

Mountain Proclamations

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

www.mhfirstcongregational.org

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Order of Worship

You may have noticed some frequent changes in the Order of Worship over the past few weeks. The Diaconate Board, Pastor Deral and the administrator are trying to move the worship flow back to the way it was before COVID. With the facts that there were a couple of different Orders of Worship and Pastor Deral also having his own style, it is going to take a few Sundays to find an Order of Worship that flows in a way that lets us all praise and worship God and hear Pastor Deral's message in a timely fashion. Time spent in God's House is always a good time spent, but we understand that God is "out there", too.

Thank you so much for your patience as we work through these transitions.

Poinsettia Dedications

You may now start bringing in your live (no silk ones, please) poinsettias. Those being shared as memorials or dedications, will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin so be sure to give this information to the church office by **Monday, December 19th** Forms are available on the back table in the Sanctuary or from the office.

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. **If you want your poinsettia back after Christmas, please be sure to put your name on it.** You may take your plant home any time after our Christmas Eve candlelight service.

Giving Tree

It is that time of year again, The Giving Tree is in full swing. If you would like a tag or two, please see me either before or after church every Sunday starting Nov. 20th through Dec. 11th. I have 20 tags, 10 boys, 10 girls.

ALL TAGS MUST BE BACK BY DEC. 11TH so that they can be dropped off with the Giving Tree Program by Dec. 14th to be wrapped and distributed to needy kids.

PLEASE DO NOT WRAP GIFTS!!!

*Sincerely,
Ann Carlin*

Women's Fellowship Christmas

Bazaar

The Bazaar will be held on **Saturday, December 3rd, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.** Fresh baked cinnamon rolls and pieces of pie will be available along with many homemade items, bakery items, decorations . . . old and new! Items to sell are greatly encouraged . . .

Set-up will be **Friday, December 2, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.** Please have your donations to the church as early as possible. If you can stay and help set up, all hands will be most appreciated.

Please contact Women's Fellowship if you have any questions! All sales (monies) become the property of Women's Fellowship.

Editor's note: The Women's Fellowship spends these monies on the church – coffee, tea, and other condiments for Fellowship Hour and potlucks. They also make contributions toward other needed items around the church as well as donations to charitable organizations around town. Come support those who support us.

These Days

The *These Days* devotional booklets have arrived for the first quarter of 2023 – January through March.

These popular devotional booklets are free due to a generous donation from Helena DeWeerd in memory of her husband, John and her son, Jeff.

Thank you so much, Helena, for aiding our walk with God and Jesus.

For the Women of the Church

Women's Fellowship Christmas Party and recycled gift exchange

Women's Fellowship will hold their December meeting/Christmas Party Pot-Luck Luncheon at **noon on December 9th**. Hostesses are Linda Ramsey and Gail Banner.

After feasting on our always delicious table of food, we will have a short meeting to wrap up the recent fundraisers, install the new officers for the 2023 year, toss around ideas for the new year

and have a gift exchange. Everyone is asked to bring a homemade, recycled, re-gifted gift.

All women of the community are invited...the more the merrier!

Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study has been put on hold until January.

Women's Bible Study is starting up again! The book is *Grace* by Max Lucado. We will meet on **the 1st and 3rd Thursday at 10:30 AM. January's classes will be Thursdays January 5th and 19th.** If you need a book, please let the office know. Each book is \$12.71. It is also available on Kindle and Audio.

Please let the office know if you would like to be added to our email group.

Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross

On **December 18th** we will take our *Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross* offering.

Christmas Thank You Checks for retired UCC clergy/lay employees. Retirees with limited financial resources receive a gift at Christmas time as a way of saying "thank you" for years of service to the United Church of Christ.

Pension Supplement for lower-income retired UCC clergy/lay employees. Retirees with limited financial resources receive monthly payments to bring their household income up to a minimum level so that they can afford basic needs such as food, utilities or medical expenses.

Health Benefits Supplementation for lower-income retired UCC clergy/lay employees. Retirees with limited financial resources receive assistance to pay their UCC Medicare Supplement Plan premiums.

Emergency Grants for active or retired UCC clergy/lay employees. Sometimes those who serve the Church face unforeseen circumstances that create financial need. Our help and emergency funds are available to assist in covering those costs.

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.

Special Christmas Story for the Children

Miss Betty Ashcraft will be sharing a special story during Children's Moment on **Sunday**,

December 18th. Bring your kids and bring your grandkids to join in the fun and learn a special song to sing.

Christmas Luncheon

The Christmas Luncheon will be on **Sunday, December 18** after worship. Ham, bread and beverages will be provided. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Everyone is invited to the table!

