

Mountain Proclamations

a publication of the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Mountain Home

www.mhfirstcongregational.org

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churchinfo@mhfccucc.org

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!!!Back to in-person worship!!!

Beginning with the Sunday, February 7th worship, we will be back to in-person, physical distance worshiping. For those who feel they are not ready to be in a semi-crowded room, we will record the worship service (not live-stream) and it will be posted on our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4te-AbJS-hGeUS6c1cmVA/>) by mid-afternoon. This is a new step; please be patient.

Sunday is Communion Sunday and we will, again, offer the drive-up Communion to those who wish to partake of the elements, but do not feel ready for in-person worship. This will be on **Sunday, February 7th from 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.** out by the front entrance overhang. Pastor Gary will meet you at your car as you pull up and he and a member of the Diaconate Board will administer the elements to you. This will also give folks a chance to say Good-Bye to Pastor Gary.

A Refresher on COVID protocols for Worship

- We are asking that each person attending worship please bring and *correctly* wear a facemask and observe physical distancing.
- The bulletins will be on a table as you come in for you to pick up.
- The bulletins will contain the music so you will not need to pick up the hymnals.
- Every other pew will be closed off to help facilitate social distancing
- The sign-in books will not be passed around. Only one person will note attendance.
- We will not have any physical contact during the passing of the peace, nor will we move from our pew area.
- The offering plate will be on the table as you come in so you may drop your offering off either on the way in or the way out.
- There *will not* be Fellowship Hour after worship
- Visiting in the aisle or in the building is discouraged. You may chat in the parking lot for as long as you wish.

If you do not feel safe coming to worship just yet, please know that we understand and support

your decision and you will be in our thoughts and prayers as always.

Boy Scout Sunday

Please welcome the Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venture Crews on **Sunday, February 7th** as they celebrate Scout Sunday with us. All scouts are welcome to attend no matter which troop, pack, or crew you belong to. Please observe COVID protocols.

Pastor Gary's Last Sunday

Sunday, February 14th, Valentine's Day, will be Pastor Gary's last Sunday as our interim pastor. We will open the Fellowship Hall for more physical-distancing room if needed. If you would like to come say good-bye to him, but do not feel ready to come to in-person worship, he will be out in the parking lot after worship – approximately 11:45 – to say good-bye to anyone who wishes to come and visit for a short spell – weather permitting!! If it's raining or snowing, we may not be able to do this. There will *not* be a special Fellowship Hour to say our good-byes.

Pastor Paul's first Sunday

Rev. Paul VanAntwerp's first Sunday with us will be **Sunday, February 21st**. Please try to come and welcome him. We will open up the Fellowship Hall for worshipers, if necessary, to facilitate physical distancing. At this time, there will *not* be a special Fellowship Hour to welcome him.

Donation Records 2020

The donation records for 2020 were mailed out on **January 11th**. If you do not receive your copy by **Monday, February 1st**, please contact the church office.

Women of the Church

Flowers

There will not be Fellowship Hour for the month of February, but we still need Flowers. As of this printing, *all Sundays are open*. If you would like to provide Altar Flowers for a Sunday in

February, please contact the church office. We'll take sign-ups for March, too!

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship meeting will be via ZOOM on **Friday, February 12th at 11 a.m.** An invitation will be sent out to those that the Women's Fellowship has email addresses for. If you would like to attend, but have not received an invitation, please contact the office to be put on their list.

Bible Study

We will be doing a study of Paul's letter to the Philippians by Sarah Koontz.

<https://livingbydesign.org/free-bible-studies/>

The site titles it JoyFULL, and you will need to sign up for the emails to get the materials.

February's studies will be at **10:30 a.m. on February 3rd and 17th** via ZOOM. Invitations will be sent by email before the meeting time.

If you are not on the Women's Bible Study email list, email the church office at the below email address to be added to the mailing list:

churchinfo@mhfccucc.org

All women of the church are invited to attend.

32nd Annual Black History Banquet

After careful consideration, and in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and in helping to keep our community safe; we will not be having our 32nd Annual Black History Banquet in 2021.

