



Columbus Community Congregational Church

CORNERSTONE

Ephesians 2:20

February 2026 Issue

Sunday worship 10:30 *in person* and online; go to church website & click on the worship date to view. Fellowship with refreshments follows worship.

Church website: columbuscommunitychurch.com

Pastor's Corner



TO GO FROM POWERLESS TO POWERFUL IN SIXTY SECONDS...

These days can make us feel powerless, which can make us frustrated, and that can arouse our anger. There seems to be a lot of that going around.

But I think we are immensely powerful, because we get to choose how we respond to any situation. But...we have to *choose* "to choose," not just react with our first impulse.

We have 100 TV channels, more podcasts than you could watch in a day if you wanted to, and cell phones. They are all hoping we will watch them, because they make money when we do.

So headlines are more shocking, stories are written to provoke stronger feelings, and our emotional response to it is bigger.

Still, we are immensely powerful and can choose . . . if we give ourselves permission to think through the present moment. It's like my mother telling me when I was a little boy, to chew before you swallow.

We draw near the end of the season of Epiphany. We have been watching for signs of God's loving presence in the world. Stories of hardship and injustice interrupt our reverie, pouring in from around the world.

But we are here, in a community of people who know each other and care about each other and want the best for each other. We are not in Gaza or Kyiv

or Minneapolis.

Our existential problem is not a thousand miles away, but our attention is. The way we are chained to our newsfeeds means that we are living our lives neither here, where our body is, nor there, where we have no control over the way things are supposed to be.

So, what are we going to do about it? The next season on the Christian calendar, Lent, calls us to do something or deny ourselves something so we can become better people, more human, more Christian.

We do this to honor the one life we have read about where the person sought only to do God's will and refused to be distracted by what the world demanded he do to make people with worldly power happy.

He healed the sick, helped people who were blind to their own choices see them, fed those who felt so spiritually empty that they thought they were starving, and showed those who were afraid of death what it means to live a perfect life.

He didn't just believe. Christ is the story of a mere human being who came to earth and lived his life in freedom. He wasn't just reacting to those around him or the story of the day but asking himself to see the best way to live – meaningfully, with joy for all that God asked him to do – and showing his one true self to the person in front of him or next to him. He was a here and now kind of guy and he brought an awesome light of understanding, and love, and peace into the world.

So I know what I am giving up for Lent this year. I am giving up trying to be anybody but my best imitation of that guy that I can be. What can I do something about, and what am I going to do about it?

This could be interesting, now that I think about it. Who knows? I might feel free for the first time in a long while.

It could be as much fun as one person can have.

Onward and upward, Pastor Kelly



Moderator Musings

And we continue. Our mission committee changed their name to Community Outreach, so it reflects more closely what they do. This is not just a name change for the committee. It demonstrates an increased effort for all of us – the church – for community support. How does this work? Where does it take us? I do not know.

We will obviously continue Sunday worship services. Everyone is invited to bring ideas, enthusiasm, and participation. Many thanks to the several folks who signed up to be readers and participants. Everyone is also encouraged to bring ideas, enthusiasm, and participation to our community outreach.

Many Thanks to the folks who reorganized and cleaned the basement in preparation for pickleball. Great appreciation and thanks to Daryl Northup for taping the court. We are facility rich. Sharing is an effective way to support the community.

Lent is just a few weeks away. We will be working with St. James again. Dust off the soup and bread recipes and remember the admonition of Aunt Rosemary, “I don’t cook, but I shop.”

Maurie Petterson

Mary's Great Adventure with her Scout



No, Grandma didn’t get run over by a reindeer; she did a pretty good job all by herself. Add a few more tons, some metal edges, and less fur.

Here’s what happened: I’d seen an ad on Facebook for an estate sale that looked too good to pass up. So, I fired up my latest vintage vehicle, a 1968 International Scout and proceeded to the Whitebird Fishing Access.

First, you have to hear how I came by this extraordinarily flawless SUV. As Casey and I pulled up in front of our granddaughter’s house in Billings, what to my wondrous eyes should appear right there in the driveway but that gleaming turquoise beauty. We rushed over to admire it. Our grandson-in-law, Michael (Tex) always has something with wheels that he’s in the process of fixing up to sell or keep for himself.

