



ELEMENTS

DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



Patti's Ponderings

Pockets of Peace. I came across a meme a few weeks ago that showed a little mouse sitting in a cozy chair in a library with a fireplace going (can you picture it?) that read, "The conditions are rarely perfect, but, I'm going to find pockets of peace anyway." (@wonderled.life on IG) I resonate with this idea. The world is a chaotic place. Our lives tend to be busy, full of menial tasks and meaningful ones. In the midst of all that, it can be a challenge to feel grounded. We are our best selves when we are grounded in God's love. Especially this time of year, it can be next to impossible to carve out significant amounts of time to find peace. So, what if we just create pockets of peace here and there. Sit with screens off and the fireplace on for just 15 minutes. Light a candle each night and offer gratitude for the day. Wrap up in a cozy blanket and listen to your favorite holiday music. Make it a priority to attend worship on Sunday mornings. When we are grounded in God's love, we have a greater capacity to be loving and generous with others. May you create pockets of peace this holiday season.

~Pastor Patti

PS Thank you for your generosity! We have donated so much food to hungry people in the past month or so due to your donations. First, for the 300 Thanksgiving Food Boxes the youth worked on, and then hundreds of pounds of food for the Aurora Interfaith food bank. Fewer people are hungry due to your generosity. You are making the world a more loving and just place for all.



From the Associate Pastor's Desk

The celebration of advent through the traditions of our Celtic ancestors has tremendously helped me to remember that God comes to us on earth... and that everything God created was good.

Too often, I have thought of God being in the heavens and at a distance... the thought of God walking the earth that was created and called "Good" reminds me of what a shift in thinking we must go through to understand that we were created good from the beginning.

This is a huge change from thinking that everyone is born in sin and is evil.

As we reconnect with friends and family through this holiday season, it is easy to see the worst in people, but perhaps we need to shift that thinking.

We all have our bad days... but somewhere in each of us there is something good.

Should you find yourself with difficult family members or perhaps dealing with someone who is less than joyful for the holidays, the best blessing you can give is to see something that helps you to remember what is good... and that perhaps the secret to this season is helping others find the good inside themselves that they have forgotten ever existed.

May this season bless you and may you find the good that you forgot existed.

Blessings,

Rev. Glen Wood

Smoky Hill Welcomes the Denver Feminist Chorus in Concert February 21st!



UNBOUND

Celebrating Our Right To Say No

Unbound: Celebrating Our Right to Say No, an empowering anti-Valentine's concert, honors the power of walking away from toxic relationships, bad habits, or anything that holds us back. Featuring songs like "Goodbye Earl" and "Labour," the Denver Feminist Chorus celebrates strength, clarity, freedom, and the joy of embracing a life unbound.

Pay What You Can – The Denver Feminist Chorus strives to be an inclusive body for our members, and we want to create that space for our audiences as well. A typical ticket costs \$28.00, but we understand that amount might be prohibitive. For this concert, we are offering a "pay what you can" pricing structure. On the ticketing page, you will be prompted to select the number of tickets you want and name the price you are able to pay. We are grateful for those who give generously above the standard ticket cost, as your generosity will open the door to those who may not have been able to attend our shows in the past.

Tickets are on sale now! Please go to the attached link as this is a show you do not want to miss! <https://denverchoruses.org/unbound/> Blessings, Rev. Glen Wood



ADULT CLASSES & GROUPS

Open Door - Sundays at 9:00 am in Room 218 This class is a welcoming, inclusive environment, inviting individuals from diverse backgrounds to participate, whether you're new to Bible study or have been participating for years. Come as you are! No need to prepare or do homework - just bring yourself and an open heart. We use various forms of media to stimulate thoughts and ideas and focus on meaningful conversation and spiritual growth rather than formal lessons. No need to RSVP - just drop in whenever you can. For more information contact Kim Brice kbrice227@gmail.com

The Way of Faith – Sundays at 9:00 am in the Upper Room & on Zoom

This is an inclusive and open group whose focus is on God's love in our world today and how we can do better to live God's will in our lives. We start each class with a video that includes such authors and theologians as Richard Rohr, Diana Butler Bass, AJ Levine, Adam Hamilton and many, many more. Each Sunday is a standalone teaching and conversation allowing people to attend when possible. We hope you will join us as we gather to discern the way of Christ in our lives today and seek to be deeper rooted in the love of God.

