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This issue has 4 pages



## Being Kind and Useful

By Mark Nepo

*A reflection for Lent. . . .*

Through conflict and joy, and love and loss, we're asked to craft our soul and weave our journey into the one life we're given. This is how we become instruments of love. A shovel, a hammer, a pair of calipers, a screwdriver, a candle, an altar, a set of worry beads, a crooked divining rod—these tools are never as happy as when they're being used. As are we. To be relied on, to be leaned on, to be asked to give something we didn't think we could give, to be asked to listen beyond our edge of patience, to be asked to carry what others have trouble carrying—these are hard blessings that have us grow for being of use. In learning a craft, any craft, we are crafted. In working to create anything, we are worked and in turn created.

Since living is breath-taking and hard, we need the stories of our own transformation to become the personal myths that guide us, that help us remember who we are and how we're joined to life. Every day, life asks us to accept that we are radiant and broken. And time asks us to uncover what it means to love the world. And love asks us to gather the gifts that come from keeping the window of our heart open, while integrity asks us to continually widen our circle of compassion. No matter what we face, we're asked to stay tender and resilient, so we don't harden to life.

One of the ethical challenges in living is not to betray ourselves while giving of ourselves, tricky business at best. In the end, all the insights we can unravel and all the paradoxes we can enter are meaningless if they can't help us live and be of service to each other.

– from the book, *The One Life We're Given*

## February offerings and attendance

2/03/2019	46	\$ 4106.00
2/10/2019	49	\$ 2435.00
2/17/2019	40	\$ 1342.00
2/24/2019	55	\$ 3292.79

Total \$ 11,175.79                      Average Attendance: 48

**The church needs about \$10,000 a month to cover expenses.**



Bonnie Daly	1-Mar	Birthday
Dona Harmon	3-Mar	Birthday
Curt Daly	9-Mar	Birthday
Erika Kenney	14-Mar	Birthday
Jo Taylor	15-Mar	Birthday
Deb Johnson	19-Mar	Birthday
Bernie Joha	22-Mar	Birthday
Ron Jerman	26-Mar	Birthday

## WRCC UCC March Calendar

- March 2 – Yoga with Melinda at 8:30 a.m.
- March 3 – Transfiguration Sunday (Mark 9:2-8), Sunday School at 9, Worship at 10, David Preaching and Claudia in training.
- March 6 – Ash Wednesday service. We will have a soup supper at 6 p.m. followed a contemplative Ash Wednesday service (6:45 p.m.) and application of ashes. This marks the beginning of Lent.
- March 9 – Deacons and Trustees meet. **Yoga with Melinda** at **8:00 a.m.**
- March 10 – **Daylight Saving Time** begins! Spring forward. First Sunday in Lent. **Confirmation class** meets at noon.
- March 17 – Second Sunday in Lent: Recognition Sunday
- March 23 – **No Yoga**
- March 24– Third Sunday in Lent. *PEO meeting in fellowship hall 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.*
- March 30 – **No Yoga**
- March 31– Fourth Sunday in Lent. One Great Hour of Sharing offering.



## Survey Results – “Be The Church”

During our February annual meeting we took a survey based on our UCC “Be The Church” banner. I asked people to select their top 4 concerns or interests as to what our church might emphasize in its mission and focus. Here are the results! My hope is that we can begin to have conversations on what some of these topics mean and how we as a church and Christian people might live into these principles. The number in parentheses indicates how many people selected that topic.

- Embrace diversity (17)**    **REJECT RACISM (16)**    **Fight for the powerless (14)**  
**Protect the environment (13)**    **Love God (13)**    **Care for the poor (10)**  
**Forgive often (10)**    **SHARE EARTHLY RESOURCES (9)**    **Enjoy this life (10)**  
**Other - create just political/social /economic systems**

## NOTES FROM AN OLD BULLETIN, OR, "MY, HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED!" BY CO-PASTOR DAVID

Recently as we were at home going through some old papers I came across a Sunday worship bulletin from our church. The date was March 31, 1957. That's 62 years ago! As I reviewed the contents I noticed quite a few differences—some pertaining specifically to our congregation, and others concerning conditions throughout society.

