

Mountain Proclamations

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

www.mhfirstcongregational.org

February 2026

mhfccucc@gmail.com

Volume 59 - Issue 2

Joe B. McNeal

We will celebrate the life of Joe B. McNeal with his funeral here at First Congregational Church, UCC, on **Saturday, February 7th at 11 a.m.** followed a graveside service. A repast (light meal) will be held at Our Lady of Good Counsel, 342 E Jackson Street, following the graveside service. If you can help the Women's Fellowship with the meal, please contact Linday Ramsey or Sherry Bush.

There will be a viewing at Rost Funeral home on Friday, February 6th from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Scout Sunday

Nationally, Scout Sunday is celebrated on Sunday, February 8th. However, due to a local winter camporee Troop and Crew 57 will be celebrating Scout Sunday on **Sunday, February 22nd**. All Scouts are welcome to attend no matter which troop, pack, or crew you belong to.

Donation Records 2025

End of year Giving Statements for 2025 were mailed along with this newsletter – the last week of January.

If you have any questions about your statement, please contact the Financial Recording Secretary, Frank Marsh.

Women of the Church

Women's Fellowship

Ladies, come out and see what wonderful things the Women's Fellowship is doing in our community.

Our February potluck luncheon and meeting will be on **Friday, February 13th at noon.**

Please contact Nancy Sobien, Gail Banner or the church office if you have questions.

The Annual Black History Banquet

The Mountain Home Black History Committee will be hosting their 38th Annual Black History Banquet on **Friday, February 13, 2026**, A Century of Black History Commemorations!

The banquet will be held at The Elks Lodge, 325 S. 3rd West. Social hour begins at 6:30 p.m. with dinner at 7:15.

The Keynote Speaker is Colonel Saunya N. Bright, Commander of the 366th Medical Group, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho – Home of the “Gunfighters”.

Dress is semi-formal. Ticket donation is \$40 per person. **Please RSVP by February 3rd.**

The Mountain Home Community Black History Committee

Black History Sunday

We, as a church, will celebrate Black History Sunday on **Sunday, February 14th** at the 11 a.m. service.

Mildred McNeal will be providing a cake for our Fellowship Hour. All are welcome to come enjoy good cake and good fellowship.

Presidents' Day

The Church Office will be closed on **Monday, February 16th** in recognition of Presidents' Day.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Please join us on **Tuesday, February 17th at 6 p.m.** for a Pancake Supper of sausage and pancakes!

This is **not** a potluck. Just bring yourself, your family, a friend or two. Everything will be provided. There is not a study afterwards; this is simply a time for fellowship and fun.

Gluten-free pancakes will be available upon request.

Ash Wednesday Service

Ash Wednesday worship will be at **7 p.m. on Wednesday, February 18th** here at First Congregational.

One Great Hour of Sharing

“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not

reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)

What is One Great Hour of Sharing?

For over 75 years, the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (OGHS) has been helping Christians bring God’s hope and healing to hurting people both in the US and around the world. OGHS’s mission is to support domestic and international development, fight poverty and its consequences, bring aid and relief to communities torn by war or ravaged by national disaster, provide advocacy and resettlement assistance for refugees and displaced persons, and combat injustice in its many forms. OGHS provides funding and hands-on assistance in collaboration with local and international partners. Each year, OGHS is gathered by several denominations and Church World Service (CWS) under a single theme developed by the ecumenical OGHS Committee. In addition to posters, brochures, and interactive media, the Committee commissions a Planning and Resource Guide that contains a variety of resources and activities for pastors and church leaders to use as they promote and receive the offering. In the United Church of Christ, the Global H.O.P.E. team oversees the distribution of the offering. You can learn more about this team at www.ucc.org/global-hope. Thank you for supporting One Great Hour of Sharing for over 75 years. You continue to embody a love offering to the world

Where does the offering go?

Here are a few examples of organizations supported through gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing. Your gifts travel to East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, South America, and beyond. Mediterranean Hope - Italy Refugee and migrant service ministry International Assistance Mission - Afghanistan Eye care, prosthetics, mental health, and rehabilitation efforts Children’s Future International - Cambodia Community development and anti-human trafficking program

The One Great Hour of Sharing Lenten Offering will be taken on **Palm Sunday, March 29th**.

There are no Giving Calendars for suggested giving this year, but coin boxes will be available should you wish to use one for your own giving ideas.

The Maurie Townsend Memorial Underwear Offering

The Annual Maurie Townsend Memorial Underwear Offering will begin **Sunday, February 22nd** and will conclude on **Palm Sunday, March 29th**.

