

**CREEDE COMMUNITY CHURCH, UCC**  
**Annual Congregational Meeting 2023 In Review**  
**Sunday, February 4, 2024**

Contents	1
Agenda	2
Minutes of 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting	See PDF File Attached
Moderator's Report	3
Minister Report	4
Clerk's Report	5
Trustees Report, including House Committee	6
Deacons Report	7
Christian Life Education	8
Mission & Outreach/Helping Hands	9
Ladies Aid Society	11
2023 Ministry Teams and Nominations for Officers, Deacons, and Trustees	12-13
Income Statement & 2024 Budget	See PDF File Attached

**Annual Congregational Meeting**  
**February 4, 2024**  
**Agenda**

1. Call to Order and Declaration of Quorum
2. Approval of Minutes from the February 12, 2023, Annual Congregational Meeting
3. Reports
  - A. Moderator
  - B. Minister
  - C. Clerk
  - D. Trustees
  - E. Deacons
  - F. Christian Life Education
  - G. Mission & Outreach/Helping Hands
  - H. Ladies Aid Society
4. New Business:
  - A. Present Proposed Amendments to Bylaws for Congregational Approval
  - B. Present 2024 Budget for Congregational Approval
  - C. Election of Officers and incoming Deacons, Trustees, and Ministry Leaders
  - D. Commissioning & Blessing Officers/Deacons/Trustees/Ministry Leaders
5. Closing Prayer

## **Moderator's Report for 2023**

by Jamie McLeroy

*"I will praise you, Oh Lord with my whole heart; I will tell of all your marvelous works."*

- Psalms 9:1

2023 was my last year as moderator. It has been a privilege to serve the church and the community in this role. I could not have done it without the support of Sarah Linn and the other team leaders. Our most important accomplishments are detailed in their reports.

We did a good job managing our finances and increasing member contributions.

We had a very successful Ladies Aid Rummage Sale.

We welcomed several new members.

We provided significant support to people in need and bereaved families through the work of Mission Outreach, Helping Hands, Ladies Aid, and the Zuni Outreach Mission.

We continued our collaboration with the arts community through CRT tech support dinners and musical events.

I look forward to working with Lori Forth-Dooley as incoming moderator. We are so fortunate that she agreed to take on this role!

## Minister's Report from the Rev. Dr. Sarah B. Linn

At the beginning of 2023, I thought I knew what I was in for. But I had no idea!

While I was focused on our lives together in Creede, the Rocky Mountain Conference of the UCC (comprised of the 70-some UCC ministries across Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah) was going through an immense upheaval. It faced multi-layered crises that were only beginning to be revealed. And through a strange and comical series of events, I was tapped to serve as Moderator of the Board of Directors, starting last June.

So, the second half of 2023 was incredibly demanding, heart-breaking, and rewarding as I led the Board through identifying and repairing staffing, administrative, and financial ruptures. Here at the start of 2024, we are only now *starting* the work we hoped to do: reconnecting across the RMC, recommitting to mission, re-envisioning how we need to carry out the work of the church.

I say all this because there's no way I would have or could have taken on the role of Moderator, except that our congregation has incredibly faithful, generous, and skilled volunteers leading every aspect of ministry. So, to all our Officers, Deacons, Trustees, and ministry leaders: **Thank you!** You have kept our congregation moving forward thoughtfully and generously, allowing me to share the "Red Church Way" of care, humor, and common sense with the Conference, where it is sorely needed.

Along the way, we had the blessing of accompanying Jesse Ophoff through the UCC ordination process. He was ordained in our sanctuary on December 2 to the role of Director of Spiritual Care at Rio Grande Hospital in Del Norte. We're glad Brooke & Jesse's family is still in Creede for now and appreciate Jesse's preaching when we get to hear from him. But we're excited to share them with the world and can't wait to see what lies ahead for all of them in 2024.