- The front cover of the bulletin was printed in advance by a church bulletin service. The cover photo shows people—all white folks under 40—sitting shoulder-to-shoulder in a church sanctuary. Without exception all the women are wearing coats, hats, and white gloves, and the men—including even teen-aged boys—are wearing coat-and-tie. (If this dress code were in effect today, how would that affect our Sunday attendance? ☹ )
- The inside and back of the bulletin were typed with a mechanical typewriter and printed on a mimeograph machine. (This involved stencils that were cut with the typewriter keys and a big, messy, ink-filled drum that was turned with a hand crank.)
- The church's street address was the same as it is now, but the city is listed as "Denver 15, Colorado." This was before the advent of Zip Codes. Larger cities were divided into numbered postal "zones."
- The church phone number was "Belmont 3-9391." Belmont was a type of prefix invented by the phone company to help people remember the first two digits of phone numbers. (When I was a boy, our home phone prefix was "Fleetwood.") Each number on the phone's rotary dial was associated with three letters of the alphabet. There were no push-button or touch-tone dials. Phones did not have electronic memory; callers had to either memorize the numbers or look them up in the phone book. (That would never work today.) The only simpler aspect of phone numbers was that area codes were not included; back then, area codes were used only by the Operator when you wanted to make a "long-distance call."
- The minister was William A. Davis. Bill Davis had a reputation as a very skillful preacher. He was the pastor of our church for about twenty years during the '50s and '60s.
- The "pianist" was Beverly Smith. In the early years of my pastorate at our church, I used to visit Beverly in the nursing home. She loved music. Beverly died several years ago and is no doubt now playing the piano or organ for some Celestial Choir.
- The beginning of the program included the following instruction: "Upon entering the church let the worshipers bow in prayer and wait in silence and meditation upon the Spirit of God." What a novel idea!
- After the prelude and opening hymn there was a "Call to Prayer," followed by "Prayer of Intercession," "Bidding Prayer," and "Pastoral Prayer." Then came another hymn, the scripture reading, the anthem, and the sermon. *After* the sermon the offering was received, and the service ended with a "recessional hymn," the benediction, and the postlude.
- The service itself did not include spoken welcome or announcements, an introit, words of welcome, time with the children, the Lord's Prayer, the Doxology, or a choral response to the Benediction. The entire order of worship fit onto a half-page.
- In the printed announcements, the Sunday schedule included Church School at 9:30, Worship at 11:00, and Pilgrim Fellowship for youth at 6:30 p.m. On Tuesday night at 8:00 a Lenten Lecture was being given by Professor Harvey Potthoff from Iliff. On Thursday, rehearsals were at 6:30 for the Junior Choir and 7:30 for the Senior Choir.

I found it interesting to think about the ways in which church services in the '50s differed from our services today. Many of today's changes are great improvements. (Who would go back to mimeograph machines and rotary-dial phones, or white gloves and neckties?) But maybe there are a few aspects of "the good old days" that we could take a second look at and revive today—at least with modifications. What do you think?

# MOUSE MORSELS

**Happy March!** People have been out and about this last month. [Donilyn Thomson](#) traveled to Eugene, Oregon to surprise her sister Jo An for her birthday! They had a wonderful time. What a thoughtful sister! [Terri and Ron Applebach](#) traveled to Glenwood Springs to enjoy the hot springs. With all this cold weather, we bet it was a nice to soak in the hot water. [Melinda Townsend](#) has been making several trips down to New Mexico in preparation for moving her 92-year-old step-father, Pat, to Denver. He has now officially moved and we are happy to report that he and his cat are adjusting well. We hope to meet him soon. [Gabrielle and Robert Sherry](#) recently traveled over to Gunnison to celebrate McKenna's 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday! [McKenna](#) is doing great! She loves Gunnison, the beautiful outdoors, and has many good friends. [Skyler Sherry](#) just turned 21! We hear she is enjoying being 21! [Nancy Conner](#) traveled Jackson, Mississippi. She and her two brothers commemorated the 50-year anniversary of their father's death. We are thinking of you, Nancy! **Thank you . . .** to all of our new committee members who are stepping up to serve the church in various capacities. We also thank all of you who continue to serve our church and community in so many varied ways. You are the church and you make it great! [Rod and Joanne Gustafson](#) have made a generous donation for the purchase of a new electronic sign. This will greatly improve our ability to communicate church events to the public and change our quotes more easily. Yay! **Congratulations . . .** to [Explore & Discover](#) for being selected as a 2018 Public Health Champion of the Year. This is an award for going above and beyond basic requirements to ensure health regulations. The annual Public Health Champions Awards recognize the vital contributions made by individuals, groups and organizations toward our larger shared goal of a healthier, thriving Jefferson County. Wow! Congratulations go out to [Jennifer Brozovich](#) for being accepted into a year-long program at D.U. to earn an Administrator License. This will give her many more opportunities for leadership in the public school system. You pastor **David Conner** just got published! He and Dr. **Demian Wheeler** (<https://www.unitedseminary.edu/faculty/demian-wheeler/>) are the editors of *Conceiving an Alternative: Philosophical Resources for an Ecological Civilization* (<http://processcenturypress.com/publications/forthcoming/>). We are delighted to welcome a new member, [Constance Wise](#), into our fellowship. Constance teaches religious studies, women's studies, and philosophy at the University of Colorado, Denver, and at Metro State University. Constance, we are so happy that you have joined us! We have also received the excellent news that [Dianne Nelson](#) is moving back to the Denver area. We hope to see you soon, Dianne! We are sad to report, however, that [Jeri Mitchell](#) is moving to Alaska. We wish you the very best on your exciting adventure but we will miss you. **Prayers . . .** Please keep Charlotte Rubenking and her sister and family in your prayers. Her sister Janet lives in Arizona and has entered hospice.

*Please let us know of any news you have for us. See you soon!*

The Church Mouse is published monthly by the Wheat Ridge Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. The deadline for copy is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Articles may be handwritten or typed, but we prefer plain text sent via email to [wheatridgeucc@gmail.com](mailto:wheatridgeucc@gmail.com). Articles must indicate the name of the writer and/or sender. Unsigned articles are written by the editor. The church website is: [www.wheatridgeucc.org](http://www.wheatridgeucc.org). News and photos for the website should be sent to the same email address listed above. Sunday worship is at 10:00 a.m. Office hours are 8:30 to 1:00pm daily. Monday is the minister's day off. The pastor may be reached at 303-238-6271 (office), 303-246- 0589 (Claudia's cell), or [wheatridgeucc@gmail.com](mailto:wheatridgeucc@gmail.com).