The Mountain Home Community Black History Committee and their supporters for thirty-two years have helped to educate the citizens of Mountain Home, the surrounding communities, and particularly our youth on the contributions made by Black Americans to this great country, and prayerfully we will continue to make this a thoughtful celebration in the future. In the meantime, *we can still celebrate Black History Month* by setting some time with our family to learn, honor, and celebrate the achievements of black men and women throughout history. The theme for Black History Month 2021 is: "The Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity" exploring the African diaspora, and the spread of Black families across the United States. This theme offers a rich tapestry for exploring the African American, past and present.

We thank everyone for their continued support, for it takes all of the community members to make Mountain Home a great place to live, work, and play. We continue to weep for all those we have lost, cry with joy for all those who

are born, and leap with joy for all the dawns of the new days we are able to explore!

The Mountain Home Community Black History Committee

Presidents' Day

The Church Office will be closed on **Monday, February 15th** in recognition of Presidents' Day.

Lent

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will not be happening this year. With any amount of blessings, we can use those pancakes and sausage at the Easter Breakfast.

Ash Wednesday

The sister churches who participate in the Ash Wednesday service with us – Grace Lutheran and Christian and Baptist - have either no pastor or a brand new interim and our new settled pastor will just be getting in and settled. With all of this and COVID, too, it has been decided that we will not be having an Ash Wednesday service this year. Please make time to acknowledge the beginning of this most solemn and thought-filled time of the church calendar.

Wednesday Lenten meditations

Beginning on **Wednesday, February 24th**, we will have our traditional Wednesday Lenten Meditation at 6:30 p.m. We will be exploring the book *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of life for Searching People* by Dorothy C. Bass. Books will be available or you may order your own in the format you like best. At this time, we are looking at doing a hybrid meditation – we will have in-person meditation in the Fellowship Hall and also be conducting it via ZOOM for those who would like to attend, but do not wish to be in-person just yet. More on this as plans are finalized. If we you wish to attend via ZOOM, please contact the church office to have your name added to the list.

One Great Hour of Sharing

The One Great Hour of Sharing Lenten offering will begin Sunday, February 21st. Offering will be taken on **Palm Sunday, March 28th**.

The Maurie Townsend Underwear Offering

The Maurie Townsend Underwear Offering will also begin **Sunday, February 21st** and will conclude on **Palm Sunday, March 28th**.

This very different, and oddly named, offering accomplishes a wonderful and not often thought of service for the disadvantaged in our community.

Any time during Lent, bring in *new* packages of any type of undergarments - socks, underwear, t-shirts, foundation garments - for any age group or gender. When all the offerings are collected, they will be taken to El-Ada for distribution to the disadvantaged in our area.

Time and Talent

The flow of Time and Talent cards back to the church has been getting smaller and smaller each year. This means that fewer and fewer people are being called upon to do more and more. As a church family, we all need to carry some of the ministry to keep the church vibrant and serving. If you simply overlooked sending your card back, please do so soon or pick up a new card from the office. If you think you have nothing to offer, trust me, you do. Everyone has a gift; sometimes we just need a little help taking the wrapping off.

Please, get your yellow Time and Talent card in today.

Thank You

From The Giving Tree

“On behalf of the Giving Tree committee, please accept our sincere thanks for your generosity in support of this project. Your donation of time, talents, energy, supplies and money made it possible for our group to provide holiday gifts and winter clothing for 91 families for the 2020 season.

Thank you again for supporting the Giving Tree. This project would not be possible without your generosity. Wishing you all the best in 2021.

*Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce
Giving Tree Committee”*

From Doreen and Ted Solum

“Dear Women’s Fellowship and Church Family,

Thank you so very much for the love you’ve shown to us after I broke my hip. The visits, delicious meals, silk flower arrangements, cards and even financial gift were deeply appreciated.

I can’t find adequate words to convey what sincere caring we have felt. I eagerly await the time we can all worship together again!

