



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 39

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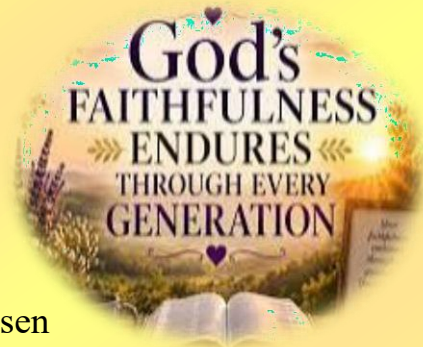
*like us on Facebook: First Congregational United Church of Christ-Great Falls, MT
Christ United Methodist Church Great Falls*

October 11, 2026

Worship Service

10:00 A.M.

Worship Leader:
Pastor Laura Ymker



Lay Reader: Rosemary Neilsen

Ushers: Dave Neagle, Bill Tiskus

Accompanist/Music Director: Melissa Gilbert

Acolyte: Chase Schrader

Nursery: May Harris, Linda Larson

Sunday School: Janet Koostra, Betsy Rogstad

Fellowship: Bev Harris, Heather Weibel

Treats: Linda Grossman, Syneva Heupel

A/V Tech: KimKay McCarty Martin

UCC Tellers: Kristine Berntsen, Liz Lee

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.

Acolyte Training and Refresher Course

Children grades 3rd and up are invited to ACOLYTE TRAINING / REFRESHER COURSE this Sunday, October 11. **Please meet in the sanctuary at 11:15 A.M.** Children will learn the definition of the word “acolyte”, what role acolytes play in worship and the proper way to light / extinguish candles. And many thanks to all the young people & their families who make this ministry possible!

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

† Paul Holland is home after being in the hospital with heart-related issues.

† We join our community in mourning the victims of last weekend's stabbings, including baby Aurora, 7 days old, who died as a result.



From the Pastor

This past Sunday we learned from a young prophet who made the mistake of listening to the lies of an old prophet rather than to God's voice. (You can find the story in 1 Kings 13.) **We pondered the lies we've been told in the name of God, and we ripped them up and threw them in the trash before receiving communion.** *You can watch the service [here](#).*

This coming Sunday we will ponder the original choice in Scripture: **choosing between eating the fruit of the tree of life or the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** What does this allegory mean? How might some of Jesus' teachings direct us to remember this original choice? How will our decisions impact our children?

May God help you **forgive** all those who have harmed you in the name of God. May your heart be filled with **compassion** for all those who are harming others in the name of God. May your prayers to God and your conversation with others bring **light and truth** into every dark place as you bring the good news of a welcoming God to the world.

Pastor Laura

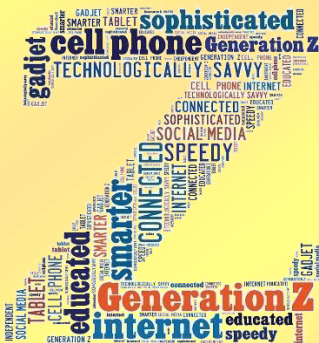


Christian Education News

On October 11, children grades K-5 will begin in worship. This week's Sunday School lesson is titled **"Song of Wonder" based on Psalm 139**, which rejoices that we are each wonderfully made by God. This year's curriculum is **"Path to Peace: Peace Inside"** and it explores the uniqueness of each person and each person's relationship with God. Class will include singing, review of the Class Covenant, prayer, Bible story and activities.

PLEASE RETURN REGISTRATION INFORMATION!

And review and discuss the class covenant with your children. Thank you!



Gracious Space- The Faith of Gen Z

At 7:00 P.M. on October 15, we will be getting together in the Fellowship Hall to discuss the faith of Generation Z, (people currently between the ages of 15 and 29). How do young people interact with spirituality differently now than they did 50 or 100 years ago? How can we better communicate with the young people in our families and those walking through our doors? How do we honor their faith and appreciate how the diversity in our faiths can strengthen us all? **Might there be anything we could change in our Sunday service or in our activities throughout the week to help Gen Z feel more comfortable in our space?**

All these questions and more on the 15th! If you can, before coming listen to **"[Episode 66: Angela Patterson - The Faith of Gen Z](#)"** on the Bible for Normal People podcast. You can find it on Spotify, the Apple podcast app, or on this [link](#). Otherwise, a handout will be provided with an outline of the interview with Angela Patterson.

