

One Lord  
One Faith  
One Baptism

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION OF THE ECUMENICAL CATHOLIC COMMUNION

The Journey Shared

# Catholics & Lutherans together

## REGIONAL MUSINGS

Our local communities have been living the vision for years. Now, on a formal level, our shared journey as ECC and ELCA members of the Body of Christ is being celebrated as a model of inter-denominational collaboration. ...and lest you think formulating a necessarily nuanced, official agreement is a simple task, the name says it all:

*Considerations for Collaboration in Mission and Sharing in Worship between Congregations of the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Congregations of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion in this Territory*

See pages 3 and 4 for the full text of this historic agreement.



Bishop of the ECC, preached. Both Bishops signed the Agreement that marks the collaboration and sharing in worship between the faith communities. Bishop Francis gave an inspirational sermon on forgiveness and peacekeeping, embracing the account of the conflict between Jacob and Esau (Genesis 33.1-11).

"It was truly a memorable and heartwarming experience, with more than 60 people participating and with the joyful noise of St. Paul's Lutheran Choir under the direction of Dcn. Mark Alan Filbert. The liturgy was then followed by an enjoyable fellowship in the church hall. An evening we will remember long past the celebration."

Dennis Giblin drove an enthusiastic carful of seven from Church of the Beloved (including Mother Kae Madden, Christy Chady, Bonnie Gaither, Kate Giblin, Deacon Buddy Fricke and Alice Bradley) to the historic celebration. All who attended found it to be a wonderful, step forward in the reunification of our common bonds as communities in Christ Jesus. Expressions included, "a wonderful church family reunion" and "it was a powerful, beautiful ceremony." "It gave me a strong feeling of the communities with which we are connected." And, "Wow, what a powerful and moving homily by Bishop Francis!" Bonnie commented: "I was truly blessed by being able to attend the liturgy and signing of the agreement between the ECC and the ELCA. It has been a dream of mine



So thrilled was Sue Kaessner, one of the members of the hosting church in attendance, writes, "The Ecumenical Catholic Communion and the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church joined together in a glorious liturgy and celebration at St. Paul Lutheran and Catholic Community of Faith on October 30. Bishop Jim Gonia of the Rocky Mountain Synod presided at the Lutheran Eucharist, The Most Rev. Francis Krebs, Presiding

since childhood to be able to commune and celebrate liturgy jointly with the ELCA. Half of my neighborhood was ELCA and the other half were Catholic... but we were all little kids, God's kids, loved by Him, sharing love, life and growing up together, getting to sharing everything but the celebration of our faith. The signing of the agreement by the two Bishops and sealed with a whole-hearted, joyous hug was a realization that we are getting closer to the wish of Jesus that we ALL will become ONE as he and the Father are one." Dcn. Buddy elaborated, "Great night. Very Positive. Powerful. Historical. As a fan of Martin Luther and a clergy member of the ECC it was especially meaningful."

In concluding remarks, both Bishops echoed a key line in the sermon that captured the deeply spiritual significance of the evening, the ground of the agreement, and "the holy envy" embodied in our ecumenical relationship: "I see the face of God in you."

~ Fr. Michael J. Nicosia, Vicar

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### Editor

Fr. Michael Nicosia  
[nicosia410@yahoo.com](mailto:nicosia410@yahoo.com)

Considerations for Collaboration in Mission and Sharing in Worship between  
Congregations of the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and  
Congregations of the Evangelical Catholic Communion in this Territory

Over many years, a number of congregations from our two dioceses in this Rocky Mountain territory have developed important relationships in their local settings. These relationships rest on strong affinities in mission, including substantial proximity on many issues of our time, and thus enrich the witness of these communities to the world. Members of these communities also desire to share together as much as possible in worship.

These Considerations were both to celebrate and to provide guidance for these relationships.

### General Information

The ELCA's 1993 Policy Statement, "A Declaration of Environmental Commitment," articulates principles helpful for these considerations:

- "Ecumenism has as its focus and goal clarity of understanding among Christians and a greater realization of unity among Christ's people."
- "Local ecumenism, and its synodical and regional forms, provides a rich area of opportunity and challenge for the unity of the church. It has much to teach and much to learn from the national and international instruments of ecumenism."
- Ecumenical collaboration in many forms, including through the National Council of Churches to which both national church bodies belong, can be an important step toward deeper communion.

#### Guidelines for writing

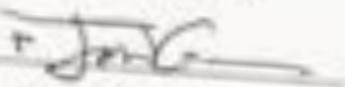
- Especially when sharing the same facilities, EOC and ELCA congregations are encouraged to pray together, to study the scriptures, and to gather together for special occasions of the church year. In particular, they can make a practice of presence at one another's baptisms, confirmations, and on occasions like the installation of a new pastor.
- Both the ELCA and the EOC practice sacramental hospitality, welcoming all baptized persons to the eucharistic table. Therefore, ELCA Lutherans are welcome to participate in EOC Eucharists, making "consciousness decisions" about receiving the sacrament,<sup>2</sup> as EOC members do at Lutheran celebrations.
- Both churches allow for changes from other traditions to preach or worship, including an celebration of the Eucharist or Lord's Supper. Therefore, EOC clergy are welcome to preach in ELCA congregations when invited to do so by the local congregation and vice versa.
- Both churches provide for lay persons to assist in certain roles in their own and in other Eucharists, e.g., as lectors, eucharistic ministers, etc. Therefore, lay members present at a liturgy of the other community are welcome to assume roles which the hosting community deems to be lay roles.

“Now I Want to Know How to Make a Living,” 1900, p. 8.

The Art of the Masters of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Mind and Awareness 301

- Since our two churches are not in full communion with each other, it is not permitted for ELCJL clergy to preside at an ELCA liturgy or vice versa, or for ministers from the two churches to co-preside at a Eucharist. Nor are they to administer other sacraments or ecumenical rites. Exemptions may be made only by joint agreement of the local ELCA and ELCJL bishops and only in cases of genuine pastoral need.

