



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2025

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PASTOR

Instead of the usual Letter from the Pastor, our editor, Devon, interviewed Pastor Claire about her spiritual lineage, values, and how her spiritual path has influenced her personal philosophies. We hope you will enjoy this special interview, and look forward to more discussions of introspection and awareness in 2025!

Editor: To begin, please, introduce yourself!

Pastor Claire: I'm Claire McNulty-Drewes. I'm the Pastor at Heart of Longmont and my pronouns are she/her/hers. I would describe myself as energetic, multifaceted, passionate about justice, an animal lover, a mom, a wife and partner, a sister, and a friend.

What is, or how would you describe, your spiritual lineage?

That's a great question. I wasn't raised in the church, so my spiritual life as a young person was primarily influenced by nature. It didn't have a name at the time, but there was definitely a sense of the holy, the sacred, or God. My earliest church influence was in the Episcopal church. My dad had graduated from law school and they said, "If you want a job, go to the Episcopal church, that's where all the attorneys go to church." He went and he had a job by the end of church. I was little at the time. He died young but his whole



Pastor Claire at a riding competition, 2024

professional career he felt indebted to that particular church. So we went on and off. I think of my father and I going to Midnight Mass for Christmas Eve every year. That was very special to me.

There was a family I was really close with that I rode [horses] with. Their daughter and I were best friends at the barn. They were very religious and so they were probably my biggest influence. They had a variety of people in their family: Southern Baptist and non-denominational. They were more conservative, traditional,

Christian, even evangelical. They were also Episcopalian. So, when I spent the night at their house I would always go with them to church.

Those were my early influences. As a teenager my parents were very liberal and political. We were in Western Virginia and there was quite a bit of racism, sexism, misogyny, both in community and particularly in the church. In that particular Episcopal church, the priest had an affair with his secretary (that was her title at the time) and, instead of being fired or held accountable, he was promoted. My mother absolutely wrote off the institution [of the church] because it was so misogynistic. My biggest influence from my mom was the UU [Unitarian Universalism] tradition. I would go with her to the UU church sometimes. And I loved that. I missed the influence of Jesus, though.

When I was sixteen I had a sort of "born again" experience at a Young Life camp—which I didn't know was a Young Life camp—and I really fell in love with Jesus. I came home and my parents said I left one person and came home this evangelical creature they didn't know what to do with! But they were really supportive, and I started going to Bible studies and really dove in hard to the Christian tradition. Young Life is not a church, it's just an extension, so you can go to any

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

IN THIS ISSUE

- Happy New Year from Heart of Longmont!
- Meet our new CFM Director!
- Heart of Recovery Thanksgiving Recap
- Christmas at Heart of Longmont Recap
- The story about our Miracle Window
- What to look forward to in 2025!

church you want, so I went to all kinds of churches.

When I was in my twenties, I met a United Methodist pastor who helped me marry, if you will, the idea of justice and the gospel, and for the first time I found a denomination that I felt was truly passionate about the things I was passionate about and could live into their faith. That’s how I found myself in our particular UMC tradition. In terms of lineage, I would say some of my early United Methodist clergy influences have remained really important in my life.

What does spiritual practice mean to you?

Spiritual practice is finding different disciplines that help me always have a posture toward God. That may be prayer, that may be worship, that may be service, that may be time in nature. I think there’s a variety of ways that I have found to ground myself in spiritual practices. I think worship should be a way of life and my posture is that every day is holy and sacred and I do my best to treat it as such.

Would that be the aspect that matters most to you in your spiritual practice? Living it every day?

Yeah, living it every day. I believe that as people of faith our role or expectation is that we are to live out Jesus’ commands—which are pretty clear, even though we like to think they’re not.

How does your spiritual path influence your values? Have you always had the same values? Have they changed over time? And how do your values manifest within your spiritual practice?

I think my humanist values became my gospel values as a person of faith. Early on, they were humanist values: That people deserve to be valued, to be honored, to be seen. I think the more I learned about the life of Jesus, it really became clear that that is a way of being. Has it changed? I think the only way it’s changed is it’s not so much about being kind, it’s not just being a good human. If I’m going to take my faith seriously, then I have a responsibility to live that faith in the world. It’s a bit different in the humanist approach.

Is spiritual introspection a part of your spiritual practice? How important is an introspective practice to you?

I would say earlier in my ministry it was probably a lot more important. Early in my ministry, I would always go on an annual silent retreat, believe it or not! The mystic

way of being really honors mystery and I think faith has moved so much towards certainty. Mystery is really where the thin line, that liminal space, of God is. That is when we allow mystery to be what it is. I think that’s what the mystics taught the most, or the best. They modeled that and we have gotten away from that—even I have. The church has become very rote. We have meetings, we have papers, so it’s very rote. That’s a good question. I think that’s one thing that we—that I—could



Pastor Claire at a riding competition, 2024

bring back into my spiritual life and the church’s.

