

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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Poinsettias

You may start bringing in your live poinsettias. If your poinsettia is to be shared as a memorial or dedication listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin, be sure to give this information to the church office by **Monday, December 20th**. Forms are available on the back bulletin table, or you may call or email your dedication in. Poinsettias may be dropped off at the church office Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. or brought in on Sunday mornings.

Please put your name on them if you want them back after Christmas. You may take your plant home any time after our Christmas Eve Candlelight service.

Women's Fellowship Christmas Bazaar

As with all things 2021 – the Women's Fellowship Christmas Bazaar is going to look quite different than normal again this year. The Women's Fellowship Christmas Bazaar will look like it did last year.

The sale will be virtual. Pictures will be taken and prices listed. These pictures will be posted in the *In the Loop* and on the church's website under the Women's Fellowship tab. **The sales will begin on December 1st at 10:00 a.m. and runs through December 8th at 8:00 p.m.** Purchases can be made by calling Linda Ramsey [REDACTED] or Sherry Bush [REDACTED]

Purchases are first come, first served!

Editor's note: Thank you for your continued support of the Women's Fellowship. They do so much for the church – let's be sure to give back in a big way.

Giving Tree

Tags are in, there are 11 tags left. If you would like to take a child or two, please see Ann Carlin either before or after church services until Dec. 5th. Wrapping of gifts is not permitted this year as the Giving Tree Program has a ton of gift wrap & boxes that they need to get rid of. Please make sure that the tag/tags you took are with the gifts that you purchased so that Ann knows what has come back; also make sure that the family # is on bag/bags that do not have the tag

on it. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ann @ [REDACTED]

*Sincerely,
Ann Carlin
Giving Tree Coordinator
First Congregational Church*

For the Women of the Church

Women's Fellowship Christmas Party and recycled gift exchange

It's Christmastime! All ladies of the church are invited to attend the Women's Fellowship's Christmas luncheon/meeting. We will gather on **Friday, December 10th** at 12 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a potluck meal followed by a very short meeting. Then we will enjoy a recycled gift exchange! Gifts are not to be purchased, but re-gifted, gently used recycled or handmade! For more information, contact Nancy Sobien

Women's Bible Study

BOOK: The Screwtape Letters, by C.S. Lewis
Purchase your own book (including "Screwtape Proposes a Toast") OR

- pick one up on the back table after church (please donate \$10 to the collection)
- pick one up from the Church office (please donate \$10 to Jennifer).

Dates: Thursday, **December 2, 16, and 30**

Time: 10:30am

Location: Adult Sunday School room

COVID Precautions: Personal distancing, masks, and "please do not to attend if you are sick".

What to expect:

- We will meet about every 2 weeks covering 2-3 letters each meeting
 - Our discussions will be based on The Screwtape Letters Study Guide by Alan Vermilye
 - Insights, quotes and bible verses you share
 - Relevance to your/our personal experiences and the present world stage
- Syllabus will be provided

Christmas Program

DECK THE HALLS AND TRIM THE TREE is the Christmas play this year. The chancel choir will accompany the kids as they present the poetic Christmas story. All children are invited to join whether they have attended Sunday school or not. Rehearsals will be at 10:00 during Sunday school time starting Nov. 28, then Dec. 5 and 12. The program will be performed Sunday Dec. 19 during regular service. Let's celebrate Christmas together!

Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross

On **December 19th** we will take our *Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross* offering.

See the website (www.christmasfund.org) and the bulletin inserts for all the wonderful things that the Christmas Fund does for our active and retired clergy and their families.

Christmas Luncheon

There will not be a Christmas Luncheon this year.

Office Christmas Schedule

Since Christmas and New Year's falls on a Saturday, there are no special office hours, *at this time.*

!Christmas Eve Candlelight Service!

Our Christmas Eve worship service will be at **7 p.m.** on Christmas Eve!

We will continue to practice physical distancing with the roped-off pews and will open up the Fellowship Hall for seating, if necessary. Our current mask policy will stay in place – masks if you are NOT vaccinated, masks optional if you are vaccinated. *Due to many visiting family and friends, we do strongly encourage the wearing of masks by everyone when not in the pews.*

Questions or concerns? Please contact the office.