This agreement is signed by



Bishop Jim Gonsi  
For the ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod

31 Oct 2016

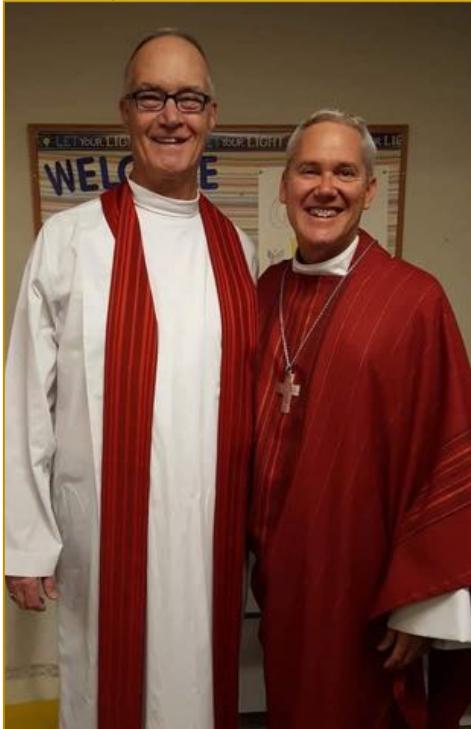
Date



Bishop Francis Kivu  
For the ELCJL Proto Diocese<sup>1</sup>

10-30-2019

Date



<sup>1</sup> The ELCJL Proto Diocese is the original diocese of the ELCJL and its component now of that territory in the United States, where a local ELCJL diocese has not yet been carved out.

## +FRANCIS'S HOMILY NOTES

Homily for Considerations for Collaboration Signing

At Ecumenical Eucharist 10 30 2019

### 1. Welcome and Introduction

### 2. Thanks to

- a. St. Paul's
- b. Other communities
- c. Bishop Gonia & Kathryn Lohre

### 3. Context

- a. We are not in full communion
- b. This is a very important milestone on the road to reconciliations.
- c. And this is exciting because of the possibility of building a "bottom up" (not a top down) ecumenism. Our agreement can be a template for other regions of the country, spreading laterally until there is a critical mass, a tipping point, where it becomes a national reality. It is ecumenism that happens where congregations actually want to collaborate rather than simply doing what the "national office" thinks is a good idea.
- d. I want to, with God's grace, apply the Word from this evening to this milestone—mostly looking at the ancient story of Esau and Jacob from the book of Genesis.

### 4. Jacob & Esau

- a. Born as twins, Jacob clutching the heel of Esau as if to say, "If you're leaving the womb, I want what you are having." The envy begins!
- b. Jacob was envious of his older brother modelling the ego/flesh/false self that wants to compare and rank all the time—not perceiving our deep equality in God.
- c. Jacob lies to get a blessing; he pretends to be Esau.
- d. He then flees for fear of the consequences of what he has done.
- e. Yet he longs to be with his brother again.
- f. He eventually goes back to his brother to be reconciled, though he fears being killed.
- g. On his way back it becomes clear that he needs a "grace filled wounding."

(In wrestling with an angel, he suffers an injury to his hip.)

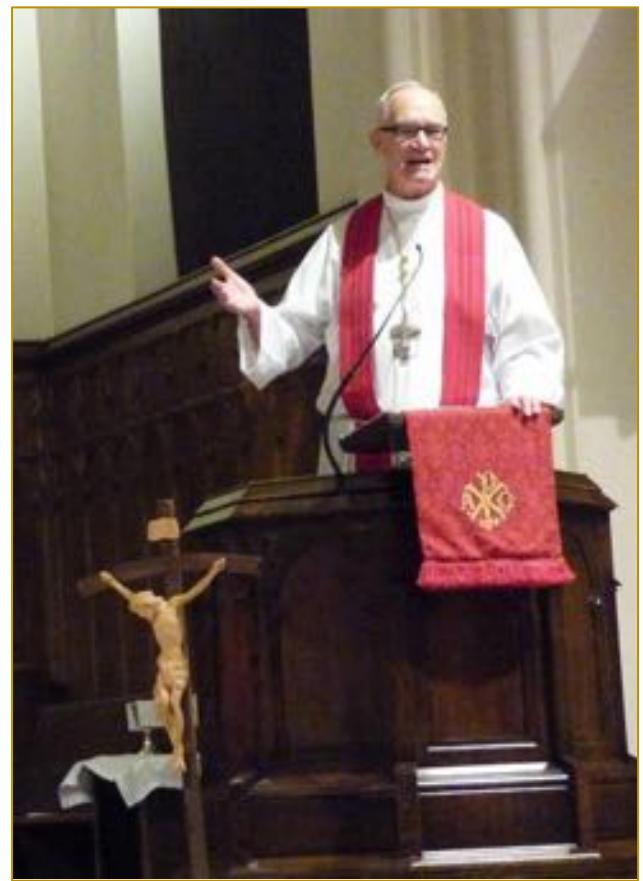
In this wrestling in the night, he has a dream which must have been recurring all his life.

- i. In it he asks a messenger from God for a blessing.
- ii. The messenger asks him his name.
- iii. He cannot let go of the fact that many years ago he gave into the temptation to pretend in order to get a blessing.
- iv. We can imagine the unwritten part of this inner struggle: "Are you still pretending?" "Are you still envious?" "Who are you?"
- v. After enough wrestling he finally admits, "I am Jacob." And Jacob receives a blessing. And in this moment he sees THE FACE OF GOD.

To know our identity before God is a moment of truing, a pivotal moment in our lives.

