

March 2021

"THE LINK"

United Community Church

Pastor Christian Stradley

Cell Phone (406) 934-4367

Church Office 406-18-4822

BIRTHDAYS

March 10	Katie Stauffer
March 12	Kamden McArthur
March 14	Kristopher Brabec
March 25	Marshal Mead
March 29	Leah Krieger

NO ANNIVERSARIES

U.C.C. HAPPENINGS

March 3	Soup and Bread
March 7	Communion Sunday Session Meeting
March 10	Soup and Bread
March 14	Farewell Luncheon for Christian Set Clocks Ahead
March 17	Saint Patrick's Day Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner at 6:00 P.M. (No Soup and Bread)
March 21	Welcome Rev. David Murchie
March 24	Lent Soup and Bread
March 28	Palm Sunday
March 31	Lent Soup and Bread

Upcoming April Events:

Maundy Thursday Fish Dinner on April 1st



Please join us for a special luncheon to honor our pastor, Christian Stradley, for his service to our church, and to wish him continued success on his journey through his ministry.

SUNDAY, MARCH 14th
(Following Worship Service)

We welcome Trent Krieger to the Session!

(Session Members and contact Information on Page 4)

From the Pastor's Desk

"GOD'S PLAN FOR THE ELECTION IS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED"

By Christian Stradley

When we speak of God's sovereignty, we think of verses like *Job 42:2* that "no one can thwart His purposes," *Isaiah 46:10* "My purpose will be established," and *Psalms 33:11* "The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of His heart from generation to generation." On top of that, in regards to positions of authority, we are reminded by Paul in *Romans 13:1* that "there is no authority except from God and those which exist are established by God," and Jesus Himself alludes to this idea while telling Pilate, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above" (*John 19:11*). Therefore, throughout the entire counsel of God's Word, we are left with the conclusion that God's sovereign plan is always being enacted without any hiccups and that there is no possible way any leader can rise to power "unless it had been given them from above."

What if Biden didn't actually win and the election was rigged? What if there was Russian involvement? What if all of America is being duped right now by our nation's leaders and this is the beginning of the end? First and foremost, I am not going to say that any of those things are true, happening, or have happened. Why? If there is some "proven" legitimacy to any of them, they are still conspiracy theories. We, the American people, will simply not know the truth within the political campus in the world due to all the lying and deceit on, wait for it... BOTH sides. There may be a lesser of two evils, but in reality, both parties are made up of sinful, fallible men with wicked hearts that hate God. Therefore, as Isaiah says in his 8th chapter, "You are not to say, 'It is a conspiracy!' In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it. It is the Lord of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread" (*Isaiah 8:12-13*). You see that? Our trust is not to be in governing authorities, nor are we to come up with all these "conspiracies" or fear what the people fear. For the average human being, this life is the best life they will ever face. For the believer, our best life is to come, which is why we are to regard God as holy, and He shall be our fear and dread. What does that mean? It means we don't respond to election results like the world does. It means we don't get all bent out of shape because the president we wanted didn't get in office. It means we don't start crying "conspiracy" like the pagans, who some may actually be in agreement with, are chanting. Do we fight for justice? Yes. Do we fight for religious freedoms? Absolutely. Do we do our best to advocate for the life of the unborn? Most definitely.

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From the Pastor's Desk (Continued)

However, above all, we must regard our God as holy and be in fear of Him. Meaning, we must recognize that despite the seeming chaos right in front of us, and the potential of extreme wickedness coming from a particular party or candidate, God is on His throne, reigning and ruling in accordance to His great plan, and for the believer, this should be tremendously comforting, knowing that it is always for our good (*Romans 8:28*)!

Finally, you might still be confused with how God's plan could be enacted, even through a potentially rigged election. Well, if we go all the way back to *Psalms 33:10*, a verse that precedes a verse that we all agreed affirms the sovereign plan of God "from generation to generation," then we will see a peculiar truth laid out for us. David writes, "The Lord nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples." Are you aware of what we just had happen in this country? Thousands, if not millions of Americans and even many Christians, were convinced that we would be able to set up all these counsels to "overturn the election." Texas tried to file a lawsuit, it didn't work.