Thank you

Pie Sale

Thank you to everyone who purchased a pie from Women's Fellowship. Over \$705 was made from the Pie Sale and donations. Proceeds will go toward enhancing ongoing church projects.

Special thanks to the following people who made and donated pies: Gail Banner, Rose Ann Tagg, Judy Case, Linda Ramsey, Nancy Sobien, Nadine Roberts, Doreen Solum, Betty Ashcraft, Kay Eilebrecht; Terri Jones and Susan Mussler. They carried out the theme of Women's Fellowship which is to "Spread Joy". What better way than through home-made pie!

*Nadine Roberts
Women's Fellowship*

Editor's Note: Thank you, Nadine, for coordinating this event this year.

Fall Decorations

Thank you to Lee Wright, Rita Olson, Mike, Eddie and Sherry Bush, Mollie Marsh and Lori Levis, for the beautiful harvest decorations in the Sanctuary. Thank you for all the beauty you brought into our worship space.

From Ramona Yrazabal

"Dear Church Family,

Your Healing Wishes and Prayers were what brought me through the worst of my COVID days. I truly appreciate all your thoughts and prayers. They are the reason I am able to send this note today. I am feeling much better and getting stronger every day. I thank you each and every one. My Love to you all!

Ramona Yrazabal"

Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child Shoebox Project

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, we were able to deliver SEVENTEEN very stuffed shoeboxes to the designated drop-off point to be delivered to children across the world. Accompanying each of these boxes is a storybook about Jesus in the child's language.

We had enough donations to help pay some of the \$9 per book delivery. Thank you, Generous Givers!

My thanks to all the various helpers on this project. You are truly angels!

Nancy Sobien

Note Suzanne Dillard

"Dear Jennifer et al,

When I got my recent mail from the church, I realized that I haven't updated my address with you all since I moved in late February! My new address is:

Upcoming Events

All Boards and Committees

Year-end 2021 Annual Reports are due in the office by **Wednesday, January 5th**, earlier if possible, so they can be prepared for distribution at our Annual Meeting on **Sunday, January 16th**.

Red Cross Blood Drive HERE!

Thursday, January 6th 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. we will be hosting a Blood Drive here at the church. This event is by appointment only, and we're looking to fill 32 slots for the day.

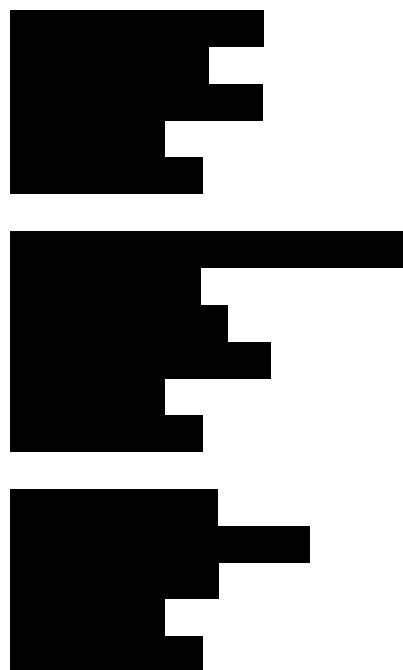
You can log onto <https://www.redcrossblood.org/> to either enroll into the system or to sign in and schedule a time if you are already registered. They even have an app for your Smartphone! Our Drive is also looking for a Volunteer or two to help with the checking in of the Donors as they arrive.

For more information, contact Rick Parks at cavmastergunner@gmail.com or call/text at (520)227-8485

2022 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting for 2022 will be on **Sunday, January 16th**, immediately after worship. This is the time when we review all the happenings of 2021 and finalize the budget for 2022.

Directory Update



Our Condolences

*The loss of Kay Eilebrecht's sister-in-law,
Sharon Peters*

Good news!! - I have a new grandchild!! My younger son, Phil, and his wife, Sanaz, had a boy on Sept. 26th!! His name is Shahan Frank Knight Dillard. He's beautiful, smart, and strong!! I can tell as his objective grandmom, Nana!! It's my son's first child and Sanaz's second. We are all thrilled. of course!!

Frank and Rose should be getting orders sometime after the New Year for a move next summer. I'm praying he gets them for the Florida Panhandle as that's where they'd really like to go. Phillip is 16, Joseph is 14, Victoria is 12, and Thomas is 8!!! Can you imagine!?! Seems like yesterday we lived in Mountain Home and they were so little!!

