
The Good News

Volume 2021

October 27, 2021

Issue 40

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

Worship for October 31, 2021 All Saints Sunday



Serving in Worship
Lay Reader: Carol Shipley
Ushers: Dave Neagle, Joan Dailey

Scripture: John 14:1-3, 18-19, 25-27
Revelation 21:1-5a

In-Person worship will be offered in the church sanctuary at 9:30 A.M.
The service will be live-streamed on Facebook.

A recording of the live-stream will be available on YouTube later in the day.

An abbreviated version of the service will be available on the local NBC station at 9:30 A.M.

Remember to wear your facemask to completely cover your nose and mouth throughout the service and try to observe some physical distancing.

Plan to leave the sanctuary as soon as possible after our service to allow our friends from Christ United Methodist Church to prepare for their worship at 11:00 A.M.

There will be Coffee Fellowship in Fellowship Hall after the service.

Please remember to wear your face mask unless you are actively eating or drinking.

Worship Notes for October 31, 2021

All Saints Recognition

We will be observing our annual recognition of those who have died in the previous year by reading their names and holding a space for their memories in silence. We will also be offering a time for candle lighting in remembrance of others who had died. For those who will be participating in worship through Facebook, television or YouTube, you are encouraged to have a candle to light during the service.

But wait! There's more! **Because it's also Halloween, you are invited to shake it up a bit and wear a costume to church!** Our final Stewardship talk will be given by a special someone among us who will be in costume and they'd love some company! If we were giving points, extra points would be given for those costumed as a "saint." (Remember that "saint" is pretty loosely defined in Protestant church! Think about your favorite Sunday School teacher, author, minister, or that other lay person who has influenced your faith.)



Christian Education News

This week, children begin in worship before dismissal to a Halloween party during Sunday school. Costumes are welcome as long as they are not bloody, gory or scary. The Thanksgiving Basket Project continues to gather food. Please bring stuffing mixes this week to add to our collection of canned vegetables, cereal and potato mixes. Both classes will begin new lessons on November 7th.

Christmas Pageant Organizing Soon!

The Christian Education Board plans to produce a digital Christmas Pageant again this year. Readers, musicians and artists of all ages are needed to make this special event a success. **If you would like to participate, contact Janet Koostra, 727-8443 or janetkoostra@gmail.com**, for more information and to sign up. Baby Jesus, here we come!

Thank you

A very big thank you to **John & Marilyn Sheffels** of Christ United Methodist for renting a 40' container to haul away the ash tree branches. It sure made the cleanup go faster not to have to bundle all those large branches. **Russ Davis** and **John Baker**, thank you so much for your work on this project! The generosity and labor is greatly appreciated. Thank you, again!



Celebrating Stewardship

What is it that brought you to this church? What about this church nurtures you?

As part of our annual Stewardship Campaign, a variety of members have been asked to share their response to these questions (as well as others) in worship. Because what they have to say is so powerful, the

Stewardship Board has also asked them to provide a written version to be shared in our newsletter. As you read about their stories, perhaps you could ask yourself the same questions and think about that as you consider making your annual pledge. **Here's Dean Jardee's Story:**

Good morning. For those of you don't know me, my name is Dean Jardee. I am a father of two children, my daughter Addy is 23 and my son William is 21. I work as an educator for Great Falls Public Schools, specifically at Whittier School as the school librarian. In addition to my 6 years at Whittier, I worked as a classroom teacher, assessment specialist, and literacy teacher in other schools in Great Falls and also served as K-8 School Administrator at Vaughn School about 10 miles out of Great Falls. I also served as worship music director at my last church for 18 years.

I have always been self-motivated, goal-driven and one who strives to do what I can with what I have to make a difference in the lives of others. I love my family, I love Great Falls, I love Montana, I love Jesus, and I love God. I know and understand the importance and necessity of the Church community to assist in my spiritual journey. The UCC community claims that no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

I remember seeing this and hearing this the first few Sundays I was at UCC a couple years ago, but was still skeptical because of previous experiences. When I started attending, I had just started learning who I was as a divorced man who just accepted myself that it was okay to love who I wanted to love as a gay man. To be happy, I needed to be who I was.

Since I have come to the UCC, I have not once felt judged by the people for anything I have said, done, or admitted about myself. There is an unconditional love and acceptance that I have never experienced before to this degree.

Yes, I love being involved in the music at UCC, I love the fellowship and snacks after service, I love Pastor Lynne's inspiring messages, and I love the way the UCC reaches out to those in need in our community. But, the reason I joined as a member and the reason that I am becoming more involved in ministry, is because I feel loved, valued, and accepted in a way that is hard to explain. I know I'm not perfect. I know I don't always speak fluently and clearly. I know that I will not always agree with everything preached or shared at UCC. But I do know that no matter who I am or who I have been, where I am or have been-I am welcome here. I want to be a part of that message because that's the message of God. Thank you for showing me this unconditional love at the UCC. I am so blessed to be part of the work we do here.

Neighbors In Need

Our special offering will be collected on October 31st. Donations can be brought with you, mailed to the church with the memo NIN, donated through the United Church of Christ national website: <https://www.ucc.org/neighbors-in-need-special-mission-offering/>, or through our own Great Falls United Church of Christ website with the memo NIN, <https://greatfallsucc.org/>.

Neighbors in Need helps make Unfailing Love possible.

For this to occur, it needs your support.