- h. But wait! He will shortly see THE FACE OF GOD again for an entirely different reason.
- i. Continuing on his journey toward his brothers he sends many gifts ahead of him to soften his brother, hoping he will receive him; but he is still afraid.
- j. As it turns out, Esau RECEIVES HIM WHOLE-HEARTEDLY.
- k. How beautiful to travel the road to reconciliation!

- i. The first time he saw himself clearly. "I am Jacob!" →



- ii. Now Jacob sees his brother Esau clearly, like someone contemplating a great mystery. We imagine him saying, "Who is this?" (as if he never even imagined let alone saw this Esau before). He was never able to see before Esau RECEIVING HIM WHOLE HEARTEDLY.
- iii. And so now for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, seeing Esau clearly (seeing him as the Imago Dei, RECEIVING JACOB WHOLE-HEARTEDLY), he realizes that he is seeing again THE FACE OF GOD.

I. At this point he probably experiences (thank you, Lutheran theologian Krister Stendahl) a return of, but in a whole new way, envy.

- i. Holy Envy is the ability to see the grace of God in the other, to appreciate it, and to desire it for ourselves, not as a theft, but as a growth-goal for us.
- ii. Pope Benedict XIV said, "Who can deny the grace of God in the Lutheran Lord's Supper?!"
- iii. Jacob wanted/needed to be clear about his own identity and he wanted/needed to be reconciled/back in relationship with his brother.
- iv. But it was Esau's RECEIVING HIM WHOLE-HEARTEDLY that stirred up Holy Envy in Jacob and that made him desire the God we was seeing in his brother—made him realize that he saw and was drawn to THE FACE OF GOD.
- v. May it be so, by God's grace, among us.

## St. Paul Lutheran & Catholic

Living ecumenism for the past 16 years, the church that hosted our Ecumenical Eucharist nurtures faith and service as one community. Here are just a few examples.

### SUMMER CEREAL DRIVE

Dorothy Stenman received a letter in September from Jennifer Lackey, Vice President of Development at **Project Angel Heart**, thanking all of us at St. Paul for our generosity and explaining that the 58 cereal boxes donated make it possible for Coloradans who are living with cancer, HIV/AIDS, kidney/heart disease, or other serious illness to get the extra nutrition they need without expending precious energy to do food prep. Lackey said that "your generosity ensures that over 3,000 Coloradans with life-threatening illness receive the nutrition they need to keep fighting. Thank you for your support!"

If you're interested in learning about how you can help Project Angel Heart,

contact their Volunteer Resources team at 303-830-0202 or email [volunteer@projectangelheart.org](mailto:volunteer@projectangelheart.org).

### ADULT FORUM: THE CREEDS

Adult Forum is brought to you by St. Paul's Education Ministry. When we recite the Creed every Sunday, do we think about what we are really saying and what we mean when we do say the Creed together? Is it a communal prayer like the Lord's Prayer? Is it a prayer at all? Are we free to change the parts we don't like or don't understand? Some Protestant churches don't even use the Creed in their worship services. Do we really need it? How many Creeds are there and where did they come from? And more to the point, what relevance do they have for us today? Join Father Don and Maryann for a discussion on "The Creeds" downstairs at **9:15am every Sunday through November 24**.

### STP ADVENT JAZZ CELEBRATIONS

We will celebrate the joy of Advent with local ministry partners at two exciting community events.

On December 14, "**Razzle Dazzle Christmas**" is a community awareness event for Auraria Campus Ministries.

Check out this inspiring ecumenical campus ministry and their great work in supporting and developing faithful followers of Christ at [www.aurariacampusministry.org](http://www.aurariacampusministry.org).

Hosted at the legendary Dazzle Jazz Club [dazzledenver.com](http://dazzledenver.com) from 3-4pm, with Christmas music, sing-alongs and jazz standards we will celebrate the end of the semester with the students. This event is open to everyone with no cover charge.

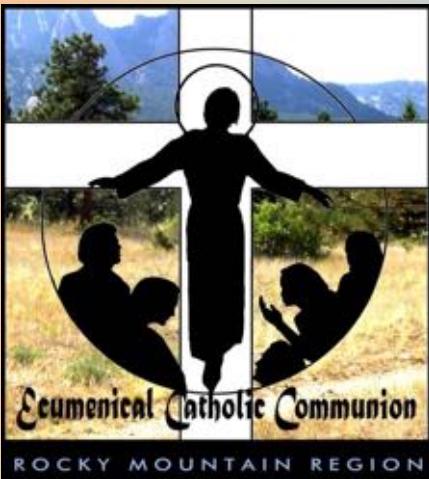
On December 15 we will celebrate Gaudete Sunday with **Advent Jazz Vespers** at St. Paul Church at 7pm with our ministry partner Nativity Lutheran of Commerce City. This Advent Jazz Vespers will be a celebration of "Rejoice" in anticipation of Christmas. We will share fellowship with a reception afterwards.

Both events will feature the return of the Barry Sames Jazz Ensemble [thejazzsanctuary.com/barry-sames](http://thejazzsanctuary.com/barry-sames).

### STP CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve Worship  
Dec. 24 at 4pm and 8pm

Christmas Day Worship  
Dec. 25 at 10:30am



#### REGIONAL COUNCIL

#### REGIONAL VICAR

Fr. Michael Nicosia, 720-218-1081  
[nicosia410@yahoo.com](mailto:nicosia410@yahoo.com)

Follow on Instagram and Twitter  
[@FrMichaelECC](https://www.instagram.com/_frmichaelecc/)

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[revdenised@gmail.com](mailto:revdenised@gmail.com)

#### PRESIDING BISHOP

The Very Rev. Francis Krebs  
[bishop.francis@ecumenical-catholic-communion.org](mailto:bishop.francis@ecumenical-catholic-communion.org)



For more about the  
**ECUMENICAL CATHOLIC  
COMMUNION**, visit  
<http://ecumenical-catholic-communion.org>

# Light of Christ

Our Light of Christ (LOC) community members have been busy supporting the greater community over the last few months in a myriad of ways.

