

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

Volume 2025

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September 24, 2025  
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Issue 27

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

**September 28, 2025  
Worship Service  
10:00 A.M.**



*Minister*

*Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith*

Scripture: Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

Lay Reader: Betsy Rogstad

Ushers: Jenn Goss, Bruce & Linda Grossman

Acolyte: Chase Schrader

Accompanist/Music Director: Melissa Gilbert

Sunday School: Susan Sanford

Nursery: May Harris, Lily Yelvington

Coffee Fellowship: Peggy Floen, Bev Harris, Bill Tiskus

Treats: Connie Brauer, Melissa Zimmer

UCC Tellers: Paul Haffeman, Nancy Zadick

Christ UMC Tellers: Rosemary Neilsen, Jeanne Nobbs

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.

**The office will close at 12:30 P.M. on Thursday, September 25 for an office staff lunch off site. The office will be open on Friday, September 26 from 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.**

## ***Special Congregational Meeting/Charge Conference***

**This meeting is called to vote on a name for the new church to be formed upon the federation of Christ United Methodist Church and First Congregational United Church of Christ.**

**Sunday, September 28, 2025, following worship  
In person or Zoom**

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87331790014?pwd=rb5d6giyadaQBQJXkJPVzt3taLGOy3.1>

Meeting ID: 873 3179 0014  
Passcode: 530676

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### *Christ United Church*

When I started thinking of a new name, I wanted one that expressed who we are and what we stand for. My choice is Christ United Church. **It is centered in Christ. It is united in Spirit. And it is simple and strong.** By blending both names, we are not forgetting our pasts, and for all members, it carries echoes of legacy. Preserving the name Christ, it is familiar and sacred; it affirms the unity that has always been part of both congregations. It says we remember where we came from. We honor the faith, the friendships, and the stories that build our congregation. It holds the memory of baptisms, weddings, potlucks, and sorrowful moments. We are not just united by the name Christ United Church, but by the purpose, by a shared hope that spans generations, traditions, and dreams. Christ United Church is our bridge that connects the legacy of two faithful congregations with the promise of something new. It honors our elders and opens the door for younger voices and our neighbors who've never stepped inside our church before. It offers a new opportunity to say we are open and confirming, and we are louder than labels. A new name is more than a decision – it's an opportunity. It's a chance for our wider community to learn who we are, what we value, and how we live out our faith. Remember, when choosing our new name, it is how we live up to our new name that matters. I believe the name Christ United Church preserves our legacies and opens our doors.

**Respectfully, Karen Venetz**

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### *Mosaic Community Church*

I'd like to share my reasoning for choosing **Mosaic Community Church**. As a member of the Search and Call Committee, I was struck by a concern from two promising candidates. They felt that names combining our old ones didn't signal a new future. They saw it as re-naming, not a true transformation. This got me thinking: what do we really want to accomplish? Do we want to simply maintain our current family, or do we want to grow and reach new people? The name we choose should reflect our answer.

A name like **Mosaic Community Church** offers a fresh start. A mosaic is beautiful art made of many different, broken pieces. I'm reminded of our church retreat a few years ago centered on this very idea. We are two churches coming together, each with our own history and people. By joining our broken and beautiful pieces, we create something new and whole—a powerful symbol of unity and a visible demonstration that everyone belongs here, no matter their background.

This name shows the community that we aren't just a traditional church combining two denominations. We are a new entity, welcoming and accepting of all. It tells the story of our journey while also pointing toward a future of growth and inclusion. It represents the best of who we are and who we can become.

A **Mosaic Church** is more than a name; it's a living metaphor for what we are called to be. It's a Christian community that draws inspiration from a mosaic—a whole image created from diverse pieces. This name tells everyone who walks through our doors that they have a place here. It says to the person who feels broken, that they are valued and essential. It says to the community around us that we are a place of unity and love, welcoming all. Let's not just be a new church; let's be a **Mosaic Community Church**. - Dean Jardee

## ***Dreaming God's Dream***

The 2026 Stewardship Campaign is underway. Please remember to complete pledge cards and Opportunities to Serve forms **by October 19**. Thank you.

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### ***A Note From Your Moderator:***

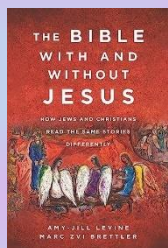
As we approach Sunday's Congregational meeting, I want to thank you for your conversations, questions, and careful consideration in the discernment process of naming our church. This past week, the church leadership became aware that some churches using the name "Mosaic" have faced criticism for their policies regarding the LGBTQ+ community and women in leadership. **We are sharing this information with you so that you have time for reflection and further research if you choose.** Note that there are Mosaic churches, such as Mosaic Community Church (UCC) in Oklahoma City, which are ONA (Open and Affirming) or Reconciling, and they share beliefs and practices that mirror those of our own congregation. A similar contradiction likely exists comparing churches using Christ United but may be less apparent since the name is less distinctive.

