

FIRST
 United Methodist
CHURCH
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 Fort Collins, CO 80524
 www.fcfumc.net

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**We Express Our Sympathy
 to the Families of ...**

- Betty Ann Bay - Feb 13, 2020
- Bob Bormuth – Feb 25, 2020
- Bonnie Dazey – March 20, 2020
- Aletha Deal – April 16, 2020
- Bill Eiman – May 1, 2020
- Elsa Lee Sarlo – May 13, 2020
- Mildred Gilbert – May 16, 2020
- Gerry Thierstein – June 17, 2020
- Tom Clements – July 10, 2020
- Therolyn Waggoner – July 16, 2020
- Eldon Reutter – July 27, 2020
- Kathern Ericson – July 28, 2020
- Peggy Cecil – August 31, 2020
- Mary Anderson – September 10, 2020
- Alan Beatty – September 14, 2020

**We Welcome Our
 Newest Members ...**

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dan and Judy Jacks | Sandy Tanner |
| Josh and Kate Soholt | Katie Messerli |
| Judy Kinner | Brian and Gail Wells |

We Rejoice in the Marriage of ...

Steve Spelts and Sandy Odenbach

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The **Carillon**

October 2020 Volume 26 Issue 10
 David Adkins, Editor

*First Church: An inclusive, deeply relational community
 inviting all people to experience God's presence today.*

Discover God's Love
 Inspire Hope • Grow in Faith • Serve With Joy

We are pleased to resume publication of our monthly newsletter the Carillon. While the majority of our members and friends receive our weekly email "First Wire" (560 people read it each week), some do not have online access, and we wanted to reach everyone affiliated with our church. Much of what you find in the Carillon is also in First Wire, and you can see that we are actively engaged in vital ministry for all ages.

Message from Melanie

I have missed you all so much since we were last together for worship in our building on March 8--singing, worshipping God, shaking hands, hugging, and eating donuts. Doesn't that seem like a lifetime ago? So much has changed, and so much has been lost. Yet we have adapted well to these very unusual circumstances. The entire First Church Staff and I are deeply grateful for your ongoing engagement, generosity and support. We are working hard to deliver inspiration, connection, faith formation, and consolation to you from a safe distance. Thank you so much for your commitment to our shared ministry as Disciples of Jesus Christ.

It is going to be challenging for all of us as we head into the months ahead. A long winter awaits with continuing social isolation and a deeply divided country. If you are a socially sensitive person you have heard that there are two topics you never discuss in polite company: religion and politics— especially politics, and particularly now, when we are so divided that even family members become enemies in a culture of contempt.

And yet at a time such as this, there are many issues affecting all of us that are political in nature. During October, our sermons will address matters related to faith, ethics and politics, without taking sides or promoting a particular agenda. We would never presume to tell you how to vote or what you should believe. You are intelligent people, and you will make decisions based upon your values, life experience and hopes for the future. But we are all children of God called to be involved and engaged as we seek to be faithful to the teachings of Jesus. We are called to prayerfully consider how we might be light and hope in this sad, conflicted, and turbulent time. Let's think about what our faith requires of us in these difficult days as we worship together online this month.

Melanie
 Dr. Melanie Rosa, Lead Pastor



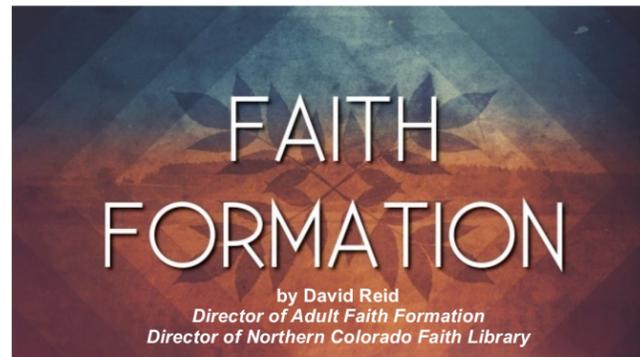
October Sermon Series: *Faith and Politics*

October 4—World Communion Sunday
“A Time Such as This”
Matthew 5:43-45

October 11—“The Vanishing Center”
1 Corinthians 1:20-31

October 18—“The Ethics of Jesus”
Matthew 5:38-42

October 25—Reformation Sunday



A three-session class is scheduled to start October 7 on N.T. Wright's *God and the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and its Aftermath*. Participants may attend by Zoom at noon or 7 p.m. each Wednesday.

