

## JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Have you noticed how many new faces there are around church? We are blessed to be a growing a church community. Newcomers regularly tell us that we are a welcoming and friendly people. In fact one family jokingly told me of their worry that they were not friendly enough to join the church! As a congregation we are clearly doing something right. But is God calling us to be more than just a friendly church?

**SIGN UP**

One of the most consistent comments I get is that it is hard to make connections with other people. We are a friendly church, but it is hard sometimes to form friendships.

Sundays are busy & there are so many people it is hard to know where to begin. Coffee Fellowship is a start. And our Wednesday evening meals are another place to connect.

This coming October, Stacy & I are inviting each of you into our home in a series of small group gatherings designed to help us better connect with each other. There are a variety of times we will gather: mornings, afternoons & evenings. Dessert & beverages will be served. Please use the sign-up sheets to register so we have enough room & dessert for you. Come gather & meet your fellow church members in a small group setting. Help us as we seek to build not just a friendly church, but a church where friendships are formed & faith is lived! Our small group gatherings will be at our house (430 Jefferson Street, across from Rocky Branch School) on the following days:

Wednesday, October 18, 2017	1:00 PM
Thursday, October 19, 2017	10:30 AM
	1:00 PM
	7:00 PM
Monday, October 23, 2017	1:00 PM
	7:00 PM
Tuesday, October 24, 2017	1:00 PM
	7:00 PM
Wednesday, October 25, 2017	1:00 PM
Thursday, October 26, 2017	1:00 PM
	7:00 PM

Space is limited to 15 people per session so we can really get to know one another. If you need childcare, please contact JaNae Westrich who can coordinate childcare in your own home with one of our church interns. Sign up soon! If history is any guide, these will fill up quickly! Pastor Chris

## FINANCIAL

### Treasurer's Report

	Week of Oct 1, 2017	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,233	\$ 319,111
General Fund		
Operational Needs	\$ 8,519	\$ 340,760

A full accounting of all income and expenses is available in the church office.

\*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

**E-Giving**—It is quick, easy & safe. It is designed to help both you with your home budgeting & financing of church ministries which continue even when you are away. Contact Missy ([missy@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:missy@firstchurchrf.org)) with questions. If you give electronically, please use the e-giving bookmark in the pew as the offering plate goes by.

## WELLNESS

### Yoga Class & Meditation-Mindfulness

If you have never experienced Yoga, please come and join a wonderful, friendly group of people. Bring a Yoga mat and a desire to learn about a new exercise that will bring you flexibility to your body & mind. A donation is requested. Join us from **9:00-10:00 am Tuesdays and Thursdays** in the youth room.

## HURRICANE RELIEF

The UCC Disaster Ministries is already gearing up for long-term recovery work in Texas and Florida and your contributions for hurricane survivors mean providing community support for repairing homes for families, and restoring dignity for the most vulnerable who have lost everything in the wake of these catastrophic events. 100% of funds designated for disaster relief to the United Church of Christ are used for disaster relief and rehabilitation programming. Please make checks out to the church and mark 'Hurricane Relief' in the notation or use one of the envelopes in the pews. Bless you for your support.

## OCTOBER 8, 2017

*No matter who you are. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!*

**As Jesus' courageous disciples, living God's grace, we strive to...**

## WORSHIP FAITHFULLY

### Sunday Volunteers Needed

Liturgists for: Oct 15, 22; Nov 5, 12, 19, 26

Welcomers for: Oct 15, 22, 29, Nov 5, 12, 19, 26

Coffee Fellowship for: Oct 15, 22; Nov 5, 12, 19, 26

The sign-up sheets are on the back table. Thank you!

**SIGN UP**

**Worship Service on Channel 16**—The Sunday worship service can be viewed on River Falls public access channel 16 on **Wed at 9 pm & Thurs at 12 pm**. Thanks to Jeff Hoffman who is leading the team to record the weekly worship service. He is in need of a few more volunteers. Contact him [jeffhoffman312@gmail.com](mailto:jeffhoffman312@gmail.com) or 715-425-5633.

**Church Office Hours**—The church office hours between Labor Day and Memorial Day are: Mon-Thurs: 8:30 am-4:00 pm; Friday: 8:30 am-Noon

## WELCOME OPENLY

### Rev. Del and Judith Permann Farewell

**Reception**—After 30+ years in River Falls, Del and Judith Permann are leaving to move closer to their two daughters and granddaughter in Tacoma, Washington. Del served as pastor of our church for over 19 years and as interim pastor in many more churches since he retired. Judith has been our part-time pianist/accompanist and full-time volunteer working with VBS, Musicals and Sunday youth programs. Both will be missed greatly. Come celebrate with them and send them off in style at a reception during Coffee Fellowship **TODAY** between the early and late worship services.

**TODAY**

**New to Church?**—Are you a first time visitor? Please stop at the welcome table in the gathering area to receive a special welcome gift from us!

