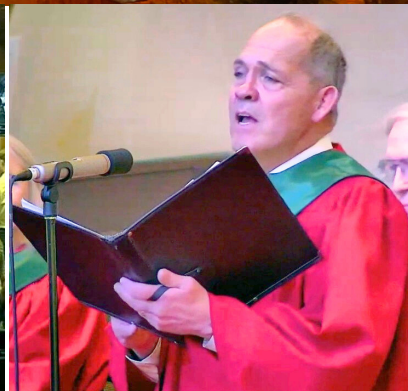
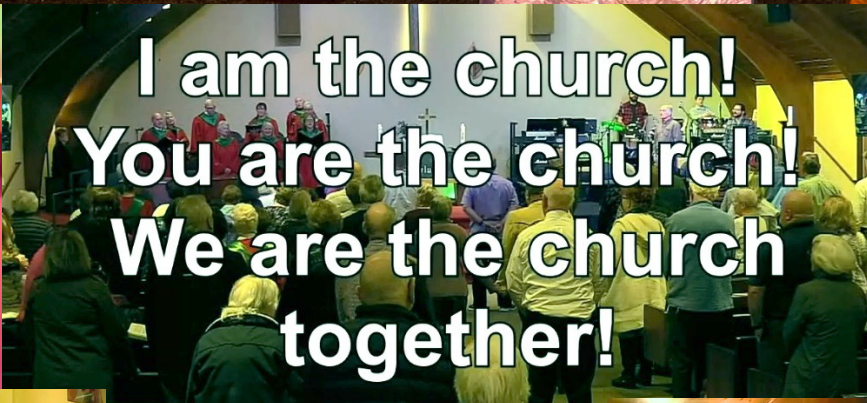




First Church Communicator
February 2024 Newsletter
Church Address: 1200 South Street
Castle Rock, Co 80104
Office Phone 303-688-3047
Office Email: office@fumccr.org
website: www.fumccr.org
Scan the qr code for all of our social media presence



**Pictures from the
Celebration of
Music and
Musicians
January 21st**



Celebration of Music and Musicians

Keep up with the 150th events here:

<https://www.fumccr.org/150thcelebration>

The January 21st Combined Worship Service celebrating our music and musicians provided a memorable spiritual experience as the inaugural event of our Sesquicentennial. Not only did the rafters ring with the singing of familiar hymns like “Amazing Grace” and “Holy, Holy, Holy,” but our talented musicians filled our hearts with joy and appreciation for the many blessings God has provided.

Vocal solos were perfectly performed by Emily Franks, Gene Ackerman, Cate Witter, Chuck Kangas, and Lucas Anderson. The duets performed by Steve (guitar) and Cate Witter, Chuck Kansas (guitar) and Les Irwin (mandolin), Gail Hammond (flute) and Les Irwin (guitar) lifted our hearts, while the amazing keyboard magic of Nancy Docksey, Donna Murray, and Pat Hammond brought smiles to our faces and joy to our hearts.

The duet that literally brought people to their feet was the Witter brothers’ “Blue Bossa.” With Griffin on drums and Sam at the piano, the congregation was mesmerized by the rhythmic and melodic duet that was nothing short of professional.

The service was beautifully framed and gloriously unified with the opening music of our Bell Choir, the Chancel Choir anthem “How Great Is Our God,” and The Band’s closing numbers: “In My Life/If We Ever Meet Again,” “Compass,” “I’ll Be There,” and “The Sound of Silence.”

A soup and salad lunch followed with a bounty of food that pleased the palate and table conversations that provided meaningful fellowship. Before and after lunch people could check out the hymnal display that encompassed nearly 150 years of Methodist music traditions and the official FUMC 1874-2024 teeshirt on display.

The Sesquicentennial Steering Committee thanks everyone who contributed to the success of this event— Pastor Matt, the tech crew, the musicians, those who prepared food, and those who helped with set-up and clean-up.

