



ELEMENTS

APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER



Patti's Ponderings

A new season is slowly bursting forth. As I am sitting in my office today writing and looking out the window, I notice the leaves are just starting to bud out from the tree branches. Tiny green leaves taking the risk to open up to the sun, hopeful the cold and snow still to come won't be too much. We are standing on the threshold between winter and spring. Change. We typically don't like change, even if it is a desired change. Change makes us uneasy as we adjust from what was to what will be. Change raises uncertainty. We need to let go of some things and embrace the new thing. Linda Douty writes, "Transitions large and small, temporary or permanent, expected or unexpected, can break our hearts and disrupt our serenity. I hope that, surrounded by grace, rather than being broken down, our souls can be broken open."

That is a beautiful sentiment. How do we navigate transitions in such a way that they break us open to new possibilities? It does not happen naturally. We have to work at it. Here is a strategy for moving through transitions in a way that opens us up. We begin by recognizing that change involves grief as we let go of what was. Name your losses and honor them. Take time with this but don't get stuck there. Maya Shagnar (podcast called *A Slight Change of Plans*) suggests three questions for navigating change. First consider, in the context of this change, what am I now capable of? What new things can I learn to do? What opportunities does this open up? Second, ask yourself, as I experience this change, how does it enforce or shift what I value? What questions does it raise about what I believe? And third, reflect on how this change might change how you define yourself?

For myself, changes are on the horizon. April marks the month a new baby will be born into our family. My first grandchild. Quite exciting! And life will never be the same. I will have to relearn old skills like changing diapers. I am sure this new baby will challenge my values and beliefs in new ways. And my identity will shift, as I add grandmother to my roles. My heart will be broken open!

We just celebrated Easter and the resurrection power of God. We looked at the odd ending of the Gospel of Mark and realized the story doesn't end with the resurrection, or the disciples. It isn't wrapped up with a nice bow. Rather the story continues. The story always continues with God. The end is never the end. As you navigate upcoming transitions, whether it is exciting or difficult, always remember the God of life, the God of the resurrection, the God of never-ending possibilities is with you and will open you up to new life.

Pastor Patti



WORSHIP

Worship With Us Sundays 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM

Livestream at 10 AM on Facebook & YouTube

Sunday School Classes

9:00 & 10:00 AM

Spanish Service at 10:00 AM
in Celebration Hall

CAN'T BE HERE? Catch the
10:00 AM Service online:

[Livestream on Facebook](#)

[Livestream on YouTube](#)

or watch the service when it's
convenient for you!

This is not an April Fool's Day joke! We are closed to give our staff a much-needed break after Holy Week and Easter. *Sorry for any inconvenience.*



**Smoky Hill UMC
CLOSED
Monday, April 1
Staff Holiday**

Newcomers Connection Lunch Sunday, April 7th 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.

Childcare provided with reservation

RSVP 303-690-9816



You're invited to lunch, and we hope you can attend!
Just RSVP by phone
303-690-9816 or by email at
churchsecretary@smokyhillumc.org



CHILDREN & FAMILY

Children and Family Ministry

March was filled with lots of fun!!! We enjoyed donuts and wore our PJs to Church for Daylight saving. For St. Patrick's Day we all enjoyed some green Rice Krispies treats!

Thank you to our Youth for stuffing the Easter eggs.



**Church & Community
Easter Egg Hunt on March 23rd**

The weather was perfect.

Thank you to everyone who donated candy to our event. We had an amazing turn out for not only our church families but our community!!!!



**So much candy
to find!!**



Thank you,
Youth Kids,
for setting the
eggs out for
the younger
kids.



PALM SUNDAY PARADE



All kids and adults participated in the Palm Parade.

April Events

April 7th - 8:30am Worship & Children's Church
9:30 - 9:55am Children's Choir rehearsal
10:00am Worship & Sunday School &
Pastor Patti will answer kids' questions

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

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

****Children's Choir will sing at both Worship hours.**

April 28th - 8:30am Worship & Children's Church
9:30 - 9:55am Children's Choir rehearsal
10:00am Worship & Sunday School &
Prayer Shawls to 2nd graders

Save the Dates More details will follow.

May 19th – 5th Grade move up & Last day of Sunday school before Summer. End of year party.

