

THE KIRK of Bonnie Brae

August 2025

From Your Pastor

Dear Kirk,

We are in a time of transition as we figure out what Children's Ministry looks like without Jackie Augustyn on staff. Along with sadness and deep gratitude, it has also prompted me to reflect on what we truly want for our children. I have been asking: *What are the building blocks of a life of faith? What is the posture we hope to teach children as they follow the way of Jesus?* And as I have been asking these and other questions, I have come to realize that age doesn't really matter. Children need the depth and wonder we engage in as adults, just as grown-ups need the stories and connections we usually reserve for kids.

While Jackie had all of this figured out, I am a little slower, but she created a foundation that is solid enough to guide us in continuing to see that children's ministry is just ministry. There is no separation, and we will all be better because of it.

So, for the next two months as the kids go back to school, the rest of us will as well. We are going to think of those values we teach our children and consider what they can teach us anew at a different point in our lives. As we move through this season, if you think of other important lessons you were taught as a child or have taught your child, please share them with me, with us. May we all grow as we go "back to school" and remember that, no matter how mature we think ourselves to be, we are ultimately all "Children of God."

Blessings,

Selena



Worship with Absolute Word Church

After our third annual combined service with Absolute Word in January, both churches requested another joint service. We are celebrating together with a combined worship on Sunday, **August 24**, at the special time of 10:30 a.m. with a potluck meal to follow!

Worship in August

August 3: “Faith Like a Child,” and Baptism of Penelope Feiten, Mark 10:13-16. Jesus welcomed the children and set them as our example. As we celebrate the baptism of Penelope, we will begin our sermon series by listening to the wisdom of children, the ways their words guide us deeper into faith, questions and joy.



August 10: “You Get What You Get, and You Don’t Throw a Fit!” Thessalonians 5:12-24
We say these words to children, but as we move into adulthood, it is hard to reconcile the circumstances we might not have chosen. What is it that we are trying to teach our kids, about acceptance and gratitude that we need to relearn?”

August 17: “Make New Friends but Keep the Old...” John 15:12-15
We teach children the importance of friendship, but too often as we get older and our schedules fill up, we neglect our own need for friends.

August 24: 10:30 a.m. Worship with Absolute Word, “Be Kind,” Isaiah 58:5-12, Matthew 25:31-40
At this special service, each church will share the ways God has called us to “be kind” and to love our neighbors in the world!

August 31: “Don’t Be Afraid of the Dark,” Psalm 23
Adults are quick to tell children that when it is dark there is nothing to be afraid of, but when the metaphorical shadows fall around us and we can’t see our way out, we too are overcome with fear. What might change if we reminded ourselves of this wisdom?

♥ Tentatively Scheduled Loving Servants

DATE	HOSTS <small>For changes, contact Ellen Campos</small>	COFFEE <small>For changes, contact Lisa Kipp</small>	LAY READER <small>For changes, contact the office</small>
August 3	Lisa Kipp & Ellen Campos	Lisa Kipp	Riss Kostelnick
August 10	Joe & Diane Berry	Elliana Wright	Donna Furman
August 17	Greg & Beth Sherry	Beth Sherry	Tim Ward
August 24	Lee Trujillo-Lopez & Ellen Campos	Beth Sherry	Ellen Campos
August 31	Don Zimmerman & Patty Hummert	Lisa Kipp	Beth Sherry

Children’s Ministry Update

We are so grateful for the volunteers who are working with our children each Sunday! In September, we will return to the ‘storyroom’ model during worship.

August Children’s Ministry Volunteers:

- **August 3:** Lisa Kipp
- **August 10:** Ellen Campos
- **August 17:** Jan Sumner
- **August 24:** Laura Tobey-Davis
- **August 31:** Jan Sumner



Stockholders' Dinner, August 10, 5 p.m. Kirk's Lower Level, RSVP Required

Thank you, Kirk, for your generous support of our youth participating in our Be the Neighbor Service-Learning Trip in June! We are thrilled to share with you the amazing and powerful "return" on your investment in the lives of these young people!

Our Stockholders' Dinner will be held on Sunday, **August 10**, at 5 p.m. at the Kirk. Please RSVP [HERE](#) or to the church office if you plan to attend. You will be fed with good food, good stories and opportunities for your own growth as we share not only how we served but what we learned. See you then!