If you have photos of this event or ideas to share, contact any of those on this team: Pastor Matt, Joyce Morales-Caramella, Brenda Ryan, Rose Andrade, Lisa Andrews, Linda Pottenger, Karl Sarah, Laryce Kitsch, Phyllis Tumey, Julie Bailey.



Sesquicentennial Teeshirts

Our celebratory teeshirts are currently on display and on sale for \$15 each between services during the month of February.

These shirts are a beautiful teal in a soft fabric with our Sesquicentennial logo on the front. We'll have several opportunities to wear these in the coming year. If you miss ordering one in person, contact Joyce Morales-Caramella (joycemorales@aol.com)

Year to Date	December 2023
Revenues	\$ 221,931
Expenses	\$
Personnel	133,653
Conf Apportionment	18,751
Trustees	43,595
Church Office	8,004
All Other	5,540
Total Expenses	\$ 209,544
Net Total	\$ 12,387

WAYS TO GIVE TO CRFUMC



Offering Plates

In-person offerings may be dropped in the offering plates



Mail or Dropped off

Offerings can also be mailed or dropped off at the church office
1200 South Ave.
Castle Rock, Co. 80104



Online/Text

Web Site
www.fumccr.org/give
or
Text GiveTo FUMCCR to 73256

WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY RETREAT May 3-5, 2024

Sign-ups are now available at the Welcome Center for this year's Women's Spirituality Retreat, When Change Comes Knocking at the Door. The cost is \$140 which includes 2 nights lodging and 5 meals. The retreat will begin with dinner on Friday evening and conclude after worship on Sunday. Led by Revs. Sarah and Brenda, the retreat will be held at Ponderosa Retreat Center in Larkspur.

Knot Again will meet tonight at 6 pm at the church. If you can tie a knot, please join us in this easy mission work. Our "knotting" dates are:

**February 21
March 20
April 17
May 15**

Prayer Request

If you have a prayer request you can go to

www.fumccr.org/prayer-request



Deadlines for Church Publications

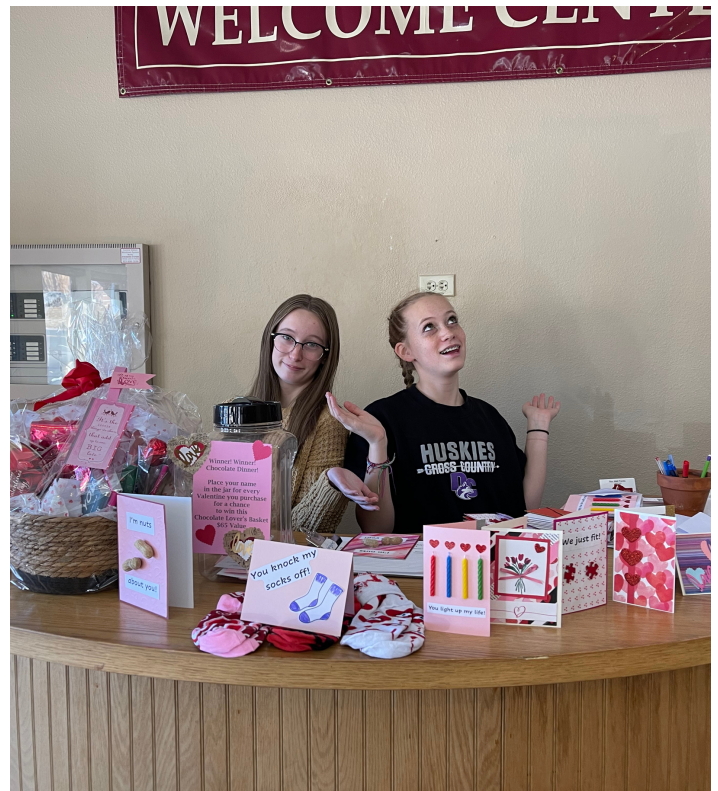
- The monthly newsletter articles or pictures are due on the 21st by 9 a.m.
- Weekly EBlast Tuesdays by 9 a.m.
- Weekly Link Wednesdays by 9 a.m.

