



MESSAGE FROM MELANIE

We never know just what a New Year is going to bring. Some years are momentous and memorable. Others are challenging—testing our character, strength, and faith. There are good years, and then there are other types of years, and as people of faith we are expected to trust in God through it all. The author of the book of Ecclesiastes writes, “There is a time and a season for everything.” There is a deep rhythm at the heart of life, and peace is found when we accept it all and remain open to lessons life has to teach us, even the most painful and humbling lessons of all.

I do hope that 2017 was a positive year for you and that you have hope for the future. I pray that 2018 will be filled with peace, progress, and protection for our fragile human family, particularly the most vulnerable. Yet inevitably some of us will face setbacks related to health, loss, relationships, and finances. Some of us will struggle and suffer because that is the nature of our human reality.

No matter what happens in the coming year, remember that this church is here to support and sustain you. Remember also that your life unfolds within the care of our Creator, who notices us, nurtures us, and nudges us toward abundant life.

I know that we could all improve upon some things in the coming year, so I offer a few suggestions in that regard. Resolve in this New Year to take your faith more seriously. Serve, share, give, and attend church regularly. You will reap the benefits! Study after study has demonstrated that regular church attendance increases positive behavior and reduces negative behavior in all age groups. People actively involved in spiritual growth are not only happier but healthier. And serving others is the best way to forget about your own problems.

Decide to drop a grudge, forgive yourself, and stay in closer touch with people. Apologize when you are wrong and try to understand a completely different point of view, which is particularly important during these deeply divisive times. Read and watch things that are uplifting and enlightening. Maintain your integrity. Take better care of yourself. Enjoy the beauty and wonder of nature. Be more charitable toward others and toward yourself. We all limp through life, and everyone is doing the very best that they can—including you. Perhaps if we can do just some of these things, it will be a positive year for us all.

Dr. Melanie Rosa

YOUNG ADULT SMALL GROUP

JOIN US JANUARY 18

@BLACK BOTTLE BREWERY

6 PM



Safe and Sound

by Joan Carter

Appearing in the *Denver Post* December 3 was a lead article in Section B titled "Security—unfortunately—has to be a part of the ministry." Here at First Church, we too recognize that security is imperative, Sunday through Saturday, to ensure that everyone who enters our doors is entering a Safe Zone.

We are seeking individuals with a dedicated interest in being part of the solution for the safety and security of FUMC. One way to get involved would be to join the team who will form a plan of action for Sunday morning services. Another way of serving would be to share your expertise if you have a background in safety protocols.

We **do** have resources: guidelines for Crisis Management were drafted in 2016 and endorsed by the Church Council, the Fort Collins Police spoke with the staff in recent weeks, and our Preschool has developed a plan for midweek.

What the Council needs now is a task force committed to working up solutions quickly. If you are "in," please let Joan Carter know soon. Your ideas are valuable. Help out by sharing them via letter, email, phone, or personal conversation.

Being a faith community in a large town, we invite **all** to enter our "open doors." But.. things happen, and we **are** vulnerable. Let's be **safe and sound**.

LIVE

5.4k

When we compare ourselves to others, we never seem to **MEASURE UP**. Come see how God can help us see ourselves in our new series #MeasureUp.

January 21 and 28

| 6-8 pm Youth Wing |

MEASURE UP

**Registration for FUMC Co-op Preschool
Begins February 7 for FUMC Church Members**

Primary (Must be 3 years old by September 15)

2 day/week:

Mon. & Wed. Mornings 9 a.m. —12 p.m.

Tues. & Thurs. Mornings 9 a.m. —12 p.m.

3 day/week:

Mon., Wed., & Fri. Mornings 9 a.m. —12 p.m.

Pre-K (Must be 4 years old by September 15)

3 day/week:

Mon., Wed., & Fri. Mornings (2 classes) 9 a.m. —12 p.m.

4 day/week:

Mon.—Thurs. Mornings (1 class) 9 a.m. —12 p.m.



FUMC members not currently enrolled in preschool will be able to register February 7 at 9:00 a.m.

Open registration for the public will begin February 9. Members may register after their designated day, but they will lose their priority status. Registration involves filing out a registration form and paying the \$50 non-refundable registration fee.

