

SCHOOL SUPPLY EVENT

On **Mon, Aug 6 & Tues, Aug 7**, families in the River Falls School District can receive free school supplies for the upcoming year through the Free School Supply Event. The sorting & distribution of supplies will be here at our church. Supplies we are in most need of are: washable markers, extra fine Sharpies, scientific calculators, Ticonderoga pencils, dry erase markers, plastic folders, large pencil boxes, ear buds or headphones, and backpacks for older students. Sharpened pencils are requested by many teachers. Please do not donate small calculators or flash drives as there are no requests for them. Please limit purchases of 24-box crayons and wide-ruled notebooks. We appreciate donations of all other school supplies. Please bring your donated school supplies to our church **by Sun, Aug 5**. The First National Bank is again donating 300+ pairs of tennis shoes. They are using the proceeds from this spring's bank sponsored 5K. The program is extremely thankful for this generous donation.

Also, please use the sign-up sheets if you can help sort on the 6th (start at 10 am) & assist families on the evening of the 6th from 4-6:30 pm. Volunteers are also needed on the 7th from 9:30-Noon. Students may volunteer for Monday morning shift. We prefer not to use students during the give-away times as it is an issue of confidentiality. With your assistance, families with limited financial means will be able to have their children start school on an equal basis with other students in the district. ~Bob Gustafson

Help Needed—Much of the ministry of the church is done through teams and committees. The Nominating Team is looking for people who wish to serve in the following areas beginning in September:

Christian Education	1 team member needed
Deacons	1 team member needed
Discipleship	3 team members needed
Trustees	2 team members needed
Welcoming Ministry	1 team member needed
Youth Leadership	3 team members needed

If you are interested in serving in any of these capacities, or just want more information, please talk to a member of the Nominating Team—Neal Prochnow, Lu Lueck, Carole Mottaz, Dianne Barnes, Vicki Sippel, Alan Tuchtenhagen

FINANCIAL

Treasurer's Report

	Week of	Year to Date
	June 24, 2018	
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,195	\$ 248,528
General Fund		
Operational Needs	\$ 8,920	\$ 223,000

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—Come & join a delightful group of people that enjoy the flexibility & exercise that yoga offers. The yoga group (men & women) meets **Tuesdays & Thursdays from 9:00-10:00 am** in the youth room. Jan Hansen is the certified instructor. A donation is requested & is shared with local charities during the holiday season. We all look forward to seeing new faces.

YOUTH EVENTS

Thurs, July 12—Come to church and help prepare and deliver a meal for the Simpson shelter.

Fri, July 13—Come to the church lawn for Summer fun picnic food at 5:00 and then we will watch the River Falls Days Parade together.

July 30—August 2—Vacation Bible School

Wed, August 1—River Falls Fish Game—Meet at the field at 7:30 pm.

JULY 8, 2018

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: July 15, Aug 5, 12, 19, 26

Welcomers for: July 15, 22, 29

Coffee Fellowship for: July 22; Sept 2

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 Memorial Day and Labor Day are: Mon-Thurs: 8:30 am-4:00 pm; Friday: Closed

WELCOME OPENLY

VBS Volunteers Meeting—Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help with VBS. There will be a meeting for all volunteers on **Thursday, July 26, 6:30-7:30 PM**. This is an important meeting to be sure that everything is organized for the week. If you have questions, talk to Stacy Myers.

Cookies for VBS—We need cookie bakers for VBS. We need three people each day during the week of VBS to bake four dozen cookies for snack. Please volunteer! The cookies are a highlight! Please use on the sign-up sheet.

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

Simpson Shelter Meal Help Needed—The Mission Education Committee is sponsoring their annual Simpson Shelter meal on **Thurs, July 12**. We have planned a supper & would appreciate help with the preparation & serving of the meal. We will begin preparing the food **July 12 at 12:00 pm** at the church. **At 4:00 pm**, we will leave for the Simpson Shelter to serve the meal that evening. We will also need **6 pans of bars (no frosting)** to bring. Please sign up.

Summer Singing Opportunity—This summer we will be putting together a choir once a month to lead worship and sing an anthem. Everyone is invited! You do not have to have to have music reading skills or any previous experience. We will sing on the following Sundays: **July 15, and August 5**. If you would like to sing, please meet up with us at 8:30 am on any of the Sundays that we will be singing. If you have any questions, please contact our choir director, Scott Perau. Cell - 715-461-0318 Email - sperau@gmail.com

Men's Group Gathering!—Our men's group meets every other Tuesday in the Fellowship Hall for coffee, treats, conversation and fellowship. Our next gatherings are **Tues, July 10 & 24, at 8:00 am**. Thanks to our leadership team of Mike Gardner, Roger Kampstra & Brad Williams who helped organize this group. Join us!

Summer Music Events—The Music Committee has several music performances planned for this summer. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

Wed, July 11 - Chris Silver Band will perform "Blues and Barbecue" from 5:00-7:00 pm on the church lawn. Bring your own lawn chair or blanket and sunglasses and join us under the tent for some blues music. A barbecue lunch will be available for a minimal cost.