Moments in CRFUMC History: Serving Our Community

Previously in this column, we have referenced several ways in which our church has served our Castle Rock Community community, including overnight lodging and food during blizzards and the many mission efforts extended by the varied women's circles across the years.

In updating our church history, Laryce Kitsch , who has been a member here for over 50 years, discovered that three important community organizations serving out town and county came about because of members of our church saw the need: The Senior Center, The Women's Crisis Center, and The Inter-faith Task Force.

While we continue to offer missions and outreach opportunities through our Stephen Ministry, The Christmas Giving Tree, Community Kids' SOCK program, the Knot Again quilt ministry, the Prison Backpack ministry, monthly Thinking-of-You Bags, food drives for Help and Hope, and the Youth Mission Trips, we also take note the many years that teams from our church have volunteered for Habitat for Humanity and how our building provides a place to meet for Boy Scouts and various support groups. It is a tradition of service to others that will indubitably continue for years to come. Leadership through service: it's how we roll.



Share the love! Youth Valentines are now on sale at the Welcome Center between services. Send a kind thought someone's way on Valentine's Day. With each Valentine purchased, be sure to put your name in the jar for the opportunity to win the Chocolate Lover's Basket.



Soup-er Bowl Sunday is February 11: Please bring your nonperishable food items and place them by the NFL Team you choose to win the Super Bowl.

Committee on Missions Revival

I am looking to revive our Committee on Missions. I am working on a document that will help drive our committee (see below). If you are looking to serve on the committee please email me (matt.franks@fumccr.org) and let me know. I am looking to have an organizational meeting at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 25th. If you can't attend the meeting but want to join the team please let me know.

Purpose of the Committee on Missions:

The purpose of the Committee on Missions is to provide missional opportunities to the congregation so that we can fulfill The Church's mission of being the light and love of God in our community and beyond.

Missional Focuses

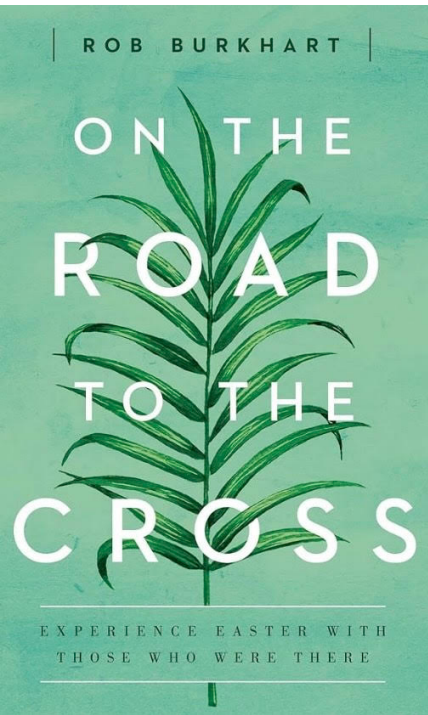
Missional Focuses help guide the work of the committee through the coordination of calendars, resources, and information about missional opportunities and sharing the work of missions in and around the Church. These focuses are as follows:

- Disaster Response: Equipping those in the congregation called to serve in times of disaster when the need arises, as well as finding ways to support the United Methodist Committee on Relief <https://umcmmission.org/umcor/>
- Go, Learn, Serve: These are the traditional mission trips that Churches take to go somewhere, learn about the culture and community we are partnering with, and help the organization we are serving within our gifts and graces.
- Projects: These are events and projects that help connect the Church with the community around us.
 - Angel Tree
 - Food Pantry Food Collections
 - Prison Backpacks
 - Knott Again
 - ETC...
- Missionary Support: Discerning ways we can support the Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church: <https://umcmmission.org/>