Celebrating Stewardship with Dennis Dell

My Congregational roots go way back in time, as I have been active in the Congregational Church since birth. One of my favorite pictures of my mom and dad is standing in front of First Congregational Church in my hometown of Billings on their wedding day in 1948. Growing up in that church left me with many fond memories:



1. Singing in all the church choirs over the years - we had five!
2. Playing the part of Joseph in the Christmas pageant.
3. Ringing the church bell on New Year's Eve with the heavy bell pulling me off the floor with its 20' rope.
4. Joining the church in a confirmation class of 56 – We had a church that boasted 2000+ members, but more likely had 1000 active members.
5. Two full services every Sunday and three on Easter. One Easter I went to all three services just to hear the Widor-Toccata Postlude. (My favorite organ piece – Tyler!) Hint, hint!
6. Three trips to Camp Miminagish during my teens – where I had my first feeling of being close to God - sitting on a rock in the middle of the Boulder River.

Tried out a lot of churches in college depending on the affiliation my current girlfriend had. None of those churches or girlfriends seemed to be a perfect fit for me. Left college and moved to Great Falls in 1973. Much has happened since. Married Susan, had a daughter-Katie, buried my parents, in-laws and brother-in-law all at the Congregational Church. Highlights of my life in this congregation are numerous:

1. Got to continue in a great church choir starting with Mary Moore.
2. Chaired many committees, became Moderator and was chairman of building committee that provided the blueprint for the Sanctuary/Office/Parlor/Choir Room addition we enjoy today.
3. Attended my first Montana/Northern Wyoming UCC Conference. This was my first meeting with national officers of our denomination leading meetings and worship. It was a life-changing event I would want each of you to experience sometime in your life.
4. In 1986 I started and still direct our Cantabelle' Ringers handbell choir.

I am most proud to tell people about our church and especially its rich history:

1. In 1964 I attended worship at the first Congregational Church built in this country back East.
2. We proudly help start some of the most widely known colleges in the world. (Harvard, Yale for example)
3. First church to ordain women, eventually all genders.
4. Over the years, numerous members of our congregation have served on National Boards, with our own Carol Shipley currently serving.
5. We share this building with another church. I am most proud to boast – our church.
6. Has become open and affirming to all who believe!

I make it a point to come to church every Sunday I am in Great Falls. God, this church and its members have been at my side through all that life has brought me and it is here, I feel safe, loved and truly cared for – each and every day! With all this church and denomination has to offer each and every one of us – I would encourage each of you to find ways to share your talents and gifts as you can in the coming year. Your life will truly be enriched, as has mine!

“Home”

In some of the next few newsletters, I'll be going into more detail about my sabbatical plans for next summer. However, it's not going to be all about me. Read on.

The line that the good folks from the Lilly Endowment put out there for applicants to consider in developing a sabbatical plan is “What would make your heart sing?”

As I looked at other proposals that had been awarded the Clergy Renewal Grant from the Lilly Endowment, I saw a lot of incredible travel plans: the cathedrals in Europe, popular spiritual renewal places like Taizé, France and Iona, Scotland; trips to amazing places from Antarctica to Zimbabwe. Those all sound spectacular and would be a marvelous way to spend a sabbatical. But, when I imagined taking such treks myself, well, my heart wasn't singing. It was getting bogged down at the thought of long flights, luggage, dealing with multiple languages and currencies and a lot of the marvelous faded away.

So, I just sat with the question for a while and listened for my heart to “sing.”

Eventually, a single word and a single tone started to resonate in my soul: Home.

Home for me has always been more than a street address. It’s a landscape, a culture, a way of being in rest and harmony with my surroundings. Ever since leaving the west to enter seminary and then engage in various ministry settings across the country, “home” was always west. Home meant being in close proximity to the mountains. Home meant crisp cool mornings and wide-open spaces. Home usually had something to do with horses. Coming to Montana five years ago was an act of coming home. My heart is already singing. Why would I need to go any further? Why not engage in embracing the home that surrounds me and let my heart not just sing but soar?

Greg and I started to explore how we could use this upcoming sabbatical time to be together and connect more deeply with this landscape that resonates with my soul and is relatively new to Greg. We realized that we are within an easy day’s drive (or maybe two) to some of the most spectacular national parks. Why not devote an entire month to explore some of them? After spending an initial week or so at home to unwind, ride, and begin some work with a spiritual director, Greg and I will pack our things into a rented camper van and journey around the countryside, visiting a variety of national and state parks, national monuments and historic locations. Other than securing reservations at the most popular locations, we’ll pretty much be footloose and fancy free for the entire month of June. (I’m really resisting the urge to imagine a couple of senior hippies traipsing around in an old VW van.)

Now, it’s your turn...

Spend some time with the question, “What would make your heart sing?” How might God be calling you to make that song something sacred? How might God be singing that song with you?

When you think of “home” what images come to mind?

How might you go about inviting God into those images?

May your journey “home” this week be richly blessed.

Rev. Lynne



Upcoming Events

Thursday, October 28

Pastoral Relations Committee, 5:30 P.M., Zoom

Monday, November 1

Christian Service Board, 1:00 P.M., Parlor

Worship Board, 7:00 P.M., Zoom

Wednesday, November 3

Bridge, 10:00 A.M., Room 7

Youth Group, 6:00 P.M.

Choir Rehearsal, 6:00 P.M., Sanctuary

Thursday, November 4

Church Growth and Vitality Board,

5:30 P.M., Zoom

Sunday, November 7

Stewardship Sunday