



*No Matter Who You Are, Or Where You Are On Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here.
Salem United Church of Christ, 5300 E. Florida Avenue, Denver, CO 80222*

January 2022

Farewell Discourse

I was leading music at a week-long summer church camp in 1999, and the week was just underway when I was called to the phone in the mess hall during breakfast. The caller informed me that my dad had collapsed, was unresponsive in the hospital, and it didn't look good. I needed to come back home.

As I drove, I thought of the last time I saw my dad. I had a runny nose and didn't want to give him a cold in his weakened state. So, I kept my distance and told him why. He nodded that he understood, his oxygen tube draping to the floor, but there was a sad look in his eyes for the hug we didn't share. I told him that I loved him and would see him at the end of the week.

Dad had been ill and declining for some time. What if this was the last time, I talked with him? Would I regret not hugging him? Did he know I loved him? I wasn't always the best at telling him that, even though I knew our time together was getting short.

It turned out that it was the last conversation we had. He had no more brain activity, and mom and I took him off life support a few days later, as we knew he wished. We spent a long time with his cooling body, talking and sharing, praying, and crying—holy stuff. It was a painful, hard time in my life, and even now when I think of him, I miss him so very dearly.

Saying goodbye is hard stuff. It's also holy stuff. And when a pastor in the UCC leaves a ministry, the guidelines call for no contact between the pastor and parishioners for a minimum of 2 years, which is also hard. For some of us, that 2 years will end up being forever. Hopefully we've said our goodbyes by the time you've read this. Hopefully you know that I love you and tried to do the best I could in ministry to you and all the people of Salem. Hopefully you, and I, and Salem may move forward where God needs each of us to go, even if we don't yet know where that is.

The book of John, chapters 14-17 are often called Jesus' "Farewell Discourse." It's what Jesus told his followers before he was taken away to be tortured and killed. Most of the disciples didn't get what was going on at the time; like my last conversation with my dad, they didn't realize this was their last time with Jesus. But Jesus' goodbye stuck with them enough to be written down so we might read it even in this day. It's a reminder of love, of blessing, and of moving forward after "goodbye."

As I say goodbye to you, I share a nugget from that Farewell Discourse, John 15:12, where Jesus says:

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

So, I remind you as I have so many times before, from the heart: Love God, love one another, and love your enemy, for love always wins, even after we say goodbye.

Goodbye.

In Christ's love one last time,
Pastor Russ

ELC

Emergency Salem Congregational Meeting was held on December 12th after church. Thirty people were in attendance in house and on Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to vote on a proposal of the Nominating Committee. Michael Stice spoke to the requirements for the vote to be taken. Kathy Carroll on behalf of the Nominating Committee moved to accept the proposal of a new Emergency Leadership Council by the Congregation. Information was given. People were given time to ask questions and receive clarification, to give opinion and to vote. 30 votes were cast, 22 yes, 2 no, and 6 abstain. The Motion passed.

The ELC will consist of 5 members. At the time of the meeting, Krissy Berry, Lori Carroll, Kathy Baird and Beth Hansen have agreed to serve. The 5th position is still open. The ELC will organize, choose a leader and a clerk to be obtained. The Ministries will continue to serve the Church and give reports to the ELC. In June, this process will be evaluated. The Conference will provide leadership for the healing and future building of Salem.

Thanks was expressed to God and to all who worked to create this proposal and to those who participated.

Respectfully Submitted,

Norma Hansen
Clerk 2021

Marshall Fire Response

Thursday December 30th saw the devastation of hundreds of houses and businesses from the wildfires in Boulder County.

The Rocky Mountain Conference will be gathering donations to help in this disaster relief -- if you would like to make a special offering in the month of January, the

RMC will ensure the monies go to vetted trustworthy agencies.

Please ensure monies directed toward the Boulder County recovery are earmarked "**Boulder County Wildfire 2021**" and sent to the Conference Office at 1140 W 5th, Denver, CO 80204.

Christian Education

We will be distributing a January Sunday School resource packet on Sunday, January 2, that will include Sunday School lessons and activities to be used at home and at in-person Sunday School classes throughout January. In-person Sunday School classes will be held every Sunday for all youth who attend the worship service.

Polly Fumagalli, Chuck Wright, Beth Hansen

C.E Ministry

Building and Grounds

The Building and Grounds Ministry team has received a donation from eLight Construction of 60 LED lightbulbs to replace the bulbs in the Community Room. Thanks go to Rodger and Jeremy Neumann for the installation! Current projects of Building and Grounds are repair of the outside sign, stripping and waxing the Community Room, Kitchen, and Church Office tile floor sometime in January.

If you have any questions or suggestions for Building and Grounds, please contact one of our team members.

Roger Neumann and Chuck Wright
Building and Grounds Ministry

Coffee Club

The *Romeo* (Retired Old Men Easting Out!) Coffee Club will meet at the church for good coffee and good conversation on Wednesdays, January 12 and 26, 9 am. All men, old or young, are invited to join us for this time of fellowship.

Personnel Ministry

It's been a quiet month in Personnel – and that's almost always a good thing!

- We advocated for and council approved year-end bonuses for Pastor Russ, Lisa, Ani, Chappell, Miro, and Lali.
- We wished Finance Assistant Ani Martinez a happy birthday on December 11!
- Exit interviews have been held with our two staff members who will leave Salem at the end of December – Chappell Kingsland and Pastor Russ Kirby.

