

# JULY 2023

Center United Methodist Church

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Center CO 81125  
Worship Services: 9 am  
In person and Online (Zoom)  
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CUMCfin@yahoo.com  
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Saguache United Methodist Church

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P. O. Box 184, Saguache, CO  
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Worship Service: (11 am)

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## Pastor Debbie

I can't believe this is my final newsletter article. First, I'd like to thank everyone so much for the love and support. Throughout these last five years, you have made me the Pastor and Elder I am today. Annual Conference was an exciting and stressful conference this year. Many changes have had to occur in the Mountain Sky Conference, especially in the four states and the one church in Ohio. Many churches are still waiting for their pulpits to be supplied. As scripture says, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few" (Matthew 9:37). I'm so proud of our Laity who are looking for new opportunities in ministry and serving. God has given you exactly what you need for such a time as this. As I move to Rawlins, Wyoming, know that my heart will always have a special place for the San Luis Valley, and the people at Center and Saguache. Know that my prayers are with you in this exciting time as you move forward with Table for All. I pray blessings on you as you find new pastoral leadership in Pastor Amos. Unfortunately, with the ordinand's schedule, I was unable to connect with him at conference. I wish him well, but I know you will love him and that you will welcome him with the generosity of spirit I have found in you and will miss. I will continue to pray that you will follow Christ's example in Jesus as our living template to be inspired and filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ has called us to be not only his witnesses but to be filled with the outpouring of God's love to all we encounter, no matter who they are, where they come, from what type of life they may have lived and/or living, knowing that none of us are perfect. We are all seeking perfection in Jesus Christ.

### Pastor Debbie's Testimony

Hi, I'm Debria Upton, but most folks know me as Debbie. My pronouns are she, her, and hers. My given name was a spelling error that stuck; however, my Creator has always known me since I was formed in my mother's womb and called me by name to "feed the sheep" of this hurting world with the help of the Holy Spirit. I love God's creation and have always been drawn to butterflies because I believe they are a wonderful metaphor for the promise we've been given.

As a tiny caterpillar, I crawled through childhood in a very protective, uber conservative, Christian home. As a cocoon, I was enveloped with love and religious training, feeding on the word of God, but never really feeling capable of the call I would receive as a chrysalis. As I emerged through the small hole in the chrysalis as a misshapen butterfly, my weak and wet wings struggled to embrace the transformation that was occurring in front of my eyes. With each flap of my wings, the Holy Spirit carefully and compassionately strengthen me into a beautiful, confident butterfly ready to take flight. As in Rev Elaine Kirkland's moving poem "Open Me" expresses, I prayed for God to "Form me... hold me... open me... unfold me... unfurl me... untether me... uncurl me... uncrease me... unwrap me" to feed the sheep, who my brothers and sisters, the land and all creation through which God continues to be revealed.

I agree with Richard Rohr in his book, *The Universal Christ*, in his interpretation of John 1:3 "Everything visible, without exception, is the outpouring of God. What else could it really be? "Christ" is a word for the Primordial Template ("Logos") through whom "all things came into being, and not one thing had its being except through him". I would only add to his statement, "Everything visible, without exception, is the outpouring of God's love in which Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine, reveals God's presence in every breath we take, every tear we shed, and who is inviting us into the divine relationship of perfect love.

God has called me to this mystical journey of ministry as Christ's butterfly of possibilities for such a time as this.

~ Pastor Debbie

.....  
• "Then I will give you shepherds  
• after my own heart, who will  
• lead you with knowledge and  
• understanding."  
•

~ Jeremiah 3:15

• "So Christ himself gave the  
• apostles, the prophets, the  
• evangelists, the pastors and  
• teachers, to equip his people for  
• works of service, so that the  
• body of Christ may be built up."  
•

~ Ephesians 4:11-12

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**Rainbow's End/  
LaPuente**

Make clothing, household items, and furniture donations to Center's Rainbows End. Make canned food donations to Center's Rainbows end or LaPuente in Alamosa. Make monetary donation to LaPuente though the church or online at: <https://lapuentehome.org/donate/>

**Kids Hope USA**

*(Haskin Elementary)*

**Art Supplies:** paper (manila, construction, cardstock, notebooks), crayons, washable markers, pencils (colored & #2), scissors (child safe), glue sticks, yarn or string, child friendly magazines, stickers, stamps and stamp pads, rulers, watercolors, pipe cleaners.

**Games:** board games, chess, checkers, dice, dominoes, etc., child friendly card games (Spot it, Uno, Phase 10, Go Fish, Old Maid, basic playing cards)

**Outdoor Activities:** balls, jump ropes, sidewalk chalk

**Books:** for Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade.

**Anna's Mission Inc.**

*(Ready to Go bags for domestic violence victims).*

Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Body soap, Shampoo/ conditioner, Body lotion, Deodorant, Comb/brush, Razors, Small box of tissues, Gift cards to Family dollar or Dollar General.

<https://annasmissioninc.com/>

**We appreciate all donations and prayers for Domestic Violence Survivors.**



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**

**Greetings from Our Lay Leader - Annual Conference Reflection**

Greetings from Mesa! I am fresh off the weekend of Annual Conference. It was uplifting to see the successes of many as they moved to other assignments and journeys. This was the first time I actually knew someone personally in the earning of new titles and privileges of new assignments.

There was also much sadness as 40 some churches were disaffiliated. The majority of which were from Trinity district and many that were labeled "to be determined" when assignments were made.

Because we are being re-districted, many felt the pain of change and one, from the front range area of my home town, had a Pastor who appealed NOT to be added to the Wyoming district when they identified themselves as part of the front range. And he said "I am not sure I can sell this to my people." Denver area front range churches questioned the 'traveling distance' through heavily congested roads and how the distance between would stifle connectivity. I tell you this NOT to be negative, but to remind us all that yes, change is hard and harder for some than others.

