

The Anointing

BETHANY REFORMED CHURCH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2022

Sigmund Wollman's Reality Test

It was summer of 1959. At a resort-inn in the Sierra Nevada of Northern California, I had a job that combined being the night desk clerk in the lodge and helping with the horse-wrangling at the stables. The owner-manager was Swiss, with European notions about conditions of employment. He and I did not get along. I thought he was a fascist who wanted peasant employees who knew their place. I was 22, just out of college, and pretty free with my opinions.

One week the employees had been served the same thing for lunch every single day. Two wieners, a mound of sauerkraut and stale rolls. To compound insult with injury, the cost of the meals was deducted from our paychecks. I was outraged.

On Friday night of that awful week, I was at my desk job around 11p.m., and the night auditor had just come on duty. I went into the kitchen and saw a note to the chef to the effect that wieners and sauerkraut were on the employee menu for two more days.

That tore it. For lack of any better audience, I unloaded on the night auditor, Sigmund Wollman.

Bethany Reformed Church
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Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

8:30a.m.-5:30p.m.

Friday 8:30a.m.-12:30p.m.

Worship Service

Sundays at 9:30a.m.

Koffee with Kevin

The first and third Wednesday of every month from 10:00-11:30a.m.

Staff

Kevin Schneider, Pastor

Jill Devitt, Office Administrator

Mary Tegarden, Custodian

Maddy Schneider, Youth/Worship

I declared that I had had it up to here, that I was going to get a plate of wieners and sauerkraut and wake the owner and throw it at him. Nobody was going to make me eat wieners and sauerkraut for a whole week and make me pay for it and this was un-American, and I didn't like wieners and sauerkraut enough to eat them one day for God's sake and the whole hotel stunk and I was packing my bags and heading for Montana where they never heard of wieners and sauerkraut and wouldn't feed that stuff to pigs. Something like that.

I raved on in this way for 20 minutes. My monologue was delivered at the top of my lungs, punctuated by blows on the front desk with a fly swatter, the kicking of chairs and much profanity.

As I pitched my fit, Sigmund Wollman sat quietly on his stool, watching me with sorrowful eyes. Put a bloodhound in a suit and tie and you have Sigmund Wollman. He had good reason to look sorrowful. Survivor of Auschwitz. Three years. German Jew. Thin, coughed a lot. He liked being alone at the night job. It gave him intellectual space, peace and quiet, and even more, he could go into the kitchen and have a snack whenever he wanted to – all the wieners and sauerkraut he wished. To him, a feast. More than that, there was nobody around to tell him what to do. In Auschwitz he had dreamed of such a time. The only person he saw at work was me, the nightly disturber of his dream. Our shifts overlapped an hour. And here I was, a one-man war party at full cry.

“Lissen, Fulchum. Lissen me, lissen me. You know what's wrong with you? It's not wieners and kraut and it's not the boss and it's not the chef and it's not this job.”

“So, what's wrong with me?”

“Fulchum, you think you know everything, but you don't know the difference between an inconvenience and a problem. If you break your neck, if you have nothing to eat, if your house is on fire – then you got a problem. Everything else is inconvenience. Life *is* inconvenient. Life *is* lumpy.

“Learn to separate the inconvenience from the real problems. You will live longer. And will not annoy people like me so much. Good night.”

In a gesture combining dismissal and blessing, he waved me off to bed.

Seldom in my life have I been hit between the eyes so hard with truth. There in that late-night darkness of a Sierra Nevada inn, Sigmund Wollman simultaneously kicked my butt and opened a window in my mind.

For 30 years now, in times of stress and strain, when something has me backed against the wall and I'm ready to do something really stupid with my anger, a sorrowful face appears in my mind and asks, “Fulchum. Problem or inconvenience?”

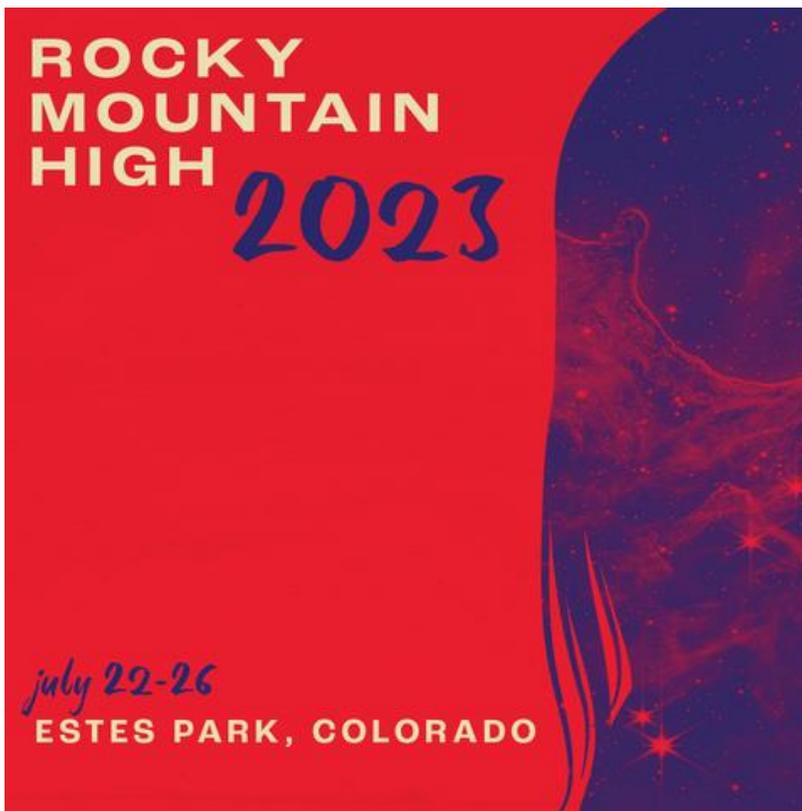
I think of this as the Wollman Test of Reality. Life is lumpy. And a lump in the oatmeal, a lump in the throat, and a lump in the breast are not the same lump. One should learn the difference. Good night, Sig.

