

Tower chimes

Monthly newsletter of First Congregational UCC | Grand Junction, CO | May 2023



Paul's Epistle

Dear Friends,

Recently, first thing one morning Pam was upset that someone had stolen our large trash can. They must have had a dire need for a trash can? I grumbled a few seconds later that the new library online system requires new passwords but then rejects the new passwords! Then a moment of pause caught me and I offered the reality check, "Is it not great we only have middle-class problems?" We are not using a shopping cart or trash can to hold all our worldly possessions and this minister has more books than some rural libraries! Yet how many of us have ruined a day with ruminations about middle-class problems. Little things can hook us sometimes for days. It is tempting to grumble about the things we do not have, or envy those with paid off mortgages rather than just pausing long enough to be grateful for the many good and positive things in our life. Or even the things that are paid off.

Most people would mention they are grateful for their parents, their children, their friends and various things they own. Many people would add a comfortable place to live. We often overlook the basics that billions cannot take for granted like: safe drinking water, a good amount of sunshine, fairly clean air to breathe, the farmers and nature that supply our food, the beauty of this county, the good fortune of places for great music and entertainment at CMU, The Avalon, and the Mesa Theater. Add the progressive voice of compassion that is our church.

There is gratitude to be shared at a special recognition at our Congregational meeting on May 21st after church. One of the greatest compliments any church can receive is the rare gift of having a pastor serve for a period of years, then move on to serve another church and then retire and move back to share in the life and mission of a former congregation. Trust me, it is very

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

PAUL'S EPISTLE

rare. The church I served in the San Diego had that good fortune. The founding pastor from 1957, after serving as a conference minister in the Central-Atlantic Conference, retired back in San Diego and re-joined the UCC church he founded. The church in response honored him with the title "Pastor Emeritus." I found him to be a great friend and advisor. He officiated at our wedding 24 years ago.



At our church Council meeting in March, it was a unanimous decision to honor Rev. Sharyl Peterson with the title "Pastor Emerita." We honor her work among us as a pastor and now as a member. Rev Sharyl covers hospital visits and pastoral emergencies when Pam and I are out of town. We are also grateful for Bob's sharing of his spiritual gifts and heart for mission. For those who are new to our church, it was Rev. Sharyl who with patience and positive energy guided our church through the "Open and Affirming Process." The vote to become an open and affirming church can be a

bumpy road; however, opening the doors of compassion changes the DNA of a church forever. It creates a larger heart of love with more space to embrace those in the future whom angry majorities want to target and harm. Her skills as a teacher, preacher and counselor helped to make this a peaceful and productive process. Many churches, in many denominations, have suffered bitter battles and split congregations all over the question of if we can welcome GLBTQ persons. Jesus was constantly condemned for welcoming others. Did churches miss all these stories? Some denominations continue to battle and split over who they want to welcome and who they vote to exclude. Rev. Sharyl's work on this ethical stand helped create the light of love. For that we all say thank you with deep gratitude. We also thank Rev. Sharyl for her faith and faithfulness in pastoral care that I hear about when doing visits over a decade later. I am sure I have left out many spiritual gifts shared but these are the ones I hear about on a fairly regular basis.

Peace, Shalom, Salaam,
Rev. Dr. Paul M. Ashby

CHURCH PARKING LOT TO BE RESEALED AND RESTRIPE

The church parking lot behind the church's building on the Elm Court side will be resealed and freshly restriped Friday, May 26. Limited parking will be available on the south side, the Kennedy Avenue side, of the old CE Building.

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS CAROLYN HOLMGREN

This month I am borrowing thoughts from Bishop John Shelby Spong, one of my favorite theologians:

*If God is the source of life
I worship God by living.*

*If God is the source of love
I worship God by loving.*

*If God is the Ground of Being
I worship God by having the courage to be more fully human,
the embodiment of the divine.*

Peace,
Carolyn

MAY SUNDAY MORNING CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

May Sunday Morning Children's Program
"Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord"



<p>Sunday, May 7</p> <p>Outdoor fun with bubbles</p> 	<p>Sunday, May 14</p> <p>Give a hand to Someone Special</p> 	<p>Sunday, May 21</p> <p>Drum Circle</p> 	<p>Sunday, May 28</p> <p>Dance Party</p> 
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If we knew what we were doing, it wouldn't be called Research. —Albert Einstein

FEBRUARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MICHAEL PETRI, CLERK

February 19, 2023

The church council of First Congregational Church United Church of Christ met in the chapel on February 19, 2023 for the monthly stated meeting. Present were council members Karen Caton, Mary Endres, Cindy Haas, Carolyn Holmgren (moderator), Brad Montgomery-Anderson, Nancy Palubicki, Michael Petri, Ken Puhler and the Rev. Paul Ashby. Julie Krueger and Mark Long were absent.