Backpack Blessing

As our youth and children, teachers, counselors and paras return to the classroom, we will gather in worship and bless each one; bless their minds and their hearts, bless their curiosity and their classes. On Sunday, **August 17**, during worship we will bless each one and their backpacks! Please be sure to bring your backpack to worship that day!

The Last Food Truck Night!

We have one more Food Truck night left this summer. Please join us on Tuesday, **August 19**, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. to meet our neighbors, welcome them to the church and enjoy a lovely Denver evening. This is a great time not only to get to know our community but also to invite friends and family to get to know your church a little bit better! All are welcome!



Potluck & Game Night August 30, 6-8 p.m.

Join us on Saturday, **August 30**, for a fun night with your Kirk Community. Instead of making a dish to feed your household, make the same thing and bring it to share with others. We will share in a potluck and enjoy the night playing games! No RSVP necessary, please bring your favorite board game as well.

School Supply Drive for Hope & Home

We can help some deserving students succeed! Your generous donations will directly benefit local children in foster care.

Here are some specific items they are requesting: backpacks, crayons, pencils, notebooks, folders, binders, pencil cases, pens, highlighters, Post-it Notes, colored pencils, erasers, calculators, rulers, lunch boxes, and water bottles. To make it super easy, click [HERE](#) for their Amazon wish list!



Take a Sack, Bring it Back!

On the third Sunday of every month, the Kirk Mission Team puts out grocery bags with a list of Metro Caring needs. We ask that you bring these back the last week of the month when people especially need food. In the last quarter of 2024, we donated 268 pounds of food (just shy of 100 pounds a month!). We are aiming to erase the “just shy” part and donate 100 pounds every month this year. Will you help us keep up the good work and achieve at least 100 pounds of food per month? We can do it the Kirk way—together!

Coffee and Community

Each Sunday, a volunteer comes early and makes coffee (following a set of instructions found in the basement kitchen) and brings a treat for after church, and then cleans up. Thank you so much to all who volunteer to create this space for us to visit and build community! You can sign up for both roles or just one (set up or clean up) [HERE](#).



Would You Like to be a Lay Reader?

If you enjoy scripture and storytelling, we invite you to become a Sunday Lay Reader. Don't let any fear of public speaking hold you back; the welcoming smiles from the congregation at the Kirk make it an incredibly rewarding experience! You will receive the scripture in advance (as well as a guide for preparing a Stewardship Moment) giving you plenty of time to practice. To sign up, please add your name to the sheet in the Narthex or contact the office to secure your spot.



DIG Deeper

Faith Formation Hour



Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. adults will gather in the Lower Level as we DIG into a new book: **Christ and Culture** by Richard Niebuhr, considered one of the most significant books on Christianity of the 20th century (and he was a member of the UCC!). Here is our schedule for the selections we will focus on each week:

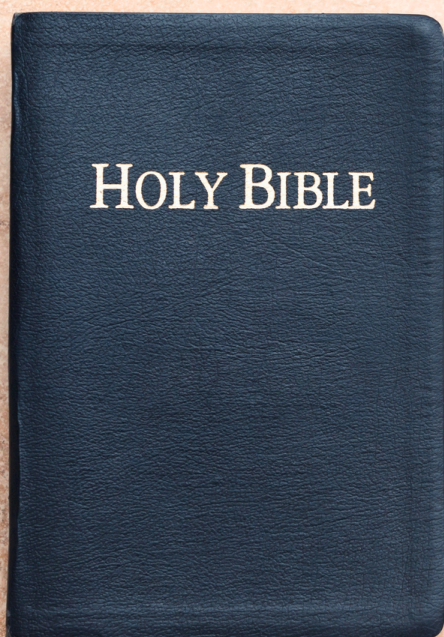
- **August 3:** Chapter 3 - The Christ of Culture
- **August 10:** Chapter 4 - Christ Above Culture
- **August 17:** Chapter 5 - Christ and Culture in Paradox
- **August 24:** *Combined Worship - No Gathering*
- **August 31:** Chapter 6 - Christ the Transformer

Connect Online!



- Click [HERE](#) for Worship livestreams.
- Click [HERE](#) for DIG, Conversations with Scripture and other ZOOM meetings.

Did you know you can connect to the Kirk anytime through our social media presence? Follow the Kirk on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube and share what inspires you with your friends and followers!



