

RMRC conference call notes for 02_07_2019

Attendance: Greg Yonker (Chair) and Don Sutton (notes) (StP); Kae Madden and Dennis Giblin (COB); John Head (CHF); Jack Wolfe and Teri Harroun (LOC); Jim DeMuth and Jane Reina (MoM); Michael Nicosia (Vicar)

Excused: Mike Weil, represented by **guest** Cynthia Drew (CHF)

1. Opening Prayer

*Master Architect, guiding your people,
we gather in this place united in prayer and intent
with our siblings across the Rocky Mountain Region.*

*As we reflect on the shape that the local church will take,
and on what design might best serve the building of your Kingdom,
keep us ever-mindful that every voice is needed in this Holy Conversation,
that our diversity enriches our communion,
and that your plans for us are revealed
only in the light of love and the vulnerable humility.*

This we ask and can do through Christ our brother. Amen

2. and Regional Prayer

*holy One, sweet Guide
reveal Your will; our new "yes"
together. Amen.*

3. Agenda Amended to include Denver PrideFest/Approved

4. Clarification of guest's role

- Cynthia's full participation appropriate particularly as Dcn. Mike excused. (Jane is glad she is not the newest person anymore.)

5. Approval of January notes via emails and confirmed by Jim DeMuth and Dennis seconded.

6. Treasurer's report (cf. emailed report)

- a. Jim commends Greg for excellent report;
- b. St Paul is still awaiting the check from its treasurer and will post it as soon as it is written.
- c. Pin report
 - i. 30 pins travelling to OPB via Teri; reimbursed as donations come in
 - ii. Greg will send sample pins to other communities by end of month
 - iii. The budget will have a line item which shows the outlay and the return and how it is shared
 - iv. Dennis wonders if we want to set a date when we finish selling the pins or how to deal with pins which are not "sold"?
Greg: when you cannot sell anymore, **return excess to Greg Yonker, 3239 S Xanadu St Aurora, CO 80014-3708** and he will handle their ongoing distribution... He may send some to the priests in Poland
 - v. Colorado Council of Churches' tithe is now due, \$1 per member sent to Greg Y and he will forward a check and account for it in the financials.

7. PrideFest booth

- d. Holy Family will contribute \$100 toward the cost.
- e. Can St Paul contribute? Won't know until after the next StP Council meeting...

- f. John is contributing \$100 as his personal contribution...
 - g. Kae- might the regional council have it in its budget? Would the Council be willing to contribute? The visibility at this event would warrant the expenditure (approved by consensus).
 - h. Should checks go to the regional council? **YES –payable to the Council not to Greg.**
 - i. Allocation offers: CHF \$100, MOM \$50, LOC \$50, John \$100, StP ?; RMRC also approved expenditure to cover any outstanding balance; **actual allocations from benefactors to be determined next month.**
 - j. Michael will proceed to register based on the assurance that he will be reimbursed. (Followup note: Michael completed registration next day, included \$55 fee.)
 - k. LOC or StP can provide insurance rider. StP has a tent.
- 8. Vicar Report—see Appendices A and B**
- a. Clarification re EP Bishop Installation - anticipated invitation to +Francis (at OPB expense unless other regional needs surface)
 - b. NOTE: Pastor Barbara personal friend of PB Curry, possible invite to StP!
 - c. Constitution revisions in HOL, may come up for electronic vote.

New Business:

- 9. RMRC Budget primer for FY 4-1-2019 to 3-31-2020 ACTION ITEM send projected tithes to Greg**

Old Business:

10. HOLY CONVERSATION Mar 2

- a. **Feedback documentation** submitted by StP, LOC, COB.
 - i. StP emphasized Lutheran input, particularly experience of electing bishops. Highlighted important characteristics of a local bishop: joyful, smiling, prophetic, has a public voice in social justice issues, doesn't meddle in affairs of local communities, and is ecumenical.
 - ii. **Mike to send CHF feedback**; Bonnie offered to be on Polity Team. Not a whole lot of discussion—John said folks have “battle fatigue” and that all seems to have been covered in previous discussions.
 - iii. MoM gathering this upcoming Sunday, anticipating that it “will go well.”
 - iv. **ACTION ITEM Each community to have one presenter and print 50 copies of their report.**
- b. **LOCATION CHANGE** for Mar 2 – COB hall unavailable but sanctuary doable; StP offered, but LOC most geographically feasible option.
- c. **DISCUSSION re Lutheran participation:**
 - i. At what level of participation are the Lutherans able to take part? Greg thinks active with voice... Might it be good to solicit input/participation from the other “nested” communities? Michael says all voices can be valuable in a “holy conversation”.
 - ii. Kae says anyone is welcomed for the participation on March 2nd.... Maybe folks who are not ECC could be “consultants” down the road, not ready for Mar 2.
 - iii. Don: labelling StP Lutherans anything other than participants makes them “other” and creates a separation that doesn't exist in that community.
 - iv. John says he is aware that there is some differentiation among their Synods (MO, Wisconsin, ELCA)