Heather, our new volunteer Grouth Youp (name of our Youth Group) leader started off the new school year by having our teens design a new logo for the group which was then printed on sweatshirts for all of the members. The new logo was a joint effort that tapped into the creative talents of the group as a whole and the end result turned out great! In October the members helped out by spending time working at the Round Pantry, a local food bank, where they helped guests select food to take home. In addition, they hosted their annual fundraising pasta dinner for the community. The event was a great success as they raised enough funds to support their activities for the next year.



From September 30 through October 4 a joint team of eleven volunteers from LOC and our host community, Bethlehem Lutheran, traveled to Nebraska for a week of working to ease the trauma that the Spring of 2019 floods brought to the residents of Fremont, NE. Their week of work was organized through Habitat for Humanity of Fremont and involved placing new siding on the home of a single father and son, installing sheet rock in the basement of a multi-generation family, painting a home for youth and an individual's home, and cleaning, sorting and organizing the Flood Disaster Relief Warehouse in Fremont. The Country Bible Church of Blair, NE, graciously provided lodging and all of their meals. Each morning began with a blessing and prayer encouraging the volunteers to use one of their five senses to reflect and be aware of where they encountered the Presence of the Divine as they went through their day.



Our Outreach committee organized efforts to help our community members support the less fortunate in our Longmont community. In September, they held a month-long food drive during which we collected over 100 pounds of food that was donated to their food pantry. In addition, at the end of the month, we sent a group of volunteers to prepare and serve a warm lunch at the OUR Center's Community Cafe. In October, we supported Homeless Outreach Providing Encouragement (HOPE) by →



## CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Leadership in transition

[www.churchofholymfamily.org](http://www.churchofholymfamily.org)

Mass: 5pm Saturdays

1092 S. Nome Street

(office - 12250 E. Iliff Ave, Ste 120)

Aurora, CO 80013

(303) 369-9000

[admin@holymfamilyco.org](mailto:admin@holymfamilyco.org)



## CHURCH OF THE BELOVED

[www.churchofthebeloved-ecc.org](http://www.churchofthebeloved-ecc.org)

Mthr. Kae Madden, Pastor

Mass: 5:00 pm Saturdays

10500 Grant Drive

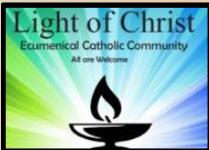
Northglenn CO 80233

303-489-7046

Mother Kae, 720-232-1562

[pastor@churchofthebeloved-ecc.org](mailto:pastor@churchofthebeloved-ecc.org)

Fr. Paul Burson, 720-254-2083



## LIGHT OF CHRIST ECUMENICAL CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

[www.lightofchristecc.org](http://www.lightofchristecc.org)

Fr. Teri Harroun, Pastor

Masses: 5:00 pm Saturdays.

9:00 am Wednesdays

1000 W. 15th Avenue

Longmont CO 80501

303-772-3785

[churchoffice@lightofchristecc.org](mailto:churchoffice@lightofchristecc.org)

collecting warm mittens, socks, thermals and hand warmers.



Through an ecumenical partnership with 5 other faith communities in Longmont (Westview Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Central Presbyterian, and Bethlehem Lutheran), Light of Christ presented a 5 part workshop on Sundays in September and October exploring end of life planning. Each of 5 workshops was held at a different church, with Light of Christ and Bethlehem Lutheran hosting the final workshop on October 20th. Topics included, health care decision making and practical planning, aging solo, medical aid in dying, and our bodies after death. The entire workshop was led by the folks from the Conversation Project. Light of Christ is looking at a future workshop for members on planning your own funeral Mass of Resurrection. Watch for details in 2020.

Four members of LOC (*pictured below, left to right: Annie, Ellen, Chuck, & Mary*) participate in our Jail Ministry and lead a communion service at the Larimer County Jail and Detention Center each Sunday. In their practice of sacramental justice, they have been overwhelmed by the grace that they have received from those they serve. God's radically inclusive love is truly meant for all people. They shared their experiences and reflections with the community during Mass on Sunday, July 20th.



Light of Christ has decided to join with other faith communities across Boulder County for the 11th Hour Remembrance Project to "raise the alarm" for climate justice and respond to the universal call to care for our →





### MARY OF MAGDALA COMMUNITY

[www.marymagdalafc.org](http://www.marymagdalafc.org)

Pastoral Director candidates being interviewed

Mass: 5:00 pm Sundays

301 E Stuart Street

Fort Collins, CO 80525

970-493-9536

Dcn. Rosean Amaral 970-692-4238

[marymagdalafc@gmail.com](mailto:marymagdalafc@gmail.com)



### ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN AND CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Rev. Barbara Berry-Bailey, Co-pastor

Fr. Don Sutton, Co-pastor

[donaldfsutton@gmail.com](mailto:donaldfsutton@gmail.com)

Catholic Mass: 5:00 pm Saturdays

Lutheran Service: 10:30 am Sundays

1600 Grant St, Denver, CO 80203

303-839-1432

<http://saintpauldenver.com>

Also check out our friends of  
**BOULDER COMMUNITY IN  
DISCERNMENT**

Mass: 1:30 pm

every first and third Sunday

Community United Church of Christ

2650 Table Mesa Drive

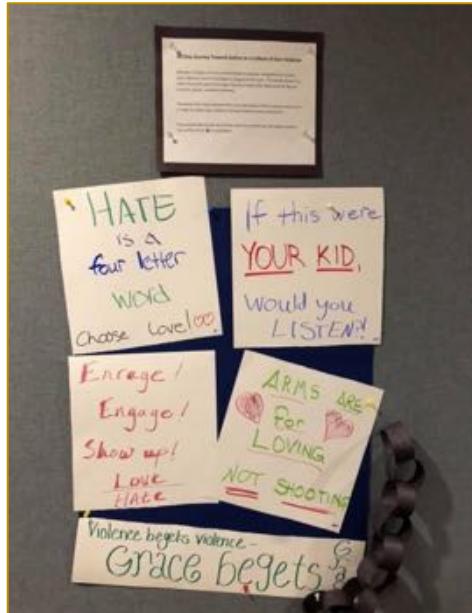
Boulder CO 80305

Mthr. Sheila Dierks 303-449-4302

[sheiladierks1@gmail.com](mailto:sheiladierks1@gmail.com)

