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## Minister's Message

As we were cleaning up after the Ash Wednesday service last week, Nate, Robbie and I were discussing ideas about what we would give up for Lent this year. To an outside observer, this may have seemed to be a highly reverent conversation. But the three of us knew better. That's because, instead of earnestly trying to pave the way towards sainthood, we were simply spitballing things we could give up that we already didn't have any interest in. For example, "I'm giving up ice cream for Lent...every kind except my favorites, of course!"

This Lenten loophole of giving up things that one isn't fond of is discovered by most kids about the same time they realize they don't like Brussel sprouts that much. And, if they're really clever, they'll cite their spiritual devotion as the reason for not needing to finish all the food on their plate before getting dessert!

While the practice of fasting from something during Lent can certainly be quite meaningful, at times it's employed in a way that can seem inconsequential to people's spiritual growth. And that's because what's most important as we grow in our relationship with God is not the outward show that makes us appear highly religious to others. What matters most is the transformation that is quietly, sometimes even imperceptibly, occurring within us as we attend to intentional practices that deepen us spiritually.

If the practice of giving something up this Lenten season will help facilitate this type of growth for you, that's great. Alternatively, if adding something to your daily routine is more likely to be a source of spiritual deepening, then you may want to consider doing that. And, unless you feel like Brussel sprouts are impeding your spiritual growth, you probably can leave them on the menu for the next six weeks!

Rev. Ben

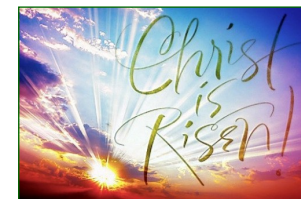
## Holy Week & Easter Schedule

**NO Wednesday Night Live  
 on April 8**

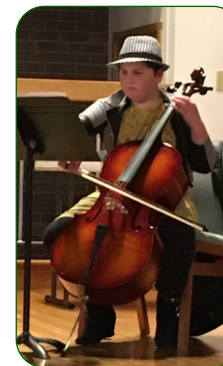
**Maundy Thursday, April 9:** On Maundy Thursday Christians remember the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples before his arrest. Our Maundy Thursday service will include communion, scripture reading, and musical contributions by the chancel choir. Worship will reflect the somber mood of the events that led toward Jesus' crucifixion. Join us for a potluck meal at 6:00 and worship at 7:00 as we prepare ourselves to receive the light on Easter Sunday by experiencing that darkness that preceded it.



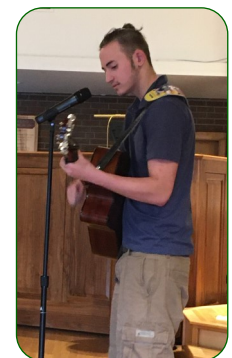
**Good Friday, April 10:** There will be an Easter Vigil on Good Friday, 7:00-9:00 p.m. in Chadwick Hall. All are welcome to drop in during this time that will include walking the labyrinth and interaction with prayer stations. There will also be art supplies and devotional materials available.



**Easter Morning, April 12**  
 Sunrise Worship at 6:30  
 (outdoors, weather permitting)  
 Sanctuary Worship at 8:00 and 10:00  
 Egg Hunt at 11:15, 16th Street Lawn



**Youth Variety Show**



**Volunteer  
 Day  
 at  
 Guadalupe  
 Shelter**



**Youth  
 Group  
 Outing**



**Making Valentines at "TO: Immigrants With Love"**





**Dinner @ 5:30**  
in Chadwick Hall  
Programs @ 6:30

### March Schedule

6:30 p.m.

#### For Kids:

- **Rainbow & Jubilation** choir rehearsal—lower level
- **Middle School Youth Group**—led by Robbie Carlson, Youth Room

#### For Adults:

- **Praying the News**—led by Rev. Nathan Miller, Slighter Hall
- **The Praxis Project**—led by Rev. Ben Konecny, Hope Room

7:30 p.m.

