
The Good News

Volume 2024

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Issue 01

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

January 7, 2024

New Worship Time

11:00 A.M.

(for in-person and live-streaming)

Celebration of Holy Communion

Distribution of Baptism Doves to those who
have been baptized during the past year



Minister: Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith

Scripture: Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

Lay Reader: Steve Gettel

Ushers: Dale & Nancy Dallmann, Steve Gettel

Organist: Tyler Menzales

Choir Director: Cindy Stevens

Sunday School Teacher: Susan Thomas

Nursery: CJ Mollohan, Mackenzie Noble

Fellowship: Dennis & Sue Turton

Tellers: Liz Lee, 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

Sunday School resumes January 7. Children begin in Sunday School and will join their families towards the end of worship for communion. **Susan Thomas** will teach the Elementary Sunday School class. It is yet to be determined if Youth Sunday School class will meet this Sunday.

Acolyte training scheduled for January 21 following worship.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

† **Bob Koostra** is recovering from having his gallbladder removed.

† **Earl Ackerman** is in the hospital after a fall.

† The family of **Susan Blackwell** who passed away just after Christmas. Her mother and step-dad are **Lynne and Dennis James**, former church members.

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 I: History – What’s this about and how did we get here?

- Christ UMC has decreased in size and is on a trajectory to closing
- First Congregational UCC is experiencing decreased membership and may be on the same trajectory
- All Protestant (mostly mainline) churches/denominations are experiencing declining membership
- Christ UMC leadership brought the question about a potential merger to the UCC leadership.
- Christ UMC sees this potential merger as a place that they can go to have hope
- Both church’s leadership teams met on October 24
 - No decisions were made
 - A general commitment to explore possibilities together was expressed
- Both congregations are now seeking to share information and get initial feedback from their respective membership

Upcoming Talking Points to be highlighted in coming weeks:

Talking point II: Why doesn’t CUMC close and join UCC?

Talking point III: Current and historical Relationship

Talking point IV: Congregational Status

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.
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Save the Date!

Camp Sunday is February 25. Sacred focus on Church Camp in worship and fellowship.

Plan on a silent auction (to raise money for camperships), camp food, camp songs and more!

Coming Up

Thursday, January 4

4:00 P.M. Joint Facilities, FH

Friday, January 5- Annual Reports Due!

Monday, January 8

1:00 P.M. Christian Service, Parlor

1:00 P.M. Church Growth, FH

6:00 P.M. Business Affairs, Zoom

6:00 P.M. Christian Education, Parlor

Tuesday, January 9

10:00 A.M. Sewing, FH

12:45 P.M. Reading, West Elementary

Wednesday, January 10

1:00 P.M. Prayer Meeting, Parlor

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

Friday, January 12

11:00 A.M. Fellowship Board, FH

Saturday, January 13

11:00 A.M. ONA Conference, Bozeman
