



Rocky Mountain Conference

United Church of Christ

1140 W. 5th Avenue

Denver, CO 80204

December 12, 2017

Dear Rocky Mountain Conference:

Last week, the Wheat Ridge, CO Police Department informed Wheat Ridge UCC (and two other Wheat Ridge congregations) that Westboro Baptist Church plans to picket the churches during worship this Sunday, December 17. Wheat Ridge Police will be onsite to keep the peace, and Rev. Sue Artt will join Wheat Ridge UCC's congregation to offer support from the Conference.

The protesters' goal is simple: They mean to pull our attention away from what truly matters by promoting incendiary messages that are quite antithetical to the UCC's. This Sunday, however, our Conference's attention will be fully focused on the loving community of Wheat Ridge UCC, and the beautiful cantata service they have planned.

Messages of hate only thrive when we feed them; even by counter-protesting, we give energy to these hateful messages, helping them grow. Many in the RMC have expressed interest in attending the service in a show of solidarity, and while the people of Wheat Ridge UCC are grateful for this gesture, they are concerned that this may complicate parking and traffic. Instead, they ask that you worship in your home congregation, and include their church in your prayers.

In fact, if your congregation does lift up prayers for Wheat Ridge UCC this Sunday, please email Rev. Claudia Schmitt at wheatridgeucc@gmail.com and let her know! During worship on Sunday, she and David will share the good news of your church's prayers with their congregation.

With our response of peace and prayer, we will affirm that there is only room for messages of love at Wheat Ridge UCC and in the RMC.

Love and Peace,

Your Rocky Mountain Conference

— with Rev. Claudia Schmitt and Rev. David Conner of Wheat Ridge UCC