Grounded Sunday School Group offers an open space for sharing, support, fellowship, and spiritual growth for adults. Discussions may include family faith formation, parenting, marriage, and living as Christians in today's world. Specific studies and/or topics are determined by the group on an ongoing basis depending upon needs and interests. Grounded also typically joins in the church wide studies during both Lent and Advent. **Feel free to join us on Sunday mornings at 10:00 AM in Room 210 during the school year. This group does not meet during the summer, from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend.**

Tuesday Morning Theologians

Join us for a variety of book studies throughout the school year.

Tuesday Morning Theologians meet from 9 to 11 am in Room 214.

For more information or to RSVP contact John Tedrick at johntedrick@me.com or John Richard at jhrcolorado@icloud.com.

This group does not meet during summer months.

Lunch Bunch

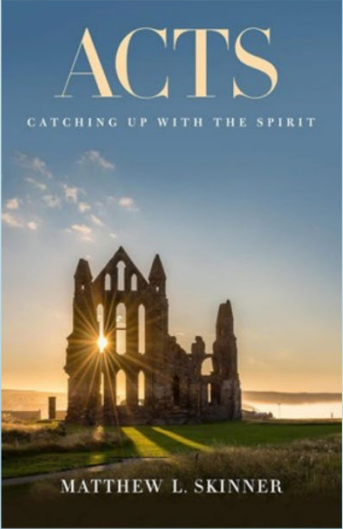
All women are invited to join the United Women in Faith Tuesday Lunch Bunch for our next book study and lunch together. Tuesday Lunch Bunch reads various books during the school year. Lunch Bunch does not meet for classes during the summer months.

Join us on **Tuesdays at 11:30 in room 214** during the school year. For more information contact Kathy Tedrick, kathytedrick@me.com

Parenting 20-Somethings Group

We are a group of parents that gather each month to talk through the triumphs and trials of parenting our 20-something old children. We would love for you to join us. This group led by Pastor Patti, mother of two 20-somethings, is open to our congregation and community. We meet on the second Thursdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. Call the church office to get a code to enter the building if you, or someone you know wants to join us.

To see all of our Adult Classes and Groups, please see our website or call the church office at 303-690-9816.



Tuesday Morning Theologians

Join us for a six-week study of
Acts: Catching Up with the Spirit
by Matthew Skinner.

**Begins January 6, 2026
9:00 am in Room 214**

Come join **Tuesday Morning Theologians** January 6th for a discussion of *Acts: Catching Up with the Spirit* by Matthew Skinner.

The Acts of the Apostles is a unique and crucial book that chronicles the story of God's grace flooding out to the world through the lives of the apostles in the decades immediately following Christ's ascension into heaven. Author and biblical scholar Matthew Skinner provides a broad yet theologically attuned

introduction to this important book and its story of the early church learning to bear witness about God's salvation through Jesus Christ. Skinner explores six key themes (over six weeks) that illustrate the ways in which reading Acts is capable of igniting our imagination about the character of the Christian message, the work of God's people (the church), and the challenges of living faithfully in a complex and changing world.

We meet at 9 am in Room 214 for two hours with a break for snacks.

To RSVP or for more information contact John Tedrick at johntedrick@me.com

Tuesday Lunch Bunch next book - "The Happiest Man on Earth, The Beautiful Life of an Auschwitz Survivor", by Eddie Jaku

In this bestseller, Eddie Jaku shares his powerful memoir as a Holocaust survivor, paying tribute to those lost as he offers inspiring wisdom on living one's best possible life despite the most horrible circumstances. Somehow, he found the will to survive and made himself a promise to smile every day in gratitude and to honor the six million Jews murdered by Hitler.

