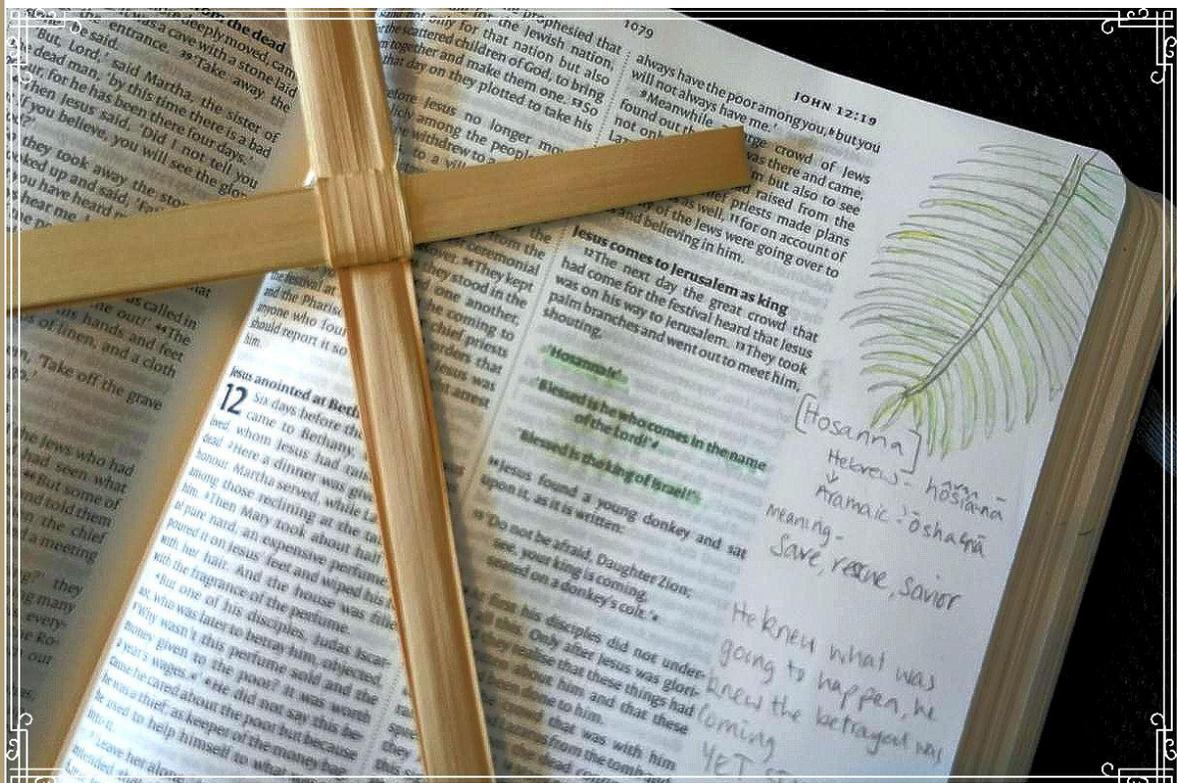


Montana - N. Wyoming Conference
United Church of Christ

CONFERENCE NEWS

Together in Spirit - March 26, 2026



HOLY WEEK BLESSINGS

By Conference Minister, Rev. Tony Clark

Dear Folks

"Christians participate in the only major religious tradition whose founder was executed by the established authority." ¹ Jesus' death was political; he was killed for proclaiming that, rather than the Emperor and Empire being king and kingdom, God was the king and God's kingdom was just. This is both heretical to the Roman religion that worshipped the emperor and treasonous to the empire that supported this belief. Jesus' death, exacted by the powerful Romans, was "...the domination system's 'no' to Jesus...Easter is God's 'yes' to Jesus and his vision, and God's 'no' to the domination system." ²

Easter is meaningless without Good Friday and the events leading up to it. Resurrection can only happen after death. God's vindication occurs after the domination system's crucifixion. God said "yes" to the living message of Jesus' life, a life that healed the sick, fed the hungry, brought honor where there was only shame, and returned people living in socially- forced exile back into community.

