

FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST (UCC)

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Fall Worship
- Harvest Fest
Oct. 10
- Stewardship
Kick Off

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From the Moderator: Mic Dawson

Preach It, Brothers and Sisters!

Then he told them "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all creation"
Mark 16:15 NAB

If you have been in worship recently –and I hope you have – you've heard and seen the gospel preached in different ways by members of the congregation.

First up were the youth, who taught us about the nature and incomparable dignity of Sophia from the Wisdom literature in the Bible. They clearly enjoyed presenting their lesson for us.

The group who studied the *Living the Question* series did an entire service on what the Bible says about sexuality, particularly homosexuality. They brought their thoughts provoked by their study and asked us to consider questions for ourselves. They had clearly planned and organized their service carefully to give a view to the variety of human sexual expression. Cheryl Hudson's homily and song were particularly poignant. I had the privilege to perform with a wonderful group in a Reader's Theater presentation of the two stories of creation found in the one Bible. It brought home for me a clearer understanding of how the Bible often contains the same story told by different voices. Virginia Bryan's children's sermon on a Native American creation story further illustrated the beautiful and various ways humans have developed to speak of where we come from.

All of these groups had a wonderful coach/director who does a mighty fine job of preaching the gospel himself. There will be more opportunities coming up to participate in preaching the gospel. It's fun (really) and thought provoking so please be sure to look for an activity where you can. PREACH IT!

Remembering the Saints

All Saints Sunday, November 1, 2015 Needed: Photos and Names

On Sunday, November 1, 2015, Billings First Church will celebrate All Saints Sunday through the German Evangelical tradition of *Totenfest*. We will remember those saints connected to Billings First who have passed over the course of the last year. We would like to include photos of everyone as a visual reminder of the life and work of each saint and the loss we all experienced. So we ask families if they could send a digital photo to the church office (firstchurch@firstchurchbillings.org) or drop off a photo of their loved one to the church office before the last week of October.

We recognize that, although we want to make sure we include everyone, we may slip up and miss someone you remember or close to you. We ask that you call the church office to make sure we include everyone who may have passed from November 2014 to this upcoming date. We remember the saints so that the good portion of their lives may go forward in our common life together.