sacred planet. We have built an ECO CORNER on the bulletin board in the narthex that holds a dispenser containing printed materials on stewardship and care for the environment. The handouts have three sections: a scripture passage, education/information, and a recommended action. In the spirit of St. Francis's "ecumenical ecology," we are encouraging LOC members to consider taking a minute, or 11 minutes, to light a candle, pray for our earth, listen to an inspiring piece of music, walk outside, smell a flower, get dirt under their fingernails, or find another practice that reminds them of the beauty and sanctity of our common home.

From the middle of August through the middle of October, several members of our LOC community along with members from our host community, Bethlehem Lutheran, participated in an online 60 Day Journey with Justice in a Culture of Gun Violence. Participants gathered at the end of October to pray and



discuss their thoughts and experiences over the course of their journey. They made signs and each person committed to doing one thing to work for justice. If you are interested in taking the journey yourself, the online resource can be found at [www.ELCA.org/60days](http://www.ELCA.org/60days).

In August and September, our liturgical theme was titled "Faces of Faith." We began by asking Light of Christ members to think about people in their lives who embody faith, and then type their responses on our trusty typewriter in the narthex. On August 18th, we focused specifically on our Stephen Ministry team of pastoral



caregivers. At that Mass, we installed RoseMarie as our newest Stephen Minister. As a culmination of our focus on this theme, on September 21st, we held Mass in the "round" style so that we could look across the circle into the faces of faith in our own community. *RoseMarie's installation (above)*

*LOC continues →*

### *Round style Mass:*



"blank canvas"

my girls were young  
nine and three  
when we went to the library in Boulder

after looking at books  
we went out back  
by the creek  
where we found the artist

he had a giant canvas  
and paints, in all the colors  
he painted river tubers and  
river gawkers and river splashers  
in pinks and oranges and reds

oh, my girls watched, intently  
I knew they were soaking it all in

the artist had blank paper and crayons  
that he gave to the girls  
for their own artwork

they took  
they drew  
exactly what they saw him draw  
his tubers  
and river gawkers  
and those glorious splashers  
in pinks and oranges and reds

they didn't draw their own river  
they drew what he drew  
in their own hand now

they drew what he drew  
and in that moment I knew  
how important it was  
to pay attention to what I drew

our children are imitators

oh, what a great privilege it is  
this drawing

look at your canvas, America  
choose your colors  
all the colors  
for all the people  
and draw  
in giant, flowing strokes  
circles  
that bring us all together  
pinks and oranges and reds will not be enough

our children are watching

© Teri Harroun



### FR. TERI HARROUN'S ANNIVERSARY

On September 18th, our pastor, Fr. Teri, celebrated her 10th anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood. To help her celebrate, our community put together a surprise celebration for her after Mass on September 14. Our community showered her with love to show her our appreciation for her leadership of our community.

### LOC ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

LOC's theme for Advent is going to be **Holy Darkness**, with a focus on Incarnation. During our Saturday evening Advent liturgies we will sing "Holy Darkness" by Dan Schutte. The words for the refrain are: "Holy darkness, blessed night, heaven's answer hidden from our sight. As we await you, O God of silence, we embrace your holy night." To reinforce this theme, every Advent Monday evening in December our Adult Formation team will be hosting discussions for participants to explore the wonders of Holy Darkness.

As if that weren't enough, Fr. Teri is once again hosting an **Advent Online Retreat**. If you would like to be a part of this seasonal retreat, e-mail Fr. Teri at [pastor@lightofchristecc.org](mailto:pastor@lightofchristecc.org) by Nov. 22 to be added to her email list. Participants will receive a daily reflection related to our Holy Darkness

theme. Our Advent season will conclude with two Masses on Christmas Eve: a 4pm family-focused service as well as an evening service which will begin at 8:15pm with Christmas Carols followed by Mass at 8:45pm.

## Vicar Dethroned

'Twas bound to happen. For the past 3 years Fr. Michael Nicosia won 2-D BEST IN SHOW in the Aurora Artists Guild's **Gateway to the Rockies Art Show & Sale**, this year running through December 6 at the Community College of Aurora's Fine Arts Building, 16000 E. CentreTech Pkwy, Aurora, CO 80011. Alas, this year he only came in third. He did bring home 2nd Place in the Miniatures category (after getting 1st Place last year — mini violin playing — frowny face emoji). It sure cheered him up that one of his friends attending the Broadway Cabaret on Nov. 21st in the gallery space was finally able to videotape his "If I Were a Rich Man" in its entirety. [www.facebook.com/amy.tapie/videos/1418398071672520/](http://www.facebook.com/amy.tapie/videos/1418398071672520/)

The fabulous ensemble includes Patrice LeBlanc and Lori Leah Monet, and word about town is that a friend of theirs is working on opening a piano bar in Denver to provide a regular venue for their talents (and on-stage shenanigans).

*Fr. Michael's miniature watercolor "Squatter's rights" (image 1" high)*



Father Jim DeMuth  
First Pastor of Mary of Magdala, ECC  
Fort Collins, Colorado



You Are Appreciated and Loved.