- v. Jim DeMuth says it would take a lot of education to include the non ECC members of their hosting communities in order to include them in any ECC discussion...
 - vi. Kae says what happens at the local church level is on a continuum of interaction and the depth of the relationship... she suggests that the March 2nd be only ECC members and that folks only be involved at a later date...
 - vii. John: Martin Luther was in trouble and he thinks we should figure it out...
 - viii. Michael: March 2 is a holy conversation and all should be involved in a conversation...
 - ix. Teri agrees with Kae and thinks we don't know well enough what we are doing to include others who are not ECC and she is sad that St Paul has already invited the non ECC people...
 - x. Michael- another way to look at the " barn raising" is that the process of building also builds relationships...
 - xi. Cynthia thinks that she is uncomfortable that she had never thought to invite her Lutheran partners...
 - xii. Jim DeMuth agrees...and leans toward Kae and Teri's stated positions...
 - xiii. Michael – we will have a discussion at St Paul and explain the concerns and the tensions that the presence of non ECC persons would be problematic...
 - xiv. Teri - yes but "not quite yet"
 - xv. Greg: "holy One, sweet Guide / reveal Your will; our new "yes" / together. Amen."
 - xvi. Consensus not reached re Lutheran member participants.
- d. **ACTION ITEM** E-mail exchange of the **feedback summaries** from each community to be presented at the Holy Conversation... some discussion of common format; not necessary.
 - e. **ACTION ITEM** Quart of soil from each community; wheelbarrow from LOC
 - f. **ACTION ITEM Draft of flier** – still needs location and contact person; email Kae with edits.
 - g. **TIME CLARIFICATION:** Jim moves that we meet at Light of Christ; 8:30 to 11:30, on March 2 – better to end early and the two teams have some time for a brief conversation among themselves.
 - h. **TIMELINE DISCUSSION:**
 - i. Is there anything "sacred" about finishing by the beginning of the next liturgical year?
 - ii. Holy family is ready and can adjust to any time line.
 - iii. Michael – it takes local communities up to two years to call a pastor so it would be unlikely that we could do it in less time.
 - iv. Kae says we did a presiding bishop's call in nine months so we can figure it out if we need to figure it out.
 - v. Teri- we can do this "within ourselves"
 - vi. Dennis- an aggressive schedule but we may need to modify it. A schedule is a guideline but we are "resource constrained"
 - vii. Jane- look at the calendar from a liturgical perspective and if Advent begins to seem not feasible than we can adjust and look at Easter....
 - viii. Jack – planning for Easter means being finished by Ash Wednesday...
 - ix. Michael- we need to be more careful with language – "finalizing" is not what we are doing...we are preparing a framework which needs a local bishop to be a part of the "finalization" of the constitution...
 - x. Jack- Bishop is only "one leg" of the three legged stool ; this is a fiercely independent region that would object to a single person vetoing it all.
 - xi. Michael – bishop does not have "veto" power

- xii. Kae: Process is organic and will grow and develop with the folks involved in the process
- xiii. Jane accepts changing “constitution” to “constitutional framework” and asks for input on other changes.
- xiv. Should this be sent back to the communities for comments?
- xv. Greg- hold the schedule at the Regional Council level and then let the two teams look at it once they are formed... since the Regional Council is the “steering committee”

i. DRAFT LINEUP for March 2nd

i. Proposed

Chaplain role

Who:

Opening Prayer

Overview Agenda

Reports on input received from each community

Facilitation of discussion

Signing of Letter of Episcopal Vacancy

Ritual

Commissioning, blessing of teams

Next steps

Closing Prayer

ii. Discussion of the order of the day led to following revision:

Chaplain Michael

Conveners Jack and Teri

Opening Prayer: Michael

-song: “This is holy ground”

Overview Agenda: Jack/Teri

Signing of Letter of Episcopal Vacancy: Dennis

- surrounded by our respective dirt

- enough space for individual names including name of their community)

Process Going Forward: Two interdependent planning teams: Teri/Jack

Reports on input received from each community

- 1 spokesperson from each community

Facilitation of discussion: Teri/Jack

- bring forth any additional issues/concerns

Identify those interested in being members of the two teams: Teri/Jack

Commissioning, blessing of teams: Michael

-ritual action of combining the soils

Next steps: Jack/Teri

- sticky notes / refining teams, feedback points

- gratitude for those present

Closing Prayer: Michael

Following the meeting, conversation with initial team members to get organized

Supplies: flip chart, sticky notes, pens, markers, tape, name tags, soil from each

community, wheelbarrow, containers for soil to take back to home

communities, sign in sheet?