Time With Teresa

- This story has been accredited to Socrates, although the original source may have been someone else. One day, a student came up to the great philosopher. "Socrates, I have just heard some news about one of your friends" he excitedly exclaimed. "Before you tell me this news, we need to make sure that it passes the triple filter test," responded Socrates. "What's the triple filter test?" the man asked. "The first test is that of truth. Tell me, do you know that what you're going to tell me is absolutely true?" asked Socrates. After thinking for a moment, the man said, "I heard this news from someone else, so I'm not 100% sure if it's true." "The second test is that of goodness," Socrates continued, "Is what you're about to tell me something good?" "No, actually it's the opposite..." Socrates interrupted the man, "So what you're going to tell me is neither true, nor good?" The man was slightly embarrassed and shrugged his shoulders. Socrates continued, "There is one final test which is usefulness. Is what you're about to tell me going to be useful?" "Probably not," the man replied. "Well, if you're going to tell me something that's not true, good or useful, then why tell me at all?" responded the philosopher.
- Proverbs 26:20 says, "Without wood a fire goes out, without gossip a quarrel dies down." Let's be peace-makers, not trouble-makers. May His Spirit Fall Afresh on you - Teresa
- **ATTENTION!! Primetimer's are invited to join me and the Cremation and Funeral Gallery staff at West Park Retirement Home on Sunday Oct 18th at 2:00pm for an Octoberfest Old Fashioned Wagon ride, pulled by the most beautiful Draft horses you've ever seen.**
- **Worship opportunity at West Park Saturday 10/03 @ 2:00 pm.** We have begun a new worship service at West Park every month at 2:00pm with Holy Communion. Join me Oct. 3rd in the Lower Level in the Chapel. If you would like to provide music or participate in worship, or help serving communion, let me know. Thank-you!
- **Primetimer's Older Adult Lunchtime! 11:30am Oct. 15th at JULIANO'S.** If you don't want to drive at night, how about during the day? Monthly on the 3rd Thursday at 11:30am. All Older Adults 55+ are welcome to meet at a local restaurant to share fellowship and lunch! RSVP the church office or me by Wednesday. TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE
- GRIEF EDUCATION AND SUPPORT GROUP MONDAY'S @ 4:00pm @ Conference Office. All are welcome. No charge.
- **Primetimer's Studytime~ Sunday mornings @ 10:00 in Teresa's office.** Curriculum focus is what God would want for us as we pass from middle-age towards the final quarter of our lives, according to scripture references.
- **Primetimer's Dinnertime~5:30 pm Oct. 15th at PUG MAHONE'S.** All 55+ are welcome to come enjoy a time of Fellowship & FUN! Transportation available.
- **Primetimer's Winetime~ 5:30 pm Oct. 22nd at the home of Linda Snider.** She lives at 2881 Silverwood. She can be reached at 670-2127 for directions. If you haven't attended a Winetime, you are missing out! Wine/beverages provided, bring an appetizer to share. Come make some new friends. All Primetimer Older Adults (55+) are welcome! TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE
- **PRAYER CONCERNS:** For the family of Mabelle Reichenbach (Vic), Prayers of healing and comfort for Alice Roberts, Michael Brown, Myrle Theimer. For those facing change of address, grieving, with financial concerns. We pray for the Church, Staff, and Leadership.
- **Our Prayer Chain can always use more prayers! Call Bonnie Conn 373-6740 if you would like to be a prayer or to request prayers for someone.**
- Home Communion-If you would like to share communion in your home, please let Pastor Teresa or the Rev. Mike know. We'd love to see you!
- Home-Bound? Need A RIDE? It's SUPER easy to use our Transportation Ministry. A cabbie will show up just when you request~ Please call the church office to get a voucher. Suggested rides: Church, Primetimer events, funerals, doctor, senior lunch program? HOME-BOUND Older Adult Primetimer's 55+) only.
- I attended a full day workshop last week at St Vincent's Hospital on suicide prevention, presented by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. This included the first results about every suicide in Montana for 2014 by Montana's Suicide Mortality Review Team. If you would me to preset of this material to your group, I'd be happy to do so. Let me know.

Rev. Michael Mulberry, Sr. Minister

Last month I shared how good leaders in a congregation will challenge people to move forward by standing beside them or by standing in front of them. This month I want to share how leaders in healthy congregations provide immune capacities or health-promoting responses. Good leaders will recognize the complexity of relationships and that disease is enabled and maintained by many influences.

We should be realistic. Viruses are always present in the human body/congregation, but few pose a threat. The interaction between peaceful cells can be characterized as different levels of intimacy. At the first level, pathogens secrete damaging toxins into the body where they are growing. The toxins masquerade as a useful substance; the cells willingly accept them. Teacher and author and Carol Bly wrote, "A few bullies with enough toadies can rule the world for years, decades, at a stretch. That single skill—helping toadies leave off toadying in favor of becoming their own person—is of great interest to people who resent the ease with which bullies manipulate others."

In other words, disease-spreaders need cooperation from others for the disease to spread. They develop relationships of intimacy and acquiescence. Then the cooperating cells learn to love the disease and the disease-spreaders more than the health of the body.

Cancer is a special disease. It is a disease of "immaturity" or "me only." The most characteristic feature of a cancer is that it cares only for itself. A cell that has become cancerous is essentially saying to the rest of the body, "I have no need of you, I do not care about you, I care only for myself. I am the center of the universe. You feed me. Nothing else matters." And the potential for cancer is in every body/community. Unfortunately, sometimes no matter what our behaviors, cancer takes root. More and more science is proving, however, that there are behaviors and habits we can be about to make sure cancer does not take hold in our body/community.

