

January 2019

Volume 34 Issue 1

Center United Methodist Church

PO Box 626
4th & Broadway,
Center CO 81125
Worship Services: 8:30 am
Church Phone: 719-754-2243
E-mail: centerumc@yahoo.com
Financial E-mail:
CUMCfin@yahoo.com

Saguache United Methodist Church

6th & Christie, Saguache
Worship Service: 10:30 am

Pastor: Rev. Debbie Upton

Phone: 754-2243
Cell phone: 504-261-8860
PO Box 571
Center CO 81125
Email: dupton@iliff.edu

Administrative Assistant/
Newsletter Editor:

Charleen Schaeffer
Office Hours: Tues., Wed,
Thurs, Fri

Pastor Debbie

First, I wish to thank everyone for their wonderful birthday wishes and Christmas wishes. Thank you for the generous Christmas gifts from both Center and Saguache. I feel truly blessed to be serving in Center and Saguache churches. I appreciate the outpouring of love at the baptism of Charlee Mae Sease and Tony Holcomb. We were blessed by the full congregations for both Christmas Eve services at Saguache and Center. I would like to thank all those involved to make the services a beautiful service of love. May the love that flowed from Christmas Eve flow throughout the year. I also appreciate the way many of you have come forward to help with the Christmas parade, our movie night, and especially families in need. I would like to thank Janet for providing the trailer and hay for our float in the parade, Roy and Vickie for the use of their truck to pull the trailer, Kevin for being our Santa driver, Teddy's family for the beautiful decorations for the trailer, and all the wonderful riders who sang their hearts out, threw candy canes and caps and gloves. Thank you for helping us be a presence in our community. We did win third place, but the best part was the fellowship. I would also like to thank those who participated in the Advent Bible Study as we learned about the biblical truths hidden in the carols that we sing and about the amazing song writer Charles Wesley who God gave the gift of putting his sermons into song. It is my hope and prayer that we may continue our bible studies in 2019 at a time that allows more of our faith community to participate. Saguache's Faith Adventures had a visit from St. Nicholas, the original Santa. I appreciate all of those who helped to make that possible and hopefully this tradition will continue and perhaps include Center. I would also like to remind everyone that beginning January 11th, Faith Adventures in Music will begin on Fridays. At Saguache at 9 am, piano lessons will begin, at 10 am, voice lessons will begin, and at 11 am chime lessons will begin. At Center at 1 pm, piano lessons will begin, at 2 pm, voice lessons will begin, and at 3 pm chime lessons will begin.

Now as we come to the close of 2018 with the triumphant celebration of Christ's birth, let us remember that this hope, love, joy, and peace we feel at Christmas doesn't have to end with Epiphany. We have been blessed by God's mercy and grace. It is my hope and wish that our community may see the light from our lives shining through the darkness of despair and lighting a way for others to God Almighty, Christ our Savior, and the Holy Spirit our comforter and guide. Cherish every moment with family and friends and may we draw the circle wide to include new friends and family in the body of Christ. As we seek to follow holy practices with acts of piety and acts of mercy, and as in the words of that beautiful carol by Shirley Murray, "This year, let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone alive!" UMC Discipleship write Michael Hawn and professor of church music at Perkins Theological Seminary published in an article on "Star Child" a profound challenge. "United Methodist Bishop Joel Martinez once said, 'each generation must add its own stanza to the great hymn of the church.' This is especially true of songs of the Incarnation. We cannot rely on the Christmas carols of the past, but must ask ourselves, what does the God who came to earth in a human form mean for us today." Yes, what child is this and what does it mean to the world, to our church, and most importantly to our personal lives.