So, as you read through our 2023 ministry reports, I hope you will see beneath all the activity, all the giving, going, and growing – to the compassion and wisdom undergirding our lives together. And may your heart be warmed as mine is by seeing God at work in and through us. **Thank you** for embodying God's goodness and beauty. **Thank you** for living your faith and sharing your life!

Blessings on your head,  
Sarah

## CLERK'S REPORT

Annual Clerk's Report for 2023 by Francine Moyer

**Total Current Members: 143**

- Welcomed 5 new members:
  - Linda Dubbs, Member, June 11
  - Michael Dubbs, Member, June 11
  - Megan Marino, Member, June 11
  - Shirley Knox, Associate Member, July 23, 2023
  - Machaelle Shleter, Member, July 23, 2023
  
- Marriages in 2023:
  - None
  
- Baptisms in 2023:
  - Hazel Rose DiAntonio, July 9
  - Ellie Shae Boydston, October 22
  - Idris Vernon Addison, November 26
  - Brennand Scarlett Birdsey, December 24
  
- Confirmations in 2023:
  - None
  
- Those who passed from us in 2023:
  - Tracy Trow, Member, March 9
  - Tricia Schneider, Associate Member, May 5
  - Karen Tempfel, Member, August 27
  - Mary Summers, Friend, June 3
  - Kay Wyley, Member, September 1
  - Ray Sharp, Friend, October 8
  - Don Wagon, Friend, October 1
  - Sandy Kroll, Friend, November 16

## TRUSTEES REPORT

The primary function of the Board of Trustees is financial oversight. It is the responsibility of the members to create a budget to present to the congregation with oversight throughout the year. Last year we were under budget in spending by \$7469.70 while receiving \$4096.81 over budget in income. While we had anticipated using \$21,672 in reserves, we only used \$14,202.98. The Board of Trustees are confident of our financial position.

Our congregation has been blessed for many years by having Debbie Whitmore as our bookkeeper. Debbie is in the process of a much-deserved retirement. We send her our deepest gratitude for the years of service. We also want to welcome Linnaea Renz as our new bookkeeper.

In 2023, we were able to get started on much needed maintenance on the parsonage. We had the logs sand blasted, stained and sealed. Many participated in this process, no one more than Sarah Linn. Sarah spent many hours prepping, painting and sealing, thank you!

This year was also the year the beautiful (used to be) tree in front of the church was taken down. Once we saw the degree to which it was rotten, it didn't happen any too soon!

The decision to move the maintenance position from yearly to seasonal was made this year as a trial. It worked well and we have decided to continue with the schedule. Billy Fairchild is currently in the maintenance position, and we are grateful for him.

Last year we experimented by asking for the next year's pledges in September, prior to the budgeting process. Trustees found this is a much better approach. Having that estimated number for use during the budgeting process was very helpful. At the end of 2024 we will be able to gather data about the estimated number and reality. After several years we should be able to get an ever more accurate prediction.

Overall, the Creede Community Church is overwhelmingly blessed by our financial position. With this strong footing we can continue being a blessing to our members and the community. The Trustees will continue to carefully watch over us, maintaining our position for the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori G. Dooley

## DEACONS REPORT

by Millynn Teal, Deacon

Many thanks to the Deacons serving in 2023: Carol Pierce, Billy Fairchild, Linda Walker, Scotty Lamb, Bethany Andre, and Millynn Teal. Special thanks to Linda, who is rotating off after three years. Scotty will serve another term, starting in 2024 and we welcome Linda Dubbs as a new Deacon this spring!

We are likewise so grateful to our worship team members, including Music Director Debbie Whitmore, who helps provide such graceful accompaniment, along with Jenny VanRy, Johanna Gray and Meg Marino. We are blessed with such enriching music each time we meet.

In 2023, we started providing “Deacon Sunday” worship services each quarter, which has allowed us to provide Pastor Sarah some relief and different perspectives to the congregation. From mid-June to mid-August, as we have in years past, we added a 9am service. However, we found it was lightly attended and those who came said they would be happy to worship at 11am with the rest of us. So, at the end of the summer, the Deacons decided that we will not have a 9am service next year. If there is a new demand for an early service, we can always revisit the decision.