Anxious, reactive people function in a ways similar to a virus. They have no boundaries and respect no boundaries; they cannot say no to themselves (must have it their own way); they never learn from their experience (can't regulate their own behavior); they go where they don't belong (are invasive). Some anxious reactive people are secretive, devious, vague, or nebulous in order to prevent detection as troublemakers. Anxious, reactive people are also selective about what cells they infect. They look for people who have ultimate values about "being nice" and have low thresholds for the toleration of pain who will take up their cause.

When a community's goal is peace and feeling good, strong emotional forces prevent any interruption of the group's serenity. Immaturity will be tolerated to avoid disorder.

A good immune system will learn to distinguish self from oneself. Leaders function in much the same way. Leaders need to determine whether or not certain behaviors are damaging to the welfare of the whole. They ask, "Do these behaviors help or hinder the congregation's mission?" Leaders, serving as an immune system, keep the mission of the congregation before the eyes of all members. This is who we say we are. This is where we stand.

Ideal change begins when one can find a leader with the courage to define self, who is as invested in the welfare of the community as in their self, who is neither angry nor dogmatic, whose energy goes to changing self rather than telling others what they should do, who can know and respect the multiple opinions of others, who can modify self in response to the strengths of the group and who is not influenced by the irresponsible opinions of others.

When leaders function in this way, they lead a congregation through conflicts and crisis which then bend into opportunities for change and transformation as a body moves to maintain and manage its health.

Youth and Young Adults

We've had a great beginning of the programming year and we have a busy month of October ahead of us! We have cardboard box city on October 3 at Rocky Mountain College to support Family Promises. We are also looking for volunteers to help with various jobs throughout the weekend. We will have our monthly Family Fun Night on Friday, Oct. 9 at the Maize at Grandpa's Farm from 6-8 pm. Cost is \$12/person which includes the maize, all activities, and a cup of hot chocolate or cider. The older youth will be at the maize that night from 8-10 with the haunted corn maze and apocalyptic paintball. October 15-17 is our annual fall youth retreat at Camp Mimanagish for all youth grades 6-12. For more information and/or to register visit www.campmimanagish.org. Our Monthly older youth mystery event is Sunday, October 18 from 3-5. We will meet at First Church and the clue is "Look High, Look Low, X Marks the Spot!" This event is free. We will start the younger youth group on Wednesday, October 7 by going bowling at Sunset bowling at 4-5 and then going back to First church for dinner.

Reminder that we still need volunteers to sign up to provide Wednesday night dinners, please sign up at

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0d4ea8a929aafe3-wednesday>

Stewardship Campaign 2016: Trust in the Promise

"For surely I know the plans I have for you...to give you a future with hope."

The Stewardship Campaign 2016 will kick off on Sunday, Oct. 4 and will culminate in the Harvest Dinner on Nov. 8th.

"A future with hope" is what God promises the homeless people of Israel. To a people abandoned, alone and far from home, this promises of a hopeful future had to have felt unbelievable. There they were—exiled in Babylon. Everything that they knew and trusted had been destroyed. Yet here was promise that they not only had a future but a future with hope. Do you think God has a plan for the church? Good plans? Plans that will make our collective head spin? Can we believe in that future with hope? Can we believe in a future that is as real and concrete as the pull of gravity?

Just as the crumbled walls of Jerusalem would be rebuilt, what plan does God have for us? What have we yet to build, to manifest God's healing presence in the world? What might we offer to the future?