Consider the privileges you have that affect your experience. How do you think your privilege affects your spiritual life? And do you know of any blind spots that you may have because of that privilege? Do these blind spots affect how you live into your values? And how do you embrace awareness of these blind spots?

That is a great question. I think privilege is everything in my spiritual life and my daily life. I think it makes me very aware that I can stand in front of a group of 150-200 people and challenge them in ways that wouldn’t be or feel safe for a person who isn’t afforded the same privileges. As a white, cis[gender], clergy person, I tend to read authors who are white and cis and I forget how important it is to read about liberation theology, to bring in indigenous theology. I’m a feminist and I’ve been heavily influenced by the feminist movement which is extremely biased by white culture, and so I think I could learn so much if I begin to expand who I look to for reading, who I look to for sermons, who I look to for influencing my

understanding of the world.

Another blind spot sometimes is language, how critical language is. I now know because I have people in my life who remind me regularly that “brother and sisters” is very binary way of being, instead of saying “siblings”. I’m very careful so that I do my best to include as many as I can while knowing I still have blind spots. And I think it’s hard in Boulder County because I have to work at it. My circle [of friends and acquaintances] is a lot of sameness, so that makes it my blind spots even more blind, probably.

If a person of color has a complaint or concern or a frustration, it’s important for me to not defend or justify or judge, but to truly hear from their perspective and validate that. At seminary I was much more intentional taking classes about Black theology or liberation theology or looking at some of those who were killed because of their willingness to live out their faith.

What would you advise for how to be aware of privilege and blind spots in others’ lives, and how they might live into their values around that? Are there any skills or directions that you might advise other people to be more introspective with their spirituality and spiritual practice?

I think one thing is who you use for your devotions. If your devotions are only from white men, then I would encourage people to find women’s voices, people of color’s voices, queer voices, because voices alone change how we see things. The other thing is asking questions. We read this book, *The Adept Church*, and it talked about the difference between “ministry with” or “ministry to”. We so often do ministry to people instead of really meeting a person where they are and building that relationship.

I told a story in my sermon one Sunday and Haleigh [HOL’s AV Coordinator] said, “That’s easy for you to say. Your age afforded you privilege, your gender identity afforded you privilege, your sexual orientation afforded you privilege, your race afforded you privilege, so it’s easy for you to say that to someone but for someone who’s not safe to speak out...” It changed how I saw things and it changed how I move through the world.

The biggest thing is curiosity. Choosing curiosity versus feeling like you know the answers, and approaching life from a place of curiosity. 🌈



A PLACE WHERE LOVE CONNECTS US

There is so much that I love about The Heart of Longmont. I love the busy hum of Sunday mornings, where the energy feels alive with purpose and joy. I love being greeted by friendly, familiar faces as I rush into service—almost always a minute or two late. Sorry, Claire! I love how our church overflows with kindness and a spirit of outreach, embracing our community both inside and outside the walls of our building.

But perhaps what I treasure most is the connection. There’s something deeply meaningful about taking the time to meet new people, to hear their stories, and to deepen relationships with those I’ve known for years. I find immense joy in being one of the last people to leave the building after service, making sure I’ve had a chance to catch up with everyone I can. These moments of connection are where I see the heart of our church truly beating.

And yet, even with all these things to love, nothing fills my heart quite like spending time with our youth. They bring a vibrancy and authenticity that is both refreshing and inspiring. During the two hours between cleaning up coffee hour and helping with Santa’s Workshop, I invited the youth to hang out, eat pizza, and watch a

Christmas movie in the youth room. It was unstructured, simple, and perfect.

Unstructured time like this is when I really see them shine. They chatter so fast it’s hard to keep up—half the time I’m learning new lingo I’ll never use—but it’s worth it for the laughs we share. Their laughter is contagious, their silliness boundless, and their openness humbling. Amid the jokes and teasing, they inevitably share pieces of their lives that are challenging, trusting each other with their stories.

These moments remind me why I am so passionate about our youth ministry. They are a gift to our church, a reminder of what it means to live with curiosity, honesty, and resilience. They inspire me, and I hope we, as a congregation, inspire them in return.

The Heart of Longmont isn’t just a church; it’s a place where love connects us all. Whether through Sunday morning smiles, heartfelt outreach, or the laughter of teenagers over pizza, we are living into our mission together.

