



Happy New Year

## THE KIRK of Bonnie Brae      January 2026

### From Your Pastor

Happy New Year, Kirk!

I have a challenge for us as we enter 2026.

It began in early December when I took part in an interview process for youth leaders from across the Rocky Mountain Conference. A colleague from First Congregational Church in Greeley and I met with 8 youth and asked them questions about the church's role in their lives, in the world and "What do you think the church could be doing better?" Let me note that these were all youth who are actively involved in a UCC church, so much so that they signed up to serve as youth leaders and spearhead a project in their own congregation over the next few months. (Three of those youth are from the Kirk, so you will be hearing about their project in the months to come.)

What struck me in these interviews was that over half of these teens responded to the question, "What can the church be doing better?" by saying, "The church needs to be louder." They went on to say in their own ways that most of their friends don't know that churches like ours exist. They are surprised to hear that there are LGBTQ-affirming churches, churches that are working to love our neighbors and grow in faith at the same time. These teens were proud of their churches and wished we weren't so afraid to let people know who we are and what we believe. I wanted to pass that along to you. Our youth are asking us to be "louder" about our faith, about our church, and about our call to love kindness, seek justice and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). So while we have our individual star words, maybe this is our collective word to guide us this year. May this be the year we are louder!

**LET IT BE SO!**



Selena

### De-Deck the Halls and Pancake Brunch

How beautiful our sacred space has been throughout the holiday season! On **January 4**, after worship, we will de-deck the halls, take down all of our Christmas decorations and store them for next year.

While we are doing that, a group of Kirk men will be preparing pancakes for us to enjoy! Mark your calendars and plan to stay to help and to enjoy a fun meal together!



# Worship in January

**January 4:** Epiphany Sunday – along with the Wise Ones we will set out following a star. All who received a star word last year are invited to bring them back to worship with your name or initials on the back. We will reflect on the year that has passed and listen to how God is calling us forward with a new-to-us star word in 2026.



**January 11:** Worship with Absolute Word at 10:30 a.m. It has become our tradition to worship with our building neighbors, Absolute Word Church, around Dr. King Weekend. This year we are worshipping together a week early, but we will, as we have in the past, combine our worship, preaching and prayers as we celebrate the way God calls us together.

**January 18:** John 1:29-42, Our Pastoral Resident, Riss Kostlenick will be sharing in leadership this Sunday with Rev. Selena, offering us a word on this lectionary text.

**January 25:** 1 Corinthians 1:10-18, Divisions and Hope. What if the history of the church was not that much different than a lifespan, with distinct phases and foci for each season? What season might we be in now?

## Heart Tentatively Scheduled Loving Servants

DATE	HOSTS For changes, contact Ellen Campos	COFFEE For changes, contact Lisa Kipp	LAY READER For changes, contact the office
January 4	Bill & Eve Harrigan	Bill & Eve Harrigan	Rev. Lee Zortman
January 11	Jeannie Mitchell & Sharon Snyder	Patty Hummert	(not needed)
January 18	Lee Trujillo-Lopez & Ashley Lopez	Erica Thompson	Donna Furman
January 25	Greg & Beth Sherry	Elli Wright	Riss Kostelnick

## Children's Ministry Update

This fall, we were so blessed by the time and attention our Storyroom Volunteers gave! Please continue to be in prayer for our volunteers and children as we continue to step into our new Volunteer Model for the StoryRoom. Here is our Volunteer Schedule this month:



**January 4:** Led by Jackie Augustyn

**January 11:** Worship with Absolute Word Church (no Storyroom)

**January 18:** Wyndol Furman

**January 25:** Wyndol Furman, The Ark and the Tent of God

# Worship With Absolute Word Church!

Due to scheduling, we have moved our combined worship with Absolute Word to **January 11** this year (instead of on Dr. King weekend). On Sunday, January 11, we will worship at **10:30 a.m.** with our siblings in faith from Absolute Word Church. We will share music and preaching and give thanks for our partnership and all God has in store for us as we continue to live into being two churches at one location. Immediately following worship, we will share a potluck lunch together!



## Confirmation

We have seven confirmands currently on the journey of confirmation. In January, they will meet with our Youth Group on Sunday, **January 11**, at 6:00 p.m. to learn about the life and work of the church!

## Youth Group!

All teenagers (and friends) in grades 6-12 are invited to join us on Sunday nights from 6-7:30 p.m. We share a meal together, play games, check in about our weeks and engage in discussion on issues of life and faith! We use the GroupMe app to communicate. You can join that group [HERE](#).