Wright is a research professor of New Testament and early Christianity at the University of St. Andrews and senior research fellow at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. This timely book promises to shape our faith now and into the post-virus world by addressing questions such as:

- What should be the Christian response?
- How should we think about God?
- How do we live in the present?
- What can we learn about ourselves?
- How do we recover?

David Reid will facilitate the study. Register by contacting him at davidreid24@gmail.com. Books may be purchased at local bookstores and online. Contact David for help obtaining the book or using Zoom.

YOUTH MINISTRY
Josh Malave,
Director of Youth and Family Ministries



High School Bible Study Tuesdays / 7:30-9 p.m.

High school youth are meeting weekly in different outdoor locations every week. Locations include Youth Director Josh Malave's outdoor firepit and City Park, among others. High Schoolers are diving into how to navigate their own faith journey and the perceptions of Christianity today. A better understanding of our faith and how people see our faith community will help us better connect with God, and help others see the life-giving nature of Jesus Christ.



Youth Group Wednesdays / 6:30-8 p.m.

Students grades 6-12 are meeting on the Church west patio/lawn. Students are enjoying lessons and youth games! We are taking advantage of our outdoor situation by finding the best ways to run, be silly, and just be together. Our most recent lesson was about the Prodigal Son, where students were asked to get into small groups and reenact the story to better understand the relationship between us and God.



Confirmation Class Sunday mornings / Beginning October 4

Confirmation will be offered starting in October, for 7-9th graders (we want to include the 9th graders who missed previous confirmation). Our confirmation will begin on Zoom and look to moving in-person when it is safer to have indoor activities. Confirmation will continue until January 24th (with a break during Christmas break), with a confirmation retreat the following weekend.

Come to the table.

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Sunday, October 4, is World Communion Sunday, a day when we join Christians the world over at a common table as One Body in Christ. Please plan to join us for virtual communion at the end of our worship service that Sunday. We will take a special offering, which supports diverse mix of national and international ethnic young adults to make a global impact for Christ. Half of the offering benefits scholarships for graduate students from the U.S. and other countries; the remainder assists ethnic scholarships for international undergraduates studying in the U.S. If you would like to contribute, you can send a check to the church with “World Communion” in the lower left-hand corner. Thank you!

MOVIE NIGHT
OCTOBER 8

Reviewers say “Sing” is a movie you can watch over and over. That’s why it’s the feature film for a movie night in the church parking lot on October 8. The movie starts at 6:30 p.m., so come early to pick your spot.

Bring your whole family and lawn chairs. We’ll show the movie on a large screen. Children and Family Ministries will provide individual boxes of popcorn and bottled water for everyone and treat bags for kids.

The 3D musical comedy is voiced by some big stars: Matthew McConaughey, Reese Witherspoon, Seth MacFarlane and Scarlett Johansson. Here’s the plot summary from IMDb:

“Set in a world like ours but entirely inhabited by animals, Buster Moon, a dapper koala, presides over a once-grand theater that has fallen on hard times. Buster is an eternal—some might say delusional—optimist, who loves his theater above all and will do anything to preserve it. Now faced with the crumbling of his life’s ambition, he has one final chance to restore his fading jewel to its former glory by producing the world’s greatest singing competition.”

You’ll be directed where to park and to the physically distanced seating area on the south side of the church. The large restrooms will be available through the south doors. Contact the church office with questions.

Our big event took place on September 13th, with our Back to School Journey. With the collaboration of our staff and volunteers, we put on a socially distanced, masked and staggered Back to School Journey that families could go on together.

The event was a mostly touch-less, sanitized, parent-guided activity that emphasized helping kids approach the school year with the confidence of God's love, protection and guidance for all of them. The event was for preschoolers through 5th grade. We set up 7 stations in the south parking lot. There was activities for kids at each station and a school supply to take with them. At the end, there was individually wrapped donuts and bottle of water for each member of the family. Each family was started in five minute increments in order to space people out. We had a total of 47 kids attend (toddler-7th grade), and 31 adults.

