
The Good News

Volume 2024

August 28, 2024

Issue 35

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
September 1, 2024
9:30 A.M.



Holy Communion

Combined with Christ United Methodist

Minister: Rev. Jack Mattingly

Accompanist: Sharman Tokerud

Nursery: Gracie Kuzmaul, CJ Mollohan

Tellers: Paul Haffeman, Carol Shipley

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



Christian Education News

It's almost time for Sunday School! **Children from First Congregational UCC and Christ United Methodist are invited to join in our program year! Class will start on September 8, Rally Sunday!** This year we will have one class for children from age 5 through grade 5, with once-a-month classes that will also include 6th – 8th graders. We will continue to use the Sparkhouse curriculum, "Activate Faith". The fall will feature lessons from the Old Testament. This year we're adding a special twist. Program year 2024-25 will include a special year-long theme, "Caring For . . .". **Once a month, all children aged 5-grade 8 are invited to join in a class focused on service.** Special topics will include Caring for the Unhoused, Caring for Animals, Caring for West Elementary and many others! These lessons will include scripture, a service project and more. Registration forms for all children and parent information forms will be available next week. It's going to be an exciting and educational year and we can't wait to start!

In Our Thoughts and Prayers



† Congratulations to **Ed and Karen Venetz** on the birth of their great-nephew, **David Venetz**.
† Our sympathy to **Janet Koostra** in the death of her uncle **Ray Kenik**, August 24, age 96.



West Elementary School Supply and Food Pantry Drive

Thank you for your donations of West Elementary School supplies. Sunday's blessing of the backpacks and school supplies was special. It was fun to hear why kids want to return to school: "So I won't be bored," "So I can hang out with my friends." Thanks for helping keep kids on the same level by supporting the school supplies drive. If you care to donate additional supplies while the sales are in progress, please

feel free to do so.

However... we found out West Elementary has enough school supplies to get the students going for a while...what they don't have is enough food in the food pantry. The state supplies the school with peanut butter, bread, and cheese. **What the school needs is:**

- Jelly
- Cup of Soup
- Canned soup – with a flip top if available
- Cereal
- Pasta sauce in a jar
- Canned fruit and vegetables
- Ramen
- Chili – with a flip top if available
- Can openers

Please place food items in the narthex in the West Elementary box if you want to donate them. If you would like to make a monetary donation, please make the check to UCC and mark the memo to WE food drive or scan this QR code and mark the notation as WE food drive. Your generosity of school supplies and food fills the children's imaginations with caring thoughts instead of empty tummies. West Elementary School is very grateful to you for your generosity.



Food Pantry donations are planned through September 29th.



Upcoming Worship Schedule All services are at 9:30 A.M.

- September 8** Rally Day and First Unified Worship
- September 15** Unified Worship
- September 22** Abbreviated Service with Congregational Conversations following worship
- September 29** Unified Worship

With Each Word a Child Reads, They Are Gaining Knowledge

Imagine Volunteering Together and Building Readers

Volunteers are needed to join the reading program at West Elementary. The goal is to build strong readers in elementary school so that all children leave elementary school with solid reading skills and habits. In the 2023-2024 school year, the GFPS piloted a group tutoring model in two elementary schools. The evaluations from students, teachers, principals, and volunteers are showing positive results, and both schools—and their volunteers—want to continue Building Readers next year. For 2024-2025, they aim to add five more elementary schools to the project, including West Elementary School. Here's how it works: **A group of at least 5-7 adults each agree to spend 1 hour per week in an elementary school.** The adults each cover a day of the week and cover or trade with each other when their schedule changes or one person goes on vacation. **This means the young readers get extra practice every day of the week—and get to know at least 5 wonderful volunteers in our community! Volunteers have one student at a time join them to practice reading skills for 5-10 minutes. Volunteers see about 5-7 children in that hour. Before meeting the young readers, volunteers complete a 90-minute training, complete a background check at GFPS, get a tour of the school, and meet the school Principal.**

- **Training starts the week of September 16, 2024**
- **The Building Readers program is scheduled to begin October 1, 2024**
- **Background checks through the school district are necessary to participate.** They are provided at the GFPS district office at 1100 4th St. S. Go to the HR office at the east end of the main building (door M). If you've had a background check through the school district, you should be okay, unless it's been quite a while since you have volunteered.
- As we gather additional information, your Christian Service board will share it.
- **What you can do in the meantime:** Check your schedule to see if you are available for training the week of September 16. Get your background check done before then.

If you are interested in volunteering for 2024-25 Building Readers program, please contact the church office or email Sharon Oakland at dsoak02@gmail.com or Karen Venetz, kvenetz183@gmail.com

Canoeing the Mountains Book Study

A few questions that have come up:

- Can I switch back and forth between the in-person and Zoom sessions? **Yes!**
- Do I need to purchase the book ahead of time? **Yes!** Use your favorite book source and remember to give them plenty of time if they need to order it.
- Although pre-registration is not required, it will be helpful to know if we'll have enough folks to have a meaningful discussion.

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

Each session will be 90 minutes.

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.

Zoom information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85796035444?pwd=gF1halCbV7ulOGNFHeutGVaUof9Nd.1>

Meeting ID: 857 9603 5444

Passcode: 590718



Women In Faith

Fall programming is in full swing which includes Women in Faith (WIF). This is a long time Women's group in Christ United Methodist Church. **We are a fellowship of women who support each other and reach out in mission to other women and children. We meet every month on the 3rd Thursday at 1:00 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall.** Linda Larson is our current President and could answer any other questions. She will also be at a table on Rally Day Sunday with a list of past missions we have supported. **This month we are having a special program to spotlight homeless children and how some are being housed at the Missouri River Youth Home.** The executive director, Stacie Eckenstein will tell us about the Kairos Youth Home and how we can connect with them. **Mark your calendars for September 19th at 1:00 P.M. to join this group of caring women.** Linda will be reminding you again of this meeting as it gets closer.

Coming Up

Friday, August 30-Monday, September 2

Pride Camp at Camp & Retreat Center

Saturday, August 31

3:00 P.M. Bill Salonen Memorial Service,
GFHS Davidson auditorium

Monday, September 2- Labor Day

Office closed

Wednesday, September 4

10:00 A.M. Bridge, SS Wing

1:30 P.M. Pinochle, Fellowship Hall

6:00 P.M. Choir BBQ, hosted by Dennis Dell & Sue Skees,
3917 17th Ave. S.

Thursday, September 5

4:00 P.M. Joint Facilities, Fellowship Hall

Town Pump has again selected FISH to be a part of the
"Be a Friend In Deed, Help Those in Need" Campaign.

**Between September 1-November 30,
Town Pump will match every donation,
up to \$25,000, given to FISH.**