Join UWF Lunch Bunch for our next 6-week book study **Jan. 6 through Feb. 10.**

We meet on **Tuesdays in room 214 from 11:30 to 1:30**, and share our lunch together before discussing our book.

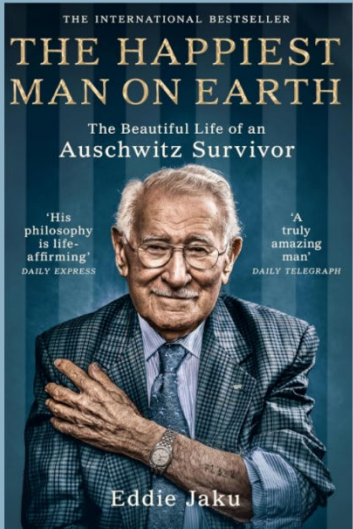
For more information contact Kathy Tedrick at kathytedrick@me.com

UWF Lunch Bunch

Join us for a six-week book discussion on

**"The Happiest Man on Earth,
The Beautiful Life of an Auschwitz
Survivor", by Eddie Jaku**

**Begins Tuesday, January 6, 2026
11:30 am Room 214**





Smoky Hill UMC Young At Heart Luncheon
Thursday, December 18th 11:30 AM

Join River and the Spirits Duo, Yvonne & Benito Rodriguez
for a heartwarming Christmas performance filled with
music, rhythm and holiday spirit!

A suggested donation of \$10.00 will help cover the cost of the lunch & entertainment. Please give as you are able and know that everyone is welcome!

Please RSVP for this lunch 303-690-9816 churchsecretary@smokyhillumc.org

DECEMBER YOUNG AT HEART LUNCH & PROGRAM

SAVE THE DATE: JANUARY 22, 2026

Join us for our January Young At Heart Lunch & Program on Thursday, January 22 at 11:30 am. We will have someone from the FBI presenting about elder fraud. You won't want to miss it!



CARE & PRAYER

SLAM: Quick Tips to Help Spot Scam Emails

Who of us has not received strange requests to send money, claim award winnings connect with a too good to be true opportunity?

The predators that send the scams via email seem to keep reinventing ways to take advantage of even the most savvy internet user.

So what do you do when you receive something that looks like a scam or phishing email, yet we are not quite sure...

We SLAM!

SLAM stands for **Sender, Links, Attachments, and Message**, and is a method to help identify and avoid phishing attempts in emails.

- **Sender:** Scrutinize the sender's email address for misspellings or unusual domains.
- **Links:** Hover over links to check the destination URL before clicking.
- **Attachments:** Be cautious with unexpected attachments, especially from unknown senders, as they may contain malware.
- **Message:** Evaluate the message for suspicious urgency, poor grammar, or requests for sensitive information.

Be safe out there!

Journeys in Faith-Winter Edition

For those who are needing support with grief, please know we have a resource for you at no charge.

Journeys in Faith is a resource for anyone who is experiencing the loss of a family member or friend.

This "Winter Edition" will focus on grief as well as provide ways to move through the holidays when you are dealing with loss. Please send Rev Glen an email to request this resource at

associatepastor@smokyhillumc.org.

Also indicate what email address you would like to receive this resource.



CHILDREN & FAMILY

Children and Family Ministry

“Christmas is the perfect time to celebrate the love of God and family.”

