

THE MESSENGER

July 2026

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

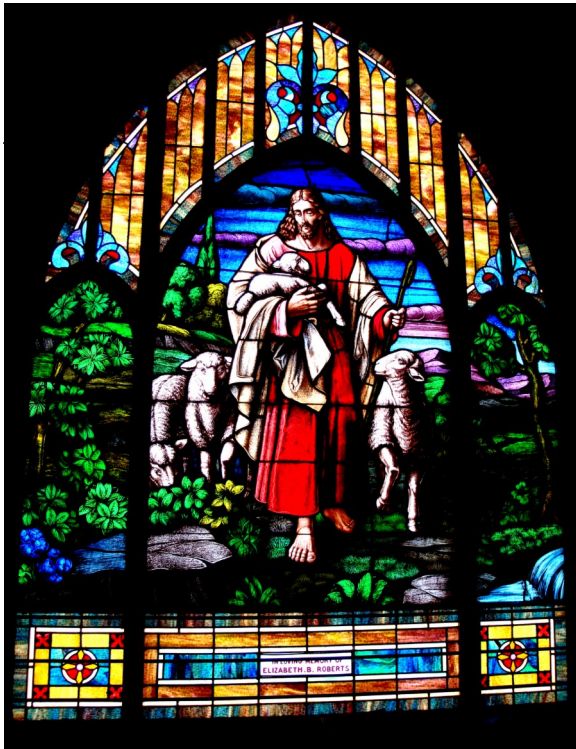
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REVEREND CALVIN HILL

Our mission statement: *Passion for Christ, Compassion for all.*



PASTOR'S MESSAGE: CELEBRATING FREEDOM

Reverend Calvin Hill

This year, we celebrate 250 years of freedom. So, we want to give thanks for the blessings of liberty and the sacrifices that made it possible. Yet, as followers of Christ, we remember that there is an even greater freedom available to everyone in and through Christ.

John writes, *"If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."* (John 8:36) While political freedom is important, the freedom Christ is offering reaches deeper. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus frees us from the power of sin, guilt, fear, and separation from God. Sometimes, we just need a little reminder of that faith; in that simple reminder, there's a little extra enjoyment and truth of being free.

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Many people seek freedom through success, wealth, or personal achievement; but true freedom is a personal relationship with Christ. Sometimes, just sharing the Gospel message helps free others who may feel a little tied down from circumstances that life brings. Jesus offers forgiveness, new life, and a promise of eternal life to all who trust in Him.

As we gather with community, family, and friends this 4th of July, let us offer that simple message and celebrate not only the freedom of our nation but also the freedom that comes through faith in Christ our Lord. May we share the Good News that God loves us, Christ died and resurrected for us, and through Him we do experience the freedom forever.

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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

(Continued)

As Paul explained, *"For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."* (Galatians 5:1)

May we walk together this July in the freedom of Christ, living faithfully in a sacred relationship with God, our community, and family.



GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Submitted by Pastor Marcia Romano

The 2026 FUMC Sacred Circle Community Grief Group will begin in August.

The sessions will be held twice monthly through December. All people who are experiencing grief and loss are invited to attend these sessions. The sessions are a progression series format and offer an educational component, personal and group sharing, and resources. It is a place for learning, sharing, and healing.

This series is for adults and open to members of the community and all church affiliations.

To register or for more information, please contact the facilitator, Pastor Marcia Romano, at 307-629-0155.

FAITH WALKS CONTINUE

Submitted by Jim Hutchinson

Our second season of Faith Walks is up and running. We've been gathering at the Serenity Trailhead at 6:30pm on Mondays since April 13th. The richness of the sermons from our local clergy are ripe for exploration and further discussion.

The "Faith Walks" small group is the perfect venue to bring your notes scribbled on the church bulletin, and observations and questions that come out of the sermon. It is a place and time where we grapple with those observations and questions in gentle conversations with others as we meander along the trail for a little under a mile.

Weather has been a bit of a factor, and the change in venue from Old Quarry Trails last year to the Serenity Trail this season has been a positive move. The tree canopy not only provides shade but also a respite from the winds that have been so present this spring. We keep our time on the trail and conversation to one hour so you're back to the trailhead by 7:30pm.

Please join in as you are able Monday evenings throughout the summer season.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Submitted by Pastor Marcia Romano

The 2026 Mountain Sky Annual Conference took place June 9-13 in Billings, Montana.

BREAKOUT EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS attended:

- RAN GRANT – J.R. Atkins, presenter, FUMC Newcastle was the first of eight churches listed as grant recipients.
- IMMIGRATION LAW & JUSTICE; A THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING – Betty Nguyen, Attorney, Christian principles of freedom and love/acceptance of ALL people. A study of the current political climate in the US and the UMC stance on marginalized people.

UMC CELEBRATION OF 70 YEARS OF FULL ORDINATION OF WOMEN

Reverend Dr. Calvin Hill chosen as a 2028 General (Minneapolis) and Jurisdictional (Reno) Conference Delegate.

