



MAY/JUNE 2024

## NOTE FROM PASTOR



On the Sunday following Easter (which was our special service day, Be Sunday), I was asked to run an errand which took me down Main Street. I noticed something interesting. I

noticed two storefronts where lines of people were waiting outside. One was a restaurant, and the other was a tattoo parlor.

I paused to ask myself: What is it about these particular places that causes people to flock to them?

The restaurant reminds me that there is power in breaking bread together and being in community with one another. People are hungry for both. In the gospel lesson following the resurrection, Jesus makes himself known to the disciples in the breaking of bread. Something happens when we gather together around the table.

The tattoo parlor is a different story. I believe that the art of tattoos is a way for people to tell and share their story.

My son, Will, has several tattoos and each one has a beautiful story to go with it. He has a tattoo for each one of his beloved family and mine is my favorite flower: An iris.

You couldn't know that flower's story if you were to see it. To you, the iris may just be a flower. To me, it represents decades of memories of my grandmother.

For many years, I called my grandmother every Sunday. We would typically talk for over an hour. She was one of the most important women in my life and her favorite flower was the iris. Each Mother's Day and on her birthday, I would send her irises and she would report to me about their beauty, how long each flower lasted in the deep colors that would change as they slowly wilted and withered away. My grandmother was feisty, witty, driven, impatient, opinionated, and valued education above all. So much

of who I am is because of her influence. To this day, my boys give me irises on my birthday and on Mother's Day as a way to honor her memory and remind me of who I am.



Will's iris tattoo.

There is power in telling our stories. As people of faith, we believe in storytelling! Storytelling is how the gospel has spread to this very day. It reminds me of the old hymn: *I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory, to tell the old old story of Jesus and his love.*

For me, this begs the question: What is our story? The gospel tells us that we are Easter people, which to me says we live in the hope that comes as followers of Jesus Christ. Rod Edmonds, our Treasurer and Vice Chair of Leadership Council, sent me a devotion during Holy Week on hope:

Hope changes history. One of the greatest dangers we face is getting used to the darkness. It can resign us. In our personal lives, we can feel we don't deserve anything better than what we have, even if what we have is painful and wrong. We just accept that as our lot in life. In our corporate lives,

we can feel we are among the outcasts or the marginalized people. As a group, we can feel weak and helpless. These feelings are real, and they deeply, directly impact us because they break the connection between what we believe and what we see.

**HOPE IS OUR HOME.** One of the greatest dangers to the free spirit is discouragement. The lighthearted soul can slowly be pulled down by the gravity of despair, the feeling that goodness will never overcome evil, that justice will be subverted by power, that common sense has been lost in the madness of the crowd. In times such as these, looking up toward the open sky of the human spirit becomes liberating. There is no earthly force that can pull us down as long as we fly toward the vision that first set us free. When we refuse to give in, others will see us. They will take wing and join us. Hope is not only our horizon, but our home.

—Steven Charleston, *Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder's Meditations on Hope and Courage.* (2021, page 65)

Isaiah 40:31 says this about hope:

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Hope is a powerful force that sustains individuals and strengthens communities. Hope empowers people to face adversity with resilience, pursue their dreams with determination, and build a brighter future filled with possibility and promise.

My prayer is that we live into our identity as Easter people and that we live into a life of HOPE!

See you in church,

- PASTOR CLAIRE



## LYNN GREENHALGE - QUIET DISCIPLE

by Edy-Kay Ward

It is with great pleasure that we announce the recipient for the 2024: Lynn Greenhalge.

Lynn is not typically a "quiet" person, but her tackling of all jobs in the church is done without boasting. By the definition of this award, Lynn works without fanfare and doesn't hold a specific titled position. She determines needs within the church and finds ways to fill them. She notices what spaces need changing or updating so they can be better used by our church family and community. She loves to declutter and has been in the church long

enough to know when something hasn't been used for over 20 years.

Lynn works tirelessly during all hours of days and nights to accomplish a project and finds the most economical way to purchase what is needed. She will sell old church furniture or items—sometimes delivering them herself—and picks up new materials. There is not an area in the church that Lynn does not tackle! She is as excellent and efficient at cooking in the kitchen as she is working outside. Wherever there is a need, there is Lynn.

Lynn shines in everything she touches: from working with children in

Sunday School; working with Wild Plum; to building needs like scrubbing, painting, Christmas activities, pulling weeds, and cleaning the kitchen and bathrooms. She was the Recording Secretary for our Conference for two years and she was the UWF Coordinator for two years. Lynn's most recent accomplishment is the rework of Room 104 and the Library and she has made our Chapel a more pleasant and useful space.

Lynn gives of herself for her church and is a beloved member of Heart of Longmont. We are fortunate to have Lynn Greenhalge in our church family.



Lynn with Pastor Claire and Wild Plum staff.



Lynn helping set up for Santa's Workshop.



