophets promised, a world marked by justice, freedom, and equity. We need a God who not only cares about us but who is also willing to show up among us, and do something with us, here, now. That is exactly what God set out to do in taking on flesh and coming among the world that God so loves. Jesus, whose name means "God saves," showed us that's just the kind of God we've got. God is not confined in heaven. God stoops toward us, intervening, showing up when we least expect and in ways that surprise. All in God's good time.

In Jesus, God moved heaven and earth to become one of us, to live our life and to die our death. And it is with the expectation that God will continue to both shake things up and put things back together that we wait with hope in the four weeks of Advent. I hope you'll join us as we celebrate and anticipate the life-changing good news that God is coming to us. We are invited to keep our hearts, our minds, our ears, and our eyes open to the possibility that God is on the way.

Both the Advent study and the sermon series will be based on Bishop Will Willimon's new book, "Heaven and Earth: Advent and the Incarnation." For our four Sunday morning worship services of Advent, we will center on the following themes:

- December 3rd: Meanwhile (Mark 13:24-37)
- December 10th: Surprised (Mark 1:1-8) Bonus: There will be a children's program at this service!
- December 17th: Light (John 1:6-8, 19-28) Bonus: The choir will have their program at this service!

And then I hope you'll join us at 1:00 and 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 24th for a Christmas Eve Candlelight service, where we will celebrate the inbreaking of the light of the world. May you be blessed during this season of waiting and may you make time to reach out to the One who continually reaches out to us.

Pastor, Al Strauss

STAFF

Rev. Al Strauss

Senior Pastor

Kathy Trevino

Director of Operations

Mardy Gerwig

Bookkeeper

Nikki Barrios

Director
Family Ministries

Travis Kornegay

Director
Chancel Choir
Accompanist

Hailey Zaggle

Director
Lucky Duckling
Daycare

Evan Messmer

Laras Prasetya

William Zaggle

Sound and Media

Erika Vasquez

Custodian

John Hull

Security

Ginger Jansson

Newsletter Editor
tgjansson@gmail.com

Financial Report

October 2023

Total Revenue: \$24,217.34

Total Expenses: \$34,396.92

Monthly Balance: \$-10,179.58

Capital Campaign Loan Balance: \$34,950.36



Is God on Your Christmas Gift List?

As you finish up your Christmas shopping this year, and you have some cash leftover, we can help you with that.

We have come to the end of a year that has presented us with a decline in financial support. Members have moved to another city or state. Some have passed on. This leaves us with some unfulfilled pledges for 2023. As far as regular giving, there has been an increase by some but a decrease by others.

Staff hours have been cut and, therefore, their pay to help compensate. Have you wondered why the office is only open 8 - 12, Monday - Thursday? Think about it. This makes it difficult to provide the service that our church community deserves.

Please remember God and your church this Christmas Season.

FUMC Money Counters



Ways to Give

*If you are comfortable attending in-person worship, your contributions may be placed in the offering plates.

*You can mail your check to the church (917 10th Ave, Greeley 80631)

*Another way to give is to use your King Soopers Loyalty card. Make sure you link your card with First United Methodist Church, Greeley as your charity of choice. Then each time you shop, King Soopers will donate to FUMC.

Thank you, FUMC Finance Committee



Help us celebrate the birthdays of our church members who are 80 years old or older.

Norma Loibl	12/03	85 yrs.
Donna Schmidt	12/05	82 yrs.
Flo Mikkelson	12/08	92 yrs.
Joyce Patterson	12/08	83 yrs.
Aris Montgomery	12/09	98 yrs.
Ron Fritzler	12/11	81 yrs.
Thelma Richard	12/14	96 yrs.
Shirley Jacoby	12/15	95 yrs.
Joan Ready	12/16	85 yrs.
Dorothy Benner	12/17	85 yrs.
Les Kropf	12/24	89 yrs.



Help us celebrate the anniversaries of our church members who have been married for 50 years or more.

Darryl & Sandi Schultz	12/23	56 yrs.
Jim & Patty Kunkle	12/26	53 yrs.
Jack & Cheryl Schneider	12/27	53 yrs.



Ed Bowker October 31, 2023

Worship Service Attendance

Knowing you are here is important to us. There are two Attendance Notebooks available for you to register your attendance on Sunday mornings. You only need to sign in one time! Knowing who is in the building helps us in case of an emergency. This also gives you an opportunity to update our records if there are changes to your phone number or address.