Sun, August 26 - Fendrick & Peck Bluegrass Group will perform during our church service and then move into Fellowship Hall to continue their music while a mini brunch is provided.

WELCOME OPENLY

Softball News—You know it's summer when on a Monday night you hear the crack of a ball connecting with a bat and cheers arise from Hoffman Park. Our softball season has begun and our team is having a good time. Our record is 1 win, 2 losses and a rainout. Our next games are:

July 9 7:45 pm at Hoffman Park

July 16 7:45 pm at Hoffman Park

Come join in the fun and cheer our team on. We love the encouragement from our fans. If you have questions, contact Matthew Thurston at (715)781-3626 or Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945.

Farmers Market on Thursdays—In addition to the weekly Saturday Farmer's Market at Dick's Market here in River Falls, St Paul's UCC in Ellsworth sponsors a weekly Thursday Farmer's Market from 2-7pm in East Ellsworth. Complete with food trucks & over 15 vendors, the market includes fresh produce, flowers, baked goods & lots of other things. Plus it is tantalizingly close to the Ellsworth Coop. Check it out!

Sustainable Living: Tip of the Month—Butterflies and bees are pollinators that do extremely important work in sustaining our food chain and adding to the beauty of nature. Climate change, pesticides, and loss of habitat are major threats to our beloved bees and butterflies, and more. What could we do to help these pollinators and enjoy their beauty? Let part of our lawn grow wild with plants that attract and nourish pollinators. In our flower beds, check out what plants and flowers will attract and be beneficial to them. You can find good information on the internet, or talk with native plant experts, or the DNR. Avoid pesticides which are harmful to pollinators. If we all do our part, the benefits will be enjoyed by God's children, and by our pollinator friends without whom we could not survive. ~Brought to you by the Mission Ed Committee.

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 Jones-Witthuhn 715-307-1182 if you are interested in knowing more.

WELCOME OPENLY

2019 Spring Break Mission Trip—We do this trip every second year (when spring break does not coincide with Holy Week ☺). The trip is geared for youth age 14 to college with a limited number of adult spots available. We spend the week working on houses (painting, light construction, demolition, landscaping, etc) in Biloxi through our UCC partner agency Back Bay Mission www.thebackbaymission.org. The cost is about \$500 per person for the week including all transportation, meals & housing. Dates are **March 23-30** (RFSD spring break). Space is limited to 22 people and this trip ALWAYS fills up. An organizing meeting will be held in the fall. For more info please see Pastor Chris or Carol Merriman.

Techies Needed!-Know websites or graphic design? Like working with computers and computer systems? If you have techie skills and would like to share them, we would like to gather a church tech team who can advise church staff on computer & technology issues. The group would meet quarterly. Please use the sign-up sheet to give us your contact info and area of interest/expertise & we will convene the group. Bless you!

GROW SPIRITUALLY

VBS: Spread the Word

Vacation Bible School at First Congregational has long been a unique, terrific event. This year will be no exception. We have great volunteers and now we need more kids. Please spread the invite neighbors and friends to participate. There is no charge and all are welcome. Registration forms are available in the church office and on the church website.

**VBS (pre-school – completed grade 5)
July 30 – August 2, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

SERVE GENEROUSLY

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.

Donations Needed for Our Neighbors' Place:

- Gently-used (or new) backpacks (big enough to hold a large box of cereal & sturdy enough to carry 7-9 lbs of food as we will use for the Backpack Program)
- Bottled water—8 or 16 oz. bottles (so we can offer guests at the Day Center a cool drink during the summer)
- Men's and women's low cut socks (new socks only please—we cannot accept used socks)
- Family Fresh receipts
- Monetary donations are always VERY appreciated!

Donations may be dropped off between 10 am-4 pm Monday-Friday. The address is: 122 West Johnson Street in River Falls. Thank you for your generosity!

Welcoming Those with Dementia—It's an astonishing number: there are over 2,000 residents of Pierce and St. Croix Counties living with some form of dementia. In the next 25 years 10 million Americans will be diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia for which there is no known cure and no effective treatment. Families in our congregation have already been deeply affected by this difficult reality. On June 10 we joined other area churches committed to living as "dementia friendly" congregations, welcoming & supporting individuals and families impacted by the disease. First Congregational is already home to the amazing work of Among Friends, the community social respite program for those with dementia and their care givers. With the broad support of the larger community, many volunteers, and hard-working leaders, Among Friends is becoming a widely recognized model for congregations seeking creative new pathways of support and outreach with those living daily with this disease. Please see the resources on the table in the gathering area.

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.

Asylum Family Update—Many farming communities of Guatemala have been devastated by the sudden eruption of a volcano. Our own asylum family has lost loved ones including Heidy's father. Three are deceased, two are in the hospital, and the four children are among the missing. Let us pray that they be comforted during this difficult time.

Birthday Cards—The Rev. Dick Hoblin (former pastor of First Congregational Church) is celebrating his 90th birthday on July 4th. We would like to shower him with birthday cards. Any stories that you could include and share with him would be very appreciated. His address is: The Rev. Dick Hoblin, 1595 Ludington Circle, Romeoville, IL 60446. Thank you!