Our Annual Open House is January 31, 9:30—11:30 a.m. We invite you to come visit. If you have any questions, please call the Preschool Director, Laura Lechtenberg (970) 482-0343 or email lauralechtenberg@fcfumc.net.

Please spread the word about our excellent preschool program to your friends and neighbors.

We are so grateful for the many people who submitted commitment cards and have offered to generously support our ministry in the coming year. Thank you! If you have not yet made a commitment, please do so soon that we might carefully plan for ministry in this promising new year. Your faithfulness will allow us to pursue life-changing mission and ministry.

Thanks to the **A New Day for First Church** team that worked on our campaign this year: Co-chairs Stephen Zink and Stephanie Lane, Mike Kohler, David Adkins, Pam Raab, Yvonne Knight, and Marjie Woodring.



The Green Team

by Rich Fisher

You may notice that three devoted members, Georgia Locker, Rosalie Ashbaugh, and Robin Hause, make their rounds in the church emptying recycle and compost bins. These three women are the backbone of our Green Team. They have been faithfully performing this duty for many years not because someone asks them to do it but because they believe it is the right thing to do. And our environment and our church greatly benefit.

The church has become “greener” in other ways as well over the last several years due to the efforts of the Trustees. They made changes that improved the HVAC and energy distribution systems and lighting and water systems. These projects and a few others have led the way in our partnership with the city in the ClimateWise program.

We seek more members who are interested in not only sustaining these green activities but in growing them. Let’s turn our efforts to helping the City of Fort Collins reach its Climate Action Plan goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. If you are so motivated, please plan to attend a one-hour Green Team meeting at the church on Wednesday, January 3 at noon when we will gather ideas for maintaining and growing our green actions. If you cannot attend the meeting but have ideas or wish to be involved, please email or text Rich Fisher at rich.fisher@comcast.net or (970) 481-7518.

Welcoming Affirming Reconciling Methodists

present the film

AN ACT of LOVE*

February 7, 2018

Gathering time 6:45 p.m.

Film begins 7 p.m.

Fellowship Hall

**First in a five-session series concerning the journey to
Reconciliation and Inclusiveness**

Watch for more information

***Story of Reverend Frank Schaeffer,
a Methodist Minister who faced a difficult decision;
chose LOVE; suffered devastating consequences; judgment reversed**

[Click here](#) to view the trailer



World Wisdoms Project

Exploring Universal Truths.
Discovering Spiritual Transformation.

First Church will host “Metaphors: Sources of Limitations or Tools of Liberation?” at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 25 in the Parlor. This World Wisdoms Project presentation features Jim Reid, a longtime religious educator and therapist in Fort Collins. Reid will explain how changing our inner narratives can change our lives. Suggested donation is \$10.

Contemplative Art Workshop: Jennifer Davey and Christine Dianni will lead a half-day workshop at Artworks in Loveland on Feb. 10. Space is limited for this World Wisdoms Project program. Register online at worldwisdomsproject.org.

The United Methodist Church Making a Difference

Through our denominational giving, we support the World Service Fund, which shares on a global level to train church leaders, create new faith communities, renew existing congregations, minister with the poor, stamp out diseases of poverty, and improve global health. Your giving to First Church is making a difference in the lives of people you will never meet. Thank you.

Visioning Team

We have formed a new ministry team to discern where God is leading our congregation in the days ahead. We will be asking: Who are we now? Who is our neighbor now? What does God call us to do now? We seek your prayers for this process as we move into the future with clarity and courage.

Recharge starts January 17

by David Reid

Recharge is the name for a new season of faith formation opportunities and other activities for people of all ages on Wednesday nights. The 10-week session runs January 17 through March 21.

Three new small groups will be offered at 6 p.m. on Wednesday nights beginning Jan. 17. They are:

- *Parenting Beyond Your Capacity*, an 8-week parenting class taught by Rebecca Dunagan for parents of children from infants through teens. Free child care will be available from 5 to 7 p.m. Books are \$15.
- *Messy Spirituality: God’s Annoying Love for Imperfect People*, a 5-week study inspired by the book of the same title from Mike Yaconelli. Rev. Cynthia Paquette is the facilitator. Books are available for \$9.
- *Mindfulness and Contemplative Prayer*, a 4-week study and practice of mindful meditation and contemplative prayer led by Rev. Linda Battello. The ancient teachings in this study help us relax, overcome fears, and center our hearts, minds, and souls and our relationships with God, ourselves, and others. No book is required, but a short list of references will be available.