Gratitude in Christ,
♪Doreen and Ted Solum”

From Beth DeVore and Family

“Dear Pastor Gary, Jennifer, and Church Members,

Words cannot express how much your support meant to both my husband and I through his battle with cancer. And we both loved the Pocket Crosses you sent us.

The cards, meals, and support have meant so much to my family.

*Thank you,
Beth DeVore and Family”*

From Lee Wright

“I would especially like to thank everyone for all the out going love shown for Sasha from the entire church families. Sasha warmed many hearts and showed a lot of love to many of the church members and Women’s Fellowship.

She loved attending the Trustee meetings, Diaconate Board meetings, Christmas Bazaar setups, Rummage sales setups and helping maintain the outside church yards.

Thank you all for all the prayers, kind words, cards, letters, food and cookies that I received.

*Sincerely,
Lee Wright”*

To Marlene Osborn

The congregation would like to thank Marlene Osborn for stepping out of retirement to play the piano for us while Doreen was on the mend.

Thank you, Marlene, for continuing to share your beautiful talent with the church family. You were a life saver!

To Suzanne Dillard

She may be far away in miles, but never in our hearts and she misses us, too. Suzanne Dillard sent a packet of several birthday cards for the birthday card ministry that the Adult Sunday school does.

Thank you for remembering us, Suzanne!

The Annual Report

I would like to thank everyone who had the responsibility of getting your committee or board’s annual report to the office in a timely manner so that it could be compiled into the 2020 Annual Report for the ZOOM Annual Meeting. Your hard work and dedication are greatly appreciated. A special “Thank you!!” to Gail Banner and Frank Marsh who came in a folded the reports and got them all ready to be posted. Without their help I would have been here all afternoon getting the 102 reports we posted ready to go. Thank you, Frank and Gail!

*Jennifer Andersen,
Church Secretary*

In Loving Memory

Shirley Curt

August 1, 1943 ~ January 7, 2021

Sasha Wright
Faithful canine companion to Lee Wright

Our Condolences

To Mildred McNeal on the loss of her sister-in-law, Verda Rene Howard

Birthdays in February

3 Julianne Mori	18 Betty Ashcraft
5 Jo Gridley	18 Betty Parks
7 Joshua Roeder	19 Eddie Bush
10 Lawrence Pearsall	19 Chris Paille
10 Janet Weise	21 Marci Hamada
11 Susan Mussler	21 Dena Olson
12 Merrilee Hiler	21 Elizabeth Parks
12 Alice Keas	23 Lars Hansen
14 Jim Blanksma	24 Nadine Roberts
17 Sam Hooley	25 Sue Baumgardner

Anniversaries in February

10	Terry and Cindy Lindquist
17	Jennifer & Ken Andersen
19	Rick and Mariah Parks

Special Angels for February

LITURGISTS (Jennifer Dillenbeck)

7 – Frank Marsh
14 – Gail Banner
21 – Chris Paille
28 – Mike Keas

GREETERS (None for February)

USHERS (Lee Wright)

FLOWERS (Sign-Up Sheet)

7 –
14 –
21 –
28 –

PARAMENTS (Heidi and Allen Harris)

COMMUNION (Linda Thomsen)

From the Interim Pastor

What a wonderful two years we have shared together. When I accepted the call to be your interim pastor I thought it would only be for a brief period, maybe six to eight months. Well, here we are at the conclusion of our time together. My last Sunday with you will be February 14. It is with mixed feelings that I leave you. On the positive side, I am thrilled for First Congregational Church in its selection of

Rev. Paul VanAntwerp. After an extended period of searching, it seems that you have found the right person to serve and lead you. On the other hand, it is always difficult to say good bye to those you love. This congregation is so special in its caring and ministry to each other and to the community of Mountain Home.

It has been a joy to serve you. Robbie and I have enjoyed your fellowship hours, the Lenten Bible studies, the monthly pot-lucks, and special worship services. We thank you for allowing us to sing in the choir. Your congregation has been blessed with many talented, committed Christians. As much as I would love to continue a relationship with you, as an interim minister I am not allowed to. Someday we will visit you again. Please know that you will be in my thoughts and prayers. God bless you always.