Lynn doing food prep for a community project.

## TEACH YOUR SOUL TO DANCE JUNE WOMEN'S RETREAT



We invite you to join us for a one night/two day women's retreat in beautiful Breckenridge, CO, Saturday, June 8, to Sunday, June 9. The retreat begins June 8 at 12:00 PM and ends June 9 at 12:00 PM. The retreat is \$50 per person.

The theme of this retreat is "Teach Your Soul To Dance" and will be led by Re. Barbara LeFevre Lyons. Read more about Barb below.

Space is limited, so please sign up now! To sign up, please contact Pastor Claire ([revclaire@heartoflongmont.org](mailto:revclaire@heartoflongmont.org)) or Tricia Grafelman ([tricia@heartoflongmont.org](mailto:tricia@heartoflongmont.org)) via email.

We hope you will come join us and others in our congregation in the beautiful Breckenridge mountains to restore your soul and recharge your spirit! This retreat is for YOU!

### Teaching Your Soul To Dance - Rev. Barbara LeFevre Lyons

Barb is newly retired Presbyterian Pastor who has made Longmont her new home this past year. Her sense of humor and sparkling style make her a sought-after speaker at women's events. Barb's messages are geared towards empowering women to thrive in their personal and spiritual lives. She is a graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary and has served churches in San Diego, Los Angeles, and most recently Denver, where she became friends with the fabulous Claire! Barb is married to Pierre Lyons, a flight attendant for Southwest airlines, and they have two young adult sons.



## UNVEILING THE TRUTH: NAVIGATING IMMIGRATION REALITIES



Are you perplexed by the conflicting narratives surrounding immigration? Separate fact from fiction with us on Sunday, May 19 as the Mission Design Team hosts a compelling table talk discussion featuring local experts well-versed in immigration matters. Our distinguished panel includes:

- Marinela Maneiro-Goodwin, a clinical psychologist specializing in supporting Latino families navigating dual cultures.
- Laurel Herndon, a seasoned attorney and founder of El Centro

AMISTAD Immigrant Rights and the Immigrant Legal Center of Boulder County.

• Lisa Moreno, executive director of El Comite, a nonprofit that focuses on economic advancement and empowerment of the Latine community and immigrants.

Join us in the HOL Media Center at 11:15 AM, immediately following church service, for an enlightening dialogue. Gain deeper insights into the challenges facing our community and dispel myths surrounding immigration.

## BEING THE CHURCH ON BE SUNDAY

We had nearly 90 volunteers participate in our Be Sunday Service Day. There is something really special about seeing so many people serving others! Thank you to everyone that made Be Sunday a success. What a joy it was to see so many people come together to go out and put more of God's love into the world, one task and one neighbor at a time. In just three short hours, we:

- Packed 50 Chef Hearty meal kits
- Created 20 casseroles for Recovery Café
- Cleaned up Centennial Park
- Jump-started the Growing Gardens garden at Bethlehem Lutheran Church

- Helped organize HOPE Outreach center
- Made sandwiches for HOPE
- Painted a refrigerator and a filing cabinet for Longmont Food Rescue
- Built a hutch to protect the fridge
- Went to five individual homes to make life just a little easier for those that live there
- Visited five shut-ins

You are amazing! Well done, good and faithful servants! You are truly a wonderful and amazing group of people to be in service with, be a good neighbor with, and be the church with!



Painting the Longmont Food Rescue fridge.



Making sandwiches for HOPE.



Building Chef Hearty meal kits.



Building a hutch for the food rescue fridge.



Painting the filing cabinet a jaunty purple.



Building meal kits.





All of the BE the Church Sunday volunteers: Becky Furuta, Ethan Shipp, Emily Farrenkopf, Kameron Sam, Brayden Landers, Robin Howard, Abby Landers, Avery Howard, Delilah Medaugh, Basil Medaugh, Tracy Landers, Sam Firebaugh, Gabe Medaugh, and Midori Furuta.

## BY EMILY FARRENKOPF

The BASIC Youth Group has stayed busy these last two months with regular youth group meetings, fundraisers, and by helping Crossroads School on Be the Church Sunday.

We helped Crossroads prepare for their big annual fundraising dinner. It was really interesting to learn that the mission of Crossroads School is to assist students who have experienced academic and/or behavioral struggles in traditional schools to reach their potential through an individually distinctive, learner-appropriate program. The school's Executive Director shared that her passion for helping kids achieve academic success is in large part because over 50% of high school drop outs will end up in prison. It helped us all understand how valuable the school is to our community. It was awesome to see the youth dedicate their Sunday morning to help spread more of God's love into the community through action.