Good Friday is the reminder that illness, hunger, shame and exile belong to the world we live in. Good Friday reminds us that domination systems divide people into "us" and "them", those who belong and those who don't. Good Friday points us to an ending, a dark tomb barricaded, a finality locked into a place of no escape. Easter reminds us that God's kingdom is possible, there is still work to do, and that Jesus will help us along with that work. Easter unites us in Jesus who teaches us to see "them" as truly "us", and to welcome even those who don't exactly seem to belong. Easter points us to an unblocking of the barricade, opening the tomb, bringing light in the darkness and an opening to new life.

"The political meaning of Good Friday and Easter sees the human problem as injustice, and the solution as God's justice." ³ The theological meaning of Good Friday and Easter is anti-imperial; if Jesus is Lord, then Caesar is not. No matter how powerful the government is, God is more powerful. Whatever the powers that be declare and do God declares a new kind of kingdom and God does works that bring everyone along to the new kingdom.

As we approach Holy Week, I wish blessings on your experience of Good Friday and Easter Sunday. May these days give you strength to live as Jesus: bring healing where there is sickness, offer food where there is hunger, give honor where there is shame, and return the exiled back into community.

In peace and prayer,

Pastor Tony

¹ Borg, Marcus J., *The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith*, (NY: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003), p138.

² Ibid.

³ Borg, Marcus J. and Crossan, John Dominic, *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus' Final Days in Jerusalem*, (NY: Harper One, 2006), p.211



MARCH

March 29 - Palm Sunday
April 2 - Maundy Thursday - Office Closed
April 3 - Good Friday - Office Closed
April 5 - Easter Sunday
April 8 - Church and Ministry @ 1:30 pm

2026



The graphic features the word 'MARCH' in a stylized, green, serif font, surrounded by a decorative border of green shamrocks and vines. Below the text is a list of dates and events for St. Patrick's Day. To the right, there is a colorful illustration of a leprechaun with a red beard and a green hat, holding a shamrock. Below the leprechaun is a green leprechaun hat with a gold buckle and a rainbow arching over it, with small yellow stars scattered around.



Keeping in Prayer

Sheridan First Congregational UCC

Buffalo Union Congregational UCC



**UCC ISSUES APPEAL TO SUPPORT RELIEF EFFORTS AS HISTORIC
FLOODING CONTINUES TO IMPACT HAWAII**

“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

-2 Timothy 1:7

UCC GMP ISSUES STATEMENT FOLLOWING US/ISRAEL ATTACK ON IRAN, CALLS ON ELECTED OFFICIALS TO ‘REJECT WAR’

UCC POETRY COLLECTIVE



UCC LAUNCHES ONLINE POETRY COLLECTIVE



SEPTEMBER 24 - 27, 2026
Conference Annual Meeting
Helena, Montana



Join us for the overnight retreat April 3-4, 2026. We will be gathering at Lava Island at 6:00 pm for a few hours of fun, games and dinner. We will then be heading out around the town to enjoy the escape room, ice skating, sip and paint, laser tag, paintball, VR games, sword battles, rage room, and indoor rock climbing. Youth will be picked up from SteepWorld at 6 am. Cost is \$125/person. Open to youth 5-12 grade.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



We will be traveling to Minneapolis, MN this summer. We are still working on confirming specific dates but it will be that first week of August! We will be learning about and working with churches and organizations that work with programs for the elderly, local indigenous tribes and immigration. The cost for this year's mission trip is \$1,500 and is all inclusive including travel, lodging, food and activities. Mayflower Youth have

Upcoming
Youth Events @ Mayflower UCC

Overnight

Retreat

&

Summer Mission Trip

to Minneapolis

including travel, lodging, food and activities. Mayflower Youth have been doing fundraising and has scholarships to help with the cost. We can also set up a payment arrangement to help with the cost. Registration is due by May 1 with a \$100 deposit.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



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Jennifer Penfield - Administrator & Registrar
Patty Martinson - Administrative Assistant

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