Tell everyone "hi" for me and Happy Thanksgiving to all!!

*Love,
Suzanne*

From Ken Hill

The Church Family and Friends received a card from Ken Hill wishing us a Happy Thanksgiving.

End of year giving

If you want credit in **2021** for your December tithe, be sure to have it to the church before **December 31st**. If you mail it, be sure that it is in the mail to be **postmarked** before or on December 31st. Anything received after that will go on you 2022 giving statement.

Pilgrim Cove Camp

If you are looking for another end-of-year giving place, please remember Pilgrim Cove Camp. Mail your tax-deductible donation to:

Pilgrim Cove Camp
P.O. Box 867
McCall, ID 83638

Pledges for 2022

If you were not able to get your pledge in before the Pledge Blessing on Sunday, November 21, no worries. Just bring it to church anytime during office hours, drop it in the UPS box (no money, please), or mail it back to us in the envelope provided with the Stewardship Letter you received.

You lost your card? The church has more; just contact the office.

*The loss of Joe and Mildred McNeal's son,
Joe, Jr.*

The loss of Mildred McNeal's sister

Birthdays in December

2 – Richard Bush 21 – Maurie Townsend
15 – Todd Paille 22 – Truman Parker
15 – Lee Wright 26 – Bud Weise
19 – Lucas Brumley 28 – Ethan Townsend
19 – LeeAnna Lathrop

Anniversaries in December

2 – Vickie and Joseph Armstrong
8 – Sue and Wade Baumgardner
9 – Sherry and Eddie Bush
17 – Stephanie and Kevin Osgood
18 – Diana and Dale Hooley
20 – Susan and Richard Broemeling
28 – Rita and David Olson
29 – Grace and Maurie Townsend

Special Angels for December

LITURGISTS (Heidi Harris)

5 – Susan Walker
12 – Polly Sanders
19 – Susan Mussler
26 – Heidi Harris

GREETERS (Not yet)

FELLOWSHIP HOUR (Not for December)

FLOWERS (sign-up sheet)
Christmas Décor

ADVENT CANDLE (Curtis Carlin)

5 – The Osgood Family
12 – Gail Banner
19 – Rick and Mariah Parks
24 – Al Foster and Betty Ashcraft

USHERS (Diane Venski)

PARAMENTS (Allen and Heidi Harris)

COMMUNION (Sandy O'Connell)

From Pastor Paul

Well, I'd be a fool to feign I could talk with authority on the subject of music theory, but I can tell you what it is that *I like*, and then share a line from Duke Ellington as support: "If it sounds good, it *is* good."

Now, I enjoy many varieties of music, but it's Blues and Gospel that I love the most (which is to say, my apologies for alienating you

Country music fans)—and in my listening and response (oh yes, friends, I sing along with gusto even if I can't hit the note, and am not afraid to shake my booty a little when the rhythm calls me) I've found that there are three styles (energies, rhythms, spirits, whatever-the-word) of music that "sound good" out there.

First there's what I'll call the "vibe" ... at the bottom, where the music is low and slow and full of soulful depth. The notes there are sparse, foundational, often fairly simple, and patiently abdicating any melodic interludes to short expressive cries from the high notes. When we listen to the "vibe" we close our eyes, slowly shake our heads, and breathe.

Then in the middle: a steady rhythm with a little hop, snap, or clap that finds our bodies rocking back and forth—I'll call that the "groove". It's the music we're compelled to help along—patting on our pant legs, tapping on the steering wheel—it's the music where mid-song clapping happens in concerts, or in worship.

And way up high then, where we sit with our shoulders tense and our chins raised, where the rhythm can't be kept with our hands and we nervously nod in approval of the up-tempo spin and whirl—well now, what's that called? There's no word I can muster from my lexicon. No label. It is fast paced, often shivering, celebratory. I guess I'll call it the "the highs".

And lest you shrug this off as two-bit chatter from an overly verbose Pastor, I'm here to tell you that the same way my comments might receive an eye-roll from those well-educated in musicology, I want the same eye-roll from those well-educated in theology when I tell them this:

In your faith, you need all three: a "vibe", a "groove", and "the highs." You need all three in your prayer life, your worship, and your daily engagement with God in the steps and breaths and interactions of your life.