The youth group is getting ready for a full summer. We are excited to have committed to go on a combined middle and high school mission trip to Rapid City, South Dakota, at the end of June. We are partnering with the mission

trip organization Youth Works for this trip. We will be learning about Lakota culture in a small urban context and will be partnering with local organizations that serve tangible needs in the community. We may be working alongside organizations that care for individuals with mental and physical challenges, a summer kids' program, a community garden, or other organizations that serve the community in meaningful ways. We look forward to seeing a different part of our beautiful country and meeting new people.

We have been working on saving for this trip through our fundraisers that so many of you have generously supported. Thank you to all of those who helped make the Easer Egg Hiding and Easter Ham fundraisers a great success. We "egged" 23 homes and sold 45 hams! This meant that in one weekend, we were able to raise over \$1,200 that all goes to our mission trip expenses. We look forward to holding a few more fundraisers before our June trip to help us raise the rest of the funds that we need. We will be selling flower bulbs for Mother's Day, butter braid breakfast treats, and we will be selling "shares"

that folks can purchase to be personal supporters of our trip. For being a stake holder in our trip, we will mail you a thank you post card from Rapid City and you will be invited to our mission trip presentation luncheon. You will be able to purchase all of these items by connecting with a youth member or leader after church services. Please keep your eye out for specific details and the dates of each of these fundraisers in the Weekly Pulse, church emails, and on the social media pages.

As we look ahead to the exciting opportunities of the summer, we are immensely grateful for the unwavering support of our community. Your generosity and encouragement have propelled us forward, enabling us to make a meaningful impact both locally and beyond. As we continue to prepare for our mission trip to Rapid City, South Dakota, we invite you to join us in this journey of service and growth. Together, we can spread love, compassion, and hope to those in need. Thank you for being an essential part of the BASIC Youth Group family, and we look forward to sharing our experiences with you in the coming months.



BE the Church Sunday Gabe Medaugh, Abby Landers, and Avery Howard



Working hard at Crossroads School. Left to right: Becky Furuta, Henry Furuta, Sam Firebaugh, Robin Howard, Basil Medaugh, Delilah Medaugh



Crossroads school fundraising preparation. Ethan Shipp, Kameron Sam, Brayden Landers, and Midori Furuta.



High School Youth Talia Martinez, Charlotte Farrenkopf, Kameron Sam, Brayden Landers, and Ethan Shipp on Easter morning.



Youth Members Ethan Shipp, Kameron Sam, and Brayden Landers on Easter Morning ready to pass out hams.



Youth ready to hide Easter Eggs in yards.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH!



# PALM SUNDAY EASTER CANTATA



Who Is Jesus? Easter Cantata on Palm Sunday. Huge thanks to Karen Moore for the wonderful photos!

# EASTER MORNING AT HOL



Easter morning worship service.



Reading scripture for Easter morning worship.



Kevin Lattu performing on Easter morning.



Easter egg hunting for the littles after Easter morning worship service. We were blessed with clear weather!

# FROM THE DESK OF THE TREASURER

	YTD 2024	YTD 2023
Income	\$ 134,564	\$ 105,991
Expenses	\$ 128,709	\$ 121,403
Income greater than (less than) expenses (deficit)	\$ 5,855	\$ (15,412)

I am pleased to present the financial update for the first quarter of 2024, reflecting our commitment to transparency and stewardship. Your continued support and dedication are vital to the ongoing success of our church's mission.

### Financial Highlights

- **Positive Start in 2024:** We are pleased to report that our income exceeded expenses by \$5,855 during the first quarter of 2024. This positive trend is a result of your generous contributions and prudent financial management.
- **One-Time Income Items:** Two significant one-time income items contributed to our strong start: a grant from the Peaks New Ministry Council (\$16,658) and the annual distribution from our General Endowment Fund. While the grant was unexpected, it aligns with our efforts to establish and expand ministries in our community.

- **Expense Management:** Our expenses through March were below budget by \$8,146 (6%). However, compared to the same period last year, expenses increased by 6%, primarily due to investments in facilities maintenance, HVAC loan interest, and leadership expenses.
- **Future Outlook:** As we enter the second and third quarters of 2024, we anticipate that expenses will likely exceed income, following historical patterns. We are actively exploring opportunities to increase income and will keep you informed of any developments.

### Stewardship and Community Impact

- **Grant Utilization:** The grant from the New Ministry Council, while unrestricted, is being used to support our ongoing ministry efforts and community initiatives. We believe this allocation aligns with the council's encouragement

- to establish new ministries.
- **Financial Stewardship:** Your faithful giving and financial stewardship are crucial in sustaining our mission and outreach. We are committed to responsible financial practices and transparency.

### Get Involved

- **Questions and Feedback:** If you have any questions or would like more detailed information about our finances, please reach out to Rod Edmonds, our Treasurer. Your input and feedback are valuable to us.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** We invite you to explore volunteer opportunities within our church community. Your involvement strengthens our fellowship and mission impact.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to Heart of Longmont. Together, we are making a positive difference in the lives of many and fulfilling our mission to put more of God's love into the world.