The deadline for the January 2024 *Messenger* is **Monday, December 18th**. Articles can be emailed to Ginger Jansson at tgjansson@gmail.com. If you know of someone who would like the newsletter emailed to them, please have them send their email address to me or to the office at office@fumcgreeley.org. Thank you.

Cookie Walk



If you are a cookie eater or need a tasty gift for someone, stop by and select your favorite Christmas cookies. The variety is always amazing. Shoppers are given a box when they enter. As they walk around the display of cookies/candy, they choose items, and a volunteer places them in the box. Shoppers can buy a little or a lot. Pricing is by the pound. Thanks for supporting Greeley-Weld Habitat for Humanity.

The annual Habitat for Humanity Cookie Walk will be **Saturday, December 16th**, from 9 am to 12 noon at Zoe's, 715 10th Street. If you are a cookie baker or candy maker, please donate some sweet treats for the sale. Put them on plates or trays and deliver them to Zoe's on Friday, Dec 15 between 4 and 6 pm. Or contact Marian Ruge at 970-381-2222.



Thanks to everyone who purchased a quilt from Sewing for Service. A final report of 2023 donations and sales will be in the January newsletter.



News from United Women in Faith



United
Women
in Faith

Our November meeting was World Thank Offering month focused on giving thanks for our blessings and ways to continue improving the lives of women & children locally and through world missions. We recently donated items and funds for layettes as part of our local giving.

Our December meeting on **Thursday, December 14th**, will be a Christmas celebration. Bring a special Christmas snack to share as we share stories of Christmas celebrations of the past. We also welcome special items to display that have personal meanings to us. Put December 14th at 1:30pm in Fellowship Hall on your calendar.

Donna Hettinger,
Secretary

Local and Global

Our **Fall Food Drive** was successful with 110 pounds of food collected. We don't have a total yet on the money donated. Thanks so much to everyone for your support.

By the time you read this, we hope you will have taken a tag from the **Salvation Army Angel Tree** to help children in our community have a great Christmas.

The order form for **Christmas Poinsettias** will be in the bulletin soon. The plants will be used in our Advent decorating and can be picked up after the Christmas Eve service.

Thanks, *Donni Clark*
970-330-5940 or jdclark1@live.com

Holiday Angel Tree



A big thank you to all who picked up gift tags from the Salvation Army. Please know that your generosity helped to make the holidays brighter for local children.

Winter Wear Tree

This holiday season we will be collecting socks, mittens, gloves & winter hats for those in need. We need socks for men, women and children. We could really use hats and gloves for men. We use these items in the hygiene bags that are put in the **Blessing Box**. A tree will be available in the east narthex beginning December 3rd and will remain until Christmas. You are asked to decorate the tree with new items. Donations will be distributed by volunteers to those in need. Items for men are especially needed. While you are out doing your holiday shopping, please pick up a pair or two of socks, gloves or a hat for the tree.



Backpacks for Kids

The Weld Food Bank *Backpacks for Kids* program has started up again for the school year. Our church fills backpacks on the first Monday of each month. Our next time to go to the food bank is **Monday, December 4th**. We meet at the Weld Food Bank at 9AM. The food bank encourages everyone who volunteers to register online if you can but if not, please show up as plenty of help is always needed. If you have issues, please call them at 970-356-2199, ext. 307. Please contact Barbara Shaw or Donni Clark for any questions or for more information. Thank you.



Pray for Our Students

Education Commission



The Advent season is always a special time for our children to learn about the Christmas story. Adults always enjoy seeing the kids of our congregation glowing with reflection, questions, and experiencing scripture in ways we can all understand.

The Children's Christmas Pageant will be held **on December 10th**, during our regular worship time. After the service, the children will have a Christmas party with pizza and an ornament exchange. They will then head over to UCCC for a performance of *Scrooge*. Reservations are needed so please contact Nikki at 970-590-0003 for more information. This experience was made possible through a grant from a memorial. Parents are welcome to attend (with reservations) but chaperones are being provided if parents would like to take this opportunity to do a little Christmas shopping!

Pastor Al is going to be holding an adult Advent study which will meet in the Parlor after worship on **December 3rd, 10th, and 17th**.

In January the Wednesday study group will be starting a new book. Please stay tuned for that start date and book title.

The Education commission will also be putting information out about the McNulty Scholarship in February/March. Please let Connie Long know if you would like an application.