Reports To: Discipleship Ministry Team

Meetings: At least in person once a quarter.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

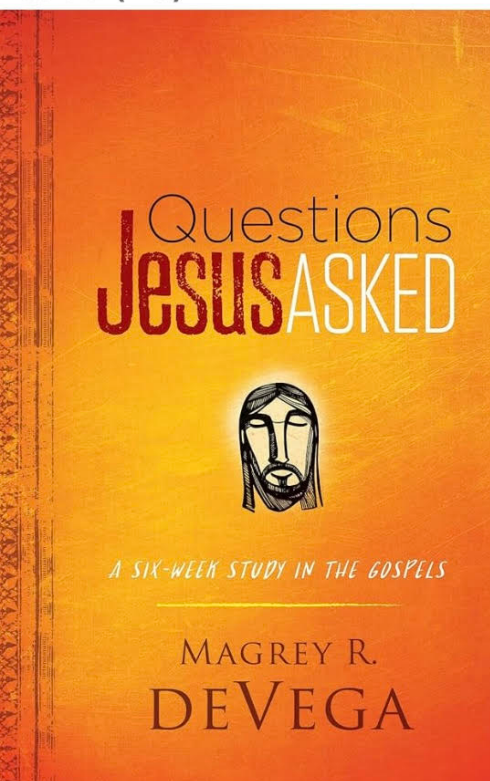


Tuesday Morning Lenten Bible Study will begin its Lenten Study on **February 20**, gathering from 9:30 - 11:00 am.

The book for our discussion and close-up reading of Scripture will be *The Road to the Cross* by Rob Burkhart, a book that brings the experience of Easter through the eyes of the everyday people who witnessed us the triumphal entry, saw Jesus drag his cross to Calvary, and cried through Christ's last words.

Walk with and learn from the secondary characters of the Easter Story: Simon the Leper, Malchus, the Centurion at the cross, Cleopas, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, Barabbas, Simon of Cyrene, and Mary Magdalene.

Contemporary Bible Study Group



Book: *Question Jesus Asked: A Six-week Study in the Gospels* by Magrey R. DeVega

Jesus was fond of asking questions, many of which cut right to the heart of what it means to be human. Why are you terrified? What do you live for? Who do you say that I am?

Magrey deVega explores six of the most provocative questions Jesus posed to others and guides us in answering them for ourselves. Asking these questions takes courage. Not only do they reveal what Jesus really cares about, they open a window into our hearts. When we dare to raise them, these questions bring us a fuller appreciation for the wisdom, power, and presence of God in our lives.

Are you ready to answer the Questions Jesus Asked? J

Join Rev. Sarah's contemporary Bible study group meeting in person, Mondays February 12, 2024 to March 25, 2024; 6:30PM to 8:30 and

on Zoom on Fridays February 16, 2024 to March 29, 2024; 6:30PM to 8:30PM

Thoughts about the Our Charge Conference

By Kari Sarah

A Saturday meeting at church a couple of weeks before Christmas? UGH is what I thought! However, if I had the opportunity to do it again I would. I had the pleasure of taking the minutes – have you ever said you had the pleasure of taking the minutes? I have not, it's really not my favorite thing to do. You may not know this about me but I am easily distracted – which is why I sit at the front of the church. When I am taking minutes I am afraid I am missing something important while writing something else down. The struggle is real. But when I started typing up what we talked about I had such a feeling of thankfulness and such goodness in our church that I was brought to tears. I wanted to make sure everyone had the opportunity to read what we witnessed at the meeting.

DS Carr's question of the day was "How is the Holy Spirit moving here at FUMC, Castle Rock?" Here are some of the responses that followed –

Rev Matt's sermons bring us closer to God every Sunday and he helps us grow and continue working on ourselves through the week

The hundreds of water bottles that were donated to hand out at the parade

Excitement grows with our 150th Anniversary year approaching, including opportunities for more service opportunities and fellowship as we honor those who started our church and those who have helped it grow over the years

Time & Talent Auction commendable success

Singing during the Sunday services has increased with hymns well-chosen and blending in with the sermon

People appreciate the new format of the Sunday bulletin and the technology that Rev Matt has brought.

