

MARCH 2026



Marvelous Mondays

Participation in “Marvelous Monday Mornings” continues to grow as folks gather at Coff33 (20 Wilcox St, Suite 111C) for their favorite morning beverage and conversation. Lot’s of laughter and love shared. It’s a great time to meet up and get to know each other better. Come join us!

Face to Face 2026:

A Journey of Faith & Fellowship

Join us for Face to Face, a unique spiritual retreat designed specifically for older adults (ages 60+) to rediscover Christ’s presence and navigate the seasons of aging with grace. This four-session program—held April 29, May 1, 4, and 6 at Central United Methodist Church—offers a supportive space for discipleship, meaningful discussion, and community. Lunch is provided daily as we explore our faith together from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Talk to Pastor Matt or John Tamborski for more info.

Spaghetti Bingo

Many thanks to all who came to the spaghetti-supper-bingo night on February 26th. \$1300 was raised toward the goal of \$4,300 needed to send 5 youth and 7 adults to Red Bird Missions in Beverly, Kentucky.

You can still contribute to the fundraising with a cash donation. See Courtney or Josh Hay or leave your donation in the collection plate with a “Mission Trip” tag.



Holy Week

Sunday March 29th

Palm Sunday & Easter Egg Hunt

Join us as we process in as a Church waving Palm Branches. This commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, where crowds famously greeted him by waving palm branches and spreading them along his path as a sign of honor.

Then following worship we will have an Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the HOME team.

Wednesday April 1st
Stations of the Cross
10 a.m.- 7 p.m.

This self-guided devotional experience is an opportunity to connect with the Jesus last moments in our beautiful sanctuary.

Thursday April 2nd
A Holy Potluck
6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

A Maundy Thursday Dinner Church opportunity.

BBQ Meat will be provided.

What to bring to share?

Last Names:

A-M: Desserts

N-Z: Side Dishes

Friday April 3rd
Good Friday Service
6 p.m. In The Sanctuary

This service centers around the final day of Jesus life with readings, music and other reflective elements.



Saturday April 4th **Extreme Community Makeover**

Join us for the Extreme Community Makeover in the Barnum District, Denver, to revitalize the area through landscaping, painting, and yard work. This event focuses on building relationships between volunteers and community members.

- Cost: \$10 per person
- Transportation: Bus provided or drive yourself
- Sign Up: Register at the Welcome Desk

For questions, contact Ashley Franks on Sunday Mornings.

Easter Sunday

April 5th
3 Services

6 a.m. Sunrise Breakfast Service
9 a.m. Modern Music Service
11 a.m. Traditional Music Service

Prison Backpack Ministry

On Sunday, March 22nd, there will be an opportunity for our Church family to participate in our Prison Backpack Ministry program. This Ministry responds to Christ's concern for prisoners (Matthew 25: 36, 39, 43). At this time, our Church is the only organization that provides backpacks to indigent men and women being released from the Douglas County Detention Center.

Prison ministry goes back to the beginning of Methodism. Eight years before John Wesley's heart-warming experience of God's grace on Aldersgate Street, he had already begun practicing acts of mercy as an essential part of faith. One of his acts of mercy was to visit prison five days a week.



From the backpack blessing service last year

When Mike Vitek informed Ken Teague, Director of Religious Programs at the Douglas County Sheriff Detention Center, that our Church was going to do our Prison Ministry again this year, he replied, "That will be awesome." After consultation with Ken, we will provide 48 backpacks (36 for men and 12 for women). We purchase backpacks and then fill them with a wide variety of personal items, such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, socks, towel/washcloth, razor, socks, wallet, and other personal items. There is also devotional material in each backpack to help these men and women know that God loves and cares for them.

Please stop by the table in the narthex and choose a card listing an item or items to be purchased or give a cash donation for the purchase of the backpacks and/or the needed supplies and toiletries. The supplies for the backpacks need to be returned to the Church by Sunday, April 12th.



*Ken Teague & Mike Vitek
from last year's backpack blessing*



Leah Circle

At the February Leah Circle lunch Pastor Matt presented a program on the Wesleyan Quadrilateral. As the group learned how Scripture (primary authority), Tradition (historical context), Reason (rational interpretation), and Experience (personal transformative faith) evolved as the framework for Methodism. It is used by Methodists for theological reflection, decision-making, and understanding Christian doctrine, based on the sermons and writings of John Wesley.

Leah Circle will meet on Thursday, March 12, when a representative from the Senior Center will present a program on the events and opportunities available through their organization. Leah Circle meets the second Thursday of the month at 11:45, providing a social, inspirational, and educational opportunity for the women of the church. All are welcome.