Pastor Debbie

(Pictures of Mike and St. Nicholas on nest page)

Pastor Debbie	1
St. Nickolas, Baptism	2
UMW, Martha Circle, Supper with your neighbor	3
Superintendent letter	4
Celebrations, concerns	5
Bishop Oliveto	6
New year, New Opportunities	7
Calendar	8

I have been sick and so the newsletter is late. I am sorry. Charleen



Let's Celebrate

Friends, family, community members and church members gathered in Center United Methodist Church to witness the Baptism of Charlee Sease and Tony Holcomb on December 22. Let us all welcome these two into our church and support them in their new life. A reception was held after for all to celebrate this event.

CUMC Financial News

Happy Happy New Year !!! I am looking forward to 2019 with gratefulness and amazement in what one small but mighty congregation can do. However, when you consider the focus of our giving and our missions and remember He is the One who makes all things possible, it definitely all makes sense. Here are our November numbers

Giving.	\$27,409.23
Expenses.	\$7,984.60
Net monthly income	\$19,424.63

This is an amazing gift to our work as servants of the Lord. We send prayers of thanks for the wonderful offerings and send many thanks to all who made this possible. Thanks to Janet and Sue for all their service and dedication to our finances this year.

"My God will meet your every need out of his riches in the glory that is found in Christ Jesus. Let glory be given to God our Father forever and always" Amen. Philippians 4: 19-20

Blessing for 2019,
Tony Holcomb
Finance Chairman

UMW / Martha Circle

UMW will meet on January 8th instead of the 1st. We wish you all a Happy New Year!! The 8th will be our Pledge Service and planning meeting for 2019 events. Bring your ideas and suggestions about a yard sale this summer and a possible dinner in December. We will meet on February 5th for a Prayer and Self Denial program.

Martha Circle will meet on January 16th and on February 20th. All the ladies meetings start at 9:30 and all are welcome. Please join us anytime.

Cooking with Your Neighbor

we had a lovely evening with 37 folks attending on December 6th. We all enjoyed a beef roast with potatoes and gravy along with so many side dishes, we could hardly take them in. This next month our dinner will be on January 3rd. Our theme will be a new year, and we will have a taco bar. Glenda is going to help me as I have been a little under the weather. A baked potato bar may be a good choice to add. For those more adventurous folks, a quick google search for a recipe online can be a great source of recipes. Or, bring any side dish you like. It is always a good time to visit, talk and sometimes learn about how to cook something you may not know about. How in the heck do you cook an artichoke anyway? Ha ha see you there. Remember to bring someone with you or invite someone to join us. It is open to anyone.

Dinner with Your Neighbor

Saguache is going strong with its program on the Second Thursday of the month. Due to several conflicts of community events they had only 30 in December, but they continue to increase their numbers and Social fellowship. Come out and join everyone on Jan. 10 at 5:30.



Trinity Views

Happy New Year and Epiphany Greetings!

As we enter 2019, I pray this finds you in good health and spirit, still treasuring the gifts of heart and life that came to you this Christmas. I hope that you have room for one more Holy Day (the origin of holiday) tradition... perhaps not one you've encountered before.

In some places around the world, it is the custom on January 1st for people to return home and receive a blessing from their parents. It is a lovely practice, with mothers and fathers placing their hands on their children's heads and praying for them, whether they are 5, 15 or 50 years old. Granted, not all of us still have parents to return home to at this stage of life. But this is a gift that nurturing soul-friends might provide one another in the life of our congregations. And, any of us who have young people we connect with might consider offering them a blessing, whatever the "official" relationship. Frankly, I don't believe it's possible for young people to have too many adults who love them. Bring on the "borrowed" grands and aunts and uncles!

Scripture is filled with blessings that can be prayed for and with one another. One of the most famous comes from Aaron's words from Numbers 6:22-27. "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace." I suspect that many of you might have these words memorized from regular use in some way. If these exact words feel overly formal, or just awkward to speak aloud over someone, you might consider how you would naturally express the deeper meaning they convey. How does this person bring you and God delight? How are the bonds of relationship between the two of you and with God a gift? What hopes for well-being and goodness in life do you hold for this person? Truly, how would you bless the space between you?

