

*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
River Falls, Wisconsin*

November 12, 2017



*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.*

Psalms 136:1

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN**

NOVEMBER 12, 2017

9:00 & 10:30 AM

“TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST”

“You see, the kingdom of God, according to the Bible, is not some never-never land in the sweet by-and-by. Most of the Bible really is not very interested in heaven. No, the kingdom of God is life on this earth—life transformed to accord with the will and the purpose of a loving God. The Lord’s Prayer does not say, ‘Thy kingdom come in heaven.’ It says, ‘Thy kingdom come on earth, even as it is in heaven.’” ~From: *Of Children and Streets and the Kingdom*, Elizabeth Achtemeier

Welcome to our guests who are visiting
with us today!

Join us for coffee in the Fellowship Hall
between the 9:00 & 10:30 worship services.

- ~The Nursery is available for young children.
- ~Church Mouse activity bags are available for children.
- ~Large print bulletins and hearing impaired devices are available from the ushers.
- ~Please stand when noted by the *
- ~Congregation responses are in bold.

*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*
- ~ *Welcome openly*
- ~ *Grow spiritually*
- ~ *Care passionately*
- ~ *Serve generously*

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SILENCE AND RINGING OF THE BELL

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Give thanks to God,

P: For God’s creation is amazing.

L: The sun warms our day,

P: The moon lights our nighttime way.

L: The earth is filled with bounty,

P: A cornucopia of plenty.

L: Give thanks to God,

P: For God’s love is everlasting;

L: A constant source of comfort,

P: A companion in hard times.

L: God is my strength and song,

P: So my heart is filled with praise.

L: Come let us join our hearts and mouths in praise!

All: Come let us worship the God who leads us into abundant life!

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

L: Caring God, in our anxiousness, we cling tightly to familiar people.

P: Afraid to extend our hand, we bind up our gifts, fearing we won't have enough for ourselves.

All: Forgive us, Caring God.

L: Loving Jesus, lacking trust in you, we clutch our possessions as if they are the meaning of life.

P: Our hesitancy to share stops the flow of your compassion.

All: Renew us, Loving Jesus.

L: Gracious Spirit, when we discount our ability and talents, we miss what is possible when Christ blesses our offering.

P: Loosen our closed hands and tight hearts that we may offer the gift we are and the gifts we have, to touch the bruised world.

All: Release us, Holy Spirit. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

L: Our God is a living God who seeks to bless us and send us forth to bless others.

P: With faith in this truth, let us live as God's forgiven people called to be a blessing to others.

L: This is good news!

All: Thanks be to God!

L: May the peace of the Lord be with you all.

P: And also with you.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE** **(Please greet one another with signs of peace)**

***GLORIA**

"Praised Be the Rock" (Choir sings v. 1; all on v. 2 & 3)

Musical score for "Praised Be the Rock" in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of three staves of music with lyrics underneath. The first staff (measures 1-4) contains the lyrics: "Praised be the Rock of our sal - va - tion, a In Je - sus Chirst our con - so - la - tion, Made We now a - wait the con - sum - ma - tion, To". The second staff (measures 5-8) is marked "Refrain" and contains the lyrics: "bul - wark stead - y and a sure place. God's good - ness one with him for - ev - er by grace. see God's glo - ry then in Christ's face." The third staff (measures 9-12) contains the lyrics: "shown through - out cre - a - tion for our whole race." The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4.

OFFERTORY (During the offertory, members of the church are invited to bring their tithes and pledges for the coming year as well as their weekly offering and place them on the communion table.)

"Where Your Treasure Is"

Musical score for "Where Your Treasure Is" in G minor, 4/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "Where your treas - ure is, there your heart shall be. All that you pos - sess will nev - er set you free. Seek the things that last; come and learn from me. Where your treas - ure is, your heart shall be." The key signature has two flats (Bb, Eb) and the time signature is 4/4.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

L: Let us give God thanks...

P: For homes that are warm and the ability to be neighbors to others.

L: Let us give God thanks...