- **January 4:** Stepping Toward a New Year (Candlelit Labyrinth Walk)
- **January 11:** Liturgy: The Work of the Church (confirmation)
- **January 18:** No Youth Group
- **January 25:** Where does it hurt? (Identifying pain and injustice in our communities)

## Youth Group Meals



We are looking for volunteers to provide dinner for our weekly youth group! We usually feed 20 people and need an option for three vegetarians, two who don't eat red meat, and one who is dairy-free. (All meals don't need to meet these dietary requirements; we just need an option for these.) The kids so appreciate the food, and it will give you a chance to get to know our youth and see what happens on Sunday nights. We ask those providing the meal to stay, eat with us, and after the kids bus their own tables, to help clean up so the kids can engage in their meeting. We eat promptly at 6:00 p.m. and cleanup is at 6:30 p.m. To volunteer, please sign up [HERE](#)!

# The Kirk's Annual Meeting



On **January 25**, 2026, after worship we will have our Annual Congregational Meeting. At this meeting, we will approve the 2026 budget, elect officers for the coming year to serve on the Kirk Council, and hear a word from our outgoing and incoming Moderators, as well as from our Pastor on the state of the church.

The meeting will be in the sanctuary immediately after worship, and everyone will be invited to stay and share a meal! Please mark your calendars. All members have a vote. Non-members are welcome to join us for the meeting and the meal!

Our Faithful Adulting Group will host a Soup Cook-off after the Annual Meeting on Sunday, **January 25**! They will bring soups, and the congregation gets to vote on the best one with dollars or cans of soup, all to be donated to Metro Caring. Plan to stay after church to enjoy this fun and important event together (even if we won't quite know who will be in the Super Bowl).

**Pro Tip:** Please bring a muffin tin for the easiest way to sample all the soups!



## Sign Up for Action Alerts



Through our partnerships with justice organizations such as Together Colorado, Interfaith Alliance and Colorado Faith Communities United Against Gun Violence, we have many opportunities to engage in the legislative process to advocate for a just world for all. During the legislative session, the Kirk emails Action Alerts from our Justice Partners—inviting you to send an email, make a phone call or testify on various bills. Those who signed up in previous years remain on the list, unless you ask to make a change.

To sign up for these lists (there is also a list for Green Justice actions, and a list to receive all action alerts), please see the sign-up sheet in the Narthex or contact the church office.

# DIG Deeper

Faith Formation Hour



Each Sunday at 9 a.m., we have an opportunity to dig deeper into our understanding of scripture and our relationships with one another. In the lower level, children ages 6-17 are invited to dig into the Bible with Rev. John Davidson. Adults will begin a study on the Gospel of John on Sunday, January 18, reading scripture alongside the book: "[The Gospel of John: A Beginner's Guide to the Way, the Truth, and the Life](#)" by Amy-Jill Levine. All are welcome in person or on [ZOOM](#) to be a part of the conversation!

- **January 18:** Introduction
- **January 25:** Chapter I, the Wedding at Cana (John 2)

## BIBLE STUDY **EVERY TUESDAY @ 1.00 PM**

IN THE KIRK'S OFFICE & ON ZOOM

### Conversations with Scripture

- Casual atmosphere
- Join in or just listen
- Share insights and questions!



## Connect Online



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

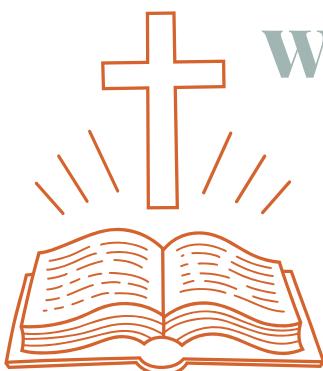
Did you know you can connect to the Kirk anytime through our social media presence? Follow the Kirk on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube and share what inspires you with your friends and followers!



The Kirk Staff would like to thank all of you for generous Love Offering given to us for Christmas. We all treasure this community and the multitude of ways you support us!

*Selena, Greg, Tim, Matthew,  
Christine, Ed and Riss*

THANK  
YOU  
♥



## Would You Like to Be a Lay Reader?

If you enjoy scripture 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 and a guide for preparing a brief Stewardship Moment. To sign up, please add your name to the sheet in the Narthex or contact the office to secure your spot.

