

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN

May 23, 2021

"Pentecost"

10:00 am

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Come, Holy Spirit, come. Be the wind and fire that transform our lives.

P: **Breathe upon us as we study your word of life.**

L: Come, Holy Spirit, come. Kindle vibrant faith from hopes and dream.

P: **Cleanse us from our waywardness and distractions.**

L: Come, Holy Spirit, come. Deepen our passion for sharing the good news of gospel of Jesus Christ.

P: **Give us a strong voice to proclaim your mighty works in every tongue.**

All: **Fill your church with power. Come, Holy Spirit, come!**

SONG *"Send Down the Fire"* **Vocal Group**

Refrain: *Send down the fire of your justice, send down the rains of your love;
Come, send down the Spirit, breathe life in your people, and we shall be people of God.*

*Call us to be your compassion, teach us the song of your love; give us hearts that sing,
give us deeds that ring, make us ring with the song of your love.* Refrain

*Call us to witness your Kingdom, give us the presence of Christ; May your holy light
keep us shining bright, ever shine with the presence of Christ.* Refrain

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Thirst-quenching God—**You are living water for our parched souls. Your Word satisfies our deepest need; your presence gives hope to the lifeless and lost; and your power bursts forth with amazing creativity. So come, Holy Spirit, come. Strike the stone of our hearts with a jolt of pure grace, and let new life pour forth. Refresh our spirits with the limitless power of your mercy and love. Empower us to hear the good news—and to believe it and live it. Amen.**

PSALM 104:24-34

L: O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

P: **Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great.**

L: There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.

P: **These all look to you to give them their food in due season; when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.**

L: When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

P: **When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground.**

L: May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works—who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke.

P: **I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 2:1-21

HOMILY

Rev. Chris Myers

SONG

“Holy Spirit, Truth Divine”

Vocal Group

*Holy Spirit, Truth divine, dawn upon this soul of mine.
Word of God, and inward Light, wake my spirit, clear my sight.*

*Holy Spirit, Love divine, glow within this heart of mine.
Holy Spirit, Right divine, King within my conscience reign;
Be my Lord, I shall be Firmly bound, forever free.*

*Holy Spirit, Peace divine, still this restless heart of mine.
Speak to calm this tossing sea, stand in my tranquility.*

Holy Spirit, Power divine, fill and nerve this will of mine.

STATEMENT OF FAITH (South Africa)

L: It is not true that this world and its inhabitants are doomed to die and be lost;

P: **This is true: “for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him shall not die but have everlasting life.”**

L: It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction;

P: **This is true: “I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”**

L: It is not true that violence and hatred shall have the last word, and that war and destruction have come to stay forever;

P: **This is true: “for to us a child is born, to us a son is given in whom authority will rest and whose name will be Prince of Peace.”**

L: It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil that seek to rule the world;

P: **This is true: “to me is given all authority in heaven and on earth, and lo, I am with you always to the end of the world.”**

L: It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the church, before we can do anything;

P: **This is true: “I will pour out my spirit on all people, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young people shall see visions, and your old folk shall dream dreams.”**

L: It is not true that our dreams for the liberations of humankind, our dreams of justice, of human dignity, of peace, are not meant for this earth and this history;

P: **This is true: “The hour comes, and it is now, that true worshippers shall worship God in spirit and in truth.”**

All: **This is the faith we confess. This is the faith we believe. This is the faith that will set us free to follow in the steps of Jesus. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS & LORD’S PRAYER (debts/debtors)

In Dutch, Chinese and French

We pray, ...Come, Holy Spirit, come.

...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.

SONG *“Peace of God”* **Vocal Group**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,

*And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,
Be amongst you and remain with you always, Amen.*

***BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

“Open Our Eyes, Lord”

**Youth Bell Choir
(online only)**



SCRIPTURE LESSON: Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

Worship participants for this week:

<i>Audio/Visual:</i>	<i>Jeff Hoffman, Andy Myers</i>
<i>Music:</i>	<i>Jamie Mills, Terry Mithun, David Reilly</i>
<i>Preacher:</i>	<i>Rev. Chris Myers</i>
<i>Vocal Group:</i>	<i>Deb Hoffman, Carole Mottaz, Jamie Mills, Sue Danielson, Ann Gustafson, Natasha Rayne, Jill Paulson, Trish Graves, David Reilly</i>
<i>Lord's Prayer:</i>	<i>Lillian Tan (Hokkien Chinese), Natasha Rayne (Dutch), Emily Stifter (French)</i>

Treasurer's Report

	<u>May 16, 2021</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 8,145	\$ 243,557
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,262	\$ 185,240

A full accounting of all income and expenses is available in the church office.

