



The Journey Shared

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

better together

VICAR MUSINGS ON OUR ECUMENICAL CONVERSATIONS ON THE LOCAL LEVEL BETWEEN THE ECC AND THE ELCA

“Christ’s Church, Better Together” is more than a catch phrase used by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). On the ground, where the Spirit moves beyond the confines of human polity, we are finding it to be a lived reality among the communities of the ECC’s Rocky Mountain and Southwest Regions that are in relationship with ELCA communities.

Building ecumenical relationships is a heart-felt priority of our ECC Presiding

Bishop Francis Krebs and ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod Bishop Jim Gonia. So on July 19, 2018, they gathered the clergy and lay leadership from said communities: St. Paul Lutheran and Catholic Community of Faith in Denver, Light of Christ ECC and Bethlehem Lutheran in Longmont, Mary of Magdala ECC and Trinity Lutheran in Ft. Collins (they also partner with St. Paul’s Episcopal), Blessed Oscar Romero ECC and St. Paul’s Lutheran in Albuquerque, and Church of the Holy Family who is currently researching the possibility of nesting in one of two local Lutheran Churches in Aurora. Church of the Beloved, being nested with Northglenn UCC in Northglenn, also took part in the gathering as we shared

our experiences of ecumenism and the exploration of deepening relationships. We were honored to be joined via video conferencing by Kathryn Lohre, assistant to the presiding bishop and the ELCA’s Executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations. (When the ECC was accepted into the National Council of Churches, Kathryn served as the NCC president.)

In sharing our experiences, we were amazed at how the Holy Spirit was doing similar things in our respective communities. I encourage you to talk to your community’s leadership to hear what excited them about the day!

Collaboration between ECC and ELCA congregations is not new or unique →

to our region; there are other examples around the country. “Nesting within” churches of other denominations, our evolving partnerships have been moving away from rental contracts to the value of relationships as the one Body of Christ. Many of these ecumenical partnerships have been forged by the passion of pastoral leaders who have developed personal relationships with each other, so Bishop Gonia stressed the importance of communal education and investment in ecumenism to ensure the long-term sustainability of such relationships.

Being church together and moving into our common future holds its challenges. “There is a *holy tension* between innovation (Spirit) and structure (Institution).”



In the ELCA’s process toward intercommunion there are four stages of ecumenism:

1. Ecumenical Cooperation in mission and advocacy. This is the level of creative conversation which we currently enjoy.

2. Bilateral & Multilateral Dialogues. The term *dialogue* is technically reserved for conversations on the formal, denominational level. It’s where the guidance of God’s Spirit hopefully leads us to communal conversion or repentance, and an openness to new possibilities.

3. Preliminary Recognition. Here the ELCA can be involved on a church-to-church basis in eucharistic sharing and

cooperation, without the exchangeability of ministers. This level includes as prerequisites mutual recognition of church and sacraments with a growing agreement in doctrine. “This might find expression in what Lutherans have often understood as pulpit and altar fellowship.”

4. Full Communion. The ultimate, long-range healing of the breaches within the Body of Christ, its shape and form would be addressed and answered practically in terms of what will best further the mission of the Church.

The ELCA enjoys #4 with six other churches: the Presbyterian Church/USA (1997), the Reformed Church in America (1997), the United Church of Christ (1997), the Episcopal Church (1999), the Moravian Church (1999), and the United Methodist Church

(2009). They have been in stage #2 with the Roman Catholic Church for 50 years—it’s a process!

Kathryn emphasized the caution identified in the ELCA’s ecumenical documents: “We cannot jump from ministry together to full communion or skip over stages.” Doing so can present an image of haphazard, unreflective innovation that can hamper progress and even jeopardize existing agreements. She advised us to embrace the enthusiasm that exists now because it is hard sometimes to breathe that into the national agreements. “Don’t rush to the ‘full communion’ stage because there are

other paradigms emerging on the ground.” (For example, between the ELCA and the African Methodist Episcopal Church, where it is more grassroots and ground up.)

It was suggested that education might be the place to start. The ECC needs to present its theology, history, etc. for Lutherans to understand ECC better — To this end, our regional ECC 101 presentation was well received at St. Paul and could be reprised for other Lutheran communities in the region. Certainly studying [Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist](#) would bring ECC folks up to speed on the history and progress of Lutheran/Catholic dialogues. Bishop Francis suggested that the ECC could do a “commentary” on that document to clarify both the identity of the ECC and whatever remaining differences the ECC may have with the ELCA.