Kids, join us in Sunday School at 10 am for Out of the Blue Advent lessons” on **December 7th, December 14th and December 21st.**

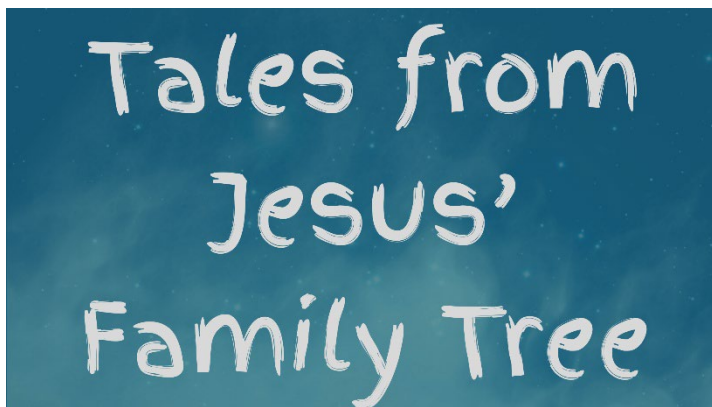


You are invited to Breakfast with Santa, **Saturday, December 13th**

9:00 -11:00 am in Celebration Hall

Join us for Breakfast, Storytime, and pictures with Santa.

This is a **FREE All Community** event. Invite friends and neighbors!



Christmas Eve: December 24th

Join us on **December 24th at 4:00 pm** for our **Children and Family Christmas Eve service**. Tales from Jesus' Family Tree.

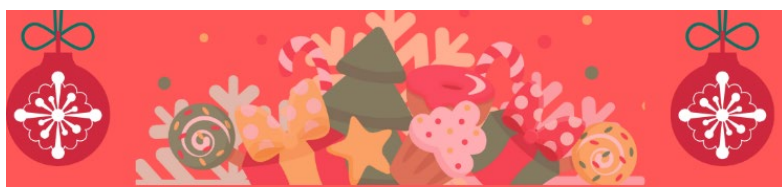
We need kids who would like to speak. Please reach out to Crystal if your child

would like lines. We will have a rehearsal after Church on December 21st.

Children's Choir kids will be singing 2 special songs. All kids will be singing other songs in the program, we will be working on those songs during Sunday school.

Traditional Christmas Eve Service at 7pm and Communion Christmas Eve at 11 pm. Candlelight and glow sticks at all services.

Nursery care is available for the 4 pm and 7pm Service.



Dec. 7th - 8:30am Worship & Children's Church
9:30 - 9:55 am Children's Choir rehearsal
10:00am Worship & Sunday School

Dec. 13th - Breakfast with Santa 9-11 am. Free

Dec. 14th -8:30am Worship & Children's Church
9:30 - 9:55 am Children's Choir rehearsal
10:00am Worship & Sunday School

Dec.21st -8:30am Worship & Children's Church
9:30 - 9:55 am Children's Choir rehearsal
10:00am Worship & Sunday School

Dec. 24th Christmas Eve Services
4:00 pm Family
7:00 pm Traditional
11:00 pm Communion

Dec.29th- 10:00am Worship &Worship as a family,
No Sunday School




WE WILL HAVE ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ON DECEMBER 28TH, @ 10:00 AM.
WORSHIP AS A FAMILY.
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL.
THE NURSERY WILL BE OPEN FROM 9:45 -11:15 AM.





FINANCE

2026 Stewardship Campaign Letter

As we look toward the close of this year, I want to share a brief update to our 2026 stewardship campaign and 2025 budget.

We faced some unexpected challenges this year, including a significant insurance increase. Thanks to your quick response and our staff's strong stewardship of expenses, we have remained on solid footing. However, as I shared during worship last Sunday, fourth-quarter giving has softened. Without a strong December, we face a small year-end shortfall that will affect how boldly we can plan for ministry in 2026.

Our 2026 Stewardship Campaign invites us to Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, and Lead Courageously. To help us plan for 2026, we've built three budget scenarios:

- Maintain – \$784,287: continues our current mission and ministries.
- Grow – \$809,646: includes new classroom chairs, staff salary equity, a small part-time position, and refreshed paint and carpet throughout the building.
- Dream – \$1,107,291: expands staff, increases our monthly tithe, enhances outreach, and updates key building systems such as the elevator and fire alarms.

Pledges are the most important component of our budget process. So far, two-thirds of pledges have been returned and with one-third of pledges still outstanding, we are currently on track to propose the "Maintain" budget. We recognize the economic difficulties some members are facing even as the needs of our mission partners grow. Please know that we support you as many others have committed to increasing their giving.