**Ultimately the name our members select will reflect who we are as Christians, what we believe, and the mission of our local church.** Let us move forward in prayer remembering that God is still speaking. May we have ears to listen. **Kind regards, Karen Spencer, Moderator**

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

- † **Bonnie Lane's** son **Tom** passed away on September 16. Our sympathy to Bonnie and family.
  - † **The Search and Call Committee** and the person whom God is preparing to be our next pastor.
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### ***Bible Study Continues***

**Starting Wednesday, October 1, Bible study will continue.** For guidance, we will be using *The Bible With and Without Jesus* by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler. The subtitle is how Jews and Christians read the same stories differently. The first session will be introducing the topic and getting text in the format best for you. It is possible to just read the Bible passage and not the book and still come and learn and grow. **Bible study will be on Wednesdays, from 10:00-11:30 A.M. in the church parlor.**

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### ***Christian Education News***

Sunday school students will begin in worship on September 28. After sharing a time with Pastor Lynne, they will have class with teacher **Susan Sanford**. Nursery care will be provided for children through age 5.

**\*Childcare will be available during the Congregational meeting after worship on September 28th.\***

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The Christian Education Board plans to host an **Indoor Trick-or-Treat event for children of our church and the students of both West and Lincoln Elementary schools.** The Christian Education Board would love to have volunteers "Adopt A Door" to decorate, donate treats and participate on party day. **This event will happen on Sunday, October 26 from 2:00-4:00 P.M.** With your help, this will be a howling good time for families from across our community.



## ***Reverse Offering***

The celebration of Rally Sunday continues. **If you participated in the Reverse Offering offered by the Stewardship Board**, please let us know of your experience by either returning the slip of paper explaining your experience to the Church office or put it in the offering plate on a Sunday morning.

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## ***Church Directories Are Here!***

Hear ye, hear ye! Church pictorial directories are hot off the press! **One is ready for each household.** Pick yours up today in the church office or look for members of the Church Growth and Vitality Board handing them out on Sunday morning.

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## ***Youth Group***

For the month of October, Youth Group will meet at First United Methodist Church, 610 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N, unless otherwise noted. **Youth Group is for young people from 6<sup>th</sup> grade to seniors in high school. The group meets on Wednesday evenings from 6:00-8:00 P.M.**

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## ***CROP Walk***

**Sunday, October 5**

**1:00 P.M. at Elks Riverside Park**

It's back! It's been a few years since there's been a CROP Walk in Great Falls. Central Christian Church is bringing it back. **If we work together, we can end world hunger.** That's why we're participating in the CROP Hunger Walk to support Church World Service and help families who are struggling with hunger. Please join us with your steps and your donations. Together we will provide more meals for the growing number of people in our community who need them and create greater food security in communities around the world. Please donate to our team today!

***Amanda Gosik, Emily Comstock and LeAnn A Budeski***

**Register to walk or donate at**

**<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/team/central-christian-church-4>**

More information is available on the Welcome Table at church.

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## ***Neighbors In Need***

**Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.**

**-Galatians 6:2**

The Neighbors in Need offering supports ministries of justice and compassion, with one-third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries and the remaining two-thirds supporting UCC justice ministries.

**The Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM)** is the voice for American Indian people in the UCC. CAIM provides Christian ministry and witness to American Indians and to the wider church. Justice issues that affect American Indian life are communicated to the whole UCC by CAIM. Historically, the forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hocak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin and northern Nebraska.

Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. CAIM supports these local churches and their pastors. In addition, CAIM strives to be a resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations and to strengthen their participation in the life of the church.

**The Love of Church Ministries (LOC)** of the United Church of Christ supports congregations and other settings of the church in doing justice, seeking peace, and building vibrant faith communities that are welcoming to all. From the National Setting in Cleveland, Ohio, Love of Church is responsible for supporting local churches with worship and faith-forming publications, resources, research and development, and education. The ministries and services of the Love of Church Ministries are central to the identity of the United Church of Christ.

**We will collect this offering during the month of October. Please mark donation NIN.**

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### *Coming Up*

#### **Sunday, September 28**

9:15 A.M. Choir Rehearsal

Congregational Meeting/Charge Conference

#### **Wednesday, October 1**

10:00 A.M. Bible Study, Fellowship Hall

10:00 A.M. Bridge Players, SS Wing

1:30 P.M. Pinochle, Fellowship Hall

6:00 P.M. Youth Group at First United

Methodist Church, 610 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N

6:00 P.M. Handbells

7:15 P.M. Choir Rehearsal

#### **Thursday, October 2-Sunday, October 5**

Conference Annual Meeting, Missoula

#### **Friday, October 3**

4:00 P.M. Fellowship Board, FH

#### **Sunday, October 5- led by Dr. Kelly Quick**

9:15 A.M. Choir Rehearsal

11:15 A.M. Worship Board, Parlor

#### **Monday, October 6**

1:00 P.M. Christian Service Board, Parlor

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