- iii. **Who can be on the teams?** Kae- **YES**, whether or not they can be there on the 2nd they can be on a team. **Can clergy be on the teams?** **Yes**- Jack thinks there should be clergy on both teams and Dennis agrees.
 - iv. Finalization of the program for the day will be done via a conference call **Feb 22 at 6:30p.m.** The phone in number is 712-775-7000 then enter the access code 206613# (the # sign is important).
10. No community reports will be done tonight.
 11. Greg asked for a reconsideration of allowing some St Paul Lutheran members to attend; as it would only be 3-4 people Jim and Jack said their participation might be okay. There were no other concurring voices.
 12. Closing Prayer: Greg
 13. CALENDAR:
Conference call Feb 22 at 6:30p to finalize Mar 2 program
Next monthly meeting: Mar 7 hosted by COB; Apr 4 CHF; May 2 LOC; Jun 6 MoM; Jul 4 SP

RMRC conference call notes for 02_07_2019 and 02_13_2019

Attendees: Michael Nicosia, Don Sutton, Jim de Muth, Jack Wolfe, Kae Madden, Jane Reina, Greg Younkens (facilitator), Mike Weil, Dennis Giblin, John Head, Teri Harroun (note taker)

1. 7:30p- Feedback from the Mary of Magdala community discussion was distributed.
2. Opening Prayer – Greg
3. Recap of phone conversation on Feb 7th. Question of the evening is:
Are we inviting Lutheran members of St. Paul to attend the Holy Conversation on March 2nd?
4. Discussion included going around the table so everyone had a chance to share their own personal reflection related to the question on the table. After 9:00pm, it was moved and seconded that "all 5 communities in the Rocky Mountain Region be able to invite their members to attend the Holy Conversation planned at Light of Christ on March 2nd". Everyone voted in favor of this motion. There were no negative votes. Motion was approved.
5. Reminder of the regional Holy Conversation to take place at Light of Christ on Saturday March 2nd beginning at 8:30am for gathering. LOC will provide breakfast. Official agenda to begin at 9am and end by 11am. There will be time from 11am to 11:30am for the two teams to connect and plan their next steps. Each of the 5 communities should bring a quart of dirt to be presented and redistributed during the rituals planned that morning. The Holy Conversation will include prayer, dialogue, and relationship building.
6. In addition, there is another conference call planned on Friday February 22nd at 6:30pm at the COB conference call number. The phone in number is 712-775-7000 then enter the access code 206613# (the # sign is important).
7. 9:20p- meeting concluded

Appendix A—Vicar Report for RMRC 02 07 2019

FORMATION/RECEPTION

Disseminated +Rafe's **independent study reading list** on Old Catholic's Ultrajectine tradition and theology.
Two women in ordination discernment, Mother Kae and Vicar Michael interested in Zoom discussions, probably quarterly...**open to all for continuing education.**

REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

1/19 Womxn's March with StP

Regional query re participation in ECC Denver PrideFest Booth; CHF expressed interest in sharing \$300 cost.

Celebrated Mass at MoM 1/13, Dignity/Denver 1/27.

Designed PowerPoint and led StP "a barn raising" conversation 2/2.

Disseminated announcements for CHF's "**I am for peace**": **The Psalms for Justice-Seekers and Peace-Makers**—Friday, March 8, 7-8:30 pm, & Saturday, March 9, 9 am-2 pm
RSVP at free Event link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/i-am-for-peace-the-psalms-for-justice-seekers-and-peace-makers-tickets-55453729598>

Faithful Tuesdays 2/5 Kickoff—led closing prayer and flute meditation

Networked with other faith leaders incl. RC Bp. Jorge Rodriguez;
Episcopal Diocesan Social Justice Chair wants to extend invitations to ecumenical partners to the **installation of their bishop-elect, The Rev. Kimberly (Kym) Lucas** on May 18, 2019 at St. John's Cathedral. Told him our Presiding Bishop would like to attend. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will preside.

