



From Your Pastor

Dear Kirk,

“Go outside. Don’t tell anyone and don’t bring your phone. Start walking and keep walking until you no longer know the road like the palm of your hand, because we walk the same roads day in and day out, to the bus and back home and we cease to see. We walk in our sleep and teach our muscles to work without thinking and I dare you to walk where you have not yet walked, and I dare you to notice. Don’t try to get anything out of it, because you won’t. Don’t try to make use of it, because you can’t. And that’s the point. Just walk, see, sit down if you like. And be. Just be, whatever you are with whatever you have, and realise that that is enough to be happy. There’s a whole world out there, right outside your window.

You’d be a fool to miss it.”

— **Charlotte Eriksson**

In the winter of 2024, I began writing a grant application answering the question, “What makes your heart sing?” and the answer that came to me was about walking. Something about movement included letting go, adventure, quality time with God, myself and my beloveds, taking time to notice the world around me to cultivate gratitude and joy. Although I did not receive the grant, the theme was scaled down, and I will still be able to do just as the above quote describes...to just walk, just be.

And this is my prayer for you all as well. You will have amazing preachers this summer! They will inspire you in varied ways with their creativity, compassion and commitment. I am so grateful to Riss, Scott, David, Lee, Donna, Chris, John and Corbin for sharing their wisdom with you all as we all embark on this 12-week journey of something different.

Know that I will be praying for you each day of the 12 weeks I am away. I am so grateful for this time with my family and my faith. Thank you! I hope each step we take guides us deeper into our relationships with God, Earth and Community, both while we are apart and once we return together on Sunday, September 6.

Take care of each other.

With Gratitude and Love,

Selena



Worship in June at the Kirk

June 7: Walking Toward Wisdom, and Farewell (for now) to Selena

During worship, we will launch our summer theme, which aligns with Selena’s sabbatical theme, Walking/Moving toward Wisdom. She will pray over us, and we will pray over her as we all embark on her 12-week sabbatical.

June 14: Romans 12:1-13

Riss Kostelnick will be offering our message for this first Sunday of Sabbatical. As we begin our series on walking, Riss will lead us in reflecting on their journey and celebrating the Pride March.



June 21: Luke 24:13-35, Journey Stories: Practices of Awe and Wonder



Rev. Scott Hardin-Nieri wears several hats in ministry, all of which will feel familiar, as Selena and Scott have been colleagues and friends for over 20 years. Scott serves as Co-Minister of Green Chalice and Director/Minister of Bethany Congregations, bringing nearly 20 years of congregational ministry experience. He co-founded Eco Grief Circles, leads climate-informed spiritual direction, workshops and retreats, and works to build community resilience through gratitude, grief, and action—insights deepened by Hurricane Helene’s impact on Western North Carolina.

Scott holds degrees from Texas A&M and San Francisco Theological Seminary, and seeks to foster curiosity, deep listening, and active hope while helping communities grow justice and resilience in a climate-changed world.

June 28: Pride March Sunday! No in-person worship at the Kirk. We will march in the parade with our UCC siblings. Details of where to meet and what time will be in the Thursday emails as the date approaches. You can also worship online from home and engage in a combined worship service with our UCC sister churches (Sixth Avenue, Park Hill, and Washington Park). The link for this service will be sent out in the June 25th email. *Read about the impact of Pride from Rev. David Zortman on page 6!*

♥ Tentatively Scheduled Loving Servants

DATE	HOSTS <small>For changes, contact Ellen Campos</small>	COFFEE <small>For changes, contact Erica Thompson</small>	LAY READER <small>For changes, contact the office</small>
June 7	Greg & Beth Sherry	Lisa Kipp	Beth Sherry
June 14	Jeannie Mitchell & Lisa Kipp	Patty Hummert	Leigh Plue
June 21	Ellen Campos & Robert Bowles	Beth Sherry	Donna Furman
June 28	Marching in PRIDE, No Worship Service at the Kirk		

Coffee & Community

Thanks to a generous gift, we have a new Coffee Maker! Each Sunday, a volunteer comes early to make coffee (following a set of instructions in the lower-level kitchen) and also 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. We are looking for sign-ups for the summer! You can sign up [HERE](#).



Supporting our Children's Ministry, Summer Volunteer Needed!

We are so blessed by the time and attention our StoryRoom Volunteers give! We are still seeking one volunteer to lead our Children's Church during worship (after the children's moment until the end of worship) on July 5. Curriculum will be provided to you for your day well in advance. Please sign up [HERE](#). And thank you to our summer volunteers!