Blessings,  
Rod Edmonds, Treasurer

# WESLEY TOWNHOMES UPDATE

by Rod Edmonds

A few weeks ago, while tuned into CNBC and enjoying my morning coffee and muffin, I caught Tim Rakow, Executive Director of The Inn Between (TIB), discussing their crucial role in offering affordable housing solutions for their clients. I was pleasantly surprised to see Tim on TV as he stood beside the elevations for the Wesley Townhomes

This was part of an advertisement

by Stapp Interstate Toyota, highlighting their sponsorship of TIB. However, what caught my attention was the spotlight on Wesley Townhomes.

Furthermore, we've received feedback from the City regarding our latest submission, which primarily involves minor adjustments in communication and details. This feedback has enabled us to move forward swiftly and we've now submitted our Minor Subdivision Plat to the City for an

expedited review and approval.

With City approval expected by early May, we are currently collaborating with TIB and legal advisors to finalize the restricted deed and shared space agreement. I remain optimistic that both agreements will be completed in May.

Should you have any questions about the project, please don't hesitate to contact me, Joan Edmonds, Jean Malchow, Tricia Grafelman, or Clint Schahrer.

# LEGACY GIVING SUPPORTS OUR MISSION AND MINISTRY

**Verb:** To convey one's values through creation of a future gift to charity  
**Noun:** A foresighted action to strengthen a favorite cause

- The Paula Johnston Children's Fund
- The Library Endowment
- The Margaret Patterson Scholarship Fund

The Heart of Longmont has been abundantly blessed for many decades by the generous legacy gifts of both current and former members. These contributions have significantly impacted our church's ability to fulfill its mission and ministry.

We are grateful to have several endowment funds established at the Methodists Helping Methodists Foundation, each serving a specific purpose:

- The Permanent Endowment Fund
- The General Scholarship Fund

Distributions from these endowments have supported numerous capital improvement projects, including essential renovations like flooring and roof repairs. Additionally, they annually provide crucial support to our scholarship programs, helping our youth members pursue their educational aspirations beyond high school.

We extend heartfelt thanks to all who have felt called to support the ministry and mission of our church in perpetuity. Through your generosity, we continue to spread more of God's love into the world,

making a lasting impact on our community and beyond.

If you are interested in learning more about legacy giving and how you can contribute to our endowment programs, there are numerous resources available to you. Feel free to reach out to members such as Paul Johnston, Rod Edmonds, Keith Watson, and others who are familiar with our endowment programs. They can provide guidance and information to help you make a meaningful contribution to our shared vision.

Your foresighted actions today can strengthen our favorite causes tomorrow. Together, let's continue to build a legacy of love, service, and faith for generations to come.



## COMPASSION OFFERINGS

May's Compassion Offering will be for El Comite of Longmont. El Comite's mission is to facilitate communication and understanding within the community to improve social justice, education, and economic status for Latine, immigrant and non-Latine Members of the community.

El Comite provides services for work permits, green card renewal, and citizenship classes. Additionally El Comite offers ESL and GED classes.

June's Compassion Offering will be for the purchase of free gun safes. In partnership with the United Church of Christ, Heart of Longmont holds a free giveaway of hand gun safes.

According to Gifford Law Center, more than half of all gun owners store at least one firearm unsafely. 4.6 million minors in the US live in homes with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm. Safe firearm storage helps prevent gun deaths and injuries in children.

## THE LAST CHEF HEARTY BEFORE THE SUMMER

We have one more Chef Hearty build day for the end of the school year. We will be packing the last meal kit on Mother's Day right after worship service. After this May, Chef Hearty will be on summer break with the Wild Plum kids but will return in September for the new school year!

If you have a healthy, inexpensive recipe that you want to share for next fall's Chef Hearty program, please reach out to Tricia Grafelman at [tricia@heartoflongmont.org](mailto:tricia@heartoflongmont.org).



## FOR THE LOVE OF A HORSE

Summer is nearly here and Pastor Claire will be hosting another FOR THE LOVE OF A HORSE series at her ranch. If you missed a chance to learn about horses and the special spiritual connection that can form between humans and equines, you have another opportunity this summer! Space is limited, so please check in the gallery for the sign up sheet if you wish to attend! If you have questions, please [contact Pastor Claire](#).

### For the Love of a Horse

Monday, June 10 — 10:00 am-12:00 pm  
 Monday, July 8 — 10:00 am-12:00 pm  
 Sunday, September 8 — 1:00 pm-3:00 pm



### Why horses?

There are some tantalizing clues as to why human beings and horses can share a close connection and the nature of the sense of healing and well-being that occurs when we work with and spend time with our equine friends. According to researchers at HeartMath Institute (a nonprofit organization), the heart has an electromagnetic field that

extends beyond the body. This is true of all organisms, not just human beings. This electromagnetic field can be measured with a magnetometer. The field radiating from a human heart can extend up to 3 meters (9.8 feet) from the body, and that of a horse can extend five times that distance. Horses were also found to have a "coherent" heart rate pattern. A coherent heart rate pattern is a measure of well-being and is consistent with positive emotional states, such as calm and joy.

