The Insight

Giving *insight* into the life of FUMC Loveland and keeping our mission *in sight.*

October 2026

Bird's Eye View, by Pastor Don Bird

There is a word in the church that makes a lot of people cringe a little. You know the one: stewardship.

For many of us, stewardship is a word we hear most often when October arrives and the church begins talking about budgets, giving, and our financial commitments for the coming year. And let's be honest—when we hear the word *stewardship*, our minds can pretty quickly go to money.

But I wonder if we have made stewardship much smaller than God intended it to be.
Stewardship is about much more than money. It is about what we do with everything God has placed in our hands. Our time. Our abilities. Our relationships. Our resources. Our creativity. Our compassion. Our willingness to try something new. Even our willingness to step into an uncertain future with faith.

This year, our stewardship theme is *Ripple Effect*. I love that image because a ripple can begin with something remarkably small: a single drop of water touching the surface. We often don't know how far the ripples will travel.

The same can be true of our lives and our ministry. A simple invitation can change someone's experience of church. An hour serving out of our passion can make a ministry possible. A conversation can open someone's heart. A loving welcome at Trunk-or-Treat can help someone see the church as a place where they belong. A willingness to learn with Christians from other congregations can remind us that the body of Christ is bigger than any one church. And yes, a financial gift can become part of that ripple too.

But here's what I hope we remember: **We don't give because we are afraid the church won't survive. We give because we believe the church has something life-giving to offer the world.**

Throughout Scripture, we see a God of abundance. Again and again, God takes what appears insufficient and uses it for something greater. Five loaves and two fish become a feast. A mustard seed becomes a great plant. A small act of faith becomes the beginning of something much larger.

That doesn't mean we ignore the realities we face. Churches have budgets. Ministries have costs. Buildings need to be maintained. Staff need to be supported. And there are times when we have difficult financial decisions to make.

But I don't want our stewardship to be rooted in fear or scarcity. I want it to be rooted in faith**.** What might happen if we began asking not simply, *"What does the church need from me?"* but instead, *"What might God do through what I am willing to offer?"* That is a very different question. And it is a question I hope will shape us not only during our stewardship season, but throughout the year ahead.

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There are already many ripples beginning around us. We are preparing for Trunk-or-Treat on October 31. We are exploring what a Cooperative Parish with Trinity United Methodist Church might mean for the future of ministry in Loveland. We are joining with Fort Lupton and Longs Peak UMCs for a class exploring the life and faith of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Each of these opportunities asks us to offer something of ourselves—and each has the potential to create ripples that reach much farther than we can see today.

That is the exciting thing about ministry. We may never know the full impact of our faithfulness. The kind word we offer. The person we invite. The hour we serve. The class we attend. The young person we welcome. The relationship we build. The gift we make. The risk we take. The hope we share.

God can take all of those things and do something with them that is greater than any one of us could accomplish alone. So, as we enter this stewardship season, I invite us to think beyond a campaign and beyond a number.

Think about the ripple. What will you place into the hands of God this year? And then let us trust God to see how far the ripples travel.

Keep Choosing Love,
Pastor Don

A Word from Trinity, by Rev. Bryson Lillie

Hey First Church friends!

Greetings! I hope your fall is off to a fantastic start. Trinity Church is really excited to host our joint congregational meeting on October 6. There are lots of possibilities in the air right now about more potential cooperative ministry. I'm excited to see what happens as we gather, dream together, and listen for where God is leading us. There's a lot to be hopeful about!

And since you'll already be in the same space, why not come back the very next day? On October 7, Trinity is hosting our JOY Fellowship pizza party. JOY Fellowship is our older folks ministry designed to promote fellowship and connection. We'll enjoy some pizza together and hear from the Fort Collins Rescue Mission about their new facility, followed by a Q&A about modern ministry with our unhoused neighbors. Bring a side, salad, or just yourself!

Two days in a row at Trinity! I'd love to see you both days.

Blessings,

Bryson Lillie

News from Trustees, by Joanne Scheihing

The words I have been wanting to write for months - **we have two working elevators!** I want to thank everyone (again) for your patience and understanding for all the delays.

We have working air conditioning in the kitchen now, also. There was a bad compressor that needed to be replaced. Thank you, Garry Parry, for spearheading this project and to Finance for finding us the funds to purchase it.

Gary Small has taken on yet another roll in our church and has the title of Sunday Bus Driver. He informed us that the bus's wheelchair lift was having some difficulties so Pete Shaw and Garry Perry looked at it and determined it was an old battery issue and have replaced it. Thanks to all of our 5M's who work so hard to keep everything working in our church.

News from Finance, by Charlie Bouchard

Greetings from Finance!

I had a dream last week that inflows to FUMC actually equaled outflows. Alas, it was only a dream.