May the Spirit continue to guide our local communities for the benefit of the entire Church.

~ Fr. Michael, following notes from the gathering and [The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#)

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Regional Vote Sept. 8/9

THE QUESTION OF CALLING

A LOCAL BISHOP IS BEFORE US

The Rocky Mountain Regional Council was formed “to listen and respond to the spirit’s leading and action in the diverse communities of our region, facilitate collaboration, foster growth in faith and love, and extend the radical hospitality of the ECC to one and all.” In order to fulfill this mission, the Council’s functions/scope of responsibility include coordinating dialogue about the growth, leadership and effective operation of the region, and facilitating ongoing dialogue and discernment regarding the call of a regional bishop when timely and appropriate. The time for that discernment has come.

Every member of the region will be asked to vote at Mass on September 8th or 9th (or before if unable to attend and voting remotely) on whether or not to proceed. We’ll be asked to check one:

I support moving forward with the process to call a local bishop in 2019.

I do not support moving forward with the process to call a local bishop in 2019.

If two-thirds of the members voting in a given community vote “I do,” that community would be in favor of proceeding. If 4 out of 5 of our communities affirm, we would move forward. Each community needs to discuss the spirit of consensus – that each community would be willing to “live with” the decision of the other four if they collectively decide to move forward.

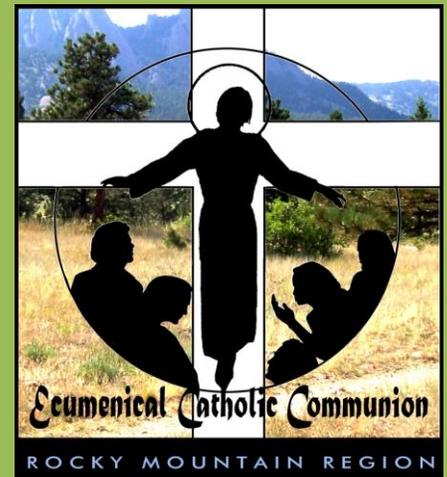
Each community has or will be engaged in educating its members about the issue, offering both pros and cons, utilizing as a basis the common document prepared by the regional team and the other valuable resources found on the regional website, www.coloradoecc.org under Council News. There’s also a short [video](#) produced by our Presiding Bishop explaining how episcopal leadership is exercised personally, collegially and communally in the church.

The process of moving forward to call a local bishop will include the following agreements:

- Prayer: steeped in prayer, held in prayer, begin and middle and end in prayer
- The votes of each community will be received the same weekend, prior to synod, so that delegates may attend the synod with the region’s clear direction.
- The process of calling a local bishop will be researched, developed and presented for affirmation by a regional group (TBD), synodal in composition, with lay and clergy representatives from each community as well as our vicar and Bishop Francis or Auxiliary Bishop Denise — the 3-legged stool in action.
- The history of forming “households or regions” across the ECC and the current movements will be studied.
- Nominations for or discussion of candidates is not permitted until the process is developed and affirmed.

We are excited to be standing on this sacred ground at this moment and encourage every member of each community to fully participate in this prayer, discernment and decision by voting.

May the Holy Spirit lead us, inspire us, and foster unity among us.



REGIONAL COUNCIL

www.coloradoecc.org

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nicosia410@yahoo.com

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AUXILIARY BISHOP

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revdenised@gmail.com

PRESIDING BISHOP

The Very Rev. Francis Krebs

bishop.francis@ecumenical-catholic-communion.org



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



Regional Delegates to Synod 2018

Twenty-one of our regional delegates gathered on August 4th to share our respective communities' feedback on the work of the Constitution Commission as they reorder and amend our ECC Constitution. We are grateful to the Commission for all of their hard work and perseverance.

Under the gentle moderation of Fr. Teri Harroun, Pastor of Light of Christ, we came to 100% consensus on several issues of concern which we communicated to the Commission, the Leadership Team and the ECC's Chancellor. Central to our concerns is that a Constitution should convey to the world our image of church and should accurately reflect our "three-legged stool" polity.

The holy conversation continues! With the grace of the Spirit, together we proceed in being church together.

Holy Family

NEW PASTOR!

