

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

Volume 2025

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Issue 29

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

**October 12, 2025
Worship Service
10:00 A.M.**



Farewell and Happy Retirement Rev. Lynne!

Minister: Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith

Scripture: Philippians 1:3-10

Lay Reader: Steve Gettel

Ushers: Linda Larson, Rosemary Neilsen

Communion Servers: Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith,

Rev. Dr. Tony Clark, Rev. Greg Smith, Lois Baker, Nancy Dallmann

Acolyte: Lily Borland, Chase Schrader

Accompanist/Music Director: Melissa Gilbert

Nursery: May Harris, Lily Yelvington

Coffee Fellowship: Dave and Debbe Rothweiler

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.

Sunday, October 12, 2025



This week's service will include the celebration of **Holy Communion** and a **service of closure for Rev. Lynne's ministry in Great Falls**. We will welcome **The Rev. Dr. Tony Clark**, Conference Minister of the Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference who will be participating in the service.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Revs. Lynne and Greg...Blessings! We wish you well in all that you do in retirement!

† Our sympathy to **June Rovero** in the death of her uncle, **Tom Griffith**, 87 years old.

† The **Search and Call Committee** and the person whom God is preparing to be our next pastor.

† **Barb Armstrong** has a new phone number. It is (406) 231-3789.



Christian Education News

There is **no Sunday School on October 12**. Children will attend worship with their families to share the celebration of Rev. Lynne's final Sunday. Nursery care will be provided as usual. **Sunday School will resume on October 19.**

Halloween Event Cancelled

The Christian Education Board has decided to cancel the planned "Indoor Trick-or-Treat" event which had been scheduled for Sunday, October 26. The board determined it would be too † To expensive, it would be difficult to find enough volunteers and it is a need that will be met by many other events throughout Great Falls. Thank you for understanding.



Bible Presentation

Each year, as a ministry of the Christian Education Board, **our congregation gifts Bibles to fourth and fifth grade students who are part of our church family.** This week during worship, Rev. Lynne will present Bibles to four young people from our church community. The recipients are: **Lily Borland**, 5th grade; **Echo Greene**, 5th grade; **Erika Greene**, 5th grade; and **Chase Schrader**, 4th grade. May this gift excite their curiosity about sacred scripture and be a blessing to their lives.

United Women in Faith

We will have our monthly meeting on **Thursday, October 16 at 1:00 P.M.** Representatives from the newly opened **Baatz Block Apartments** are coming to explain this new opportunity to offer rental apartments to people searching for low income homes. **We are collecting items that can be used in their "Welcome Baskets".**

Items that are needed are: digital clocks, 20 piece set of flatware, wall clocks, command wall hooks, laundry baskets, oven mitts, cutting boards, can openers, plastic plates, paper towel holders, 10" skillets, microfiber cloths, shower curtains. **These items should be new.** Other items on the wish list are **gently used** coffee pots, mugs, drinkware, books, board games bedding, bath towels, laundry supplies, & cleaning supplies. **Please brings any of these items on Thursday, October 16 to help this needed housing option take off.**

If you would like to arrange a ride to Rev. Lynne's retirement celebration on Friday, October 10, please call the church office and we'll see what we can do. Thank you.



Reverse Offering Stories of Generosity

Here are two more stories of the generous acts brought about by church members giving away Reverse Offering money.

#1) Amount of money in envelope: \$5

What I did with the money: I got coke, potato chips and candy. I also got a canvas bag and put a coloring book and markers in it.

Why I chose this act of kindness: Holly, who is on the Board of Housed Great Falls keeps in touch with an unhoused woman named Hope.

What did you gain or learn from this experience? I learned that Hope may have needed items like toiletries or clothing but would enjoy a bag of her favorite treats more.

#2) Amount of money in envelope: \$15

What I did with the money: I gave it to a homeless woman on the corner of 9th St. and 10th Ave. S

Why I chose this act of kindness: I always feel sorry for them but seldom stop. There was the incentive of the envelope of money in my pocket. I thought of a non-profit but then thought \$15 would mean much more to one person.

What did you gain or learn from this experience? Homeless people are grateful for what you give them. I visited with the woman for several minutes. She took my hand in hers and blessed me. She had injured her foot and last year lost her job and a place to live.

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.

Friendly Reminder

Newsletter items should be received by 12:00 P.M. on Tuesdays of the week you wish to have your information printed. Thank you.