Advertised on social media and notified 9News @NextNow but no media coverage.
(Thank you, Mthr. Cynthia Drew, Gayle Craun and Fr. Scott Jenkins for attending!)

Collaborating organizations incl. Colorado Council of Churches, Interfaith Alliance of CO, Greater Metro Denver Ministerial Alliance, Colorado Catholic Conference, ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod, Episcopal Diocese of CO, Together Colorado, Mile High Ministries

Each coalition partner will host a week during the state legislative session to highlight a specific public policy issue relating to **supporting a just economy, promoting equity, and eradicating racism in Colorado**. The week's host will not highlight an issue so controversial that it will prevent other groups from participating. **Encourage attendance on Tuesdays now through April hosted by other organizations to amplify our voices and signal unity.** Please wear clergy attire if possible.

Colorado Council of Churches hosts on Tuesday, Feb. 26th. Our topic will be homelessness.
Please let CCC ED Adrian Miller or Fr. Michael know if you plan to attend.

You may find **schedule of Tuesdays** at www.faithfultuesdays.org.

COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Disseminated CCC Judicators' Statement (*Appendix B*)

Board Meeting January 30, 2019

FAITHFUL TUESDAYS UPDATE—Faith Leaders speaking on each of 3 themes: Moral economy, Equity, Eradication of racism; Bp. Gonia opening prayer, Vicar Michael closing prayer.

— Following Tuesdays hosted by participating organizations leading 30-minute press conferences on “non-divisive” topic; **drum up attendance**.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE UPDATE—Community Choir; discussion on bi-lingual gospel proclamation; Vicar Michael asked to open with flute meditation again.

COMMITTEES—Shine the Light, Voices for Justice, Ecumenical Relations Committee, Pastors/Rabbis meet regularly; need chair for Criminal Justice; Respectful Conversations moves from committee to general focus

CCC added support to pending housing bills (barring substantially changes) with Colorado Center on Law and Policy and Colorado Coalition for the Homeless:

- 1) Expand the opportunity for renters to cure a lease violation or pay rent before an eviction from 3 days to 14 days. This bill would increase the effectiveness of rental assistance programs and help prevent homelessness.
- 2) Establish an eviction legal defense fund for low-income renters. Research shows that renters are at an extreme disadvantage in court, since few are represented by an attorney while most landlords are assisted by a lawyer.
- 3) Prohibit discrimination based on someone’s source of income. Renters should not be denied housing because they receive public assistance, disability benefits or veterans benefits.

BISHOPS/VICARS CALL 1/16

Constitution

- Bishop Francis shared there is currently a review of the process for approving the revised Constitution. There aren’t specific guidelines in the Constitution to change it as a whole so we’ve been treating it like we would change any particular part of the Constitution as advised by the Chancellor. There is some concern that in this process to approve the revised Constitution that there will also be amendments to change different parts of it, rather than approve it as a whole. He encourages the delegates to not see this process as a time to make radical changes (which might alienate some who feel that such changes depart from the Constitution their communities “bought into” when they joined), but rather to keep what is currently there for now, approve the revised version which helps with clarity and organization, and then make later amendments at the next Synod.
- The HOL has been reviewing the version approved by the HOP and will be voting on it with any additional proposed amendments in the next couple months. Their approved version will then be passed back to the HOP for approval. +Francis would veto any approved version that departed too much from the original (for the reason cited above), which could be overridden by a majority vote in the HOP/HOL.
- There was also discussion about the process that unfolded in the HOP.

DISCUSSION re equivalency for the MDiv—HOP Steering Committee would like to have some discussions re what classifies as equivalency for the MDiv to accommodate more people interested in ordination but who are financially unable to get an MDiv. Discussions with the Episcopal Council planned.

Regional Check Ins

Southwest Region

- Rev. Delores and Theresa will be traveling to Albuquerque NM the last weekend of January to spend time with Mary Magdalene and St. Oscar Romero communities. Bishop Francis will connect with her after the visit for a report.

