

Community of Christ

ROCKY MOUNTAIN USA MISSION CENTER

Re: 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Mission:

The primary purpose of the Rocky Mountain Mission Center is to support member congregations in mission. Without the pursuit of mission there is no purpose for the church to exist. Congregations and mission centers would have no reason for being as well. Everything the Rocky Mountain Mission Center does must focus on mission. So, what is mission and what does it mean to be engaged in mission? First, we must recognize that the mission we are referring to is God's mission, which is the church's mission as well. God's mission to the world is about the reconciliation and healing of creation. We see in the life of Jesus, God's revelation of the nature of God and of God's mission. We also catch sight of our call as disciples of the Lord Jesus in that very same life. As disciples of Jesus Christ and as gathered sacred community we are called to live out our discipleship focusing on the fulfillment of God's mission in the world. If we are involved in purposes or activities which do not focus on mission then we are missing our sacred call in Jesus Christ.

Supporting Mission through Congregational Ministries:

Over the past year several congregations have been engaged in community outreach. Listed below are some of the congregations engaged in these mission oriented activities.

The **Aurora**, Colorado congregation offered the community its annual celebration with fun, food and music. The surrounding community was invited.

Brighton, Colorado congregation offered its annual Vacation Bible School to the community. The event begins with a carnival for the community.

Cheyenne, Wyoming congregation was part of a community block party. The congregation made their new playground available and hosted activities for the community on site.

The **Franktown, Colorado fire station** group continues to reach out to the community through emergency preparedness activities. The CERT program is one of these community service programs. It is also hosted in conjunction with the Greenwood Village congregation. The group meets regularly for worship and Christian education.

The **Fort Collins**, Colorado congregation partnered with a local Fort Collins service organization to provide a day shelter for homeless people through out the winter months.

Greenwood Village Colorado congregation provides a country fair for the community during the summer and also is host to several classes such as CERT training.

Longmont, Colorado congregation continues ministry to the community through its over a decade long homework club and several members also support the English as a Second Language program in the community.

Grand Junction, Colorado offered its building as a homeless shelter on a rotating basis with other churches and community service organizations.

The **Seibert**, Colorado congregation serves as a community church in Seibert. There are many non-member participants including children. It is a vibrant community.

Supporting Mission through Discernment:

Discovering God's guidance for ourselves and congregations is the primary way in which congregation direction and focus occurs. Mission center staff working with specific congregations, as part of the new ministerial staff re-alignment, are using discernment processes in which the congregation may discover God's guidance for them. This discovery through discernment results in the formation of congregational specific mission in alignment with God's mission. The process of discernment is continually being lifted up to all congregations.

Supporting Mission through Fellowship and Worship:

Fellowship and worship, the coming together of the body of Christ, for the purpose of being together and worshipping God, is available in every congregation in the mission center on a weekly basis. In addition, the mission center is responsible for providing other fellowship and worship opportunities. These opportunities are in the form of 3 reunions, 2 women's retreats, 1 men's retreat, the mission center conference and various other events offered at various times. The three reunions are Big Spruce Reunion, Camp Paradise Reunion and the Rockies Family Camp.

50 attended the Big Spruce Reunion

44 attended the Camp Paradise Reunion

70 attended the Rockies Family Camp

35 attended the Big Spruce Women's Retreat

30 attended the Camp Paradise Women's Retreat

12 attended the Camp Paradise Men's Retreat

35 attended the Bishop, Evangelist, High Priest, Seventy Gathering

The Rocky Mountain Mission Center Conference is the largest gathering in the mission center. It is held the first weekend of November. In 2009, approximately 252 persons attended, 60 of which were youth, the largest number of youth to attend a mission center conference since the Rocky Mountain Mission Center began.

Supporting Mission through Youth and Young Adult Ministries:

From November 2009 to November 2010 there have been numerous opportunities for youth and young adults to learn, fellowship and provide service, all in support of mission. The Rocky Mountain Mission Center believes that a key part of living out mission is to bring ministry and opportunity for youth and young adults to be engaged in ministry and mission. The mission center provided the following ministry opportunities

Sr. High Street Retreat 17 attended
India Jr./Jr. High Retreat 21 attended.
Young Adult Retreat 50 attended
Jr. Camp, Big Spruce 4 attended
Jr./Sr. High Camp Big Spruce 6 attended
Jr. Camp, Camp Paradise 8 attended
Jr. High Camp, Camp Paradise 10 attended
Spectacular 17 attended
Intergenerational Hunger Challenge 45 children, youth, young adults & adults attended
Youth Peace Colloquy Retreat 11 attended