The many benefits human beings can enjoy while

interacting with horses, including lower blood pressure and heart rate, decreased stress and anxiety, and feelings of connection, empowerment, and confidence might be explained by the interaction of a horse's electromagnetic field and coherent heart pattern with a human being's. This might also be a reason why horses respond and give feedback to handlers and riders so quickly and are able to mirror the emotions of a rider or handler. This close and special connection between human beings and equines has been common knowledge for centuries, if not since the very first domestication of horses. This is why horses are a popular therapy animal.



## UPDATES FROM THE HOL UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

### May 4 Presentation

Every Woman attending Heart of Longmont is invited our next big event which will be on Saturday May 4 at 10:00 AM in the Gallery and Chapel. This will be a great time to meet new women who are very interested in reaching out into the world both near and far to support women and children in their everyday lives. Our guest speaker will be Rev. Ashely Murphy from the Wesley Foundation on the campus of CU in Boulder. She will be sharing with us the needs of female CU students and her experience with these students. Please come for this very informative program. We will also be putting together menstrual health kits after the program.

### HOPE Meals

Upcoming activities include supplying a meal once a month for HOPE clients. The clients appreciate the meals they are served daily. Along with other groups in the community, we help make sure the folks attending HOPE

have a nourishing meal every night.

### Cookbooks for New Members

Soon we will be sharing extra cookbooks with our new members. We want them to know what good cooks we are!!! And they have shown us that they are good cooks too. One of our new members was a winner at the Chili Cook Off back in February.



United Women in Faith

### Holiday Fair - November 2

It is not too soon to be looking ahead to the Holiday Fair on Saturday, November 2. It will be here before we know it!!! We will need bakers for the Food Pantry. We will need vendors, too, so if you know a vendor who would like to be a part of our Fair,

please let us know. We will also need help in the kitchen with lunch. And of course we will need some folks to help set up on the couple of days before the Fair. More details will be coming!

### Food, Faith, and Fellowship

Our faith is being stimulated by the programs provided for us. This year's theme is Food, Faith, and Fellowship. We have been looking at our faith practices around eating together, sharing the living water, and being the salt and seasoning to the world. We will also be looking at Food Access and Food Justice before the year is over. Join us in our study and fellowship. What new insights might you gain?

### Questions? Comments?

If you have any questions or comments to share, please contact Marty Allison.



## HELP OUT ON SPRING WORK DAY!

Our spring work day is coming up! It will be Saturday, May 11, from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Our building is not only used by our congregation on Sunday mornings, choir and bell choir rehearsals, UWF Circle meetings, and committee meetings, but also by many organizations from our community. Just a few of the folks who walk through our doors every week include: Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, Alcoholics Anonymous, Button Club, Craft Club, Knitting Club, and families whose children take drum lessons and organ lessons.

We need YOUR help to do some basic spring cleaning so that we can continue to share our space with others. All skill levels are welcome to help! There will be indoor and outdoor tasks, including:

- Cleaning of maintenance closets and boiler room
- Cleaning gutters
- Cladding the fascia boards
- Cleaning sanctuary light fixtures
- Patch/paint from LED lighting installation

- Weeding/mulching flower beds
- Trimming bushes
- Cleaning Pews
- Cleaning windows
- Dusting window sills
- Dusting artificial plants
- Spot cleaning carpets
- Re-gluing carpet tiles in gallery
- Turning on the sprinklers for spring
- Installing backflow valves
- Checking first aid kits
- Sweeping up loose asphalt
- Cleaning the Outdoor Learning Center
- Exterior checks
- Weeding the parking lot
- Other maintenance tasks

Your help is appreciated and welcome! Please [contact Tricia Grafelman](#) if you have questions.





# A PILGRIMAGE OF COMPASSION & CULTURAL IMMERSION

BY PASTOR CLAIRE MCNULTY-DREWES

Embarking on a mission trip to Guatemala is more than just a journey, it's a pilgrimage of compassion, cultural immersion, and personal growth. Guatemala, a country rich in history, culture, and natural beauty,



offered a profound backdrop to the ten-member mission team from Heart of Longmont who made their way to San Juan la Laguna and San Pablo la Laguna for nine life-changing days.

On the surface, the focus of the trip was to provide 12 High Impact Home improvement (HIHI) stoves to families whose health and lives are ultimately changed by such transaction. As always happens, though, the lives that were even more changed were ours.

For me, this mission and trip was



not new. I was introduced to Organization for the Development of Indigenous Mayan (or ODIM) over a decade ago when I served Father Dyer UMC in Breckenridge. This was the first time I led a team, however.