—EMILY FARRENKOPF



MEET HOL’S NEW CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY DIRECTOR

Holly Milne joined us as our Children and Family Ministry Director in 2024. Originally from north Georgia, Holly lived in Seattle, Washington, as a young adult before moving to Colorado in 2008.

Holly has enjoyed mentoring children since high school when she first worked as a summer arts and crafts teacher. Since then, Holly has supported children’s healthy development through involvement in Big Brothers Big Sisters Athens (GA), classroom teaching assistance, I Have A Dream Foundation Boulder County, and

additional volunteering. Holly also brings a background in public service, and she is currently working on her master’s degree in mental health counseling.

For fun, Holly enjoys spending time with friends and family, playing with her pup, Mr. Bojangles, getting outdoors, and seeing movies on the big screen!

Holly says, “My aim is to help children build a connection to the Divine. One that can grow and evolve with them, providing a deep sense of love, compassion, and hope throughout their lives.”



HEART OF RECOVERY

Our second annual Thanksgiving meal with Recovery Café was another resounding success! A special thank you to our fearless co-leaders Amy Mann and Hermine Ngnomire for their leadership and passion in making the meal so meaningful.

All who attended left with full bellies and full hearts. One person told me a beautiful story of the power of community. Newly in recovery, she told me she had lost most of her relationships along the way. Her family and friends had abandoned her through her addiction, leaving her alone as she hit rock bottom. As she fought to make her way back to health and wellness, Recovery Café became an important part of her recovery story.

She thought she was going to be alone again for the holidays, but saw the Heart of Recovery Thanksgiving meal advertised and was ecstatic. She said, “To be able to spend the holidays with my Recovery Café family means the world to me. Just to be with people who know my story...” She teared up and couldn’t finish her sentence. We hugged, knowing the shared pain in addiction and the healing that comes in recovery.

There is power in community. It leads to healing and hope. Thank you Heart of Longmont for being a beacon of light and love in our community and world!

—PASTOR CLAIRE



Fearless leaders and organizers, Amy Mann and Hermine Ngnomire!



Volunteers prepping food for the meal



Hermine and Jean Malchow setting up one of the tables



Everyone sitting down to the meal!



The brilliant folks of Recovery Café!



Sharing a Thanksgiving meal together

LONGMONT LOCAL LIVES DISCUSSION COMING IN FEBRUARY

Get ready to connect with the heart and soul of our community! The Mission Design Team invites you to a special showing from the Longmont Local Lives series, a powerful collection of stories from local residents. These stories provide intimate glimpses into the experiences and journeys of Longmont residents.

Directed, edited, and produced by videographer Trenton Hoshiko, this series was brought to life by the Longmont Community Foundation, highlighting voices that resonate with personal triumphs, challenges, and community connections.

This event will feature the story of one of our very own Heart of Longmont members. After viewing their inspiring video, stay for a thought-provoking discussion and a Q&A session that will dive deeper into their experiences and insights.

Date to be announced soon! Keep an eye on our socials and the Weekly Pulse email updates!

Don’t miss this opportunity to engage, learn, and connect. Stay tuned for more details—you won’t want to miss it!

MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP: A CALL TO LOVE AND SERVE

The Mission Design Team is excited to announce that we are exploring the opportunity to sponsor a missionary. Missionaries have been a vital part of the Methodist Church’s history and mission since 1819, embodying John Wesley’s call to love both God and neighbor. This work reflects one of the church’s core values: faith in action.

By sponsoring a missionary, we have the privilege to extend our reach beyond our local community. While financial support is essential, our sponsorship will also include communication and prayer, fostering a deeper connection with the missionary and their work.

Currently, the Mission Design Team is prayerfully discerning which missionary to sponsor, focusing on those who align with our church’s core beliefs and mission. Once the decision is made, we will share their story with the congregation and provide opportunities for everyone to engage in this meaningful partnership.

In the meantime, we invite you to join us in prayer as we make this important decision. Together, we can support this vital ministry and participate in spreading God’s love to those in need, near and far.

COMPASSION OFFERINGS

January’s compassion offering is designated for El Comité. This nonprofit works tirelessly to assist immigrants in getting a foothold in a new community by helping to build connections and find support. Their mission is to facilitate understanding and communication within the community and to improve social justice, education, and economic status for immigrants.

February’s compassion offering will support the I Have A Dream Foundation. This nonprofit believes that, when given equal access to resources, all children can achieve their dreams. They partner with youth and their families to navigate school from 1st grade up to college and beyond into careers. The I Have A Dream Foundation motivates and empowers children from low income situations to reach their education and career goals by providing long-term intervention with mentoring and tutoring.



