

# Mountain Proclamations

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

[www.mhfcucc.org](http://www.mhfcucc.org)

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## Search Committee Update

We would like to thank all those who came to the "Meet and Greet" to visit with Pastor Drew, his fiancé Jade and her son, Nolan. We also really appreciated the great turnout for the candidate sermon and the positive response to our selection. Both the congregation and Pastor Drew have accepted the call for him to pastor our church. We are excited to begin the transition to a new period in the life of our church.

Pastor Drew is currently the pastor at Wright Community Congregational Church in Boise. To give his current congregation the necessary notice and transition time he will fulfill his contractual notice of 90 days and will join our congregation on February the 19<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to his arrival. Until that time Rev. Parker has graciously agreed to continue serving our congregation.

*Sincerely,*  
*Search Committee*

## Giving Tree Tags

The Giving Tree Tags are in, if you would like a tag, please see Ann Carlin either before or after church and she will be more than happy to give you a tag.

Here is some information on how the tags should be done.

- You can purchase whatever you like off the tag but make sure to cross off what you have purchased so that the Giving Tree Headquarters know what they still need to get.
- Please **DO NOT WRAP** any of the gifts.
- Please put the gifts in a gift bag with the tag either tied to the handle of the gift bag or taped to the gift bag.
- The tags will be available from November 20<sup>th</sup> to December 11<sup>th</sup>. ALL tags/gifts must be back to the church no later than December 14<sup>th</sup> so that Ann & Curtis can get them delivered to the Giving Tree Headquarters by December 16<sup>th</sup>.

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

## Poinsettias

You may start bringing in your live poinsettias. Please note: the church does not purchase poinsettias. If yours is to be shared as memorials or dedications listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin, be sure to give this information to the church office by **Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**. Forms will be available on the back table. 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.

## Children's Christmas Program

Practice for the Children's Christmas Program will be Sunday mornings during Sunday school. **The program, "Christmas Spirit? Let's Hear it!", will be presented on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**. All children are welcome to participate.

## Christmas Bazaar

### *Christmas Bazaar Set up*

Set up for the 2016 Christmas Bazaar will be **Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>**, from 1 p.m. until 5 p.m. This is the time to bring in your handcrafted items and baked goods. This is also when some muscle is needed to help set up tables and transform the Fellowship Hall into a holiday wonderland of really nifty items for a unique Christmas celebration. Please help if you can.

### *Women's Fellowship Christmas Bazaar*

The Women's Fellowship Christmas Bazaar will be held on **Saturday, December 3, 2016**, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 pm. There will be homemade goodies of all kinds and pies with coffee and tea in Horner's Corner. Besides goodies to eat, handmade crafts and needlework and gift items will be available for purchase. Come join us and bring friends and neighbors. Get your Christmas baked goodies here and unique gift items for those very special people on your Christmas list.

If you have something to contribute to the Bazaar, contact the church office or one of the ladies from the Women's Fellowship.

## Annual Crèche Exhibit of Nativities

The Annual Crèche Exhibit of Nativities at the LDS Stake Center at 790 S. Haskett Street will be Thursday and Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Our Bell Choir will be performing at 8 p.m. on Friday and the Community Choir will be performing on Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 3:30 p.m.

## 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 9<sup>th</sup>** at 12 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a potluck meal followed by a short meeting. Mickie Betts will be our hostess and the new officers' installation will be done by Rev. Parker. Then we will enjoy a recycled gift exchange! Gifts are not to be purchased, but regifted, gently used or handmade! For more information, contact Nancy Sobien.

### *Women's Bible Study*

Due to the holiday busy-ness, we will be meeting only once this month – **Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m.**

## Christmas Luncheon

On **Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>**, we will have our Christmas potluck immediately following the worship service. The Church will provide the Christmas ham and you can bring the side dishes and desserts as well as your own place setting. Come and enjoy good food and good fellowship.

## Christmas Sunday School Schedule

There will be no Sunday School for the children on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>. No Sunday School for the adults on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> and Jan 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Christmas Eve Service

On **Saturday evening, December 24<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 p.m.** we will hold our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service. Come join us on this special and holy night of nights as we celebrate the birth of Christ with music, fellowship and the telling of the story that never grows old.

## Treasurer's Report

I want to remind everyone that any pledges paid for this year must be received by the church before **December 31, 2016, and/or postmarked by the end of that day.** Any funds received or postmarked after that date are considered into the new year.

