

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.

ASYLUM FAMILY UPDATE

Hey, folks, we did it! Because of your generosity in 2016 and 2017, our little Guatemalan family has now qualified for permanent residency in the USA. Each person in the family has a green card application that was completed by Kim Hunter's firm to be signed by Heidy. Our immigration lawyer, however, is no longer working pro-bono. That ended when she represented the family and pressed successfully for asylum a year ago. Her fee for preparing the green card applications is \$1,000.00 (the total cost of the application fees and the fee for her services). We will gladly pay the fee even though it will put a dent in our little fund because we could not have gotten this far without her. Our family is safe and happy & on their way to citizenship.

Make sure to visit Mariachi Loco for lunch or dinner sometime. Heidy began working there in October. Sometimes she cleans before they open and sometimes she is part of the wait staff. The women there have become her friends, taking her shopping for bargains and giving her their hand-me-downs. She finds her own daycare, is asking for her own bank account, and wants to buy a pass for the taxi service. I'll say it again....we did it!

PS—The kids are doing very well and looking forward to lots of snow!

FINANCIAL

Treasurer's Report

	Week of Nov 5, 2017	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 7,116	\$ 356,749
General Fund		
Operational Needs	\$ 8,519	\$ 383,355

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) 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.

THANK YOU

To our church family: Thank you all for a thoughtful farewell reception to send us on our way to our new home in Tacoma, Washington. After sharing our lives together for 34 years in River Falls & in this church, it was a difficult decision to make. But the thought of living close to our birth daughters & only grandchild won out. We will forever hold you in a special place in our hearts for friends are impossible to replace....and you are an amazing group of people. Our prayers, best wishes & gratitude go with you as you move into the future. You will always be welcome to visit. ~Del and Judith Permann

NOVEMBER 12, 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: Nov 26; Dec 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Welcomers for: Nov 19; Dec 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Coffee Fellowship for: Nov 26; Dec 10, 17, 24, 31

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 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

Wednesday Meals—Join us each Wednesday night for a healthy, home cooked family meal in the 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. Join us as a church family each **Wednesday, 5:15 to 6:15 pm.**

Nov 15—Chicken ala king served over biscuits, fresh fruit

Nov 22—No Meal (Thanksgiving week)

Nov 29—Roasted pork loin, baked potatoes, sweet & sour red cabbage, vegetables, rolls

Dec 6—Baked potato bar and soup

Dec 13—Beef stroganoff served over noodles, salad, bread

WELCOME OPENLY

Thanksgiving Dinner—Come one, come all to the all church Giving Thanks Meal to be served in the Fellowship Hall **TODAY** after the 10:30 worship service. Come join with church members and friends as we give thanks to God for the blessings we have received. The Youth Dessert Silent auction will also take place during the meal. Please join us.

TODAY

WHAT: YOUTH COOKIE BAKE

WHEN: Sun, Nov 19th from Noon-3:00—Come join the fun and bake some cookies here after church. Then on **Sunday, December 10th after church** we will deliver them to the home bound who are a part of our church. Open to all 6th—12th graders. Lunch included.

Book Group Meeting—Tues, Nov 28, 3:00 pm

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City, by *Matthew Desmond*—2017 Pulitzer prize-winning non-fiction book about Milwaukee and the devastating consequences for families when evicted from their homes. The author, then a Madison PhD student, lived with the tenants and learned their stories. The meeting will be at the church. Books available for check out in church office.

Advent Workshop—The family workshop will be held following the 10:30 service on **Dec 3**. The event will begin with a family-friendly meal followed by a chance to make a variety of Christmas ornaments. Please come!

Annual Christmas Luncheon—You are invited to attend the luncheon on **Tues, Dec 12, at 11:30 am-1:00 pm**. The Fellowship Hall will be decorated, the food will be delicious, the company hard to beat & the River Falls High School Costumed Carolers provide the entertainment. Please come! We have drivers to pick up anyone who needs a ride. The cost is \$9 per person. Please make a reservation and let the office know if you need a ride.

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

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 **Nov 14**.

Did you remember your Name Tag?-We are fortunate to have lots of guests these days & lots of new members & a few of us who just easily forget names! Remember to wear your name tag! (Yes, dig it out of your purse or pocket, take it off the fridge, pick it up from your dresser & if you just can't find it, request a new one) We're glad to know you!