From past experience Casey was afraid to think

what was about to happen. Michael took me out for a drive, showed me how to start it (with a choke no less), and let me drive around a block or two.

How could I resist? After the deal was closed and a little work done, Tex drove it to Columbus. He had to get off the interstate after he discovered the top speed for the old Scout was 55 mph, and he was in danger of being run over by semis. It took two hours on the frontage road to get here, but, alas, it did arrive.

When I drove it around town (intermingled with a few hiccups), it became the center of much attention and many offers to buy, which I foolishly turned down.

But back to the estate sale. As I drove along Highway 78, it came to me that it had been fun to own the Scout, but I should sell it. Driving along with the imaginary dollars adding up in my head and daydreaming that once on the market, it would surely sell and possibly result in a bidding war!

As I travelled to the end of Whitebird Road there was no sign of a sale, which, incidentally, I found out started the next day. As I started to pull up onto the highway to make a left turn back to town, the old Scout stalled halfway across the road.

A semi blew by without so much as a glance at my dilemma. I became alarmed that someone might crash into me and wipe us all out, so it seemed the only thing to do was push it off the highway, which I did. An important note here is that I left the driver’s door open. When the thing didn’t stop rolling as it got back to the dirt road, I panicked and ran to jump in and stop it before it went off the road, and (God forbid) get a dent.

I made a run for it, grabbed the inside door handle with one hand and the steering wheel with the other. Unfortunately, I hadn’t taken into account that my short legs couldn’t keep up, and the door knocked me over backward.

I watched as the tire rolled over my arm and chest. I’ve always envied women with flat chests, but for once my ample bosom kept me from getting injured worse. When that big tire with deep tread hit my breast, it must have acted as a speed bump, and the tire jumped right over my shoulder, or it would surely have been crushed.

Three people stopped and administered aid. The next thing I remember is lots of sirens and being loaded into the ambulance.

At the hospital, I was x-rayed and declared to have four cracked ribs, and my arm was twice its usual size and completely black. Oddly enough, the

speed bump suffered no damage. After spending the night, I was sent on my way.

What concerned me most was where did the Scout wind up and was it okay?

I wasn't allowed to see it until I was back on my feet, and to my horror, it had a big dent in the door and deep scratches along the entire side. So, there went my dream of a sale and a hefty addition to my bank account.

After a period of mourning, I gave it to my grandson who lives in Malta. I told him if he chooses to drive it home, at its top speed, he'd have to spend the night in Grass Range. He didn't think it quite as funny as I.

We've come to the conclusion that the Scout had help in getting the damage it sustained. From where it stopped it had completely turned around, crossed the road, went through the ditch, a barbed wire fence, a hefty post and wound up halfway across a field and in another ditch. Curious.

One final note: if you get word that I'm on the verge of doing something that will possibly cause damage to myself or others, please step in. At 82, my spirit of adventure sometimes must be quelled.

Mary Kuehn

What this Church Means to Me

Over the last couple of years I have attended numerous yoga classes taught by Theresa at the Little Stone Church. After yoga classes I would walk past the Congregational Church to my car. Several women at yoga invited me to Sunday services. I had researched the church numerous times but never actually walked in the door for a service until my daughter Alison was diagnosed with breast cancer. Something kept nagging me that this church might be worth checking out. I am so glad that recently, in 2025, I walked in the door of the church to attend a service. Everyone was so friendly, caring and genuine. I feel right at home and noticed each time I attend a service, the sermons are genuine and always give me so much to ponder and think about during the week. I am hoping to make this church a permanent fixture in my life.

Irene Adams

*from . . . Earth Prayers
from Around the World (p. 5)*

I am the one whose praise echoes on high.
I adorn all the earth.

I am the breeze that nurtures all things green.

I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits.

I am led by the spirit to feed the purest streams.

I am the rain coming from the dew
that causes the grasses to laugh with the joy
of life.

I am the yearning for good.

By Hildegard of Bingen,
a German Benedictine abbess active
as a writer, composer, philosopher,
mystic, visionary, and as a medical
writer and practitioner of the Catholic Church
during the High Middle Ages. ([Wikipedia](#))

Baroque Music Montana performance

January 11, 2026
“I Melt Like Snow in
the Sun of Your Beauty”



“The end of all good music is to affect the soul.”
-- Monteverdi –