Once again in 2023, we saw several new folks join the church, which is always exciting. We held “Coffee with the Deacons” sessions in June and July to share stories, discuss faith, and answer questions. Throughout the year, we tried to let members, friends, and neighbors know that the Red Church is here for them to help with practical needs and/or prayer requests. This included sending greeting cards during Advent to everyone in the church directory.

Deacons set up and serve Communion each month and help with First Sunday Potluck in the off-season, which continues to be fun, delicious, and full of fellowship with one another. We also assisted with Tech Dinners for the Creede Theatre in 2023 and look forward to similar opportunities in 2024.

We are so grateful for our faithful congregation and are honored to serve Creede Community Church. Please remember that we are here for you, we pray for you, and we love you. Never hesitate to let us know how we can help, and please don't forget to keep your Deacons in your prayers.

## CHRISTIAN LIFE EDUCATION

by Kate Michaels

This year has been an interesting one as we've returned to in-person church services following the most intensive period of the pandemic, and actively tried to reinvigorate our Christian Life Education program at CCC. I am going to break this board report down into three sections: (1) What is going well, (2) What needs improvement and (3) Action items for 2024-25.

### 1. What is going well?

- a. We have a wonderful group (approx. 5) of volunteer teachers that frequently teach Sunday School at CCC. We know that in a small community, and an even smaller church, that our congregants wear many different hats. I am so thankful for those individuals that have devoted their time and talents to teaching CCC's youngest congregants. I think that it would be helpful to add 2-3 more individuals to our group of available folks, and continue to grow our program.
- b. The Celebrate Wonder Curriculum seems to be meeting our needs very well. We have children in the 2-4 age range, all the way up to 11 years old. It is helpful that this curriculum offers a range of activities based on age. The lessons seem to engage our children, and teach them about scripture and the stories and lessons in the Bible.

### 2. What needs improvement?

- a. The fact that our curriculum is only available online may be a barrier to some teachers who may not have internet access, a home computer and/or printer. Would it be helpful to print the curriculum and have it available to teachers so that they don't have to print materials ahead of time? This could be a topic of discussion during our winter meeting.
- b. When we have a wide range of ages at Sunday School, it can be a bit challenging to feel as though we are meeting the needs (and providing appropriate education) for each student. If the number of children we have in attendance on a weekly basis continues to grow, we may need to consider two Sunday School groups: perhaps ages 2-5 and ages 6-10? OR, adding an additional teacher so that the larger group could be broken into two smaller groups at some point for the activity or application portion.

### 3. Action Items for 2024-25?

- a. Set a date/time for an annual Christian Life Education meeting to discuss the above topics.
- b. Recruit additional congregants that would be interested in serving as Sunday School teachers.
  - i. Is anyone interested in taking on the role of director of Christian Life Education as my 2-year term is coming to a close.
- c. Discuss available funding for items such as: quarterly curriculum, new children's books, art supplies and snacks.



## **MISSION/OUTREACH AND HELPING HANDS**

by Bethany Andre, Chair

Special thanks to returning team members Jamie McLeroy, Margaret Phillips, Carol Pierce, Linda Walker, Douglas Hammet-Lair and Jana Bean Wilson for their excellent work this year! Doug resigned from the committee in 2023, and we are thankful for his service, while gratefully welcoming new team members: Linda and Mike Dubbs. 2024 will also see Jana taking on greater responsibility on the Mission & Outreach team. These diligent, service-minded church members are joined by many others who volunteer for specific projects and provide generous financial support.

### **2023 PROJECTS & SUPPORT EFFORTS**

This year has seen greater organization and planning within the Mission & Outreach team. We are excited about how much we have been able to accomplish in God's name with this additional focus.

