



The Good News of United Spirit Community Church



A Federation of Christ United Methodist Church & First Congregational United Church of Christ

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Issue 32

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

**August 23, 2026
Worship Service
Thirteenth Sunday
after Pentecost
10:00 A.M.**



Worship Leader:
Pastor Laura Ymker

Lay Reader: Harry Brauer
Ushers: KimKay McCarty Martin, Lynne Weeks
Accompanist/Music Director: Melissa Gilbert
Nursery: May Harris
Coffee Fellowship: Maxine Schilling, Bill Tiskus
Treats: Connie Brauer, Linda Holland
UCC Tellers: Kristine Berntsen, 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 United Spirit website.

Worship in Fairfield on August 23

Don't forget, we are invited to worship with Fairfield UCC this Sunday, August 23 at 11:00 A.M. to celebrate the retirement of long-time pastor, Phil Maxwell. A catered reception will follow in the Fellowship Hall. Cards are welcome, but no gifts, please. So far, about a dozen folks are headed to Fairfield. **Please note: while carpooling is encouraged, travel will be on your own as a time and place to meet for a caravan could not be established.** Thank you.

For those not going to Fairfield, worship in our sanctuary will still take place at 10:00 A.M.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers



† Heather and Jason Weibel's son, Charlie, is continues to recover at home for a collapsed lung.
† Rebecca Marinko remains in rehab.



Raise our Rank

You can help boost our presence on Google and other search engines by visiting our new website for **United Spirit Community Church**. Click on the link shown here <https://unitedspiritcc.org/>, bookmark the new address and visit it frequently. Here you will find **the latest church information and newsletter, links to worship services, weekly bulletins complete with the hymns, and so much more!**

In case you missed it, please see email updates below.

Pastor Laura: pastor@unitedspiritcc.org

Eric: tech@unitedspiritcc.org

For now, the office email remains the same: greatfallsucc@gmail.com

Important! Please check your spam folders if you think you should have received an email from staff and have not. **Delete the old contact and add the new, or simply email the new address** and that should be sufficient to avoid going into a folder other than Inbox. Thank you.

“Gracious Space” is in our future!

Beginning on Thursday, September 17, Pastor Laura is hoping to start an evening conversation we call “Gracious Space” on the first and third Thursdays of the month. Gracious Space will be a place to **re-examine, re-imagine, and re-form our faith** in an environment where we stubbornly insist on believing that God will always be “more good” than anything we can imagine and where we also commit to believing the best about other people and other expressions of faith.

Participants will be asked to watch a video or listen to a podcast about the night’s discussion before arriving. Links to the teaching will be shared in the newsletter just like we’ve been doing for Sunday’s music. Currently, Pastor Laura is considering “The Faith of Gen Z” and “Enslaved People & the Making of the Bible” as topics for our first two discussions. She plans on having us alternate between discussions that involve biblical scholarship and history and those that have to do with faith in our contemporary setting. **Each discussion will stand alone; participants are not expected to come to every discussion. You can join as you are able or interested and not fear missing out.** We hope to see you there!

Jesus Loves the Little Children...



Christian Education News

Children age 6 and older are invited to attend worship with their families. They are welcome to use resources found in the **Christ’s Kids Bags** on the stand at the back of the sanctuary and items available in the **Pray Ground** area at the right side of the sanctuary. **Nursery care is provided for children through age 5. Nursery care will NOT be provided on Sunday, August 30 for the outdoor worship service for the Blessing of the Animals.**



FISH Thank You's

Thank you so much to our amazing volunteers who worked at the Fish Food Pantry last week to help distribute food: **Elaine Balzer, Lila Byers, Carol Davidson, Peggy Floen, Bev Harris, Mende Kloppel, KimKay McCarty Martin, Steve & Karen McElroy, Rosemary Neilsen, Sandy Nicolai, Sharon Oakland, Janet Olson, Dennis & Sue Turton, and Nancy Zbinden.** You are all so much appreciated! **Our next turn to work at the food pantry is October 19-23.** Maybe see you then!

United Women in Faith

On August 20, Women in Faith is having their first meeting for the year to plan what type of programs and activities they would like to do in support of their mission to help women and children here in Great Falls. We will meet at 1:00 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall for planning, fellowship, and yummy treats. All women are welcome to join us in this caring group of gals. For more information, please call Linda Larson, our President.

Wonder How to Share Prayer Requests?

You may have noticed that we haven't been doing the sharing of joys and concerns during the service. This is largely to make sure we are protecting the privacy of those who may not know or perhaps forget that everything said in service is live on the internet. You can still share your requests with us! Feel free to email them to Holly or me, write them down and put them in the basket on the table in the lobby, or tell them to me in person. Please let us know if the request is private or if you'd like it to be share with the prayer circle or in the newsletter. Didn't know we had a prayer circle? We do! If you'd like to receive the prayer requests of others via email, please let me know; and I'll add you to the list. We'd love to have you pray with us.