Conversations with Scripture

The Kirk's Bible Study group that meets on Tuesdays, will be taking our summer break in August.

We will reconvene on September 16.

If you love scripture, or have been curious about what a bible study is like, we invite you to join us!

All are welcome!

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

<input type="checkbox"/>	EXCELLENT
<input type="checkbox"/>	VERY GOOD
<input type="checkbox"/>	GOOD
<input type="checkbox"/>	FAIR
<input type="checkbox"/>	POOR

Input About Selena & Our Staff Requested

Donna Furman, Emily Snow, and Lisa Kipp will be working on Selena's annual performance review in the coming weeks. They will be reaching out to a sample population of the Kirk and would appreciate your candid opinions. Anyone else who would like to share information about Selena's ministry is welcome to reach out directly to Donna, Emily or Lisa.

For feedback on the ministry and work of Greg Cooke and Tim Ward, please contact Council Member Erica Thompson or Selena. All input is due by August 10.

Gratitude for Generous Donations to the El Salvador Emergency Fund

On behalf of our neighbors in the village of El Bebedero, we thank Kirk members for their generous contributions to the Emergency Fund. We were able to provide a total of \$1,250 to village leaders to address urgent needs that arise in the community. In the past, we have been aware of people who need medical treatment or supplies but cannot afford them. We have also seen those who struggle with food insecurity. Your donations to the Emergency Fund will provide a safety net for the community for many months to come. We look forward to sharing our experiences with all of you when we return! ~ Beth Sherry and Ann Karlberg



Be The Neighbor Update

In July, the Kirk hosted a total of 51 youth and adult sponsors as they learned about Eco-Justice from the work the Kirk has done over the years. Their weeks included learning about environmental racism, regenerative farming, waterways, and much more. The Kirk Green Justice Team led a climate simulation each week, leading the groups in addressing the complexities of climate change from a global perspective.

Thank you to Donna F. and Greg S. for help with the building. Thank you to Erika W. and the Furmans for opening your home for showers. Thank you, Ann and Riss for leading the Climate Simulation. It took many to make this work, but the impact of our ministries now extends to Virginia, Texas, Iowa and beyond.



Church Camp Thank You's

In July, twelve Kirk kids attended Church Camp at La Foret! Thank you, Kirk, for all the ways you supported them in making this possible including your contributions to our many fundraisers. This is what they said about their week:

What was your favorite part?

"The ropes course, specifically the zip line" - Lyle

"Campfire with friends." - Willow

"I loved being able to go to the music concert when we got to mix with MADD camp and be in the historic Ponderosa Lodge, watching the stage where thousands of performances have occurred over the years." - Tate

"I loved seeing friends and the social aspect" - Eddie

"My favorite part of camp was getting to show off the art we all worked on throughout the week." - Calvin

"All camp worship." - Gwen

"The ropes course!" - Cosi

"The purple bishop cup, the dance, hanging out with my friends, having good conversations." - Elli



What did you learn about God or yourself?

"I learned about inner peace and relation to spirituality." - Lyle

"Throughout the week, there are many ways that I experienced God. Walking through the labyrinth, doing yoga and especially worship at the end of the week. But one way that really stood out to me is when my cabin would pray together. Me and my roommates prayed together every night switching off who would pray. After deep conversations one of our counselors would pray. Through all of this I felt so connected to my cabin and I will forever cherish those moments." - Ila

"God is always there, even if you can't feel it, and God has a plan for everyone." - Willow

"I learned that everything and everyone has a deeper story than we all realize." - Eddie

"I learned that it is ok to ask for help." - Gwen

"I experienced God during the campfire, when the Voyager campers and counselors sang a melodic song - I felt connected with all the singing voices and the crackling fire." - Tate

"I learned that, at camp, we feel God's presence all around us. We feel more connected to God and each other and we disconnect from the real world. In reality though, La Foret is the real world. We just have to bring our love and joy outside of our magnificent place so that others can experience what we feel at camp." - Elli



Grandparents' Day Potluck

Sunday, September 7, is Grandparents Day! We will have a special potluck to honor the many grandparents in our midst and those "grandparents-of-choice" who make our community warm and supportive across generations. This is a great Sunday to bring grandkids to church and celebrate these special humans! Plan to stay after worship and bring a dish to share. *(Note that you don't have to be a grandparent to attend; all are invited to come!)*



Animal Blessing & Outdoor Worship Saturday, September 20, 10 a.m.