- **High School Youth Group**—led by Robbie Carlson, Youth Room

**NOTE:** On Wednesday, March 11, at 6:30, Please join us in the Chapel for Taize worship, a time of contemplative singing and silence.



*This will take the place of the usual adult programs during Wednesday Night Live.*



At our 2020 Annual Meeting last January, the congregation approved a process to consider the Rev. Ben Konecny as our next Head of Staff. The first step of that process was to have our Personnel Committee meet with Rev. Ben to determine his interest and assess whether his gifts and training fit our vision for a new Head of Staff when Rev. Miller retires. The Personnel Committee completed their meeting with Ben last month and made a recommendation to the Church Cabinet. The Cabinet received the recommendation of the Personnel Committee and voted to call a Special Meeting of the Congregation on Sunday, March 22, at 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary. There will be two items on the agenda.

First, upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee and Cabinet, we will vote to call the Rev. Ben Konecny as our Head of Staff, effective January 1, 2021.

Second, upon the recommendation of Cabinet, we will vote to move forward with a Capital Campaign with the help of our consultant, John Laster. Copies of the Feasibility Study are available in the church office and can be emailed.

### ***Talk to a leader before the meeting!***

On Sunday, March 8, after each worship, leaders of our church will be in Chadwick Hall to visit. Doran Azari and Laura Gurney (our Moderator and Assistant Moderator) will answer questions about the process before the vote calling Rev. Ben as Head of Staff.

Members of our Board of Trustees will also be in Chadwick to answer questions about our proposed Capital Campaign.



Our youth groups will start their spring fundraiser soon. Several of our high schoolers will attend the UCC National Youth Event at Purdue University in July, and our middle schoolers will partake in a weekend mission experience in Denver in August. We'll begin selling Butter Braid pastries, along with several NEW items this year. Stop by the narthex after worship on March 8, 15, 22, and 29 to place your orders; then pick them up after church starting on Palm Sunday, April 5. Thank you for your support!



The FCC Garden Group will meet in the library after the 10:00 worship on March 15. If you'd like to help this group with the landscape of our church grounds, please come to the meeting. If you can't attend but would like to be involved, please contact Judy Smith: 970-415-2205 or smith.jmwrh@gmail.com.

### ***The Brothers of Taizé***

The Brothers of Taizé will be at Regis University in Denver on Saturday, March 14, for a gathering that will include workshops, discussion groups and prayer. If you are interested in attending or would like more information, please speak with Rev. Ben Konecny.



Registration is open for all Rocky Mountain Conference 2020 Summer Camps, including a few adult sessions. These opportunities are offered at La Foret Conference & Retreat Center. Dates and descriptions of each camp, age groups, and registration can be found here: [rmcucc.org/news-events](http://rmcucc.org/news-events).

If you have questions about any of these opportunities, would like more information about the experiences at La Foret, or if a scholarship would assist your family in making them possible for you, please let Robbie know. We want everyone who has a desire to attend these transformational events to be able to do so.

Want to make great use of an hour of your time? Volunteer for Waste Not! Waste Not is a partnership program with UNC Dining Services where volunteers pick up leftover food from a dining hall and deliver it to the Guadalupe Shelter.



For years this program has ensured that thousands of pounds of good food have gone to feed people who are hungry, instead of going to waste. Currently there is a great need for volunteers to keep this program going. Long-time volunteers from our church are happy to provide training to people interested in getting involved. Please contact Kurt Dallow if you would like to learn more: [kurtdallow@gmail.com](mailto:kurtdallow@gmail.com).



Some things stay the same for the 10:00 service on 5th Sundays: we still meet in the sanctuary; we still pray; we still sing; we still read scripture; and we have faith that God is still present with us! But on 5th Sundays we also seek to change things up

a bit in hopes of offering a little different experience of worship. This includes a less traditional style of music, more opportunities for movement and participation, and our kids and youth joining us for the entire service. While this alternative worship time excites some and stretches others, we hope it is a way our church can create sacred space where God can be experienced in a variety of ways by people in our community of Faith.



**2020 Choristers Guild Participants**