From the Pastor

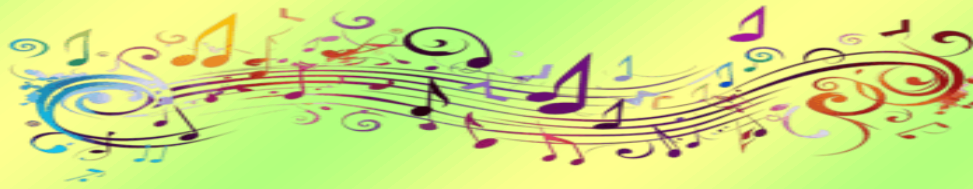
Calling All Vendors!

First United Methodist Church is hosting a parking lot craft fair and market on September 19 from 9:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M. (610 2nd Ave. N). Booth fees are \$50.00 for a 10x10 space. No electricity available. Applications will be accepted until all spaces are filled. For an application or if you have any questions, call Hollie King at (406) 453-3114 or email churchoffice@umcgreatfalls.org.

Shoe Box Time

A friendly reminder to folks buying new shoes for the school year: if you don't need your shoeboxes, please bring them to the church for our Christmas Shoebox Ministry. You can leave them in the office or hand them off to Janet Koostra. In December, Sunday School children and other volunteers will fill the boxes with gifts and wrap them for transport to Browning United Methodist Parish for distribution to kids of all ages!





Music in the News

You can quickly find August 23's music on YouTube:

- “Higher Ground” in the *New Century Hymnal* #442 (I can’t find the version from our hymnal among the many versions on Youtube. This one is the general gist of what we will be singing.)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBU-4rKQdw&list=RDLBU-4rKQdw&start_radio=1
- “My Life Is In You” in *The Faith We Sing* #2032
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0M0NALW7EM&list=RDF0M0NALW7EM&start_radio=1
- “Be Now My Vision” in the *New Century Hymnal* #451 vs. 2
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ed6C4_nQG8s&list=RDed6C4_nQG8s&start_radio=1
- The doxology will be recently written words sung to the melody of “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow.”
- “Here I am, Lord” in the *United Methodist Hymnal* #593
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kd-dgoCrdJY&list=RDKd-dgoCrdJY&start_radio=1
- “God Be With You” in the *New Century Hymnal* #81 vs. 1 (These are not the exact words in our hymnal.)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=764l5NpyTpk&list=RD764l5NpyTpk&start_radio=1



Blessing of the Animals *Sunday, August 30, 10:00 A.M.*

We will gather on the front lawn of the church
for an outdoor service and blessing of the animals.

- Bring your own lawn chair. (We'll have a few chairs available just in case.)
- Bring sun protection (sunscreen, hats, long-sleeved shirts).
- Bring your well-behaved pet. (Make sure they are safely contained or controlled.)

If your pet doesn't like getting out and about, bring a photo so they can still be blessed.
Feel free to also bring photos of pets who have crossed the rainbow bridge.

If the weather is not cooperating, we will move the service indoors to
the Fellowship Hall and try to accommodate the animals. (Pray for good weather!)



***“Justice Isn’t Blind:
Race and Inequality in the Federal Criminal Justice System”***

Sponsored by the Progressive Ministerial Association

**Presented by Hank Branom,
Criminal Defense Attorney**

**United Spirit Community Church
2900 9th Ave S. Great Falls, MT
October 1, 7:00-8:30 P.M.**

A person can be subject to a federal criminal prosecution based in part upon their ethnicity and where they live. With six federal jurisdiction reservations, this has an impact upon our native neighbors in Montana. This presentation will delve into the impacts of federal criminal law upon Native Americans from the 1880's to the present day. It will also address the current immigration prosecutions occurring in our state and elsewhere.

Sharing Words of Wisdom

When you do something, do it right the first time.
How you leave one room is how you enter the next.
There is no bad weather, just bad clothing.

Share your words of wisdom with us!

Use the note pad on the table in the narthex and place your thoughts in the jar provided.

Coming Up

Thursday, August 20

8:00 A.M. Pray with the Pastor, Sanctuary
9-10 A.M. Pastor Laura Office Hours
1:00 P.M. United Women In Faith, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, August 23

10:00 A.M. Worship Service
11:00 A.M. Coffee Fellowship
11:00 A.M. Worship in Fairfield (alternate service)

Monday, August 24

5:30 P.M. Pray with the Pastor, Sanctuary

Wednesday, August 26

12:30 P.M. Pray with the Pastor, Sanctuary
1-2 P.M. Pastor Laura Office Hours
1:30 P.M. Pinochle, Fellowship Hall

Thursday, August 27

8:00 A.M. Pray with the Pastor, Sanctuary
9-10 A.M. Pastor Laura Office Hours

Sunday, August 30- Blessing of the Animals

10:00 A.M. Outdoor Worship Service

11:00 A.M. Coffee Fellowship

11:30 A.M. Worship Board Meeting