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# The Good News

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Volume 2024

March 13, 2024

Issue 11

Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith  
(406) 453-4316

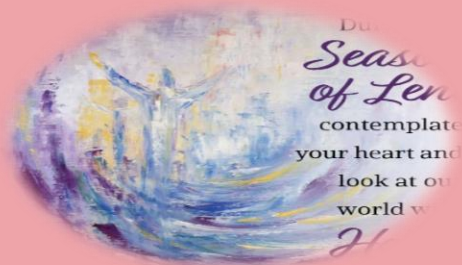
E-Mail: [greatfallsucc@bresnan.net](mailto:greatfallsucc@bresnan.net)

[www.greatfallsucc.org](http://www.greatfallsucc.org)

P. O. Box 6303, 59406

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

**March 17, 2024**  
**Fifth Sunday in Lent**  
**Taizé Service**  
**11:00 A.M.**



Minister: Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith

Creation Worship Theme: Seeds

Scripture: Matthew 13:3-9, 31-32

Lay Reader: Joan Duncan

Ushers: Jenn and Zurie Goss, Susan Thomas

Organist: Tyler Menzales

Choir Director: Cindy Stevens

Youth Sunday School: Cara Dunn/Dean Jardee

Elementary Sunday School: June Rovero with Gwen Valley

Nursery: CJ Mollohan, Mackenzie Noble

Fellowship: Bill Tiskus, Dennis and Sue Turton

Tellers: Carol Shipley, Nancy Zadick

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

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## ***Christian Education News***



This week both the Elementary and Youth Sunday School classes will spend the entire worship hour in class. Sunday School offering will go towards our mission child in the Philippines, VJ Antonette. There will not be a children's message in worship. Nursery care will be provided as normal.

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## ***Baptism Class***



Children and their families are invited to join Pastor Lynne in the sanctuary for a kids class on baptism following worship on **March 17**. Kids will learn about what baptism is and what it means in our denomination, the United Church of Christ. **This event will begin about 12:15 P.M.** Hope to see you there!



The United Church of Christ responds to humanitarian and development needs worldwide. **Gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis.** Through OGHS's work with local churches, conferences, and international partners, One Great Hour of Sharing provides sources of clean water, food and education, health care, small business micro-credit loans, advocacy, resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, emergency relief and rehabilitation as well as disaster preparedness and response. *Imagine Together* how many places OGHS is touching worldwide and how stretched its resources are. **Your Christian Service board supports One Great Hour of Sharing's message of love and hope with a \$100 donation.** This donation opportunity is because of our church members' generosity. **Join us in giving to OGHS by check, on our website at [greatfallsucc.org](http://greatfallsucc.org) or by clicking on the QR code. Be sure to mark your donation OGHS.**



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### *In Our Thoughts and Prayers*

- † Our condolences to **Kelly Quick** on the death of her father, **Gary**, who passed away March 7.
- † Our condolences to **Jan Robitaille** on the death of her sister, **Lynn**, who passed away March 10.
- † **Judy Hendricks** is in the hospital with respiratory issues.
- † **Norman Menzales** and his colleagues in the **Chinook Winds**, who have been notified that the ensemble will be discontinued at the end of the season in May.



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### *Game Day Fun for ALL*

Plan now to attend Game Day, sponsored by the Christian Education Board. This intergenerational event will be held during coffee fellowship on **April 7** and will feature games for all ages and lunch!

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### *Easter Basket Ministry*

Thank you to everyone who is donating items for Easter Baskets. **Don't forget that items are due by Thursday, March 20.** Can't wait to see the many wonderful goodies!