Our challenge and invitation:

- Help us finish 2025 on budget by thoughtfully considering your December giving.
- Please return your 2026 pledge in the next two weeks—online through Vanco, by calling the office, or by stopping by the Gathering Space for a pledge card.
- Most importantly, pray about how God is calling you to support our shared ministry in the year ahead.

Thank you for the many ways you embody Christ's Love in this community. Together, we can move into 2026 with Joy, Courage and trust in God's abundance.

Sincerely,
Butch Reimer



**It's not too late to
turn in a
Pledge Card**

2026 Pledge Drive



If you need a Pledge Card, pick one up in the church office, scan the QR Code above, or print your own Pledge Card here: [Pledge Card](#)

Read Pastor Patti's letter to the congregation here: [Stewardship Letter](#)

Questions? Call the church office 303-690-9816

The Rummage Sale is Returning!

Save your "stuff" for our next all church Rummage Sale on May 29 and 30, 2026! This is your opportunity to clear out your basement/ garage/ closets of all those items that you no longer use and help your church with some extra income. We can't accept your things until the week of the sale (May 26, 27 and 28, 2026) but we would love to have them then. Many willing hands will be needed to help sort and price before the sale and many helpers will also be needed on the actual sale days. Please mark your calendars to donate and assist! For more information, contact Susan Hora (cusaglass@gmail.com, 636-236-6549, call or text).



JUSTICE MINISTRIES

TURN YOUR GUN INTO A GARDEN TOOL! **



As a thank you for your choice to safely dispose of your firearm, you'll receive:

\$50 * FOR YOUR LONG GUN/ SHOTGUN

\$150 * FOR YOUR HANDGUN OR SEMI-AUTOMATIC

\$250 * FOR YOUR ASSAULT STYLE RIFLE

**In the form of grocery store gift cards, while supplies last*



**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13
10AM-NOON**

**AT ST. ANDREW UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
9203 S UNIVERSITY BLVD
HIGHLANDS RANCH, CO**

HOW IT WORKS

- No reservation needed; Just come to the parking lot to voluntarily surrender your unwanted firearm!
- Arrive with your UNLOADED firearm(s) in your trunk
- Remain in your vehicle
- Skilled personnel remove your gun(s)
- Volunteers destroy firearms in your presence
- **Destroyed firearm parts are transformed into garden tools, jewelry, and art separately from this event
- You remain anonymous
- No ammunition accepted
- Homemade guns will be accepted and destroyed, but not compensated for

Learn more at www.gunstogardensdenver.org
or @GunsToGardensDenver on
Facebook & Instagram



Espanol, Français, Kiswahili,
Tiếng Việt, and more



St Andrew UMC in Highlands Ranch is having the first ever UMC Rawtools gun surrender on Saturday Dec. 13th. If you would like to volunteer, please click on the link below. If it motivates you to volunteer, you are given a free lunch. There are always more volunteers than volunteer openings so if you want to see what these events are like, click the link:

<https://tinyurl.com/G2GStandrew>

If you have any questions about the event or what volunteering entails, please reach out to me, Kathy Brennan, 720-255-3755.

RAINBOW ALLIANCE

Inviting all LGBTQIA+ adults to **The Big Gay Epiphany Party, January 2nd, 6 p.m.** Join us decked out in your royal regalia and bring a side or appetizer to share. Party address will be shared upon your RSVP.

Please RSVP to associatepastor@smokyhillumc.org or churchsecretary@smokyhillumc.org by December 30th.

SAVE THE DATE!

Rainbow Alliance is sponsoring a speaking and Q&A event for **Sunday, March 15, 2026, from 11:30AM to 1:00PM**. Our guest speaker will be Representative Brianna Titone, Colorado's first openly transgender state legislator, who represents District 27 (within Jefferson County) in the Colorado General Assembly. Prior to entering politics, Rep. Titone, who holds a Master of Science degree in geochemistry, worked as a mining consultant, geologist, and software developer. She also served as a volunteer firefighter for seven years, starting in high school.

