
The Good News

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

Worship for September 12 and 19, 2021



**Worship will be held in the sanctuary at 9:30 A.M.
and live-streamed to Facebook.**

**A recording of the Facebook service will be
available on YouTube and on our website later in the day.**

An abbreviated, pre-recorded service will air on NBC at 9:30 A.M.

Children will begin in worship for the next two Sundays and will be dismissed for Sunday school activities after the Children's Message

Scripture for September 12th: Psalm 19

Lay Reader for In Person Worship: Kelly Quick

Lay Reader for Televised Service: Linda Fagenstrom

September 19th Lay Reader: Hank Branom

Help us create and maintain a healthy sacred space:

- Face masks work best when consistently worn over nose and mouth
- Our distancing is physical so that we can be social
- Vaccinations protect you as well as others. If you are not vaccinated, check with your health care provider to find out if you are eligible and can safely receive the vaccine
- Our ventilation system brings in fresh, outside air. As the weather gets chilly, dress appropriately. Since the coat room is a confined space, it will continue to be closed until further notice

A special note as we move to separate services: In order to create space for our companions at Christ UMC to prepare for their worship service at 11:00 A.M., please leave the sanctuary and narthex as soon as possible after the service. Please continue your socializing in either Fellowship Hall or outside. Thank you for your understanding and help!

Renewed, Together!

Who is ready for RALLY SUNDAY???

While it has been a long two years of challenges and adjustments, it is time for our faith community to come together in a spirit of renewal and rejoicing!

WHEN: Sunday, September 19th, 2021 directly after Worship

WHERE: Fellowship Hall and Front Lawn

WHO: ALL of our AMAZING Church Family!

WHY: It's past time for our Faith Community to be renewed, together!

WHAT: Sack lunches prepared by Fellowship and Church Growth and Vitality Boards

GAMES TOGETHERNESS RENEWAL LAUGHTER

We can't wait to see everyone there for this joyful time of reconnection and fun!

Lunches will include vegetarian and gluten-free options

For the safety and well-being of all, COVID-19 protocols will be followed. Please wear your face masks and maintain a respectful distance so all may participate and enjoy this time safely.

***** note: this is a change of date*****

2021 Directories

New directories are available! Stop by the church and grab one! They are in the brown bin outside the front doors and also on the table in the narthex. If you would like one emailed or mailed, please let Holly know.



† Memorial service for **Willy Heupel** is this **Friday, September 10th at 11:00 A.M. at the church.** Please plan to observe our regular COVID safety guidelines.

† Our sympathy to **Rev. Lynne & Greg** in the death of their dear friend, **Dave**, who passed away September 6th from pancreatic cancer.



Christian Education News- Sunday School Returns!

Recently, parents of Sunday school children were polled about a return to in-person Sunday school. Most who responded were in favor of re-gathering. **So we're back in the classrooms beginning this Sunday, September 12!** Several protocols are in place to make a safer environment. Increased airflow from open windows and fans will improve ventilation. Hand sanitizing stations will be available in the hallway and in each classroom. Supplies like pencils, scissors, etc., will be sanitized after use. Masks will be required for children and adults. Two classes are planned: K-4th grade and 5th -8th grade. This week, kids begin in worship with their families before heading to Sunday school where they will play games and get re-acquainted after 1 ½ years away. Lessons will start on September 19th. **Questions? Want to be a teacher or helper? Contact Christian Education Coordinator Janet Koostra at 727-8443 or janetkoostra@gmail.com.**

Nursery Care Resumes

Several families have expressed a desire to once again have nursery care available during worship and Sunday school. **As a result, nursery care will resume this Sunday, September 12!** Several new safety protocols are in place to help keep the nursery cleaner. Airflow/ventilation will be improved with fans and open windows. Toys will be sanitized after use and some harder-to-clean toys will go into storage for the time being. **Masks will be required for adults and children aged two and up while in the nursery.** Parents are required to sign children in for potential contact tracing. We also hope to continue our standard practice of having a volunteer helper each week. **Our care giver from before the start of the pandemic, Whitney Mulready, is coming back to help us, too!** Please contact Christian Education Coordinator Janet Koostra (727-9443 or janetkoostra@gmail.com) with questions or to volunteer.



Office Schedule

Holly will be out of the office September 13th-17th. **Beginning September 20th, regular office hours will be Monday-Thursday 9:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.** With changing circumstances, it is advised to call the church before heading over to make sure someone is here and the doors are unlocked. Thank you.



Fishing for Volunteers

Hey everyone! Just letting you know that our turn to work at the **FISH Food Pantry is September 20-24 from 9:00-11:00 A.M.** If you feel comfortable volunteering and distributing food to families in need, please call Carol Davidson at 836-1862 (my land line isn't working!). Thank you so much if you can help!

Prayer Meeting- Tuesday, September 14th, 6:00 P.M.

Meet at the church for "checking in" and then we'll walk to Lions Park to walk the Labyrinth. Everyone is welcome!



"Just What is a Labyrinth?" It looks like a maze but it's not. Mazes call for decisions to be made along the way. A labyrinth calls for only one decision: to walk it. You can get physically lost in a maze. You may get "lost" in God while you are walking a labyrinth but you will always find your way. A labyrinth is an ancient tool of prayer or meditation. Labyrinths have been found in the remains of civilizations all over the world. They are not tied specifically to any religious practice and are practiced by many. The labyrinth we will be walking during our prayer meeting on September 14th is located just northwest of the flags at Lions Park and was created by a local Scout as part of an Eagle Scout project.

