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# The Good News of First Congregational UCC and Christ United Methodist Church

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Volume 2024  
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*like us on Facebook: First Congregational United Church of Christ-Great Falls, MT  
Christ United Methodist Church Great Falls*

**Worship Notes For  
November 24, 2024  
Reign of Christ  
9:30 A.M.**



Worship Leader: Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith  
Scripture: Revelation 1:4b-8, John 18:33-37  
Lay Reader: Dana Kirkmeyer  
Ushers: Nancy Dallmann, Susan Thomas  
Acolytes: Jullian Valley, Alicia Light  
Choir Director: Jason Webster  
Accompanist: Victor Tsai  
Sunday School: Noël Walker, Sue Turton  
Nursery: Gracie Kuszmaul, May Harris  
Coffee Fellowship: Bill Tiskus, Dennis & Sue Turton  
Treats: Elaine Balzer, Karen Spencer  
Tellers: Carol Shipley, Noël Walker

The service will be live-streamed on both church Facebook pages  
and a recording of the livestream will be available on YouTube  
later in the day and on the UCC website.

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## ***Thankful for Thanksgiving Potluck***

The Fellowship Board would like to thank all who were a part of this year's Thanksgiving Potluck. Thanks to those who **cooked and carved, brought dishes to share, set up/cleaned up**, and thank you to the nearly 100 of those who **brought their family and friends** for a special evening. Thank you!

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## ***In Our Thoughts and Prayers***



† ***Carol Shipley and family as Ron settles into Bee Hive Assisted Living.***

† **Hudson**, granddaughter of **Tony and Melissa Zimmer**, is being treated for two broken wrists after falling from a swing.

## ***Last call for Search Committee***

An invitation for anyone interested in being considered for the Search and Call Committee was included with the November 6 *Good News*. **This is a final call for anyone who would like to be considered for the Search Committee.** The Committee will consist of 6-8 members of First Congregational UCC and 2 members of Christ United Methodist Church (selected by CUMC). We envision a committee comprised of people representing the diversity of our congregation (gender, age, years of membership, racial, cultural, economic, sexual orientation), as well as individuals involved in varied aspects of church life.

First Congregational UCC members are asked to contact Dick Kloppel (406-799-7094) or Karen Spencer (406-781-6381) to indicate your interest, nominate someone, or for information regarding the process, time commitment, and responsibilities. Christ United Methodist members should contact their leadership team to be considered as a CUMC representative to the Committee.

**Due to the length of the Search and Call process, the Committee will begin being formed on November 25 so your Council can approve it at the December Council meeting.** Our intent is to have our vacancy advertised and church profile posted by the end of February. Thank you.

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## ***Christian Education News***

On Sunday, November 24, children will begin in worship where they will have a “Children’s Message in a Bag”. In Sunday School, the lesson will be “Jonah and the Big Fish” with **teacher Noel Walker and helper Sue Turton. Children age 5- 6<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome in Sunday School.**

**Nursery care is provided for children through age 5.**

**Children’s Message: Chase has already brought the Brown Bag and is ready to share this Sunday. Thank you Chase!**

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## ***United Women in Faith***

Ladies- remember tomorrow is our United Women in Faith meeting. **Join us in Fellowship Hall on Thursday, November 21 at 1:00 P.M.** Help bring our gingerbread people and houses to life!

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## ***Pageant Rehearsal***

Christmas Pageant rehearsal this week will take place in the sanctuary following worship and Sunday School. **We will begin at 10:45 A.M. Actors with speaking roles: Remember to bring your scripts! Rehearsal will be done by 12:00 noon.** Questions? Please contact Janet Koostra at [janetkoostra@gmail.com](mailto:janetkoostra@gmail.com) or 406-727-8443.

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## ***Christmas Poinsettias***

Some of you may remember when we used live poinsettia plants as part of the sanctuary Advent and Christmas decorating. **We are reviving that tradition this season** and invite members of our congregations to participate (if you wish) in the following way:

Honor a loved one or just contribute to the beauty of our sanctuary this Christmas by donating **\$15** for a live poinsettia. Names of those who are honored will be included in our Christmas Eve bulletin. **Please send checks made out to UCC (with flower fund in the memo) and names of those to be honored to the church office no later than Sunday, December 15. You may also place checks and names in an envelope in the offering trays each Sunday.** Poinsettias will be displayed the entire Advent season.

## ***Announcement...***

Congregational Meeting for both Christ United Methodist and First Congregational United Church of Christ is scheduled for **Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> after worship**. The 2025 unified budget will be discussed and the Fellowship Board will serve refreshments in the Sanctuary.

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### ***West Elementary Christmas***

**Imagine Together** how gift-giving spreads joy and makes a lasting impact. Each year at Christmas, the UCC Christian Service Board adopts families at West Elementary; each year, your generosity fulfills the children's wishes. **The need has grown this year, and we have adopted three families.** The gift-giving tree is located in the Narthex.

If you wish to fulfill a child's wish, please **select a tag, purchase the gift, and return the gift wrapped with the tag securely attached to the church no later than Monday, December 16.** Thank you for sharing your love and joy. You are all amazing children of God! Merry Christmas.