May 26th - Worship goes to one service at 10:00 AM. We will have a very modified outside Sunday school lesson and activities as the weather permits. We will gather most Sundays. The last Sunday will stay as Worship as a family.



VBC- FREE

JUNE 24 - 28TH ~ 5:30 - 7:30 PM
(Inside and outside)

FOR KIDS AGED 3YRS TO 5TH GRADE

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED, 6TH GRADE AND UP

SMOKY HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
19491 E. SMOKY HILL RD
CENTENNIAL, CO. 80015

Contact Crystal @ crystald@smokyhillumc.org 303-690-9816

Register here



You can register here: <https://forms.gle/YkTUyz4ERHA7Tvco9>

June 30th – VBC Celebration Sunday

Our Theme is: Just like me, Diggin in and growing deep. Sponsored by Reconciling Ministries Network. Our Bishop has highly recommended this!!!!

JUST LIKE ME is an adaptable Vacation Bible School curriculum that centers the deep and active faith lives of children and the real-world context our kids live in. Grounded on theologies of inclusion, this unique Vacation Bible School uses both First and Second Testament Bible Characters to help students build vital social and spiritual skills that support active faith development.

This intersectional curriculum is designed to help kids celebrate their own identities as beloved creation of God—just as they are. Over the course of the week, campers will be introduced to cast of neighborhood Gardeners who will help them explore Biblical stories of people who were able to change things for the better. Students will practice sharing what they have, finding their community, and using their voice for others!



YOUTH



Spring Youth Group has been full of fun, faith, fellowship and great group energy!

Here are some highlights:

- We had an awesome time bonding, blacklight dodgeball-ing, night sledding, and learning a lot about each other on our Winter Retreat at Ponderosa Retreat Center in Larkspur.
- We had a great Youth Pancake Supper fundraising event on Fat Tuesday, with the support of our awesome church members. THANK YOU to everyone who came to support us!
- We're halfway through Confirmation class and learning lots about Methodist history and views. (Confirmation Sunday will be May 5th.)
- Our **Annual Easter Brunch (fundraiser) is this Sunday from 8-10**. We're excited to serve you brunch and share our mission trip fundraising excitement!

Looking forward to the Youth Group adventures through the end of the school year, and cherishing the time left with our 3 seniors!

AND, we are excited about 2 mission trips we have planned for this summer!

1. June 9-15 – High School Mission Trip to the Lower Rio Grande Valley in South Texas. (REALLY south Texas. Barely still Texas.)

We'll be flying there to be part of a larger group of around 80 youth and adults from Texas and other states for this year's Mission Service Project group. **"MSP" has been a week-long Senior High youth mission week since the 1980s that is based on sharing God's unconditional love as we share our God-given gifts with those in their community. MSP is a home repair ministry for those – mostly immigrant families – who are economically challenged and in need of help in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.** (missionserviceproject.org)

Our SHUMC group will be working in one small group all together. We'll be doing hard – HOT – work repairing homes and will get to bond with the families we are directly helping. It will be memorable, life-changing work we are doing!

Then we'll spend the last 2 nights and a fun beach day – hopefully cooling off – on South Padre Island.

2. July 21-25 – Middle School Mission Trip to the San Luis Valley / Alamosa, CO

This trip is all about serving those experiencing poverty, homelessness and in need of crisis stabilization in the San Luis Valley area. (We did this trip last summer, and 5 years ago, and both were AWESOME. So we're doing it again!)

An organization called **La Puente** has organized the work we'll do – 2 & 1/2 days of service work, with a fun day mid-week. We'll be helping in various ways – cooking & serving food in their homeless shelter, working in their community garden, spending time with young kids who have experienced trauma, sorting / packing at the food bank, etc. We'll be seeing the level of crisis in this area of our state from many different viewpoints.

As always, thank you for your support (in all the ways) of this special group of young people! We are so blessed to be part of SHUMC!

Scholarships

Attention all High School seniors! We have scholarship money available! Submit the attached application by April 26th. Also, please let us know you are graduating, so we can celebrate you on Sunday, May 19th.

