

# The Good News

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Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith  
(406) 453-4316

E-Mail: [greatfallsucc@bresnan.net](mailto:greatfallsucc@bresnan.net)

[www.greatfallsucc.org](http://www.greatfallsucc.org)

P. O. Box 6303, 59406

*like us on Facebook at First Congregational United Church of Christ-Great Falls, MT*

## Worship – Sunday, June 7, 9:30 A.M.



**It's Communion Sunday!**  
**Remember to bring some bread and juice of your choice**  
**to worship this Sunday.**

**(Zoom open at 9:15 for check in and fellowship)**

**Call/text/email Rev. Lynne for log in information**

**Livestreamed to UCC Facebook:**

**<https://www.facebook.com/greatfallsucc/>**

**Recorded service will be available on YouTube at 10:30 A.M.**

**[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_F90NqrN-elxYSQ17O5LeA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_F90NqrN-elxYSQ17O5LeA)**

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### *June 7, 2020 Worship at Home*

Set a Worship Center:

Green cloth

Candle

Bible open to Exodus 3:11-15

Bread and Juice for Communion



Light the candle, recalling that when we worship, God is with us in a special way.

Read (if there are more than one of you, share the reading):

In the presence of the God whose word called the stars into being,

**We pause in awe.**

In the presence of the Christ whose arms held little children and whose eyes sparkled with laughter,

**We settle in trust.**

In the presence of the Spirit who stirs within us and causes our hearts to thirst for meaning,

**We offer our longing.**

Before you, God, giver of life, in search of love and truth and wholeness,

**We enter into worship.**

## Prayer

God of all earth and sky, you shaped us from your own ground into being, you breathed spirit into our souls, you breathed words into our ears. You burn around us in unexpected places, calling us to turn aside and feel your presence, to turn aside and hear your voice, to turn aside and be grounded in you. Here we are, Holy God: open, waiting, hoping to know you more deeply, more fully, more wholly. Amen.

## Introduction to the Scripture

Recalling that Moses had fled Egypt and settled as a shepherd in Midian: While tending his sheep on the hills of Mt. Horeb, he encountered a bush that was burning but was not consumed. From the bush, God spoke to Moses, telling him to return to Egypt to tell Pharaoh to set free those being held in slavery.

Read Exodus 3:11-15

## Reflection and Communion

What do you know of slavery? In our country? In other countries? Consider how the captivity of one person by another goes against loving God and neighbor. Is slavery the only form of captivity experienced by people today? In the spirit of faithfulness, what are two things you can do this week to take part in releasing others from captivity? What is holding you captive from seeking justice?

Set the bread and juice before you and recall the liberating message and ministry of Jesus. Recall the night he gathered with his disciples for the Passover meal. He took bread, gave thanks and blessed it and gave it to them, telling them to take and eat, in remembrance of him. He took the cup of blessing and gave it to them, telling them it is the cup of the new covenant. They should drink in remembrance of him. Eat the bread. Remember Jesus and the unity in Christ we share whether gathered or scattered. Drink from the cup. Remember the new covenant in Christ.

## Closing Prayer

Offer a prayer of thanks for the many ways God has blessed and nourished you. Give thanks for those who have fought against oppression and captivity. Ask for wisdom, courage and faith to be a “Moses” for today, speaking truth to power, seeking release of captives in all forms and equality in all regards.

Close with the Lord’s Prayer.

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## *In Our Thoughts and Prayers*

† *Linda Lydiard* upon the unexpected death of her 14-month old great-niece.

† *Tyler & Norman Menzales* following the passing of their darling dog, Daphne.

## *Sunday School News*

Sunday School Kids: Watch your mailbox for the first of several summer postcards!

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## *Sew What?*

**New curtains!** Now that the Sunday school rooms are painted, the Christian Education Board would like to continue the remodel project with new, matching curtains for all of the rooms! We are looking for volunteers who can make these curtains a reality. ***Simple instructions, fabric and all necessary notions will be provided.*** Please contact Janet Koostra, [janetkoostra@gmail.com](mailto:janetkoostra@gmail.com) or 727-8443 if you would like to help. Thank you!