Blue Christmas Service

There will be a Blue Christmas Worship Service at the Church of the Nazarene, 950 N 7th East on **Wednesday, December 21st.** Soup will be served at 6:30 p.m. and the service will begin at 7 p.m.

Blue Christmas service provides a quiet and contemplative worship service as an alternative to the more traditional gatherings. This is in honor of those who are experiencing grief and struggling with loss, particularly throughout the holidays.

Office Christmas Schedule

Since Christmas and New Year's falls on a Sunday, 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 **Saturday, December 24th.**

Christmas Day

There will *not* be a worship service on **Sunday, December 25th.** We celebrated Christ's birth with our church family during the Christmas Eve worship the night before; now we will celebrate Christ with our families at home.

Thank you

Fall Decorations

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

Pie Sale

Thank you to the wonderful pie bakers and the generous bidders for making our recent Pie Auction a great success. We made a whopping \$1,817! Proceeds will be used to support church

projects and fund community outreach donations.

Special thanks to Susan Broemeling for the donation to the auction of a beautiful glass vase and to Linda Ramsey for the quilted soup bowl holders.

Women's Fellowship would especially like to thank Roger Fogleman (and his apprentice, Autumn) for doing a great job of auctioneering.

Nadine Roberts, Chairman

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

Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child Shoebox Project

Twenty-eight very full shoeboxes were dropped off Nov. 21st to be delivered to children ages 2-14 all over the world. Children attend a special Sunday school session to learn about Jesus and his wonderful works. They come back a second time and receive a shoebox filled with school supplies, hygiene articles and toys. They are also given a Bible in their own language along with a picture book and story of Jesus' life.

In addition to the wonderful gifts that we stuffed into the shoeboxes, we also received monetary donations to cover the \$290 cost of shipping and handling of the boxes.

Thanks to the congregation for their support and to the ladies that packed the boxes...not really an easy thing to do! Thanks to Barrie, Frankie, Sherry, Linda R., Betty A., Nadine, Vickie, Bobbi, Doreen, Lars, and Nancy.

I'm sure that 28 children somewhere in the world will be very happy!

Nancy Sobien

Thanksgiving Dinner

THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!! To all who prepared, drove, cooked, decorated, served, cleaned up, etc. at our annual Thanksgiving Dinner.

We had our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday, November 20th, 2022, after not having it since 2019 due to COVID. This wonderful night of food & fellowship started off with a prayer done by Heidi Harris and a song lead by Nadine Roberts. There were 62 people present and 9 shut-in meals were delivered for a total of 71 meals; a great time was had by all, and \$115 was donated for future events.

The festivities were put together by Heidi Harris and Curtis Carlin and their crew of Thanksgiving helpers. The cooks for the turkeys and hams were Betty Ashcraft, Vicki Armstrong, Ann

Carlin, and Allen Harris. The beautiful decorations were done by Lee Wright and Curtis Carlin. Delivery Drivers were Heidi Harris, Ann Carlin, Eddie and Sherry Bush, Betty Ashcraft and Al Foster. Servers were Curtis Carlin, Sue Stanek, and Linda Thomsen. Clean-up crew was Nadine Roberts, Linda Thomsen, Curtis and Ann Carlin, Vicki Armstrong, Kay Eilebrecht, Eddie, Sherry and Rick Bush, and Barb Fogleman.

We know that there are people who work under the radar, so if we are missing any names, please know that your help was most welcome and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Heidi Harris & Curtis Carlin

End of year giving

If you want credit in **2022** 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 your 2023 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 2023

If you were not able to get your pledge in before the Pledge Blessing on Sunday, November 20, 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.

Upcoming Events

All Boards and Committees

Year-end Annual Reports are due in the office by **Wednesday, January 4th**, earlier if possible, so they can be prepared for distribution at our Annual Meeting on **Sunday, January 15th**.

January Communion

January's Communion will be on **Sunday, January 8th**, due to the first Sunday being New Year's Day.

2023 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting for 2023 will be on **Sunday, January 15th**, immediately after worship. This is the time when we review all the happenings of 2022 and finalize the budget for 2023.