- **June 7:** Lisa Kipp
- **June 14:** Laura Tobey-Davis
- **June 21:** Maureen Dutell and Sharon Snyder
- **June 28:** *Pride - No In Person Worship at the Kirk*



Sabbatical Send-Off

On Sunday, June 7, in worship we will prayerfully release Selena into her 12-week sabbatical as she and we begin our summer of Walking/Moving Toward Wisdom. To celebrate we will then move outside to the front lawn for a picnic lunch! We will move some tables out and ask those who are able to bring blankets as we gather together for a shared meal outside! Please plan to stay for this gathering that will bless Selena and the Kirk on the many journeys ahead!

Food Truck Nights, 2026!

We are continuing our tradition of hosting Food Trucks in our parking lot for the Cory Merrill Neighborhood again this summer! As a part of this, the Kirk sells Beer and Wine. If you are willing to help with this Kirk fundraiser, we are looking for people to purchase beer, wine, and ice (you will be reimbursed) and also volunteers to sell the beverages during the events. Please contact Sharon Snyder with interest or any questions. All Kirk folks are invited to attend Food Trucks, get to know Kirk neighbors, and don't be shy about letting them know what kind of church we are and just how welcome they would be! **Food Trucks will be 5:30-7:30 p.m., June 16, July 21 and August 18.**



Have You Considered... Foster Parenting?

Hope & Home is always looking for Foster Parents. If this is something God might be calling you to, feel free to check out their website [HERE](#) for more information.



Kidney Donation Info

Over 90,000 people in the U.S. are waiting for a kidney transplant — and some of them may be sitting in the pew next to you. Living kidney donation is one of the most profound acts of generosity one person can offer another, and you don't have to know someone to say yes.

The Kirk and Absolute Word Church are co-hosting a Kidney Convo on **Monday, June 30, from 6:30–8:00 p.m.** — a free, live event in our Sanctuary where you'll hear directly from donors, recipients, and the communities whose lives their decisions transformed. Come curious, and invite someone to come with you! Register free by clicking [HERE](#).



“Be the Kirk!” A Youth Service-Learning Experience!



This summer, Corbin and Laura Tobey-Davis will lead a local youth service-learning experience focused on our own community! Youth who have completed grades 6-12 are invited to arrive at the Kirk at 3 p.m. on Sunday, **July 26**, and stay through Tuesday, **July 28**, at 4 p.m., playing games, serving our community, sharing meals, and even sleeping! The cost is \$50, please register by clicking [HERE](#).

Kirk Creates Service-Learning Trips

This summer, the Kirk is partnering with First Plymouth UCC to host Be the Neighbor Service-Learning Trips focused on Eco-Justice:

- **June 21-26** from Kent UCC in Kent, Ohio.
- **June 28-July 3** from the Congregational Church of Manhasset in Munsey Park, NY

The groups will be staying at First Plymouth (they have showers!) but the Kirk's Green Justice Team will be serving the groups dinner on Monday nights and providing a Climate Simulation on Tuesday afternoons. The groups will be working with our Eco-Justice partners to help them engage in the theme from Ekar Farms, to Bluff Lake, CSU Spur and more.

Want to get involved? Reach out to Ann Karlberg to help with a beans-and-rice dinner on Monday, June 22 or 29, at First Plymouth. After dinner, you are welcome to stay, as local activist Lucy Molina will speak to the groups.

We are also looking for 1-2 homes to host the college-age interns **June 26-28**. The interns need their own room, laundry facilities, a couple home-cooked meals and time to rest between their weeks. If you can offer a guest room, please reach out to Selena before her Sabbatical begins on June 8.



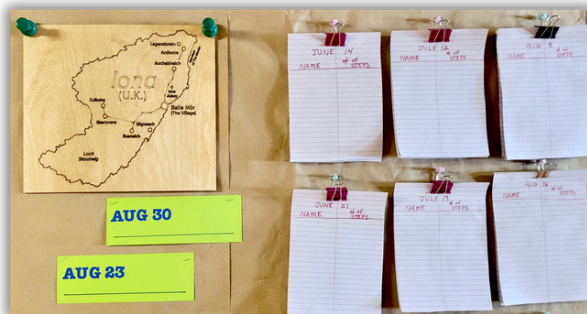
Walking Toward Wisdom

Counting Steps and Cultivating Relationship

The Kirk's Sabbatical Journey

As Selena embarks on her 12-week sabbatical, themed "Walking Toward Wisdom," the Kirk will likewise engage with this theme in worship and beyond. Throughout the summer we are encouraging folks to walk or move toward wisdom alone and together.