Please mark your calendars - and stay tuned for more details as the event approaches. Questions? Contact Tim Davis (tcDavis660@comcast.net) or Denise Arnold (beagle_lover_501@msn.com).



SHUMC Rainbow Alliance

Guest Speaker

REPRESENTATIVE BRIANNA TITONE

SUNDAY, MARCH 15 11:30AM

**Come meet and hear from
Colorado's first openly transgender
state legislator in the
Colorado General Assembly.**

*Light lunch & childcare available
with RSVP 303-690-9816*



**Representative Brianna Titone
District 27, Jefferson County**



MEN'S GROUP BREAKFAST MEETING

All SHUMC men are invited to join us for our Men's Group Meeting at 7:30 am on Dec 13th for our White Elephant gift exchange. All gifts should be under \$20.



Christmas in the Park (a ministry with AfterHours Denver) is taking place Christmas morning, and we are collecting new and gently used men's winter boots and casual shoes that will be handed out on Christmas morning. We are collecting shoe and boot laces, insoles, and foot powder. These items will go directly to those who need them most. Please look for the Boot Bin in the gathering space. Anyone is welcome to join us on Christmas day! The commitment is 11:00 - 1:30. If you have any questions or would like to join us, please contact Marta Nielsen (720-271-0691) or Kimberly Carlson (303-519-7127).

THREE GIFTS CAMPAIGN

Each year during the Christmas Season, the Missions Team offers an opportunity to give to a local, national, or international cause. This year we have chosen:

LOCAL: Colorado Feeding Kids is an all-volunteer organization which provides food to those in need. Smoky Hill has had a relationship with them for over eight years, and congregation members take part in their monthly food packs.

NATIONAL: Pine Ridge Reservation is in the poorest county in the United States. Unemployment is near 85% and teen suicide numbers are astounding. The life expectancy is the lowest in the United States. SHUMC has taken teams to Pine Ridge to learn more about their culture and life on the reservation. Your donations will go directly to support programs on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

INTERNATIONAL: Support for Florence Mefor. SHUMC has sponsored the missionary work of Dr. Emmanuel and Florence Mefor in Zimbabwe Africa for many years. One of their major projects is the mother and child survival program. They house 40-60 at risk pregnant women each day to ensure a safe delivery of their baby. Dr. Mefor has retired, but Florence is continuing her work with the women. Your support allows them to continue to offer pre-natal care and improve the survival rate of mothers and children.

Financial gifts can be made out to SHUMC, with "Three Gifts" or the specific organization name in the memo.

The Heifer Project

Once again, Smoky Hill will support the Alternative Gift program for the Heifer Project. Heifer International is a global nonprofit working to eradicate poverty and hunger. Heifer distributes animals along with training to families in need around the world as a means of providing self-sufficiency. Recipients must agree to “pass on the gift” by sharing animal offspring, as well as training with other impoverished families. You may “purchase” an animal in honor of a loved one this holiday season. The Mission Team has holiday cards available indicating your gift. We will be in the Gathering Space during the month of December. Stop by, help a family in need, and do some holiday shopping.

The Giving Tree

We will be collecting **NEW** tennis or athletic shoes for Wholly Kicks, a local nonprofit organization, which provides new shoes to those experiencing homelessness as well as kids in Title 1 schools and women in shelters. Please pick a shoe tag from the tree in the gathering space, buy a **new** pair of athletic shoes, tie the shoes together with the shoe tag, and place them unwrapped (no boxes, please) under the tree by Christmas Eve. Our goal is 50 pairs of shoes. If the tags are all gone, you can still buy any size of shoes and leave them under the tree. If you don't want to buy shoes, you can make a financial donation.



Reverse Advent Box

If you are looking for a meaningful activity for this Christmas season, consider having a reverse advent box. Each day from December 1st to Christmas, place one food item in a box. On Christmas or soon after, drop your box off at the Little Red Wagons by the front doors.

A graphic for a bloodmobile event. On the left is a stylized illustration of a blood donation bag with a white cross on a grey background. To the right, the text "SAVE LIVES" and "GIVE BLOOD" is written in large, white, bold letters on a dark red background. Below this, the text "Bloodmobile at SHUMC" and "Sunday, Dec. 21st" is written in a smaller, dark red font. Further down, the time "8:30AM - 12:00PM" is displayed in white on a dark red background. At the bottom, the text "Blood is needed especially during the holidays!" and "Call 1-877-258-4825 to sign up!" is written in white on a dark red background.

SAVE LIVES
GIVE BLOOD
Bloodmobile at SHUMC
Sunday, Dec. 21st
8:30AM - 12:00PM
Blood is needed especially
during the holidays!
Call 1-877-258-4825 to sign up!

Coffee Time
Let's connect with coffee, tea,
and treats between services



If your last name begins with
V, W, Y or Z, please bring a
snack to share on Sundays
in December ~ *Thank You!*

Smoky Hill Abundant Health



Blindness and visual impairments exact a great price from individuals and society. Learn more about how you can detect and prevent vision problems and preserve sight for all ages at [Prevent Blindness.org](https://www.preventblindness.org) This includes great information for parents and teachers, linking vision and educational success.

On the Move with Smoky Hill UMC

Group Exercise on Zoom: Looking for exercise that requires no money, no travel, and fast access to your shower? Join the Zoom exercise community on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 9:30. Contact Susan Hora at cusaglass@gmail.com

Hiking Group: The weather is changing but keep an eye out for possible coming hikes by watching the weekly e-blast or our [Smoky Hill Abundant Health Facebook page](#) or contact Marta at 720-271-0691 with questions.

Yoga at Smoky Hill: Join us every Tuesday at 1:45-2:30 PM in Celebration Hall to stretch and improve your health. Zachary Horan, our yoga instructor is an expert at working with your personal needs and restrictions. We ask for a donation of \$7-\$10 in appreciation of his time.

Join us on Facebook! [Smoky Hill Abundant Health](#) This is the place to connect about hikes, bowling, kayaking, fishing, and new recipes!



JUSTICE & JOY READERS

The Smoky Hill UWF Justice and Joy Readers will have a holiday potluck and book exchange on Monday, December 8th, Noon to 2pm since the group doesn't meet for book discussion in November and December. Contact Rebecca Mino at 303-330-7795 or rebeccamino@hotmail.com.





Did you miss our Craft Fair? Don't worry, we have items left over to purchase, just in time for Christmas! You can still shop by clicking via this link:

<https://form.jotform.com/213197357617160>

By adding your contact information, we can arrange delivery. All proceeds will go towards United Women in Faith Mission Giving.



WORSHIP



Smoky Hill UMC Celtic Advent Sundays

8:30 & 10 am

Join us as we explore
some of the characters in
Jesus' family tree

Contemplative Worship Service *Awakening To God's Presence*

**Mondays at 8 PM on Zoom
November 17 - December 22**

Email church office to get zoom link
churchsecretary@smokyhillumc.org

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Family 4:00 pm

Traditional 7:00 pm

Livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube

Communion 11:00 pm

Smoky Hill United Methodist Church
19491 E Smoky Hill Rd
Centennial, CO 80015

Please join us ~ all are welcome here!

Sunday, December 28th

One Service at 10:00 AM

Worship as a Family

No Sunday School

Nursery Open

9:45am - 11:15am



CAN'T BE HERE? Join the 10:00 AM English service on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#)

To livestream the Spanish service, please contact Pastor Lucia for the link.



19491 E Smoky Hill Rd
Centennial, CO80015
303-690-9816

www.smokyhillumc.org

Following Jesus together to make the world a more loving and just place.

Email all information and updates for church communications to churchsecretary@smokyhillumc.org