Whether you actually lay hands upon a beloved one, or simply pray blessings in your heart, I invite you to begin this calendar year with a spiritual gift, blessing those who matter to you.

While you're at it... I request that you join me in offering prayers of blessing for Sarah and Major Rettig, our newly hired Trinity District Congregational Resource Ministers (CRMs). They begin their work with the District this month, even as they continue serving as pastors of the Hugo and Limon churches.

As we live into a new season of growth together, I pray that we may all find abundance of hope and vitality as we serve in Jesus' name.

Blessings on the Journey from your District Superintendent,

Margarit

A Christmas Message

FROM BISHOP
KAREN OLIVETO



Dear brothers and sisters, siblings in Christ,

In this Christmas greeting, I want to celebrate with you joy as we celebrate our first Christmas as the Mountain Sky Conference. This year, we have made many changes. Through the midst of all that is changing around us, I have seen how God is moving through each of you and is calling all of us deeper into Beloved Community in exciting, new ways. I want to thank you for your creative, engaging discipleship, and the ways that each of you bring God's message of hope and healing to those in our conference and around the world. It is an honor to serve as your bishop as we continue to respond to the Holy Spirit in our midst.

We continue in the season of Advent as we move to Christmas Day. Advent reminds us that before our time of celebration, we must look inward, see our own need for Christ, and prepare our hearts and our lives once again for his coming. Each week in Advent, we ponder what Jesus has brought into our life. It's easy to want to skip this self-reflection and jump right to the joy of celebrating Christ's coming. Yet, when we do this, we leave little room to acknowledge what is really happening in our lives and communities.

In recent years, more and more churches are taking opportunities during this season to hold gatherings for those who are struggling during this time. Whether it's the loss of a loved one, financial debt, struggling family relationships, or the loss of a job, the brokenness of our lives and world weigh especially heavy this time of year. But here is the beauty of Advent: we are reminded that even in our messy, imperfect world, the love of God shows up when and where we need it most.

In reading the birth narratives in the Gospels, it is important for us to remember that Jesus himself was born in a time of turmoil. The Gospel of Matthew tells us that Herod, the ruler over Judea, was so threatened by the idea of God anointing a new leader of the Jewish people, that he bribed the wise men to tell Herod where this new child was born, so that he could get rid of what he assumed was a threat to his political power. It was only through the intervention of God's angel that Joseph, Mary, and the newborn Jesus escaped to a foreign land. It is in this setting that God chooses to be born into the world as Christ. It is in this time of persecution, oppression, and violence that Christ's birth signals a new way to live, a way of love.

The hymn "Love Came Down at Christmas," written by Christina Rossetti, tells us that love, through Christ, came into this world so that we might know God's love more fully. When we understand the circumstances of Jesus' birth, the words of this hymn bear a deeper message. In our brokenness, God's love, through Jesus, comes into our world so that we might experience new life and hope in places we least expect it. The past year has been filled with violence, pain, anger, and confusion. The ever-increasing "us versus them" mentality that we experienced this year signifies – above all else – our continued need for God to enter into our lives with a message of love. Friends, know that love came down at Christmas so that we could come together. Love came down at Christmas so that we might find wholeness and healing in broken places in our lives and relationships. Love came down at Christmas so that we would see the "other" as God's beautiful creation. Love came down so that we might find new ways to face the challenges that arise.

To my kin in Christ, as you read over the words of this hymn below, consider where God's love has shown itself in your life this year. What was the result? Where has new life and love come out of the brokenness?

Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, Love divine;

Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine;

Worship we our Jesus, but wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token, love be yours and love be mine;

Love to God and others, love for plea and gift and sign

As we wait with anticipation for Christ's coming, may we be filled with the knowledge that love comes into our lives, not just on Christmas, but at any moment we choose to open ourselves up to God's abundant grace. May love be our token in this season, and throughout the year to come.