CHRISTMAS AT HEART OF LONGMONT

HELPING SANTA AT THE 3RD ANNUAL SANTA'S WORKSHOP



The kids who attend the Heart of Longmont Wild Plum location who came to shop for their families at Santa's Workshop



Giving high fives and fist bumps to Santa Claus!



Personal shoppers helped kids find presents for their family members



Santa's Helpers at the gift wrapping table



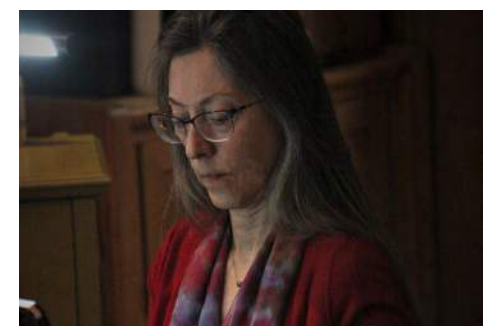
So many generous angels and elves brought gifts for all ages to Santa's workshop!



The HOL courtyard was converted into a petting zoo for kids of all ages to enjoy during the event!



THE SANCTUARY FILLED WITH SONGS OF THE SEASON



OUR MIRACLE WINDOW

by Ann Yoder

Our spectacular stained-glass window, located in the west balcony, was designed by Ludwig Schremer, a Christian artist and art consultant. The window fits the architectural design of the church, described in contemporary newspapers as “one of the most beautiful edifices in the region.”

The Holy Trinity is expressed several times in the window. The hand and triangle symbolize God the Father, showing the hand of Creation and Command. The red heart shape is the symbol of life. The lamb represents the gift of God, His Son, Jesus Christ, and the dove represents, the Holy Sanctifier. The purple circle around the various symbols reminds us that the three persons—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit—are one God, one Unity, our Lord of Heaven.

The glass in this religious window was made in a studio in West Germany near the city of Frankfort, and is of the best quality to be found. 1,000 pieces were needed to complete it. The glass will not fade nor

peel because it is made of genuine European mouth-blown antique glass, which, at the time of the window’s construction, was the only hand-made glass in the world.

Ludwig Schremer, the designer, is a graduate of the College of Fine Arts in Kaiserslautern, Germany, and has his Master of Arts degree from the University of Munich and the Sorbonne in Paris. His studio, Schermer Art Studio, was located in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Consecration Day for the church was set for November 22, 1959, and the window was not expected to arrive in time for the consecration. But the window would arrive just in time and its placement was brought about by the artist’s presence in Longmont. Ludwig Schremer returned to St. Paul to hurry the window’s shipment, going through two custom houses and two brokers for its arrival at the church in Longmont that Sunday. He supervised workers late into Saturday night to complete the window for the Sunday services.

Attendees at the Consecration service proclaimed “It’s a miracle!” at the window’s surprise arrival. Thus, the window gained its name: The Miracle Window.

The Miracle Window remains an architectural and symbolic feature of the church building. Sadly, our east-facing congregation doesn’t see it during services. However, as you leave the altar following communion, or as you exit the sanctuary, LOOK UP! Night time offers the most beautiful view of the lighted window. Study the symbols, the art work in all its beauty and you, too, will proclaim, “ITS A MIRACLE!”

After over 60 years of wind and weather, vandalism and neglect, it was time to give the Miracle Window special attention. At the recommendation of the 150th Anniversary Committee, an appraisal, restoration, and cleaning project was launched. Karl Scott agreed to spearhead this project and generous gifts provided the needed funds. Additional protection has been provided with a safety glass shield to safeguard our beautiful and meaningful Miracle Window.



PHOTO BY
HALEIGH BIRD

WESLEY TOWNHOMES WORK BEGINS

We are so excited that work has officially started on the Wesley Townhomes! You will notice a new traffic pattern as you approach our parking lot. You will be unable to access the church from Mountain View on Emery and there is no longer access to the north entry to the parking lot. The city is doing prep work in the road as our project progresses. If you have any questions, please reach out to the church office.



HEART OF LONGMONT BLOOD DRIVE

January 26th, 2025

10AM-2PM

350 11th Ave
Fellowship Hall
Longmont, CO 80501

Donors can visit Vitalant.org and use blood drive code 10055200 Or scan the QR code to sign up today!

This is Emily and Bowen’s story. ✨



Emily & Bowen

Every year around the time of his birthday, Bowen’s Mom, Emily, hosts a blood drive in his honor. Bowen was born with multiple heart defects and in the first days of his life Bowen received his first blood transfusion. He has since needed more during two subsequent open-heart surgeries to date. Emily is grateful for those who selflessly donate blood.