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## ***Talk to Me***

Over the last three months, we've tried a number of things to offer meaningful worship and fellowship. We've done totally pre-recorded, totally Zoom, and a mixture of the two. We've live-streamed to Facebook and posted a recorded service on YouTube. I'm curious to hear from you what format or platform you found meaningful, important, difficult, or helpful. I'm not looking for content feedback (although that's helpful as well) to help us figure out what is the best way to reach the most people in a meaningful manner. Drop me an email at [pastor@greatfallsucc.org](mailto:pastor@greatfallsucc.org) or send me a note to 6 Cherokee Drive, 59404. ***Your constructive input will be helpful.***

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## ***Yay, Tech Team!***

Thanks to FCUCC-ers ***Greg Smith*** and ***Dean Jardee*** and CUMC-ers ***Karen Smith***, ***Melissa Zimmer***, ***Lois Baker***, and ***Rev. Dawn Skerritt*** who have stepped forward to become tech teams for each of our congregations. They are learning the ropes and will be helping facilitate our worship experiences as we continue this time of building closure.

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## ***Looking for Drive-By Coordinator(s)***

Do you love to organize things? Is keeping church members connected during this time important to you? Do you like making people's day? If you said yes to these, God might be nudging you to be part of a team to organize upcoming Drive-By parades to greet church members and friends who might be feeling more isolated these days. Contact Rev. Lynne and let her know you're answering the call.

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## ***What Two Things?***

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1-2

**Marc Stewart**, *our Conference Minister*, has shared that the experience of living within a pandemic is like running a marathon. And now we are living in a time of increasing racial and political unrest and division. When I first heard the message that we are in a marathon, I thought, "Well, I'm sunk." I'm more of a sprinter. But, what I've learned is that marathons aren't run without training and that training involves running shorter stretches and increasing them over time. Distance is increased over time. Training needs to happen every day. Every 7-10 days, training includes a long run. Rest and renew. Breaking it down, makes confronting this marathon a bit more doable.

As I think about our plan to extend our building closure well into the future, one of my concerns is that it will be easy for people to just fade away from the life of the church. There are many reasons. Zoom and other forms of social media are not that easy to navigate for everyone. Virtual worship and Bible study just aren't like being there in person. Worship just isn't the same without singing. Those statements are all true. But that doesn't mean that we can't find meaning in the new ways we are trying to be the church. It doesn't mean that we can't become accustomed to some new things.

We are confronted with two temptations: run headlong into everything and get

overwhelmed or look at how daunting six-months without church as we know it is and just give up or go somewhere else.

Like those training for a marathon, everyone does their first one. I'm sure, once the commitment was made, it looked daunting. Twenty-six miles is a long way. It would be like running from Great Falls to Fort Shaw. I'm exhausted even thinking about it, especially since it would most likely be running into the wind. Six months is a long time. But that long time is made up of individual intervals: months, weeks, and days. There are things that we can do in each one of those intervals to help us get through and stay connected. What one thing can you do today to stay connected to your church? What two things can you do this week to contribute to the health and vitality of the church during this time? What six things can you do between now and our time of opening to share the work of your church with others?

Breaking it down into doable things makes facing this marathon much less daunting. Remembering that we do not run the race alone, helps as well. We have one another and we have Christ who runs this marathon with us. So let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us. There will be a celebration when we get there. But we will have reason to celebrate along the way.

## **STAYING CONNECTED**



### **This Week's Program and Log-in Information:**

If you would like help getting connected, contact Rev. Lynne or someone that you know who has figured it out. Remember that long-distances fees may be incurred if you are phoning in on a land line.

**Call/text/email Rev. Lynne for log in information**

**Let's Talk About It:  
What's Faith Got to do With It?**  
Wednesday, 7:00 P.M.

**Bible Study and Prayer**  
Thursday, 7:00 P.M.