A quorum was established. The meeting was opened with an opening prayer by the pastor at 11:32 a.m.

Minutes of the January 15, 2023 council meeting were approved as distributed.

Pastor's Report: Paul noted

- ◇ The WEShelter homeless overflow shelter program has been in place at our church for the last two weeks, overseen by members of the Latter Day Saints church. Tonight, our church takes over oversight for the remaining two weeks of the program at our facility.
- ◇ In light of continuing threats to Jewish people across the country, Paul suggested that we offer our space to our Jewish friends for a celebration of Jewish tradition for the community. The council approved this, on motion.
- ◇ The Rocky Mountain Conference has asked that our church host a dinner and a singalong as part of the annual gathering – as a way to bring people together. A specific date was not requested, but the gathering is scheduled for June 15-17.
- ◇ He received a letter from the BAM group indicating that our welcome of this youth art group has mended some fences for BAM members who have been brutalized by other churches. They felt welcome in our church. Efforts are being made to continue support for the work of this group.

Ministry Team Reports/Minutes: Available reports were distributed prior to the meeting, as noted:

- ◇ Mission and Outreach/JAM,.
- ◇ Fellowship & Hospitality Meeting, January 2023, February 2023.
- ◇ Worship and Celebration, February 2023.
- ◇ Property Team, February 2023.
- ◇ Personnel Committee, no report
- ◇ Marketing Team, no written report
- ◇ Finance and Stewardship, February 2023

Finance Report for 2022 Year End – Treasurers Report and Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet were distributed prior to the meeting. Julie will formally present the reports at the next meeting.

FEBRUARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MICHAEL PETRI, CLERK

Other Business/New Business:

- ◇ Membership: Beth mailed out letters to the members moved to the inactive roll at the last meeting. There were no responses, but one person did attend a worship service since then.
- ◇ Request from Finance and Stewardship Team to approve the following two resolutions (which were distributed prior to the meeting):

RESOLVED, that the following individuals shall have authority to conduct financial transactions on behalf of the First Congregational Church, UCC, Grand Junction:

Julie Krueger, Treasurer

Michael Petri, Clerk

Martha Jones, Financial Clerk

Nancy Palubicki, Financial Clerk

Such authority shall extend to both written and verbal authorization of the sale of stock on behalf of the church, with the proceeds payable to the church, the opening of accounts and making investments in the name of the church. This resolution was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED, that the following individuals are approved signators on accounts held in the name of First Congregational Church at The Bank of Colorado:

Julie Krueger, Treasurer

Michael Petri, Clerk

Martha Jones, Financial Clerk

Nancy Palubicki, Financial Clerk

Brian Mahoney, Member of Finance Committee

Cindy Haas, Member of Council

This resolution was approved unanimously.

- ◇ Set Date for Annual Meeting to Elect Council Members/Lay Delegate - On motion the meeting was scheduled for May 21 following the worship service.
- ◇ Form Nominating Team - Paul suggested that the council act as the nominating committee. Michael said he would check the bylaws to be sure that was allowed. Paul asked people to think of nominees prior to the next council meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 12:20 p.m.

Michael Petri – Council Clerk

The next council meeting will be March 19 at 11:15 a.m.

MARCH COUNCIL MINUTES MICHAEL PETRI

March 19, 2023

The church council of First Congregational Church United Church of Christ met in the chapel on March 19, 2023 for the monthly stated meeting. Present were council members Karen Caton, Mary Endres, Cindy Haas, Carolyn Holmgren (moderator), Julie Krueger, Nancy Palubicki, Michael Petri, Ken Puhler and the Rev. Paul Ashby. Mark Long and Brad Montgomery-Anderson were absent.

A quorum was established. The meeting was opened with an opening prayer by the pastor at 11:36 a.m.

Minutes of the February 19, 2023 council meeting were approved as distributed.