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.

There will be a hamper by the bulletin table for you to place your offerings in.

Wednesday Lenten Potluck and Study

Lenten potlucks and studies will start **Wednesday, February 25th**

Changes are happening this year!

To begin with, the Wednesday night potluck portion will run from **5 to 6 p.m.** Come in any time in that hour for food and fellowship. If possible, please bring a covered dish to share. Beverages and bread will be provided.

From 6 to 7 p.m. we will have our Lenten study. This year the study will run for 7 weeks and we will be revisiting Jesus’ 7 last sayings. Below is the breakdown of the studies and the formats.

**Week #1: Forgiveness – Full & Free
Luke 23:32-34**

**Week #2 From Pain to Paradise
Luke 23:32-43**

**Week #3 Love the Provides
John 19:26-27**

**Week #4 My Forsaken Substitute
Matthew 27:45-49**

**Week #5 A Human Cry from A Loving God
John 19:28-29**

**Week #6 Not A Victim- A Victor
John 19:25-30**

**Week #7 Triumphant
Luke 23:46**

Attention all: Please make plans to join us during the Lenten Season for a time of fellowship, food and study of God’s word. With interactive lessons, discussions, videos and more. Please invite a friend or neighbor to learn of the Jesus 7 last saying.

Music Committee

The Choir would like to know if you have a favorite song that we have done in the past and you would like to hear again. Just jot us a note with either the name of the anthem or whatever part you can remember and we’ll do our best to work it into our playlist.

As always, the door is always open for new members to join us. All ranges are welcome. If you can't read music, we have folks who can guide you along.

Sunday School Substitute Teachers

Christian Education has the children's Sunday school classes covered, but they do need some folks that are willing to be on standby should a substitute be needed.

The curriculum is quite easy to follow and it's so very important that the children know we care enough about them to be there for them.

If you can put your name on the substitute list, please contact the church office, Ken Andersen, or Diane Venski.

Time and Talent

Twenty-seven Time and Talent cards came back out of 86 that were sent out locally. There are a few outstanding Time and Talent Cards that need to be sent in.

As a church family, we all need to carry some of the ministry to keep the church vibrant and serving. If you think you have nothing to offer, trust me, that's not true. Everyone has a gift; sometimes we just need a little help taking the wrapping off.

If you simply overlooked sending your yellow time and talent card back, please do so soon or pick up a new card from the office or back table in the Sanctuary.

Thank you so much for helping move God's kingdom forward.

Thank You

The Annual Report

I would like to thank everyone who had the responsibility of getting their committee or board's annual report to the office in a timely manner so that it could be compiled into the 2025 Annual Report for the 2026 Annual Meeting.

Your hard work and dedication are greatly appreciated.

*Jennifer Andersen and Grace Townsend,
Church Secretaries*

January 18th Potluck

Thank you to Joe and Mildred McNeal for providing the cake for Martin Luther King Jr.

Day; the cake was yummy and enjoyed by everyone who snagged a piece.

Thank you to all those who brought wonderful dishes to share. A special thanks to Rick Bush who supplied pulled pork sandwiches for everyone.

This was a wonderful time of good fellowship and good food.

A huge thank you goes to everyone that helped to get everything set up and cleaned up.

*Sincerely,
Curtis Carlin
Social Committee Chairman*

Helena DeWeerd

Thank you, Helena, for sponsoring the *These Days* devotional booklets again this year in memory of your husband, John and son, Jeff.

Your generosity is much appreciated by all who use this booklet for their spiritual sustenance.

Paper Donations

Thank you to the anonymous donor of a case of 8.5 X 11 printer paper to the church. Paper is a very important part of the operations of the church.

These types of donations really help the church budget go farther. Thank you!!!

Upcoming Events

Time Change!

Sunday, March 8th, we Spring Forward as Daylight Savings Time begins.

Holy Week Schedule

The below schedule is subject to change.

Sunday, March 29th – Palm Sunday and the conclusion of **One Great Hour of Sharing and The Maurie Townsend Underwear Offering.** **Worship** is at 11 a.m.

No Lenten potluck and study on Wednesday, April 1st.

6 p.m. Maundy Thursday worship

Good Friday, April 3rd –7 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 5th

7 a.m. Sunrise Service with Communion

8 a.m. Easter Breakfast with Easter Egg hunt afterwards

11 a.m. Worship with Communion

Blood Drive

We will again be hosting Blood Drives here at First Congregational Church. The first one will be on **Tuesday, April 21st, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.** You can schedule your donation on line or in the Red Cross Blood Donor app, if you have it. The app makes it *very* easy to set up your appointment time.