Our year-to-date income is on track, and expenses are a little below budget. That is good news. At the same time, we are currently tracking close to the budget we approved for this year, including the anticipated deficit. While that is a reality we need to be attentive to, it also reflects the significant ministry and operational commitments we have made together.

Our historic building requires ongoing care and investment. Thanks to the hard work of our Trustees, we have completed the replacement of one elevator and the repair of the second elevator. The bill for these two projects was over $150,000. We also had an expensive compressor go out in the air conditioner serving the kitchen area. We were able to use funds reserved for capital items to cover these significant expenses, which is one of the reasons maintaining healthy reserves and planning for the future is so important.

As we move into fall and our stewardship campaign, we are grateful for all you do to support the life and ministry of FUMC. There are many ways we contribute to the work God is doing through this congregation, and we appreciate the generosity, commitment, and faithfulness you bring. We look forward to continuing this ministry together.

Sincerely,
Charlie Bouchard

Finance Committee Chair

News from Church Council, by Judy Stout

Church Council meetings are open to everyone! We welcome visitors and the voices they bring. Our next meeting is scheduled for November 2nd at 6:00 in Heartbeat Bay. We discuss a wide variety of topics related to FUMC and its mission. We continue to discuss ways to use our building and the concept of 'cooperative parish.' We look forward to seeing you there!

Life Changing Opportunity, by Charlie Bouchard



Come join us in Guatemala! For more than 10 years, FUMC has joined with Pura Vida and sent a team to work in the tiny village of Lemoa, Guatemala. Much progress has been made in that time and many hearts changed forever. Homes have been built, families fed, and children educated. We have been involved in the lives of the people of this area long enough to see sponsored students graduate college and become part of the staff in Guatemala. One of them was our interpreter on our work site last year!

Our (aging) team of volunteers is headed to Guatemala again in February, and we are asking you to join us. If you want to physically join us, we have room on the team for those interested in building a house. If the "spirit is willing but the flesh is weak" please consider joining us as a virtual team member. A virtual team member makes a contribution (suggested minimum of $250), and receives updates on the progress of the team in Guatemala. Pictures and stories will be sent each day of our trip. You get to share in everything but the sore muscles and occasional intestinal distress! Not room in your check book to help? No problem, we always need prayers to support us in this endeavor.

Pura Vida sponsors 529 student scholarships as well! For a small monthly financial gift, you have the opportunity to change a young person's life forever. If you have any interest in learning more about our work in Guatemala or are interested in sponsoring a student, please contact one of the folks below.

Thank you for your generosity.

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CROP Walk 2026, by Sarah Clegern

Yippee! It looks like our church has raised over $3,500 this year and was the majority of our 24 CROP walkers today! Final totals are not in, but I believe that all together, the Loveland CROP Walk will raise close to $6,000 to fight hunger locally and around the world. Thank you so much to all who participated and helped to support this great event. Sarah will close out the books next weekend and let us know the final numbers. Anyone who was meaning to donate but didn't get it done is still welcome to contribute at CROP Hunger Walks 2026, and then search Methodists on the Move. Thank you, church!













Celebrating LPS, by Jen Kuzmich

Dear Church Family,

It is hard to believe that we are already well into another school year! The halls and classrooms at Loveland Preschool are busy once again, and we wanted to take a moment to share a little bit about what has been happening in our preschool community.

Our school year is off to a wonderful start! Our classrooms are filled with children learning, playing, creating, exploring, and making new friends. Teachers have been busy helping children become comfortable with their new routines, getting to know their classmates, and building those important classroom communities. There is nothing quite like the energy and excitement that children bring into the building each morning and afternoon!

We have also been celebrating some special milestones**.** Loveland Preschool turned 59 years old! For 59 years, our preschool has been a part of the Loveland community, providing children with a child-centered, play-based early childhood experience. It is amazing to think about how many children and families have walked through our doors over the years, and we are excited to continue that tradition for another year. We are so grateful to be able to continue that tradition in this wonderful space.

Our parent cooperative has been busy as well. We recently held our first fundraiser of the school year, giving our families an opportunity to come together to support the preschool. Fundraising is an important part of helping us provide enriching experiences and maintain the wonderful program we are able to offer our children. We are so grateful for the support and enthusiasm of our preschool families!

We know that sharing a facility with a preschool takes flexibility and cooperation, and we truly appreciate the patience and support of everyone who helps make our partnership work. Every time we see children running into their classrooms, teachers preparing activities, or families gathering for preschool events, we are reminded how special it is to have a community willing to share its space with us. Thank you for sharing your building, your kindness, and your community with us. We look forward to another wonderful year together and to many more memories in the months ahead!

With Gratitude,

Miss Jen Kuzmich
Director and Lead UPK Teacher
Loveland Preschool


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PLAY



