

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

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

**February 15, 2026  
Transfiguration Sunday  
Worship Service  
10:00 A.M.**



Worship Leader: Dr. Kelly Quick

Lay Reader: Hank Branom

Ushers: Bruce Cole & Bill Tiskus

Accompanist/Music Director: Melissa Gilbert

Acolytes: Jaycee Storle, Aalayah Dunn

Sunday School: Erin Borland, Janet Koostra

Nursery: May Harris, Lily Yelvington

Coffee Fellowship: KimKay McCarty Martin, Terry Roemmich

Treats: Shirley Davis, Carolyn Dowdy, Peggy Floen

UCC Tellers: Dick Kloppel, Carol Shipley

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.

## *In Our Thoughts and Prayers*



† Our sympathy to **Conference Minister Rev. Dr. Tony Clark** in the death of his father who died February 1 after a long illness.

† Continued prayers for **KimKay's infant grandson** who is home with medicine and a heart monitor.

## *Prayer Circle*

**Tuesday, February 17 at 1:00 P.M. in the parlor.** Join us for a time of sharing joys and concerns and sharing the spirit through prayer.



## Announcing...

The next step in the history of our churches occurred on Sunday, February 8. The joined congregations voted unanimously that Laura Ymker will be the 20<sup>th</sup> FCUCC minister and the 17<sup>th</sup> Christ UMC minister. *She will be the first to serve our new federated church.* Hallelujah! We thought we would not have her in the pulpit until the end of March, but God is at work and she will be able to begin much sooner. The plan is to start in the office on March 4 or 5 and to lead worship on March 8.

Thank you to all who were able to attend the brunch and open house and welcomed Laura so well at those events. She was given a true idea of the kind of Church we are. The turnout on Sunday was tremendous, and it showed how much we care about who our next spiritual leader is.

Our pulpit supply has been outstanding, but it is time to move forward into our next chapter with Laura Ymker at the podium. *And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.* Mathew 21:22



## Annual Meeting Re-Cap

**Thank you to everyone who participated in the January 25 Joint Annual Meeting of First Congregational United Church of Christ and Christ United Methodist Church.** Members are encouraged to review the Annual Report, which includes a comprehensive overview of board activities, church business, financial information, and leadership reports. **If you need a copy, please reach out to Holly at the church office.** Meeting Highlights:

- Reports on finances and membership were presented, offering a clear overview of the current status of the church.
- The congregation adopted the proposed budget for 2026, ensuring financial stability in the year ahead.
- New board members and officers were installed. Recognition was given to those who had completed their terms and to individuals transitioning into other leadership roles.

**Special thanks are extended to the Fellowship Board for providing lunch and fostering a sense of community during the meeting.**



## Christian Education News

**Children will start the morning of February 15 in worship.** After a children's message, children age 5 through grade 6 are invited to Sunday School for a lesson titled "Song of Creation", based on Psalm 104. **Erin Borland will lead class.** **AND the Christian Education Board would like to have children attend worship once each month.** We are working with the Worship Board to decide when this will begin. Watch for more news!

## *"In the Moment"- a Mindfulness Retreat*

**Saturday, March 21  
8:30 A.M.-3:00 P.M.**

The Church Growth and Vitality Board is sponsoring “In the Moment-A Mindfulness Retreat” on Saturday, March 21, from 8:30 A.M.-3:00 P.M. at the church. The one-day event will include individual and group activities that will allow participants to explore personal and communal spirituality. **Fun and easy activities will help folks practice being present “in the moment” to focus hearts, minds and souls on their own spirituality and their relationship to God.** The group will spend time doing chair yoga, music, the Lord’s Prayer, art, crafts, making sandwiches and learning about the labyrinth. **Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Sign-ups begin Sunday, February 22. Cost is \$25/ person.** Honorariums are available. This retreat takes place just before Holy Week-what a wonderful way to prepare for Easter!

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**Service and Stone Soup Supper  
February 18, 5:00 P.M.**

Our Ash Wednesday service will continue the tradition of meditation and reflection. **The service will conclude with the imposition of ashes.**

Following the service, the Fellowship Board is sponsoring a Stone Soup Supper.