You need all three, or you will get bored.

The way I see it, Advent does a good job in keeping us from getting bored. I tend to put most of the season in the "vibe" category, what with the darkening season and the candlelight meditation and all, but we all know the "groove" of the holidays—the gifting and cooking and sharing—the Jingle Bells... and if those aren't part of our faith lives then we're missing the boat. As for "the highs", I hear two songs rising up from the darkness and over the rhythm. I hear Mary, the fourth movement of our five-week Advent symphony, "my soul magnifies the Lord!"

...And I hear the closing performance, amidst the candlelit faces that send us forth on Christmas worship. I hear the highest notes in Silent Night. "Sleep in heavenly peace." He's with us now. "Sleep in heavenly peace."

*In God's Light,
Pastor Paul*

December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 p.m. Book Study 10 a.m. Virtual Christmas Bazaar begins	2 9 a.m. Breakfast 10:30 Women's Bible Study 6 p.m. Bells 7 p.m. Chancel 7 p.m. Troop 19	3 10 a.m. Quilters	4 6 – 9 p.m. M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
<i>Second Sunday of Advent</i> 5 10 a.m. Sunday School w/ play practice 11 a.m. Worship w/ Communion	6 7 p.m. Diaconate Board 7 Troop/Crew 57	7 10:30 a.m. Liturgical Discussion	8 7 p.m. Book Study 8 p.m. Virtual Christmas Bazaar ends	9 9 a.m. Breakfast 6 p.m. Bells 7 p.m. Chancel 7 p.m. Troop 19	10 12 p.m. Women's Fellowship	11 6 – 9 p.m. M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
<i>Third Sunday of Advent</i> 12 10 a.m. Sunday School w/ play practice 11 a.m. Worship	13 6:30 Trustees 7 Troop/Crew 57	14 10:30 a.m. Liturgical Discussion	15 7 p.m. Book Study	16 9 a.m. Breakfast 10:30 Women's Bible Study 6 p.m. Bells 7 p.m. Chancel 7 p.m. Troop 19	17	18 6 – 9 p.m. M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
<i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i> 19 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship w/ Christmas Program	20	21 10:30 a.m. Liturgical Discussion	22 7 p.m. Book Study	23 9 a.m. Breakfast 6 p.m. Bells 7 p.m. Chancel	24 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 Christmas 6 – 9 p.m. M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
26 11 a.m. Worship	27 7 Church Council	28 10:30 a.m. Liturgical Discussion	29 7 p.m. Book Study	30 9 a.m. Breakfast 10:30 Women's Bible Study NO Bells NO Chancel	31 New Year's Eve	

January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 New Year's Day 6 – 9 M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
2 11 a.m. Worship w/ Communion	3 7 p.m. Diaconate Board	4 10:30 a.m. Liturgical Discussion	5 7 p.m. Book Study	6 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Blood Drive 9 Breakfast NO Bells NO Choir 7 Troop 19	7 10 a.m. Quilters	8 6 – 9 p.m. M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
9 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	10 6:30 Trustees 7 Troop/Crew 57	11 10:30 a.m. Liturgical Discussion	12 7 p.m. Book Study	13 9 a.m. Breakfast 1030 – Women's Bible Study 6 p.m. Bells 7 p.m. Chancel 7 p.m. Troop 19	14 12 p.m. Women's Fellowship	15 6 – 9 p.m. M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
16 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship After worship – Annual Meeting	17 Martin Luther King Day Office closed	18 10:30 a.m. Liturgical Discussion	19 7 p.m. Book Study	20 9 a.m. Breakfast 6 p.m. Bells 7 p.m. Chancel 7 p.m. Troop 19	21	22 6 – 9 p.m. M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
23 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	24 7 Church Council 7 Troop/Crew 57	25 10:30 a.m. Liturgical Discussion	26 7 p.m. Book Study	27 9 a.m. Breakfast 1030 – Women's Bible Study 6 p.m. Bells 7 p.m. Chancel 7 p.m. Troop 19	28	29 6 – 9 p.m. M.H. Speakers (A.A.)
30 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	31					