[Watch Bishop Karen Oliveto read this letter in her Christmas video](#)

New Year, New Opportunities

We are gifted every year with an opportunity to start over. We are handed an empty page upon which we can write any new life we want. We can decide to have a good year or a bad one. That does not mean we will not have trials, temptations and disappointments but we can decide how we react to Plan B. We make plans and hope to set into motion how we want life to be. We can set down this road and be quite happy on it as long as we know that it will not be a fairy tale. There will be curve balls we never saw coming, we will reap some of the sums of making poor choices, and we will also have good times. It is the way we deal with plan B that will determine our way forward.

I can testify that having a chronic disease is not a walk in the park. I have suffered since August first with a ghost disease which seemed to have no reason or made no sense but they have now settled into what they now think is caused by the bone marrow transplant. I am tired, sick of having people ask what is wrong, and having to explain they are really not sure. All I can say is it has hit my quality of life hard. Others deal with other things that might not look so rosy either. But we have to deal with the hand we get in life and keep asking God for help in dealing with it. There may not be an instant cure available but we can search out and plan a way to minimize its affect on us. Focusing on the things we can do, seems to help most people deal with it. That is not always easy.

Even Jesus suffered the pains of being human. Think about the night before he is arrested. He knows suffering. Let's look at some Bible passages that can help us:

John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Luke 14:27 "And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." - **Romans 12:21**

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." - **John 1:5**

"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast." - **1 Peter 5:10**

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." - **Galatians 6:9**

"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings." - **1 Peter 5:8-9**

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." - **Philippians 4:6-7**

Praise to the God of All Comfort-"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God." **2 Corinthians 1:3-4**

"...God is faithful. He won't allow you to be tempted beyond your abilities. Instead, with the temptation, God will also supply a way out so that you will be able to endure it." - **1 Corinthians 10:13** (purefixinsiders.com)

It is the beginning of a new year. Let us plan on how to improve our Christian Life by attending a bible study group, Reading the Bible, setting side a time devoted to prayer and meditation, or helping by volunteering to do good. We have the power to fortify ourselves against these bad times by writing our own story on this clean sheet of paper called life. The choice is ours. Will we choose to be happy with our lives as they have been or will we choose to change them to do more good for others and ourselves.

Try to keep the Christmas Spirit going all year long. Too often we pack it away with the Christmas ornaments and go right back to our old life. Write a happy life for both plan A, Plan B and whatever else may come along this new year.

Charleen

January 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
			CUMC Cross-roads 9-12	Cooking with your neighbor 5:30 CUMC		Yoga 9:30 am CUMC with instructor
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CUMC service 8:30 am SUMC service 10:30	Pastor at Saguache Tea with Pastor @ 3	Worship Committee 8:30 Yoga 9:30 UMW 9:30 Administrative meeting 6 pm	CUMC Cross-roads 9-12	SMC Dinner with your neighbor 5:30	See message below Saguache's and Center's Faith Adventures in Music	50+
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
CUMC service 8:30 am SUMC service 10:30	Town & Country 11 :30 CUMC Pastor at Saguache Tea with Pastor @ 3	Yoga 9:30	Martha Circle 9:30 CUMC Cross-roads 9-12	Movie night 6 pm	See message below Saguache's and Center's Faith Adventures in Music	Yoga 9:30 am CUMC with instructor
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
CUMC service 8:30 am SUMC service 10:30 Brunch @ CUMC	Pastor at Saguache Tea with Pastor @ 3	Yoga 9:30	CUMC Cross-roads 9-12		See message below Saguache's and Center's Faith Adventures in Music	
27	28	29	30	31		
CUMC service 8:30 am SUMC service 10:30	Pastor at Saguache Tea with Pastor @ 3	Yoga 9:30	CUMC Cross-roads 9-12			

Beginning January 11th, Faith Adventures in Music will begin on Fridays. At Saguache at 9 am, piano lessons will begin, at 10 am, voice lessons will begin, and at 11 am chime lessons will begin. At Center at 1 pm, piano lessons will begin, at 2 pm, voice lessons will begin, and at 3 pm chime lessons will begin.