Supporting Mission through Generously Sharing:

Without a doubt, mission would be seriously hampered without the generosity of the members and friends of the Rocky Mountain Mission Center. Through many hours of service and the generous sharing of financial resources the church has been blessed. In the twelve month period ending June 30, 2010 the Rocky Mountain mission center gave the following to various funds in the Community of Christ:

\$282,000 (36%) to World Ministry Mission Tithes
\$57,000 (7%) to Oblation
\$21,000 (3%) to World Hunger
\$430,000 (54%) to Congregation Ministry Mission Tithes

In addition to these amounts, **\$52,110** was given by congregations in support of the Rocky Mountain Mission Center 2010 budget. Funds in the amount of **\$4165** were contributed to reunions and family camp. Camperships in unknown amounts were given in support of sending youth to summer camp and Spectacular. Also, congregations supported youth in attending the various retreats such as the Peace Colloquy Youth Retreat, Denver Street Retreat and Hunger Challenge. Congregations and individuals have given **\$67,000** to the Big Spruce Campground Caretaker housing project and **\$3170** to the Camp Paradise Dishwasher Replacement project. Congregations give funds to local community projects and services as well as Outreach International and a host of other projects and ministries. For all of this generosity, thank you, from a thankful community.

Supporting Mission through Education and Leadership Development:

There are many opportunities to engage in Christian education and discipleship formation throughout the Rocky Mountain Mission Center. Most congregations in the mission center offer Christian education classes to various age groups weekly. Classes are offered on various topics. For example, classes have been offered on the New Testament, focusing on the Letters of Paul and the Gospels, Enduring Principles, the Book of Mormon, and a variety of other topics centering on understanding God's call and movement in human life.

The mission center offers an in depth theologically rigorous program known as SITE, Seminars In Theological Education. SITE classes are offered 3 times a year over a weekend format. "The mission of SITE is to educate and prepare—through prayerful scholarship, teaching, service, and mentoring—faithful, creative, and discerning leaders for ministries in congregations, the church and the world. SITE will prepare ministers to effectively serve the cause of God's reign (Zion,

the peaceable kingdom), where peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit embrace all.” Currently, there is space for more students in the SITE program.

TEAM, Training Education And Ministry classes became a reality in 2010. TEAM classes are condensed training, ministry and information sharing opportunities offered in various geographic areas throughout the mission center focusing on congregational leaders and potential leaders. TEAM is part of the Rocky Mountain Mission Center Staff Re-Alignment in Effective Mission Support. In 2010, the TEAM classes focused on “A Disciples’ Generous Response.” The class was offered at all three reunions and one congregational setting. Approximately 50 persons participated in these offerings. Next year TEAM will be expanded to 2 congregational settings in addition to the reunion offerings. The class will be offered in Delta, Colorado and Cheyenne, Wyoming. Congregations in areas near these hosting congregations are encouraged to attend.

Supporting Mission through Full/Part-Time and Volunteer Staff:

Volunteer staff is vital to the support of the mission in the Rocky Mountain Mission Center. The following persons currently serve the mission center in very important roles:

Jean Holloway, Youth Worker Registration Coordinator

Jon Mendenhal, Webmaster

Annetta Vickery, Mission Center Recorder

Don Woster, Guest Ministry Coordinator

The budget supports 2 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Field Specialist positions and a part-time youth camping coordinator. The World Church provides funding for 1 Appointee position. The North Valley congregation is providing funding for a part-time paid pastor. This position is being shared with the mission center. The ministerial staff members for 2011 are:

Tim Ashburn	Appointee, President and Financial Officer
DeziRae Astle	Field Specialist, Mission Coordinator, Youth Ministry Support
Melanie Grimes	Youth Camping Coordinator
Jerry Lewis	Field Specialist (part-time), Mission Developer
Shandra Newcom	Field Specialist (part-time), Mission Developer, (part-time), Pastor, North Valley, SITE Coordinator,

In addition to the ministerial staff, the mission center employs a part-time administrative assistant (Amberly Ivaska) and a part-time bookkeeper (Phyllis Modica). Amberly Ivaska started with the Rocky Mountain Mission Center in April 2010. Amberly brings professional and technical skill to her role as the administrative assistant. Amberly also serves as the annual Rocky Mountain Mission Center Conference Manager.