The dozens of "thinking of you" bags that get delivered every month

Stephen Ministries' online meetings allow one of our men who moved away to stay connected with our church and ministry. He also took part in the Blue Christmas service this year – what a treat!

Our Task Force run by Rev Sarah does a great job of keeping up with the needs of the congregation

The many children that are signed up and attending Little Blessings (80) and SOCKS (40 plus 12 youth that come and help the younger children)

We are so thankful for the youth that take part in our services and their families that come here

Rev. Matt emails the bulletin every week to accommodate a member of our church who is blind, enabling her to follow along, take part in the readings, and sing the songs

It was so good to hear what other people's responses were. Some were things that I had not thought of or might not have known were going on. What a blessing to be able to attend this meeting My hope is that in reading this article you also feel blessed with a greater understanding of what a fantastic church community we have.

May we all look for ways to be more involved so that we can help ensure that we continue to be a great church.

Love One Another

God's command is to "Love one another even as I have loved you," John 13:34. Stephen Ministers especially answer this call by being present in God's love for people who need a faithful presence and a listening ear amidst the struggles of life as Christian caregivers.

I was reminded recently in my preschool classroom that my three-year-old artists (see accompanying photo) are similar to our care receivers we are blessed to serve. We walk the journey together in God's love in the hope that the outcome will be precious.



As Stephen Ministers, we are trained to listen and have an open heart as we walk alongside our care receivers. We share the materials God intends for us to share and with patience and love, we guide our care receivers to help them put the pieces together in their own lives.

We know that God is the caregiver and it is our responsibility to listen, support, and be present. Stephen Ministers do not fix problems or tell others what we think they should do, but we do care enough to be companions to our care receivers as we pray for God's wisdom, guidance, and love along the journey together toward healing.

As Stephen Ministers who are human and heartfelt, we try our best to guide our care receivers even through the stickiest of situations with our sleeves rolled up and our hearts and minds in prayer for guidance. Prayer keeps the lines open between God and each of us. Stephen Ministers pray intentionally for the needs of our care receivers, our church family, our pastors, our community, and each other so that Christ's work can be done through open hearts and open minds.

If you or someone you love would like to have a Stephen Minister walk alongside them in Christian companionship, let Pastor Matt or Reverend Sarah know. You can also reach out to any of us who are proudly wearing the blue nametags of the Stephen Ministry. — Cheryl Smith

**NO ONE HAS TO FACE LIFE'S CHALLENGES ALONE.
OUR STEPHEN MINISTERS CAN HELP.**



Find out more info.

<https://www.fumccr.org/stephenministry>



Rev. Sarah's Space

email:

sms11@mindspring.com



When Jesus was asked the question that started with “What must I do”, he responded with three things that we were commanded by God to do.

In our walk of faith, we are called to love the Lord our God with all our minds, hearts, and souls. Now this doesn't seem so hard to do when we reflect on all God has provided us. It seems doable when we acknowledge the unconditional love that God has extended and will continue to extend.

As a people of faith, we are also called to Love our neighbor. This means those who look and act like us – as well as those who are radically different. This can be challenging but doable if we allow ourselves to let go of judgment and always seek to be in control. It helps if we focus on the positives and not allow the negatives to overpower us.

Perhaps Jesus saved the biggest challenge for last as he reminds us that God wants us to Love ourselves. Sometimes we can be our hardest critic. We struggle to let go and forgive ourselves for the mistakes that we make. We extend compassion and love out to others, but we need to reflect on how to turn some of that compassion and love inward. As we find ways to forgive ourselves, the love will be there.