[Scholarship Application](#)

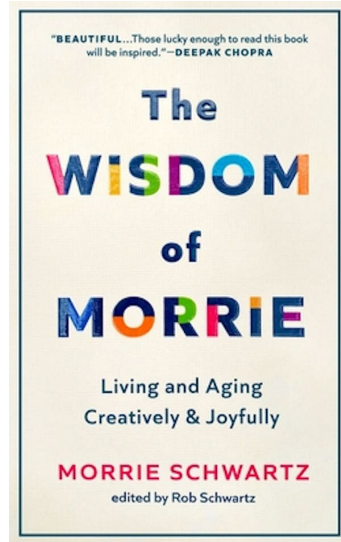
DISCIPLESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

UWF Tuesday Lunch Bunch – The Wisdom of Morrie

April 2 – May 14, 11:30 in room 214

Join our next book discussion of **The Wisdom of Morrie**, by Morrie Schwartz, led by Fran Krech. Morrie explores how to live life and age joyfully and creatively in later life. He draws on his experiences as a social psychologist, teacher, father, friend, and sage to offer us a roadmap to navigate our futures. Morrie was the beloved subject in the bestseller **Tuesdays with Morrie**.

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



Parenting 20-Somethings

Parenting those in their 20's has its incredible joys and significant challenges. Let's get together on Thursday, April 11th at 7 pm in the Upper Room to learn more about the unique challenges this generation is facing and how we can best nurture them. If you need a code to get in the door, email Patti at pattia@smokyhillumc.org.

JUSTICE MINISTRIES

POSITIVE CHANGE

Prohibit Certain Weapons Used in Mass Shootings; Air Quality Ozone Levels; Overdose Prevention Centers, Strengthening Enforcement of Human Trafficking. A few of the many bills that have been introduced in the State General Assembly this session that runs until May 8. You can listen to committee hearings online, peruse the listing of bills and, very importantly, contact your legislator to as to your support or opposition. To do this, type in leg.colorado.gov. From there, you can find topics from Find my Legislator to bills among many others. It's a table of contents to your Colorado General Assembly. Remember that citizen engagement is crucial during this legislative process, so stay informed and participate in shaping Colorado's policies and laws!

The Colorado Village Collaborative has been very active in transitioning residents to jobs and furnished apartments, giving a safe space to previously homeless people in warm tents soon to be replaced by palette homes housing two people in one of the new palette homes in the safe open spaces in the city of Denver. The one at 38th and Steele, situated in the large parking lot where Denver Human Services is located has been able to help migrants dropped off after hours when the building is closed.

Positive Change is in the process of developing ways that we can support those who have been trafficked. More about this later.

SHUMC Racial Justice Task Force

Presents

Part Two of “Killers of the Flower Moon”



FREE MOVIE

SHUMC Racial Justice Task Force
Invites you to Part Two of:

“Killers of the Flower Moon”

Sunday, April 14 11 am Room 214
Lunch & Childcare provided
with RSVP 303-690-9816



Methodists Helping Methodists

F O U N D A T I O N

Please consider Planned Giving for Smoky Hill UMC

IRA charitable Rollover:

Video <https://vimeo.com/636442988?share=copy>

More info: <https://msumf.giftlegacy.com/?pageID=158>

Stock donations

Video: <https://vimeo.com/711645034?share=copy>

The foundation's free service: <https://mhmf.org/donate-securities-to-your-church/>

More info: <https://msumf.giftlegacy.com/?pageID=9>

Pick up a Planned Giving Guide Brochure in the Gathering Space or view/print:
<https://mhmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Planned-Giving-Brief.pdf>

Let's Talk About...



"Let's Talk About..." is a column in our monthly newsletter where we will learn one thing at a time about how we can love others the way they want to be loved. We will learn something each month that helps us understand and respect people who are different from us a little more deeply.

Let's Talk About Arab Americans

Since 2021, April in the United States has been recognized as Arab American Heritage Month. It speaks volumes that this national awareness month only received federal recognition 3 years ago. And yet, it is not surprising. I was 8 years old when 9/11 happened. I have never known an America without strong anti-Arab sentiment. One poor neighborhood near my high school was locally rumored to protect terrorists. In retrospect, I am very clear that the reputation had everything to do with the ethnicity of that neighborhood's residents and nothing to do with its (average for the area) crime rate.