Each week, there will be a prayer station at the back of the sanctuary, inviting you to share how far you have journeyed in the past week. We will be collecting totals throughout the summer, as will Selena. If you are not in worship, you can send your distance to Lisa at newillkipp@gmail.com. Even better, we will walk together!



Sunday Group Walks at the Kirk:

Every Sunday morning from 9-9:30 a.m. a group of Kirk folks will meet out front and prepare for morning worship with a walk. Each walk will have a word to focus our reflections on whether we walk silently or chat with a friend new or old as we journey. Contact Donna Furman for more information.

Mid-Week Group Walks at Washington Park:

The Sabbatical Planning Team is hosting a monthly group walk at Washington Park. Each walk will have a word to guide the reflection and conversation. The hope is to help Kirk folks get to know one another and nature a bit more as we journey together.

We will meet out front of the Washington Park Rec. Center ([701 S Franklin St, Denver, 80209](https://www.denvergov.org/locations/washington-park-rec-center)).

This is a 2.2-mile walk that should take no more than an hour. Walks will be held:

- Wednesday, June 24 at 9:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, July 22 at 9:00 a.m.
- Friday, August 28 at 7:00 p.m.

We are also encouraging people to host their own walk or movement toward wisdom. In the back of the Sanctuary, you will find sign-up sheets where you can write a date, time, and location for a walk, or another way to move toward wisdom, such as hosting a discussion or a movie to watch together. We are all journeying toward wisdom in our own ways and hope that several Kirk folks will take turns being our guides!

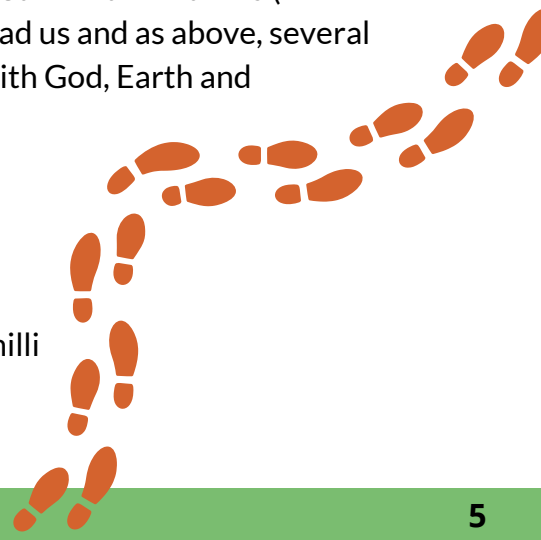
All the plans are set for Sabbatical with amazing preachers, dedicated Care Team Leaders (who will be calling and checking in with everyone soon), strong volunteers to lead us and as above, several ways to not only stay connected but to 'pursue depth in relationship with God, Earth and Community' during these 12 weeks.

As always, if you have any questions please reach out to any of us.

On the Journey,

Sabbatical Planning Team

Lisa Kipp, Donna Furman, Emily Snow, Sharon Snyder, Cam Short-Camilli



The Impact of Pride... by Rev. David Zortman

When I moved to Colorado last June, my husband Lee stayed behind in Pennsylvania to sell our properties and to coordinate our move. I was alone in a strange place, desperately seeking connection, and I decided that a good way to make connections was to find a church home.

I assumed it would be a monumental task, because in Pennsylvania, Lee and I drove 65 miles each way to the only open and affirming UCC church in our area. Our neighborhood was very conservative both politically and ideologically, and Lee and I never felt at home, nor did we feel completely safe.

On my first Sunday visiting the Kirk, Pastor Selena was away. Rev. John Davidson and many of the members of the congregation welcomed me warmly. At the end of the service, I asked John if I could go with the Kirk to the Pride parade, since it had been announced that a group would be going. He eagerly said yes and led me to the sign-up sheet.

I went to the church the next Sunday to meet a group of strangers to travel into the unfamiliar city of Denver to attend my first Pride event. I was nervous and anxious, and I had no idea what to expect. Selena's husband, Pat, our van driver was kind and outgoing. The other people in the van also warmly greeted me.