P: For the people we love today and for those who now rest from their labors.

L: Let us give God thanks...

P: For opportunities to grow in faith, love and service.

All: Bless, O God, the gifts we offer this day for the coming year. Together may we be your courageous disciples who worship faithfully, welcome openly, grow spiritually, care passionately and serve generously. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

BAPTISM OF PRESTON RYAN MEYER (9:00 am)

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Look at the World"

Chancel Choir

PRESENTATION OF SERVANT GIFTS TO YR 1 CONFIRMANDS (10:30 am)

TIME WITH CHILDREN (10:30 am)

Rev. Chris Myers

SONG OF BLESSING (10:30 am) (Children preschool through grade 8 may go to Sunday School. Worship bags and children's bulletins are available in the back.)

*Jesus loves me! This I know, as he loved so long ago,
Taking children on his knee, saying, "Let them come to me."
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

PSALM 70 (Cantor will introduce; congregation, please join in when directed)

R



Keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your lamps trimmed and burn -
- ing, keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing, for the time is draw - ing nigh.

L: Be pleased, O God, to deliver me. O LORD, make haste to help me!

P: Let those be put to shame and confusion who seek my life.

L: Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire to hurt me.

P: Let those who say, "Aha, Aha!" turn back because of their shame.

L: Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you.

P: Let those who love your salvation say evermore, "God is great!"

L: But I am poor and needy; hasten to me, O God!

P: You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay! *R*

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Amos 5:21-24
Matthew 25:1-13

SERMON

Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers

*HYMN

"Arise, Your Light is Come"

#164

*STATEMENT OF FAITH - United Church of Christ

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

*COMMISSIONING

As the earth keeps turning, hurtling through space
And night falls and day breaks from land to land;
Let us remember that in waking, sleeping, being born and dying
We are part of one world, one humanity.

The blessing of God: Father, Son, and Spirit, be with you all.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord your God. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

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Assisting in today's worship service are:

Ministers:		<i>The Whole Church</i>
Liturgist:	9:00 am	<i>Jill Paulson</i>
	10:30 am	<i>Grace Gilberg</i>
Coffee Fellowship:		<i>Giving Thanks Meal</i>
Ushers:	9:00 am	<i>Gloria Gardner, Suzanne Hagen, Bernice Larson</i>
	10:30 am	<i>Cori Fosmo, Kathy and Beth Rausch</i>
Welcomers:		<i>Wendy Hill, Rebecca Ferguson</i>
Nursery:		<i>Sheila Peterson</i>
Organist:		<i>Marsha Pearson</i>
Rover:		<i>Wendy Hill</i>
Trustee:		<i>Randy Welsh</i>
Counters:		<i>Diane Welsh, Midge Kees</i>
Among Friends Coordinator:		<i>Norma Revels</i>
Music Coordinator:		<i>Marsha Pearson</i>
Choir Director:		<i>Scott Perau</i>
Bell Choir Director:		<i>Ross Fugl</i>
Church Moderator:		<i>Neal Prochnow</i>
Church Secretary:		<i>Missy Luedtke</i>
Youth Pastor:		<i>JaNae Westrich</i>
Minister for Community:		<i>Rev. Dave Ostendorf</i>
CE Minister:		<i>Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers</i>
Senior Pastor:		<i>Rev. Chris Myers</i>