We tried to get it to the Supreme Court, it didn't work. Trump stayed in office until the day he was essentially forced to pass the baton to Biden in hopes that something would happen that would nullify the results of the election, it didn't work. Why? "The Lord nullifies the counsel of the nations." If God has, in His plan, Biden being in office, there is nothing that can stop that from occurring and God can use a variety of means to bring His decree to pass, including a potentially rigged election. What's the result? "He frustrates the plans of the peoples." I know several people, whether loved ones, fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, or just Trump-loving friends that were absolutely devastated by this result. Some in fact, have still, to this day, refused to accept the results.

MODERATOR'S REPORT

Our church is currently in transition, as we say goodbye to our current pastor, Christian Stradley, and welcome the Reverend David Murchie and his wife Joy to our church.

Christian will preach his last Sermon for us on March 14th. Christian accepted the pastoral position with our church right out of Bible School. We had the privilege of hearing him preach his very first Sermon in August of 2019. We have been truly blessed with his knowledge of the Bible and his gift of not just preaching, but *teaching* God's Word. He has continued his education during this time with us and will soon complete his Bachelor's in Religion Degree. It has been both a joy and a privilege to be a part of this young man's journey through his ministry. We wish him all the best as he follows his heart wherever God leads him. Our love, heartfelt wishes, and prayers go with him.

The Murchies will be flying in from Japan late on the evening of March 3rd. They will be required to quarantine for two weeks. Therefore, if all goes well, Rev. Murchie plans to give his first Sermon on March 21st. They will not have a car and all they will have are their personal belongings; it may be a month or two before the shipment of the remainder of their personal items arrive.

Since we currently rent out the Manse, we have rented an apartment duplex for the Murchies. So, we have been in the process of obtaining the necessities for everyday living, such as living room and bedroom furniture, a dining room table and chairs, washer and dryer, and kitchen incidentals such as dishes, silverware/utensils, pans, bakeware, coffee pot, toaster, microwave, and linens and towels. We have had to purchase some things (*used*), but several items have been generously donated. We would like to extend our thanks to those of you that have contributed.

During this transition, we are depending on our members to volunteer their time, gifts and talents. We understand that this pandemic has caused a reduction in attendance, and understandably so, especially for those at a higher risk due to their age or health issues. **(Continued on Page 3)**

"FUTURE"

Before me is a future
All unknown, a path unrod.
Beside me is a Friend,
Well-loved and known,
That friend is God.
Before me lies a new
And untried way,
Midst shadows dim.
And day by day
I walk with Him.



6:00 P.M. Wednesdays During Lent



Unlock every good thing

**Prayer is
the Key,
but Faith
unlocks the
door.**

Moderator's Report (continued)

The Church is open for weekly Sunday services. We are providing masks and taking sanitizing measures. For those who are able, we encourage you, and we look forward to seeing you return to worship with us. *We have missed you!!* 

There may be some changes in the structure of the service with a new Pastor. We ask for your patience and understanding during this process. We welcome both your suggestions and comments. As a Session, we are making decisions that affect you, our "church family", and we are concerned with your needs. Your input is very important to us. Please don't think your one voice cannot make a difference.....the voice of one man, Jesus Christ, still impacts the world today!

Consider volunteering your time to usher, host the coffee hour, provide music for worship, assist with Sunday school or afterschool program, church cleaning or maintenance, etc. We are created to serve God and bring glory to Him through our God-given gifts and talents; it draws us closer to Him and one another, and we grow spiritually. When we grow, the church grows.

".....to equip His people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up....." **Ephesians 4:12**

The Session generally meets every second Sunday of the month at 12:30 P.M. following worship and fellowship. It is an open meeting and all are welcome to attend. Addressing the needs and goals of our church should be a corroborative effort that will ultimately help us to grow spiritually, individually and as a church. If you have something you wish to bring to the Session's attention, please contact Gail Beckham at 406-670-2644 and the issue/item will be placed on the agenda for discussion. Or, contact one of the other Session members, whose contact information is on the last page of this newsletter.