Retirement Celebration  
August 18, 2018

## Mary of Magdala

### FR. JIM DEMUTH—FINAL MASS & RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

Father Jim DeMuth celebrated his final mass with Mary of Magdala on August 18th. The readings and music for the mass were picked by his wife Colleen and himself. They represented his joy and love for the celebration of Eucharist and the ongoing hope for Christ's love extended to all—which Jim is quite good at doing. As our first Pastoral Director, Jim led our community through the many challenges of a newly forming church. His deep faith, sense of humor, and flexibility to embrace ideas we early seekers and pilgrims had shepherded MoM to the church community we have today. We miss him and know his retirement is well earned.

### PASTORAL DIRECTOR CALL UPDATE

There are two applicants for the position of Mary of Magdala's Pastoral Director, Dcn. Rosean Amaral and Jane Reina, both members of our community. Interviews have been held, homilies given, and meet-and-greets have been presented to the MoM community. The Call Committee is awaiting survey input from the community before giving a recommendation to the Leadership Council.

MoM is deeply grateful to Fr. Teri Harroun, Mthr. Kae Madden, Mthr. Cynthia Drew, Fr. Don Sutton, and Fr. Paul Burson for stepping up to preside at our liturgies during our interim period with no pastor, as well as to Fr. Michael Nicosia who joins us once a month. Our thanks to this marvelous community of priests who offer their gifts when others are in need.



### JOINT ECO-TEAM FORUMS

The Joint Eco-Justice Team from Mary of Magdala ECC, Trinity Lutheran, and St. Paul's Episcopal Churches held three Adult Forums in September and October on what we can do to be more environmentally conscious in our daily life. There was good information shared and ideas to increase our care of Mother Earth.



### JOINT LITURGY SERVICE

Mary of Magdala ECC, Trinity Lutheran, and St. Paul's Episcopal held their quarterly joint liturgy service on October 27th. St. Paul's did most of the planning, with each church being represented on the altar and doing the readings. There was a potluck brunch before the service. These joint services are giving all of us a chance to mingle with the other churches' members and to appreciate being united in our faith and Christ Consciousness.



*More joint service photos follow →*



## MoM ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

MoM will join with our three church communities for 6pm Wednesday Soup Suppers followed by Taize services at 6:30pm.

A 10:30am joint liturgy will be held Dec. 15th at which the youth of Mary of Magdala, Trinity Lutheran and St. Paul's Episcopal will be presenting a Christmas Pageant.

MoM's Christmas Eve Mass — 6:30pm.



## Church of the Beloved

### A GOOD TIME!

On principle the Church of the Beloved leadership relies on consistent regular offerings from members to sustain our budget. One exception is our fall community-building and fund-raising event. One of the hallmarks is a contest for the best culinary creation. All in all, relationships are the foundation of community and in the process we generate some additional funding.

What is the recipe for our fun, successful community-building and fund-raiser event?

- Take one outgoing visionary leader who is excited about Church of the Beloved,
- add a handful of willing and creative team members,

- whip up 23 diverse, interesting, value-added baskets compiled by ministry teams and individuals,
- gather in a prayer-soaked sanctuary,
- stir in a warm easy meal,
- spice generously with a mouth-watering dessert contest,
- and fold in lively humor and conversation with members, friends and family.

Simmer for a couple hours on low, checking frequently to adjust the temperature as the drawings commenced and fabulous baskets were distributed. Garnish with copious gratitude for friendships forged and strengthened and coffers filled. Amen.



### CONFIRMATIONS!

With great joy, November 16th, 2019, COB celebrated the Confirmations of three adult members of our faith community. Mother Kae Madden and Alice Bradley prepared the candidates and their sponsors. ECC Axillary Bishop Denise, presided at liturgy with Mother Kae and Deacon Buddy Fricke. It was



an exciting event for our whole community to complete the sacramental initiation of these dear members.

Adding to that joy was the opportunity to meet and celebrate the sacraments with Bishop Denise who shared that as a "baby bishop" this was her first Confirmation. No one would have known it, however, as the Spirit moved, and Bishop Denise presided with ease and grace making our candidates feel at ease while calling them to full membership in the Body of Christ.

Before the evening liturgy, Bishop Denise met with each candidate, discussed their call and gifts, encouraging each in their spiritual

journey. During the homily she spoke about each candidate, their choice of patron saint and their calling. Each was presented with a certificate of completion and a scroll which contained a letter they wrote to themselves on retreat in which they committed to God and themselves to share their gifts with the Church and the world.

A key point Bishop Denise made in her homily is that sacraments are not just between us and God. They are an experience of the presence of Christ in and with the Community. She explained how when one among us is Baptized or Confirmed or receives Eucharist for the first time, our own experience of that sacrament is recreated, and we are each renewed in grace as individuals and as a community. That grace was surely felt by all! We are filled with gratitude for April, Ken and Michael, for Bishop Denise our clergy, catechists and most of all our Beloved Community in which we continue to grow in love and grace. Glory Be to God! *COB continues →*



*Confirmands pictured from left to right*

#### **Kenneth James Guadalupe Balcom**

Ken received Baptism as an infant, and Reconciliation and First Communion as a child completed his Sacraments of Initiation with Confirmation.

#### **April Lynn Joan Begler**

April was Baptized this past Easter Vigil and was received the sacrament of Reconciliation this summer. Receiving Eucharist has been a vital part of her formation and today she formally received Eucharist and was confirmed.

#### **Michael Andrew Martin Mendoza**

Michael received Baptism as a young adult and received the sacrament of Reconciliation this summer. He has been moved by receiving Eucharist during his formation. He formally received Eucharist and was confirmed.

#### **COB CHRISTMAS EVE**

4pm Mass for All Ages, and 9pm Mass on December 24th.