East Coast

- March 30th will be the regional Chrism Mass celebrated by Bishop Denise Donato at Mary Magdalene in Rochester. Any community not able to attend will have the oils sent to them.
- On the most recent regional call, there was agreement about just having one region with all those currently participating called the "East Coast."
- There is a small Lutheran community near All Souls that Fr. Dewayne used to occasionally preside at when needed and Fr. Henry has also filled in at. They do not have a regular pastor and are now looking at possibly having to shut down but want to remain an active Lutheran community. Fr. Henry is looking for information or ideas about how to collaborate or incorporate a Lutheran church into their local community. Fr. Michael will share with him contact information for Fr. Don Sutton who is our ECC priest in Colorado that co-presides who co-pastors at a joint Lutheran/ECC church. He can offer him insight about how they function. The regional ELCA Bishop may want to connect with Bp. Gonia of the Rocky Mountain Synod (his contact info also to be shared).

Rocky Mountain Region

- The Regional Council has been busy organizing community meetings to move forward with the process for calling a local bishop. There will be two teams: one focusing on the election process and one focusing on drafting language and ideas for an initial constitution. There will be a regional gathering in March to share the summaries of local conversations, offer people opportunities to join a planning committee, and also sign a formal letter to send to the Leadership Council to declare an episcopal vacancy. The hope is to have an election by the end of 2019.
- Bishop Francis requested a look at some of the documents they are developing so that that he might offer feedback of the "third leg."
- Bishop Francis asked about the recent vote and upcoming installation of the new Episcopal Bishop of Denver. He would like to attend if possible. Fr. Michael will ask the Colorado Council of Churches if ecumenical partners will be invited or can attend.
- CCC bishops and judicators agreed at their last meeting to try and meet at least quarterly.

Mid-America Diocese (not part of the call) +Rafe posted on 2/4 :

Friends,

Today is the thirtieth anniversary of my consecration to the episcopate.

I ask for your prayers for myself, for old colleagues and dear friends who are still working in the vineyard, and for those whose happy memory is presently foremost in my mind: especially Bishop (then Father) Peter Hickman, who stood at my side as chaplain; my consecrators, Bishop Francis Facione, now retired from both ministry and graduate education and Bishop John Joseph Humphreys, still active in ministry well into his eighties at Our Lady of Good Hope in Pinellas Park FL.

Remember also my deceased mentors and friends who were present that day: Bishop James Hubert Rogers of Brooklyn (my other co-consecrator), my confrere, Fr. Donald Currie, Deacon Mary Blackburn Sylvester, and the Very Rev. Ralph Parks, Dean of the Episcopal Diocese. Father Parks, especially, did much to shape my understanding of ministry. He often boiled things down to simple statements. There are three things he said that I'll always remember:

"There are two essentials to being a good pastor. Be present. Be pleasant."

"Always remember - we're sales, not management."

And on the day of my consecration, "You're too young to be a bishop." But that was OK. I hope I've grown into it.

Dominus det vobis pacem! +R

ADVOCACY

Attended **Spiritual Direction Colorado 2/1-2/19**—announced Faithful Tuesdays; members of Center for Contemplative Action interested in criminal justice reform may be interested in joining CCC's Voices of Justice team to chair that initiative.

Disseminated info re **2019 CFCU / Colorado Ceasefire Gun Prevention Lobby Day** on 1/24 (unable to attend)

Disseminated info re movie "**Changing the Conversation - America's Gun Violence Epidemic**" February 8th from 6:30 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. (with potluck) at First Universalist Church of Denver (the NE corner of Colorado Blvd and Hampden.) Janet Fitch, the film's producer and director will be in attendance with a presentation, including clips, about the movie.

First Plymouth and First Universalist have extended an invitation to CFCU members to attend the showing. They are asking if you plan to attend to PLEASE RSVP with Anne Rendon at trtrendon@gmail.com with how many will be attending and the potluck dish you will be bringing to ensure they set up enough tables, chairs, etc.

Movie synopsis: "Gun violence is generally discussed in terms of urban homicides, yet startling statistics tell another story. *Changing the Conversation* reframes discussion of America's gun violence epidemic by shifting from singularly Second Amendment rights to a broader focus of public health prevention. Engage in a radically logical approach to restructure how we think, speak and act on gun violence through three distinct lenses.

Hear from lawmakers and activists, urban musicians united for change, and a quiet town searching for answers after a domestic murder-suicide. Featuring experts from the field of public health and a shocking back-room interview with a state senator, *Changing the Conversation* asks – not can we change the status quo on gun violence, but will we?"

Come check out this film to see if it's something you'd like to show in your congregation.