Can we claim that promise of a future with hope for ourselves by giving all to this moment? Be generous to our future together. (from Trust in the Promise)



Important Dates This October

- 10/3-4 **Labyrinth** in Fellowship Hall
- 10/11 **Second Sunday Lunch** following worship in Fellowship Hall
- 10/11 **Marika Willard Funeral: 4:00 p.m. Bring a dish to pass for potluck following the service.**
- 10/13 **Diaconate Meeting** 7:00 pm Library
- 10/15 **Newsletter Deadline**
- 10/15 **Primetimer's Lunch Time** 11:30 a.m. at Julianos . RSVP to Teresa.
- 10/15 **Primetimers Dinnertime** 5:30 pm at Pug Mahones. RSVP to the church office or Teresa.
- 10/18 **Primetimer's Oktoberfest: See Teresa's Column**
- 10/20 **Mayflower Circle Meeting**~ Conference Office
- 10/20 **Council Meeting** 7:00 p.m. Library
- 10/22 **Primetimers Wintertime** 5:30 pm at the home of Linda Snider. Bring an appetizer to share.
- 10/25 **Brent Long Preaching**
- 11/1 **All Saints Sunday**

HarvestFest October 10th

12th Annual HarvestFest!

Saturday, October 10th, 2015, is Downtown Billings' 12th Annual HarvestFest under Skypoint from 9am to 4pm. This fall festival features Arts & Crafts booths, Farmer's Market produce, Food Trucks, children's activities, a pumpkin pie baking contest, the HarvestFest Basket Raffle, and live entertainment under Skypoint.

Reserve January 8-9, 2016!

The Jesus Seminar is coming to Billings First!

Dinner: Just for Kicks and Giggles

Last April 102 of us gathered at the twelve homes to get acquainted with each other, to begin our visioning and our conversation for the future of our church, and to have dinner. Over the years we have realized that our members really enjoy sharing meals in one another's homes. It is also a wonderful way to introduce new folks to the church. So it's good to meet, mix, and share a meal. Here we are at October 1st and we're planning another round of dinners. This time they are simply for "kicks and giggles". If you participated in the April dinners, you will receive a call from your host regarding the time and date. If you did not participate in the April dinners and want to be included this time, call Lyla at 252-0602 or Mary Jane at 652-5022. Also call us if you would like to host a dinner. P.S. You know that we will call you, if you don't call us. We are looking forward to talking to you



Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley

Our next hosting is November 1 through 7. We especially need volunteers to prepare meals to feed a dozen people, or so. Contact Dan Struckman at 256-3588.

Want to get involved with helping homeless people get back on their feet? Phone the Family Promise Day Center. They need volunteers on weekends to staff the center. Phone (406) 294-7432.

Here are the families currently in the program:

Kelsi: Austyn Jo (2). There are no known allergies for this family. Kelsi works in the evenings and typically goes to an evening meeting Monday-Wednesday. She will drive herself to the church Monday-Thursday evenings. Once she gets her work scheduled for next week I will keep you all

updated.

Kim: Treyvion (7), Sincere (4), and Taj (2). There are no known allergies for this family. She will be going back to school in January to continue her nursing degree. She is also expecting her 4th boy in early November. Kim goes to group on Tuesday nights from 7:30-8:30 and she has a class Fridays from 5-6pm.

Kim: Michael (8). There are no known allergies for this family. Kim will also be going to evening groups. I keep you updated on times and days.

Coordinator Corner:

- The next Congregational Coordinators meeting will be October 5 at 7:00 pm at Day Center at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, hope to see you all there!



“Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

St. Francis of Assisi

“We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way.”

St. Francis of Assisi

Mayflower Circle

Mayflower Circle will meet October 20, 2015 at Conference Office 2016 Alderson Ave. The meeting begins at 1:00 pm. Linda Malkuch will be speaking about “Silver Sneakers”. Guests are always welcome and you are encouraged to bring a friend. Call Myrle Theimer at 245-3650 with questions. Please bring supplies for the Conference Office.

From Your Board of Outreach

The Neighbors in Need offering which we will receive on October 18, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through ucc.org/justice, our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice. Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM), one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

If you cannot be present on October 18, please send your check to the church office with “NIN” on the memo line, or donate online at ucc.org/nin.

Our September special offering was for the Angel Fund, which benefits socially vulnerable children and youth in our schools to meet their special needs. To date we have received \$. Thanks to all who contributed. Remember to bring your items for the FOOD BANK on OCTOBER 4. Place your items in front of the altar.

