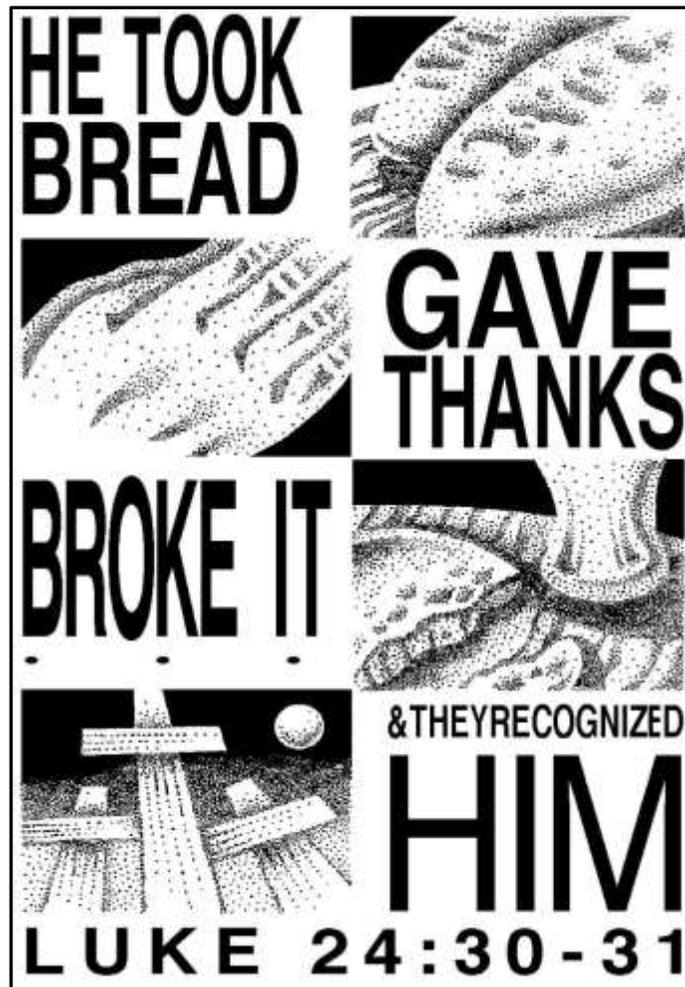


*First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
River Falls, Wisconsin*

*April 15, 2018*



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

APRIL 15, 2018

9:00 & 10:30 AM

*“THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER”*

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*“Doubt is not the opposite of faith. Doubt, in fact, is probably a necessary ingredient to faith. Faith, by definition, is trust in spite of a lack of evidence. Faith is not knowledge. Faith is more tension-filled. It is acting as if something is true even when you have no proof that it is.”*

*~David Lose*

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: Quiet and persistent God,

**P: You work miracles in the silent hush before dawn.**

L: Strong and surprising God,

**P: You roll away every stumbling stone and bring life to our dead ends.**

L: Whirling and dancing God,

**P: You delight in empty tombs and surprising visits.**

L: Easter God,

**P: You give us joy and cause an Alleluia to flow from head to toe.**

L: Risen God,

**P: Forever rising in us, we sing our joy.**

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

\*HYMN

*"Christ is Alive"*

1. Christ is a - live! Let Chris-tians sing. His cross stands  
2. Christ is a - live! No long - er bound to dis - tant  
3. Not throned a - far, re - mote - ly high, un - touched, un -  
4. In ev - ery in - sult, rift, and war, where col - or,  
5. Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to

emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with  
years in Pal - es - tine, he comes to claim the  
moved by hu - man pains, but dai - ly, in the  
scorn, or wealth di - vide, he suf - fers still, yet  
this and ev - ery age, till earth and all cre -

prais - es ring. His love in death shall nev - er die.  
here and now and dwell in ev - ery place and time.  
midst of life, our Sav - ior in the God-head reigns.  
loves the more, and lives, though ev - er cru - ci - fied.  
a - tion ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord Jesus, before you died, you prayed that we would be one, and that the world would know we are yours by our love for one another. We confess that too often we have fallen short of your call. Instead of seeking unity, we have gossiped. Instead of seeking to serve one another, we serve only our own interests. Instead of embracing the outsider, we isolate ourselves away from the world. God, save us from seeking redemption in such small ways. Lift our eyes to see your movement and work in the world. Give us the joy of finding your work and joining the movement of the Spirit. Make us one, Lord, here, there and everywhere. Amen.