So it may surprise you that since the early 1900s, Arab Americans (who come from 22 different countries in the Middle East and North Africa) have been considered white in U.S. census data. At the time, the alternative was being grouped in with Chinese and Mongolian people, who could not become citizens. So, some Arab Americans went to court to prove their whiteness, and eventually won. But in reality, we know that the Arab American experience is drastically different from the European American one. Due to the lack of a specific, accurate option on the census survey, there is no way to be sure what proportion of this people group gets lumped into the options of white, Asian, or Black.

There is a push now to change the options for the 2030 census so that this minority can have the benefit of more comprehensive data that evidences the systemic injustices and health issues and other unique challenges of this particular group of people. You can learn more about this effort in this PBS article from last year: [Why Arab Americans are pushing for a 'Middle East or North African' category on the census | PBS NewsHour](#)

And in the meantime, how can we support our Arab American neighbors?

1. Learn Arab American stories. Chat with neighbors about their heritage. Additionally, PBS has some great resources for experiencing cultural practices and artistic expressions by Arab American creators: [Arab American Heritage Month: Facts, Activities & Resources | PBS](#)
2. Learn about Islamic holidays. Not all Muslims have Arabic heritage, and not all Arab Americans are Muslim, but there is a lot of overlap in these identities. Additionally, in many Arabic countries, non-Muslims have to know Islam's holidays in a similar way to how non-Christians in the United States are expected to know about Christmas and Easter. Learning about the fasting practice of Ramadan and the pilgrimage practice of Hajj can deepen understanding of our neighbors and help us to support others' ways of living out devotion to God.
3. Finally, notice the automatic thoughts and feelings that pop up sometimes for you. Maybe this means reminding yourself that "Allah" is just the word god in Arabic. Maybe it's a reminder that head coverings are a self-expression of one's culture or religion, not at all about hiding one's identity. It is okay to have these built-in racial biases; we all do. Our task is to notice them and consciously choose not to listen to them.

Our "Let's Talk About..." column is one place where we can help one another learn how to be better allies for all our neighbors. If you have a question you'd like answered, or if there are things you wish others in our congregation better understood about your own marginalized identities or those for whom you are already a strong ally, please submit suggestions to <https://forms.gle/E9eRqZlGqVagbDZ9> or email me directly at virqiniaq@smokyhillumc.org.



MISSION

Mission Team Newsletter, April 2024

Develop a new habit!

Our donations to Aurora Interfaith have been light over the last few months. We are encouraging the congregation to develop a new habit of buying one item each week when they go grocery shopping. If it is hard to remember, make it the same item every week. Write it on your grocery list. It can be any nonperishable item-cereal, soup, peanut butter, canned vegetables or fruit, pasta, rice, tuna, spaghetti-o's, any item that is on sale. It is your choice—just add it to your weekly list.

The steps to develop a new habit include:

1. Cue- (triggers your brain to initiate the behavior.) Write the item on your list.
2. Motivation- (the reason to act). To help those in need.
3. Respond- (Do the action) Buy the item and bring it to church.
4. Reward- (How it makes you feel) Knowing you helped someone you will never meet when they were trying to provide for their family.

It takes repetition to develop a new habit, so keep doing it every week until the habit develops. Thank you for helping us support Auora Interfaith and the work they do every day.

Book Collection Discontinued

The Mission Corner is being repurposed and we have removed the bookcases and books. We will no longer collect or sell books. Thanks for your faithful support over the years.



Eye Glass & Hearing Aid Collection

With the repurposing of the Mission Corner, the eyeglass collection basket and the hearing aid basket has been moved to outside of Celebration Hall. The basket is next to the container for the pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House.

Ride Ministry

We have a team of volunteers who are willing to drive people to church or doctor's appointments. If you need this kind of assistance, contact Lynne in the church office. She will coordinate a ride for you. Call (303)690-9816 M-F 8:30-4 or email churchsecretary@smokyhillumc.org

UMCOR Sunday Update

Thank you to everyone who donated on UMCOR Sunday. We received \$1,598 which will help cover the administrative costs. Because of UMCOR Sunday, 100% of donations for disaster relief go directly to the disaster. It is not too late to give, just indicate your donation is for UMCOR Sunday.



