

The Good News

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

E-Mail: greatfallsucc@bresnan.net

www.greatfallsucc.org

P. O. Box 6303, 59406

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

Worship Service

August 18, 2024

9:30 A.M.



Praise God!

Combined with Christ United Methodist

Minister: Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith

Scripture: 1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14, Psalm 111

Lay Reader: Carol Shipley

Ushers: Dean Jardee, June Rovero

Accompanist: Sharman Tokerud

Choir Director: Jason Webster

Nursery: Gracie Kuszmaul, CJ Mollohan

Fellowship: Verna Kessner, KimKay McCarty Martin

Tellers: Carol Shipley, Noël Walker

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



Teacher Meeting—All Are Welcome Here!

It's time to organize our slate of Sunday School teachers for fall programming. **Join Janet Koostra, Christian Education Coordinator, and Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith on August 18 in the parlor at 10:45 A.M.** Grab treats and a coffee then head to the parlor to discuss the upcoming lesson schedule and our Safe Conduct Policy. This meeting is open to previous teachers as well as those interested in finding out more about this opportunity for ministry for our children. **No experience necessary!** The curriculum we use is simple and very user-friendly. Questions? **Please contact Janet Koostra at janetkoostra@gmail.com or call/text 406-727-8443.**

In Our Thoughts and Prayers



† Congratulations to **Mike & Suzan Seery** who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary August 8.
† Our sympathy to **Ray Young** in the death of his sister **Betty**.



Christian Education News

It's already mid-August! **Watch for Sunday School News coming soon!** In the meantime, children 6 years old and up will find resources to use during worship at the Pray Ground and in Christ Kids Bags at the back of the sanctuary. Nursery care is available for children through age 5.



Summer Joint Worship Schedule

All services are at 9:30 A.M.

August 25 Worship with joint leadership. **Change of plans! Indoor service.**
September 1 Joint summer worship, Christ UMC leadership, Holy Communion

This will be the final Joint Worship for the year. Beginning September 8, we will continue with combined worship at 9:30 A.M. Services going forward in the fall will incorporate leadership and elements from both worship traditions over time.

September 8 Rally Day and First Unified Worship of the fall.

We will continue to worship at 9:30 A.M. with our friends from Christ United Methodist Church.

September 15 Unified Worship



Rally Day Garden Party! *September 8, 2024*

Save the date for our annual Post-Summer Rally Day on Sunday, September 8. **We will have our first fall unified worship at 9:30 A.M. with the choir singing.** After worship, we'll make our way to Fellowship Hall for food and fun. With the theme "Garden Party" be prepared for activities related to growth, flowers, yummy fruits and vegetables and, as always, fun for all. **Our friends from Christ United Methodist Church will be joining us in worship and for the festivities.**

137th Conference Annual Meeting *September 26-29, 2024*

If you are interested in being a delegate to represent First Congregational United Church of Christ at this year's Conference Annual Meeting, **please contact Dick Kloppel or Karen Spencer.** Registration will be paid for by the church though delegates are in charge of their lodging. The Conference has reserved blocks of rooms, held at a discounted rate, at the following hotels:

Best Western Plus Clocktower Inn, 2511 1st Ave. N., Downtown Billings. \$169/night. To reserve, call 406-259-5611 and request CAM Conference group block.

Super Stay Plus by Best Western, 3040 King Ave. W., West End Billings. \$150/night. Reserve by calling 406-294-9090 and request CAM Conference group block.

Reservations must be made by September 1 for the discounted group booking rate.

Fall Book Study

With all the talk about a potential merger of some fashion with Christ United Methodist Church, we realize that we are about to enter uncharted territory. Beginning September 9, we will explore the writing and insights of Tod Bolsinger who has used the lessons of Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery as a model to help churches navigate their way through new directions in ministry and mission.

The course will be offered both in person and on Zoom.
There will be six sessions, 2 weeks apart.

**In-Person sessions will be Monday's beginning
September 9 at 10:30 A.M.**

**Zoom sessions will be Tuesdays beginning
September 10 at 6:30 P.M.**

Each session will be 90 minutes.

Zoom information:

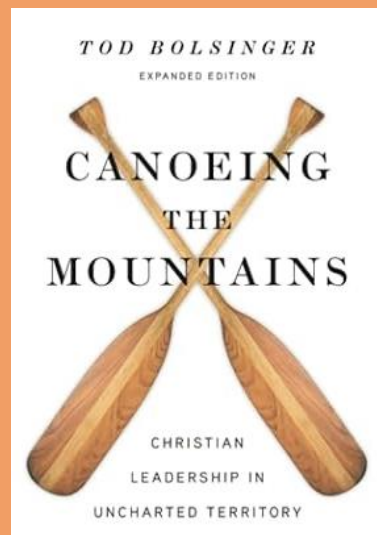
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85796035444?pwd=gF1halCbV7uLOGNFHeutGVaUof9Nd.1>

Meeting ID: 857 9603 5444

Passcode: 590718

Books can be purchased at your usual sources. You are encouraged to support local bookstores (they may have to order it for you so don't wait until the last minute) or online stores selling used books (betterworldbooks.com; bookshop.org, etc.).