Holy Family has hired Cynthia Drew to be the new Pastor. Cynthia was raised Roman Catholic. Having earned her Masters of Divinity at the Divinity School at Wake Forrest University, she has recently completed her Chaplin Residency at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro North Carolina. Church of the Holy Family voted unanimously to call Cynthia and she responded with a resounding YES!!! She will be ordained to the Diaconate on August 14th at 7:00pm at the Wake Forest Divinity School Chapel in Winston-Salem, NC. She will be serving a diaconal internship in North Carolina. Her first Mass at Holy Family as a Deacon will be October 21st. Everyone is invited to a pot luck celebration after Mass on the 21st to welcome Cynthia to Holy Family. Her presbyterial ordination is tentatively scheduled for the beginning of November.

HOLY FAMILY MASS IN THE PARK

Holy Family will be celebrating its annual Mass in the Park on September 16th at Utah Park on the corner of Jewell Avenue and Peoria Street in Aurora, CO. There will be a potluck picnic afterwards. Please bring your lawn chairs and join us for a wonderful time of fellowship.



CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

www.churchofhollyfamily.org

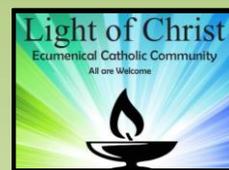
Vanessa Henk, PLT President/Chair
Diane Morgan, Administrator
Dcn. Mike Weil, Sr. Clergy Leader
Mass: 10:00 am Sundays
16738 E. Iliff Avenue
Aurora CO 80013
(303) 369-9000
admin@hollyfamilyco.org



CHURCH OF THE BELOVED

www.churchofthebeloved-ecc.org

Mother 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
Fr. Paul Burson, 720-254-2083



LIGHT OF CHRIST ECUMENICAL CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

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

summer fun at Light of Christ

This summer, Light of Christ has continued to spread its wings and fly by finding ways to reach out into the community, serve others and let others know that at Light of Christ, all are welcome.



In June, Light of Christ members participated in the Longmont Pride Festival by hosting a booth where folks could stop by to take a picture with our giant Flat Jesus and decorate a light switch plate (because we are LIGHT of Christ). The sticker on Jesus' right arm read "Born this Way." Taking a picture with Jesus, who became known as our "Born This Way Jesus," ended up being a huge draw. The local newspaper even mentioned it in their article about the event. Ellen and Chuck, pictured, were instrumental in coordinating a wildly successful and fun day.

Love is love is love is love. God is good.

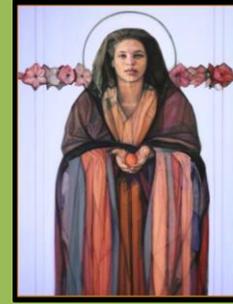


Our community regularly has members host "People to People" dinners where someone hosts a meal at their house and invites about eight more people to join them. It is a great way for folks to get to know one another. In July, we celebrated a community-wide People to People dinner with a picnic after Mass. Blessings and friendship were abundant, as well as tasty home-cooked food!



In true Ecumenical style, Father Teri partnered with Pastor Mark of our host community, Bethlehem Lutheran, to celebrate his retirement. He has been a guiding light for Light of Christ, a shepherd, and a friend. Following Pastor Mark's retirement and prior to Bethlehem's interim pastor starting, Fr. Teri was asked to fill in some ministry gaps. It was a great honor for her to be asked and to serve our host community in this way.

Fr. Teri and two high school members of our youth group (left) embarked on a cross-cultural immersion trip to Wind River Reservation in Wyoming where they had the opportunity to embody Christ and make a difference in a community not their own. In addition to performing physical labor, they engaged in deep spiritual conversations, worship services, and personal reflection. Our community looks forward to hearing about their experience later in August.



MARY OF MAGDALA COMMUNITY

www.marymagdalafc.org

Fr. Jim DeMuth, Pastoral Director

Mass: 5:00 pm Sundays

301 E Stuart Street

Fort Collins, CO 80525

970-493-9536

Fr. Jim 970-420-6230

Dcn. Rosean Amaral 970-692-4238

marymagdalafc@gmail.com



ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN AND CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Rev. Penni Walsh, Interim Co-pastor

Fr. Don Sutton, Co-pastor

donaldsutton@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



Mary of Magdala

Facilitators from Mary of Magdala ECC, St. Paul's Episcopal and Trinity Lutheran combined to present a 6-week class on two of the Lost Gospels, archaeological sites of ancient writings, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. The ecumenical adult education study drew the interest of 30 participants. Classmates who were able to attend, traveled to the Denver Museum of Nature and Science to view the breathtaking exhibition of the Dead Sea Scrolls, one of the greatest archaeological discoveries of all time. Lunch, an IMAX movie about Jerusalem, and the Dead Sea Scrolls made for an enjoyable field trip for all!