Asked regional pastors to bring topic of Eco-Justice to the attn of the churches with whom they are nested:

Interfaith Green Building Conference April 11-12, 2019
Hosted and Co-sponsored by First Universalist Church of Denver
Co-Sponsors: Colorado Interfaith Power & Light, GreenFaith,
Eco-Justice Ministries, and Hazon

Energize your congregation to take action in response to our changing climate! We invite you to join us at the Interfaith Green Building Conference and help guide your congregation or non-profit

organization in developing a path toward zero greenhouse gas emissions. Learn from the experiences of local experts and congregations about transitioning to sustainable operations for your facility and surrounding grounds, including strategies for motivation, financing, and implementation.

The Interfaith Green Building Conference will be held at First Universalist Church of Denver on April 11-12, 2019 and is co-sponsored by Colorado Interfaith Power and Light, Green Faith, Eco-Justice Ministries, Hazon and First Universalist. To reserve one of the limited spaces, please pre-register here: [Interfaith Green Building Conference Pre-Registration \(tinyurl.com/IGBC2019\)](https://tinyurl.com/IGBC2019)

Don't miss this unique opportunity to join other Colorado organizations working to address the critical issue of our time. Help demonstrate "that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world."

Questions? Contact Rev. Peter Sawtell, Executive Director of Eco-Justice Ministries, (303) 715-3873 or ministry@eco-justice.org

Appendix B— CCC Judicators’ Statement

Colorado Faith Leaders Call on Colorado’s Congressional Delegation to End the Partial Federal Government Shutdown

January 23, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Adrian Miller, Executive Director, Colorado Council of Churches (303) 825-4910

To:

The Honorable Michael Bennet, U.S. Senator

The Honorable Cory Gardner, U.S. Senator

The Honorable Ken Buck, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Jason Crow, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Diana DeGette, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Doug Lamborn, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Ed Perlmutter, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Joe Neguse, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Scott Tipton, U.S. Representative

The partial, federal government shutdown--now the longest in U.S. history—continues to take an unnecessary and formidable toll on Coloradans. As Christian denominational leaders, clergy and religious professionals living together in Colorado, we stand united in support of the foundational value that a just and compassionate society requires an adequately funded and functioning government. We call on our state’s Congressional delegation to work with their colleagues to find a compromise that will end the shutdown as soon as possible.

The Colorado Council of Churches understands that border security is an important public policy concern. Yet, border security is just one aspect of comprehensive immigration reform. We affirm that asylum-seekers have legal status, and that our country is morally and legally obligated to address their needs according to international law. We support policies that recognize the humanity and value of everyone within our borders, whether or not they are here legally, as well as those who seek refuge here for economic or political reasons. As Christians, the call to treat one another with hospitality and compassion is primary, especially when someone is a “stranger.” The complexity of border security demands a full legislative debate that is separate from the budgeting process that funds the basic and essential functions of our federal government.

The failure to separate these issues has caused, and continues to cause, tremendous suffering. Federal employees are working without pay. Low-income families are not getting much-needed assistance to meet their basic needs. Now, thousands of families must choose which bills they can pay, wonder how they can afford food and medicine, and fret over how much longer they’ll be able to stay in their homes. God’s creation is being affected as well with trash piling up and vandalism occurring in our scenic national parks due to a lack of staffing.

Fortunately, the faith community, state and local government officials, businesses and private citizens have rallied to support those who needlessly struggle. However, such efforts are not sustainable. We must do better for Colorado, and our nation.

We're very pleased that the U.S. House of Representatives has successfully passed legislation to fund the government, and that U.S. Senators Michael Bennet and Cory Gardner have called on President Trump to end the shutdown. Yet, things remain at a procedural impasse. We need leadership from both Democrats and Republicans to forge a compromise to fund the federal government and separately debate border security. This compromise should be presented to President Trump for approval. If President Trump fails to approve the compromise, Congress should override the president's veto, and fund the federal government.

Creating and maintaining a compassionate society requires leadership. We prayerfully request that our political leaders end this shutdown as soon as possible, and get much needed relief to people in need.

Signed,

The Colorado Council of Churches

Rev. Sue Artt, Conference Minister, Rocky Mountain Conference, United Church of Christ

Rev. Joan Bell-Haynes, Executive Regional Minister, Central Rocky Mountain Region, Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

Presiding Elder Anthony Hill, Kansas District, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

Bishop Jim Gonia, Rocky Mountain Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Rev. Michael J. Nicosia, Vicar to the Rocky Mountain Region of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion

Bishop Karen Oliveto, Mountain Sky Conference, United Methodist Church

The Right Reverend Robert O'Neill, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Colorado

Rev. Vickie Samland, Western Plains District Representative, Church of the Brethren

Rev. Olivia Hudson Smith, J.D., Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Denver