



**Rev. Laura Folkwein's Summer Sabbatical  
Information and Invitations  
July 1-Sept 30, 2020**

Hi Church! I will be on sabbatical, a time for clergy rest and renewal, July 1 through Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>, this summer. A sabbatical is a gift and a privilege for a pastor. After serving UCC Missoula as Small Group Ministry Coordinator and now Associate Pastor for the past five years, I am grateful for the opportunity.

Here's a video about my plans: <https://youtu.be/YvXwORSzQTc>

Or you can read more here. I will spend my sabbatical mostly in Missoula and western Montana. My hopes are to spend time praying in as many ways as possible, while hiking and cycling, reading, writing poetry, exploring silence, spending time with family, and working on my mom's small market garden up in Columbia Falls with her and Laurie. Laurie, my mom and I will also begin work on a book we have been planning, which explores my family history in western Montana along with Indigenous histories here and other socio-political, and religious happenings during the late 1800's and early 1900's when we arrived in Montana and the Rogers and Loefflers eventually settled in the Flathead Valley.

To make sure I get the rest and focus I am seeking, I will be on social media much less. I will develop a Pastor Laura Folkwein Facebook page for all UCC Missoula contacts. Find me there after July 1 for periodic updates, musings, and photos. If we see each other around town, that will be great! We can still say hello and catch up.

**Join me** in a few of the following readings or activities over the summer, and we'll share our experiences when I return to church in October 2020.

**Reading:**

- Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S. by Lenny Duncan, Fortress Press, 2019
- Native: Identity, Belonging and Rediscovering God by Kaitlin B. Curtice, Brazos Press, 2020

*Both Dear Church and Native come with discussion guides, for now or later.*

- The Celtic Way of Prayer: The Recovery of the Religious Imagination by Esther De Waal, Hodder & Stoughton Religious Books, 2003 (new edition).
- Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now by Walter Brueggemann, Westminster John Knox Press, 2014
- The Salish People and the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Revised Edition, Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee and Elders Cultural Advisory Council, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, UNP Bison Books, 2008.

### Prayer Practices:

- Meditative walking or hiking – take an amble in your neighborhood or up a trail, paying attention to how your feet touch the ground, each step a prayer. Try to keep your mind open to whatever sights, sounds, and smells meet you on the trail, letting your thoughts flow through your mind without grasping onto any of them. Pay attention to each moment, rather than aiming for your destination. See what happens. What prayers rise up? What does God have to say to you on this journey?
- Lectio Divina- praying meditatively with Scripture, Centering Prayer – exploring silence, Welcoming Prayer and Active Prayer. Guidance at <https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/practice>
- Gratitude - What are you grateful for? How is God leading you to respond to your gratitude?

### Curiosity/Research:

Join me in my research by exploring your own family history: What do you know about your family history? How did they come to live in the U.S.? When? And Why? What land did they settle on? What Indigenous people were the original inhabitants of that place? Check out this website <https://native-land.ca/> and find other Indigenous authored books and resources to learn more.

With love and anticipation for what is next on our journey,

*Pastor Laura*

Be well.  
Pray often.  
Seek justice.  
Enjoy beauty.

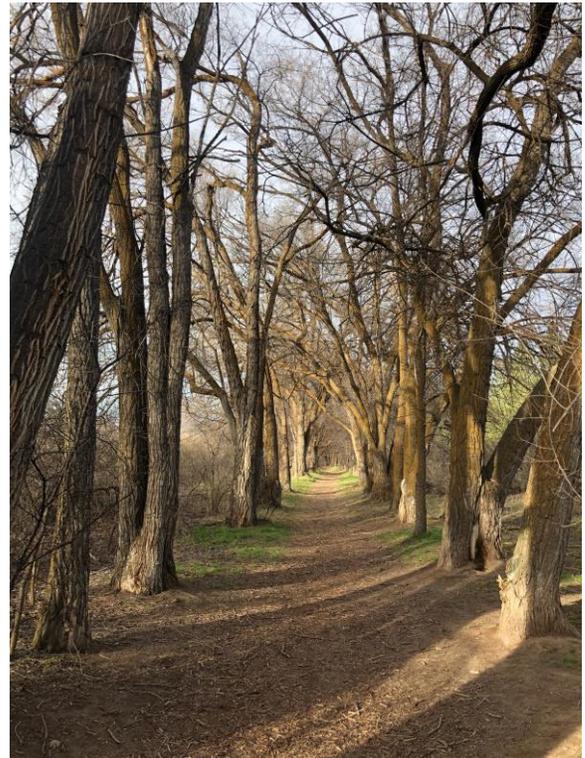


Photo-LFolkwein, DNRC, 2020