The first mass the children planned as part of their Faith Formation classes was held in July. The children were responsible for all facets of the planning from picking readings, writing prayers of the people, picking the music, being lector and musicians.





Mary of Magdala said farewell to Coulibaly in May. He returned to Cote D'Ivoire after completing the work on his Masters Program. We celebrated him during the mass and had a dinner following mass. We all miss his faithful presence in our community.



Mary of Magdala held a meeting in July for community members to learn more about the question of Calling a Bishop. After a short presentation, questions were answered and discussed.

MoM had its annual outdoor mass and parish picnic in June. We released ladybugs as a symbol of gratitude and spiritual devotion and to help the environment.





the danger of a single story

1ST ANNUAL ECC YOUTH MISSION TRIP

One of our youth from Church of the Beloved participated in the first annual ECC youth mission trip to southern California. One of two Colorado participants, the experience was led by Jennifer Reyes Lay, our ECC Administrator. Here is Kate's reflection on her experience.

Hi. My name is Kate and as many of you know, I was blessed with the opportunity to spend a week on a mission trip in California with other youth from Ecumenical Catholic Communities. I met 7 youth, 3 from Colorado and 4 from California, and we had two wonderful adults with us throughout the entire time. We stayed in a home named St. Junia's House, owned by Mother Martha and Mother Jetti. In California, we spent time visiting other ECC churches, getting to know a little bit about each one. We also performed service work which allowed my group to open up to new ideas and to challenge our previous opinions about others. Our theme for the week was the danger of a single story and so we learned to reject stereotypes and, instead, listen to people's stories.

Now, I am going to make a guess and say that everyone here has been stereotyped or stereotyped someone else at least once, whether we know it or not. And, that's okay! It is a natural human reaction to take stories from the past and use them to judge the quality of a person. No one should ever aim to change that, because it helps to make you human. But we can try and change what types of stories we hear by listening to others instead of making judgments. Meeting with former gang members gave me a wider range of exposure, and taught me to reject the idea that all gang members are violent and will remain violent throughout their lives.

We handed out purses full of personal items to homeless women in Skid Row and our group realized that not all homeless people are sad and need our pity because they are homeless. I began to realize that those gang

members who are "violent and will remain violent" are brothers, sons, daughters, sisters, fathers, and mothers. I began to realize that homeless people appreciate help, but the last thing they want is pity, because pity doesn't get anyone anywhere. We tend to live in a box. We know the story of our family, our schools, and our church, but we forget that there are others with miraculous stories that are often forgotten in the background of things. When I think of an Ecumenical Catholic Community, I used to think of only our church. One thing that I have always associated with the ECC is open communion because I didn't know any differently. But did you know, that Holy Trinity, an ECC church in California, doesn't have open communion? This means at their church, someone can't receive until they make their 1st Communion. Still, everyone else is welcome to receive. This is a different tradition than in our church, yet, we are still the same community. We believe that all are welcome and we give equal opportunity to all, but Hispanic tradition about communion is important and still has to be respected within the church.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to have participated in this mission and to share my story with you. Something I have really taken away from this journey is the danger of a single story. Because I went on this trip, I will always be aware of how I judge others and why I judge them in certain ways. I hope that in the future, we as a community can begin to learn the stories of others, share them with each other, and learn that everyone is always more than just a single story. Thank you for your support of the ECC youth mission trip.

St. Paul Lutheran & Catholic

CALLING A NEW LUTHERAN CO-PASTOR

If all goes smoothly, Saint Paul Lutheran and Catholic Community of Faith will gather for a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, August 26th at noon at which the Call Committee and Congregational Council are hopeful they will be able to present a candidate to the congregation. We are grateful to Ron Thorne, who led the Call Committee during the first part of the process. As ECC Co-Pastor Fr. Don Sutton loves to point out as a historic example of being church together, Catholics were included on the committee. Jeri Rodrick and Maryann O'Brien are now acting as Co-Chairs for this next part of the process in calling a new Lutheran pastor.



