

## SCHOOL SUPPLY EVENT

As some of you know, I am stepping down as coordinator of the free school supply program. It is with regret & sadness that I do this as I so strongly believe in the mission the program offers struggling families in our community. Your commitment has enabled this program to serve so many students over the years. Because of the strong legs you have given this program, it is time to turn the reigns over to younger community members. Three of my former students (I was a high school teacher in my previous life) have agreed to take on this role. They will be fantastic and will lead the program for years to come.

From its inception as part of the Tuesday Banquet, a table of school supplies was set out. In the early days, students really only needed a handful of items. I believe only two of us involved in its organizational year still remain active. Polly Wymer was there on the first day organizing the supplies & she remains the “queen” of organizing notebooks & folders today (at the age of 96). What an incredible role model she is for all of us.

Thank you to the many donors of supplies & money over the years. This church has been a leader in donations. The money donated has allowed me to purchase supplies that are needed beyond what is donated. I cannot thank you enough for all of your support. A special thank you to those who have donated your time as well. Randy & Diane Welsh have been there for me for so many years. I am extremely thankful to them. They will be taking over as coordinators for our church next year.

This church has also opened its doors to hosting the program. As we outgrew the space at St. Bridget, we returned the program here—our church that hosted the first give away. You provided an incredible facility to meet the needs of this program. Dave Mountain and Missy Luedtke have gone out of their way to help in so many ways. School district budgets for classrooms have been decimated in recent years because of political decisions. This is why this program is so essential for students needing assistance.

You, as a congregation, have demonstrated that a church is an institution that puts the professed faith of its members into action for the ultimate good of all. What an honor it is to have served as coordinator of this program as well as a member of a church that truly puts its beliefs into action. I cannot thank you enough for all that you do for children in this community.

~Bob Gustafson

## FINANCIAL

### Treasurer's Report

	Week of Aug 5, 2018	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 7,256	\$ 278,713
General Fund		
Operational Needs	\$ 8,920	\$ 276,520

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.

## 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.

**DivorceCare**—Most people who've gone through separation and divorce will tell you that it is one of the most painful experiences they've ever faced. If you are hurting from the pain of divorce, DivorceCare may be just what you need. A new DivorceCare group will be starting at St. Bridget's on Monday, September 10 at 6:30 pm. For more information or to register call the parish office or email [divorcecare.ic.stb@hotmail.com](mailto:divorcecare.ic.stb@hotmail.com).

## AUGUST 12, 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: Sept 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Welcomers for: Aug 26; Sept 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Coffee Fellowship for: Sept 9, 23, 30;

Oct 7, 14, 21, 28

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

## WELCOME OPENLY

**September Book Group Meeting**—The book group's next meeting will be **Tues, Sept 25 at 3:00 pm at the church** to discuss *Women of the Castle* by Jessica Shattuck. Three women become a family in post WWII Germany. Books are available for check out in the church office.

**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

**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, Aug 21 & Sept 4, at 8:00 am**. Join us!

**Summer Music Event**—The Music Committee has a performance planned. Please join us!

**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.

**Rally Day & Parent Meeting**—All parents of children pre-school through grade 9 are asked to attend a brief orientation session on **Rally Day, September 9, following the 10:30 worship service and Sunday School**. This is a very important meeting and required for all families of confirmands. Please be sure to attend. First Congregational Church takes its responsibility to educate children very seriously. There needs to be a strong connection between church education and family life.

**Sunday School Teachers Needed**—According to the calendar, Sunday School is right around the corner! Sunday School is one of the congregation's most important ministries. *Please* consider volunteering to teach. All classes are taught by a team of teachers so no one teacher teaches every week. For information, please contact Stacy Myers. Please indicate your willingness by signing the volunteer list.

**Wednesday School Workers Needed**—It is time to prepare for school-year programming. Wednesday School begins on **October 3**. We need adult volunteers, drivers to transport children from school to church, and people to provide snacks. Please consider volunteering. A sign-up list is available for volunteers.

**Cribbage Night**—The group meets on the second Monday 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 **Sept 10**.

## WELCOME OPENLY

**Softball News**—Monday night was another fun night of softball with warm temperatures & a few bugs out in the field. We received a forfeit with the other team coming up short on players. So we shared a player & we played a fun scrimmage knowing we get a win for the night no matter what happened in the game. A bad thing that happened was our second baseman with an ankle injury in the first inning. So our record now is 5 wins, 4 losses. We are in third place. Way to go team!!!! Our last game is:

**August 13 at 7:45 pm** at Hoffman Park against  
Servant of the Shepherd

Fans come join in the fun & cheer us on at our last game. We love your encouragement and support. If you have questions contact Matthew Thurston at (715)781-3626 or Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945.

**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](http://www.thebackbaymission.org). The cost is about \$500 per person for the week including all transportation, meals and 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.

### Washington State Peaches

Single layer box \$19.00 or 2 single layer boxes for \$34.00  
If you order 3 single layer boxes it is \$34+\$19 = \$53.00

This is an annual fundraiser for our youth.



**\*\*The peaches are arriving early and will be here the week of August 27th.** You will receive a call when they arrive.

**To place an order contact: Caren Prochnow at 715-425-6346 or [cjprochnow@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cjprochnow@sbcglobal.net) or use the sign-up sheet.** Please provide the number of single layer boxes, your name, and a home and/or cell number.

**Order Deadline is August 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Thank you for your support!**

## GROW SPIRITUALLY

### Confirmation Kick Off Event: Sunday, September 9

Confirmation is a program to strengthen the faith lives of our 6-9<sup>th</sup> grade young people. On Sun, Sept 9, all students and their parents will gather for the annual Confirmation Kick Off Event in the Fellowship Hall following the late worship service. At this mandatory 45-minute meeting we will overview the goals & requirements of the Confirmation Program, meeting times, dates, trips, retreats and events. Please mark your calendars now!

### Tuesday Bible Study Resumes in the Fall

Weekly Adult Bible Study will resume on **Tues, Sept 18, 1:00–2:30 pm**. The focus will be *Why Christian?* by Douglas John Hall. Copies of the book are available for \$22.00 in the church office. Participants do not need to commit to attending every week. Come when you can. Please sign the list indicating your interest.

**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

## 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!

### Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Opportunities

We have an active build site in Hammond, WI which we are looking for volunteers, also we are looking to start supplemental home repair projects as we are looking for candidates for A Brush With Kindness & Aging In Place. We always have volunteer opportunities at the Roberts ReStore & are always looking for material & financial donations. Please join us in doing some great work while having fun doing it! You can contact the office at 715-760-3300 and the ReStore at 715-760-3456. Thank you and God Bless, *St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity*

**Among Friends Volunteer Driver Needed**—Among Friends continues to grow & expand service to surrounding areas within Pierce County. We have two individuals from Prescott who would like to participate in our program but can no longer drive. This volunteer driving position will receive Pierce County Aging & Disability reimbursement of \$.54 per mile. If you are interested, please contact Bonnie Jones-Witthuhn 715-307-1182 or Norma Revels 715-293-2561. We hope to recruit 2-3 drivers so it becomes a shared position. Thank you & great thanks to everyone who has been so supportive of Among Friends.

## 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 715-821-4008.

**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.

**Sustainable Living: Tip Of The Month**—As you grow your lawn and care for it, consider using natural fertilizers or compost instead of commercial fertilizer. They release nutrients slowly throughout the year and support insects, fungi, and other organisms which are essential to healthy soil. Also consider leaving grass clippings on the lawn as they provide a natural and free source of nutrients. Or you can compost the grass clippings for use in your garden. ~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.