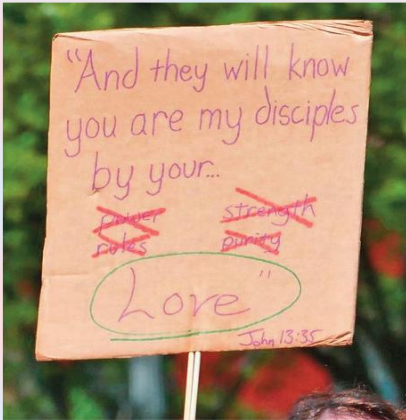
Neighbors in Need

**Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
-Galatians 6:2**

Prayer for Compassion

God of compassion,
Give us the courage to breathe in care,
and breathe out all that separates us.
The voices of your people can be lost in a cacophony of need.
Help us to pay attention and see clearly our neighbors.
Encourage us to not only help, but listen,
so all may have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.
Strengthen us to confront evil
and alleviate suffering.
Let us not turn away from the direct needs

of ourselves and those around us
even as we seek to dismantle deeper injustice.
Turn us toward justice, peace and reconciliation.
We pray in your holy name,
Amen



This prayer is based on the text from the 1999 General Synod resolution that affirmed the Neighbors in Need offering alongside the other three Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ. Gifts to Neighbors in Need have supported justice and compassion work through direct service and advocacy for decades in the United Church of Christ. Your gifts continue to fund grants, the Council for American Indian Ministries, and justice and National Ministries of the United Church of Christ. **We will collect this offering during the month of October. Please mark donation NIN.**



Holiday Help

The Unified Worship Board is asking for volunteers to help decorate the church for the holidays. **If you are able, please come to the church on Tuesday, November 25 at 1:00 P.M.** Any remaining decorating will be completed the following day.

Lasts and Firsts

Yes, it's *that* week. The transition week where I am so aware of a series of lasts and looking ahead to a bunch of firsts. My last Monday coming to the church to get things ready for what will most likely by the last Sunday service I'll prepare for a congregation that I have been called to serve. It occurred to me as I was participating in communion at the Conference Annual Meeting this past weekend in Missoula that I will be a recipient of a communion more than an officiant at the table. Greg and I are starting to make plans to visit other churches in the coming weeks and months. We anticipate there will a series of "first" visits around the area.

Since this is my last newsletter article, the most significant thing I can say to you is "Thank you." Thank you for the trust you have placed in me and the ministry we have done together. Thank you for showing up. Thank you for speaking up. Thank you for welcoming Greg and me and the multitudes of folks who have come to the church doors seeking a safe, welcoming place for worship and community. Thank you for laughing at my bad jokes. Thank you for helping me grow in faith and service to God. To those who have served as leaders over the last 9 years, thank you for all that it takes to be a leader in the church. To those with whom I have been privileged to serve on staff, thank you for your devotion and fun. And finally, thank you for simply letting me go into a future that is still unfolding before me. We have a few things planned for the month of October and then it's all open. I literally have only one monthly commitment on my calendar for the next several months (Book Club). Throw in a few doctor appointments here and there and it's clear that I'll have plenty of time to start working on the list of things I plan to do in retirement. (Someone once suggested I list 100 things to do in retirement. I'm currently at 45.)

One of the things that I'm looking forward to is reading devotions and scriptures and attending

worship services and try to resist the urge to make mental notes about how I might use it in worship or a sermon. It will be a time of switching off that information collection and storage switch and just being open to receive what it is God is trying to say to me in the words, the music, the textures and sensations of worship and devotion. I'll probably have to work at that a bit. That's going to be a big switch to turn off (I'm open to suggestions!). So, I'll practice at being attentive to what others have to offer as I have appreciated how others have been attentive to my offerings over the years: with focus, curiosity, hope and wonder. (Wish me luck!)

And for you? I'll simply remind you what I've urged you to do before: Show up. For worship. For fellowship. For service. Show up with curiosity and wonder. Show up with eagerness. Show up with your calendar and your checkbook and be ready to fill in the blanks as you ask, "how can I help?"

It's been a great ride and I'm so grateful to have been on it with you these past 9 years. May the coming years be God-blessed and Spirit-led—for all of us.

With Love,
Rev. Lynne



Coming Up

Friday, October 10

5:30 P.M. Rev. Lynne's Retirement Celebration,
Heritage Inn, 1700 Fox Farm Rd.

Sunday, October 12

8:45 A.M. Christian Ed. Board, Parlor

9:15 A.M. Choir Rehearsal

Monday, October 13

6:30 P.M. Business Affairs Board, Zoom

Tuesday, October 14

10:00 A.M. Mitten Makers, Fellowship Hall

12:00 P.M. Joint Facilities, Fellowship Hall

2:30 P.M. Church Growth & Vitality, Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, October 15

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

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

1:30 P.M. Pinochle, Fellowship Hall

NO YOUTH GROUP

6:00 P.M. Handbells

7:15 P.M. Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, October 16

1:00 P.M. United Women in Faith, Fellowship Hall

6:30 P.M. Ecumenical Book Study,
Central Christian Church, 1025 Central Ave.