Thanks to the generosity of this church, the people of Firawa, Sierra Leone are well on their way to starting their agricultural business. They have purchased tools, fertilizer and seeds to grow cabbage, carrots, corn, peppers and much more. They are working with an Agro Business in the town of Makeni to purchase the supplies and learn how to start the business.

With YOUR help, 90 families in Firawa have been helped. This means independence in feeding their families, paying school fees, and pulling themselves out of the cycle of subsistence farming. At this time, over \$3500 has been collected to benefit these families. If you wish to help to contribute to future needs, please donate to SHUMC and add "For Sierra Leone" in the notation.

A heartfelt THANK YOU for your generosity for again helping them. You have been a blessing that they will not forget.

From Jana Jones on behalf of the Mission Team and the people of Firawa.



Coffee Time
 Let's connect with coffee & treats between services

If your last name begins with J, K, or L, please bring a snack to share on Sundays in April ~ Thank You!

Healthy Refreshment Ideas for Gathering Space on Sunday Mornings

Remember to consider those who are trying to maintain a healthy weight and also be a good example of healthy eating for our children! Also, provide sanitary (reduced handling) servings.

- Fruit bites on toothpicks or colorful fruit kabobs
- Veggie tray with bite size cherry tomatoes, baby carrots, etc.
- Bowl of nuts with a spoon for self-serving
- Small portion sweets such as donut holes or mini muffins, small cookies or bars, bite size wrapped candies

Smoky Hill UMC Abundant Health



APRIL 2024



Most drivers see others driving distracted on nearly every trip they take. We get angry when we see others driving distracted, yet many of us drive distracted. Reducing distracted driving and saving lives will require us to change the way we think about distracted driving.

Did you know:

- That a text takes 4 seconds and that moving at 55 mph we travel the length of a football field while completing that text?
- That the percentage of traffic fatalities caused by distracted driving is likely to be about 29%?
- That teens whose parents drive distracted are 2 to 4 times as likely to also drive distracted?

Traffic safety experts classify distractions into three main types: **Manual, Visual and Cognitive.**

- Manual distractions are those where you move your hands from the wheel.
- Visual distractions are those where you focus your eyes away from the road.
- A cognitive distraction is when your mind wanders away from the task of driving.

Texting involves *all three types* of distraction.

Learn more and find resources at EndDD.org – [End Distracted Driving](http://EndDistractedDriving.org) and some interesting PSA's at safestart.com

[Distracted Driving Awareness PSAs](#)



Recipe of the month:

Roasted Carrot and Beet Soup

Plant carrots and beets in the spring for fresh vegetable option later in the summer. Find vegetable options now at the grocery store to make this easy soup recipe.

<https://www.eatright.org/recipes/soups-and-stews/roasted-carrot-and-beet-soup-recipe>

Move that Body!

Why do we need strength and resistance exercise as we age? Strength and resistance training can play an important role in healthy aging. The aging process is often associated with a decline in muscle mass, strength and physical stamina. However, incorporating simple strength and resistance training exercises can help older adults maintain muscle mass, improve mobility and reduce certain health risks commonly associated with aging. Even if you didn't lift weights in your younger years, it's never too late to realize the benefits of starting a healthy routine. Read more at [Aging and strength](#)



Work out at home with these videos which incorporate resistance training:

- [20 min Senior Fitness Standing Weights](#)
- [Senior Fitness - Resistance Band Exercises Full Body](#) (seated exercise)
- [Whole-Body Resistance Band Workout \(Ages 50+\)](#) (standing exercise)
- **Zumba at Smoky Hill.** Christy Legleiter is leading Zumba classes on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-6:30 in either the celebration hall or the gathering space. Donations are accepted to help cover Christy's recertification costs (\$5 suggested)
- **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
- **Yoga at Smoky Hill.** Zachary Horan is leading us in yoga classes on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 1:45 in the Celebration Hall. Bring a mat if you have one. Donations of \$7-10 per session are appreciated.
- **Hiking Group:** Keep an eye out for future hikes as the weather improves by watching the weekly e-blast or our [Smoky Hill Abundant Health Facebook page](#) or contact Marta at 720-271-0691 with questions.
- **Join us on Facebook!** [Smoky Hill Abundant Health](#) This is the place to connect about hikes, bowling, kayaking, fishing, and new recipes.



