

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Christmas Eve Worship Schedule:

9:00 am—Morning Worship (no 10:30 am worship)

4:00 pm—Candle Light Family Worship with Children's Message

6:00 pm—Candle Light Family Worship with Children's Message and Communion

11:00 pm—Candle Light Worship with Choir and Communion

### New Year's Eve Worship Schedule:

9:00 am—Worship

10:00 am—Coffee Fellowship

10:30 am—No Late worship

## POINSETTIAS

### Poinsettias for Christmas Eve

Poinsettia sales "In Honor of" or "In Memory of" someone special sponsored by our youth has begun. The order forms are on the sign-up table or please call the church office. The cost is \$14. You may return the order form with payment to the office or place it in the offering plate by **December 18**. The plants will be on display for the Christmas Eve service. You may pick your plants up after the 11:00 pm service on Christmas Eve. Proceeds of the sales go toward youth activities.

### Annual Reports Due

All Committees, please submit your Annual Reports, preferably electronically, by **January 8, 2018**, to Missy Luedtke at [missy@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:missy@firstchurchrf.org). Thank you !

## FINANCIAL

### Treasurer's Report

	Week of	Year to Date
	Nov 26, 2017	
General Fund Income*	\$ 8,584	\$ 384,257
General Fund		
Operational Needs	\$ 8,519	\$ 408,912

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.

**Message from the Trustees**—As we approach the end of the church year, the Trustees would like to ask each of you to review your recently delivered giving statements to ensure your 2017 giving is on track with your pledge. If you have been blessed this year with the ability to give beyond your pledge, please consider an additional gift so that the church can finish the year financially strong & ready to embark on our 2018 church year on solid financial footing.

## WELLNESS

**Yoga Class & Meditation-Mindfulness**—Please join us. 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.

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

## DECEMBER 3, 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: Dec 24; Jan 7, 14, 21, 28

Welcomers for: Dec 10, 17, 24, 31

Coffee Fellowship for: Dec 17, 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](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

**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.**

Dec 6—Baked potato bar and soup

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

Dec 20—Breakfast for dinner, eggs benedict, breakfast burrito, stuffed French toast

### 2018 Pledges are Due!

Please turn in your blue 2018 pledge sheets today. Copies are on the sign-up table.

## WELCOME OPENLY

**Advent Workshop**—The family workshop will be held following the 10:30 service today. 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.

**Youth Cookie Delivery**—Please join our youth as we deliver cookies and carols to our home-bound. We will leave church by van on **Sunday, Dec 10 at Noon** and return by about 3:00. Sign up in the Gathering Space. Open to ALL who want to spread some Christmas Cheer!

**Advent Projects**—Donna Moseman, First Congregational member and crafter extraordinaire, will be in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesdays during Advent (**Dec 6, 13, and 20**) from **5:15-6:15 pm** leading two craft projects—one for children and another for adults. Please stop by!

**Picture the Bible Christmas Greeting Cards**—New this year are Christmas greeting cards featuring the "Jesus is Born" Picture the Bible image. The cards are 4 1/4" x 5 1/2" and come with an envelope. The cards are sold in a set of 12 cards for \$8.00. Please come to the church office.

**Amaryllis**—Please see table with amaryllis and enrich your Christmas by signing up to deliver one to a special church member.

### Interested in Becoming a Church Member?

The Inquirer's Class was recently held. We will be receiving new members on Dec 17. If you are interested in joining, please contact the church office by Mon, Dec 11 to be put on the list for the reception of new members.

**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 **Dec 12**.

**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

**WANTED: Welcomers**—We are looking for people to welcome worshipers as they enter the church. It's a fun job & requires nothing but a handshake, a smile & a warm welcome. Please consider signing up.

**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!

**Holiday Show**—The River Falls FORWARD Foundation is hosting a fun-filled Variety Holiday Show **today at the River Falls High**



**School. Showtime is at 3 pm with a social hour starting at 2 pm.** Colleen Raye along with her sister and a 10-piece orchestra will delight guests with wonderful renditions of favorite songs from Andy Williams, Karen Carpenter, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, and many others. The audience will join the musical group in rousing versions of classic holiday tunes. In addition, guests will have an opportunity to further support the Foundation by bidding on nearly 100 silent auction items. Tickets may be purchased at the door. Cost of tickets are \$15 for adults, \$10 for students and seniors, and no charge for youth 5 and under.

FORWARD is a non-profit organization separate from the River Falls Public Schools that serves as the means for private giving to the local public schools. Its mission is to raise private funds to support programs beyond the core school district budget. Since its inception six years ago, more than \$106,000 has been awarded to teachers for innovative learning opportunities for our public school students.

## GROW SPIRITUALLY

**Adult Forum**—*The forum meets Sundays 9:00–10:00 am*  
**Dec 3: Geography of Bible Lands, Lee Lueck**—Understanding the geography of Bible lands is important. Come for a presentation that gives a geographic context for many of the people and places in the Bible, particularly related to Jesus' ministry.

**Dec 10: The Messiah's Birth: Wild John and the Wondrous Waters of Baptism, Dave Ostendorf**—"Wild" John the Baptist is one of the most intriguing characters in the holy texts. "Preparing the way" in the trans-Jordan wilderness for Jesus, he baptized his followers & then the Messiah himself, declaring that a new age of God had begun. Decades after the Messiah's birth the gospel writers relate this provocative, foundational story as the early Christian community emerged within the Roman Empire. Gather to explore anew the power and impact of this story then and now.

**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 2017 Advent Musical, *Follow That Star!*, during Sunday School. Rehearsals will take place during Sunday School from through Dec 10. The musical will be presented on **Sun, Dec 17 during the 10:30 worship service**. There will be a dress rehearsal on **Sat, Dec 16, 10:00 am–12:00 noon**. The dress rehearsal is for children in Grades 1–5. Pre-School & Kindergarten children do not attend the dress rehearsal but are part of the musical. It is very important for children to have consistent Sunday School attendance so they are well-prepared for 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.

**Giving Tree**—The Ecumenical Giving Tree Program is back but with a new name: *Angels on Earth Giving Tree Program*. It has been renamed to honor Rita Mountain, who was the heart & soul of this program. Help local families this Christmas by taking an ornament from the tree, shop & bring the gift back, **unwrapped, with ornament attached by Sun, Dec 10**. Cash & checks are always welcome to help purchase fuel & grocery cards.

**Food Donation Opportunity**—Advocates for Immigrants, a River Falls churches & community organization, invites us to provide: dried beans of any kind, rice of all kinds, cooking oil, sofrito, Goya sauce, Masa, corn meal, flour of all kinds, canned goods & large bags of foods not suggested for area families in need. Please bring to church by **Dec 10**, or take to the United Methodist Church.

**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.

**Spirit and Health**—I don't need to wait 'til New Year's to know that I want to change (that is to say, improve!) my relationship to my body & my health. I also know that I am going to need God's help to make these changes. Finally, I know that I need to do this with other seekers. If you are interested in exploring a group process based on our spiritual growth together around issues of weight, exercise, food, & stress, please come to a planning meeting **Dec 6, at 5:30 pm, in the Fireplace room**. (If you are interested, but can't make that meeting, call me at (262)227-1542 or email at [rebeccaferguson@hotmail.com](mailto:rebeccaferguson@hotmail.com) ) Here's to a renewed temple! ~Rebecca Ferguson

## 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.

**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](mailto: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](http://www.chordsmash.com)