Pastor's Report: Paul noted:

- ◇ Kathy Viglianco did a great job leading the WeShelter program at our church in February. There were some problems. One plan to reduce problems is the get a breathalyzer to test participants next year. This will decrease the WeShelter insurance costs, too.
- ◇ We need to do a better job following up with people who have been missing from church. Mary volunteered to send a card to the Fords. Michael noted that the Breeze program should be able to flag folks who have been missing (assuming the attendance information is input promptly),
- ◇ We should get members to sit with visitors
- ◇ That we honor Sharyl Peterson with Pastor Emeritus status. He explained that it's an honorary title thanking pastors who rejoin churches that they'd previously served. A motion was made and approved to grant Sharyl Peterson the title of Pastor Emeritus, pending her approval. Assuming this is acceptable, the title will be acknowledged at the annual meeting on May 21.

Ministry Team Reports/Minutes: Available reports were distributed prior to the meeting, as noted:

- ◇ Mission and Outreach/JAM, March 2023
- ◇ Fellowship & Hospitality Meeting, March 2023,
- ◇ Worship and Celebration, March 2023
- ◇ Property Team, March 2023
- ◇ Personnel Committee, no report
- ◇ Marketing Team, no written report
- ◇ Finance and Stewardship, not meeting in March
- ◇ Annual Data Hub church statistical report for 2022 sent to UCC

Finance Reports: Verbal Report from Treasurer, 2022 Year end Financials, Treasurer's Narrative [These were also shared in the materials for last month's meeting.] Julie reviewed some highlights from the 2022 budget year included in the report.

MARCH COUNCIL MINUTES MICHAEL PETRI

Other Business/New Business:

- ◇ Review Suggested Candidates for Council. The council, acting as the nominating committee, made these proposals for the 2023 Council:
 - ◇ Karen and Brad as lay delegates. A motion was approved to allow Karen to serve for another year.
 - ◇ Julie as treasurer
 - ◇ Carolyn as moderator
 - ◇ Ken as vice-moderator
 - ◇ Michael as clerk
 - ◇ Cindy and Mary at-large
 - ◇ Ask Mark if he is willing to continue. Nancy does not wish to continue on council
 - ◇ A review of the bylaws shows that we can recruit up to 3 more at-large council members. Carolyn will contact several others who were suggested to see if they're willing to serve.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 12:32p.m.

Michael Petri – Council Clerk

The next council meeting will be April 16 at 11:15 a.m. Due to the annual congregational meeting, no council meeting is planned for May.

CATHOLIC OUTREACH NEWS



What are we collecting for Catholic Outreach in May?
PASTA!

Oodles and oodles of funny shaped noodles, filling and nourishing —and so versatile too! [But let's skip the spaghetti, okay?]

There's pasta salads ... pasta goulashes ... pasta casseroles ... pasta and cheese ... pasta and tomatoes ... pasta and beans ... the possibilities of pasta are END-LESS!

I think the last time we collected pasta, we collected 125 pounds. Let's go for 150 pounds this time around!

CONGREGANTS AT WORK!



The team begins its work



Allan carefully surveys the task at hand



Sharefest 2023!

What an accomplishment! Hooray!

A BLAST FROM FIRST CONGREGATIONAL'S PAST

Editor's Note: One of my more peculiar editorial quirks is that I don't like to leave too much blank space in the publications I produce, because it seems wasteful not to do something creative with a blank canvas.

So, as I contemplated a full empty page in this issue of Tower Chimes [Horrors!] I wondered what would be fun and creative to put here ... and decided to look back at past issues of Tower Chimes to see what was happening in May back in the day. I struck paydirt with this article from the May 2015 issue, from the year our congregation celebrated its 125th anniversary— otherwise known as a Quasqui-centennial. [Really. No joke. Look it up.]

I hope you enjoy reading this as much as I did. ~~Beth Rakestraw

FCC On the Move During the Last 125 Years

During May, the 125th Celebration is highlighting the structures that are a part of the history of this congregation.

The original tent where the first services took place on January 17th, 1890 was at 5th and Main close to the location of the current Margery Building. The congregation met there until April of that year when they moved down the street to the Mesa County Courthouse located at 559 Main Street.

By June of 1890, the congregation bought the former Methodist Episcopal Church South at 543 Rood Avenue. It served the needs of the church until 1904 when it was rented to the school district to supplement income. It eventually became the Whittier School.

The congregation was growing during the turn of the century and it became necessary to build a new building. The church was built at 602 Rood Avenue on lots donated by Maud Bull. The sanctuary had a seating capacity of 650 people. Incredibly, 736 people crowded into the new building in October 1904 to dedicate the new church.

It was determined in the 1940s that another building with parking was necessary. The congregation bought four lots at 6th and Grand in 1945. The lots were sold for double the purchase price when the decision was made to build at 5th and Kennedy. In 1953 the fundraising began. Pilgrim Hall, office

and classrooms were complete in 1954 at 1425 N. 5th Street. As a result of the sale of the 6th and Rood site, ground was broken for the sanctuary in May 1955. The building was dedicated March 4, 1956. The Christian Education building was completed in September 1965.

