



## The Church Bell

First Congregational Church, UCC  
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February 2, 2024

THE CHURCH BELL (USPS 110-560)  
PERIODICALS MAILING

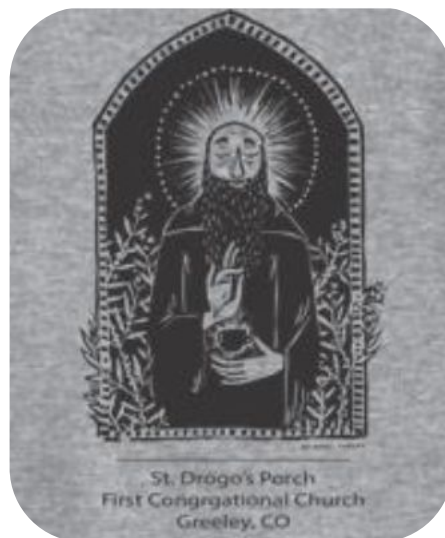
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### Mail May be Returned Undeliverable

It has come to our attention that several people have mailed things to the church that have been correctly addressed, but returned as undeliverable. We are working diligently with the post office to identify why this is happening and rectify the problem. Please know that we receive mail Monday - Thursday and that all checks received through Sunday morning are deposited on Monday or Tuesday. If it has been more than 2 weeks and your check has not cleared the bank, please reach out to Laura in the church office ((970)-616-5352 or [laura@firstconggreeley.com](mailto:laura@firstconggreeley.com)). We do offer secure drop boxes outside the west doors, just outside of the main office door, and automatic giving options if you prefer to avoid the mail!

### Buy a T-shirt and Help Support the Youth Summer Trip to the Rosebud Indian Reservation!

Heather Schulte has worked with a local artist and Milo Schulte to design a new St. Drogo's T-shirt. St. Drogo's is the patron saint of coffee and the namesake for our "coffee shop gathering space" near the front entrance of the church. The shirts will be made by local print shop Gojos. A portion of every purchase will be used to help offset the cost of the trip for our youth to attend their learning and service trip to the Rosebud Indian Reservation at the beginning of the summer. T-shirts can be purchased as [schulte101.wixsite.com/mysite/projects-6](http://schulte101.wixsite.com/mysite/projects-6). Gifts can also be made to support the trip by sending a donation to the church office.



### Rosebud Pews

Several months ago, Holy Innocents Episcopal Church in Parmelee, South Dakota burned to the ground. It has since been determined that this horrible event was caused by an arsonist. This is a tremendous loss for our friends on the Rosebud Reservation. But the loss of their 133-year-old building is not the end for the Holy Innocents congregation. Plans are already underway to rebuild. In support of the rebuilding efforts, we have gifted Holy Innocents with nine pews that we were no longer using. Transportation costs to move the pews were approximately \$1,150. We are currently accepting donations to help offset the cost. You may give online by selecting Roseud in the fund dropdown or mark your cash envelope or check "Rosebud."



### Annual Meeting

Please join us for the 154th Annual Meeting of the Congregation on **Wednesday, February 21 at 6:00 pm**. Extended childcare will be available for the duration of the meeting. Join us for a chili dinner at 5:00 pm - maybe we'll be lucky enough to get a reprise of last fall's chili cook off award-winning chilis! Annual reports will be available in print no later than February 7. A digital copy will also be sent via email.

### Ash Wednesday Dinner & Service

Join us for our traditional pancake dinner on **Wednesday, February 14** for Ash Wednesday! The church will provide pancakes and drinks. Please bring a side dish (ex: egg casserole, bacon, yogurt, etc) to share. Dinner will be at 5:15 pm and we will move into the sanctuary for a special Ash Wednesday/Valentines Worship at 6:00 pm. Family Faith Formation will offer Ash Wednesday & Lent activities for all between dinner and the service.

### Silver Circle

This month we had a wonderful time exploring *Habitat for Humanity's* good work in Weld County and internationally, as we heard from long-time volunteers and current board members. Please stay tuned for more ways to be involved in the ongoing work they are doing to address the housing crisis in our community.

On **February 22 at 10:00 am** the Silver Circle will visit the LINC (Library and Innovation Center) in downtown Greeley, and learn more about the art, creation spaces, and educational offerings that are already transforming our community. We will get a tour from Melissa Beavers, Library Manager, and have the opportunity to learn more about the "Water Flows Uphill" immersive installation upstairs <https://www.mylibrary.us/wwfu/>.

Following our time at the Library, we will head to Doug's Diner where folks can order lunch. Please RSVP to [revtamara@firstconggreeley.com](mailto:revtamara@firstconggreeley.com) if you would like to participate in any or all of this gathering. Be sure to mention if you are driving yourself or joining us in the van. Those who would like to ride in the van should meet at FCC at 9:30am. We will return to the church by 1:00 pm.



### Food Pantry

We are committed to providing food bags to anyone who come through our doors requesting food assistance. Donations can be placed in the basket outside the sanctuary. We are currently in need of the following items:

- Ramen Noodles and Cup of Noodles
- Dry Rice
- Pasta & Pasta Sauce
- Canned Soup (pull tab top preferred)

### Staff Retreat

We are grateful for the chance to spend time together in Estes Park on staff retreat the last few days of January. It is both a lot of fun and a lot of work! Along with planning much of the church calendar for next program year, we also had the opportunity to learn more about ourselves and each other through a workshop Lola Fehr led on the StrengthsFinder Assessment. A special thanks to Jim and Yvonne Zack for helping to offset the cost of the trip by providing space through their timeshare.