Spiritual Director-In-Residence

As I write Pope Francis I is concluding his visit to the U.S. The release of his encyclical *Laudato Si* in mid-June, addressed not just to Roman Catholic bishops but also to the world, has generated much excitement. It is an amazing document that speaks to all on matters of social, environmental, and economic justice and brings words of encouragement and affirmation to all who have been working on justice issues. During his visit to the U.S. Pope Francis has been speaking truth to power in Congress and at the U.N., emphasizing themes from the encyclical. You are invited to learn more about *Laudato Si* on **Sunday, October 4**, which just happens to be the Feast of St. Francis, from whom Pope Francis takes his name, **at 4:00 p.m. in the Parlor/Library** when Eco-Angela, an environmental justice group from Angela's Piazza, makes a one-hour presentation on “Caring for Our Common Home,” which will explore how to understand and apply Pope Francis' encyclical on healing our broken world.

In celebration of the culmination of the Creation Liturgy and the Feast of St. Francis, our labyrinth will be illuminated and available for walking and for meditation to “Praying with the Earth,” prayers and chants of Celtic mystic John Philip Newell. As demonstrated by Pamela Gustafson, Julie Solberg, and Emma Kerr-Carpenter in worship on September 20, prayer can be embodied as well as silent or spoken. Walking on and/or around the labyrinth is embodied prayer. You are invited to pray with the earth on **Saturday, October 3, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** and on **Sunday, October 4, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**
Barbara Gulick, MRE, DASD

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Marcia Spalding	2 Clara Bentler Ezra Stewart	3
4 Barbara Bryan	5 Teresa Kennedy	6 Jim Paulsen Violet Krum	7	8	9	10 Carolyn Tolton
11 James Pickens	12	13 Mary Jane Taylor	14	15 Helen Bender	16 Karen Irion Nina LaSeur	17 Parker Gunderson
18	19 Kathleen Blaesius James Reineking	20 Randy Hyvonen	21	22 Carrie Miller Jo Lokken	23 Thomas Solberg	24 Eric Ramsett William Jaksha
25 Betty Hamstrom	26	27 Mike Gustafson	29	30	31 Susan Ogden	

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and get important information online and updated daily!

Billings First Church

First Congregational United Church of Christ (UCC)

*Theologically progressive, radically inclusive,
committed to justice!*

310 N. 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101

Phone: 406-245-6477
Fax: 406-245-6478

E-mail: firstchurch@firstchurchbillings.org

An "Open & Affirming/Peace with
Justice" Church

Our Staff

Rev. Michael Mulberry, Senior Minister
Teresa Kennedy, Pastoral Care Associate
Kimmie Harris, Youth/Young Adults
Laura Blodgett, Chancel Choir
Jo Lokken, Melody Choir
Barbara Dobesh, Organist/Pianist
Steve Plaggemeyer, Assistant Organ/Piano
Susan Ogden, Parish Nurse
Jan Duffy, Bookkeeping
Breanna Rolandson, Administrative Assistant
Barbara Gulick, Spiritual Director-In-Residence

Our Ministers

Every member of the congregation!



www.firstchurchbillings.org

Your October congregationalist is here!

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Worship ~ October and November

Rest: Every Wednesday at 12:10 p.m. Join us for this ½ hour service.

Saturday, October 3, 11:00 a.m., Blessing of the Animals on the Eve of the Feast Day for St. Francis

Please bring your pets, animal friends, or photos of animals special to you for a blessing. It is said that St. Francis had a special relationship with creation and animals, recognizing all of life as sisters and brothers in life and faith.

Please have necessary clean-up for pets and collar or muzzle for any animal that might struggle with the diversity of living beings that will be with us that day. This is an opportunity to remember our wild and free God with a wild and free and creative heart.