### **Delivery Volunteers Needed**

A new sign-up sheet for volunteers to deliver Easter Baskets is in the narthex under the Easter Basket Ministry poster. Due to a little confusion with the first sheet, please sign up again if you can help deliver baskets. Thank you! **Baskets will be ready for delivery by the afternoon of March 21. All baskets should be delivered by March 31.**

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### *Journey With Us Through Lent*

#### Upcoming Worship Theme Schedule and Notes

March 24	11:00 A.M.	Palm Sunday; Worship Creation Theme: Stones
March 28	7:30 P.M.	Maundy Thursday; Tenebrae service with Communion Joint service with Christ UMC
March 31	9:30 A.M.	Easter Sunday; Joint service with Christ UMC, Rev. Lynne Preaching



***Spring Fling***  
***April 18, 12:00 P.M.***

All women are invited to the Spring Fling Salad Luncheon. **Hosted by Christ United Methodist Women in Faith** (formerly UMW), this free program will feature the topic “how to be a good neighbor to the folks using the new Recreation Center.” Find out what this new facility is offering to our community and how we can partner with them. Speaker is Jessica Compton Parks & Rec. **Please RSVP to Linda Larson by April 14, (406) 868-8409.**

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***Gardens at 2900***

*“Inch by inch, Row by row. Gonna watch this garden grow.”*

**If you would like to be in on the beginnings of the gardens in our church yard, contact the church office or Bruce Cole.** This is all in the very early dreaming stages so it’s a time of exploration and wondering. The hope is to create community gardens of some kind to help provide fresh, healthy produce for those receiving food assistance through FISH or the West Elementary food pantry. We don’t know a lot just yet so we’re looking for some ideas and guidance and a core group of folks to figuratively till the soil and plant the seeds for what could be an amazing ministry.

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***Our Relationship with Christ United Methodist Church  
the “Merger or Shared Ministry” Conversation Continues***

There was a meeting of both pastors and key lay leaders from both congregations on Thursday, March 7. We shared the outcome of our Congregational Conversation and information brought forward at the February Church Council meeting. The folks from Christ UMC provided us with information about their process. They have discovered that work was done several years ago to begin the process to become a Reconciling Ministries Congregation (the United Methodist version of Open and Affirming). They are taking steps to continue that process. They will be contacting folks on their membership list to verify their desire to remain active members and seek input from their congregation about things that need to be considered in the conversation. They are also hoping to have a congregational conversation using the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) assessment like we did on February 11.

The Pastors and key lay leaders will be meeting with our wider church leaders – our Transitional Conference Minister, the United Methodist District Superintendent and a member of their Conference Trustees. That meeting will most likely happen shortly after Easter.

**Please remember to keep your church in your prayers as we continue the conversation.**

**If you have any questions or thoughts, please be in touch with  
Dick Kloppel, Karen Spencer, Rev. Lynne or any of the Church Council members.**

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***Spring Retreat***  
***“Seeking God: A Spiritual Practices Retreat”***

**Facilitator: Rev. Charles Wei, Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, Helena**  
**Friday, April 19, 4:00 P.M. – Saturday, April 20, 7:00 P.M.**  
**Cost: \$25.00 – scholarships available upon request.**

**Remember to sign up by this Sunday (March 17).** Beginning March 18, registrations will be opened up to our friends at Christ United Methodist Church and Fairfield and Helena UCC’s. Retreat participation is limited to 30.

(continued)

Retreat continued...



We will be participating in several hands on and sensory activities, including creating personal mosaics. Materials will be provided and you are also invited to bring your own materials for your mosaic. Suitable materials include ceramic, china, glass, sea shells, and rocks – basically any hard item that will not be destroyed by being placed in grout. Bring your items whole. Creating the pieces will be part of the process.

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### ***First Congregational UCC Camp Corner***

**Camp registrations are now available**

#### **For Our Youth:**

➤ **You and Me Intergenerational Adventures: July 5-8, 2024 at Mimanagish**

(formerly Grandparents and Me) Cost \$290 per person – Registration Deadline: June 1, 2024. *No refunds after June 1.* A special time of intergenerational fellowship, spiritual renewal, and bonding as a community in a wilderness setting close to God. (Each youth must be accompanied by an adult. Multiple youth can “share” the same adult.)