## \*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: Christ forgives the most impossible sins,

P: **Overcomes the greatest fears,**

L: Comforts the loudest cries,

P: **And breaks down the strongest barriers to his love and peace.**

L: Through the resurrection, Christ's power in the Holy Spirit lives and works here and now.

P: **So let us know that we are forgiven and be at peace. Amen.**

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 *Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down.*

*Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down.*

*I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burdens down.*

*I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burdens down.*

## SPECIAL MUSIC

Chancel Choir

## 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.*

*Jesus loves me! Still today, walking with me on my way,  
Wanting as a friend to give light and love to all who live.*

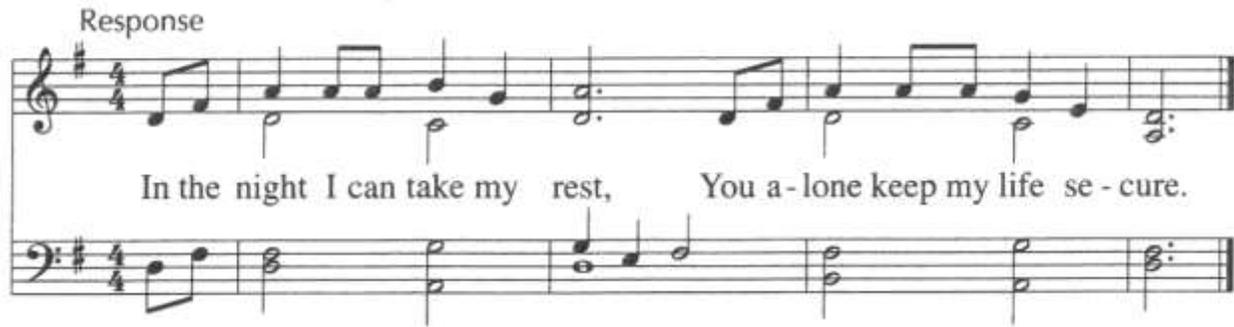
*Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!*

*Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.*

## SCRIPTURE LESSON

1 John 3:1-7

**PSALM 4 (Cantor will introduce; congregation, please join in when directed)**



**L:** Answer me when I call, O God of my right!

**P:** **You gave me room when I was in distress. Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.**

**L:** How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?

**P:** **How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies?**

**L:** But know that the LORD has set apart the faithful; the LORD hears when I call.

**P:** **When you are disturbed, do not sin; ponder it on your beds, and be silent.**

**L:** Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD.

**P:** **There are many who say, 'O that we might see some good! Let the light of your face shine on us, O LORD!'**

**L:** You have put gladness in my heart more than when their grain and wine abound.

**P:** **I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O LORD, make me lie down in safety. *R***

**GOSPEL LESSON**

**Luke 24:36b-48**

**SERMON**

**Rev. Chris Myers**

\*HYMN

*"Let the Whole Creation Cry"*

1. Let the whole cre - a - tion cry,  
2. All who strive to serve the Lord, Al - le - lu - ia!  
3. Men and wom-en, young and old,

"Glo - ry be to God on high!"  
Proph-ets burn-ing with God's word, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Raise the an - them man - i - fold,

Sun and moon, lift up your voice,  
Those to whom the arts be - long, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Join with chil-dren's songs of praise,

Night and stars, in God re - joice,  
Add your voic - es to the song, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Wor - ship God through all your days,