Seeing the growth in the organization and its mission filled my heart with such joy. ODIM is led by



passionate young Guatemalans who believe in their mission. ODIM is changing the health and wellness of their local communities. It is such an

inspiration to be with those who believe in making the world a better place. Take a few moments to read what some of our team members wrote about their experiences in Guatemala on this mission trip across the next pages.

If you are interested in going with us to Guatemala in 2025, save these dates in your calendar: Friday, February 28 to Saturday March 8, 2025.



## A NECESSARY & UNEXPECTED EXPERIENCE

by Dawn Desai

Going to Guatemala was the trip I never knew my heart and soul needed. As Bobby from Alabama put it a couple weeks ago: it was the trip of a lifetime. Not only because it allowed us to be in community with fellow HOL friends (and bonus friends in Anne, Bobby, and Marie), but it allowed a kind of giving and connection that I had never experienced before. It was such a joy to be able to converse and connect with the kids especially (my Spanish was right about the level of a three-year-old, so it worked out great). We were able to show God's love and it is unconditional. I can't wait for next year!!!



## WHEN THE LIGHT MEETS THE DARK: REFLECTIONS ON THE GUATEMALA TRIP

by Bobby Pannone

When our dear friends, John and Trish Grafelman, graciously invited Marie and I to join them with Heart of Longmont UMC on an international mission trip, I was an immediate "yes" because I had never served in this manner but always wanted to. I didn't know much about Guatemala. Although I consider myself an educated man, I didn't know that Guatemala is the heart of a Mayan culture that still exists. (I had incorrectly assumed that it was extinguished by Spanish conquistadors.)



Our mission to build ONIL stoves immersed us in the livelihood of two very rural villages, San Juan la Laguna and San Pablo la Laguna, on the shores of volcanic Lago de Atitlán. We learned that the necessity to procure and build stoves was born of a medical need. The stoves replaced open fires inside the home for cooking. These fires produced smoke that, when inhaled for one hour,



was the equivalent to smoking 400 cigarettes! (There is a lot of lung disease in Guatemala). Furthermore, the open fires posed a risk to children playing around in houses. Kids horse-around, fall in these fires, and can be severely burned. The provision of the ONIL stoves dramatically addresses these two medical risks.

The ODIM High Impact Home Improvement (HIHI) program (under which the ONIL stoves are provided) demonstrates the key strategy of the overall ODIM mission: Prevention. The community-led medical clinics address high rates of diabetes and infant malnourishment with high-quality nutrition programs and patient sponsorships. To address high rates of pre-teen pregnancy, the community partners with adolescents and their parents to provide early-intervention sex education in a dogma-free, earthy, "get real" manner (the Mayan-developed supporting handbook is the best I have seen).

I can't conclude without mentioning how loud San Juan la Laguna is at night. Street dogs barking, feral

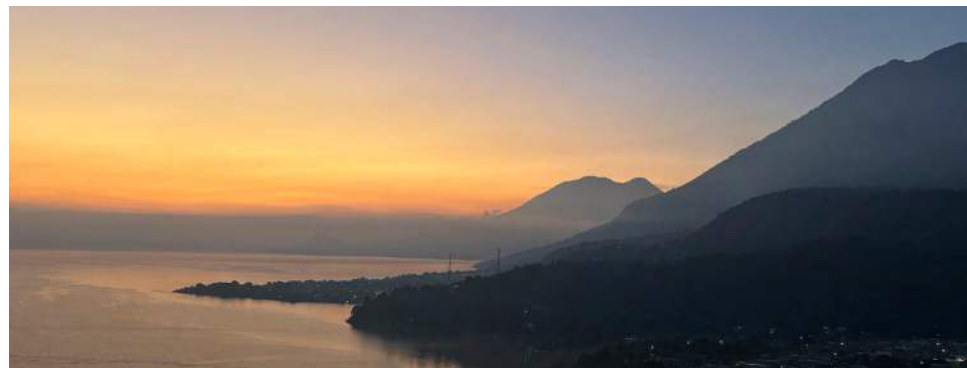
cats fighting and jumping on every tin roof in town, roosters crowing, church bells ringing, tuk-tuks (three-wheeled taxis) revving engines... It was life that was truly life (and kept me awake for most of the first two nights). It reflected the soul of the Mayan community, and it was beautiful. You see, ODIM and the Mayans have developed sound and practical strategies to address the hard challenges facing their communities. They never asked for my sympathy, but they emphatically asked for my support because they see it as an investment, not a gift. They did not want me to go out on a limb for them, they wanted me to go out on the limb with them.

For one short week, I went with them, and it changed my life forever. Above is a picture of the sunrise over Lago de Atitlán. The beauty of the sun's light is amplified by the always-present dark smoke that settles over the lake. I believe it provides a daily metaphor of how the Mayan spirit overcomes the challenges in rural Guatemala.

When the light meets the dark, the light always wins.