Happy Advent Season, your Education Commission, *Connie*



Trustees

The Board of Trustees continues to maintain our church building by repairing leaky boiler valves, keeping the bus up and running, getting a new refrigerator, taking care of recurring maintenance issues and repairing the Blessing Box. Due to speeding traffic in the parking lot and safety concerns for the Lucky Duckling Daycare children, it was decided to use the chain to block off the north end of the lot. The chain will be removed for church services and concerts.

The Lucky Duckling Daycare is fully certified and up and running. There are currently 15 children with more expected soon.

Thanks to Travis Anderson, John Hull, David Pringle, Donni Clark and Pastor Al and the amazing Scouts who meet in our church. Sixteen scouts, parents and leaders joined us in raking up the leaves from our church property. We used lots of trash bags!! There are still a few leaves to fall but the majority are taken care of. So many thanks to the scouts for their time and efforts on November 18th!

PRAYER CHAIN MINISTRY



When believing people pray, great things can happen. Do you realize that every time you pray for someone, you are opening a door for God to do something in their lives? This is exactly what our prayer chain ministry believes.

We have three prayer chains who respond to prayer requests made to the church by phone, in person or to any of our prayer chain members. However, we do need permission from the family to be able to put someone on a prayer request.

The best part for those serving in this ministry is being able to pray in the privacy and convenience of our homes. Requests are passed along on the phone and kept in confidence.

New members are always welcome. If you are interested and have questions, please contact me (Dee Kratochvil) at 970-356-3644. Our present leaders are Georgia Fitch, Carol McConnell and Dee.

Thank you to the following members who now serve in this worthwhile ministry:

Julie Haworth, Beth Hyde, Marcia Shafer, Sharon Voightmann, Judy Linn, MaryCay Utterback, Connie Long, RuthMary Lyons, Mary Scheel and Linda Kautz.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6 Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks.

Dee Kratochvil

Party People Plans!



What a busy time of the year this is. The Party People want to remind you to take a moment and enjoy some of the sights and sounds of the holidays.

On **Saturday, December 9th**, we will be warming up the bus and headed to Island Grove Regional Park for *The Holiday Lane Drive*. We will meet at the church at 5:30 and return for Christmas Cookies and hot chocolate afterwards. On **Saturday, December 16th**, the Greeley Philharmonic will be back for Christmas

Brass. The concert will be in the Sanctuary beginning at 7PM. You can go to greeleyphil.org/tickets for more information.

Looking ahead to January, we will have our annual Birthday Bash Potluck Dinner on **Sunday, January 14th**, after worship. Plan to bring a dish to share and find out who you share a birthday month with. Birthday cake will be provided.



HIS Ride

If you would like to start attending service on Sunday morning and need a ride, please call the church office at 970-353-5522. We will let you know what time the bus will be coming to pick you up.



Lucky Duckling Daycare



Lucky Duckling Daycare at First United Methodist Church is up and running! We have had a slow start but are working out the kinks and it is really coming together. All inspections have been passed and we are fully licensed. You might like to know that the church basement passed the radon test with flying colors! Currently, we are accepting children ages 1 to 3, and we only need 2 more children who are ages 3-5 to open our preschool room.

We continue to be privileged to work with amazing staff, children, and families and are so grateful to have them.

As we grow, we are seeing bigger needs for our families beyond quality childcare. So far, we have been able to assist these families a little with food, clothing, and blankets for the children, as well as car seats and transportation assistance. If you would like to help us with this, it would be more appreciated and impactful than you might imagine!

Family needs:

New/like new condition clothing and shoes for girls and boys, sizes 12 months to 5T.

Shoe sizes: toddler size 4 to 12

Blankets- kids and adult bedding sizes

Car seats- boosters and convertible (faces front or backwards), used is fine if they haven't been in an accident. It is sad and shocking how many families in Greeley are not using car seats for their toddlers because they can't afford them.

Diapers- size 3 to 6 and pullup size 2T and up

Daycare needs:

Snacks - Healthy, shelf stable, kid friendly, easy to serve. Applesauce pouches, Special K Crisps, Belvita snack bars, fruit cups, Nutrigrain bars, Goldfish, apple juice, Cheez-Its crackers.

Extra lunches- Families are supposed to pack a lunch, but sometimes they are forgotten or insufficient. We need easy meals that we can store on the shelf or frozen and use as needed (such as microwavable mac n cheese bowls).

Diapers and wipes- Parents are supposed to provide these, but we always need extra!

Spare clothing (sizes 12 months to 5t)

Extra blankets for nap time

Sheets for the cots (crib sheets work!)

Clothing, blankets, and sheets can all be used, we are grateful for any help!