## WELCOME OPENLY

**Adult Trip to New York**—Pastor Chris will again be leading an adult trip to New York City in early May. Based on the trip many of our youth have taken, it will focus on the immigration experience of many of our ancestors as well as include lots of traditional tourist sights. Included are Ellis Island, Statue of Liberty, Chinatown, 9-11 site and museum, Rockefeller Center, Lower Eastside Tenement Museum, Central Park. If you would like more information, please use the sign up sheet.

**NEW**

**Inquirer's Class**—New to church? Interested in learning more about our life and ministry? Join us for the fall Inquirer's Class on **Tues, Nov 7 from 6:30-8:00 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. During our time together, we will talk about the mission and ministry of the church, meet church leaders and other newcomers, as well as have lots of time for questions. Dessert is served and childcare is available. Use the sign up sheets at church or contact the church office to sign up.

**NEW**

**Family Meals Return!**—Join us each Wednesday night for a healthy, home cooked family meal in the church fellowship hall. Cost is \$6 per person with a max of \$25 per family. **Please sign up by Tuesday at noon** so we have enough food. Please also sign up to help set, serve or clean up which helps makes our meals so cheap. Whether you are single, a couple or have a minivan full, join us as church family each **Wednesday from 5:15 to 6:15 pm**.

Oct 11: Parmesan crusted chicken breast with hollandaise sauce, rice, vegetable, croissants  
Oct 18: Lasagna and chicken alfredo, salad, garlic bread  
Oct 25: Hot beef sandwiches, cheesy hash browns, fruit

**Peach Fundraiser Update**—Thank you very much for a very successful peach fundraiser event. The event raised over \$1600 to go to the youth activity fund. Thank you also to all the wonderful volunteers who took time from their busy lives to help with the unloading, sorting, and pick up times of the peaches. Special thanks goes to Caren and Neal Prochnow who spent hours taking peach orders and overseeing the peach pick up times.

Finally, thank you all for the generous support of our church's youth program. Hope you were able to enjoy the "yummy" peaches. ~God bless, Deb Hoffman

## WELCOME OPENLY

**Planning Your Good Funeral**—Remember the old saying: The only two things that are certain in life are death and taxes? Your accountant can help you with the tax part, but who will help you with the death part? We will. On **Sun, Oct 22 during the 9:00 am Adult Forum**, Pastor Chris will lead an hour long class on how to plan your good funeral. Since death is inevitable why not plan for a good funeral? In our time together, we will cover things like the difference between a funeral, memorial service and celebration of life; writing obituaries; leaving a legacy; grief and helping those left behind. Join us to plan your good funeral.

**Cribbage Night**—The group meets on the second Tuesday at the church. Players are asked to donate \$2 and the group decides which charity to donate it to. Playing time starts at **7:00 pm**. All players & abilities welcome. The group will continue again on **Oct 10**.

**WANTED: Coffee Fellowship Hosts**—We are in need of people to sign up for Coffee Fellowship. We all know what an enjoyable & important part of our Sunday worship this is. If you have questions, contact Lu Lueck at 715-781-0138

### **Loving & Raising Teens: A Conversation for Parents**

Raising children is complicated. One way to find support is to talk with other people & learn from experts. Parents of teens are invited to participate in a conversation about “The 5 Love Languages” specifically geared for parents of teens. This conversation will be focused on the work of Gary Chapman who has identified five different ways that teens experience love. The conversations will be held while teens attend confirmation. Families can eat together at the church family meals & at 6:30 pm teens go to confirmation & parents will meet to talk. The conversations will be convened by Linn Lawrence & Mara Shepherd. Books are available for \$10 in the office. You do not need to read the book to attend. You do not need to commit to attending each session. Please let us know your interest by signing up. The conversations will following the alternating confirmation schedule, so there will be two sessions of each theme. Please come!

Oct 11—Session 1; Oct 18—Session 1;  
Oct 25—Session 2; Nov 1—Session 2;  
Nov 8—Session 3; Nov 15—Session 3

## GROW SPIRITUALLY

**Adult Forum**—The forum meets Sundays 9:00–10:00 am in the Youth Room. All are welcome! The nursery is open for very young children, and older kids are invited to spend the hour in supervised play with Legos and Plankos.

**Oct 8: Creation & Adam and Eve, Rebecca Ferguson**  
What do we learn when we compare the two Genesis stories of creation? Meet Dr. Amy-Jill Levine (a Jewish New Testament scholar), who sheds so much insight into these stories, especially regarding the two “earthlings” and the nature of God.

**Oct 15: Abraham, Sarah, & Hagar, Rebecca Ferguson**  
We continue learning from Dr. Levine about the complex and sometimes ironic stories of these three founders of three different faiths.

**Tuesday Bible Study**—Adult Bible Study meets on Tuesdays from **1:00 to 2:30 pm**. The focus is the Old Testament. Participants do not need to commit to every week. Come when you can. Books are available in the office for \$28. Talk with Stacy Myers for more information.