A catered dinner will be available during new extended hours from 5 to 6 p.m. so that classes can begin promptly at 6. Cost for the dinner is typically \$6 per person or \$20 for a family of four or more, but may vary depending on the menu. Reservations are not needed.

A single class will be offered at 7 p.m.: *Tired of Apologizing for a Church I Don’t Belong to: Spirituality without Stereotypes, Religion without*

Ranting by Lillian Daniel. David Reid will facilitate the conversation. The same class will be offered at noon Wednesdays. Books are \$10.

Children’s Chimes Choir rehearsal will be at 6 p.m. every Wednesday. Carillon handbells rehearse at 5:30 p.m.

2018 Double Nickel Senior Lunch Programs Announced

by Linn Zink

Double Nickel Senior Lunch gathering each month continues to draw a good and lively crowd. The events averaged over fifty in attendance in 2017. For 2018 Joe Winsett and JoAn Hopkins have signed on as co-convenors for the Senior Council which oversees and plans this monthly event along with other programs for First Church Senior Ministry. Here is the schedule for the months ahead:

January – no Double Nickel scheduled (This has become our annual winter break month.)

February – Piano and Flute Jazz Concert presented by Karen Stody and Keilani McConnell

March – “Our Marcussen Organ Story” presented by Alyce Kaehler and Bill Emslie

April – “Youth Ministry at First Church” presented by Rebecca Dunagan

May – “Guatemala Mission Trip” presented by Bev Winsett

June – “Volunteers of America: Services & Volunteer Opportunities”

July – “A Patriotic Celebration” by The Stover Street Stompers

August – “Fort Collins Age-Friendly Communities” presented by Martha Conant and Mike Kohler

September through December – great programs in process – TBA

Special thanks is due to Diane Smith and her outstanding team of volunteers is who prepare wonderful lunches for the Double Nickel gatherings. Double Nickel Lunch meets the second Friday of each month from noon until 1:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. *Mark your calendars now for these programs and the best \$4 lunch in town! All are invited and no reservations are required.*

Human Relations Day

by Diana Burkholder

Sunday, January 14, 2018

Since 1972, United Methodists have celebrated Human Relations Day on the Sunday before the national observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. A special offering is taken on that Sunday. Such connectional giving is the United Methodist Church's way to strengthen generosity efforts beyond our local church by designating six Special Sundays throughout the year. When thousands of U. M. congregations join together to give toward causes and organizations that promote sustainable life change, amazing things can happen!

The Human Relations Day offering supports three neighborhood ministries through community development, community advocacy in the United States and Puerto Rico, and work with at-risk youth through the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program. One hundred percent of every donation goes straight to the marginalized, the disenfranchised, and those at risk. The goal is to serve and empower the community. Grants are awarded to nurture a variety of programs at the grassroots level. One such is the Amachi program in Denver which helps to instill value and worth in children who are growing up without parents because of incarceration. More information is available about programs at the Church & Society table in Fellowship Hall. Thank you for your generous support of Human Relations Day special offering, blessing the lives of those near and far away.

Deepest thanks to David Adkins who has baked the Communion bread for our church for the past year. This has been a labor of love, and we are grateful. This important ministry will be continued by Elva Alden and her team.



1005 Stover Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524-3849

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We remember with sympathy the families of ...

November 26—Paul Josephson

December 1—Maxine Nissen

November 30—Rob Novack

December 2—Tom Ballance

Sacrament of Holy Baptism

We celebrate the new life among us and congratulate the families of two precious baby boys recently baptized at First Church:

Theodore Frederick Ross and Patrick John Hanna

January Sermon Series—Tough Questions

January 7—Epiphany/Holy Communion

“Does God Exist?”

Isaiah 43:1-5; Matthew 2:1-12

January 14—Second Sunday after Epiphany

“What Happens When We Die?”

1 Corinthians 15:35-44; John 14:1-4

January 21—Third Sunday after Epiphany

“Why Do People Suffer?”

Psalm 23; Romans 8:31-39

January 28—Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

“Difficult Sayings of Jesus”

Psalm 111; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 17:20-21