United Women in Faith

Next week the women in this church will be taking a tour of the **Baatz Building** for the monthly meeting of Women in Faith. **Please meet at 1:00 P.M. on October 15th at 400 2nd Ave S. (The Baatz Building).** This is the new shelter that helps homeless people find an apartment.



Music in the News

You can quickly find October 11's music on YouTube:

- ["How Great Thou Art"](#) in the *United Methodist Hymnal* #77
 - ["I Sing the Mighty Power of God"](#) in the *New Century Hymnal* #12
 - ["Spirit of the Living God"](#) in the *United Methodist Hymnal* #393
 - The doxology will be Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow, two verses. First a version that is new to us (but around 300 years old) then #780 in the *New Century Hymnal*.
 - ["Cornerstone"](#) by Hillsong, words on the screen and in the insert.
 - ["Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"](#) in the *New Century Hymnal* #77 vs. 1
-

Coming Back from CAM (the UCC Conference Annual Meeting)

Perhaps the most memorable moments at annual meetings happen around tables when we are just chatting, not officially learning, just building relationships, and realizing how we might grow and mature as pastors and congregations. **Growth isn't always upwards.** It isn't always reflected in numbers or ministries. Sometimes **it's sending roots down, becoming more excited about our relationship with God**, submitting to the quiet work of inner healing so that we are filled with joy and peace rather than resentment, fear, or any of their cousins.

I attended three workshops: Poetry in Worship, Conversation time with the Associate General Minister for Love of Church, and Navigating Conflict with Congregations. The first was fun, quite like a writers group. In the second, it was good to ponder the difference between welcome, hospitality, and belonging. The third was most helpful. I'm always looking to become better at conflict resolution. Steve Brehe, the Canon for Christian Formation at St. Peter's Episcopal Cathedral in Helena and consultant for congregations in transition in the Episcopal Diocese of Nevada, challenged us to ask questions like "What is happening in the system?" rather than "Who is the problem?". Anxiety wants a location and tries to find a scapegoat. Scapegoating makes one person a powerful problem while no one else needs to change. No person is that powerful.

The Relational Toolbox Steve left us with?

- Talk to the person, not about the person
- Speak for yourself
- Separate facts from interpretation
- Stay curious
- Slow down (increase the gap between stimulus and response)
- Stay connected
- Practice repair (apology/amends)

If we follow Steve's advice, I have a feeling we won't just be a church where people are welcomed at the door and chatted with during coffee hour but a church where people find it a joy to belong because they feel safe.



Fishing for Volunteers

Hey all you FISH volunteers! **United Spirit Community Church's next turn to work together at the FISH Food Pantry is October 19-23 from 9:00-11:00 A.M.** If you'd like to volunteer and distribute food to families in need, **please call Carol Davidson at (406) 836-1862.** Thank you so much if you can help!



Care Team Recruitment

If you are interested in joining a Care Team for the church, please let Pastor Laura know or call the church office. **This will expand beyond prior visitation teams and will be in addition to Pastor Laura's visits.**

On a side note: Please let Pastor Laura know of any pastoral care information and updates she may be unaware of. She does not spend time on Facebook or Instagram so any information posted on those social platforms will not be seen by her. Thank you.

Heartfelt Appeal for Food Pantry Donations

Some children at West Elementary face days when their cupboards are bare. The school's food pantry becomes quite a lifeline- a place where a child can find something nourishing without questions and without going hungry. **Good-quality, kid-friendly foods offer more than calories.** They offer comfort, stability, and the reassurance that something will be waiting at home. **If you're able, please consider donating sturdy, nutritious, long-lasting foods such as:**

Chef Boyardee meals (pop-top), canned tuna or chicken, canned stew or chili, mac & cheese, pasta & sauce, rice, cereal, jelly, peanut-free snacks, manual can openers.

