



Congregational United Church of Christ of Buena Vista

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 28, 2018

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***Called to: *Understand *Care *Celebrate.**

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“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

AGENDA

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Moderator’s Opening Comments and Prayer**
- C. Approval of the January 29, 2017 Minutes**
- D. Clerk’s Report**
- E. Treasurer’s Report**
- F. Questions Concerning Board, A/O Board, Committee Reports**
 - 1. Boards:**
 - a. Christian Education**
 - b. Diaconate**
 - c. Mission and Ministry**
 - d. Trustees**
 - 2. Affiliated Organizations:**
 - Women’s Missionary Society**
 - 3. Stewardship Committee**
- G. Recognition of Outgoing Officers and Board Members**
- H. New Business**
 - 1. Nominating Committee Report and Slate**
 - 2. Election of Officers and Board Members**
 - 3. Presentation of the 2018 Budget**
 - 4. Approval of the 2018 Budget**
 - 5. Other**
- I. Passing the Mantle**
- J. Pastor’s Remarks**
- K. Hymn #396 “Where the Spirit of the Lord Is”**
- L. Closing Prayer**
- M. Benediction and Adjournment**

Pastor's Annual Report, 2017

SOUL WRAP: Caring for Our Souls and Each Other

Happy New Year! As I write this, we are just about to ring in the new year with worship, carols, celebrating the gifts of the Magi and the gifts of one another and the Spirit! For, truly, as a beloved community, we are a gift to each other and tangible proof of Spirit's presence among us.

We began 2017 with the theme: *SOUL WRAP: Caring for Our Souls and Each Other*. We endeavored to care for our souls more deeply: "We will engage in a year of reflection, renewal, rejuvenation, restoration. In seeking to get to know one another better, listen to one another's stories, and nurturing our collective soul. We will keep on meeting, planning, ministering, learning and worshiping together, but will also look and listen with new and open eyes and ears—to each other, and to our own inner voice: The Christ in each one of us."

We did all those things and more this year, as our incredible leaders guided us through a never-boring time of spiritual reflection and growth, community transformation inside and out, honoring traditions, and taking on new challenges and projects.

In the Spring, we celebrated life in all its forms with many "Celebration of Life" services with Holy Week and Easter in the middle, followed by the creation of a Community Garden!

In April, we celebrated seven years of faithful service of Carolyn Calhoun, Church Secretary, and sent her off to retirement with gifts and much appreciation. We welcomed Nancy Best as our new Office Communications Administrator. Nancy has quickly become an integral part of our staff and community, and has the place running smoothly, creatively and with great spirit!

In June, we continued our commitment to **Intergenerational Mission Trips** as a group of 9 youth and 11 adults traveled to Anchorage, Alaska. We built community as we helped out a local church community with much-needed repair, maintenance, and upgrade projects. We also explored God's beautiful country, along with moose and bear and mud flats!

As summer neared an end, and events in the world around us moved toward a more divisive tone, we responded by "drawing the circle wide" with the creation of The Rainbow Place—a gathering place for all, and dedicated a banner proclaiming "Love is Still the Way!" on the east side of the church building.

In September, we learned about Spiritual Pilgrimage, and sent out 12 of our own to join 11 others on a Celtic Pilgrimage to Ireland. We continue to enjoy worship and exploration of the Celtic Christian tradition to deepen our faith and experience of God, friendship, and creation.

In October, Pastor Rebecca and Helen Duncan began a leadership journey called IGNITE, in the Rocky Mountain Conference, as representatives from CUCC. We confirmed how much "we need each other" to explore what the future of the Church is to be in our times, and how we can inspire and ignite each other to interface with our wider communities more fully, while also nurturing and building up the body in our church family.

In November and December, the Trustees undertook "church makeover" projects and gave a beautiful new spirit and look to the Fellowship Hall. We are continuing to explore the "footprint in the community" that our congregation makes.

Christmas Eve saw a packed house with many visitors from the wider community, and was a true celebration of the birth of Jesus with meaningful ritual, tradition, and inspiring music.

It's been a year of loss and of joy. A year of change as beloved folks left us for other places of ministry and existence. And it's been a year of caring—of great tenderness for one another's souls and the soul of this beloved community. We have truly lived out our vision of Soul Wrap: Caring for our Souls and each other.