I am in awe of our great staff – Pastor Russ, Lisa, Chappell, & Ani. Also, of Miro and Lali, who help keep our building and grounds looking so lovely. Please take a moment to let them know you appreciate them!

As always, please feel free to reach out to either Polly or Kathleen with questions.

Personnel Ministry

Financial News

Salem Family, I would like to encourage you to continue your support and patience as Salem moves into our new and exciting governing structure of the ELC (Emergency Leadership Council). These volunteer folks have a big job ahead and will need your patience, emotional support and most importantly your financial support. Please continue your financial support

at, or possibly above, your current level. You can still send in your checks but please send them to the church at Salem UCC, 5300 E. Florida Ave., Denver, Co. 80222. Nate Reiser, our wonderful Offertory Manager, is having to step down due to continued health concerns and issues. A huge Thank You for all you have done, Nate. Another information item, Ani Martinez, our new parttime bookkeeper, will only be completing bookkeeping tasks, which includes reimbursement checks, payroll etc. twice a month. Here are her working dates for January and February - Jan. 9 and 23; Feb. 6 and 20. Please be patient as we work through all these new changes. In closing, it has been my joy and honor to be Salem's Treasurer for the past 8 years.

Sincerely,

Chris Johnson

Financial Ministry

Church Rental

We are pleased to welcome the 50 members of Christ the King Anglican church who will be leasing our building every Sunday afternoon, 3-7pm, beginning January 16. They are a new church start of the Anglican diocese of Denver. Their Pastor is Rev. Jesse Blaine. We welcome this new church to our Salem community and neighborhood.

Mission Moments

In anticipation of having an interim minister soon, the January mission will be the Pastors Discretionary Fund. This will help him or her to have the funds to help those who come to the Church asking for help. At present, there is a zero balance in this account.

The following are missions hopes for missions for 2022 remaining months. Some may change as our new interim minister may have some ideas.

Feb Souper Bowl Sunday. As well as collecting for women's bean project

March Archway. Archway will let us know but presently they need cleaning supplies and toiletries for their residents. If the need changes, then we will do a food drive. Also, a 5 for 5 is One Great Hour of Sharing

April The Denver Hospice. This year funds collected will be in honor of Vernita Carroll one of the founders of Denver Hospice

May KIVA

June Strengthen the Church. A UCC 5 for 5 and the Community Meal

July Archway. School Supply drive

August Hoping for a Hands-on Mission

September Filter of Hope.

October Neighbors in Need.

November Stewardship.

December Heifer Project and Christmas Fund.

June Seppa
Missions Ministry

Bible Study

In 2021, the Tuesday morning Bible study began to list a weekly word to think on each Tuesday at noon, for 3 minutes. Our thought was to find a way to think positively and perhaps relieve some of the negativity of the week. The following list are the words used in 2021.

January: ponder, opportunity, understanding, grace.

February: resolve, heart, commitment, pray.

March: family, pleasure, sight, mission, celebrate.

April: remembrance. Compassion, stewardship, accomplishment.

May: planting, nurture, blossoming, sacrifice.

June: awesome, timely, barefoot, fireworks.

July: Journey, together, chat, pilgrimage.

August: lion, sno cones, boots, preparation, laborer.

September: welcome, assembly, charity, changing.

October: autumn, harvest, transform, Halloween.

November: clock, veterans, snow, bounty, adorn.

December: cherish, hospitality, fragrance, thirst.

Simple words but when pulled aside to allow our brains to wander through, we were able to get many meanings, thoughts and perhaps joy. In 2022, we will continue and have chosen words for the first three months. We encourage you all to help us, and give ideas to Pat, Debra or Norma.

Birth Announcement

Welcome to the world, Hans August Scheefer, who was born on November 16, 2021, to Rois and Travis Scheefer of Gunnison, CO. Bette Earsman, great-grandmother for the fourth time, looks forward to meeting Hans and seeing his proud big sister, Isabel, who is 3-1/2 years old.

January Calendar

ELC Meeting Tuesday, Jan. 13th

Bible Study Participate on Zoom at 10 am on Tuesday Jan 11th, Jan 18th and Jan 25th

February Newsletter The deadline to submit your information and articles will be Jan. 21st

Worship Sundays, 9:30 am. We are now worshipping in person! Please pay attention to the COVID guidelines. We will also continue with online and by-phone options for services. Join us in person or online!



18th Adysen Neumann

20th June Seppa



Salem United Church of Christ

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January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:30-Contemplative Worship Service	3	4 7-Cub Scouts	5 6-Community meal	6	7 9:30-Art Class	8
9 9:30-Worship Visit of the 3 Magi	10 7-Worship Committee - Zoom 7-Boy Scouts	11 10-Bible Study Zoom 7pm Cub Scouts	12 9-Men's Coffee Club 9:30-Art Class	13 ELC Meeting-in person 7-Child Care Providers	14 9:30-Art Class	15
16 9:30-Worship 3-7-Christ the King Church	17 7-Boy Scouts	18 10-Bible Study Zoom 7-Cub Scouts	19 9:30-Art Class 6-Community Meal	20	21 9:30-Art Class	22
23 9:30-Worship 3-7-Christ the King Church	24 7-Boy Scouts	25 10-Bible Study Zoom	26 9-Men's Coffee Club 9:30-Art Class 6-Community Meal	27 7-Coin Club	28 9:30-Art Class	29
30 9:30-Worship 3-7-Christ the King Church	31 7-Boy Scouts					