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Those who are ill or recovering:

Bernice Larson, Megan (daughter of Steve and Janice Healy), Augie (friend of Rose Rude), Peg Thompson, Dorothy Shavers (Rene Bylander's mother), Roger Hirstein, Jim, TC (brother in law of Cori Fosmo) and his family, Mischa (friend of Bobbie Kuhn), Elaine Dixen, Jodi (sister of Lori Johnson), Jackie Nesvig (sister of Marshall Skule), Jacob Helmrick (son of Jodie and Kurt), Paul (friend of Janice Healy)

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For the Youth Ministry Search team as they seek to find a new Youth Minister by the fall, that they may think creatively about future ministry possibilities with our young people
- For the Church Van Campaign, that we may quickly raise enough funds to purchase a used 15 passenger van
- For the Wisconsin Conference UCC Annual Meeting that was held this past week virtually, that we may all grow in love and service
- For Carol Merriman who will be helping at Moon Beach Camp and Tim Bylander who will be going to Moon Beach for a Work Camp, we are blessed by your dedication to our camping program
- For our Trustees who cleaned the church inside and outside these past two Saturdays and for all who helped in this endeavor
- For our incredibly faithful and flexible musicians, webteam and deacons who are willing to put in the extra work each week for worship
- For those who continue to support our church's ministry with their tithes, offerings and gifts--you are all a blessing

Prayers for our World:

- For peace and resolution to centuries of problems in Israel and Palestine, come Holy Spirit
- For those at RFHS going to prom—hallelujah you can go this year!
- For those trying to be vaccinated and those who already have, that we may continue to act safely
- For police officers who are struggling with so many expectations
- For students gearing up for exams, the last days of school and grad parties—may you finish strong!
- For those in the military, especially for Jean Smith's grandson Jake who leaves for an overseas deployment
- For our fractured nation, that we may find ways to come together and solve our real problems

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

- For Lois Hall, the 103 year old sister of Polly Wymer who died recently, may she join the saints in heaven
- For Catherine Engstrom and Steve Papp who are the proud parents of Margaret Jean Papp born April 29 at 7 pounds 5 ounces and 20.5 inches long in Hudson with happy siblings Brandon, Wes and Trudy—may she grow in love and trust
- For Carole and Tim Hoopman who celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on May 7 and Duane and Mary Church who celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary on May 9
- For Mike Noreen, member of our church and conservation officer for the City of River Falls who has made River Falls second in the nation in its use of renewable energy.
- For Sawyer Sitz, son of Heather and Dan Sitz to be baptized on June 20 and Weston Fuller, son Kahla and Farnum Fuller to be baptized on June 27—that they may grow in grace and years
- For Marshall Skule who has created a pouring urn to be used to inter ashes in our new Memorial Garden
- For the over 155 million people vaccinated so far in this country, thanks be to God

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Amanda, sister-in-law of Lori Johnson and wife of Mike, who died recently and whose memorial service was in early May, that they may receive God's comfort
- For the family of Jenny Sperling who died recently at Comforts of Home and whose funeral was recently led by Pastor Roger Kampstra, and whose interment in Webster will be in early June, that she may rest in peace
- For the family of Phyllis Huber who will be interred at St. Paul's UCC cemetery on Saturday, May 15 at 2pm
- For those in mourning, including the Wymer, Williams, Filkins, Reilly, Zeman and Greub families, as well as all those who have died from Covid-19

If you have people you wish to include on our prayer list, please contact the church office or one of the pastors.

New Church Van Needed

Perhaps the most hopeful sign we are nearing the end of the pandemic is the need for a new church van. You may recall that when the pandemic began we sold our old church van (an aging 2004 Ford Econoline 15 passenger van that was rusting and had high mileage) rather than have it sit unused for a year. As we anticipate a more normal fall, we will need a church van to continue our current ministries. Below please find some details about the Church Van Campaign.

Q: Do we really need a church van?

A: Yes! In fact Stacy says on Wednesday afternoons when we pick up kids for Wednesday School, we could use two church vans! The church van is used to pick up Wednesday Schoolers, take our youth on trips to Feed My Starving Children, retreats, and monthly trips. The van is driven back and forth to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi for our annual mission trips saving us many dollars in baggage fees. We also hope to resume senior lunch trips in the fall.

Q: What kind of van are we looking for?

A: Church Council has authorized a small team to research options for a used 15 passenger van that is safe, has about 50,000 miles on it and will be easy for both youth and seniors to enter and exit. Right now we are looking at both Sprinters and Transits in the used car markets.

Q: Can we get an electric or hybrid church van?

A: After carefully looking into this option, the short answer is no. While there are some exciting new possibilities for hybrid vans, they would have to be bought new which would double our price. An all electric van would not allow us to use it on trips to Back Bay.

Q: How much will it cost?

A: We estimate it will cost between \$30—32,000 dollars used. The used car market is really hot now, driving up costs so we are starting a Church Van Campaign to raise \$32,000 to purchase a slightly used church van.

Q: When will we get it?

A: When we raise the money! We hope we can quickly raise the money in the next 8 weeks so we can purchase it, have it lettered with our church name and be ready for us by September. Please make checks out to 'Church Van Campaign.' You can also make donations on the church website under the 'give' option. No gift is too big or too small!

**Church Van Fund
\$32,000 Goal!**