Condensed from “UH-OH” by Robert Fulghum

<p>A special Thanksgiving offering was taken on Sunday, November 20. The donations went to:</p> <p>Hamlin Reformed Church \$5000 Inspiration Hills \$1000 Kingdom Boundaries \$1000 Living Stone Prison Ministries \$1000 Biruk's Egg Project \$1000 Freedom's Gate \$600 Hope Haven \$500 Love INC \$450 Union Gospel Mission \$250 Sewing For Mission \$250</p>	<p>Elder and Deacon nomination <u>Elder</u>: John Van De Stroet and Doug Van Zee <u>Deacons</u>: Brandon Jarman, Ray Schroder, Craig Wiersma, and Dustin Wallenburg.</p> <p>Prayerfully consider who God's calling you to elect. Voting will happen during the congregational meeting on Sunday, December 4.</p>	<p>Help us decorate the front of the church for the Christmas season! Donate a poinsettia plant of any size, leave it in the church kitchen with a note saying who's donating it and if it's in honor or in memory of a loved one. Contact the office with questions.</p> 
<p>Youth Fundraiser Sunday, December 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Menu</u> Chili Soup Vegetable Beef Soup Potato Soup Tortilla Soup Bread or Cheese Sandwich</p> <p>Freewill Donation. Proceeds go to Rocky Mountain High youth retreat.</p>	<p>Annual Congregational Meeting Bethany Church encourages you to attend the congregational meeting following the worship service on Sunday, December 4, from 11a.m.-12p.m. During this time the Deacons will present the 2023 budget and members will vote for future Elder and Deacons.</p> <p>Thank you Mark Kelderman, Dave Wallenburg, and Dylan Paulson for using your gifts while serving on the consistory the past three years.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Christmas Eve Service Saturday, December 24, at 4:00p.m.</p>
<p>Consistory Meeting Monday, December 12</p> <p>Anyone seeking transfer of membership, profession of faith or baptism is welcome to come to the Elder's meeting at 7p.m. The Deacon's will meet at 7:30p.m. and full consistory at 8p.m.</p>	<p>Children's Christmas Program</p> <p>We invite you to attend the children's Christmas Program on Sunday, December 18, at 6:00p.m.</p> <p>PARENTS: Program practice for kids 3 years old – 5th grade, will be held during discipleship class on Sundays from 11:00-11:45a.m. Call or text Rachel Kelderman with questions at 712-899-0180.</p>	<p>November Giving Report</p> <p>General Fund: \$21,535.00 Deacon's Fund: \$989.00</p> <p>Thank you for your generosity! We are truly blessed! Visit www.bethanyrcsd.org to give online, or text GIVE to 605-702-2209</p>

DECEMBER 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2 Mark Kelderman	3
4 9:30AM Worship Annual Congregational Meeting 11AM Youth Fundraiser 12PM	5	6 Jess Wiebe	7 Koffee with Kevin 10:00- 11:30AM Midweek 6:15-8:00PM Roger Sehr Kaitlyn Wiersma	8 Joe Kelderman	9	10
11 9:30AM Worship	12 Food and Friends 5:30- 7:00PM Consistory Meeting 7:00PM	13 Jeanne Schneider	14 Midweek 6:15-8:00PM	15	16	17 Tim Lems
18 9:30AM Worship Children's Christmas Program 6:00PM	19 JAM Preschool Christmas Program 6:30PM	20	21 Koffee with Kevin 10:00- 11:30AM Colin Wiersma	22	23 Church Office Closed	24 4:00PM Candlelight Service <i>Christmas Eve</i>
25 9:30AM Worship (Communion) <i>Christmas Day</i>	26 Tami Nelson	27	28 Emma Evans	29 Conrad & Linda Baker	30	31 Karren Peterson <i>Taylor & Austin Fossum</i>



Rocky Mountain High is a youth conference held every three years geared toward high school students currently in grades 9 - 12 and their adult leaders. It is organized by the Synod of the Heartland Youth Ministry office.

Rocky Mountain High's Mission: to provide a large group encounter with the transformational truth and love of Jesus for students and leaders.

2023 Theme: *Yes, and... when you embrace the mystery, faith isn't so fragile.*

There are times in our lives when something hard happens that we just can't make sense of. We search for an answer that will bring us clarity but instead we find ourselves stuck between two realities that may not always seem to work together. But what if they do? What if amidst the questions we ask about God and our hard times comes a better understanding that gives us a faith that isn't going to be easily torn down? What if the answer is yes, and? At Rocky 2023, we will dig into the yes and that make our faith stronger.

Registration opens February 2, 2023. Cost per person \$445. This includes lodging, meals, a t-shirt, and all event programming. Through fundraisers, we hope to cover most of the cost for our students.