The labyrinth will be available in the Fellowship Hall of Billings First Church from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 3, and Sunday, October 4, from 1:00-4:00 p.m. for people to walk and reflect on our relationship to all of God's creation. The holy and sacred people of Angela's Piazza will be presenting "How to understand and apply Pope Francis' encyclical on healing our broken world: Caring for Our Common Home" from 4:00-5:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 4, at Billings First Church.

Creation Lectionary~ World Communion Sunday

Sunday, October 4 Mountain Isaiah 65:17-25
Artist: Edward Barta

Creation Lectionary~ Indigenous Peoples' Sunday

Sunday, October 11 Indigenous People

We welcome Ms. Dyani Bingham to the pulpit! Dyani is one of Rev. Mulberry's favorite colleagues and an incredible leader in the Billings community. She has been prolific in her work to develop the model which has led to success with our friends and neighbors in the chronic inebriate community. The success of that effort led to the Downtown Billings Alliance receiving its 2015 Downtown Pinnacle Award.

Bio:

Dyani Bingham (Assiniboine/Blackfeet/Metis) has worked at the MT-WY Tribal Leaders Council (now Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council) since 2008. Currently, she works as Project Director for the TRAC Peer to Peer Recovery Support Project. Ms. Bingham has a background in tourism, native art marketing and development, media relations, historic preservation, tribal policy, peer to peer recovery support, obesity prevention, physical activity promotion, breast and cervical health, and commercial tobacco use prevention. Ms. Bingham worked as the Native Arts Specialist for the MT Arts Council in the mid-2000s, where she specialized in Native Art Market development and education. She also served as the Director of the Montana Tribal Tourism Alliance for 5 years, where she developed inter-tribal representation in the cultural tourism and during the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial. She also worked as a MT Artrepreneurship Program coach for the Big Timber cohort. Ms. Bingham is a proud mother, auntie and daughter who enjoys spending time with family and friends. She is very interested in policy reforms that advance wellness for Native people and communities.

Worship ~ October and November

Marika Willard Funeral, Sunday, October 11, 4:00 p.m.

Please bring a dish to pass for a potluck following the service.

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday, October 18 Job

Readers' Theater: *On Job: The Suffering of the Innocent*

Based on the book by liberation theologian Gustavo Gutierrez, this Readers' Theater takes a hard and difficult look at how we might understand God in the midst of the deep suffering of the world.

Reformation Sunday

Sunday, October 25

Brent Long will be preaching while Rev. Mulberry is on vacation visiting his sons in Indiana and Illinois.

Rev. Brentley E. Long has been a Presbyterian pastor for just over 20 years, spending much of that time trying to find ways to let his art (pottery and painting) do some of his preaching for him. His undergraduate degree was in fine arts from the University of Oklahoma and he worked in Tulsa for a few years as a graphic designer before giving in to the call to ministry. He ventured out to the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, VA to receive a Master of Arts degree in Christian Education, specifically youth ministry, and then traveled cross-country to San Francisco Theological Seminary where he received his Master of Divinity in 1994. His first pastorate was in Gillette, WY before moving to remote Rutherfordton, NC where he served as a part-time potter and part-time pastor for Brittain and Union Mills Presbyterian Churches. In 2003 he moved to Billings, MT to be the full-time solo pastor of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church. He resigned in 2011 to once again juggle his own pottery business while also working part-time as a Hospice chaplain, and part-time as a cashier for the Habitat for Humanity ReStore in downtown Billings. In all his extra time he's an avid fly-fisherman and camper with my best friend, Blu, a goofy Alaskan Malamute.

Brent Long

www.belongarts.com

All Saints Sunday

Sunday, November 1 Ruth

Totenfest-We remember the saints who passed over this last year. Please remember to send a photo of any loved one who has passed over the last year to the church office (firstchurch@firstchurchbillings.org). We would prefer electronic photos.

Pledge Sunday

Sunday, November 8 "Trust in the Promise"

We join together as a community to pledge our financial resources to the life and well-being of this beloved, historical, prophetic, and courageous church.