#### **Mission Dinners**

During the past year, we have hosted three Mission dinners, specifically to assist members of our community facing significant medical expenses and life-altering events, as well as assisting with four tech dinners for Creede Repertory Theatre. We also hosted a Mission dinner with 100% of proceeds to benefit Helping Hands. Altogether, we raised over \$12,000 through these efforts.

#### **La Puente Homeless Outreach Meals**

We prepared and served three meals to our unhoused friends through La Puente in Alamosa. Over the past year, we have helped prepare and serve more than 150 meals, many of which were for children.

#### **Zuni Mission School Library Project**

Mission & Outreach worked with Jenny and Jim VanRy to build a library of books for the Zuni Mission School in New Mexico. Congregants were invited to send titles from a prepared list directly to the school. Once that list was satisfied, we provided funds in 2023 and have budgeted funds in 2024 to continue assisting with this effort until a full, permanent library is available to these Zuni students.

#### **Socksgiving! 2023**

During 2023's Socksgiving! from Oct 22nd through Nov 26th, we collected and delivered 908 brand new pairs of socks to support La Puente's efforts to serve those experiencing homelessness in the San Luis Valley. We received donations from congregants and community members. Special thanks to Jana Bean Wilson and Douglas Hammet-Lair for their assistance with putting up posters, sock collection, counting and bagging!

#### **La Puente Christmas Tree**

Mission & Outreach offered the congregation the opportunity to serve the clients of La Puente, through donating toys and gifts via a gift tree. About 30 gifts were delivered Dec 21st, while some were mailed directly to La Puente.

### **Preventative Dental Care Initiative**

Mission & Outreach has partnered with Creede Dental Works to provide preventative care for local children and Veterans. Our dental hygienist provides preventative care including cleanings, x-rays, fluoride and other services discounted by 50%. Five children have benefited from this program since it began in Dec 2023. The hope is to expand the program to include all of those who have Medicaid, a program in which the practice isn't currently able to participate.

### **Local Care Packages**

We have created a care package program for local residents. This allows us to purchase OTC medications and supplements, soup, tea, juice, tissues and little happies/cheer 'em ups at Kentucky Belle to deliver to neighbors in need due to illness, disaster and/or bereavement.

### **2023 CHARITABLE DONATIONS**

Thanks to God's faithfulness and the unfailing generosity of our community we were able to send over \$7000 in contributions to ministry partners: Creede Early Learning Center (\$1000), La Puente (\$1000), Tu Casa (\$1000), Adelante (\$1000), Creede Repertory Theatre (childcare: \$1000), Creede Dental Works (youth/veteran preventative care; \$500) as well as \$600 to the Zuni Missionary School in New Mexico and \$1000 to Backbay Mission. We also contributed to the UCC's "Our Church's Wider Mission" fund and two special UCC offerings ("Neighbors in Need" and "Strengthening the Church").

### **2023 HELPING HANDS ASSISTANCE**

This was a challenging year for many, but we were able to provide financial assistance to all community members who made requests! Over 2023 we gave nearly \$9000 to cover a wide range of needs including medical and dental bills, utilities, disaster funds, rent, wood and groceries. This is twice what we offered in assistance in 2022! Helping Hands ended 2023 with a balance of \$3,245.41.

### **2024 PLANS**

We are excited to continue helping our neighbors, increasing financial support for our mission partners, and creating new relationships as we expand mission opportunities and share God's love.

- **Grow the Mission & Outreach team**
- **Monitor and grow (if appropriate) Preventative Dental Care Initiative**
- **Monitor and grow (if appropriate) Local Care Package Program**
- **Assist with Zuni Mission School Creede Trip (May 2024)**
- **Steward and grow (if appropriate) Mission & Outreach budget to include an annual 15-20% increase in giving to Mission partners**

Please pray for Mission/Outreach and Helping Hands – God has a lot for us to do in 2024!

**LADIES AID SOCIETY**  
by Lori Dooley, President

Once again, we are celebrating and praising God for his wisdom and guidance. Another year of helping everyone that requested assistance last year is such a blessing to all involved.