## **Rice & Beans**

#### **REGIONAL OUTREACH**

COB's social justice team set the date for our next rice and beans project. Traditionally, this is a regional invitation. We (COB) purchase about 800 pounds of bulk rice and beans. We gather and pray, reflect on hunger, then gather around the tables in the fellowship hall and package the rice and beans into 1 pound bags for distribution to local food banks. We particularly invite our children and youth to participate in this hands-on ministry. Good conversation flows as we get to know each other while our hands are busy. Many hands makes light work. At the conclusion, we gather in the sanctuary, bless the bounty, and each community participating takes some bags to the food bank in your area. Rice and beans: Blessed, broken and shared.

We know that the food bank supplies diminish after Christmas. We planned the event for Saturday, Feb. 8 at 2:30 p.m. It usually is a little over an hour and that would get folks back to share at their own Saturday (or Sunday) liturgy.

The team hasn't yet identified a coordinator, so for now, please let Mother Kae know if you plan to participate. More details to come.



## **Old & Independent Catholics**

On October 25th many of our ECC bishops, clergy and lay leaders traveled to Holy Family Church in Austin, TX, for a first gathering of various jurisdictions of the Old & Independent Catholic movement across the country. Rev. Rosa Buffone reported on Facebook, "We explored what being church together might look like based on the ecclesiology of the ancient church. Good conversation, new friendships, exciting times ahead with the Holy Spirit guiding our steps!"



*Greg Yonker, Mother Cynthia Drew & drumming circle instructor Bishop Cathy Chalmers of Ascension Alliance, Everett, WA, at prelude to night devotional at Old & Independent Catholics meeting*



# Church of the Holy Family

## LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Due to financial reasons, Mother Cynthia and Holy Family have decided to part, and Mother Cynthia will be returning to her home in North Carolina in mid-December. Your prayers for Holy Family and Mother Cynthia as they discern their paths forward are greatly appreciated.



## PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Holy Family's parents with young children group got off to a great start in October with Carey, Paisley, & Charley (not pictured) Alvarez Bacha, and Jonathan, Christopher, Chloe, and Caylee Azteca-Acosta. They are next planning a book discussion, and, since the two families have moved closer to each other, may meeting informally closer to their homes in the future. Mother Cynthia is pictured with the Arteza-Acostas on the joyous September 7 occasions of Caylee's baptism — Holy Family's 4th baptism this year.

Paisley & Carey Alvarez Bacha



## CHF SACRED EXPERIENCES

Last Spring we started our Rosary Group, meeting each Wednesday at 6 pm in the church office to pray the Rosary — and we also include Litanies and lots of laughs! We would love to have anyone else join us any night you wish.

When PrideFest time came around, at the last minute, I thought it would be nice to give away Rosaries at our booth. Mother Cynthia was able to quickly buy out the last of their stock of 50-cent plastic Rosaries on hand at the nearby Catholic supply store Queen of Angels. So we had 25 Rosaries at the festival and we were pleasantly surprised that we ran out so fast — and that most everyone already knew how to pray it!

We recently decided to start making handmade Rosaries to give out there next year. We are starting off with all twine hand-knotted Rosaries and hope to branch out to other styles. A sample of the Rosary we are first making was passed around at Mass last week. Rochelle now has that one, but, since PrideFest is not till next June, we are going to start by giving away the first batch we make here in our community. We will continue to make them and hopefully have lots more to give away at the next PrideFest!

In the meantime, we invite you to have a Rosary we have made as they become available. Please also let us know if you are interested in learning how to make them — whether or not you can join our group meetings on Wednesdays at 6 pm. Instructions and resources (including good YouTube videos) can be found at RosaryArmy.com, where, if you wish, they will also send you one sample free hand-knotted Rosary in a color of your choice. I'd be happy to help anyone who's interested get started — please just let me know!

Many Blessings! ~ Cara Thompson



Church of the Holy Family celebrated their annual Mass in the Park on August 18th. Utah Park provided a peaceful lake setting for Mass and the picnic afterwards. Little Paisley mostly enjoyed the ice. Thanks to our social committee chair Anne Grant and her husband Mike who did so much to set up the site, including the tents, for a great gathering enjoyed by all.

CHF continues →





Maureen Crocker and Mother Cynthia attended a program at the Sacred Heart Jesuit Retreat House by Fr. Ed Kinerk on "Gratitude and Forgiveness." He emphasized that forgiveness doesn't happen once, but is a negotiation of our feelings over time. On gratitude, he suggested we share our feelings of gratitude with God every day. Seeing a herd of beautiful white-tailed deer on the grounds, we were both filled with gratitude!



Holy Family had a blessing of the animals Oct. 4 in honor of the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi (patron saint of ecology). Pictured with Mother Cynthia are Cara & Marsha Thompson with their hairless cat Uber, who was anxious to get on with it and continue exploring Christ the Savior's lovely memorial garden.

### WHY I TITHE TO THE CHURCH

*~ a testimony by CHF member  
Linda Sue Head*

Growing up the youngest on a farm near Kersey, CO, with 5 brothers and sisters and parents who chartered the Greeley Wesleyan Church in 1950, I am rooted in church and church is my extended family.

One of the basic principles my parents believed in and followed was the discipline of tithing.

As a young mother with 3 young boys married to a man who was not able to provide for us well, I fell away from my teaching of tithing. It just wasn't logical based on our needs and expenses. We struggled with paying for car repair, doctor's visits and other things that came up beyond our ordinary monthly obligations, and I was the one responsible for deciding who and what to pay each month.

One January, our pastor taught on the purpose and reason for bringing the tithe to the church. He challenged his audience to pay the tithe FIRST, not last from the leftovers, but FIRST. Well, I wasn't even paying it last. My heart



Maureen invites those interested to join her for a program at Sacred Heart called "Advent: Rejoicing in the great gift of the incarnation," presented by Sr. Eileen Currie on Tuesday, December 3rd from 9:30am to 2:30pm. She's found Sr. Eileen's programs over the years to be spiritually meaningful.



was touched. I knew how important the church family and ministry was in my life and felt challenged to TRUST in God, not my calculator, and make some changes. I figured out what 10% of our income would be, and sighed. Did I have enough FAITH and TRUST in God to make this adjustment?