## **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR EASTER**

**We believe in the God of Resurrection,  
Who lights the dawn to chase away the darkness;  
Who rolls away each stone of doubt;  
Who surprises us with incredible gifts of family and friends, silence and  
laughter;  
Who raises us from sadness and despair to the possibilities of blessing and  
joy.**

**We believe in Jesus the Christ,  
Friend of the poor and searcher for the lost,  
Who comes to us in our grief and longing, calls us by name and sends us on  
the paths of peace to speak of an awesome love that is not overcome by  
death.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit our Guide,  
The hidden partner, the gentle messenger of God,  
Who fills our every breath with blessing;  
Who guides us in the dark, beckons us to do good, speaks to us in dream and  
image, and watches over us with tender compassion.**

**We believe in the church,  
An instrument of God in this present moment, striving for justice,  
celebrating in joy, clawing at despair, living in hope, praying for healing  
and forever proclaiming the Good News of God's persistent and  
redeeming love. Amen.**

## **THE PRAYERS & LORD'S PRAYER (debts/debtors)**

**...Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy  
will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive  
us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us  
from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

**TELL ME A STORY**

**Evelyn Purdy**

## OFFERTORY

### *"We Give Thee but Thine Own"*



We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be; all that we have is



thine a - lone a trust, O Lord, from thee.

## \*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Merciful God, we rejoice that we are able to love, O God, because you first loved us. May these gifts be used by your church as agents of your love, compassion and justice, that we might provide for our neighbors' needs with more than bread alone. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## \*HYMN

### *"Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"*

#77

## \*COMMISSIONING

**L:** As God sent Christ, so now God sends you into the world. Go to show and live your faith in all you do and all you are. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord your God. Christ is risen!

**P:** Christ is risen indeed!

## POSTLUDE

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*Assisting in today's worship service are:*

<b>Liturgist:</b>	<b>9:00 am</b>	<i>Traci Hagberg</i>
	<b>10:30 am</b>	<i>Midge Kees</i>
<b>Coffee Fellowship:</b>		<i>Rebecca Ferguson, Rene &amp; Tim Bylander</i>
<b>Ushers:</b>	<b>9:00 am</b>	<i>Peter Rayne, Bernice Larson, Lee Lueck</i>
	<b>10:30 am</b>	<i>Suzanne Hagen, Evelyn Purdy, Matthew Myers</i>
<b>Welcomers:</b>		<i>Colin and Aspen Richter</i>
<b>Nursery:</b>		<i>Sheila Peterson</i>
<b>Organist:</b>		<i>Marsha Pearson</i>
<b>Rover:</b>		<i>Dale &amp; Shelia Olson</i>
<b>Trustee:</b>		<i>Tim Bylander</i>
<b>Counters:</b>		<i>Marie Roe, Allen Barnes</i>
<b>Among Friends Coordinator:</b>		<i>Norma Revels</i>
<b>Music Coordinator:</b>		<i>Marsha Pearson</i>
<b>Choir Director:</b>		<i>Scott Perau</i>
<b>Bell Choir Director:</b>		<i>Ross Fugl</i>
<b>Church Moderator:</b>		<i>Neal Prochnow</i>
<b>Church Secretary:</b>		<i>Missy Luedtke</i>
<b>Youth Pastor:</b>		<i>JaNae Westrich</i>
<b>Minister for Community:</b>		<i>Rev. Dave Ostendorf</i>
<b>CE Minister:</b>		<i>Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers</i>
<b>Senior Pastor:</b>		<i>Rev. Chris Myers</i>

*Altar table flowers are given by Marsha Pearson  
in memory of Maynard Pearson.*

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

**Tel: 425-2052 Email: [office@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:office@firstchurchrf.org) Fax: 425-9800**