If you have any questions or want to help with this event, check in with Rick Parks.

Our Condolences

*To Gail Banner on the loss of her brother, Gary,
On December 31, 2025*

In Loving Memory

*Joe B. McNeal
November 4, 1936 – January 25, 2026*

Birthdays in February

3 Julianne Mori	18 Betty Parks
5 Jo Gridley	19 Eddie Bush
10 Lawrence Pearsall	19 Chris Paille
11 Susan Mussler	21 Dena Olson
12 Merrilee Hiler	21 Elizabeth Parks
14 Jim Blanksma	23 Lars Hansen
18 Betty Ashcraft	24 Nadine Roberts
	25 Sue Baumgardner

Anniversaries in February

17 Jennifer & Ken Andersen
19 Rick and Mariah Parks

Special Angels for February

LITURGISTS (Polly Sanders)

1 – Mark Light
8 – Christine Negri
15 – Mildred McNeal/Latasha Wilcox
22 – Frank Marsh

USHERS (Ann Carlin)

FELLOWSHIP HOUR (Sign-up Sheet)

1 – Barb Fogleman
8 –
15 – Mildred McNeal
22 –

FLOWERS (Sign-Up Sheet)

1 – Anita Christianson
8 – Vickie Armstrong
15 – Mollie Marsh
22 – Nadine Roberts

PARAMENTS (Heidi and Allen Harris)

COMMUNION (Susan Mussler)

From Pastor Derrick

Greeting and Blessings:

My wife and I want to personally thank you for being a part of the First Congregational Church family. With a new year just starting and many wonderful things scheduled for the new year. We want to personally encourage you and reassure you that God is in control and everything will work out for your good.

We are expecting historical records in our attendance, giving and outreach. Our theme for 2026 is “Moving Forward”. Moving forward in our faith, service, giving and commitment to God.

The Bible says in Philippians 3:14 “I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

Pressing requires effort and determination. Many people are dealing with physical illness, lost of love ones and many other issues. We are focused and determined to move forward and be victorious.

May God continue to bless you all and let’s continue to move forward in 2026.

*God Bless
Pastor Derrick and Latasha Wilcox*

February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship with Communion	2 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1076 7 p.m. Diaconate Board mts 7 p.m. BSA	3 5:30 p.m. Women's AA	4 1 p.m. PEO 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1077	5 5 p.m. Choir 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout 1064 6 p.m. Bells	6 10 a.m. First Friday Quilters	7 11 a.m. Funeral for Joe B. McNeal 7 p.m. AA
8 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship AW Christian Ed mtg	9 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1076 6:30 p.m. Trustees 7 p.m. BSA	10 5:30 p.m. Women's AA	11 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1077	12 5 p.m. Choir 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout 1064 6 p.m. Bells	13 12 p.m. Women's Fellowship potluck and meeting	14 Valentine's Day 7 p.m. AA
15 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	16 President's Day Office Closed 7 p.m. Church Council	17 6 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 5:30 p.m. Women's AA	<i>Ash</i> <i>Wednesday</i> 18 1 p.m. PEO 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1077 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday service	19 5 p.m. Choir 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout 1064 6 p.m. Bells	20	21 7 p.m. AA
22 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship AW Outreach mtg	23 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1076 7 p.m. BSA	24 5:30 p.m. Women's AA	25 5 – 6 Lenten potluck 6 – 7 Lenten Study 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1077	26 5 p.m. Choir 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout 1064 6 p.m. Bells	27	28 7 p.m. AA

March 2026

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1 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship with Communion	2 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1076 7 p.m. Diaconate Board mts 7 p.m. BSA	3 5:30 p.m. Women's AA	4 5 – 6 Lenten potluck 6 – 7 Lenten Study 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1077	5 5 p.m. Choir 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout 1064 6 p.m. Bells	6 10 a.m. First Friday Quilters	7 7 p.m. AA
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22 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship AW Outreach mtg	23	24 5:30 p.m. Women's AA	25 5 – 6 Lenten potluck 6 – 7 Lenten Study	26 5 p.m. Choir 6 p.m. Bells	27	28 9 a.m. Spring Clean 7 p.m. AA
<i>Palm Sunday</i> 29 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	30 5:30 p.m. Girl Scout troop 1076 7 p.m. BSA	31 5:30 p.m. Women's AA				