

# ***The Church in the Wildwood***

*An Open & Affirming Community Church  
in the United Church of Christ*

**July 27, 2025  
Cowboy Sunday!**



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Cowboy\_at\_Prayer,\_near\_Clayton,\_NM\_IMG\_4952.JPG.

P.O. Box 26 • 10585 Ute Pass Ave |Green Mountain Falls, CO 80819  
Rev. Darlene Avery, Pastor | Teresa A. Allen, Director of Music  
[www.wildwooducc.org](http://www.wildwooducc.org) | 719-684-9427

*Wherever you are on life's journey,  
if you come in peace, you are welcome here.*

# July 27, 2025: Cowboy Sunday Order of Worship

*A triangle [▲] indicates times when the congregation is invited to stand as able.*

**Call to Worship**

Wildwood Church Bell

**Prelude:**

Organ: Teresa Allen

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♪♪ **The Old Rugged Cross** ♪♪  
by Dale Wood

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**Welcome**

Rev. Darlene Avery

Welcome to Church in the Wildwood,  
where the mountains bring peace to the people.

We're mighty glad you rode in today—  
whether you're a regular hand or just passin' through.  
Welcome to where the wind still carries old hymns,  
and where God's grace runs deeper than Catamount Reservoir and Fountain Creek.

Maybe you come with a heart full of joy.  
Maybe you're carryin' a burden that's heavy as a rain-soaked saddle.  
Either way, you don't have to clean up or shape up to belong—  
just show up, and let the Spirit meet you here.

No matter who you are,  
and where you are on life's journey,  
if you come in peace, seeking peace—  
you are welcome here.

**▲ Opening Hymn:**

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♪♪ **Sweet Hour of Prayer** ♪♪  
Singing Church Hymnal #444  
Public Domain

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## Prayer of Praise & Confession

Dar: Lord God, Maker of mountains and menders of hearts,  
we gather here like trailhands at a campfire—  
lookin' for warmth, wisdom, and a word from You."  
You're our Father— not just up yonder in heaven, but right here on earth:  
in the wind, the mountains, and the burble of the creek water.

**All: Your name's holy, and we aim to honor it—  
even if we get turned around sometimes.**

Jeff: Let Your kingdom come, Lord— not just in some sweet by and by,  
but right here in our homes, in our families, and in our neighborin'.

**All: Let Your way be done, whether we're under chapel rafters  
or a wide open sky.**

Dar: Give us this day our daily bread—and for some of us, Lord,  
that means just enough strength to get through another sunrise.

**All: We know You provide— even if it comes in ways we don't expect,  
manna or mercy, or a kind word from a stranger.**

Jeff: Forgive us, Lord, for the wrongs we've done and the rights we've left undone.  
We've missed the mark. We've judged when we shoulda loved.  
We've held grudges like rusted-out tools.

**All: Help us loosen our grip and forgive others too,  
so we can all ride a little lighter, together.**

Jeff: Lord, lead us not into temptation—  
Lord, You know the wilderness we walk through,  
and the tricks and traps the enemy sets.

**All: Keep our eyes open, our hearts soft,  
and our hands gentle but sure on the reins.  
Deliver us from evil— in our world, in our country,  
in our history, and in ourselves.**

Dar: We reckon there's a lot that needs healing, Lord.  
So help us walk with justice, mercy, and a humble spirit, even in these boots.

**All: For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory—  
now and forever. Amen.**

## Passing Christ's Peace

**Reflection Scripture  
Reflection**

Luke 11: 1-13

Jeff Chapman  
Pastor Darlene

**▲ Song of Response**

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♪♪ **Amazing Grace** ♪♪  
Singing Church Hymnal #278  
Public Domain

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**Prayer Scripture**

Jeff Chapman

**Prayers of Joy & Concern - Prayer Journal**

**JOYS:**

- Gratitude and joy for Bronc Day festivities and for Friends of Ute Pass Trails for putting on the pancake breakfast and donating the proceeds to the Wildwood Food Pantry

**CONCERNS:**

- Doreen could not attend worship today, sore throat needs to be better by Tues to go to Cheyenne
- Prayers for friends of members who are seriously ill.

## PASTORAL PRAYER

Lord God,  
You hear the prayers we speak out loud,  
and the ones we hold quiet in the corners of our hearts.