The organization has been blessed with several new members. They are such an exciting group anxious to help where needed.

This year saw some incredibly difficult times for one of our members. Sherry and Henry Hosselkus lost their home of over 50 years to fire. Thank God they were both able to get out but did suffer smoke inhalation issues. We are so very thankful that they are here and on the mend. LAS partnered with the Elks and sponsored a very successful fundraising evening full of fun and amazing items donated by the area businesses and individuals for auction. In addition to the fundraiser fellow Sewing Sisters Janet Harrison and Becky Welch along with other LAS members worked hard getting temporary housing set up for them when they got to come home. Thank you to all that helped with that effort!

Next year will be the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ladies Aid Society! We are planning some great things. A committee headed by Therese Hargraves has already been planning the last several months in preparation. Participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities and special activities throughout the summer will celebrate the last 125 years.

When looking at our finances at the end of each year, I am always in awe of how God blesses us!

Checking Balance	\$15,287.85
Savings	901.68
Investment	<u>22,948.62</u>
Ladies Aid Cash/Investment Bal.	\$39,138.15
LAS Income	\$56,529.44
LAS Expenses	55,744.29

We had just what we needed plus \$785.15 to spare!

**2024 Officers, Trustees, Deacons & Ministry Teams**  
**DRAFT Nominations for Congregational Vote in Red**

**Officers:** Moderator: Lori Dooley (1<sup>st</sup> yr)  
1-year terms Vice Moderator: Charlene Ameal (1<sup>st</sup> yr)  
Clerk: Francine Moyer (2<sup>nd</sup> yr)  
Treasurer: Tom Schrandt (3<sup>rd</sup> yr)

**Pastor Relations:** Charlene Ameal, Officer  
reports to Officers Billy Fairchild, Deacon  
Jake & Jenni Harbour, Trustee

**Deacons:** Carol Pierce (2025)  
6 members Millynn Teal (2025)  
3-year terms Bethany Andre (2026)  
Billy Fairchild (2026)  
Linda Dubbs (2027)  
Scott Lamb (2027)

*Seasonal Deacons may be appointed by the Board.*

**Worship Committee:** Johanna Gray  
reports to Deacons Megan Marino  
open to more participants Millynn Teal  
Debbie Whitmore

**Trustees:** Michael Meals, chair (2026)  
6 members Michele Schrandt (2025)  
3-year terms Jana Wilson (2025)  
Jake & Jenni Harbour (2026) – serving jointly/one vote  
Michael Dubbs (2027)  
Bill Jenkins & Barb Roughton (2027) – serving jointly/one vote

**House Committee:** Jana Wilson  
reports to Trustees and friends

## Ministry Teams, continued

**Mission & Outreach/  
Helping Hands**

reports to the Board  
at least 5 members  
serving 2-year terms  
open to more participants

Bethany Andre, Co-chair, HH (2026)  
Jana Wilson, Co-chair, M/O (2026)  
Linda Walker (2025)  
Carol Pierce (2025)  
Linda Dubbs (2026)  
Michael Dubbs (2026)  
Jamie McLeroy, Helping Hands

**Ladies Aid Society:**

reports to the Board  
officers serve 2-year terms

Lori Dooley, president (Sept. 2024)  
Terri Ricketts & Millynn Teal, secretary (2024)  
Linda Walker, treasurer (2024)

**Sewing Sisters:**

reports to Ladies Aid

Sherrie Hosselkus  
and friends

**Christian Life Education:**

reports to Deacons  
at least 4 members  
serving 2-year terms  
open to more participants

Kate Michaels, chair (Sunday School coordinator) (2026)  
Michelle Meals (2025)  
Michael Meals (2025)  
Linda Walker (2026)  
Debbie Whitmore  
Michael Meals  
Brooke Ophoff

**Safe Church Team:**

works with CLE  
reports to Moderator

Michele Schrandt, Trustee Representative  
Debbie Whitmore, Member-at-Large  
Kate Michaels, Christian Ed Representative