Are you interested in being part of our Prayer Chain Ministry? Just let Rev. Lynne know (pastor@greatfallsucc.org) and she'll get you signed up!

And a Little Child Shall Lead Them

Last Sunday, I had the joy of baptizing Keeley, Dick and Mende Kloppel's great-granddaughter in a family celebration in our sanctuary. I also had the privilege of officiating the wedding of Keeley's mom and dad a few years ago so this was a fun extension of the formation of this family. Because of COVID, Keeley's baptism took place a bit later in her life than usual. She's about 2 ½ and FULL of energy. We decided we would let Keeley explore the sanctuary a bit while the adults went through the blessing of the water and list of questions. When it came time to involve Keeley, her dad held her and brought her close to the baptism font that now contained the water over which her family had all prayed and added their blessings.

Not wanting to startle her, I first put a little water on her hands so she could see that this woman wearing a long white dress that she'd never seen before wasn't going to hurt her. The water on her hands was okay so I moved on to letting her feel it on her head. Good to go!

"Keeley Kay, I baptize you in the name of God the Father (water on her head), God the Son (a little more water on her head), and God the Holy Spirit (more water on her head). Keeley Kay, you are a child of God loved and blessed (as a cross is marked on her forehead)."

She was great! But she was not quite through. She leaned down towards the water and put her hand out. I assured her it was okay to feel the water again and helped her put her little hand into the water. She was not interested in just touching it. She took a little fistful and put it on my head. And everyone cheered.

She did to me what I had done to her. And this darling act of reciprocity was met with approval by those she knows and loves and trusts.

This innocent, lovely, blessed act of a child full of energy and wonder has been at the center of my soul this week. I've carried her tender response into my wonderings about the future of things. I've reflected on other children who have been excellent teachers of the ways of faith. I've marveled at how quickly and eagerly children mimic our actions.

That process of mimicking the actions of others is so central to how we learn and how our values are developed and embraced. Children who are recipients of loving actions are more likely to repeat those loving actions to others. Children who are shown generosity are more likely to be generous with others. Children who are welcomed in are more likely to accept others. They will do to and for others what has been done to and for them.

I can't help but think about our diligent work around creating a safe and healthy environment for our congregation to re-gather during this time of COVID, especially as we move into our fall programming and resume Sunday school. Children will, once again, be in our midst on a regular basis. What we do around them, how we welcome them, how we model safe and healthy habits will impress them. The children will come and we are called to do our very best for them.

And then, we should watch. Because, what we do to them, they will do to others. We have the potential to transform lives and the world every time we encounter a child. What a splendid opportunity.

Have a wonderful week and be blessed. Rev. Lynne

"Renewed!"

A "Re-gathering Theme in the Time of COVID"

September 19 – November 7, 2021

From what are you being renewed these days? *For* what might God be renewing you? What might God be using to renew you in body, mind, and spirit?

Using these themes for worship and small group discussions, our church will come to more fully understand how it is that God is working to renew us individually and collectively for this time and the time to come.

You (yes you!) can be part of this important movement of renewal and transformation! Here's how:

- Participate in worship (in person, on Facebook, television broadcast, or YouTube)
- Sign up to be part of a weekly small group discussion. Contact the church office (greatfallsucc@bresnan.net) or Rev. Lynne (pastor@greatfallsucc.org or 406-770-9157). Small groups will be gathering either in person or through Zoom).
- Meditate, prayer, reflect on each of the weekly themes and messages.

Upcoming “Renewed!” Themes:

September 19 – “Renewed from the ‘Heebie-Jeebies (aka Fear)’”

Fear is a strong force that stifles growth and renewal. From what fears are we being released as we move into the future God intends for us? For what purpose is God calling you forth from fear?

September 26 – “Renewed from Separation”

We have spent the last 18 months experiencing various forms of separation. Even though some separation continues in many forms, God continues to call us away from separation into connectedness. From what forms of unnecessary separation might God be wanting to renew you and us?

October 3 (World Communion Sunday) – “Renewed in Community”

World Communion Sunday celebrates the world-wide Christian community, our union through Christ with people around the world. How is God working through community to give you renewal? Where do we experience deep community as we live into our faith?

October 10 – “Renewed by Hope”

Emily Dickinson writes of hope: “Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune without the words and never stops at all.” What might God be wanting to renew in you with the feathers of hope?

October 17 – “Renewed for Creativity”

The writer of Ephesians writes about the gifts for ministry that are given to each of us. How do we discover just what those gifts are and what is holding us back from using them to the fullest? What’s the one thing you’ve always wanted to do through faith and what is keeping you from doing it?

October 24 – “Renewed for Wonder”

Have you ever watched a young child explore something for the first time? Have you ever seen something so beautiful it takes your breath away? Have you ever found yourself in a situation that is so unbelievably wonderful that you stop in your tracks just to take it in? These are all indications of the gift of wonder and it is where worship begins. How might God be calling us into renewed wonder as a church? As individuals? As a denomination?