FAREWELL TO PASTOR PENNI

In St. Paul's newsletter, ELCA Interim Co-Pastor Penni Walsh writes:

If the Call process continues as it is now, September 9 will be my last Sunday with you. This may or may not mean your new Lutheran pastor will be here just yet, so there may be a few Sundays with Fr Don or our other "in-residence" clergy. (If the process stalls, we may revisit this plan.)

I have been so blessed by my time as your pastor! And I thank every one of you for your willingness to walk the difficult path of moving from the familiar into the new and for your commitment to St. Paul. You are the gift of this place and because of you St. Paul will thrive, opening a new chapter in the legacy of this special place. I will move on to another interim call, but as my time allows I will visit occasionally

Blessings, Pastor Penni

Pastor Penni embraced the ecumenical challenges of this blended community of faith worshiping in two traditions and helped our Catholic members settle into their ECC identity. "Just to say thanks," she has invited the St. Paul community to an Open House on August 19th.

Even if she does manage to stop by on occasion, she will be sorely missed.

getting-the- word-out opportunity

ECC INFO TABLE AT LGBTI+ AFFIRMING CONFERENCE

A new conference in town, **You Are Welcome Here** (YAWH), will be held 9am-5:30pm on **October 4th and 5th** in the Turnhalle Ballroom At The Tivoli, 900 Auraria Pkwy in Denver. (For more info visit [https://welcomeyawh.org/.](https://welcomeyawh.org/))

The Conference is centered on being interfaith and LGBTQ+ inclusive and affirming. Their speakers will share from their own lived experiences with faith spaces, coming out, mental health, and a variety of other experiences. This two-day conference will also feature dozens of LGBTQ+ inclusive and affirming faith spaces, organizations, and movements located in Denver and around the country.

Attendees will have the chance to meet with folks from these organizations during their resource fair taking place throughout the two days.

The organizers are excited about having an ECC presence at the event, so let Fr. Michael know if you are able to help staff our table, especially at the close of the conference as it conflicts with his Gateway to the Rockies Art Show reception and awards ceremony that Saturday. nicosia410@yahoo.com

Denver's March on the NRA

On August 4th Fr. Michael showed up to support this local student-led challenge at the State Capitol. Beyond mad that one of the organizing groups, Students Demand Action, had to pull out of participating after receiving online death threats, blessedly the counter-protestors on location were civil and willing to engage in conversation. With only their voices and their passion, the youth are leading the way.



Follow the vicar's activism and weekly homiletic reflections on Instagram and Twitter @FrMichaelECC.

@Coloradoecc

Have you visited our regional ECC Facebook [page](#)? The screen shot below is an example of staying in touch — Light of Christ's farewell to our former newsletter copy editor, Sally,

and her husband Charlie Allen. Sally also served on the Regional Council as our Treasurer. "Our lives are forever changed having known them," indeed.

Coloradoecc shared Light of Christ Ecumenical Catholic Community's post. Yesterday at 8:46 AM

Always fond of church-hopping, especially when there was a chance to participate musically, this beloved couple did their part in keeping the region connected. Missed, indeed, but hopefully still connected.

Light of Christ Ecumenical Catholic Community added 2 new photos. August 4 at 8:34 PM

Like as Your Page

Tonight we blessed Sally and Charlie as they move to another state. We will miss them. Our lives are forever changed from having known them. May the Light of Christ shine forever in them.

keeping families together

Immigration activists formed a human blockade at ICE headquarters in Centennial on August 3rd, part of a week-long campout in front of the federal property. Fr. Michael went thinking his flute would provide some grace mid-week, not knowing that the action was scheduled for that day, not knowing that some serious prayer and other corporal works of mercy would also be called for... God's good timing (and plenty of homily material).

You'll find photo journalist Dave Russel's powerful album of the action and Homeland Security's exaggerated response at www.buffaloheartimages.com/2018/08/abolish-ice.

Coloradoecc shared a photo. Yesterday at 8:42 AM

Michael J. Nicosia is at Saint Paul Lutheran and Catholic Community of Faith August 3 at 5:48 PM

the great test

Having picketed in front of our local ICE office yesterday, I'm obviously at one extreme of the debate over this Administration's implementatio... See More