When we got to the site where the parade was to begin, I was amazed by the number of people representing other UCCs from across the Denver Metro area. I could never have imagined that there would be so many open and affirming churches supporting this event. I was also flabbergasted by the large number of people from the Kirk who were there. Shortly after arriving, I met Pastor Selena, and the only way I can describe that experience is that it warmed my heart. She was exactly as I imagined her to be: gentle, caring, and inviting. Every person I met from the Kirk treated me as if I had been a lifelong member of their church.



As the parade began, I felt a sizable lump in my throat. I had no idea what I was about to encounter. I envisioned protestors and people shouting words and phrases of hate. My fears melted quickly as I saw the streets lined with supporters holding signs bearing positive messages and shouting words of encouragement. I quickly found myself becoming overwhelmed with emotion, and the tears began to roll down both cheeks. I felt seen. I felt respected. I felt accepted as the authentic me. Luckily, while I was crying, Pastor Selena was walking beside me and offered some quiet words of support.

I am looking forward to marching in the parade this year with my husband, Lee, beside me, so that he can experience the outpouring of love that I felt. It will be even more special this year because the strangers who walked beside me last year are now my church family.

Thank You Kirk!

~ David Zortman



With Love, from Riss Kostelnick

THE END. Perhaps these are not the best words to start an article, but as you read this, my residency at the Kirk will be finished. There is not enough space in this newsletter to express all of my gratitude for my time here. Kirk, thank you, from the bottom of my heart...

Thank you for caring for me, for being faithful to your call, for moving and growing and rolling with the punches. Thank you for all the cursive cards and the kind words I was mostly able to read, and the ongoing learning as I work on reading them all fluently. I have watched you live into abundance with the Capital Campaign, I have watched you turn a sermon series into a Repair Cafe, and I have felt supported in preaching, organizing, and during every corny joke I tell. You have made this year of residency truly the most wonderful experience.

Unfortunately, even this wonderful experience had to come to an end. However, I want to be clear, my relationship and love for the Kirk will never end! According to the RMC (Rocky Mountain Conference), you are still my home church and the one preparing me for ordination.

As I continue to work towards ordination and maintain my relationship with you, I will be writing monthly MID (Member in Discernment) updates (open to suggestions for a fun title) for the newsletter. So perhaps, at least in this capacity, this is less of a “The End” and more like a “Welcome In” as I move into this next season of life and take you along for the journey. ~ Riss



Church Camps at La Foret! How You Are (and Can) Support Them!



Next month, our youth and children will be living our mission—pursuing depth in relationship with God, earth and community at our annual church camps at La Foret Conference and Retreat Center! The Kirk offers financial support through the Dena Cox and Elizabeth Root funds to help many of our campers attend these life-changing camps! Additionally, we ask that you please hold our young folks in prayer during their week and consider sending them a letter of encouragement as they make this time commitment to their faith!

You can send letters to:

Camper's Name

Name of Camp (see list)

**La Foret Conference &
Retreat Center**

6145 Shoup Rd.

Colorado Springs, CO 80908

Voyager Camp, Grades 6-8, July 12-18

Lyle Davidson, Katherine Salada, Tate Tobey-Davis,
Nathan Trudel-Brady

MADD (music/arts/dance/drama) Camp, Grades 9-12, July 12-18

Calvin Davidson, Samaj Ellis, Elena Salada, Ila Tobey-Davis,
Eddie Trudel-Brady, Gwen Wright

**Note - USPS can be slow, so consider mailing letters no later than Monday, July 13, or in advance of their camp week.*

UCC Combined Worship ~ July 26

As has been our tradition for many years, we will worship with our sister churches the on last Sunday of July. On July 26, the UCC churches of Metro Denver will gather at First Plymouth UCC at 10:00 a.m. for worship! Our preacher will be Rev. Darrell Goodwin, Executive Conference Minister and President of the Southern New England Conference of the UCC. Here is some information about our preacher:

“A passionate advocate for progressive Christianity, Rev. Goodwin challenges faith communities to become spaces of radical welcome, justice, and renewal. His ministry centers on helping people rediscover faith as a force for healing and transformation in today’s divided world. His status as the first openly LGBTQ black person to serve as an Executive Conference Minister in the United Church of Christ has made him a symbol of a version of Christianity where everyone is truly valued.



Known for his compelling preaching and authentic storytelling, Rev. Goodwin often speaks about hope—hope that empowers people to face uncertainty, bridge difference, and find joy in community. His warmth, wisdom, and humor make him a popular guest on podcasts, in news interviews, and across various social media platforms. He is able to connect with audiences on topics such as inclusive faith, leadership in changing times, and the spiritual practices that sustain courage and compassion.