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. The conversations will follow the alternating confirmation schedule, so there will be two sessions of each theme. Nov 15—Session 3

CHORD SMASH! Releases their First CD—The quartet that our choir director, Scott Perau, is a member of has just released their first CD. CHORD SMASH! has performed at our church several times throughout the past few years, and does a large variety of music, including barbershop, blues, jazz, musical theatre, country, and more. If you are interested in purchasing a CD, please contact Scott so that he knows how many to bring to church. CDs are \$15 and Scott's email is sperau@gmail.com, and cell # is 715-461-0318. He will plan to bring CDs on the Sundays the choir performs in November, and on Wednesday evenings. You can listen to a sample at www.chordsmash.com

GROW SPIRITUALLY

Adult Forum—*The forum meets Sundays 9:00–10:00 am*
Nov 12: Ministry in Brazil, Barb de Souza and Isabel da Silva—Isabel da Silva, of Brazil, and long-time UCC missionary Barb de Souza, will be present to discuss the work of the Association of Community Health Educators in Rio over the last 25 years. First Congregational Church has been a generous supporter of this ministry. Barb and Isabel are anxious to explain their progress and give thanks for the congregation's generous support.

Nov 19: Worship: Why We Do What We Do, Stacy Johnson Myers—Worship is both traditional and contemporary, both rooted in history and able to speak to us today. Come for a discussion of the components of our worship, to have a clearer understanding of why we do what we do during worship.

Nov 26: Unnamed Women in the Bible, Stacy Johnson Myers—The Bible is filled with stories of women who are not named but who made important contributions to the faith tradition. Come to learn about some important women in the Bible.

Tuesday Bible Study: All Are Welcome! - The Adult Bible Study group meets on **Tuesdays, 1:00–2:30 pm**. The focus is the Old Testament. The discussion is lively & the company is excellent. Books are available for \$28.00. Talk with Stacy Myers for more information.

Advent Musical: Important Information for Families

Children in pre-school through Grade 5 will begin work on the Advent Musical during Sunday School on **Nov 12**. Rehearsals will take place during Sunday School on all Sundays from Nov 12 through Dec 10. The musical will be presented on **Sun, Dec 17** during the 10:30 service. There will be a dress rehearsal on **Sat, Dec 16, 10 am–12 pm**. The dress rehearsal is for all children in Grades 1–5. Pre-School & Kindergarten children do not attend the dress rehearsal but are part of the musical.

SERVE GENEROUSLY

Adult Back Bay Mission Trip—March 18-24, 2018

It's time again to plan for a trip to Back Bay Mission to help with housing rehab, day shelter, food shelf, and serving meals at Loaves & Fishes. It's a life-changing experience so consider taking a week and helping the homeless, meeting new people, eating really good food! \$50 deposit holds your spot. Contact Carol Merriman with questions.

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.

Donation Needed for Among Friends—They are in need of a **wii game console with sports games**. Please contact Bonnie Jones-Witthuhn 715-307-1182. Thank you.

Hand Massages for Caregivers—at Among Friends

at 2:00 pm on Tues, Nov 14—November is National Caregiver month, a time for remembering & thanking all the family members & friends who provide daily care for individuals with dementia. Our gratitude for all they have done & are doing to keep individuals in their homes by providing care for their loved ones. We offer this simple moment of relaxation and fun for our Among Friends participants & caregivers at 2 pm on Tues, Nov 14 provided by Lori's Spa. Our thanks to them for this service.

Among Friends, located here at First Congregational UCC, provides a social respite for individuals with dementia & their caregivers. We are open 9:00-3:00 every Tuesday. Please contact Norma Revels 715-293-2561 or Bonnie JW 715-307-1182 if you are interested in knowing more about Among Friends. Our great thanks for the support of First Congregational church members as we move into our second month of service.

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.

Countless Thanks for Your Generosity to Help Hurricane and Flood Families and Communities

In just two+ weeks you generously provided over \$2,500 to help fill 51 five-gallon disaster clean-up buckets for families in the South struggling to clean up after the fall hurricanes and floods. The buckets were taken to the Church World Service depot in Elgin, Illinois last Thursday and will be distributed from there to places in greatest need. It was a large, hard-working, tireless crew that made this happen in such a short time, and we are more grateful to everyone, young and aging, who pitched in!

Additionally, the congregation has generously donated \$2,770 in *additional* hurricane disaster relief funds (above and beyond the buckets) over the past several months. That this faith community stepped up and gave over \$5,300 to help our neighbors to the South is amazing, and yet another indicator of its generosity, love, and commitment to the work of the church in the world. Blessings upon blessings from you, and to you!