First Congregational UCC, 110 N. Third Street, River Falls, WI 54022

Tel: 425-2052 Email: office@firstchurchr.org Fax: 425-9800

- Sun., Nov 12
- Dedication Sunday
 - 8:00 am - Music Practice
 - 9:00 am - Worship Service
 - 9:00 am - Adult Forum
 - 10:00 am - Coffee Fellowship
 - 10:30 am - Worship Service
 - 10:30 am - Sunday School
 - 11:00 am - WEVR Broadcast
 - 11:30 am - Giving Thanks Meal and Youth Dessert Auction
- Tues., Nov 14
- 9:00 am - Yoga
 - 9:00 am-3:00 pm - Among Friends
 - 11:30 am - Personnel Meeting
 - 1:00-2:30 pm - Bible Study
 - 6:30 pm - Trustees Meeting
 - 7:00 pm - Cribbage
- Wed., Nov 15
- 3:45-5:15 pm - Wednesday School
 - 5:15 pm - Family Meal
 - 6:00 pm - Jubilee Ringers
 - 6:30 pm - Pre-Confirmation (6th Grade)
 - 6:30 pm - Confirmation Year 2 (8th Grade)
 - 7:00 pm - Chancel Choir
 - 9:00 pm - Worship Service on Channel 16
- Thurs., Nov 16
- 9:00 am - Yoga
 - 3:00-8:00 pm - Free Counseling Center
- Sun., Nov 19
- 8:00 am - Music Practice
 - 9:00 am - Worship Service
 - 9:00 am - Adult Forum
 - 10:00 am - Coffee Fellowship
 - 10:30 am - Worship Service
 - 10:30 am - Sunday School
 - 11:00 am - WEVR Broadcast
 - 11:30 am - Youth Cookie Bake

Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Those who are ill or recovering:

- Marlee (relative of Diane Welsh), Wayne Petersen, Audrey Johnson (mother of Linn Lawrence), Avis Thompson (Alice Hanson's sister), Dale Purdy (husband of Evelyn), Janine Schulze (Dale Olson's sister), Steve (brother in law of Carole Mottaz), Howard (uncle of Barry Butenhoff), June (friend of Carol Merriman), Marlene Wells, Rae and Mike Farley, Donna Ray (Norma Revel's mother), Scott (son of Del Hirstein), Linda (friend of Angie Burke), Davey Keatley, Barb (sister of Sue Simmonet)

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For the Chancel Choir leading us in song today
- For Isabel da Silva, visiting us from Brazil today to talk about the community ministry we support there
- For the safe passage of the 50 buckets full of cleanup supplies on their way to those in need
- For those who attended the Inquirer's Class that they may find the love of Christ in this place
- For the 60 Middle and High School students who packed over 31,000 meals at Feed My Starving Children this Wednesday
- For those organizing the Giving Thanks Meal today, especially Andy & Christina Krueger, Laura Miller, Bob Gustafson, and David Reilly
- For Sheila Peterson and those who volunteer at our church nursery

Prayers for our world:

- For women who are abused that they may find both justice and peace
- For those who are the victims of random violence and terrorist attacks, especially Texas
- For a safe and bountiful hunting season
- For cleaning up and rebuilding after Irma, Harvey, Jose and Maria
- For peace on the Korean peninsula
- For those traveling
- For those struggling with politics
- That we all might be better stewards of God's creation

Prayers of thanksgiving:

- For the gift of our annual Giving Thanks Meal
- For our confirmands showing off their baking skills with this week's Dessert Auction
- For the 7th Grade Robotics group that won their division including our own Noah Follstad, Connor Rude and John Sullivan
- For Mara Shepherd who ran in the New York Marathon last weekend
- For the trustees who prepared our church grounds for winter
- For the Wednesday Night Family Meal program and those who make it possible. Sign up!
- For our weekly volunteers – trustees who open the building, deacons who help in worship, welcomers
- For those who are providing coffee fellowship this week (could you provide this in the future?)

Those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Harriet Christianson, who died this past week
- For the saints of our church as we celebrate All Saints Sunday next Sunday:
Marilyn Goodrich, Mary Olson, Jack Sumner, Robert Miller, Lois Smith, Cynthia McLagan, John Hanson
- For those who are grieving that God may comfort and strengthen them

If you have people you wish to include on our prayer list, please see the pastor
or use the blue prayer cards in the pews or on the back sign-up table.

This past Wednesday, our 68 confirmands, church interns, and chaperones worked at Feed My Starving Children. Together they packed over 31,000 meals which will feed 92 children for a year.



SCRIPTURE LESSON: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS:**Amos 5:21-24**

I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Matthew 25:1-13

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.