Parking Lot Banners

Have you ever thought about the banners that decorate our parking lot light posts? Actually, they don't just magically appear! Over the past 13 plus years, we have benefitted from their beauty and welcoming presence due to the work of Donna Winters. Donna has been constructing and maintaining these heavy-weight flags as a generous contribution to our congregation. Maintaining them is a constant battle due to our winds and hail. While Donna has taken charge of the sewing, the job of hanging and removing them high above the ground has been handled by the very able duo of Kurt and Kurtis Harris.

Donna has decided to step back from this job now and we want to thank her for her years of quiet service. If you see her at church, please express your appreciation. If you have enjoyed our beautiful parking lot decor and have some sewing skills which you would be willing to share, please contact Susan Hora (636-236-6549, cusaglass@gmail.com) for more information.

THANK YOU DONNA!

Update from Staff Parish Relations Committee

Dear Smoky Hill UMC Congregation,

I wanted to share a quick update from Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPR). For those new to the United Methodist Faith, we are a committee formed based on the Book of Discipline ¶ 258.2. **The committee has two overarching – Personnel and Communication with a lens of being the bridge between the staff and clergy team and to the congregation.**

As part of our responsibilities, the SPR Committee has been actively engaged in various initiatives aimed at enhancing our church's ministries, supporting our staff, and addressing the needs of our congregation.

First and foremost, we want to express our deep appreciation for the hard work, dedication, and commitment of our staff members. Their unwavering service and tireless efforts have been instrumental in maintaining the spiritual vitality of our congregation and facilitating our ministries.

In line with our commitment to adapt and innovate in response to the evolving needs of our community, the SPR Committee has undertaken the initiative to enhance our digital outreach and engagement efforts. Recognizing the importance of embracing technology to further our ministry objectives, we are excited to announce that we are in the process of hiring a Digital Ministry Coordinator.

The Digital Ministry Coordinator will play a pivotal role in advancing our online presence, expanding our reach beyond the confines of physical gatherings, and fostering meaningful connections in the digital realm. This position will play a vital role in expanding our online presence, fostering community engagement, and furthering our mission of inclusivity and reconciliation within the United Methodist faith. This new addition to our team will work collaboratively with our existing staff members to develop innovative strategies, create compelling content, and cultivate a vibrant online community that reflects the values and mission of our congregation.

I also wanted to share who makes up the SPR Committee for this year:

Frank Moore – Chair
Debbie Sakagawa
Alisa Bishop
Debbie Kemper
Laura Dosch

John Richard
Len Newman
Tim Davis
Vicki Delgado Specht
Tom Dosch – Lay Leader

Email address will be below the signature line, please reach out with questions or comments related to staff positions and clergy.

Blessings,

Frank Moore

Chair, Staff Parish Relations Committee

Moore51682@gmail.co

Digital Ministry Job Opportunity

Smoky Hill United Methodist Church is hiring a Digital Ministry Coordinator. This position offers an opportunity to make a meaningful impact in the lives of our congregation members as well as the broader community through innovative digital ministry initiatives. If you are passionate about leveraging technology to foster spiritual growth, community engagement, and social change, we encourage you to apply. Send a resume and cover letter to churchsecretary@smokyhillumc.org

 [Job Description for Digital Ministry Coordinator.docx](#)

TRUSTEES

Trustee Clean Day!!!



Smashing
cans &
fixing the
trash
enclosure.

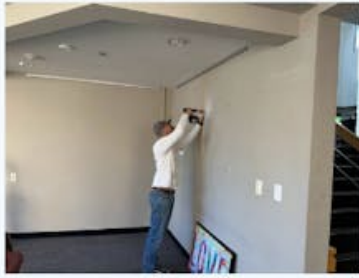


Cleaning
windows,
basement &
Sanctuary





How many people does it take to hang a picture straight?



The mission cove got an update.



Thank you to Fred for taking down all the bulletin boards and to youth for taking them downstairs.



Not pictured were cleaning the baseboards, vacuuming rooms, changing out lights, wiping tables, cleaning doors and so much more.

The Trustees want to thank all that came out and helped clean the Church. We got lots done.



Smoky Hill United Methodist Church
19491 E Smoky Hill Rd
Centennial, CO80015
303-690-9816
www.smokyhillumc.org

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

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