Blessings! Pastor Rebecca Kemper Poos

Moderator's Report

A New Church Year begins with thanksgiving for the past and joyful anticipation for the future. Together we have weathered challenges and celebrated progress. Hopefully we have been faithful to God's calling and desires for our congregation and its ministries. May we continue to keep worship and our prayers at the forefront of all we do as a community and to grow in love and understanding of one another.

Over this past year, our congregation has suffered its losses with deaths, moves, and transfers of significant members. Congregations, not just individuals, suffer from periods of grief and we act out our grief in sometimes strange ways. We want explanations and sometimes lapse into blame. We are human and begin to question God when these difficulties overwhelm us.

But our congregation has moved forward and embraced with expectation that God has a plan for us if we are faithful and we ask for guidance. We see signs for a vibrant future.

1. We have welcomed some wonderful new people.
2. Our wider community has recognized the welcome our church extends to many groups.
3. Young families have expressed to us their need for spiritual grounding, searching for new ways to find that.
4. Our facilities have had some "facelifts" – a fence, a garden, new flooring, painted walls.
5. Our governing boards were filled and board members faithfully did their work to provide opportunities for worship, fellowship, mission, celebrations, trips to help and for pilgrimage, backpacks for children, our annual bazaar, and communication pieces.

I am grateful for each one of you and the many ways that you help, care, work, provide and support our church. Even though you all deserve to be named, I do want to call attention to those people who keep our ministries strong:

1. We have a wonderful pastor Rebecca who continues to care for us in many ways, who guides us spiritually, touches us musically, and cares for us in many ways. She also has a welcoming spirit and represents us so well to our wider community.
2. Thank you to our board chairpersons: Ron Hassell, Ron Rak, Laurie Stevens, and Doyle Nyberg who also have been a helpful guide for me. Doyle sets up our sanctuary every Sunday, operates the sound system, and handles so many other responsibilities. I am also grateful for Marjorie Erickson, our Vice-Moderator for being my partner this year.
3. Our church facility has been well-cared for even though many different groups use it. Our Trustees and Custodian(s) have kept our facilities and property in good shape. Thanks to Bowie Duncan and Mark Wolters for guiding the fence installation. Thanks to Paul Dorfmeister, Mark Wolters, and Ron & Judy Hassell for their work on the garden. And to Barb Wilder and Delmar Smith for not just guiding the decision-making for Fellowship Hall but also doing a lot of manual labor both inside and outside of our facilities. Thank you to Lenny Nyberg for stepping into the Custodian position and doing a wonderful job.

4. Music fills our souls every Sunday morning and on other special occasions. Janet Steiner faithfully guides our music groups and also shares her creativity in many ways. Teresa Roorda provides the stirring music that sets the tone for our worship services. Rebecca encourages and leads in many aspects of our music program.
5. Our secretary, Nancy Best, has streamlined the administrative work of our church and its communications and helped clean up the office and organize files.
6. Even with some shortfall, our bills have been paid and people have been generous in their financial support of the church. Kay Allinger, Cindy Helm and Lesley Fagerberg make up our faithful financial team.
7. Thanks to Ken Rehborn for his faithful attention to stocking food, packing and delivering backpacks for children in our community.
8. We had travelers – to Alaska to do mission work and to Ireland for a pilgrimage. Thanks to Shawna & Brett Kinkaid for organizing the youth group and to the adults who participated and helped.
9. Thanks to Linda Rak, Norma Smith, Janet Steiner and all the women and men who created another wonderful assortment of goods and food for the bazaar.

Thank you to all who are part of this wonderful congregation. There are many others, not named, who serve in front and behind the scenes - the women and men who usher, greet, prepare & serve communion and food for all church gatherings & fellowship hour, the people who decorate or provide flowers, nursery attendants, education leaders, counselors, care givers, lectors, yard workers, scout leaders and backpack workers. We are truly blessed.

So be not dismayed that part of our journey together is travelling through loss and suffering – those are the times we learn the most if we're willing. But rejoice! We have also shared together some wonderful celebrations and joys! We are people of hope who expect God to move among us and within us to an unexpectedly bright future. We remain grateful and encouraged by signs stirring among us, by welcoming new friends, by listening to one another's thoughts and ideas, and by experimenting into the future. Thank you, everyone, for the privilege of serving as your Moderator for the year 2017. God bless us all!

Arlene Waldorf