*Grace Townsend*  
Treasurer

## Thank you

### *Halloween Party*

Our 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Halloween Party was a huge success. We had approximately 65-70 people attend and partake in the games, the food and the fun. This all would not have been possible if it were not for the help of some great people, and they are as follows: Curtis Carlin, Rose Pearsall, Barb Fogleman, Vicki Eckenrod, Billy and Carrie Roeder, Heidi Harris, Lauren and Nicholas Tomsic, and Lorraine Leno. Thank you all for taking time out of your day to help make this party a huge success. I would also like to thank Chuck Eckenrod for taking the time out of his day to cook the hot dogs for the party. A HUGE thank you goes out to all who donated candy and decorations; without your generosity this event would not have gone as good as it did. Plans have already begun for next year's Halloween Party.

Sincerely yours,  
*Ann Carlin*  
Diaconate Board

### *Pie Auction*

The pie auction on Nov 20<sup>th</sup> brought a whopping \$758! Thank you to all of the bakers for donating such scrumptious pies. A special thank you to Linda Miller for the beautiful quilted table runners and pot holders. Also thank you to Bob Roberts for his humorous auctioneering! Most of all, a big thank you to our generous bidders. Proceeds from the auction will go toward many church projects.

*Nadine Roberts*  
Women's Fellowship

### *Thanksgiving Dinner*

We held our annual Thanksgiving Dinner and Pledge drive on Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in the Fellowship Hall; there were 91 people present at this festive occasion, with meals being delivered to 9 shut-ins, for a total of 100 people. Everyone who attended had great food and fellowship.

An event like this takes more than just two people, so Curtis and I would like to thank EVERYONE who helped to set up the tables during and after church on November 20<sup>th</sup>. We would also like to thank EVERYONE who brought food to put on our Thanksgiving Table. A huge ‘THANK-YOU’ goes out to Maurie and Grace Townsend, Sherry and Eddie Bush, Betty Ashcraft and Al Foster and Dena Olson for taking time out of their evening to deliver meals to the shut-ins. Another huge ‘THANK-YOU’ goes out EVERYONE who helped to set the food up, serve the food and then clean-up after the meal was over, without their help it would be near impossible to put on an event like this.

Curtis and I would also like to express how honored we are to belong to such a loving, caring and giving church. Belonging to a church such as the First Congregational Church is a true blessing to not just us but everyone who walks through its doors. Thank you again EVERYONE for making this another great Thanksgiving Dinner and Pledge Drive.

*Sincerely yours,  
Ann and Curtis Carlin  
Social Committee*

*Lee Wright and Sherry Bush*

Thank you for all the wonderful harvest decorations in the church during the month of November. It was a vivid reminder of God’s bounty.

### *Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross*

On **December 18<sup>th</sup>** we will take our *Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross* offering. This year’s theme is “God’s Love Colors Everything”, and we even have coloring books to prove it! They will be available with the Children’s Bulletins as long as supplies last.

See the website ([www.christmasfund.org](http://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.

### *Pledges for 2017*

If you missed the Pledge Blessing Service on November 20<sup>th</sup> and you haven’t had a chance to turn in your pledge card, no worries. Just bring it to church with you any Sunday and drop it in the offering plate or mail it back to us in the envelope provided with the Stewardship Letter you received.

You lost your card? The church has more on the back table in the sanctuary or call the office.

## *All Boards and Committees*

Year-end Annual Reports are due in the office by **January 4, 2017**, earlier if possible, so they can be prepared for distribution at our Annual Meeting on **January 15<sup>th</sup>**.

### *Celebrating 40 years of Dedicated Service*

As most of you know, Truman will be retiring at the end of December and we will be throwing him a retirement party to thank him for his 40 years of Ministerial service. He has blessed our church for the last 23 years, and he and his lovely wife Terri will be deeply missed by each and every one of us. If you would like to attend, please see Ann or Curtis Carlin to purchase your ticket(s).

Cost: Tickets are \$15.00 each

Location: The Elks Lodge

Date: January 28, 2017

Time: 5 pm to 9 pm with dinner being served promptly at 6 pm

Attire: Semi-Formal

Deadline: Tickets must be purchased no later than Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>

### *Bulletin Sponsors*

There are only 11 Sundays left in 2017 for which to sponsor a bulletin. Sign-up sheets are on the back table in the Sanctuary or you can contact the office Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sponsoring bulletins is a way to help make our financial resources go just a bit farther. Last year we filled every Sunday. Each sponsorship costs \$10, payable when you can between now and the end of 2017 – please make a notation on your check. Your name will be printed in the bulletin you choose to sponsor. If you wish to remain anonymous, please be sure to note that on the sign-up sheet.

