
The Good News

Volume 2024

January 10, 2024

Issue 02

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

January 14, 2024 Second Sunday of Epiphany Worship Service 11:00 A.M.



Minister: Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith

Scripture: John 1:43-51

Lay Reader: Jenn Goss

Ushers: Nancy Dallmann, Susan Thomas

Accompanist: Marge Kline

Elementary Sunday School: Liz Lee

Youth Sunday School: Cara Dunn

Nursery: CJ Mollohan, Mackenzie Noble

Fellowship: Dave and Debbe Rothweiler

Tellers: Paul Haffeman, Nancy Zadick

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

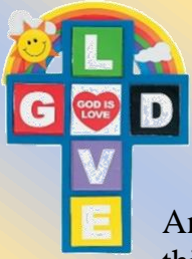


2024 Annual Meeting Scheduled

First Congregational United Church of Christ-Great Falls Council has scheduled the 2024 Annual Meeting for Sunday, January 28 following worship. We will conduct the business of the congregation, vote on the 2024 recommended budget, install board members and officers, and discuss other

items of interest to the congregation.

The meeting will be followed immediately by the annual meeting of the Memorial Fund Corporation. All members and friends of First Congregational United Church of Christ-Great Falls are strongly encouraged to attend and participate, **keeping in mind that only members can vote.**



Christian Education News

This week all children begin in worship. After a message from Pastor Lynne, all children will go to Sunday School. The Youth class (grades 6-8) will meet in the parlor with Cara Dunn. Liz Lee will gather elementary students (age 5-grade 5) in Sunday School room 4. This week's offering will help support our mission sponsor child, VJ Antonette Benarao. Please prayerfully consider allowing your children to participate in this special Sunday School offering.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

† **Bob Koostra** is recovering from having a second surgery for complications from the first gallbladder removal surgery.

Merger Talking Points

As we prepare to engage in a congregational conversation regarding the request from Christ United Methodist Church to enter into a deeper relationship (possible merger), we will be presenting four talking points over the course of four weeks. Please consider these talking points and formulate some thoughts and questions about the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that a deeper relationship with Christ UMC would bring. **We will have time for in-depth conversation at a Congregational Hearing on February 11 after worship.**

Talking point II: Why doesn't Christ UMC close and join UCC?

Several folks have raised the possibility of Christ UMC simply closing and the members join the UCC or First UMC. Here are some of the implications of that decision:

- In the United Methodist polity/structure, when a congregation no longer exists, all the assets and resources go to the conference. The UCC would be forced to buy the UM portion of the building, should the UM conference offer it to us.
- Christ UMC would not be able to turn any financial or other resources over to the UCC.
- For many of Christ UMC members, it's important to maintain a UM identity and membership.
- There is no potential for First UMC (downtown) and Christ UMC to merge. The ministries are very different. Christ UMC recognizes that they are already in relationship with the UCC and are comfortable with that relationship.

Upcoming Talking Points to be highlighted in coming weeks:

Talking point III: Current and historical Relationship

Talking point IV: Congregational Status

Last week's Talking Point (see the January 3 newsletter)

Talking point I: History – What's this about and how did we get here?

Other points to remember:

- Both leadership teams have a commitment to engaging in a good process to explore the possibilities.
- You will have multiple opportunities to be involved and receive information.
- No major decisions will be made without congregational input and agreement.



Light My Fire

All children 3rd Grade and up are invited to Acolyte training on Sunday, January 21 following worship. Pastor Lynne will explain the meaning of the acolyte ministry, train kids how to use the equipment and then have them practice lighting candles. Experienced acolytes are encouraged to attend too so they can help show new kids what to do while refreshing their own skills. Questions? Call, text or email Janet Koostra, 406-727-8443 or janetkoostra@gmail.com.

Coming Up

Friday, January 12

11:00 A.M. Fellowship Board, FH

Saturday, January 13

11:00 A.M. ONA Conference, Bozeman

Sunday, January 14

12:15 P.M. Worship Board, Parlor

Monday, January 15

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day- Office Open

6:30 P.M. Church Council, Zoom

Tuesday, January 16

12:45 P.M. Reading, West Elementary

Wednesday, January 17

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. Chancel Choir, Sanctuary