## 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. We can do it the Kirk way—together!



## An Easy Free Way 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](#).

# Moderator's Report, by Donna Furman

In December's Council meeting, we rolled up our sleeves, put on our green eyeshades and reviewed the church's 2026 draft budget line-by-line. There's good news: pledges have held to roughly the same amount as last year, no small accomplishment given that we just had a capital campaign. The result is that we can face the coming year anticipating a balanced budget and a small surplus. Thank you Church!



In our Gratitude Moment, Rev. Selena recognized Josh Pele for his creativity and dedication in directing the Children's Christmas Play—and most of all, his patience. Thank you, Josh. Every year you produce something to delight and inspire us!

In this, my final report, I want to thank everyone who helped make these two years as Moderator so rewarding: Council, staff, committees, congregation, everyone! And, most of all, my husband, Wyndol, who may have volunteered a bit more often than he planned but was always surprisingly cheerful about it. I'm leaving this post with a heart full of gratitude – and a little awe – for everything that everyone contributes to make the Kirk such a remarkable community. Thank you!

Yours In Service,  
Donna Furman



## Reports for the Annual Meeting

Hello Committee Chairs! It's that time of year again to get ready for the Kirk's Annual Meeting. You will be receiving an email from the Kirk office with instructions about submitting your reports in time for us to compile and prepare the full Annual Report. Your timely response will be very much appreciated!



## Coffee & Community

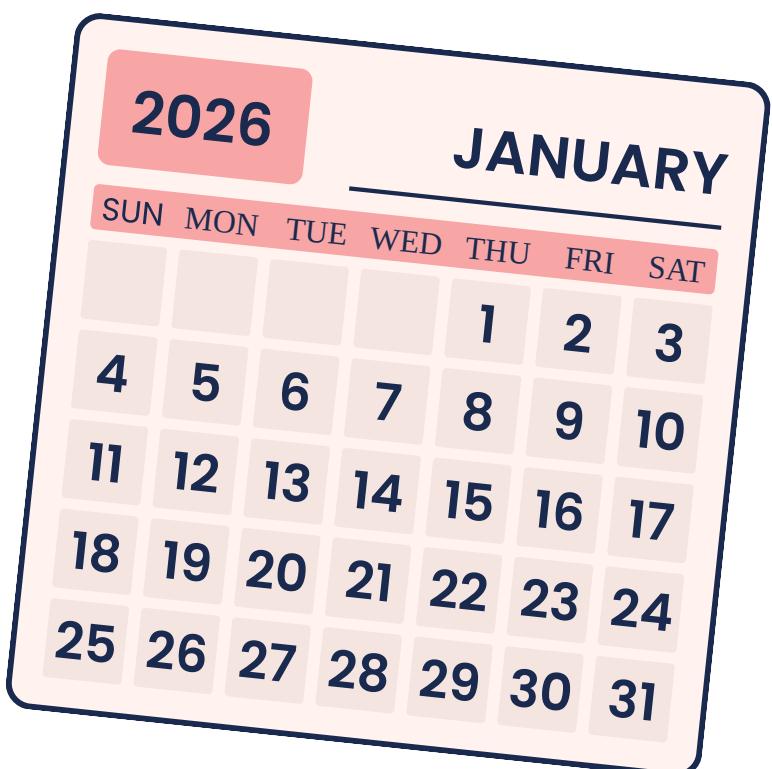
Each Sunday, a volunteer comes early and makes coffee (following a set of instructions found in the basement kitchen) and brings a treat for after church, and then cleans up. Thank you so much to all who volunteer to create this space for us to visit and build community! You can sign up [HERE](#).

# Save these Dates in... **2026**

- Pride Sunday: **June 28**
- All UCC Combined Worship: **July 26**
- Intergenerational Service-Learning Trip to El Salvador: **July 22<sup>nd</sup> through August 1<sup>st</sup>**
- Animal Blessing: 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, **September 19**
- Women's Retreat: **October 2<sup>nd</sup> through the 4<sup>th</sup>** at La Foret

## Kirk Birthdays

- 1st Tate Tobey-Davis
- 4th Jason Sheehan
- 7th Gwendolyn Plue
- 7th Josh Pele
- 9th Doug Adrian
- 10th Leah Kabira
- 12th Riss Kostelnick
- 13th Linda Diebel
- 18th Rebecca Heller
- 23rd Edward Trudel-Brady
- 24th Hadley Bowles
- 25th Wyndol Furman
- 29th Larry Augustyn
- 31st Carol Lyons



If we have missed your birthday, please let us know by emailing [kobb@kirkofbonniebrae.org](mailto:kobb@kirkofbonniebrae.org).