

Pastor Anne's Message, May 2024

Greetings to you, family, and friends of Collbran Congregational, United Church of Christ!

Welcome Springtime! It is a time of Cleansing and Pruning. In John 15:1-8 Jesus spoke, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the Vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit, he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the Word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me."

God, the Vinegrower, has tough work to do! This scripture is all about the cleansing and the pruning. This means creating lives which are pure and free from blemishes or shame. We have to "be tended" in order for the branches to bear fruit. There is no harvest if we (the branches) disconnect from God. As long as we stay connected to God, we live and produce full leaves, full lives, and abundant fruit. Jesus' words have already done the cleansing. The pruning comes from God, then lives out in the community. Our challenge is to stay connected to our God.

Jesus takes the common, everyday image of the vine and transforms it into a symbol of community, mission, and love. This community is characterized by interdependence, mutual respect, and the ongoing presence of Christ. The vine imagery is about discipleship and community over the long haul. What then needs to continue to happen, or happen in the future, in our community of faith to produce a bountiful harvest?

Fruit or the lack of fruit is a manifestation of our interior life and health. It describes and reveals whether we are living connected or disconnected lives. You can see that in long-term friendships, marriages, and community loyalty. We choose where we abide and how we stay connected.

"What fruit am I producing?" "How much?" "Is it an acceptable quality?" Those are good questions, and we ask more about the "quality" of our lives rather than "quantity." We abide in God and therefore become an extension of his life, his love, and his holiness.

It is a relationship of union as a branch is united to the vine. We live our lives as one. This is not just about relationship with Jesus; it affects and is the basis for our relationships with one another. Love for Jesus, love for one another, and love for ourselves becomes one love. We soon discover that we are living one life and the fruit of that life and love is abundant, overflowing, and glorifying God! May your Springtime be fruitful!

In Christ,

Pastor Anne Djokic



Moderator Report

March was a busy month with the take-out Lasagna dinners, Palm Sunday, the Seder Meal, and Easter. We had a nice turnout for all four. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to prepare for these events and celebrations, and to those who attended and helped make them all successful! It was a joy on Easter morning having all those children at the altar enjoying Pastor Anne and Sveto's puppet show. Special thanks to Jean Kees for the jelly bean theme.



Trustees Report

The Trustees have had a quiet spring. Small repairs are made as needed. Lawn Services have begun. It is wonderful to see the grass cut and trimmed. There is work needing done on the cross in the park and the water for the sprinkler system will be turned on in May. The security cameras have been updated or replaced.



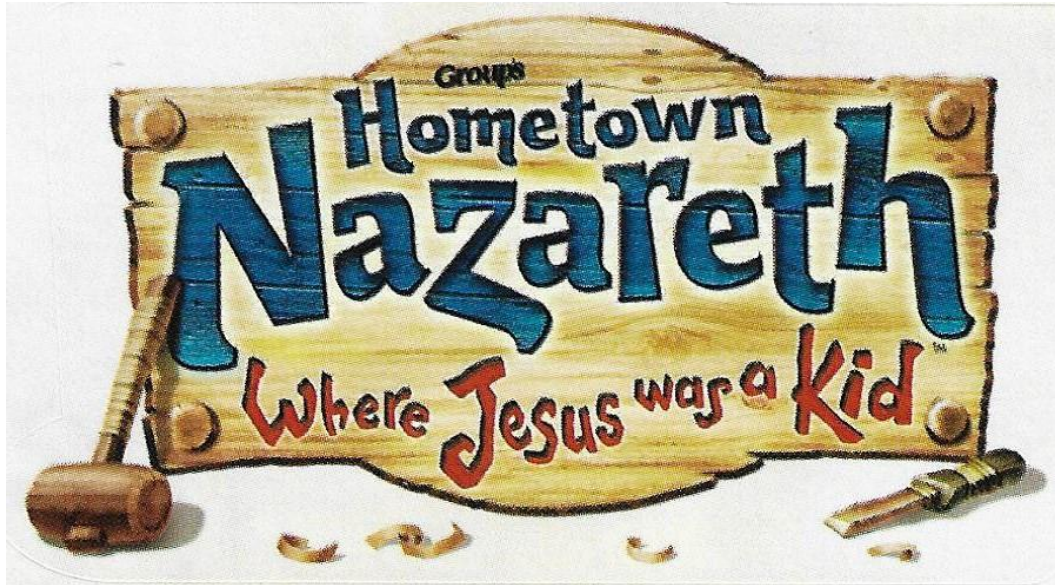
The use of the church is increasing for family parties and celebrations. The community is welcome to rent the dining room, kitchen, or meeting room upstairs for parties, meals, or large or small group meetings. Please contact Tilda Evans or Sue Bellotti for information. Information and forms are available on the church website, collbrancongregationalchurch.org, under the Events tab.

The best news of all is the rose window in the sanctuary is back in place. It is beautiful.

The Trustees try to keep a look-out for necessary repairs. If you see anything you feel is in need of our attention, please let one of us know.

Trustees – Julia Cox, Mike Loftus, Sue Bellotti, and Tilda Evans

Vacation Bible School



Plans are being made for Vacation Bible School which will be held June 19, 20, & 21st from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon.

Orders have been made. Craft and Game planning has started. There will be additional planning meetings in May which will include the teachers and pastor.

Teachers are needed for

- Pre-K, ages 4-5,
- Kindergarten, for those who have completed Kindergarten
- 1st & 2nd Grade
- 3rd and 4th Grade
- 5th and 6th Grade

Anyone willing to be a teacher, helper, or assist serving snacks, helping with crafts and games, or helping with sign-in on Wednesday morning between 8:00 and 9:00 AM are asked to please contact Pastor Anne or Sue Bellotti. Middle school student are welcomed and encouraged to participate as class helpers, craft assistants, and game guides.

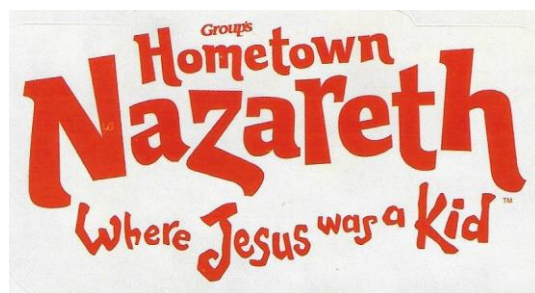
This year's program is called Hometown Nazareth, Where Jesus was a Kid. The program for the children and their families and friends will be held Friday at 11:00 with a hot dog lunch to follow.

THE MUSTARD SEED
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
COLLBRAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
PO BOX 160
COLLBRAN, CO 81624

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Collbran Congregational Church
Vacation Bible School
June 19, 20, 21, 2024
9:00 to 12:00

Contact Pastor Anne Djokic, (970) 433-3385,
For more information