Rev. Goodwin continues to inspire a growing movement of believers and seekers alike to see faith not as a set of limits, but as an ever-expanding invitation to love, justice, and possibility.”

There will be no worship at the Kirk on July 26. We look forward to you joining us that Sunday at First Plymouth UCC!

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 warm smiles from the congregation at the Kirk make it an incredibly rewarding experience! You will receive the scripture in advance, along with 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.



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!



Metro Caring Update

Did you notice the new poster in the Narthex highlighting the Mission committee's "Take a Sack, Bring it Back" campaign? Last year, we collected nearly 100 pounds of food per month for Metro Caring's Open Market, where eligible people can shop for nutritious, culturally appropriate food. The first four months of this year, we bagged 1,000 pounds of rice and lentils, donated dollars and canned goods from the Souperbowl of Caring, and took in 63 pounds of shelf-stable and canned food for Metro Caring. While the Kirk's outpouring of love and generosity is amazing, it's important to remember that grocery prices have gone up for everyone and food stamps have also been cut, making it more difficult for some of our neighbors to feed their families. There is a QR code on the poster so that you can donate any amount to the Kirk's monthly contribution to Metro Caring. Together, the Kirk can continue to support food security for our wider community. Thank you!



Fundraising for the Pool @ La Foret!



At the La Foret Conference and Retreat Center, the pool has been a central gathering spot for everyone, but it's been out of service for nearly a year. La Foret is renovating it and aims to reopen it in June 2026! The project costs \$100,000, and donations would be greatly appreciated to help restore this cherished space. You can mail a check directly to La Foret (6145 Shoup Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80908), or click [HERE](#) to donate online.

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 Lisa Kipp

Let Me Walk Us Through This...

It's hard to believe that summer is quickly approaching and with it, Selena's sabbatical. What's NOT hard to believe is that Selena has been working diligently (along with the Sabbatical Team) to map out our time without her. She has left us a fantastic trail guide!!

We will be walking toward wisdom and community, as will Selena, and we will look forward to sharing our discoveries when we all reunite in September. Leigh and Bret Plue have been working on a beautiful representation of all the steps we will take. I look forward to a summer of walking and hope to step out with many of you.



As we bid "happy trails" to Selena, we also send off our wonderful Riss. I have had the tremendous honor of being part of their journey with the Kirk. Riss is insightful, eager to learn and always so much fun!! Riss will be missed, but will be keeping in touch.

A Kirk summer would not be complete without our neighborhood Food Truck Nights (6/16, 7/21, and 8/18). Let's all take a moment to thank Joe and Diane Berry for their joyful service and commitment in selling beer and wine at food trucks. They have done a great job the last few summers!! They will not be able to do this summer, so we are looking for some volunteers for this fun job. We will provide instructions. Speaking of fun, we do have an open week for Children's Church this summer. All the materials will be provided. For either of these opportunities, you can let me know.

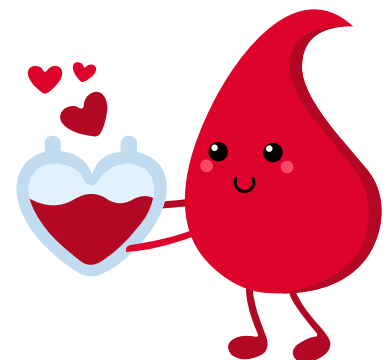
With joy and a sense of adventure, we step into summer!

Yours in Service,

Lisa Kipp

Vitalant Blood Drive

We are hosting our next blood drive on Wednesday, **July 1**, from 12-4 p.m. Vitalant will park their bus in the parking lot for donors. This is an amazing way to love your neighbors! To schedule an appointment, call 303.363.2300 or visit donors.vitalant.org and use site code B110.



- All UCC Combined Worship at First Plymouth UCC, July 26
- Animal Blessing: 10:00 a.m. Saturday, September 19
- Women's Retreat at La Foret: October 2-4

Kirk Birthdays

2026		JUNE					
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30					

4th Jackie Augustyn

7th Ellie Smith

9th Tom Hefty

10th Selena Wright

13th Ethan Smith

14th Bill Harrigan

20th Diane Berry

21st Mikki Bowles

21st Patty Hummert

22nd Elliot Cooke

26th Colin Hacker

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