**Please sign up for the supper on the sheet in the church narthex.** You are encouraged to help create the soup by providing vegetables. **Vegetables should be canned only (no fresh or frozen veggies) and brought to the kitchen by 5:00 P.M.** (before the service). Suggested donations by last name: A-H: Carrots; I-N: Green Beans; O-S: Corn; T-Z: Peas. The Fellowship Board will be providing water, coffee, juice, rolls and dessert. **Please use the sign-up sheet in the church narthex to let the Fellowship Board know you are coming and how you’ll be contributing.**

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**New Bible Study**

**February 18 will be a good time to start coming to Wednesday Morning Bible Study.** We will be using material from Amy Jill Levine’s book "Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner’s Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven." Amy Jill Levine has interesting thoughts as a New Testament professor and Jew. **All are welcome to join Rev. Paul Holland in the parlor at 10:00 A.M.**

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**Global Ministries Sponsor Child**

In June, VJ Antonette Menarao, our most recent Global Ministries Sponsor Child, turned 18 years old and aged out of the sponsorship program. **Last month, the Christian Education Board agreed it was time to apply for a new child to sponsor. The board hopes to be able to sponsor a child from a different region of the world.** Our first two sponsor children were from the Philippines. We thought it would be fun and interesting to help a child in Africa or the Middle East. Stay tuned for more news soon!



## **United Women in Faith**

This month the Women in Faith will join together on **Thursday, February 19** to hear **Cari Yturri** talk about Family Promise. Cari is the Executive Director and has much information to share. At this time, they are in need of items for their Day Center:

- Macaroni and Cheese cups
- Pudding cups
- Garbage bags (13 gallon)
- Laundry pods
- Dryer sheets
- Gift cards for children with good grades
- Soda for Family Fun Nights
- Diapers (size 5,6,7)
- Training pants (size 3/4t and 5/6t)



**We meet at 1:00 P.M. on next Thursday in the Fellowship Hall. All women are invited. Two of our members always make wonderful Valentine Theme dessert for this month. Any questions can be directed to Linda Larson at 406-868-8409.**

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## ***Church Growth and Vitality Ideas***

Just a note from your CGV Board. **We have been busy discussing ways to expand what we do.** We have asked music and worship leaders if we could experiment with a greater diversity of music (You may have already noticed this happening!). CGV plans to implement a program that **posts more content about our church(es) on social media.** We plan to share news about our new minister, Laura Ymker, and our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of our Christ UMC/UCC partnership with local media sources. We are discussing including information on our reader board about outside groups and activities that take place in our facility. **And we want to bring back “Welcome Packets” for visitors to our church(es).** Have ideas? Please share! The possibilities are endless!

Janet Koostra, chair, Church Growth and Vitality Board

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## ***The Lord's Side*** ***Kenneth L. Samuel***

*Hannah prayed: “The Lord makes some poor and other rich; he brings some down and lifts some up. He lifts the poor from the dust and the needy from the garbage dump. He sets them among princes, placing them in seats of honor.” -1 Samuel 2:7-8a (NLT)*

We don't usually like to think of God as having a “side”. We like to keep God carefully sequestered on a cloud of neutrality, high above the raucous fray of team rivalries and political contests. God's ultimate neutrality is highlighted in the assertion that God causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall on the just as well as the unjust.

Notwithstanding the above however, the God we read about in the Bible is deeply biased, always in favor of the poor. Always.

It is the hand of God that lifts the poor from the garbage dump, and it is the providence

of God that places the poor in seats of honor among princes.

In every conflict of economic justice recorded in the Bible, God always stands with the have-nots. Israel's bondage in Egypt was not just an affront to Israel's human rights; it was also an affront to the divine sovereignty of their God, since it was God who created the Israelites for freedom.

At his inaugural address given in his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus made it clear that his mission would focus on bringing good news to the poor, which meant bad news for those ensconced in the perks and paradigms of the status quo.

And according to Jesus, the measure that will be used to judge the nations at the last day will be the measure of compassion for the poor. "I was hungry; did you feed me? I was naked; did you clothe me? I was in prison; did you come see about me?"

### ***Prayer***

Lord, in every battle between the mighty and the marginalized, help us to choose your side. Amen.



### ***Coming Up***

#### **Thursday, February 12**

10:00 A.M. Grief Group, Fellowship Hall

#### **Saturday, February 14**

10:30 A.M. Ladies Coffee, Wheat Montana

#### **Sunday, February 15**

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

9:15 A.M. Choir Rehearsal

11:00 A.M. Coffee Fellowship

#### **Monday, February 16- President's Day (office open)**

6:30 P.M. Church Council, Zoom

#### **Tuesday, February 17**

1:00 P.M. Prayer Circle, Parlor

**Wednesday, February 18- Ash Wednesday**

10:00 A.M. Bridge Group, SS Wing  
10:00 A.M. Bible Study, Parlor  
1:30 P.M. Pinochle, Fellowship Hall  
5:00 P.M. Ash Wednesday Service,  
led by Rev. Sara MacGilvra Branom  
5:45 P.M. Stone Soup Supper  
6:00 P.M. Youth Group, 610 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N  
6:00 P.M. Handbells  
7:15 P.M. Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, February 19**

10:00 A.M. Grief Group, Fellowship Hall  
1:00 P.M. United Women in Faith, FH