There were many joyful times also as folks celebrated their successes. Fresh Expressions ideas that I gleaned were ideas of book clubs, fire pits, coffee shops and even one in a bar. The suggestion was to build your congregation around your talents and interests, and make connections with people by listening carefully and be more concerned of connections, not numbers in a church pew.

To sum up what I have to take away, I feel encouraged that we can take up our Methodist founding fathers and mothers small group meetings and go to the people to create small groups to spread God's message of Love and Grace.

~ Charleen



# Pastor Debbie's Ordination!

**DEBRIA UPTON**  
 WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER  
 IN THE  
*MOUNTAIN SKY ANNUAL CONFERENCE*  
 OF THE  
*UNITED METHODIST CHURCH*  
 ON JUNE 25TH, 2023 BY  
 BISHOP KAREN OLIVETO  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY  
 BISHOP C. DALE WHITE  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY  
 BISHOP JOHN WESLEY LORD  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY  
 BISHOP TITUS LOWE  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY  
 BISHOP WILLARD FRANCIS MALLALIEU  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY  
 BISHOP EDMUND STORER JAMES  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY BOTH  
 BISHOP ELIJAH HEDDING AND BISHOP JAMES OSGOOD ANDREW  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY  
 BISHOP WILLIAM M'KENDREE  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY  
 BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY  
 BISHOP THOMAS COKE  
 WHO WAS ORDAINED AN ELDER BY THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
 AND CONSECRATED A BISHOP BY  
**JOHN WESLEY**

## Kids Hope Report

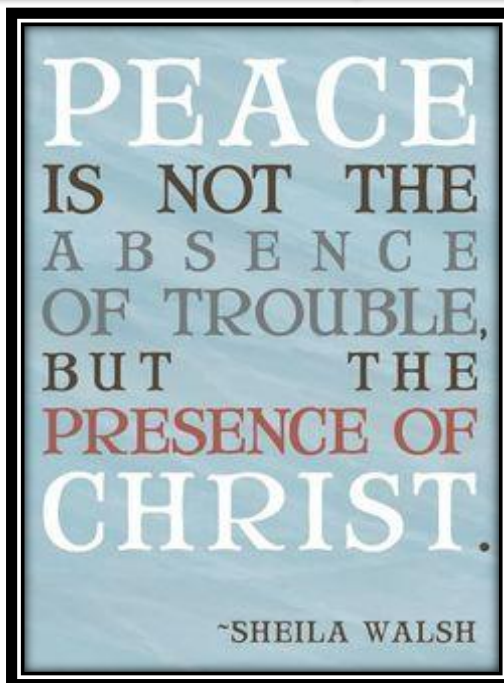
It was a great first year, and I look forward to an even better second year. I would not have been able to do this without your faithful support. We are planning a get-together for the Mentor and Prayer Partners to review the End of Year Evaluation and discuss possible ways to make next year better. We still need to set a date; it will be sometime this summer. I have made contact with someone from the Catholic Church and hope to meet with her in the near future.

Your financial gifts are greatly appreciated towards this mission of helping children.

"All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children" (Isaiah 54:13).

Yours in Christ,

Vicki Ratzlaff, Director of Kids Hope



## Table for All Grant

*We are looking for people who are: devoted to the health of the church, committed to its mission to your community, and exhibit a willingness to consider new ways of being church. They ask that we select a team of 6 to 10 to participate.* The conference will cover the costs of four from each church to participate in the gatherings. More may attend, but the individual will need to cover the costs for travel and lodging. Please contact the office if you are interested in joining the team!



## Something to Think About...

- ❖ This month Center's July potluck will be a Cookout! The date is also being moved to before the New Legacy Concert on July 21<sup>st</sup> at 6pm. The Concert starts at 7pm. We will be needing people to provide hot dogs, hamburgers, buns, and all the fixings. Please contact Hannah if you would like to support us by providing food or volunteering for the event!
- ❖ Pastor Amos will begin serving as our pastor starting July 16<sup>th</sup>. His first Sunday will be July 23<sup>rd</sup>, and we would especially love for you to attend worship in person and help us welcome our new pastor.
- ❖ Our bible study based on the TV Series *The Chosen* will be held at Janet's House starting July 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join!

# Strawberry-Cabernet Barbecue Sauce

Want to make July 4 feel extra special? This homemade barbecue sauce takes just 1/2 hour to make, and the combo of fresh berries and wine give it a flavor that'll knock the socks off the bottled stuff. We love it on chicken, pork, and anywhere else you'd add a good sauce.

## Ingredients

Recipe by: Christopher Michel

- 1 tbsp. canola oil
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 oz. strawberries, trimmed and quartered (about 3/4 cup)
- 1/2 c. Cabernet Sauvignon
- 1/3 c. apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 c. sugar
- 1/4 c. ketchup
- 2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp. pure maple syrup
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/2 to 1 jalapeño, seeded and diced



## Directions

1. Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 7 to 9 minutes. Stir in strawberries and Cabernet Sauvignon. Increase heat to medium-high, and cook until berries soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Add vinegar, sugar, ketchup, Worcestershire, maple syrup, garlic, and jalapeño. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer until slightly thickened, 8 to 12 minutes. Let cool slightly.
2. Transfer mixture to a blender and puree until smooth (or use an immersion blender directly in the pan), about 30 seconds. Return to pan and simmer, if necessary, until sauce thickens, 1 to 2 minutes. Let cool, and use to baste grilled chicken, ribs, or pork chops.

<https://www.countryliving.com/food-drinks/a39896453/strawberry-cabernet-barbecue-sauce-recipe/>