We invite all two and four-legged creatures to join us on Saturday, September 21, for a Blessing of the Animals! All dogs, cats, birds, fish, hamsters, and any other animal that is safe around other animals and a group of people are welcome. Unlike recent years, this will be a simple service of song and prayer. If you have friends who are animal lovers, this is a great opportunity to invite them (and their pets) to the Kirk! There will also be a table of remembrance if you would like to bring a picture of a pet that you have lost. We will speak their names, offer gratitude for their lives, and ask for comfort in our grief.

WOMEN'S RETREAT 2025 October 3 - October 5, La Foret

This year our out-going Vice Moderator, Cam Camilli chose a star word for our church: Known. It was an invitation for us to allow ourselves to be known, to know each other and to know God. This will guide us into our 2025 Women's Retreat. All who identify as women are invited to La Foret Conference and Retreat Center. The cost is \$125 per person for lodging, and we will work out meals together. Everyone will likely spend an additional \$15 on food, in addition to the registration fee. You can register [HERE!](#)



Moderator's Report, by Donna Furman

Our July Council meeting focused primarily on the development of our new Children's Ministry following Jackie Augustyn's retirement. We're transitioning to a volunteer-led program. Selena updated the Council on the status of the ministry and presented a job description for a coordinator who will assist our team with scheduling, program development and administration. It's a temporary, part-time position that will run from September through the end of the year. (If you'd like to know more about this position or you know someone who might be interested, please contact Selena.)



In other developments, Ellen updated us on YTD financials – good news there, since income is running somewhat ahead of projections and expenses are a little lower. One exception is building repairs and maintenance. We've experienced several large unanticipated repairs (plumbing and irrigation), which will require drawing down our reserve fund.

Speaking of the building, I would like to provide a brief update on the capital campaign projects. As of this writing, the installation of the new security alarm system is almost complete. Watch for announcements about changes to the way we access the building after hours.

And in big news, the sanctuary AC installation is scheduled to begin August 18! Hooray! Stay cool, Kirk. It's been a hot, hot summer, but relief is on the way.

Yours in Service,

Donna Furman / Council Moderator

KIRK of
BONNIE BRAE

2025 **GENERAL**
SYNOD

As published in the July newsletter, the 35th UCC General Synod took place in July with participation by Kirk members Ellie Smith, who participated as a youth representative for the Rocky Mountain Conference, and Mark Dutell, who attended as a member of the National UCC Board of Directors.

Both Ellie and Mark were active participants in the five-day meeting, which included votes from delegates on resolutions that helped define the UCC's position and principles on current events. Those resolutions include statements on immigration, mental health, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and support for small-town and rural churches. The 675 Delegates also voted on business issues, including filling open leadership positions at the national level and voting on proposed organizational changes. The Synod also featured multiple speakers who presented and commented on the mission and vision of the UCC, as well as three inspirational worship services. Details on all things Synod, including the resolutions passed, as well as inspiring worship and speakers, can be found by clicking [HERE](#).

Free Ways to Give

Remember for every King Soopers reward purchase you make, if you have selected the Kirk as your option, a portion comes to the church. Setting this up is easy!



Step 1 Log in to your online King Soopers account

Step 2 Search “Community Rewards”

Step 3 If you are not currently enrolled, search for Kirk of Bonnie Brae, and when you see it click enroll. Then log in to your account as much as you want to see how much of your grocery bill is coming to the Kirk. For more detailed King Soopers instructions, click [HERE](#).



- **August 17:** Backpack Blessing
- **August 24:** Combined Summer Service and Meal with Absolute Word Church
- **Saturday, September 20, 10 a.m.** Animal Blessing
- **October 3-5:** Women’s Retreat at La Foret

Kirk Birthdays

3rd Susan Howard	13th Sal Smith
4th Vicki Wright	17th Emma Feiten
6th Maximilian Lopez	18th Laura Tobey-Davis
9th Donna Luther-Adrian	18th Vaun Thompson
10th Judy Hickman	27th Donna Furman
12th Erica Thompson	



If we have missed your birthday, please let us know by emailing kobb@kirkofbonniebrae.org.