

The Good News

Volume 2023

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Issue 44

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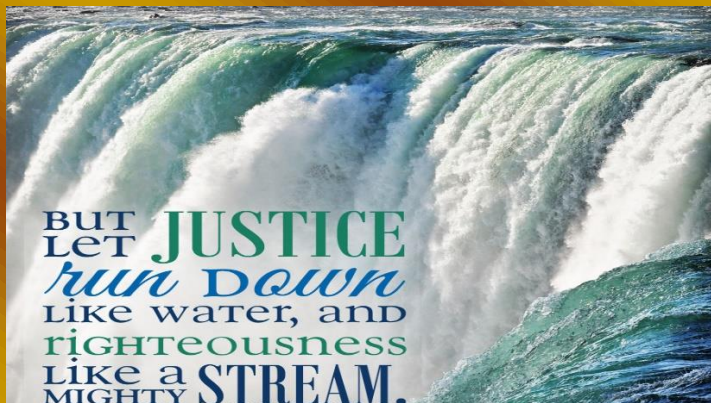
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like us on Facebook at First Congregational United Church of Christ-Great Falls, MT

November 12, 2023 Worship Service, 9:30 A.M.



Minister: Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith

Scripture: Amos 5:18-24

Lay Reader: Lila Byers

Ushers: June Rovero and Co.

Choir Director: Cindy Stevens

Accompanist: Tyler Menzales

Sunday School: (Elementary) Erin Borland, Janet Koostra
(Youth class will remain in worship)

Nursery: Whitney Mulready, Haylee Martinez

Tellers: Sue Skees, Nancy Zadick

Coffee fellowship will not be served to allow the Fellowship Board time for the Thanksgiving Potluck at 5:30 P.M. All are invited!

The service will be live-streamed and a recording of the livestream service will be available on YouTube later in the day.

Coming Up This Week



Veteran's Day Spaghetti Dinner

Friday, November 10th

5:00-7:00 P.M.

Hosted by Christ United Methodist Church

Cost is \$15 each or \$25 per family

Thanksgiving Potluck

Sunday, November 12th

5:30-7:00 P.M.

Hosted by First Congregational UCC Fellowship Board

Turkeys and hams provided.

A sign-up sheet with potluck breakdown is on the table in the narthex and in Fellowship Hall.



Thanksgiving Baskets

All Turkey Tags for our West Elementary Thanksgiving Baskets have disappeared- yahoo! Please return food items or monetary donations to church by Sunday, November 12. Items will be sorted and organized and delivered to West Elementary on Friday, November 17. Seven families will enjoy Thanksgiving dinners through your generosity. Thank you for giving! Because of you, our church changes lives!



Christian Education News

On November 12, children begin in worship. **Only the Elementary Sunday School class will meet while kids in 6th-8th grades will remain in worship.** This week's elementary lesson will be the story of *Ruth* with teacher **Erin Borland**.



Christmas Pageant

If you would like your children to be part of this year's Christmas Pageant, please contact Janet Koostra **this week**. Janet would like to hold rehearsals at a different time than Sunday School such as sometime Saturday, Sunday afternoon or a Tuesday or Thursday evening. Please share your preferences. Please also share if your child would like a speaking role and if your child can memorize lines. **You can reach Janet Koostra at janetkoostra@gmail.com or 406-727-8443.** Hope to hear from you soon!

In Our Thoughts and Prayers



† Our sympathy to **Eric Dunn** and **Chelle Herbruger** in the death of their father, **Daniel Dunn**. Dan died November 7 in Minnesota with family at his side. He leaves behind his wife **Kathy**; children **Eric, Chelle, and Rob**; and numerous grandchildren including **Kaeden, Bailey, Chase, Aalayah, Angelito, and Saint**.

Upcoming Worship Plans

November 26 - a joint worship service with Christ UMC leadership at 10:00 A.M.

December 17 - our annual Christmas Pageant with Choir at 9:30 A.M.

December 24 (Christmas Eve Day) - a regular service at 9:30 A.M.

December 24 - Christmas Eve Lessons, Carols and Candlelight will be at 4:30 P.M.

December 31 New Year's Eve Day - a joint worship service with UCC leadership at 10:00 A.M.

Staff Schedules

The office will be minimally staffed the week of Thanksgiving.

Holly will be out of the office November 16-26.

Rev. Lynne will be out of the office November 20-24.

There will not be a newsletter that week.

Next week's newsletter will include information for worship on November 19 and 26.

Coming Up

Thursday, November 9

12:00 P.M. Genesis Bible Study, FH

Friday, November 10

11:00 A.M. Fellowship Board, FH

5:00 P.M. Spaghetti Dinner, FH

Sunday, November 12

9:30 A.M. Worship Service

5:30 P.M. Thanksgiving Potluck, FH

Monday, November 13

6:00 P.M. Business Affairs, Zoom

6:00 P.M. Christian Ed., Parlor

Tuesday, November 14

10:00 A.M. Sewing Group, FH

12:45 P.M. Reading, West Elementary

Wednesday, November 15

10:00 A.M. Bridge Players, SS Wing

1:30 P.M. Pinochle, FH

6:00 P.M. Youth Group, SS Wing

6:00 P.M. Handbells, Choir Room

7:15 P.M. Choir, Sanctuary

Thursday, November 16

12:00 P.M. Genesis Bible Study, FH

New Member Spotlight

On October 29, we received six new members into our congregation. Last week we featured introductory spotlights on Jenn Goss, Noel Walker and Heather Weibel. This week, we are featuring Nathaniel Lake, Bruce Cole and Bill Tiskus. Remember to introduce yourself and welcome these folks into the church.