2027 Mountain Sky Conference spending plan: \$5,648,648 – approved

Petitions to Consent Calendar:

- MSC 141 – Clergy Minimum Compensation – 95% approval
- MSC 142 – Rocky Mtn. College and Mtn. Sky Conference MOU – Unanimous approval
- MSC 140 – Fossil Free Investments - 87% approval
- MSC 143 – Tribal History Report – Withdrawn
- MSC 139 – Caretaker of God's Creation position – 94.7% approval
- MSC 138 – Safe Sanctuary Team – Unanimous approval

RETIREMENTS AND APPOINTMENTS

MEMORIAL SERVICE

CHURCH CLOSURES:

- Aldersgate UMC – Utah
- Eureka UMC – Colorado
- Evangelical UMC – Billings, Montana
- FUMC of Douglas, Wyoming
- Berkeley UMC – Denver, Colorado

ORDINATION & COMMISSIONING SERVICE



UMW MOTHER-CHILD PROJECT

Submitted by Chris French



UMW (United Methodist Women) thanks everyone who supported the Mother-Child Project. Over 200 items and \$100 were donated to Weston County Public Health, which provides services to mothers, babies, and toddlers.

TRUSTEES BUSY WITH PROJECTS

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

The Trustees met Tuesday, June 9, with seven members in attendance. Items of business included:

- The new front door mat and secure storage cabinet have arrived. Geoff Knight assembled and installed the cabinet. **THANK YOU, Geoff!**
- The security system was been tabled for three months pending input from the conference, which has not yet been received. Pastor Marcia is the liaison with the conference security team for this project. The Trustees have designated funds for installation of a more secure system and may pursue a grant if more funding is necessary. Hopefully, Pastor Marcia and Pastor Hill will be able to encourage the conference to respond soon while they are at Annual Conference.
- The Trustees are finalizing plans to replace the exterior door to Gigi's Closet. We have been looking for a replacement door at acceptable cost.
- Chuck reported on his contact with the Newcastle Fire Department to start first aid classes as part of enhanced security. The instructors charge to conduct the classes and are willing to discount the normal charge for the church. We continue to wait on input from the Big Sky Conference before finalizing arrangements for the classes.
- The thermostat for the Sanctuary and Chancel has been moved from behind the new monitor to the Chancel area, which will enhance accessibility and function.
- The acrylic panel for the Cross project has arrived. We are working to locate the necessary extrusions for the face of the cross. Work will be scheduled when that material arrives.

- Revamping the exterior landscaping triggered a comprehensive discussion of the current landscaping, snow removal considerations, and the efficiency of the sprinkler system. The consensus of the committee is to replace the existing potentilla shrubs with landscaping that will not block the sprinkler heads and prevent snow from being shoveled onto the lawn area. These ideas will be shared with UMW.
- One of the classrooms in the basement is now designated for use as a nursery on Sunday mornings. ***PLEASE NOTE: Toys and other items placed in that room are to be left there for that purpose!***
- Relocation of the piano in the chancel area has resulted in a satisfactory solution to the inconveniences encountered during Sunday service. No further action will be taken at this time.
- White Construction is preparing an estimate to replace the front doors.

The next meeting will be held at 6pm in the Church Parlor on Tuesday, July 7.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 1: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 4: Independence Day, 250th Birthday
- 5: Media Ministries Committee Meeting
11:30am, Fellowship Hall
- 6: Worship, Welcome & Outreach Meeting
10am, Church Parlor
- 6: Faith Walk, 6:30pm, Serenity Trail
- 7: Prayer Team, 9:30am, Church Parlor
- 7: Trustees Meeting, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 8: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 12: Finance Committee Meeting, 11:30am
Church Parlor
- 13: Faith Walk, 6:30pm, Serenity Trail
- 14: Prayer Team, 9:30am, Church Parlor
- 15: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 20-23:
Church Office Closed
- 20: Faith Walk, 6:30pm, Serenity Trail
- 21: Prayer Team, 9:30am, Church Parlor
- 22: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 23: Relational Care Team Meeting, Noon
Church Parlor
- 27: Faith Walk, 6:30pm, Serenity Trail
- 28: Prayer Team, 9:30am, Church Parlor
- 29: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES*

- 1: Rick Miller
- 2: Kurtis Wood
- 4: Jim Darlington
Judi Wackerbarth
- 5: Bev Kiesling
*Tyler and Nikki Bartlett
- 7: Sawyer McFarlin
Abrienne Sharpes
- 8: Kathleen Engle
*Larry and Sharon Roness
- 10: *Kelly and Heidi Wood
- 16: Gavin Day-Sharpes
- 20: LaShel Hampton
- 27: Orrin Owens
- 30: Nylah Costa

CHURCH INFO

Office Hours:
8am-noon M-TH

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YouTube: Search for FUMC Newcastle WY

Radio: Sunday Service at 10am on KASL