Upcoming Events

March 19th
6:30 p.m. Admin. Council

April 1st
Stations of the Cross

April 2nd
A Holy Potluck 6 p.m.

April 3rd
Good Friday Service 6 p.m.

April 4th
Extreme Home Makeover

April 5th
Easter Services
6 a.m. Sunrise
9 a.m. Modern
11 a.m. Traditional

April 22nd
6:30 p.m. Trustees

May 31st-June 7th
Red Bird Mission Trip

October 8-17th
Wesley Tour of England

Find the Church Calendar at

www.fumccr.org/calendar





**C O M M U N I T Y
C O N N E C T I O N**

Lenten Opportunities to Grow in Faith by Julie Bailey

Over the years, we often thought Lent was a time to give up something, perhaps an indulgence in chocolate or ordering anything from Amazon. It was a time to reign in or eliminate something pleasurable. Giving up something was intended to honor Christ's 40 days in the wilderness where Satan tried to tempt him three times to give up his mission as the Messiah: (Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13)

In Rachel Billups' book — the basis of Pastor Matt's Lenten sermon series and the center of our Sunday morning LIFT group — the author observes that the resurrection was not witnessed in isolation; it unfolded before a crowd. How do the stories of secondary characters such as Mary of Bethany, the servant girl, Barrabas, Simon of Cyrene, the women at the cross, Joseph of Aramathia and Nicodemus teach us today? How will they help us step into the story of Easter?

By seeing the Easter story through their eyes, we may discover that the resurrection is not just a past event, but an invitation into something new, unexpected, and unlikely. Since the cross is not the end of the story, we can embrace every unlikely moment along the way. We can do things that are reflective and personal such as prayer journaling or devoting time to meditating on bountiful blessings and regretted shortcomings. We could join others in one of four groups doing a Lenten Study — Sunday LIFT, Monday or Friday contemporary issues group or Tuesday morning more traditional Bible Study. It doesn't matter if you missed a session or two. You are always welcome. Beyond our own church, we can reach out to individuals or groups in need — spiritually, physically, emotionally. The words spoken to Peter echo across the centuries : "Feed my sheep."

Beyond the reflective and personal, Billups reminds us that pouring out our love toward others with kindness or in service is an important way to observe Lent, We are ordinary people capable of doing extraordinary things. The outpouring of God's love is manifested in us as we offer time listening to others, through courageous decisions and compassionate listening, and letting go of anything holding us back from being more loving to others.

"So, in Christ we, though many, form one body,
and each member belongs to all the others."

Romans 12:5

A Note from Rev. Sarah Steidtmann

Matthew 6:28-30

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?”

Beloved Soul and Spirit, as the earth tilts forward, facing the sun and the winds soften with promise of new life, may my spirit awaken anew to the quiet welcome of Spring. May joy find its way through the budding trees and flowers, courage in the fading of frost, and hope as it blossoms in the light. Help me to step into this sacred season, blessed with a renewed clarity, gentle strength, and a heart open wide to grace.

It reminds me that Spring is not just a shift in temperature but becomes a metaphor written into the very fabric of Creation. Spring arrives with a subtle, ‘it’s time to come alive!’ as Winter’s curtain closes, having done its quiet work of rest and stillness.

Where Winter was a time to stay inside and read, enjoy the warmth of a fire, Spring invites us to enjoy Creation by paying attention to the fading and budding. It mimics my spiritual practice of reawakening, reminding me to be ready for what is to blossom.

As spring doors open, may our eyes be open to the flowers blooming. May we seek time in the beauty of nature and feel the presence of God.

Our Stephen Ministers: Whether you are navigating a difficult life transition or simply need a compassionate, listening ear, our Stephen Ministers are here to provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care to walk alongside you. We invite you to reach out to the church office to request a Stephen Minister or to learn how you can be trained to share this gift of presence with others in our community.

Prayer Request: If you have a prayer request you can fill out a green card and give it to one of our Pastors or fill out the form online through our connection point on the website.

Join a Study Group

Sunday Morning 10:20 a.m. Community Faith Time
Monday In Person 6:30 p.m. Contemporary Studies Group
Tuesday Morning 9:30 a.m. Tuesday Morning Bible Study
Friday on Zoom 6:30 p.m. Contemporary Studies Group

STEPHEN MINISTRY TURNS 50

The Stephen Ministry program is celebrating 50 years of offering distinctively Christian care to millions of individuals in America, and across the world. This is an extraordinary accomplishment, one that the community of trained care givers has been invited to share in by attending seminars being held in various venues around the country. One such gathering was held in Phoenix, Arizona on February 21st, and a contingent of four Stephen Ministers from Castle Rock First United Methodist Church made the trek.