Nathaniel Lake

Nathaniel moved to Great Falls this past summer and discovered the church was nearby—"Within a sabbath day's journey from my apartment." He is 41, single, and has no children.

As the result of an assault, Nathaniel suffered an anoxic brain injury when he was nearly choked to death. He spent 3 months in a coma with a 20% chance of surviving. "I am glad to be living."

Nathan's great-great-great grandfather, Jan Ziska, was a Czech general and was instrumental in the Protestant Revolution wars.

Nathaniel enjoys reading, walking, and camping.

The quote Nathaniel lives by is: "Be perfect as your father in heaven is perfect."



Bill Tiskus

Bill was drawn to FCUCC because he felt we are like-minded and he appreciates the social activities with others in the Great Falls Community. He usually vacations once a year with extended family and visits a close friend at least weekly and they go to restaurants. He spends other time working on home projects and cleaning a large house.

Liking historical books, his favorite book is "Secret City – The Hidden Secrets of Gay Washington." He follows politics and

likes to keep up with current events. Bill is open minded and views others as to why they have their opinions. He is a social worker by trade so he has an interest in finding out how groups work with their dynamics.

In the next 10 years he is looking forward to retirement! He plans on learning new skills on home improvement, cooking and engaging in some community events.



Bruce Cole

Bruce was drawn to our church because of the Open and Affirming designation. He is married to Bill (Tiskus) and is the proud father of Jade and Logan and grandfather to Nora. He enjoys vacations with their extended family, gardening, house projects and hiking. He is co-owner of Proforma InfoSystems, a print and promotional product distributorship.

The farthest Bruce has been from home is South Korea. Both of his children were born there. When his daughter turned 14 and his son 15, Bruce and their mother took them back to South Korea to explore and experience their culture.

Over the next 10 years Bruce is looking forward to growing old with his husband, Bill. He plans on retiring, traveling and exploring the unknown. He is also looking forward to spending more time with his children, granddaughter and extended family.

The quote Bruce tries to live by: "Carry out a random act of kindness, with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you." –Princess Diana



Welcome, All of You!

Language, Words and Letters Matter

All my life I've been correcting folks on the spelling of my name. Even when there's a written document in front of folks with the correct spelling (Lynne), people still have a tendency to drop the "e" and go with what is the more common and often (although not always) the masculine version of my name: Lynn. However, that's not my name. That was my grandfather's name and I love that we shared variations on our names. For years, we teased each other over which one of us used the "correct" spelling of our name. When Greg and I were dating and getting to know one another, he started calling me "E" because he recognized early on how important that E on the end of my name is to me.

I get, to some degree, how important it is that the language and words and even letters that we use to address others is correct for them. And that's the key... for them. I don't get to decide how someone else spells their name and I'll do my best to make sure I get it right for them out of honor and respect.

Over the last several years, we've become aware of the significance of the use of pronouns for folks. The use of she/her/hers, he/him/his and they/them have become more important as we've become aware that gender identity is more fluid than we've known. Just because someone arrives in this world with a certain set of visible genitalia, doesn't mean that they necessarily identify with the gender that is typically "attached" to those biological identifiers. Plus, folks may not identify as strictly one or the other but may identify across a spectrum. We're learning that sticking to a strict binary of gender identity (male or female; feminine or masculine; brother or sister; etc.) can exclude and harm folks.

Although my example of the "e" in my name may simplify the issue, it's a good place to start. I get to decide how important it is to me. I value when people see that small but significant distinction and make the effort to identify me according to how I see myself. It's similar with gender identity. If someone identifies as "she" or "he," we should honor their identity, regardless of what is common or what we think we see on the surface. The same goes for someone who identifies as "they." Although many of us grew up with the understanding that "they" is a term used as a plural pronoun, it's now acceptable, and in some cases, preferred to use it as a singular pronoun for a person identifying as gender neutral. Same with its companion "them." In 2019, Merriam-Webster chose singular "they" as the word of the year because the English language lacks a gender-neutral singular pronoun to correspond neatly with pronouns like "he or she." It turns out this is nothing new. "They" has been used as a singular pronoun for over 600 years.

Many Open and Affirming congregations encourage folks to include their preferred pronouns on things like membership forms and name tags. Feel free to adjust your name tag or let Holly know that you'd like your preferred pronoun included on your name tag at church. Thanks for honoring my name and here's to honoring everyone in ways that they choose. It's how we continue to live into the life-giving expression of being an open and affirming church.

Have a blessed week.

Lynne