Every can, every box, every thought choice lifts a child's burden. Thank you for helping our students feel seen, supported, and cared for. ***Your Christian Service Board***

All Saints' Sunday

On **November 1**, the worship service will include communion and a time of remembrance for those who have died this past year. **Their names will be read, followed by the sound of a chime and silence.** There will also be a time to come forward and light a candle. **To have a loved one acknowledged, please let Holly know name and relationship by October 26.** Thank you.



Christian Service Seeking Members

The Christian Service Board is seeking thoughtful members to help guide our outreach missions. Are you seeking a way to serve our church that combines **compassion, creativity, and community impact**? The Christian Service Board is seeking new members to help us live out God's love in tangible ways – through **food, fellowship, and justice.**

West Elementary continues to be the heart of our outreach- our most significant, most transformative mission. West Elementary has one of the highest percentages of economically disadvantaged students in the entire state of Montana. The school faces daily realities that require more than occasional assistance. United Spirit Community Church's generosity has shone brightly in supporting students and staff. Including:

- **Reading Program-** offering not just literacy support but encouragement, stability, and the priceless gift of time
- **Parent-Teacher Conference-** providing warm, nourishing dinners for teachers and staff, giving them a moment of rest and appreciation during their longest days.
- **Food Pantry -** canned goods and non-perishable items keep the school's food pantry stocked, ensuring students have nourishing support
- **School supplies and clothing-** essentials for students who arrive without what they need

- **Thanksgiving Dinner baskets-** a partnership with Christian Education for families that might otherwise go without food
- **Angel Giving Tree-** at Christmas, the Angel Giving Tree transforms the Narthex into a celebration of generosity. Bringing joy and relief to children and families

Other ministries we support are:

- **Our Church's Wider Mission-** OCWM funds support the national and global church. OCWM's programs, resources, and tools help keep local UCC churches strong, effective, and growing.
- **One Great Hour of Sharing-** OGHS supports life-giving recovery efforts when disasters devastate communities and lives
- **Project Graduation-** This all-night, drug- and alcohol-free event offers our Rustler, Bison, and Paris Gibson Education Center seniors a meaningful and memorable celebration.
- **Neighbors IN Need-** supporting the church's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States
- **Housed Great Falls-** provides supplies for their Cold Weather Drop-in Center
- **Mother's Day Diaper Drive-** providing receiving blankets, baby wipes, and a wide range of diaper sizes
- **LGBTQ Community-** We walk with Jesus every step of the way, celebrating and supporting our LGBTQ family

Thank you for your consideration. Feel free to contact any of our board members for more information (**Lila Byers, Karen Venetz, Sharon Oakland, Sue Skees, Chris Ebeling, David Holland, Rosemary Neilsen**)

Coming Up

Thursday, October 8

8:00 A.M. Pray with the Pastor, Sanct.
 9-10 A.M. Pastor Laura Office Hours
 12:00 P.M. Facilities Committee
 6:30 P.M. Christian Education Board

Saturday, October 10

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

Sunday, October 11

9:15 A.M. Choir Rehearsal
 10:00 A.M. Worship Service
 11:00 A.M. Coffee Fellowship
 11:15 A.M. Acolyte Training, Sanctuary

Monday, October 12

1:00 P.M. Church Growth & Vitality
 5:30 P.M. Pray with the Pastor, Sanct.

Tuesday, October 13

10:00 A.M. Mitten Makers, FH

Wednesday, October 14

10:00 A.M. Bible Study, Parlor
 12:30 P.M. Pray with the Pastor, Sanct.
 1-2 P.M. Pastor Laura Office Hours
 1:30 P.M. Pinochle, Fellowship Hall
 NO YOUTH GROUP

6:00 P.M. Handbells

7:15 P.M. Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, October 15

8:00 A.M. Pray with the Pastor, Sanct.
 9-10 A.M. Pastor Laura Office Hours
 1:00 P.M. Women In Faith, Meeting at
 400 2nd Ave. S (The Baatz Building)
 7:00 P.M. Gracious Space, FH

**Holly will be out of the office
 October 15-19**

**Veteran's Day Spaghetti Dinner
 November 11, 2026 from 5:00-7:00 P.M.**

\$15.00/person or \$30.00/family

Tickets are available from Carolyn Dowdy or Jeanne Nobbs