As you move forward to Valentine's Day celebrations and the beginning of the season of Lent, I challenge you to reflect on loving God. May that love be a light on your path. Reflect on how you show love to your neighbor as well as yourselves.

Let us pray

Oh God of compassion,

Thank You for Your unconditional love for me. Help me to see myself through Your eyes, as a beloved child who is worthy of love and respect. I ask that You fill me with Your Holy Spirit, and help me to love myself as You love me. May I let go of any negative self-talk, self-doubt, or self-hatred, and instead embrace the person you created me to be. I pray for healing from any past hurts or trauma that have caused me to view myself in a negative light. Thank you for Your never-ending love, and for giving me the ability to love myself and other people. Amen.

Children's Ministry is Community Kids



*A place where Faith,
Imagination, and Learning
go hand-in-hand.*

Ages: Toddler-5th Grade

At FUMC, we believe that children should be seen and heard all around the church and the community. Our programs are designed to start children on a journey of faith that will last a lifetime.

- Learning and Growing Bible Stories
- Treat yourself Sundays with our 5th Graders (Monthly Outreach)
- Vacation Bible School (Summer Fun)
- Music and Arts (Children's Musicals)
- Special Events (Trunk or Treat, Easter Egg Hunt & more)
- SOCK Program (Strengthening Our Community Kids- Tuesday After School)
- Little Blessings Preschool, ages 1-6 (Monday-Friday program)

Community Kids: If you can help with providing and serving food to the children who come to our after-school SOCK program on Tuesday afternoons, please sign up at there welcome center.



The Picture Above is our Worship Boxes for Kids to utilize during worship. Feel free to use them when you have little ones attending with you and just leave them next to the back pew at the end of worship.



PASTOR MATT'S SPACE

email: matt.franks@fumccr.org
social media @mattdamethdoist



***“Come, follow me,” he said, “and I’ll show you how to fish for people.”
Mark 1:17 CEB***

The Gospel of Mark illustrates Jesus' invitation to come and follow him, which essentially is an invitation to learn. Interestingly, Jesus doesn't ask his disciples if they know the scriptures, doctrines, laws, or rituals- he simply invites them to come and learn. As we approach the Lenten season beginning in February, I extend the same invitation to you. Come and learn.

A Healthy Plate Discipleship

Understanding Discipleship with the Healthy Plate Framework. As disciples, we are committed followers of Jesus Christ, devoted to practices that encourage spiritual growth. The journey of discipleship involves being transformed by the Holy Spirit through spiritual practices in order to exemplify Jesus Christ.

The Healthy Plate Discipleship framework offers a range of practices to help you follow Jesus Christ more faithfully. Give each of the six areas – worship, serve, give, learn, play, and pray – a try in order to strengthen your faith.

It's important to find a balance in your spiritual life, and I want to help. Whether your plate is too full or too empty, I will be working with a Discipleship Ministry Team (DMT) to guide us to more of a discipleship experience.

Stay Tuned!

Ash Wednesday

Feb. 14th

“Ashes To Go.” A group of Clergy will be set up at the southwest corner of Wilcox and Fourth Street from 8:00-10:00 AM, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, and 4:00-5:30 PM. Right in the area of the Veterans Memorial.

Worship Service at 6:30 p.m. at the Church

Online Vespers

Attend our Virtual Spiritual Gathering every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. via our Facebook and YouTube Channels! Pastor Matt will deliver an online experience that you won't want to miss. Make sure to join the party on time!

Communion During Lent

Starting Feb. 18th we will offer Holy Communion in the Library in between services.



Questions Jesus Asked

Lenten Sermon Series at Castle Rock FUMC

Feb. 14th - March 31st

Week 1 Who Do You Say That I Am?

Week 2 Why Are You Afraid?

Week 3 Why Are You Anxious?

Week 4 What Do You Live For?

Week 5 Whom Will You Love?

Week 6 What Are You Looking For?

For more info go to
www.fumccr.org/lent