## LOOKING BACK ON OUR GUATEMALA TRIP

by Tricia Grafelman

I had never been to a Latin American country before this mission trip to Guatemala with ODIM and, to be honest, I didn't think that Guatemala was a place I really wanted to go. With many things, whether it's a trip or a meal, what often makes or breaks the time spent is the company you keep. Spending time with my husband and with some of our church family and dear friends from Alabama



doing meaningful work made this trip even more special to me.

Serving the Mayan communities of San Juan and San Pablo la Laguna gave me an education I didn't know I needed. I have told many since I have returned that it was both heartwarming and heartbreaking at the same time. The statistics for children's malnutrition, teen pregnancy rates, rates of diabetes and amount of smoke inhaled by those in the homes due to cooking on open flames indoors (equivalent to 400 cigarettes a day!!) are alarming. The hearts of the Guatemalan Mayan communities are genuine and to see how hard they work every day and in the conditions that they live in (with poor quality water and smoky air all around)



is amazing. Family is everything to them (as it is to me) and I felt honored to be able to go into their homes and not only install well-ventilated stoves but also play with their children and smile and convey warmth without speaking their language.

The ODIM staff work to make the lives of others better every single day and I look forward to returning next year to put more of God's love into the world. I hope you will consider joining me.

I'm sharing a couple of photos from the trip. The first photo (left) is of the first stove we installed. Our team was: Joan Edmonds, Bobby Pannone, Lucy (our ODIM staff member), and Ruby (a 16-year-old from Maine who was raising money for the Mommy and Me program). The second photo is of Patrona, our gracious cook for the week, and her grandson, Orli. I took some time to play with Orli every day.



## GUATEMALA!

by Jo Lloyd

I had no idea what to expect by traveling to Guatemala. I decided to join this mission trip because I love to learn about other cultures, and I wanted to give back because I am blessed. What an education! I was so impressed with the nonprofit we served, ODIM (Organization for the Development of the Indigenous Maya). We built vented indoor cooking stoves for families in need and delivered Ecofiltro water filters. These home interventions combat respiratory and intestinal illnesses caused by toxic smoke inhalation and consumption of contaminated water. The two villages we served, San Juan and San Pablo, have NO potable water. It was a week of work and fun. I brought back many fond memories of the gracious people we served. It was a rewarding mission that will stay in my heart forever.



## LONG-RANGE PLANNING INITIATIVE

by Rod Edmonds

We are excited to share updates about our Long Range Planning Initiative, a critical effort aimed at shaping our congregation's future. In 2023, our Leadership Council initiated discussions on long-range planning, leading to the formation of a dedicated team and the engagement of consultant Paul Nixon from the Epicenter Group. The Team leading us on this transformative journey consists of Francine Berkey, Jeff Brown, Rod Edmonds, John Grafelman, Scott Greenhalge, Edy-Kay Ward, and Pastor Claire. Together, we share a deep commitment to envisioning and building a vibrant future for our church.

Long-range planning goes beyond setting goals; it's about ensuring that our church remains a beacon of faith, love, and service for generations to come. Here are some key reasons why this initiative is essential:

1. **Vision Clarity:** We aim to articulate and refine our vision for the future, answering critical questions about who we are, what we stand for, and where we see ourselves in the next decade.
2. **Strategic Direction:** Through this process, we will identify strategic priorities and initiatives that align with our vision, focusing our resources where they matter most.
3. **Stewardship of Resources:** Responsible stewardship will guide our decisions regarding financial investments, facility enhancements, program expansions, and sustainable growth.

4. **Adaptation and Resilience:** Long-range planning equips us to adapt and thrive amidst challenges, ensuring our relevance and effectiveness in fulfilling our mission.
5. **Engagement and Ownership:** We encourage active participation and ownership from every member, inviting your ideas, perspectives, and aspirations to shape our future.
6. **Impactful Ministry:** Ultimately, this initiative will enhance the impact of our ministry, allowing us to reach more lives, deepen spiritual connections, and extend God's love in transformative ways.

In addition to the recently launched Readiness 360 survey, Paul Nixon will be visiting the church from May 3 to May 5. His visit will include facilitation of focus group discussions, meetings with Leadership Council and staff, and a discussion and Q&A session on May 5 for interested members.

Your engagement in this process is crucial. We invite you to participate actively, share your thoughts, and attend the upcoming sessions facilitated by Paul Nixon. Together, let's embark on this journey of faith and planning, united in our mission to put more of God's love into the world.

For any questions or further information, please reach out to any of the Team members. Please also know that this is an ongoing process and that there will be future updates and opportunities for you to be involved.

Let's embrace this opportunity to shape our future with purpose and blessings.

## SUNDAY KIDS AND FAMILY POOL PARTY

Imagine yourself floating on the cool water, surrounded by friends and watching your children splashing in the pool. We would like to invite families to join us at Mark Vancura and Debra Brenner's home for some SUMMER FUN in their backyard swimming pool for the Sunday Kids' and Family Pool Party on Sunday, June 22, at 2:00 PM.

