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

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Volume 2026  
Pastor Laura Ymker  
pastor@greatfallsucc.org

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PO Box 6303, 59406  
greatfallsucc@gmail.com

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(406) 453-4316  
www.greatfallsucc.org

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

**May 3, 2026  
Fifth Sunday of Easter  
Worship Service  
Holy Communion  
10:00 A.M.**



Worship Leader:  
Pastor Laura Ymker

Lay Reader: Randy Houtz  
Ushers: Caroline Houtz, Susan Thomas  
Accompanist/Music Director: Melissa Gilbert  
Nursery: May Harris, Lily Yelvington  
Sunday School: Susan Sanford, Betsy Rogstad  
Coffee Fellowship: Doris Motley, Peggy Seeley, Bill Tiskus  
Treats: Lois Baker, Linda Holland  
UCC Tellers: Liz Lee, Ed Venetz  
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.

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## *Church Naming Update*

April 26 was the deadline to submit name suggestions for our newly federated church. **Thank you to everyone who took the time to provide ideas!** Watch for more information, coming soon!

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## *In Our Thoughts and Prayers*



† Our sympathy to **Karen Spencer, Nick Spencer, and Lacey Hallett and family** in the death of husband, father, and grandpa **Tom Spencer** who passed away on April 27, age 78. A memorial service is being planned for June. Please respect the family's wish for solitude at this time.  
† **Jack Armstrong** remains at the Grandview for care and rehab.  
† **United States Military Personnel** throughout the world.



### *Ordination Celebration*

**Last Saturday in Red Lodge and continuing to Sunday morning at worship our church celebrated the ordination of Pastor Laura as an Authorized Minister of the United Church of Christ.** This is an important event in the life of our church and in Pastor Laura's life as she faithfully and tenaciously listened and obeyed God's call for many years to a vocation of Christian ministry. The call to ordained ministry rarely follows a straight line on a smooth path. As time goes on and we continue to grow together as a community of faith, the lessons and insights Pastor Laura has gained throughout her call journey will be revealed to us. Through her words and her example, Pastor Laura will encourage and guide us, to live with Christ at the center of our lives. A part of the ordination service says, "the church believes that God calls every Christian to be a servant of God, a minister, living and serving in Christ's name." It continues that the church is a living body, a covenantal community called, formed and sent into the world by the power of the Holy Spirit acknowledging that its members have many diverse ministries in the world and the church. **How fortunate are we to be the ones at this time in our church's journey to minister alongside Pastor Laura's leadership experiencing and sharing God's abundant love and grace for us and our community.** We are all so blessed to be with one another. Thanks be to God! To watch the ordination service, please click on this link:

<https://vimeo.com/1186596444?fl=ip&fe=ec>



### *From the Pastor*

On Saturday, people gathered to lay hands on me and pray for the Holy Spirit to fill me with the Spirit-power I need to serve as pastor and teacher in the United Church of Christ. I do feel different now. **Love transforms us.** Love changed me when I saw so many faces shining with joy and people moved to the point of tears by the service. I am well-loved. May this

knowledge empower me to love well.

This coming Sunday we will be talking about the priesthood of all believers, a phrase from 1 Peter. **I may now be an ordained minister of the Word and sacrament, but I preach to a roomful of priests.** As priests, how should we relate to God and to the world around us? What does it mean to be the one in between? And where does the author of Mark give a little wink to this doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

May you be ever aware of God's presence with you, never departing from you in your greatest joy or most intense sorrow. **May you know that God dwells with us, and may this give you peace.**

Pastor Laura

P.S. Some written version of Sunday's sermon is posted to my blog each Wednesday. **You can find my blog at <https://laurakae.substack.com/>.** If you become a subscriber, an email will be delivered to you on Wednesday morning with the entire blog post in it, and you will no longer have to revisit the website after you subscribe.

Jesus Loves the Little Children...



### *Christian Education News*

Welcome to May! **May 3 is Communion Sunday.** Children will begin in Sunday School with teachers Susan Sanford and helper Betsy Rogstad for a lesson titled “Storm at Sea”. This lesson recounts the story of Jesus quieting a storm on the Sea of Galilee. **On May 10, Sunday School will celebrate the end of the program year with a party during class time.** On May 17, children will attend worship which will be led by the Youth Group. Beginning May 24, children will attend worship with their families until Rally Sunday on September 13.

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### *Youth Group News*

**Youth Group meetings in May will be at First United Methodist Church, 610 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N. On May 13<sup>th</sup>, the group will meet at “Wheels of Thunder”, 1609 12<sup>th</sup> Ave N.** Costs for skating will be covered but youth will need to bring money for treats and games. Plan to drop off and pick up kids at the roller rink. **On May 17<sup>th</sup>, youth will lead our Sunday worship service, including music, children’s message and sermon-it will be wonderful! Be sure to join us!**

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### *Diaper Collection Continues*

Sponsored by the Christian Service Board, **diapers, wipes, formula, receiving blankets, etc.** will be collected now through Mother’s Day. **A crib is set up in the narthex for the donation of these items until May 10.** This offering will be shared with **Toby’s House Crisis Nursery and YPEC (Young Parents Education Center).**

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### *Rides Needed*

Is anyone available to give rides to folks who can’t get themselves to and from church? **We have a few who have mentioned they’d sure like to get to church if they had transportation.** If you can help, please let Laura or the office know.

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### *Jeopardy! Was a Joy*

Thank you to everyone who joined in our all-church intergenerational church-themed Jeopardy! Game on April 19 during coffee fellowship. It was a lot of fun. Five teams with a mixture of children, UCC and UMC players competed for bragging rights (and prizes!), with the high score going to the Watermelon Team. Many thanks to **Dean Jardee**, emcee and game creator, **Kaeden Dunn** for working the computer, **Erin Borland** providing prizes and **Eric Dunn** for set-up. A good time was had by all!

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### *Discussion With the Pastor*

Last month Pastor Laura invited you to read **How We Learn to Be Brave: Decisive Moments in Life and Faith by Mariann Edgar Budde** alongside her. If you did read the book, or are still reading it, please let Laura know so that discussion dates can be planned. **You’ll get together sometime in May to discuss the author’s ideas and how to can incorporate what you learned into your own life.**



***Eric Dunn leading a train of dancers at the Family Promise Soc Hop on Saturday, April 25.***

***Ending childhood homelessness.  
One family at a time.  
Every child deserves a home.  
Every family has promise.***



In 2025, thanks to the generosity of donors and partners, Family Promise of Great Falls provided life-changing services to 110 families with 235 children in crisis- offering case management, prevention, stabilization, and temporary housing. Every dollar spent comes from grants, community support, and donations.

### ***Coming Up***

#### **Sunday, May 3**

- 9:00 A.M. Fellowship Board, FH
- 9:15 A.M. Choir Rehearsal
- 10:00 A.M. Worship with Communion
- 11:00 A.M. Coffee Fellowship
- 11:15 A.M. Worship Board, Parlor

#### **Monday, May 4**

- 1:00 P.M. Christian Service, Parlor
- 7:00 P.M. Stewardship Board, Zoom

#### **Wednesday, May 6**

- 10:00 A.M. Bridge Players, SS Wing
- 1:30 P.M. Pinochle, Fellowship Hall
- 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, May 7**

- 12:00 P.M. Facilities Committee, FH