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**Delicious Christian Service News!  
Borrie's is having a fundraiser for**

**West Elementary PTA on Wednesday, November 20**

We know this is short notice. If you see this and have not yet made plans for dinner, **Borrie's will donate 10% of all dine-in orders to West Elementary PTA.**

**Please consider dining in on Wednesday.**

It is also Wine Down Wednesday. Bottles of wine are half-off.

Treat yourself to a delicious meal, enjoy a nice bottle of wine, and support a worthy cause.

The PTA is fundraising for new and improved playground equipment.

1800 Smelter Avenue, Black Eagle

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### ***UCC Stewardship Winding Down***

**78/137 pledges received for a total of \$180,600**

Of those 78:

34 increased                      \$13,900

29 same                              \$38,520

9 decreased                        \$3,922

6 new from last year    \$2,560

**Last year's totals were 83 pledges totaling \$187,162.00**

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### ***Fishing for Volunteers***

**UCC week at the FISH Food Pantry is December 2-6 from 9:00-11:00 A.M.**

**If you would like to distribute food to families in need that week, please call Carol Davidson at 406-836-1862.**



## ***Christ Methodist Financial Report for October***

October Income \$12,828.77

October Expenses \$12,078.43

October Net Income \$750.34

Checking Balance October 31, \$54,302.41

Year to date Income October 31, \$5,615.93

I paid our Mission Shares/Apportionment of \$1,200.00 for October to Conference and will do so in November and December. Thank you to each of you for your continued support of our Church. Blessings to all of you and Happy Thanksgiving. Jeanne Nobbs

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### ***World AIDS Day Observances and Events***

#### **World AIDS Day is observed every year on December 1.**

This year, there are several community events related to observance and education.

➤ **World AIDS Day Service and Re-Dedication of AIDS Memorial Rock**

Offered by The Great Falls Progressive Ministerial Association

Sunday, December 1, 2:00 P.M.

Central Christian Church – 1025 Central Avenue

*The AIDS Memorial Rock has been relocated to Central Christian Church from it's original location at the former Metropolitan Community Church*

➤ **“How to Survive a Plague”**

Documentary film by David France about the early days of AIDS.

Tuesday, December 3, 6:00 P.M.

Great Falls Public Library

Doors open at 5:30 P.M. – Documentary starts at 6:00 P.M.

➤ **A Little White Party for World AIDS Day**

Saturday, December 7, 7:00 – 10:00 P.M.

Luna Coffee, 9 5<sup>th</sup> Street N.

HIV and Hep C tests available from 7:00-8:00 P.M. provided by Alluvion



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### ***Special Conference Meeting – December 8, 1:00 P.M. via Zoom***

The Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference Board of Directors has approved to hold a special meeting of the Conference on **December 8, 2024** to vote on becoming a signatory Conference to the STAR Coalition Resolution. The documents for the meeting can be viewed on the Conference Website: <https://www.mnwcucc.org/>. Click on “Events” for a drop-down menu for all related material. Please join us for this meeting to support the STAR (Small Town and Rural) Ministries.

Zoom Registration

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMtc-CgrTkuG9YMGke4rkEBtkZw-vUDLw09>

According to the Conference bylaws, **we are allotted 4 lay delegates**. Clergy attend as clergy delegates. **If you are interested in participating as a delegate to this meeting, please contact Rev. Lynne or the church office.**

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### ***New Headphones for Hearing Assist Devices***

If you're a regular user of our hearing assist devices you know that we've been having some problems with them. We've determined that the problem is with the headphones so those have all been replaced. **There are two options to choose from:** one style is a standard headset similar to the old ones; the other style is a cushioned semi-noise reducing version. Try them both out to find your favorite.





## ***Sunday School + Shoeboxes = Merry Christmas!***

This year, Sunday School will jump into the Christmas Shoebox Ministry, a long-time mission of Christ United Methodist Church. **On December 1, children will sort small gift items like candy, games, shampoo, mittens and toothbrushes.** Then they will fill shoeboxes with items based on age and gender. Finally, kids will wrap the boxes for delivery to the Blackfeet Methodist church for distribution to children in need in the Browning area. The Christian Education Board is very excited to participate in this ministry! **What a wonderful way to help our children learn that kids can help other kids, and kids can be God's helpers through sharing God's love with others!** Sunday School families are asked to prayerfully consider donating individually packaged **toothbrushes, toothpaste, hats and mittens.** An extra shoebox or two could also be helpful! **Linda Holland who has led this ministry for Christ United Methodist Church will be the guest speaker in Sunday School to share about this hands-on approach to God's love.**