### *Note the Change*

Ken and Jennifer Andersen have gone to just cell phones, so the “580” number listed in some of the older Directories and in the phone book is no longer in service. Their cell phone numbers are listed in the 2016 Church Directory.

### *Birthdays in December*

2 – Richard Bush	20 – John Estes
4 – Klara Lichdi	21 – Maurie Townsend
7 – Michael Marten	22 – Truman Parker
15 – Lee Wright	26 – Bud Weise
	29- Rose Dillard

## *Anniversaries in December*

- 8 – Sue and Wade Baumgardner
- 9 – Sherry and Eddie Bush
- 18 – Diana and Dale Hooley
- 20 – Curt and Susanna Ohlsen
- 28 – Rita and David Olson
- 29 – Grace and Maurie Townsend

## *Special Angels for December*

### LITURGISTS (Josh Roeder)

- 4 – Heidi Harris
- 11 – Al Foster
- 18 – Chris Paille
- 25 – Gail Banner

### GREETERS (Mickie Betts)

- 4 – Mickie Betts
- 11 – Todd and Chris Paille
- 18 – Chuck and Vickie Eckenrod
- 25 – Maurie and Grace Townsend

### FELLOWSHIP HOUR (sign-up sheet)

- 4 – Rose Pearsall
- 11 – Carrie Roeder
- 18 – Christmas Potluck Luncheon
- 25 –

### ADVENT CANDLE (Curtis Carlin)

- 4 – Curtis and Ann Carlin
- 11 – Betty Ashcraft
- 18 – Todd and Chris Paille
- 24 – The Fogleman Family

### CHILDREN'S CHURCH (Sign-up Sheet)

- 4 – Communion – no Children's Church
- 11 – Heidi Harris
- 18 – Betty Ashcraft
- 25 – Ken Andersen

### USHERS (Ken Hill)

### FLOWERS (Christmas décor)

### PARAMENTS (Allen and Heidi Harris)

### COMMUNION (Gene Mussler)

## *Children's Church and Communion*

Children's Church is for children from kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Children in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and up are invited to remain in regular church. Children below kindergarten age may go to the nursery where care will be provided.

On Communion Sunday – the first Sunday of the month – there will be NO Children's Church so that the children may remain in the worship service and partake of communion with their church family.

## *From the Pastor*

Light has always been a human preoccupation. In one way or another all of the ancient civilizations worshipped the ultimate source of heat and light, the sun. In a world whose only illumination was fire, the pre-industrial night skies blazed with celestial glory. These bright sparks of light in the black canopy of heaven provoked the curiosity, imagination, and creativity, of generations of artists, philosophers, theologians, and story tellers.

Plato taught that humans live in a dark cave whose only illumination is a small fire. Human perception only sees the vague shadows the fire throws on the walls of the cave, while outside, the whole cosmos throbs with brilliant light.

Plato lived in the fifth century BC. Eight hundred years after his death his intellectual descendants, the Christian Neo-Platonists, preached that God is pure light. The further away from God you drifted, morally and spiritually, the darker it became, until ultimately you ended up in the realm devoid of all light and illumination.

The world of the Neo-Platonists was literally black and white, with few shades of grey in between. But they too were fascinated by the idea of light being the presence of God.

Not surprisingly at this time of year, light is one of the major themes running through the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Matthew's Magi set out on their journey following a bright star in quest of the greater light that was newly born someplace in the world. Luke's shepherds unexpectedly find themselves caught up in the midst of the glory of God. The Gospel of John tells us that first and foremost, "The true light that enlightens all people was coming into the world - the light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it."

As the last days of autumn give way to winter we can literally watch darkness spreading through the way we structure our lives. But, like the ancient people, even on the shortest nights of the year our heavens blaze with light and color, especially if we can get away from the light pollution of the city.

Even as the days grow shorter, and the length of darkness increases, we know that come Christmas there will be a turn in the tide and the light will start to return to our existence. This return of the light is a sign of hope and a promise of new life and new creation.

Christ is the light and hope of the world. In this Advent season watch and wait for the coming of the light. Even now the true light, that enlightens all people, is coming into our lives.