Coming up:

- Movie night on October 8th, featuring the movie **Sing**. **ALL** ages are welcome!
- Our newly minted 3rd graders will be receiving their Bibles in a socially-distanced, outdoor ceremony in October. We will begin online Bible class after that.
- Look for online Children's Sabbath on October 18th.

As you know, in mid-March everything changed. Our building closed, and in light of the global pandemic, we made a quick pivot to online ministry. Shortly thereafter, Rev. Melanie formed a Restart Team consisting of clergy, staff, and church leaders to consider the factors necessary for a safe reopening for our church. This group continually considers the latest information from national, state, and local sources, including the Governor's Office, Larimer County Health Department, the Mountain Sky Conference of the UMC and various churches of comparable size and demographics. Decisions are based upon the needs and safety of our congregation, with special consideration for our elderly and young families with children. Key persons responsible for the programs are included in the conversation. During this time, measures have been taken to reopen the church office, Kid's Closet, Northern Colorado Faith Library, and provide access to the building and sanctuary for prayer, weddings and funerals.

We are following all county protocols for in-person group meetings indoors, and holding some gatherings outdoors.

While some churches are having face-to-face worship, the majority of churches our size are not. Most are engaging with their congregations online. We anticipate this will continue for a while, and the Worship Team will continue to deliver high quality online worship. For those without computers, CDs and DVDs of the service are delivered each week.

We are encouraged by the number of people who join us both near and far away. During the six months we have been closed for face-to-face worship, we have reached between 400-500 hundred people every week. Our weekly email "First Wire" has a 90% open rate, with 560 people reading it each week.

When the time is right and we are all welcomed back into our building, some things will have changed, but rest assured, our church will still provide the excellent worship, education, mission and fellowship opportunities that have made our church so outstanding for 151 years. Our ministry will continue long after COVID-19 is a distant memory.

The Restart Team is considering everything with regard to your safety: social distancing, mask wearing, contact tracing, hand sanitizer stations, pew cushions, bibles and hymnals, bulletins, disinfecting between services, fellowship hour, and more.

While our classes, meetings and Sunday worship experience are certainly different for now, the ministry of our church is stronger than ever. Our clergy, staff, and members have remained enthusiastic and committed, and our mission is being carried out in innovative and creative ways.

We will keep you updated through First Wire and our website during this unique and challenging time. We all look forward to the day we can all safely be together again in our church.

First Church Restart Team: Gerry Sampson, Chair Church Council; Helen Gray, Vice Chair Church Council; Kate Norton, Lay Leader; Bill Whitaker, Trustee Chair; David Adkins, Director of Music and Communications; Rev. Cynthia Paquette, Executive Pastor; Dr. Melanie Rosa, Lead Pastor



Congregational Care Ministries have been running full force since the pandemic started. Some ministries like home, care center, and hospital visitations had to stop but others like telecare ramped up. Seven people made calls between March and June for

a total of over 1,000 calls to people 75 and older; each person was called more than once. Starting in July, in collaboration with Youth and Children's Ministries, we started the Summer Flamingo Cheer ministry. To date, flamingos have visited 204 yards bringing a little postcard greeting and cheer. This ministry is still ongoing. Since we are reaching people individually, it takes time. While the flower delivery ministry had to stop because there are no flowers to deliver, volunteers started to deliver worship CDs and DVDs. Right now 13 people have requested for worship CDs and DVDs that are delivered weekly to them on Fridays or Saturdays. During these last six months, we are saddened that we have lost 13 precious church family members. Losing a loved one is difficult enough. During this pandemic, it makes it a lot harder for families and harder for our church to provide care as we are not able to visit face-to-face. If you would like to talk to Rev. Melanie or Rev. Cynthia, know that we are here for you. We might not see each other in person on Sundays but we are just a phone call or email away. Just give us a call at the church office and leave us a voicemail. While we continue to work from home, we receive voicemails on our emails and will return your call as soon as possible.

Blessings,

Rev. Cynthia

VISITATION MINISTRY

Would you like a socially-distant visit from your church outdoors? If you live in your own home, we would be happy to visit with you. We are still not permitted to visit people at care centers. Please call the church office to let us know if you would like a socially-distant visit.