“The obstacles Bowen has overcome and continues to overcome would not be possible without blood donors who selflessly give to put smiles on the faces of Bowen and countless others,” she said.



Because of you, life doesn't stop.
vitalant.org

JOIN OUR CHURCH FAMILY!

Finding a church home is not an easy thing to do when you are new to a community or if you have been searching for a while. We offer quarterly opportunities for anyone considering Heart of Longmont as their church home to come learn more about our United Methodist denomination and our church with Pastor Claire.

We invite you to join us on Sunday, January 19, right after service in the Parlor for light, healthy snacks while you ask questions about HOL and meet others who are considering taking the next step in commitment to our faith community. We will recognize those that join the church during worship service on Sunday, January 26.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Tricia or Pastor Claire

CHILI COOK OFF

Dust off your crock pots and search for your best chili recipe! Will it be a tried and true recipe from your grandmother or will you try something new you saw online?

Join us for this annual event that is filled with laughter, delicious food, and lighthearted competition. Bring your best chili in a crock pot and plug it in on the tables closest to the stage in Wesley Hall on Sunday, January 26. We will gather right after the service to taste test and vote for best chili and dessert. Drinks, chili toppings (cheese, crackers, fritos, and green onions provided). Pro-Tip: Bring your own muffin tin from home so you taste test many chilis at once!



BLOOD DRIVE JANUARY 26

Saving lives is easier than you think—and you can do so from our church building.

We will be hosting Vitalant Blood Donation Center in Wesley Hall for our annual blood drive on Sunday, January 26, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

[Click here to sign up](#) or scan the QR code on the previous page (page 9)!



CHEF HEARTY

Providing fifty Wild Plum families with a healthy meal kit once a month gives them an opportunity to take a night off from worrying about what to fix and shopping for ingredients. The kids love being in the kitchen helping prepare the meal!

Kit building for spring semester will be on Sunday, January 5, and Sunday, February 2 in Wesley Hall after service. Wesley Hall may be “out of sight” but we don’t want Chef Hearty “out of mind”!

This is a quick and easy way to serve our community and we invite you to join us on the first Sunday of every month to build Chef Hearty kits. If you know meals that would work well in these healthy kits, send Tricia the recipe!

MEDITATION CLASS AT HOL

Given the magnitude of the stress present in the world today and the stress created by our own personal issues, Chris Mason is offering free meditation classes twice a month at the Heart of Longmont.

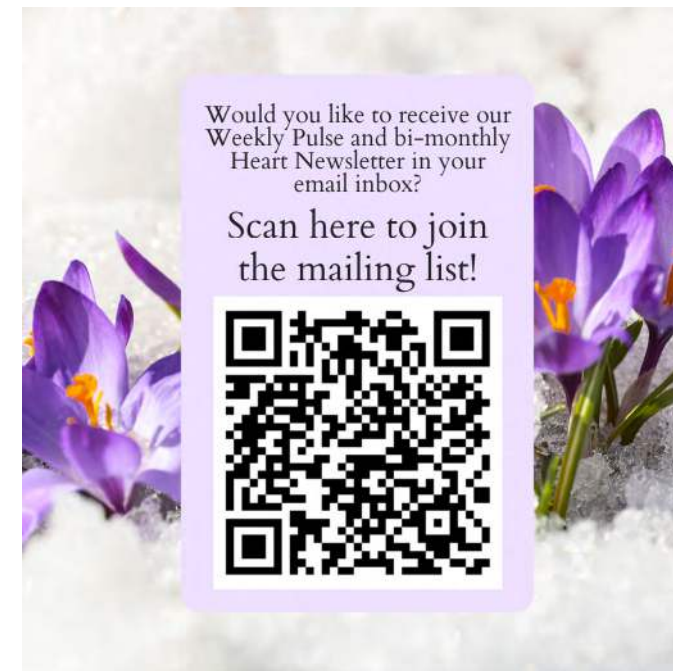
All are welcome and invited to learn more about this ancient skill that has been a calming refuge for thousands of years.

Many types of meditation will be covered with a focus on Buddhist and Christian practices. The meetings will occur two Fridays per month from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM at Heart of Longmont. The first two meetings are scheduled for Friday, January 17 and Friday, January 31.

No experience is necessary to join!
Come join us and give meditation a try!



FROM ALL OF US AT
HEART OF LONGMONT,
HAPPY NEW YEAR!



WE ARE A
COMMUNITY
THAT PRAYS

Send your prayer requests to
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!

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



www.facebook.com/HeartofLongmont



[@heartoflongmont](https://www.instagram.com/heartoflongmont)



[@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

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.