God's Blessings to you!
Gail Beckham, Session Moderator

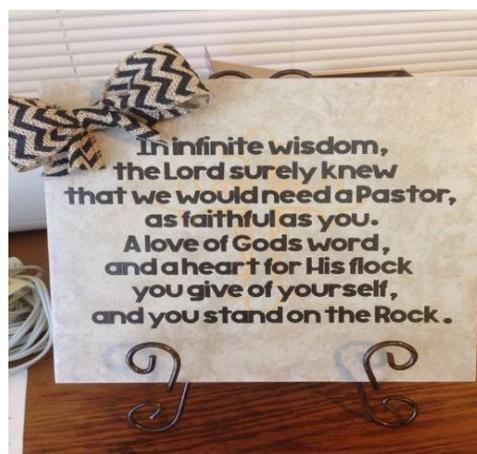


The Reverend David Murchie

We will soon be welcoming our new Pastor who will be arriving on March 3rd. He and his wife are coming from Japan, where they have been living for approximately thirty (30) years. They will be required to quarantine for fourteen (14) days; therefore, Rev. Murchie will preach his first Sermon in our church on March 21st.



CORNER BEEF & CABBAGE
(with Carrots and Bread)
MARCH 17th at 6:00 P.M.



May the the good Lord bless and keep you till we meet again. Good luck, we will miss you.



Farewell and God's Speed, Christian!




A Special
THANK YOU


We would like to extend our appreciation to our past Session members that have volunteered their time, gifts and talents in serving Christ through our church. Thank you for your generous willingness to serve and your years of dedicated service:

Carol Beery
Marshall Mead
Mike Esser

Thank you to Debbie **Skiles** for her time on the newsletter.

“ANNUAL PER CAPITA”

The United Community Church is affiliated with United Church of Christ (*MT-NWyoming Conference*) and the Presbyterian Church (*Yellowstone Presbytery*). We pay annual “Per Capita” dues to each of these denominations.

This year’s U.C.C. Per Capita is \$20.00 per member (*this is the option we chose*); Presbytery’s Per Capita is \$55.00 per member. The total of \$75.00 is divided in half because we are dually affiliated. **Therefore, the amount due from each Member is \$37.50.**

If you are a Member and have not paid your Per Capita dues, please submit this amount at your earliest convenience. *Please be sure to note on your check or envelope that it is payment for your “Per Capita.”*

If you should have any questions, please contact the church Treasurer, Glenda Brabec.

The Church sincerely appreciates your assistance in fulfilling its obligations.

U.C.C. CHURCH SESSION

MODERATOR:	Gail Beckham	406-670-2644 jg102371@gmail.com
TREASURER:	Glenda Brabec	406-740-0062 s8glendab@yahoo.com
WORSHIP:	Gail Beckham	406-670-2644 jg102371@gmail.com
PROPERTY:	Marcus Arneson	406-853-1140 coacharnesonfbm@gmail.com
	Trent Krieger	406-855-6910 trentk@rosi-colstrip.com
STEWARDSHIP:	Darell Brabec	406-740-0541 photobrabec@yahoo.com
EDUCATION:	Connie Sell	406-208-7624 cjsell49@gmail.com
FELLOWSHIP:	Nola Parry	406-749-8530
CLERK:	Kathy Stinson	406-740-2149 Stinsons02@gmail.com

SESSION MEETINGS are held on the 2nd Sunday of every month following the worship service and coffee hour (approximately 12:30) and are open meetings.

EDITOR for “The Link”: Gail Beckham (***Newsletter Deadline: 23rd***)



REMINDER
DON'T FORGET TO
CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS
MARCH 14th

Smile

Lord, give me a sense of humor.
 Give me the grace to see a joke,
 To get some humor out of life
 And pass it on to other folk.

Suggested Hymns for the:

Dentist	<i>“Crown Him with Many Crowns”</i>
Weatherman	<i>“These Shall Be Showers of Blessings”</i>
Contractor	<i>“The Church’s One Foundation”</i>
Golfer	<i>“There’s a Green Hill Far Away”</i>
Politician	<i>“Standing on the Promises”</i>
IRS Agent	<i>“I Surrender All”</i>
Gossip	<i>“Pass It On”</i>
Electrician	<i>“Send the Light”</i>