Sincerely,
Gary and Robbie Smith

From Pastor Paul

‘Just about a week now, and I’ll be exiting the freeway and coasting into Mountain Home. To say “I’m excited” is an understatement. I was excited a month ago, giddy with possibility...but since then, I’ve had a chance to interact with many more of you. I’ve had the gift of receiving your kindness and welcome (above and beyond what any pastor could expect in transition). So now, there’s a better word to use: I feel “blessed.”

Here is the “Hallmark” portion of my note: to all of you that have made such great efforts to make this transition easier, I thank God for you. To the Search Committee, and Jen in the office, and Linda and Gail (and all the others) on the “housewarming committee,” to Gary and Truman and the wisdom of the ministers in your midst... and to so many more of you, please know this: you moved this Pastor from “excited” to “blessed.”

It so happens I was just preaching kind people in our lives last Sunday, and here’s what I said in that sermon: *I could thank them a thousand times, over and over, but those are just words. The real way to thank them, and the best way I know to honor them, is to make the choice to live LIKE them.*

If the welcome I’ve received thus far is any indication of what is to come, this Minnesotan boy is looking forward to “living like you.” You betcha.

See you in a week or so. Looking forward to meeting you!

Pastor Paul

Both Calendars subject to change February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 7 p.m. Diaconate	2	3 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Women's Bible Study	4 6 p.m. Bell "B" 6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:30 Bell "A" 7 p.m. Troop 19	5 10 a.m. Quilters	6
7 10 – 10:30 a.m. Drive-up Communion 11 a.m. Worship w/ Communion	8 6:30 Trustees	9	10	11 6 p.m. Bell "B" 6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:30 Bell "A" 7 p.m. Troop 19	12 11 a.m. Women's Fellowship Meeting via ZOOM	13
14 11 a.m. Worship Pastor Gary's last Sunday	15 President's Day Office Closed	16 No Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	17 Ash Wednesday 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Women's Bible Study No Ash Wednesday service	18 6 p.m. Bell "B" 6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:30 Bell "A" 7 p.m. Troop 19	19	20
<i>1st Sunday of Lent</i> 21 11 a.m. Worship Pastor Paul's first Sunday	22 7 p.m. Church Council	23	24 6:30 p.m. Lenten Meditation	25 6 p.m. Bell "B" 6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:30 Bell "A" 7 p.m. Troop 19	26	27
<i>2nd Sunday of Lent</i> 28 11 a.m. Worship						

March 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 7 p.m. Diaconate 7 p.m. Troop and Crew 57 - maybe	2	3 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Women's Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Lenten Meditation	4 6 p.m. Bell "B" 6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:30 Bell "A" 7 p.m. Troop 19	5 10 a.m. Quilters	6
<i>3rd Sunday of Lent</i> 7 10 – 10:30 a.m. Drive-up Communion 11 a.m. Worship w/ Communion	8 6:30 Trustees 7 p.m. Troop and Crew 57 - maybe	9	10 6:30 p.m. Lenten Meditation	11 6 p.m. Bell "B" 6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:30 Bell "A" 7 p.m. Troop 19	12 11 a.m. Women's Fellowship Meeting via ZOOM	13 SPRING (your clocks) FORWARD ONE HOUR AT BEDTIME
<i>4th Sunday of Lent</i> 14 2 a.m. Daylight Savings Time Begins 11 a.m. Worship	15 7 p.m. Troop and Crew 57 - maybe	16	17 10:30 a.m. ZOOM Women's Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Lenten Meditation	18 6 p.m. Bell "B" 6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:30 Bell "A" 7 p.m. Troop 19	19	20
<i>5th Sunday of Lent</i> 21 11 a.m. Worship	22 7 p.m. Church Council ←-----	23 Spring	24 6:30 p.m. Lenten Meditation Break	25 6 p.m. Bell "B" 6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:30 Bell "A" -----	26 -----→	27 9 a.m. Spring Clean
<i>Palm Sunday</i> 28 11 a.m. Worship	29 7 p.m. Troop and Crew 57 - maybe	30	31 No Meditation			