Registration Link for You and Me Camp: <https://www.mnwcucc.org/youme>

➤ **Youth Adventures Camp: July 9 – 15, 2024 at Mimanagish for Grades 3 – 12**

*(Grouped according to grade completed by May: 3-5<sup>th</sup> grades; 6-8<sup>th</sup> grades; 9-12<sup>th</sup> grades)*

Cost \$475 – Bus ride optional at \$25 – Registration Deadline: June 1, 2024 *No refunds after June 1*

Registration link for Youth Adventures Camp: <https://www.mnwcucc.org/youth>

#### **For the Adults (there are options for adults as well!):**

➤ **The Great Escape Adult Adventures: August 25 – 30, 2024 at Christikon**

Details to come soon!

➤ **Pride Adventures**

More information coming soon for folks interested in a time for LGBTQ+ adults (18+)

#### **Additional Options:**

Other quality Outdoor Ministry Opportunities (not related to Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference) in an open and affirming atmosphere are available at Christikon (the Lutheran Camp up the canyon from Mimanagish). See their options at: <https://christikon.org/>. And at Camp Mimanagish through Singing Waters Montana. See the full listing at: <https://www.mimanagish.org/>

#### **Scholarship Information:**

Thanks to a very successful Camp Scholarship Silent Auction on Camp Sunday and funds remaining from last year, we will be offering camp scholarships again this year. **If you are planning to utilize our camp scholarships we must know by May 1.** Once we know how many people will be using the scholarship funds, we will know how much each camper will receive. Contact Rev. Lynne at [pastor@greatfallsucc.org](mailto:pastor@greatfallsucc.org) or Janet Koostra at [janetkoostra@gmail.com](mailto:janetkoostra@gmail.com) to add your name to the scholarship recipient list. Camp scholarships are also available through the Conference at: <https://www.mnwcucc.org/scholarship>

*If you would like to make an additional donation to our local camp scholarship, you can do so through the church. Please indicate “Camp Scholarship” on your donation. And don’t forget, you can give online through paypal.*



## *Conference Outdoor Ministry Happenings*

**To support Outdoor Ministry and other Conference missions, the Conference Committee on Outdoor Ministry is asking folks to consider participating in a special fundraising opportunity.** Not having our own facility creates logistical issues for storage during camps, for transporting programming needs to camp, for storage during the off-season, and for portability of supplies for events around the Conference. We are dreaming of a trailer to serve as our Conference-on-wheels, and we are asking folks around the Conference to help make it a reality.

**UPDATE:** Trudi Downer's former student made a great deal to purchase a 6 x 10 trailer. The price means that our goal of \$5000 will not only purchase the trailer but will cover all the repair and retrofitting needed to put the Conference-on-Wheels. Trudi has loaned Outdoor Ministries the \$2900 to purchase the trailer. The trailer is sturdy and dependable. The work needed besides setting up the storage area for our needs with shelving, flooring, etc. is cosmetic.

### **How Can You Support this Mission?**

- Consider giving an amount you would have contributed to the camp offering last season.
- Consider a donation or an in-kind gift to support this worthwhile project.
- All money raised will first go to paying off the purchase of the trailer and then to fitting the trailer with shelving, power, etc.
- In-kind gifts of materials and labor to fix up the trailer would be wonderful.

**Donation Link:** <https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/MNWC/trailer>

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### *Coming Up*

#### **Friday, March 15**

1:30 P.M. Widows Support Group, Parlor

4:30 P.M. Loaves & Fishes Dinner, 4:30-6:30 P.M., 1326 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N.

#### **Sunday, March 17**

10:30 A.M. Youth Sunday School, Parlor

12:15 P.M. Baptism Class, Sanctuary

3:00 P.M. Stewardship Board, Zoom

#### **Monday, March 18**

6:30 P.M. Church Council, Zoom

#### **Tuesday, March 19**

12:45 P.M. Reading, West Elementary

#### **Wednesday, March 20**

10:00 A.M. Bridge Group, 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 Rehearsal, Sanctuary

#### **Friday, March 22**

1:30 P.M. Widows Support Group, Parlor

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