So we come to You now,  
like folks around a campfire at the end of a long ride,  
with a mix of **thanks, weariness, and hope**.

We lift up the ones among us who are carryin' heavy loads—  
grief that won't let go,  
bodies that won't heal,  
loved ones lost or wanderin'.

We pray for the church—  
that it might be a place of welcome,  
a voice of grace,  
and a steady light when things get stormy.

We pray for our nation—  
for leaders with wisdom,  
for neighbors with kindness,  
and for hearts humble enough to listen and learn.

And we pray for the wide world—  
for places torn by war,  
for folks starvin' for bread and for justice,  
and for Your peace to come on earth as it is in heaven.

Lord, help us be part of the answer to the prayers we pray—  
with our hands, our words, and our lives.  
In the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray and walk in love,  
**Amen.**

**Offertory**

Chancel Choir

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♪♪ **Home by Another Road** ♪♪  
By Mark A. Miller and Lindy Thompson

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**▲ Offering Response:**

**Doxology**

## Offering Dedication Prayer

Jeff Chapman

*Church in the Wildwood exists on direct donations to this congregation. You can help support our ministries, missions, and community support by cash, check, or electronically with your smartphone at [wildwooducc.org/donate](http://wildwooducc.org/donate). If you wish, there are donation envelopes in the pew in front of you. Donations are tax-deductible if you include your name and address with your donation.*

## Announcements

Pastor Darlene

- All are invited to Tatter Hall after worship for the Cowboy Sunday Chuck Wagon potluck.
- Spread the word: CWW will hold a Blessing of the Animals service Sunday August 31 in the church courtyard. Bring all God's creatures great and small!

## ▲ Sending Hymn

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### ♪♪ How Great Thou Art ♪♪

Singing Church Hymnal #1  
Public Domain

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## Blessing/Benediction

Pastor Darlene

Go now, friends,  
with the dust of the trail behind you  
and the promise of God's grace ahead.

May the Lord ride beside you in every hard season,  
guide your steps through the dry and weary places,  
and fill your cup with daily bread and mercy.

May you forgive like folks who've been forgiven,  
love like folks who know they're loved,  
and walk humbly, even in high boots.

And may the kingdom, the power, and the glory  
be not just the end of our prayer—  
but the way we live,  
this day and every day. Amen.

## Postlude:

Organ: Teresa Allen

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### ♪♪ Blessed Assurance ♪♪

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## **REFLECTION SCRIPTURE: Luke 11: 1-8**

**11** He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.”

**2** So he said to them, “When you pray, say:  
Father,<sup>[a]</sup> may your name be revered as holy.

May your kingdom come.<sup>[b]</sup>

**3** Give us each day our daily bread.<sup>[c]</sup>

**4** And forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.  
And do not bring us to the time of trial.”<sup>[d]</sup>

## **PRAYER SCRIPTURE: Psalm 116: 12-19**

What shall I return to the LORD  
for all his bounty to me?

**13** I will lift up the cup of salvation  
and call on the name of the LORD;

**14** I will pay my vows to the LORD  
in the presence of all his people.

**15** Precious in the sight of the LORD  
is the death of his faithful ones.

**16** O LORD, I am your servant;  
I am your servant, the child of your serving girl.  
You have loosed my bonds.

**17** I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice  
and call on the name of the LORD.

**18** I will pay my vows to the LORD  
in the presence of all his people,

**19** in the courts of the house of the LORD,  
in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

## OFFERING PRAYER

Lord God,  
You've given us more than we deserve—  
sunlight on the hills, water for the land,  
a roof overhead, and folks to walk beside.

We didn't earn the rain or the harvest,  
didn't craft the breath in our lungs.  
It all comes from You.  
So now we give back a portion of what You gave first—  
not to buy Your favor, but to say thank You.

Take these gifts, Lord—  
and use 'em to sow love where there's hurt,  
mercy where there's meanness,  
and hope where the land's gone dry.  
Help us be part of Your abundance—  
not just for ourselves, but for all Your critters,  
all Your people, and all Your Creation.

Make these gifts stretch,  
multiply like loaves and fishes,  
and may they bless folks we may never meet  
but whom You know by name.  
In Jesus' name we pray,  
with grateful hearts and open hands.  
Amen.