### A Special Lenten Wednesday Night Live (Feb. 28, March 6, 13, 20)

During this season of Lent, strengthen your awareness of the Sacred. Join Rev. Tamara and Spiritual Director in Training, Sandy Varley, as we focus on **listening to our lives** as the place where God is still speaking. We'll use Parker Palmer's book *Let Your Life Speak* as the guide for our exploration together. Reading the book is not required, but if you would like to, it is available both new and used in many places or Rev. Tamara is happy to share her copy. The audiobook can be purchased at [Audiobooks.com](https://www.audiobooks.com).

### Meet Ryan Ostlund, our Choral Scholar!

Hello, I'm Ryan Ostlund. I'm from Westminster Colorado and a second-year student at UNC majoring in Vocal Performance and Music Business. (Aside from singing) I love painting and crafting dioramas, and I love board games. I feel immensely welcomed at First Congregational Church and I'm excited to sing with you!



### Partners are... Partnering!

Partners, FCC's leadership training program for 4th-6th grade students, is actively working to partner our students with other ministry teams. Through these collaborations, our Partners will get introduced to various ways that they could serve and lead in our congregation beyond the children's ministry space. Thank you to each of the ministry teams, who gladly rose to the challenge and are thinking creatively about how to incorporate Partners into their ministry work.

As students graduate from the Partners program, I hope they will continue to serve with a ministry team about which they are passionate and continue to grow as joyful leaders in our community. If you see a 4th-6th grade student serving in a new place (like on the Sunday Morning Host team), please say hi!

### A Solar-Powered Church

After many years of planning, we are delighted to share that we are now a solar-powered church! Our solar system was completed at the end of last year and is now generating most of energy for our electrical needs. Along with securing Renewal Energy Credits worth approximately \$5,000 a year over the next 15 years, we are also in the final stages of applying for a partial repayment of the project through the Inflation Recovery Act. A huge thanks to church member Russ Doty for the countless hours and tremendous insight that he has invested in this project.

### Brewery Tour & Guided Tasting

Join A Place at the Table for a brewery tour and guided tasting from TightKnit Brewing Co. on February 25 at 2:00 pm! We will begin at the brewhouse (3940 Carson Ave, Unit 4, Evans) to learn how their beers are produced and then move to the taphouse (813 8th St, Greeley) to sample the beers! Cost is \$25/person and will include the brew tour, a guided tasting, a flight and a full pour. This is a 21+ event. Please RSVP by [here](#) or to Kate Norris ([knorris.mail@gmail.com](mailto:knorris.mail@gmail.com)) to be sure we have the space and A Place at the Table for everyone.



### Welcome New Member: Holly Gregory

Holly Gregory found us online when her husband was at the end of his life at North Colorado Medical Center. Her family came to Greeley in the middle of COVID from Farmington NM seeking better medical treatment for his cancer. Holly reflected on her first visit to FCC saying she felt "he brought me here." She has found a home in our community because she and her daughter Kooper immediately felt embraced and that it is a place where our faith leads us to love and be loved. Holly is mother to her son Kadence who is 18 and a student with GAP graduating soon. Kadence has played piano since second grade, plays violin and loves to play video games. She is also the mother of Kooper who is 4 and loves high heels, princess dresses, and "tap tap" nails. They have a cat named Pete and a goldendoodle named Ranger. Holly is a therapist with a practice officing in the church called Better than Good Counseling. She also enjoys hosting the Mental Health Spa radio show each Wednesday from 7:00 - 9:00 am on 104.7 Pirate Radio in Greeley, and looks forward to an additional show out of a Fort Collins station coming soon.



### Meet Eli Schamane, our Principal Choral Chair!

There has never been a time when Eli has not been involved in music in some capacity. She began her career in worship and music at the age of 13 as a singer and a pianist and her musical experience ranges from bluegrass to musical theatre. She's most comfortable singing in a classical capacity, but let's be honest, who doesn't love a little Disney thrown in once in a while? She is an active pianist, and you will find her offerings to be improvisational and in no way representative of the music she's pretending to read while playing. While you will never catch her reciting the Lord's Prayer, Eli does hold tightly to the belief and practice of spiritual manifestation and loving energy with a heavy dash of ritual. She finds she is most able to express her adoration of those she loves through her artistic expression and enjoys dabbling in a wide medium of creation. When not at FCC, Eli and her partner Nicholas enjoy spending time in the mountains, at the theatre, playing games with friends, and, yes, at the piano writing music. Eli loves food, is addicted to coffee, and can be bribed with a good sour beer.

### Holy Week Worship

On Wednesday, March 27th from 5:15 - 7:00 pm we will have our Holy Week Service. As in years past, we will share a mediterranean style meal at table, as Jesus did with his disciples, followed by a ritual of handwashing for all ages. After the meal, there will be gym games for the children, while in the sanctuary we will offer a more traditional Tenebrae (extinguishing of the lights) service, which will also be available online. Members of our congregation have described this as "the most evocative service of the year" for the ways it moves through the highs and lows of the last week of Jesus' life, while also offering rich time for community connection.

Our Fellowship Team will provide the meal (\$3 per person/\$9 per family). However, this year, we invite you to bring a bottle or Sparkling Cider or Wine (of your choice) in the weeks leading up to the service, to help defray the cost of this community celebration. Donations can be made in our church office. **Holy Week and Easter Sunday Worship Times:** Palm Sunday - 8:00 am Chapel & 10:00 am Sanctuary, Holy Week Meal and Service - Wednesday, March 27th, 5:15 - 7:00 pm, Easter Sunday - Outside Sunrise service - 6:45 am, Services in the Sanctuary at 8:00 am and 10:00 am.