After wrestling with it for several days and seeking direction from my Lord, I added "Tithe" to the first line of the bills to pay, and wrote out the check. With some minor adjustments, there was enough to pay every bill. I'm not saying it was easy, but we were able to honor God and give him the offering first each month. I noticed that the kids were not needing doctor appointments as frequently, and the car seemed to run without extra repair. It was a good test for me and I'm grateful to have learned this lesson.

One of my favorite passages on tithing is in Malachi 3. It's a command and a promise. "Bring the whole **tithe** into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

To summarize, I tithe to the church because:

- ~ it is a command with a promise;
- ~ it blesses me and others;
- ~ it is an act of obedience;
- ~ it is one way to share responsibility;
- ~ it honors God, my pastor and my church community.

### ECUMENICAL CONFIRMATION

Just three days before ECC Bishop Francis Krebs & ELCA Bishop Jim Gonia celebrated our Ecumenical Eucharist, Carmen Henk participated in CHF's first ecumenical confirmation (affirmation of baptism) October 27 with the three Christ the Savior teens with whom she began preparing for confirmation in September 2018. →



Carmen with her confirmation class & Pastor Paul Ziegler, Christ the Savior Lutheran Church



Sponsor Rochelle Head,  
Carmen's paternal grandparents,  
& Carmen with her parents Mike &  
Vanessa & her brother Ben



Rochelle  
& Carmen

Ben &  
Carmen



## CHF ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

Given their transition, check for  
updates at

[www.churchofholymfamily.org](http://www.churchofholymfamily.org)

or their Facebook page

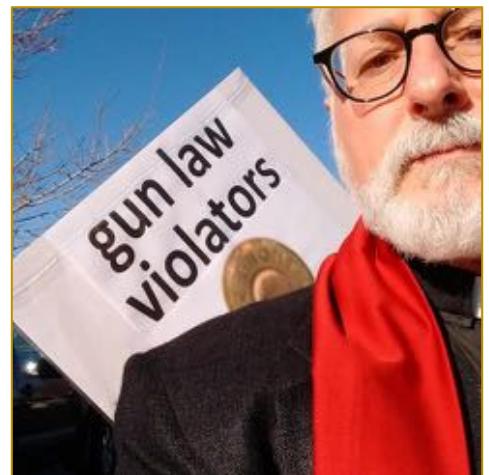
[@HolyFamilyColoradoECC](https://www.facebook.com/HolyFamilyColoradoECC)



## faithful protest

COLORADO FAITH COMMUNITIES  
UNITED TO END GUN VIOLENCE

Fr. Michael got word that CFCU would be protesting a flagrant defiance of our State's gun regulations. As reported recently by 9News, 8 out of the 10 Front Range gun shops interviewed persist in selling high-capacity ammunition magazines and/or kits to assemble them, in direct violation of the 15-round maximum mandated by Colorado law. While the media didn't cover this social justice action, hopefully our presence informed gun club members who may be unaware of this unlawful practice.



# building the local church

The regional Council has reviewed the work of our Polity Framework Team and Bishop Call Committee, and suggested edits which the teams are taking under advisement. The holy conversation will continue at the next RMRC meeting on Dec. 5th at COB. As usual, these meetings are open and guests are invited to offer their insights.

While we had anticipated opening the Bishop Call for nominations by now, the Council wishes to give our communities in leadership transition further opportunities to provide input before that next step. Even with that momentary pause we think we'll still be on track for having a bishop-elect affirmed at SYNOD 2020. Our regional prayer continues —

**Holy One, sweet Guide**

**Reveal Your will; our new "yes" together. Amen.**



**Thanksgiving blessings!**

## Priests of the Region

This series began as a way of getting to know our regional priests better and learn a bit about what they're up to.

Next up:



**MOTHER SHEILA DIERKS**

The Community in Discernment continues to bloom in Boulder CO — ups and downs, but mostly growth and hope. Our host community, Community UCC, is more than friendly. Many of the people in the pews sat and knelt with us in the local Catholic parishes as they struggled and in some ways fell apart. This intentional community has been a wonderful way to continue those relationships. Perhaps what Jesus had in mind as

he taught us a whole new meaning of All Are Welcome!

While we held soup suppers during Lent in the season of Advent we'll be offering mid-week celebrations, and will share at least one reflective prayer service late in this time of quiet reflection.

Our music group is stable and faithful with strong voices and instruments. With a good theology base, we all work together. I expect that we will grow in shared ministry. Good stuff!

A powerful part of the liturgy is the sharing time and experience around the food table after worship. It is a bounty of homemade snacks and sweets — and a couple bottles of wine — all delightful and praised. We acknowledge birthdays and anniversaries and share good wishes and sorrows. In some ways this personal exchange is a sweet, intimate heart of our time of sharing.

We are an elder group, no young families at all. And we are small in number, perhaps thirty to forty members. All good people. We are close, and pray each other's prayers, not only in community but with home visits and phone time. I trust that we are following the path Jesus has invited us to as we walk together.

**Vicar's note:** In the last issue I referred to our priests as members of the local *Presbyteral Council*, referring to a collegial association of the active priests in a particular region together with their bishop. Our Polity Team, engaged in articulating our vision of the local church, thought *Presbyteral Circle* sounded less hierarchical. Subsequent reflections about pastoral care have led us to consider expanding the traditional association to include deacons and lay pastoral ministers — a *Ministerial Circle*. As with all re-imagining, a broader conversation is in order. We may not settle on a name and the group's composition until a bishop-elect weighs in, but all agree that our ministers need a forum for sharing and mutual support.

**WINTER ISSUE SUBMISSION DEADLINE FEB. 15**

...so take lots of holiday photos and get your Lenten schedules together!