Pre-registration is not required but helpful. Please see the sign-up sheets on the Welcome Table in the Narthex and in Fellowship Hall. You can also simply contact the church office to let us know you'll be joining us on the journey.



As you may have seen on the news, Montana has closed the wait list for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (also known as Section 8). This directly affects many of the families we serve, as well as our shelter families. The Housing Choice Voucher Program is a federally funded program that allows participants to pay 30% of their income for rent, and the voucher covers the other 70% of the balance. As you can imagine, with the rising cost of housing, this news is a huge blow to the families on the waiting list. Most people (51%) currently utilizing the Housing Choice Voucher Program are elderly or disabled. We're not the only state to shut down the waiting list, Arkansas and Texas have also closed their lists. At this time, it is our intention to continue the course for the families we serve, and to continue to offer our services to those who are eligible (based on funding available). Now, more than ever, donations of all kinds are imperative to our organization. Be it in-kind donations, volunteer hours, or monetary gifts, we appreciate the support of our generous community.

Mighty Mo Brew Pub has once again agreed to host a "Raise a Pint Night" for Family Promise on Monday, September 9th from 5:00-8:00 P.M. During the event, \$1 from every pint of beer sold will benefit the families we serve. Our staff will be on hand during the event to raffle off a gift basket from Studio Montage that is valued at \$150! Children are welcome to attend and

enjoy some great food for a great cause.

**Family Promise
Current Needs List:**

Chef Boyardee canned pasta
Mac n Cheese cups
Bottled water
Pop tarts
Printer paper
Diapers and Pull Ups/Baby Wipes
Shampoo and Conditioner
Hairbrushes/Hair ties
Hair detangle spray
Razors/Shaving Cream



Down the Road

October 27	Halloween Party
November 17	Thanksgiving Potluck
December 15	Christmas Pageant

Coming Up

Holly will be out of the office August 15-19.

Sunday, August 18

10:45 A.M. SS Teacher Meeting, Parlor
3:00 P.M. Stewardship Board, Zoom

Monday, August 19

6:30 P.M. Church Council, Zoom

Wednesday, August 21

10:00 A.M. Bridge Group, SS Wing
1:30 P.M. Pinochle, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, August 25

9:30 A.M. Combined Worship Service*

*please note the service will be indoors

On September 19, the Christian Century and Faith and Reason.org are combining efforts to present a webinar on “Faith and Democracy: Confronting White Christian Nationalism.” **The webinar is free and I encourage you to look into participating:**

https://www.christiancentury.org/faithanddemocracy?utm_source=Christian+Century+Newsletter&utm_campaign=34b3370eb7-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_EdPicks_2024-08-13&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b00cd618da-34b3370eb7-82373899

The subject line in the email publishing the event caught my eye: “What type of nation do you want to live in?” What a great question. What a great way to address anything that is important in our lives. What type of marriage relationship do you want to live in? What type of neighborly relationship do you want to live into? What type of relationship with myself do you want to have? And.... Here’s the church one... “What type of church do you want to belong to?”

With the upcoming elections just over the horizon, we are pulled into the reality of our involvement around the first question. Every season, every month, every week we have the opportunity to consider the last question and respond very tangibly by how we are involved in the church, how we share our time, our talents, our finances and our voices. In the church, there’s an additional question that we should be asking as well: “What type of church is God calling us to be?”

Churches are not just another nice organization filled with good people who do good things for one another, the world and the community. There are lots of organizations around town that fit that description. We get to be different. We are who we are, not just because it’s the cool thing to do or because it’s what we want to do. When the church is at its best, it’s because we are constantly asking the question, “What type of church is God calling us to be?”

Keep that in mind as we step into a new church year as we emerge from the summer; as our Sunday school begins; as we experience things in new ways because of the ongoing conversation we are having with Christ United Methodist Church; as we get ready for our Stewardship campaign; and as we consider what type of church we want to be a part of.

God has richly blessed this congregation for over 130 years. There’s all indication that blessing will continue for many years to come. Let’s keep paying attention to be the type of church God is calling us to be.

Have a blessed week.

Rev. Lynne