## REFLECTION

**Y'all know what the most well-known Christian hymn in the world is?**

(Wait for answers...)

That's right—"Amazing Grace."

**And the Lord's Prayer—well, I reckon that's the most well-known** Christian prayer.

We all know that one, right?

"Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our..." — **whoa now!**

How many of y'all ever hesitated when visitin' a new church,  
and you got to **that line?**

"Forgive us our... debts? Sins? Trespasses?"

**(Invite folks to raise hands for each.)**

Right there in the middle of the prayer,  
we start wonderin' which version we're ridin' with!

But once we sort that out, we all get rollin' again...

Until we bump into the next fork in the road:

"And lead us not into..."

**Temptation?**

**Time of trial?**

**Testing?**

(Raise them hands again!)

**And then, maybe the biggest divide of all—how we end it.**

Some folks close out right there:

"But deliver us from evil. Amen."

Others keep goin': "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory..."

Some say *forever*, some say *now and forever*,  
and some just say Amen real sure and let it be.

**And you might be askin'—what in tarnation is all that about?**

Well, that ending—"kingdom, power, and glory"—

That ain't in the oldest Bible manuscripts at all.

It sounds a whole lot like praise to God from the Old Testament—  
Chronicles, Daniel and such.

It showed up in Christian writin' later,  
'round a hundred years after Jesus,

in them old **Byzantine Greek** copies.

**Then good ol' King James took a likin' to it,**

tacked it on in the English version most of us grew up hearin'—  
and there you have it.

**Now all them different words**—debts, sins, trespasses...

**Temptation, trial, testin'...**

**It all comes down to one thing:** translation.

Hate to break it to y'all, but Jesus didn't speak English.

He didn't even use Hebrew most days—He spoke **Aramaic**,

Like most folks in Galilee back then.

But there was also Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Syriac, and more floatin' around.

**And if you've ever tried to explain somethin' to someone**

**whose first language ain't your own,**

**you know this:**

**some things just don't translate clean.**

Words can be slippery.

They don't always line up one-for-one.

Take the word "**love**."

In English, we say love for everything—

*"I love my grandma, I love tacos, I love Jesus,*

*I sure love that heartbreakingly handsome one...."*

Well... that can get mighty confusing, can't it?

But Greek? Greek's got different words for it:

- *Philia* – brotherly love
- *Eros* – romantic love
- *Agape* – that deep, faithful, God-sized love

Same thing goes for the Lord's Prayer.

In Luke, the word lines up best with **sins**.

In Matthew, it's **debts**—but then Jesus keeps talkin'

and uses a word closer to **trespasses**.

And that other one—"peirasmos"—

It can mean temptation, a test, a trial, even an experiment of sorts.

Now, we could argue ourselves into the dirt  
about which word is “right”  
‘till the cows come home.  
And Lord knows, the church has done just that before.  
Y’all remember when I talked about that phrase  
“not one iota of difference”?  
Yeah—that one Greek letter caused a shameful early church fight  
that lasted over a hundred years.  
And Jesus wept.

But do you think that’s what the Lord wanted us hangin’ our hats on?  
I don’t reckon so.  
What matters is this:

**What’s the heart of this prayer?**

What was Jesus really tryin’ to teach His followers—then and now?  
How about:

- **Trustin’ in God’s daily provision.**
- **Livin’ in grace and forgiveness—both givin’ and receivin’ it.**
- **Seekin’ God’s guidance and protection** in the mess and dust of life.

All that?

Not just in some sweet by-and-by,  
but right here, on earth, in these boots and these lives,  
as it is in heaven.

**So maybe the debt folks and the trespassers really *should* be friends.**

 Oh the debt folks and trespassers should be friends....

Oh the debt folks and trespassers should be friends.... 

And maybe, when we pray, God hears not the word—  
but the heart behind it.”

**No matter what words we use,  
we’re all prayin’ for the same thing:**

**That God’s grace would shape us, guide us, and hold us—**

from the ranchlands to the cities,  
from America the Beautiful  
to the war torn wastes of Palestine and Sudan,  
From the back alleys of Brazil.  
to the rice fields of Vietnam,  
from now ‘til forever. Amen.