The congregation had two parsonages. The first one was built in 1901 at 1010 White Avenue on two of the four lots donated by the Grand Junction's Town Company in 1882 to the churches in the community.

In 1957 the congregation bought a parsonage at 1927 North 3rd Court. The home was brick and only three years old at the time. It was sold to Rev. and Mrs. Louis Taylor in the late 1960s.

To celebrate the brick and mortar of our community, Betty Hall will be giving a tour of the grounds on May 3, 2015 after the worship service. Also on May 17, 2015, there will be maps and pictures of the buildings where the congregation has worshipped and the parsonages we have owned.



MISSION & OUTREACH NEWS

SECOND QUARTER 2023 MISSION & OUTREACH COLLECTION

During the month of May, Mission and Outreach continues to focus on **The Joseph Center** for our 2023 second quarter project. Mona Highline, the Founder of St. Joseph Center, is a Remarkable Woman and you will have the opportunity to hear her story when she comes to speak in June. This month she has requested full size health products for men and women. In addition to what we have been collecting you should put shaving cream and disposable razors on your list. **Let's fill the shelves with shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste and brushes, soap, deodorant, lotion, and shaving cream and razors.** These products will be used the Circle Program, a residential drug and alcohol recovery program supported by St. Joseph Center.

~M & O team

“SOLIDARITY, NOT CHARITY” REGULAR, ONGOING COLLECTIONS:

- ◇ hotel and personal sized toiletries
- ◇ clean, empty plastic gallon milk or water jugs **with their lids**
- ◇ plastic grocery bags —if you have them!
- ◇ Handbags and stuff to put in them.

LOOKING AHEAD

June 15 —17 | RMC Annual Celebration in Grand Junction

September 9-10 | Grand Junction Pride Weekend

MAY BIRTHDAYS

5/2 Barbara Eyler

5/8 Karen Van Ert

5/9 David Dethmers

5/11 Karen Hildebrand

5/18 Kathleen Carlson

5/23 Sharyl Peterson

5/30 Jim Lauer

5/31 Anne Djokic

If we are missing a birthday from our lists, or our list is incorrect, please call the church office at 970-242-0298 or email office@uccgj.org. Thanks!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, MAY 21

Our Program Year Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, May 21, 2023 at the end of worship. This is the time when members of the congregation vote on the new proposed council and lay delegates for 2023-2024. It is important that we have as much participation as possible. Please save the date on your calendar and join in the governance of our congregation. A meeting agenda and other materials will be sent via email no later than Sunday, May 14.

MAY 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
April 30	1	2	3	4	5	6
8:45 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 5th Sunday Potluck		GJHS AP Exams begin 10:00 Women's Coffee/Mens' Coffee 5:30 Cantabile Ringers	GJHS AP Exams 2:00 Mission & Outreach	GJHS AP Exams 12:15 Health & Wellness 1:00 Fellowship & Hospitality	GJHS AP Exams	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:45 Choir 10:00 Worship w/ Communion 11:00 Happy Hour	GJHS AP Exams 1:00 Property Team 5:00 Make Mondays Fun Again	GJHS AP Exams 10:00 Women's Coffee/Mens' Coffee 5:30 Cantabile Ringers	GJHS AP Exams	GJHS AP Exams 12:15 Health & Wellness	10:00 Zoom Coffee	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:45 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Happy Hour 11:15 Worship & Celebration		10:00 Women's Coffee/Mens' Coffee 5:30 Cantabile Ringers		11:30 Berna B's 12:15 Health & Wellness	10:00 Zoom Coffee	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8:45 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Happy Hour 11:00 Annual Congregational Meeting	5:00 Make Mondays Fun Again	10:00 Women's Coffee/Mens' Coffee 5:30 Cantabile Ringers		12:15 Health & Wellness	Parking Lot Reseal/Restripe 10:00 Zoom Coffee	
28	29	30	June 1	June 2	June 3	June 4
8:45 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Happy Hour 11:00 Spiritual Journey through 2023 Book Study	Church Office Closed for Memorial Day			12:15 Health & Wellness	10:00 Zoom Coffee	

Don't ask God to guide your footsteps if you're not willing to move your feet.

—Anonymous



Go Green! Get your Tower
Chimes via email!



CONTACT US!

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UNITED CHURCH
 OF CHRIST