Please let Tricia Grafelman know if you are interested in attending and she will give you Mark and Debra's address.

Bring a towel, a water bottle, and goggles (if you like using them). A light snack will be provided. Summer will be here before we know it!





# LISTENING TO TRANSGENDER VOICES



by Joan Edmonds

On April 14, the Heart of Longmont congregation had the profound opportunity to witness the innermost struggles of individuals who courageously navigate a world that often fails to

societal expectations and norms, they endured profound mental, emotional, and physical anguish. Their quests to belong, to be understood, and to be loved clashed with the harsh realities of fear, rejection, and isolation.

Yet, despite the difficult paths they traversed, a radiant joy illuminated their photographed faces. They had finally shed the heavy cloak of falsehood and embraced their authentic selves, finding liberation and peace in their newfound truth.



recognize their true selves.

Sal Skog, a respected photojournalist, unveiled the poignant stories and images of several transgender individuals. Their narratives echoed with themes of heartbreak, internal turmoil, societal rejection, and relentless bullying. Living in stark contrast to

## CELEBRATE PRIDEFEST WITH US!

Mark your calendars for June 7 when Roosevelt Park transforms into a vibrant tapestry of colors, music, and celebration for Pridefest 2024! From 3:30 PM to 8:00 PM, join us in embracing diversity and spreading love in our community.

The Mission Design Team has secured a prime spot for the Heart of Longmont's Pridefest booth, where we'll be at the heart of the action. Amidst the delicious food, lively music,


and joyful atmosphere, we'll be there to connect. People can discover who we are, what we believe in, and how we're making a difference in our community.

This is a celebration you won't want to miss, and we'd love for you to be a part of it! Stay tuned for more details on how you can sign up to volunteer and join us in spreading love, acceptance, and understanding at Pridefest 2024!



Would you like to receive our Weekly Pulse and bi-monthly Heart Newsletter in your email inbox?

Scan here to join the mailing list!



## WE ARE A COMMUNITY THAT PRAYS

Send your prayer requests to [prayers@heartoflongmont.org](mailto:prayers@heartoflongmont.org)

## SUBMISSIONS?

Do you have a worshipful moment, memorable experience, story, photo, or other interesting Heart of Longmont tale you'd like to share with our community? Send them to [digitalcontent@heartoflongmont.org](mailto:digitalcontent@heartoflongmont.org)!

## Because of you, life doesn't stop.

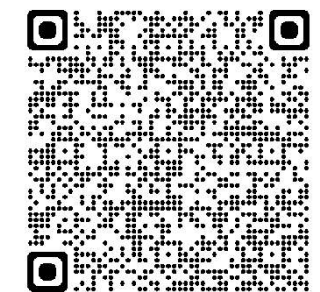


### Heart of Longmont United Methodist Church



### SUNDAY JUNE 30TH 2024

### Fellowship Hall 350 11th Ave Longmont, CO 80501



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# Give Online



Scan here to give to HOL programs and compassion offering.  
Thank you for your generosity!

## WORSHIP WITH US!

Join us for worship every Sunday at 10:00 AM in person or online on our YouTube channel! We look forward to seeing you there!

## Follow Us on Social Media!



- [www.youtube.com/HeartofLongmont](http://www.youtube.com/HeartofLongmont)
- [www.facebook.com/HeartofLongmont](http://www.facebook.com/HeartofLongmont)
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- [@heartoflongmont](https://twitter.com/heartoflongmont)
- [@heartoflongmont](https://www.tiktok.com/@heartoflongmont)

## HOL CARES ABOUT YOUR HEALTH

A return to "normal" is a precarious place for many of our friends and neighbors, especially those who are immunocompromised, disabled, or otherwise at risk.

Please continue to show love and respect for all our friends, neighbors, and siblings in Christ and stay home if you are experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness in order to curb the spread of disease. We still encourage you to wear a mask and practice social distancing.



## CONTACT US

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The Heart of Longmont office is open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM.

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

## OUR MISSION

Putting More of God's Love Into The World; Helping all persons find deeper meaning and God's purpose for their lives as committed Christ-followers.

Serving as the Heart of Longmont means:

We will welcome all persons, without reservation or judgment, just as Jesus Christ would do.

We will work tirelessly by entering into intentional acts of compassion and social justice to make our community a place where God's love is known by all, where poverty and deprivation are unknown by any, and where respect for the worth and dignity of each person is the norm.

We will respect and honor other religious traditions while choosing Christ as our way of knowing God best.

We will emphasize life-long learning so that we may engage our world from a dynamic and creative perspective.

We will work to protect God's creation.

We will practice stewardship of all aspects of our lives, including time, talent, financial resources, and spiritual gifts.

For free and accessible local Longmont news, visit:

