



# ELEMENTS

**FEBRUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER**



## **Patti's Ponderings**

Life has been intense for me lately. I have a friend, my age, in hospice care. She will be the first of our childhood friend group to pass away (we all grew up in church together since kindergarten). My Bell's Palsy is improving but not resolved yet, impacting my vision. I just bought a patio home and am in the process of moving. Which is wonderful but disrupting none-the-less. And I spent the first 25 years of my life in Pacific Palisades, growing up in a wonderful neighborhood called "the alphabet streets." Which as you have all seen on the news has burned to the ground. While I did not experience anywhere near the degree of loss as the current residents, the grief is strong. It feels like my childhood burned up in the flames.

We each have our list of difficult things we are dealing with. And on top of that, our political climate is exhausting. The news, the uncertainty, the fear. I think many people are on edge.

This is a season for us to put our faith into action. Remember my sermon series last fall in September on Bridge Building? Now is the time to put that into practice. May we be a people who put God's love and grace into tangible acts each day. Not only are we divided but the temperature is hot. We can decrease the temperature with kindness and humor. What people need most right now is care and connection. A listening ear. A supportive gesture. A promise not everything will be ok, but that we are not alone. It is a time to build bridges of love. Asking God to fill in the space between us with grace.

Jesus leads the way in genuinely encountering and connecting with all kinds of people and making each one feel valued and loved. Jesus was willing to say the hard thing, confront injustice, and affirm people's worth. Life is complicated and our politics are complex. It is a challenging time to live out our faith. It is my hope and prayer that we keep trying to follow Jesus, working together to make the world a more loving and just place for all.

*May the Lord bless you and keep you,  
Pastor Patti*



**Smoky Hill United Methodist Church invites you to celebrate 6 years as a reconciling congregation!**

**Please join us in worship February 2<sup>nd</sup> 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. as the Denver Feminist Chorus joins us in song to help us celebrate!**

**The chorus under the direction of Dr. Clelyn Chapin will be featuring songs that raise awareness and give hope regarding how we can recognize and celebrate differences with justice, compassion and hope for the future.**

**The Rainbow Alliance will have a reception with balloons and cake after both services.**

**As a reconciling congregation, Smoky Hill United Methodist Church works to transform hearts, churches and communities by organizing, resourcing and educating all people what it means to be LGBTQ+ people as well as by being a community that is open and inclusive for all people.**

**Not only do we celebrate LGBTQ+ people, but we also celebrate straight allies who understand that God's love is for everyone regardless of race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.**

**After 40 years, the reconciling movement spans four continents, 1400+ ministries, and over 46,000 individuals.**

**Blessings, Rev. Glen Wood**

**do  
not  
despair**



# ADULT CLASSES & GROUPS

## **Adult Open Door - Sundays at 9:00 am in Room 214**

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](mailto: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.**

## **Justice & Joy Readers**

Our book selection for our February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting will be "We Are Not Here To Be Bystanders: A Memoir of Love and Resistance" by Linda Sarsour. "We're In This Together: A Young Reader's Edition of We Ate Not Here To Be Bystanders" is also available. Contact Rebecca Mino at [rebeccamino@hotmail.com](mailto:rebeccamino@hotmail.com) for more information.

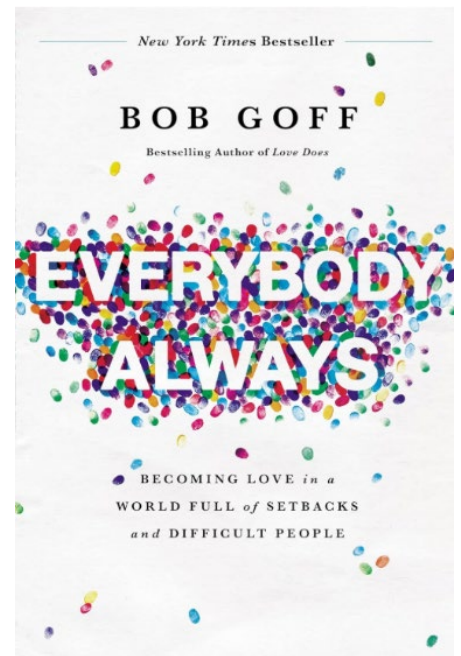
## **Parents of 20 Somethings**

Parenting our children post-High School is full of blessings and challenges. Join our group of parents on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:00-8:30 pm as we discuss the dynamics, share in our celebrations, and support one another through the difficulties. Contact [pattia@smokyhillumc.org](mailto:pattia@smokyhillumc.org) for more information.

## Tuesday Lunch Bunch

“Everybody Always” by Bob Goff will be Tuesday Lunch Bunch’s next book. This United Women in Faith group meets on Tuesdays at 11:30 in room 214. We will be reading this book for six weeks February 18 through April 1 with a break on March 11. We would love to have you join us. Please contact Kathy Tedrick with questions at [kathytedrick@me.com](mailto:kathytedrick@me.com).

Bob Goff in “Everybody Always” takes readers on a journey into the secret of living without fear, constraint, or worry. The path toward the liberated existence we all long for is found in a truth as simple to say as it is hard to do: love people even the difficult ones, without distinctions and without limits.



**Tuesday Morning Theologians** is introducing a new book *Re-Imagine the World – An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus* by Bernard Brandon Scott. This six-part study begins on February 18 and, with a one-week Spring Break on March 11, finishes April 1<sup>st</sup>.

### From the book:

In his parables Jesus re-imagines the world. The re-imagined world, called the Kingdom of God, presents his followers with a new option for living, one that contrasts with the default world of everyday. The new world is both terrifying and liberating. In this book Scott sets his interpretation of the key parables of Jesus in the context of other things Jesus said and did. The result is a startling and provocative picture of the historical figure of Jesus and the challenge he presents to contemporary life.

Join us Tuesdays from 9 am to 11 am in room 214. To obtain a book or reserve a spot please contact John Tedrick [johntedrick@me.com](mailto:johntedrick@me.com) or John Richard [jhrcolorado@icloud.com](mailto:jhrcolorado@icloud.com).



Click here for more offerings: [Discipleship Opportunities](#)



## CARE & PRAYER

Continued prayers for the family and friends of Jean Clarke who passed away unexpectedly on January 21.



# CHILDREN & FAMILY

## Undie Sunday FEBRUARY 23, 2025



WE ARE COLLECTING NEW UNDERWEAR AND SOCKS FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS IN NEED.

YOU CAN DROP DONATIONS OFF ON SUNDAY MORNINGS, OR DURING CHURCH OFFICE HOURS.

PLEASE PLACE THEM IN THE WAGON IN THE GATHERING SPACE.

## PRESENTING PRAYER SHAWLS



to our 2nd graders.

Join us at 10 a.m. Worship on February 23rd.

**Feb. 2nd** - Children's Choir 9:30 am, Sunday School at 10 am  
Chili Warms the Soul at 5:30 pm

**Feb. 9th** - Children's Choir 9:30 am, Sunday School at 10 am  
Superbowl Sunday

**Feb. 16th** - Children's Choir 9:30 am, Sunday School at 10 am

**Feb. 23rd** - Children's Choir 9:30 am, No Sunday School  
Worship as a family. Undie Sunday & Prayer Shawls 2nd grade

### Save the date: More details will follow!

- March 4th - Pancake Supper at 5:30 pm
- Ash Wednesday Prayer Stations, come any time 12-8 pm
- Trustee Clean Day - April 12th from 9am -12 pm
- Community Easter Egg Hunt - April 12th 11am -12 pm
- Palm Parade – April 13th - Both worship hours
- Easter - April 20th - Worship as a family
- End of Year Celebration - May 18th
- Vacation Bible Camp - June 23rd - 27th 5:30 – 7:30 pm FREE. Looking for helpers.

## JOIN US ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

8:30-9:30 AM WORSHIP, NURSERY, AND CHILDREN'S CHURCH.

10:00 -11:00 AM WORSHIP, NURSERY, CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR AGES 3YR TO 5TH GRADE.

NEW DROP OFF AND PICK UP FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL

DROP OFF YOUR KIDS IN THE COVE (BY THE FRONT DOOR) AND WE WILL TAKE TO SUNDAY SCHOOL. WE WILL BRING THEM BACK UP TO THE GATHERING SPACE AFTER WORSHIP.



\*\*NOTE, THE 4TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH WILL BE WORSHIP AS A FAMILY, NO CHILDREN'S CHURCH, OR SUNDAY SCHOOL. THE 5TH SUNDAY WILL BE A FUN DAY.

We are looking for volunteers to help in Sunday School one Sunday a month. You do not have to plan your curriculum!! Please reach out to [Crystal](#).

Let [Crystal](#) know if you need to be added to the email list. She sends out a monthly email about what is happening with the kids.

# FINANCE

## ATTENTION!

Year End Contribution statements were emailed on Thursday, January 16, 2025

from Finance Secretary: [no-reply@smokyhillumc.org](mailto:no-reply@smokyhillumc.org)

If you need a printed copy please contact Crystal 303-690-9816 email:

[Financesecretary@smokyhillumc.org](mailto:Financesecretary@smokyhillumc.org)

### Finance Report

The Finance Committee is celebrating the compassion, faith, and generosity of Smoky Hill UMC! We ended the year over \$6,000 to the good! That is cause for celebration and puts us in an excellent position to begin the year. Also, the results of our fall stewardship campaign were very positive with higher giving commitments than we have had in several years and several new pledges. Thank you for your commitment and generosity. Ad Council approved an ambitious budget for 2025 which is greater than our maintain level and dips into our “grow” budget. Smoky Hill UMC continues to thrive. We are seeking specific ways we can work together to make the world a more loving and just place for all. You will be hearing more about that soon.

# JUSTICE MINISTRIES

## POSITIVE CHANGE

Colorado Village Collaborative

We paused our donations to CVC because the Safe Open Space at 38<sup>th</sup> and Steele was closed while it was being upgraded for the past few months. It is now complete and they are moved in with a whole new look thanks to a substantial grant. There are now palette homes with heat, air conditioning and locks. I appreciate the dignity it provides.

The needs we are going to address for the next few months are reflective of dignity and needs of the facility. They are asking for warm clothing---gently used, please. New underwear, men and women.

Since they are not allowed to buy these with the funds provided through the grant they receive, they need over the counter drugs. For example, aspirin, Sudafed, Mucinex, Ibuprofen. If it would be easier, you can write a check to SHUMC with the memo line to CVC and I can make a run to Costco to try to get the best deal. They always need milk and fruit and I can buy those and deliver them also.

I so appreciate what we have been able to provide over the years. You are supporting those who get help to transition out to get jobs and a furnished apartment. Unfortunately, there will always be a need for a food pantry so continue to contribute there, but this is a different donation. Please help these men and women with a “hand up”.

The location to drop off has changed. It is next to Marti’s Pantry on the education level. **Sue Ricker**

# RACIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

February is Black History Month and one of the key parts of the mission of the Smoky Hill UMC Racial Justice Task Force is to encourage learning. We all can better understand experiences that differ from our own by reading and exposing ourselves to experiences that are not like our own. It is with the spirit of learning we would like to suggest a selection of books that would help you to see the black experience in America in new ways. We suggest you check out:

## Classic Books

1. "The Souls of Black Folk" by W.E.B. Du Bois - A foundational text in African-American literature, offering deep insights into the Black experience.
2. "Their Eyes Were Watching God" by Zora Neale Hurston - A novel about a Black woman's journey to find her voice and independence.
3. "Invisible Man" by Ralph Ellison - A powerful exploration of identity and invisibility in American society.
4. "Beloved" by Toni Morrison - A haunting tale of a runaway slave grappling with her past.
5. "The Fire Next Time" by James Baldwin - Essays that examine the role of race in American history and its ongoing impact.

## Modern Books

1. "Between the World and Me" by Ta-Nehisi Coates - A poignant letter to the author's son about the realities of being Black in America.
2. "The Warmth of Other Suns" by Isabel Wilkerson - A historical account of the Great Migration and its impact on Black Americans.
3. "The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness" by Michelle Alexander - An examination of how mass incarceration serves as a system of racial control.
4. "Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption" by Bryan Stevenson - A memoir detailing the author's work in the justice system.
5. "The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America" by Richard Rothstein - An exploration of government policies that enforced racial segregation in housing.

These lists should give you a great starting point for exploring the Black cultural experience through both classic and contemporary lenses. Enjoy your reading journey!

## *Systemic Racism in Our Own Backyard*

### Tracking Justice: City of Aurora's Consent Decree

#### Isaiah 10:1-2

"Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless."

Systemic racism isn't dismantled overnight—it takes action, accountability, and persistence. While marches and protests ignite change, systemic reform requires measurable goals and unwavering commitment. For Aurora, making the change lies in its compliance with a Consent Decree.

In 2021, the death of Elijah McClain led the Colorado Attorney General, armed with Senate Bill 20-217 (a landmark law enforcement accountability bill), to launch an investigation into the Aurora Police Department (APD). The findings were clear: transformative change was needed. The resulting Consent Decree was negotiated; it's a comprehensive plan to reshape how the APD operates—addressing use of force, interactions with communities of color, transparency, and officer training.

But the APD isn't alone. Aurora Fire Rescue (AFR) was included in the decree due to its troubling pattern of ketamine use as a chemical restraint. The Aurora Civil Service Commission (CSC) was also scrutinized for its role in screening and hiring minority applicants. Together, these entities represent the systemic challenges Aurora must overcome.

To ensure accountability, Aurora brought in IntegrAssure, an independent Consent Decree monitor. Every six months, IntegrAssure releases a progress report, holding these agencies to their commitments. The latest report is in, and the numbers tell a story of progress—with work still ahead.

### Progress at a Glance:

- **57 out of 78 mandates** are now in “substantial compliance.”
- **Policies and Training** goals have been fully achieved.
- **Racial Bias in Policing** and **Use of Force** goals are 50–75% complete.
- The **discontinued use of ketamine** has reached 100%.
- **CSC recruitment goals** stand at 100%, but AFR lags at 50–75%, while APD is nearing completion at 75–99%.

Meeting these goals place Aurora on what IntegrAssure calls the “right track.” However, one area remains a concern: **APD’s documentation of stops**, labeled as “cautionary/missed deadline track.”

### How Can You Make a Difference?

Rebuilding trust and achieving equity isn't just the responsibility of government, it's a community effort.

Here's how you can get involved:

- **Track the Progress:** Visit [AuroraMonitor.org](http://AuroraMonitor.org) to follow updates on the Consent Decree and its mandates.
- **Join the Conversation:** Apply to serve on the Consent Decree's **Community Advisory Committee**. Details are available on the [AuroraMonitor.org](http://AuroraMonitor.org) website.
- **Step into Leadership:** The Aurora Civil Service Commission has **three openings** starting February 2025. Apply to be part of the solution.

For questions or concerns, please contact Kathy Brennan co-chair Racial Justice Task Force at [pakorah@hotmail.com](mailto:pakorah@hotmail.com).

**Sunday, Feb. 16**

**11:15 am**

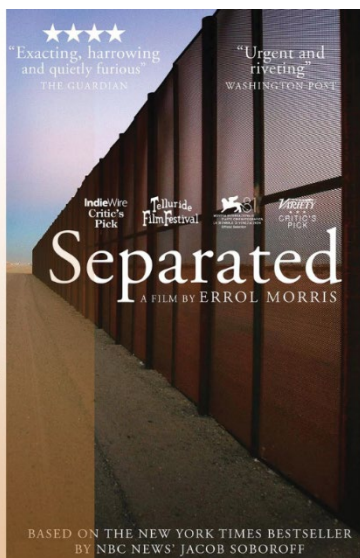
SHUMC Racial Justice Task Force invites you to a free showing of the documentary “*Separated*,” a jaw-dropping picture of the state-sponsored crisis of cruelty - family separations.

**Please RSVP**

**303-690-9816**

churchsecretary

[@smokyhillumc.org](mailto:@smokyhillumc.org)



**RAINBOW ALLIANCE**

**Celebrate with Us!**

**February 2nd @ 8:30 & 10:00 am**

**Its Smoky Hill UMC's 6th Anniversary of becoming a Reconciling Church**

**Special Musical Guest  
Denver Feminist Chorus**



# MEN'S GROUP

Our next Men's Group Breakfast Meeting will be on Saturday, February 8th at 7:30 am. All SHUMC men are welcome!

**Men's Group will be making & selling Chicken Wings for Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 9. Save \$ by pre-ordering! Reserve yours Feb. 2-7 or you may miss out!**

Call the church office to pre-order 303-690-9816

Support our SHUMC Men's Group!



**Men's Group Grill Team will offer Gospel Rubbed Smoked Jumbo Wings** for the Super Bowl Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>. Fred Isernhagen will be in the Gathering Space on **Sunday Feb. 2** taking **pre-orders** for the **Sunday, February 9th game**. **Pre-order Feb. 2-7 with Fred or call the church office 303-690-9816**. Make sure to place an order or you will pay more and you may miss out!

**Our Motto when preparing the Wings is: "We select the Wings, we rub 'em with The Gospel Rub, we smoke 'em, you sauce 'em"!**



## MISSION

### Mission Team News

#### Colorado Feeding Kids

We have reconnected with Colorado Feeding Kids and are once again volunteering. The packs are the large packs (60 people) and we will be making the individual meals meaning we are part of a production line adding one ingredient each (rice, beans, etc.)

The warehouse has moved to Aurora, so travel is more convenient for us. Their new address is 14107 E. Exposition Ave. A group of us volunteered at their soft opening a few weeks ago and we have a second group signed up for February 1<sup>st</sup>. If you want to sign up for a pack, go to their website, [cofeedingkids.org](http://cofeedingkids.org). Volunteer time is from 11:00-1:00.

We are putting together an email list of people who may be interested in volunteering. The Mission Team will send out an email when we have a team volunteering if you would like to join us on those particular dates. If you would like to be added to the email list, please send your name and email to Sharon Davis at [stdavis21@comcast.net](mailto:stdavis21@comcast.net).

#### Updated 3 Gifts Totals

Thank you again for your generosity for the 3 Gifts Campaign. The updated totals are:

**Local (Wholly Kicks):** \$4,139.63

**National (Pine Ridge):** \$5,788.65

**International (Florence Mefor):** \$6,486.66

Smoky Hill is an amazing congregation, and the Mission Team is for grateful for your support!

### **Katelyn's Birthday Project**

Thank you to everyone who donated to Katelyn's Birthday Project. It is not too late to give, just make sure to designate it on your check or electronic donation.

**CHILI WARMS THE  
SOUL  
FEBRUARY 2ND,  
5:30-7:00**

Dust off your favorite chili recipe, find your muffin tin, and join us for some fellowship. Donations will benefit Aurora Interfaith.



### **Smoky Hill Abundant Health**



February is Teen Violence Awareness month. Teen dating violence affects nearly 10% of all teenagers throughout the U.S. Learn more about teen dating abuse and get prevention resources at [Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention | Info on Teen Dating Violence](#).

### **On the Move with Smoky Hill UMC**

**Yoga at Smoky Hill.** Certified yoga instructor, Zachary Horan offers Yoga every Tuesday afternoon from 1:45 to 2:30 in-person at church in Celebration Hall. Zachary is very careful to meet your specific needs and challenges. All are welcome! We offer donations to Zackary (suggested \$7-\$10) to thank him for his time and expertise.

**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](mailto:cusaglass@gmail.com)

**Hiking Group:** Keep an eye out for future hikes by watching the weekly e-blast or our [Smoky Hill Abundant Health Facebook page](#) or contact Marta at 720-271-0691 with questions.

**Looking to go cross-country skiing?** Contact Bob Krech at [bobkrech@aol.com](mailto:bobkrech@aol.com) who would be happy to ski with you.

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

## **Newcomers Connection Lunch** **Sunday, Feb. 23 11:15 a.m. Room 214**

**We are hosting a lunch for anyone new to Smoky Hill UMC or wanting to learn more about our church. Join lay leaders and staff for lunch and learn about the mission and ministries of Smoky Hill.**

**RSVP 303-690-9816 for lunch  
*and childcare if needed***



## **Widows & Widowers**

### **Valentine's Day Lunch**

**Friday, February 14**

**12:00 pm**

**Smoky Hill UMC Celebration Hall**

**RSVP to 303-690-9816**





# WORSHIP



**SUNDAYS AT SMOKY  
HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**Worship 8:30 am & 10:00 am**

**10:00 am service livestreamed**

*Sunday School for All Ages*

**Spanish Service 10:00 am**

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



## Enciende Una Luz

**Servicio Hispano  
Domingo a Las 10:00 a.m.  
y Facebook Live**

Llame a Pastora Lucia Correa al  
303-690-9816

For the Facebook link please contact Pastor Lucia



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[www.smokyhillumc.org](http://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](mailto:churchsecretary@smokyhillumc.org)