Our church was represented by Cheryl Smith and Maryalice McHugh—both Stephen Leaders—as well as Lisa Andrews and Jonathon Cole-Morrison. This gathering offered us wonderful opportunities to meet other Stephen Ministers who are serving congregations around the country, and to listen to the insights and experiences of the leadership team that has helped guide Stephen Ministry into the successful organization that it is today.

While it was certainly exciting to hear about the roots of the Stephen Ministry program, and to celebrate the many fruits it has borne thus far, we were also treated to a glimpse into the future. We witnessed the ceremonial future. ceremonial passing of the baton of leadership from the founder of Stephen Ministry, Dr Kenneth Haugk, to his successor and new Executive Director, Dr Justin Schleuter. This evolution of leadership is creating exciting opportunities for how Stephen Ministry builds upon its many successes in providing distinctively Christian care, as well as the exploration of pathways for providing education and support meant to address the growing mental health crisis seen around the world.

A new initiative being dubbed Mental Health Empowerment will focus upon equipping individuals with the skills (e.g., coping, and interpersonal) necessary to strengthen their emotional resilience. Consequently, the long-term goal is to reduce the negative psychological impacts associated with the stressors we all face at one time or another in our daily lives. The program is preventive in nature and communal in its implementation, as opposed to traditional Stephen Ministry care--provided for an existing challenge--within a confidential, one-to-one relationship.

As the seminar neared its end, we were asked to join in conversation with those seated near us—to discuss how we could envision our role in, “Building a More Caring World Together.” As we visited with the other Stephen Ministers and then listened to the ideas as they were shared with our hosts, it became apparent that the commitment to serving others remains undaunted. Even in the face of some exceedingly difficult challenges, such as declining church membership, aging congregations and scarce financial resources, the Stephen Ministry program is preparing to extend its legacy of providing God-centered care well into the future. And your team of care givers at CRFUMC are always here for you!



Pictures from the STEPHEN MINISTRY

The Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) is thrilled to announce that Jessica Glime has officially joined our staff as our new Choir Director. After an extensive search and prayerful consideration, it became clear that Jessica's unique blend of musical expertise, infectious energy, and heart for worship makes her the perfect fit for our congregation. Jessica comes to us with a rich background in choral conducting and vocal performance. She will be joining us next Sunday. Please begin to pray for her as she comes on board. And we when you see her around welcome her and her family with lots of love.

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Scan the QR Code to Check into Worship,
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Reflection from Pastor Matt Franks

This month, amid the busyness of life and ministry, I find myself leaning into the powerful song “I Need You to Survive” by Hezekiah Walker.

“I need you, you need me. We’re all a part of God’s body.”

To be the Church isn’t just about showing up—it’s about recognizing that our spiritual health and our ability to shine are deeply connected to how we support one another. These words remind us that we are all part of God’s body, and we are at our best when we love, care for, and show up for one another. Each of us has something to offer, and each of us needs the presence of others.

I invite you to fully immerse yourself in the life of the Body this season. Join us for worship as often as you are able. Walk with us through Holy Week as we gather to remember Christ’s final days. On Saturday, April 4th, during Holy Week, we will put our faith into action through a special Mission Project—offering a hands-on way to serve the Barnum District in Denver. Then there is the joy of Easter.

We are also inviting more hearts to step forward in support of our Prison Backpack Ministry, or to join John Tamborski through Kairos Ministry. If you are seeking deeper connection, consider becoming part of the Face to Face gatherings, where we live out another line of the song: “I pray for you, you pray for me.” When you show up for worship, service, and fellowship, you remind your siblings in Christ that they matter—and that truly, we need one another to survive.

There is another line from the song that speaks powerfully to our world today:

“I won’t harm you with words from my mouth. I love you, I need you to survive.”

This is a call to be mindful of the power we carry in our speech. To truly be the Body of Christ, we must commit to using our words not to tear down, but to lift up—offering grace, affirmation, and hope to one another. When you join a mission project, sit beside someone in the pews, or share a meal in fellowship, you are doing more than simply attending; you are strengthening the very fabric of this community. By choosing words that heal rather than harm, you offer the exact encouragement that someone else may be desperately leaning on. This Easter, may we show the world that God’s light shines brightest when we stand together—loving, speaking life into one another, and surviving as one Body in Christ.

Peace and Love Lead Your Way,
Pastor Matt