Congratulations

*Sylvia and Joe Sisneros
Joined before God
Sunday, November 20, 2022*

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

Anniversaries in December

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 (Sue Stanek)

4 – Phil Miller
11 – Susan Walker
18 – Susan Mussler
25 – Merry Christmas – no worship today

FELLOWSHIP HOUR (sign-up sheet)

4 –
11 – Curtis and Ann Carlin
18 – Christmas Potluck Luncheon
25 – Merry Christmas – no fellowship hour

FLOWERS (sign-up sheet)

Christmas Décor

ADVENT CANDLE (Curtis Carlin)

4 – Heidi and Allen Harris
11 – Roger and Barb Fogleman
18 – Polly Sanders
24 – The Choir

USHERS (Heidi Harris)

PARAMENTS (Allen and Heidi Harris)

COMMUNION (Curtis Carlin)

From Pastor Deral

We often think of the shepherds “keeping watch over their flocks by night” in the most tender and ‘pastoral’ of ways. But in their day, far from being considered gentle or noble, they were viewed as ruffians and scoundrels. They were despised by the ‘good’ people. All because they weren’t able to keep all the details of the Jewish law – the ceremonial washings, the rules, all the regulations.

We tend to think of them as serene, carefree, and peaceful. But have you ever tried to herd sheep? Have you ever tried to herd anything – cows, chickens, small children? It’s not easy!

Shepherds spent long and lonely hours on the job – day and night. It was mostly monotonous, boring, repetitive, bleating, stinking labor.

Then Christmas Came!

Before, those shepherds were bound to tradition, bound down by daily routine, chained by years of prejudice, fettered by fear that nothing would ever change.

But now they heard a message of God’s great love! They were set free! They had lived their lives on the outside, seen as less than others. Now they were brought inside – into the fold. For the oldest, roughest ram, or the youngest most tender lamb, the protection of the fold was vital and Life-giving. And now, like the sheep they cared for, they, too, were brought inside!

“For God so loved the world ...” The message included everyone *then*; and it includes you and me *now* – all of us! No condemnation, but a gift that forgives our sin, cleanses our heart, and puts us right with God. The gift of Jesus lifts us above the self-defeat, the emptiness, days without hope, and life without meaning.

The gift of His Presence is the most magnificent present we can ever receive!!

Merry Christmas!
Pastor Deral

December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 2 p.m. Bell practice 3 p.m. Choir practice 7 p.m. Troop 19	2 10 a.m. First Friday Quilters 1 – 5 p.m. Christmas Bazaar Set-up	3 8 a.m. – Noon Christmas Bazaar 7- 9 p.m. AA
<i>Second Sunday of Advent 4</i> 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship with Communion 3 p.m. Joseph Armstrong's memorial service	5 7 p.m. Diaconate Board 7 p.m. Troop/Crew 57	6 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office	7	8 2 p.m. Bell practice 3 p.m. Choir practice 7 p.m. Troop 19	9 12 p.m. Women's Fellowship 4 p.m. Troop 57	10 7- 9 p.m. AA Lock-in 10 a.m.
<i>Third Sunday of Advent 11</i> 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	12 6:30 p.m. Board of Trustees 7 p.m. Troop/Crew 57	13 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office	14	15 2 p.m. Bell practice 3 p.m. Choir practice 7 p.m. Troop 19	16	17 7- 9 p.m. AA
<i>Fourth Sunday of Advent 18</i> 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship Christmas Potluck luncheon	19	20 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office	21 6:30 p.m. Blue Christmas Service @ Church of the Nazarene	22 2 p.m. Bell practice 3 p.m. Choir practice	23	24 7 p.m. Candlelight Christmas Eve service
25 Christmas NO Sunday School OR Worship	26 7 p.m. Church Council	27 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office	28	29 2 p.m. Bell practice 3 p.m. Choir practice	30	31 New Year's Eve 7- 9 p.m. AA

January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 New Year's Day 11 a.m. Worship	2 7 p.m. Diaconate Board	3 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office	4	5 10:30 Women's Bible Study 2 p.m. Bell 3 p.m. Choir 7 p.m. Troop 19	6 10 a.m. First Friday Quilters	7 7- 9 p.m. AA
8 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship with Communion	9 6:30 p.m. Board of Trustees 7 p.m. Troop/Crew 57	10 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office	11	12 2 p.m. Bell practice 3 p.m. Choir practice 7 p.m. Troop 19	13 12 p.m. Women's Fellowship	14 7- 9 p.m. AA
15 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship Annual Meeting Christian Ed mtg.	16 Martin Luther King Day Office Closed	17 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office 1 – 3 PEO mtg.	18	19 10:30 Women's Bible Study 2 p.m. Bell 3 p.m. Choir 7 p.m. Troop 19	20	21 7- 9 p.m. AA
22 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship Church Council	23 7 p.m. Troop/Crew 57	24 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office	25	26 2 p.m. Bell practice 3 p.m. Choir practice 7 p.m. Troop 19	27	28 7- 9 p.m. AA
29 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	30 7 p.m. Troop/Crew 57	31 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pastor Deral's in the office				