- Sun., April 15
- 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
  - 10:45 am - Sunday School
  - 11:00 am - WEVR Broadcast
  - 3:00 pm - Music at First Church Concert
- Tues., April 17
- 8:00 am - Men's Group
  - 9:00 am - Yoga
  - 9:00 am-3:00 pm - Among Friends
  - 1:00-2:30 pm - Bible Study
  - 3:00 pm - Wellhaven Gathering
  - 6:30 pm - Boards and Committees Meetings
  - 7:30 pm - Church Council Meeting
- Wed., April 18
- 3:45-5:15 pm - Wednesday School
  - 5:15-6:15 pm - Family Meal
  - 5:45 pm - Jubilee Ringers
  - 6:00 pm - Spirit & Health Meeting
  - 6:30 pm - Pre-Confirmation (6<sup>th</sup> Grade)
  - 6:30 pm - Confirmation Year 2 (8<sup>th</sup> Grade)
  - 7:00 pm - Chancel Choir
  - 7:00 pm - Church Interns
  - 9:00 pm - Worship Service on Channel 16
- Thurs., April 19
- 9:00 am - Yoga
  - 12:00 pm - Worship Service on Channel 16
  - Leave for Confirmation Trip to Boston
- Sun., April 22
- 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
  - 10:45 am - Sunday School
  - 11:00 am - WEVR Broadcast
  - Return from Confirmation Trip to Boston

**Please remember the following in your prayers this week:**

Those who are ill or recovering:

- Audrey Johnson (mother of Linn Lawrence), Avis Thompson (Alice Hanson's sister), Janine Schulze (Dale Olson's sister), Steve (brother in law of Carole Mottaz), Rae and Mike Farley, Carolyn (mother of Paula Tiede), Lou Ann Tadych (mother of Dean Grisar), Nancy (sister of Bobbie Kuhn), Barb (sister of Susan Walden), Brad (son-in-law of Midge and Glenn Kees), John Hyland, Marcia (Mara Shepherd's mom), Betty (Tim Lawrence's mom)

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For the newly gathered Men's Group as they meet this Tuesday that they may grow in fellowship and support
- For our 2 asylum families that they may know the love of Jesus in this community
- For the Creation Care team that brought meteorologist Paul Douglas to town this past week to talk about faith and climate change
- For those enjoying the Music at First Church concert this Sunday, April 15 at 3:00 pm
- For the Among Friends adult respite program, its guests, volunteers, board and its director, Norma Revels
- For those attending the Welcoming Dinner for our new members to be held on Monday, April 30 at 6:00 pm

Prayers for our world:

- For those suffering from depression and anxiety, that they may be surrounded by people who listen and care
- For faith and strength in the midst of an often chaotic and crazy world
- For parents raising their children that they may grow and find support and strength in the call as parents
- For those who have been abused that they may find hope, healing and peace
- For our nation that we might heal our partisan political divisions and work justly to solve our real problems
- That we all might be better stewards of God's creation and work harder to address climate change now

Prayers of thanksgiving:

- For Evelyn Purdy as she shares her faith story this Sunday
- For all who have prayed for and supported Wayne Peterson on his journey back to health – he is eating again!
- For Luella Rose Mills born March 27<sup>th</sup>, 6 lbs 13 oz, 19.5 inches to Jamie and Tim Mills
- For Trudy Papp to be baptized on Sunday, April 29, that she may grow in faith and love
- For the gift of our Church Camps (Pilgrim Center and Moon Beach) and its ministry to connect us to our Creator and each other
- For all those who work on church teams & committees, teachers, mentors, singers and volunteers. Bless you!
- For the Wednesday Night Family Meal program and those who make it possible. Sign up!

Those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Dan Herum whose mother Delores died recently and whose funeral was this past Saturday
- For the family of Stewart Lentz who died recently
- For the family of Elizabeth (Barbara Stephens)
- For those who are grieving, especially the Miller family on the first anniversary of his death

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.

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: 1 John 3:1-7**

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

**GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 24:36b-48**

Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.