WORSHIP RECORDINGS on CDs and DVDs

Do you have access to First Church's online worship? Would you like worship recordings on CDs or DVDs? Please request for worship recordings on CDs or DVDs by calling the church office (970-482-2436). If you do not have a CD or DVD player, your church will send you one so you can play the CDs. We will hand deliver worship CDs and DVDs to your house weekly on Fridays or Saturdays so you can worship on Sunday mornings. If you need someone to show you how to operate the CD player, please let us know when you call the church office. Someone will be most happy to go over to your house to show you. Let us know your needs so we can help you.

The Music Continues

- Karen Stoody

Six months ago the music department was in full swing preparing for Lenten and Easter music and a music department fundraiser after Easter. Both handbell choirs had just met when the lockdown began in mid-March. It was a shock, and we hoped we would be back together by May. During those first weeks, the staff worked creatively to figure out how to bring a high quality remote worship service to the congregation each week. Personally, I feel that I have been blessed with good health during this time to be able to work nonstop as your church organist and to bring quite a large variety of individual musicians to share in our worship experiences.

Since July, quite a few of the handbell ringers have put in their time to prepare small ensembles: we have had two duets, a trio, and a quartet so far. In the near future you will have another duet and another quartet. As we get close to holidays, we will have even more small ensembles! The bell choir members have had two outdoor, socially distanced events, with one more to come. We are supportive of each other, and there are many who have signed up to play in some of these small ensembles.

You have seen me at work every week through the worship recordings, and I continue to practice many hours a week and to rehearse with various soloists (vocal and instrumental.) Musical opportunities are scarce during the pandemic, but we are finding many ways to safely share our gift of music. Early on in the pandemic, I was able to record quite a few organ pieces to put on the church website. We are talking about doing more of that, including some of the instrumentalists as well! Maybe selections of Christmas music would be appreciated, so you can let me know if you would like that. I am always willing to do more music!

Thank you for the opportunity of serving First Church with my music, and I look forward to many more years with you.

First Church has partnered with Mujeres de Colores for many years. FUMC budget helped, but backpack program needs were larger than usual. 110 backpacks were prepared but we were 49 short in the Covid 19-safer drive-by distribution. Betty Aragon-Mitotes has been visiting families in the Latino communities regarding the impact of COVID-19 and sees problems with homelessness, living in cars, food, and family violence. Johanna at the library has been conducting seminars on surviving stressful times. Alonza North has been working with migrant families. Fuerra is working with families regarding child abuse. The Unitarian Church is working with family violence problems and La Familia is counseling families with problems in a local trailer park. For more information contact our Church and Society and Missions committees.

Without Prejudice

Equality of our diverse advantages and opportunities

Equal Treatment

Fair and Proper

All People

Equality Without Bias

Social Justice

Equality And Solidarity

It has been a different spring and summer in the Children's Ministry world. My favorite part of Children's Ministry is getting to connect with the kids, seeing them every week at church, embracing all their little personalities and watching them question and grow in their faith. We all have had to adapt to a new normal of connecting and communicating. I must say, it is not my favorite way, but we are making it work. Here is some of what has been happening over the last few months.

Sunday School: We have been doing weekly on-line Sunday School since March 20th. We start every Sunday morning with the preschoolers, and have the Kindergarten-5th grade hop on after preschool. We have been able to engage them with some great curriculum that includes video Bible Stories & worship music.



Spring: We created two activities that the families could do online together during Lent. The first was making a palm frond, the second was a happy Easter banner. In addition, I sent out Easter Cards to over 75 children from our church. When Mother's Day rolled around, bookmarks and a card were sent out to all the fabulous young moms at First Church. We finished up our 3rd grade Bible class online, via Zoom and celebrated with a socially-distanced ice cream social in August on the church lawn.



Summer: Summer was busy with summer bag deliveries to our families homes (we delivered about 90 bags) filled with outdoor fun items like chalk, bubbles and worship materials for summer entertainment. It was great to see some kids at home in order to say "hi" and say we miss you!



We also started a Pen Pal program with older adults that are in assisted living facilities. We had about 10 children volunteer to be pen pals with these folks. I loved how they wanted to connect with other generations!



We continue to try and connect with our young families and create socially-distanced, safe activities that everyone can enjoy and get something out of. If there is anything, I can do to assist your family to connect with First Church in a more meaningful way, please reach out.