**Corn Maze for Middle School Youth**—Join us for lunch & the Afton Corn Maze on **Sun, Oct 22**. We will eat in the Fellowship Hall right after the 10:30am worship service then head to the Maze with a stop at DQ on the way home. Cost is \$10. Spots are limited! Please sign up.

**Cossetta’s for High School Youth**—All senior High Schoolers are invited for a trip to Cossetta’s Italian restaurant in St Paul on **Sun, Oc 29** after the 10:30am worship service. Could there be a stop at the Grand Old Creamery after worship? Please sign up. See JaNae Westrich for info [jmwestrich@gmail.com](mailto:jmwestrich@gmail.com)- 715-897-5358

**Among Friends** is a weekly care program, held at First Congregational that serves all of the people of Pierce County. Among Friends is a local, affordable care option & is open to any person 60+ with memory loss or physical frailties & living at home. Participants spend their day in a safe, supportive & stimulating atmosphere. They have opportunities to socialize, exercise & participate in art, music & movement. They can take part in crafts, games & other activities. Website is [www.AmongFriendsRF.com](http://www.AmongFriendsRF.com) or call 715-293-2561; email [amongfriendsrf@gmail.com](mailto:amongfriendsrf@gmail.com)

## SERVE GENEROUSLY

**Neighbors in Need Special Offering**—We share in Neighbors in Need, one of the United Church of Christ’s most important offerings supporting ministries of justice & compassion across the nation. The denomination’s Justice & Witness Ministries distributes this offering to a wide array of local & national initiatives & direct service projects addressing voting rights, environmental justice, & a range of other commitments. The offering also supports the UCC’s Council for American Indian Ministries & the churches it serves in the Dakotas, Nebraska & Wisconsin. Neighbors in Need helps “make another world possible” for countless people, communities, & churches, & is a powerful reflection of our congregation’s mission & justice commitments. We invite you to support it generously.

**Simpson Shelter Needs**—Twin-sized new or gently used fitted & flat sheets; new or gently used bath towels & face cloths; men’s t-shirts, boxers (new, all sizes); disposable razors; travel size shampoo; blankets (new or gently used). There is a box for donations. Thank you!

### **Donations Needed for Our Neighbors’ Place:**

Laundry detergent & dryer sheets; new men’s & women’s socks & underwear; Pull-ups (especially sizes 4/5/6) & baby wipes; toilet paper, paper towels, Kleenex; monetary donations are always VERY appreciated. Donations may be dropped off between 10am-4pm Mon-Thu.

**Save Your Family Fresh Receipts!**-ARC gets \$1,000 for every \$150,000 in receipts, so every dollar counts. ARC is the agency funded by local churches to help address the immediate needs of people in our community (rent, utility, gas, repair help). A box for receipts is on the back table.

**Have a Heart, Inc.** is having their First Annual Fall Fund Fest on **Oct 14 from 2 to 8 pm** on the Have a Heart farm, W10356 State Road 29. It is a fundraising event for the purpose of purchasing adaptive equipment for our gym. As soon as the equipment is in place, Have a Heart will open the gym to families of loved ones with disabilities. There will be live music by the Tommy Bentz Band, a silent auction, food, beer & wine for purchase, face painting, trick or treating, pony rides, pumpkin painting & more. Family tickets - \$25 for a family of four & Individual tickets - \$10. Please call 715-425-7754 with questions.

## CARE PASSIONATELY

**Prayer List**—If you have people you wish to add to the church prayer list, please use the blue “I Wish” pew cards & put in the church office or the offering plate. If you wish to receive the weekly prayer list via email, contact the office.

**Care Givers Program**—An opportunity to serve members through an outreach program that pairs members providing visitors to those unable to be with us regularly in worship or activities. If you are interested in volunteering, have questions or are aware of anyone that would benefit from this, contact Jan Hansen at 715-425-5211

**Meal Ministry**—Ever had a death in the family? How about something joyous & life changing like the birth of a baby? As a congregation we are called to ‘care passionately’ for one another & one of the ways we would like to do that is through a “Meal Ministry.” A small stipend to help pay for food may be available. If you are interested, please contact the church office.

**Thinking of You Cards**—Please use them to send a note to someone who is ill, grieving or you just haven’t seen in a while. Place them in the offering plate & we will deliver them. This is one of the ways we care for one another.

**Flood Recovery Teams**—Flood recovery is one of the most difficult, challenging, and long-lasting undertakings to face any family, any community. The hours of hard, grueling labor needed to remediate a single dwelling can be daunting, regardless of the availability of financial assistance. Volunteers from across the nation will soon spread across Texas and the Gulf Coast to assist residents who face years of hard work putting their lives and communities back together.

So it is that right now we’re beginning to explore the possibility of pulling together Flood Recovery Teams to trek southward in the days ahead. As part of that effort we’ll have sign-up sheets available on the table for those who may be interested in such a journey at some time in the coming months. When, where, or any other more detailed information should be emerging in the coming weeks; we hope you’ll stay tuned. In the meantime, let us know if you might be interested in this aspect of our support for our neighbors to the South.