### ***Coming Up***

#### **Thursday, November 21**

1:00 P.M. United Women in Faith, FH

#### **Friday, November 22**

1:30 P.M. Grief Support, Parlor

#### **Sunday, November 24**

10:45 A.M. Pageant Rehearsal, Sanctuary

#### **Monday, November 25**

10:30 A.M. Canoeing the Mountains, Parlor

#### **Tuesday, November 26**

10:00 A.M. Mitten Makers, FH

#### **Wednesday, November 27**

1:30 P.M. Pinochle, FH

NO YOUTH GROUP

6:00 P.M. Handbell Rehearsal, Sanctuary

7:15 P.M. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

#### **Thursday, November 28**

Happy Thanksgiving! The office will be closed Thursday and Friday

### ***Shoebox Christmas***

**You are invited to participate in the annual shoebox Christmas event, a mission of the Blackfeet United Methodist Parish in Browning, MT.** The Blackfeet United Methodist Parish serves the people who live on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. The majority of the present-day residents living on the Blackfeet Reservation are bloodline descendants of the original indigenous inhabitants of this area. At Christmastime, there is a collection of shoeboxes filled with age-appropriate items for male and female, aged birth to adult. **The boxes will be collected now through December 10 before being delivered to Browning beginning December 15.** Use the labels listed below indicating if your box is for male or female and the age group. These labels will also be on the table in the narthex and have ideas listed for gifts.

## **MALE OR FEMALE      0-12 MONTHS**

Basic transport needs, basic diapers, powder, cream, bath wash, towels, layette sets, clothes, soft toys, teething toys, blankets, bed sets, changing cloths/wipes

## **MALE OR FEMALE      12-24 MONTHS**

Pull-Ups, bath wash, towels, pajamas, clothes, learning toys, physically stimulating toys

## **MALE OR FEMALE      1-3 YRS. OLD**

Bath wash, towels, tooth care, pajamas, clothes, gloves, mittens, hat, scarf, sweaters, sweatshirts, thermal underwear, snow suit, learning toys, physically stimulating toys, books that can be read to them (nursery rhymes)

## **MALE OR FEMALE      4-6 YRS. OLD**

Bath wash, towels, tooth care, pajamas, clothes, gloves, mittens, hat, scarf, sweaters, sweatshirts, thermal underwear, snow suit, learning toys, physically stimulating toys, books to be read to them (Golden Oldies, Three Bears, Three Pigs)

## **MALE OR FEMALE      7-12 YRS. OLD**

Bath essentials, self-care essentials, gloves, mittens, hat, scarf, sweaters, sweatshirts, thermal underwear, snow suit, learning toys (Legos, board games), physically stimulating toys (balls, marbles, jacks), books to read (adventure, nature)

## **MALE OR FEMALE      13-18 YRS. OLD**

Bath essentials, self-care essentials, gloves, mittens, hat, scarf, sweaters, sweatshirts, thermal underwear, snow suit, board games, physically stimulating toys (balls), books to read (adventure, nature, mystery)

## **MALE OR FEMALE      ADULT**

Self-care essentials, gloves, mittens, hat, scarf, sweaters, sweatshirts, thermal underwear, snow pants, books to read (adventure, nature, mystery, self-help)

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### ***We are Joining the Justice 100!***

The Justice 100 Team is people, churches, and organizations who join the mission of the ONA Coalition of the United Church of Christ and will commit to raising at least \$1,000 in new funds for the Coalition.

FCUCC Church Council has determined that supporting the work of the Coalition is an important way we can further our Open and Affirming mission. We are seeking 10 donations of \$100 to help us meet our goal. You can make an individual donation of \$100 or go together with friends to collectively give \$100. **We already have three \$100 commitments from council members.** Whoo hoo! *Make your donation through the church, indicating Justice 100 with your gift.* If you make your donation through PayPal, please consider covering the administrative fee to PayPal so we can forward your entire gift to the Coalition.

Here's why supporting the ministry of the Open and Affirming Coalition is important:

**We are working for a just future:** The landscape for LGBTQ+ rights has grown increasingly

complex. Trans youth face targeted legislation, healthcare access is under threat, and the fight for full inclusion continues. In the face of such adversity, the ONA Coalition remains a beacon of hope.

**Expanding the ONA Movement:** We'll continue to guide and accompany more churches through the process of becoming inclusive, affirming spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals and families.

**Strengthening Our Network:** We'll continue to support existing Open and Affirming churches in renewing or updating their covenants, ensuring a continuous commitment to extravagant welcome, dignity, and inclusion.

**Building Bridges for Change:** We'll continue to work with our denomination, ecumenical partners, and local churches to create coalitions and partnerships with LGBTQ+ organizations, fostering unity for the multiple fronts for justice and advocacy work.

**Empowering Advocates:** We'll continue to develop resources, training programs, and best practices to equip churches and develop leaders to champion LGBTQ+ rights, safety, and inclusion beyond their walls.

**Creating Circles of Support:** We'll continue to provide support networks and resources for LGBTQ+ people within and outside the church, as well as for LGBTQ+ clergy (and other leaders) navigating their leadership roles.

**Fostering Safe and Affirming Spaces:** We'll continue to work with churches and other organizations in their ongoing work to create environments where LGBTQ+ individuals can feel welcomed, protected, celebrated, and fully affirmed in their identities.

Together, we are creating a world where love truly knows no bounds and LGBTQ+ individuals can thrive, not only within church walls, but also in their communities.