Cleaning supplies- Bleach, glass cleaner, paper towels

Hailey Zaggle

Journey of Paul Trip



The early morning of September 3rd, 2023, a group consisting of Tim & Ginger Jansson, Karen Wolf, Kevin Wolf, Kevin & Kim Hilmes, & Donna Hettinger flew from Colorado to Rome, Italy on an adventure of a lifetime as we followed the travels of Paul. In central Rome our guides took us on a walking tour to Trevi Fountain, the Spanish Steps, & multiple sites of the area & where we had our first gelato. On day 2 we toured the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter Basilica, & the Vatican (the Pope was at his summer residence). Day 3 a drive down the Appian Way where Paul walked brought us to the Catacombs of St. Callixtus. Then on to the Roman Colosseum, Pantheon, Forum, Circus Maximus, Arches of Titus & Constantine & Baths of Caracalla. Then we headed to the Port of Civitavecchia where we boarded the Odyssey of the Sea. Joining us for the remainder of our trip was Deb Hull. Next stop Naples, Italy, for a tour of the ruins of Pompeii under the base of Mt Vesuvius. Gelato #2! After a day of sea travel and enjoying activities offered on ship we landed at Santorini, Greece, at the island of Faros Akrotiriou-oias. An uphill walking tour found us eating lunch at Naoussa Restaurant in Fira overlooking the sea. We returned to shore via cable car then back to the ship aboard a Tender.

After sailing 984 nautical miles we found ourselves at Ephesus (Kusadasi), Turkey, and its ruins including the Library of Celsus. Before returning to our ship, we stopped at a family-owned rug weaving shop.

Monday September 11th, we were back in Greece at Mykonos. Our bus took us to the Aegean Sea and a little wading in the water, a monastery tour then a sample of Greek cuisine of orzo, stuffed grape leaves, lamb, black Kalamata olives to name a few. We returned to ship for more on board fun and entertainment.

Ship day 7. Up early for travel to first Corinth and the Corinth canal then Roman ruins. In Athens we visited the Piraeus Museum. Our after-lunch tour was to the Acropolis where some of our group climbed to the top.

Day 8 was a trip to a WWII cemetery at Suda Bay for our first stop in Chania, Crete. It is a memorial to those known & unknown lost. The Arkadi Monastery at Akrotiri has been restored by the monks since it suffered some destruction during WWII while the monks were off fighting. Gelato once more in the Streets of Chania Port shopping center!

Ahhh! Another day at sea as we travel through to toe of Italy! A group with members from North Carolina, Georgia, & Massachusetts led by Dr. Olu Brown also joined up with us. Our day started by gathering with them and exploring Paul's letters to Ephesus led by Dr. Brown. Later we observed the volcano, Stromboli letting out puffs as we sailed past on the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Friday September 15th 6:30 am. We have sailed 2129 nm and are back in Rome to disembark and catch our plane to Istanbul, Turkey, some of the other group and the Wolfs returned home to America.

Our time (9/16, 9/17, & 9/18) in Cappadocia, Turkey, was filled with exploring the unique rock formations including fairy chimneys & rocks that look like giant mushrooms in Goreme Taui Milli Park, the Zelve Valley & Goreme Open Air Museum. Some of these formations were hollowed out and used as refuge for the Christians escaping Roman persecution. Cappadocia is also known for its hot air balloon rides, which many in our group did. They were part of 150 balloons that took off very early that Sunday morning.

Then it was off to Kayseri stopping along the way learning how the Byzantine era people lived, seeing evil eye trees, a camel stop of old, the valley of the Hunters and passing by Mount Evcyies, an inactive volcano. A short flight from Kayseri returns us to Istanbul for our last day. Monday, 9/18, we toured the Hagia Sophia Mosque & Blue Mosque with their amazing awesome architecture. Head covers, modest dress and shoes off were required to enter. We sandwiched in shopping at the Grand Bazaar & Spice Bazaar and tried not to get lost in the maze of shops.

We ended our day with a ferry ride on the Bosphorus Strait that goes between the Black Sea and Sea of Marmara that divides Istanbul with the continents of Europe on one side & Asia Minor on the other.

Up at 3am the next day, Tuesday, for a drive to the airport and return home to Colorado.



December 9th @ 5:30 pm

Holiday Lane Drive on the bus,
Cookies & hot chocolate afterwards

December 10th @ 10:00 am

Children's Christmas Pageant

December 24th Christmas Eve Services

1:00 pm and 5:00 pm