

Rev. Dr. Douglas Wooten
Interim Conference Minister

From a Pastor Heart

The words that I share are words from my heart
The countless hours you spend to share and impart
Thank you for being that counselor and friend
That is always there to listen and mend
Your work has not gone unnoticed for many can see
How you have struggled just to be
Just keep the faith that God has granted
Because it is what God has planted
Just know that you have been called
To be of service for all

Happy Pastor Appreciation Month

Rev. Dr. Douglas Wooten

Conference Wide Committee on Ministry Updates

Deep gratitude to Creede Congregational Church and to everyone who participated in the Ecclesiastical Council for Jesse Ophoff. It was a wonderfully rich and Spirit-filled evening with a unanimous approval for his ordination pending Call. Congratulations Jesse and we look forward to learning where the Spirit calls you into next ministry.

The Supportive Oversight Subcommittee is continually looking across the UCC for opportunities related to Healthy Boundary Training and anti-racism/cultural competency/racial justice trainings. Below are some upcoming classes:

Healthy Boundaries 101: Fundamentals

November 3, 2023, 1:45 – 5:15 pm ET (Part 1) AND November 4, 2023, 8:45 am – 12:15 pm ET (Part 2)

Both sessions required.

Register by October 25, 2023

An introductory workshop in healthy boundaries with an emphasis on power and vulnerability and including discussions on transference, friendships, dating, and self-care. This is the foundational Healthy Boundaries workshop which is a prerequisite to either Healthy Boundaries 201 or Healthy Boundaries 301. Register and pay for this workshop [HERE](#). The Fee is \$75. All on Zoom

Boundary Awareness Training: Through the Lens of Clergy Wellness

Good professional boundaries allow ministry and those who do it to thrive with health and wholeness. Through the lens of clergy wellness, authorized ministers will renew their understanding of and develop skills for maintaining boundaries in an ever-shifting ministry landscape. For more information click [HERE](#).

[November 13, 2023, 9:30 am-2:30 pm](#) or [January 9 & 10, 2024, 6:30 pm- 8:30 pm](#) (both sessions must be attended)

The cost for the training is: SNEUCC Clergy - \$65.00; all other Clergy - \$85.00.

If you have questions regarding the training please contact Deb Holmes at holmesd@sneucc.org or 508-244-4399.

Boundary Training with Diane Weible

Registration is still open for upcoming Boundary Training sessions on November 7 & 8, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. each day (Pacific Time). Cost is \$60 per person. [More information](#). [Register](#).

Racial Justice Training Sessions with Diane Weible

Two additional Sessions have been scheduled for:

October 18 and 19, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. each day (Pacific Time)

November 14 and 15, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. each day (Pacific Time).

[More information](#). Cost is \$60 per person. [Register](#). Questions? Email [Rev. Dr. Weible](#).

RMC Board Update



Last week's news that Rev. Erin Gilmore is stepping down as ACM kind of distracted me from reporting on the RMC Board retreat the week before. The more I think about it, however, the more her announcement and the conversations at the Board retreat all dovetail together.

During our retreat, we had to acknowledge that patriarchy, racism, and misogyny are alive and well in the UCC and we've been paying the price for them in the Rocky Mountain Conference. Coercion and control – of outcomes, narratives, and people – are signs of these forces (to which our Interim Conference Minister, Rev. Dr.

Doug Wooten, Erin, and all of us can attest). To counter these forces, we intend to de-center decision-making and view staff and board positions in terms of mutual accountability/power *with*, rather than coercive power *over*.

For instance, at our retreat's last meeting, we suspended Roberts Rules of Order to allow broad discussion and decision-making by consensus. We expect that to be our first order of business at most of our meetings going forward. On a bigger scale, we're looking for ways to support cooperative ministry across the Conference, especially as we position ourselves for our future together.

Erin's decision to step down as ACM and decline a job offer elsewhere opened space for us to start this work. Rather than a couple weeks to plan, we now have a number of months (TBD) to imagine together what collaborative leadership might look like. Erin and Doug reported on the progress of their conversations at this week's special Board meeting. Board and Personnel representatives will meet with each of them in coming days to develop concrete proposals for structuring Conference leadership for the next part of this interim period. We hope to have staffing plans approved by the Board and in place within a couple weeks and will report back to the Conference as soon as we know more.

Meanwhile, we are scheduled to provide Board updates and hear feedback from each Association, as follows: Oct. 8 – MDA; Oct. 14 – WA; Oct. 21 – SEA; Oct. 23 – PVA; Oct. 24 – IMA. (We will also hold Conference-wide Q & A sessions focused on this year's proposed budget ahead of November's special Conference meeting, so watch for those opportunities, as well.)

In the meantime, thank you so much for your prayers and please know that your input is always welcome.

Your partner in ministry,

Sarah

Rev. Dr. Sarah B. Linn, RMC Board Moderator

sblinn@live.com

Mark Your Calendar – RMC Special Meeting: Tuesday, November 28

The Rocky Mountain Conference is holding a special meeting for all Conference members by Zoom on November 28, 2023, at 6:30pm. We'll send the official notice 30 days in advance with the full agenda, etc. But we plan to discuss two items for sure:

As directed at the Annual Conference in June, the Board will propose for Conference approval an Annual Budget for the 2023-24 Fiscal Year, and we will discuss and approve next steps in response to the two-year experimental Conference-Wide Committee on Ministry.

The 2023 Colorado Legislative Session and Gun Violence Prevention Bills: What's Next?

Speaker : Eileen McCarron, President, Colorado Ceasefire Legislative Action

Sponsored by : Lakewood United Church of Christ and Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence

Time and Date: Sunday, October 22, 2023, 11:30 am



The 2023 Colorado Legislative Session resulted in six gun violence prevention bills signed by Governor Jared Polis at the close of the session. Come listen to Colorado Ceasefire Legislative Action President provide an overview of the laws and the challenges ahead for people of faith.

Colorado Ceasefire is the longest serving statewide, grassroots gun violence prevention organization in the State of Colorado. We are parents, teachers, students, community members, gun violence survivors and more who have been working for over twenty years to prevent and reduce gun violence in Colorado through education, outreach and legislative advocacy. Our efforts are making a difference.



Colorado Faith Communities
United to End Gun Violence

Lakewood UCC is a member church of Colorado FAith Communities United to End Gun Violence (CFCU) Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence (CFCU) is the only faith-based organization in Colorado dedicated to ending gun violence.

Previous versions of the Together Newsletter can be found [here](#).