Supporting Mission through the Wise Use of Resources:

Our mission center is blessed with the financial resource of our *Expansion Fund*. The method used to calculate funds available to supplement the annual mission center budget is 6% of the last

five year average balance, as of June 30 of each year. The five year average balance used to calculate the 2011 proposed budget income from the Expansion Fund is \$2.24 million. The balance of the *Expansion Fund* as of June 30, 2010 was **\$1.85 million**. The proposed 2011 Budget is \$217,000; income of \$134,400 comes from the Expansion Fund, \$51,685 from congregational support, \$27,915 from operating reserves and \$3,000 from congregational grant reserves. 75% of the 2011 proposed budget directly supports mission through program ministries and ministerial staff. 25% indirectly sustains mission through administrative assistance.

Even though the downturn in the economy has diminished the total amount of investment fund balances and their capacity to fund the annual mission center budget, careful monitoring of the annual budget and the use of reserves have kept the mission center from experiencing severe cuts. In 2009, the mission center ended the fiscal year in the black with a net income of \$3,302.08. No reserves were used even though they were budgeted. The 2010 budget is expected to come in under the projected expenditures as well. Some of these decreases in projected expenditures were due to the unfilled part-time administrative assistant position from November 2009 through March of 2010.

Supporting Mission through Communication:

Communication is vitally important to the pursuit of mission. Currently, the mission center produces a monthly bulletin insert, a weekly email update, which anyone can receive directly to their home computer, and a website that is continually updated with new information from the mission center, congregations and International Headquarters. Even with these communication tools, effective communication depends largely on the leadership of the local congregation.

Mission Center Statistics:

The statistical data for the mission center has not significantly changed in the past year. We have 30 congregations located in Colorado (20), Wyoming (4), Nebraska (4), Kansas (1) and New Mexico (1). We have about **2200 members** enrolled in congregations, another 650 people listed as friends in our database (MIS), another 550 members listed as non-resident (not a member of a specific congregation) and 1100 people in the general membership category. On an average week, about 700 people attend worship services in our congregations. Over half the congregations have a weekly worship attendance of less than 25 people. For the twelve-month period ending June 30, 2010, the mission center recorded 15 baptisms (less than 1% of congregational membership).

Hopes for 2011:

Focusing on mission is the key to our success in making the “Peaceable Kingdom” a reality in the lives of people and in our communities. Continuing in the same way we have always been the church will not bring us out of the decline being witnessed and experienced throughout most of Christianity. Neither will change for the sake of change. Focusing on mission is about being attentive to what God is already doing in the world and prayerfully engaging with the ministry, gifts and talents that have been so generously given to us.

In 2011 we will be faced with changes in the church. New baptismal policies will go into effect, Priesthood faithfulness will begin to appear, new Discipleship Formation information and

resources will be available and the US Conference will become closer. Our focus on mission during this time remains the priority. Learning more about being faithful priesthood members, sharing new disciple formation resources and preparing through prayer, discernment, and discussion on the difficult questions coming before the US Conference all are important to mission. It will be easy to simply allow the “new” of the church to pass us by, we can easily skip over it, run around it or ignore it, but that would not be the calling nor the behavior of a prophetic people. As a community of faith we have been called by God and our leaders to participate in the decision making process, to engage the tough questions, to learn about each other and this mysterious God that we follow. All of this is about mission, God’s mission, to bring reconciliation and healing to a hurting, broken world.

My hope is that we will not shy away from where God is calling us to go, in fulfilling God’s mission. My hope is that as we engage in discernment for our congregations, for the broader church, and for our own ministry that we might expect the power of the Holy Spirit to be real and with us. I know as we step out in 2011 we have the potential to become more mission focused, more in alignment with God, more steady and resolved about what we are called to and how to make a difference in the world. May we dare to ask the question: “What are you calling us to oh God?” My hope is that we will be open to wherever the Spirit leads and that we will be courageous enough to follow.

I am excited about 2011; it holds the promise of another clean slate, in which God can write on our hearts again, anew, our purpose, our hope and our calling in the Rocky Mountain Mission Center. May we go together as companions on the journey, each one supporting the other. Amen

In the peace of Jesus Christ,
Tim Ashburn
President/ Financial Officer
Rocky Mountain Mission Center