

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN

May 30, 2021

"Trinity Sunday"

9:30 am

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: O come let us join together to worship God!

P: **Creator, Holy One, Sovereign God, Maker of heaven and earth.**

L: Let us worship God!

P: **Jesus Christ, God-with-us, Savior, Brother, Lord.**

L: Let us worship God!

P: **Holy Spirit, Tongues of fire, a rushing wind, a still, small voice.**

L: God is holy, three-in-one!

All: **O Come let us join together to worship the God who leads us into life!**

SONG

"Morning Has Broken"

*Morning has broken like the first morning, blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning! Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!*

*Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven, like the few dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden, sprung in completeness where his feet pass.*

*Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning, God's recreation of the new day!*

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Loving God, we praise you that you sent Jesus not to condemn the world, but to save it and us. As we worship today, touch our hearts and our imaginations, that we may abide in you and live in care toward the world you love in Jesus Christ. Glory be to you, God, Fountain of Love, Word of Truth, Spirit of Power. Amen.

PSALM 29

L: Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

P: **Ascribe to the LORD the glory of God's name; worship the LORD in holy splendor.**

L: The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over mighty waters.

P: **The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.**

L: The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

P: **He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.**

L: The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

P: **The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

L: The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, "Glory!"

P: **The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.**

L: May the LORD give strength to his people!

P: **May the LORD bless God's people with peace!**

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 2:43-47

HOMILY

Rev. Chris Myers

SONG

"This is My Father's World"

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears all nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres. This is my Father's world; I rest me in the thought of rocks and trees, of skies and seas – his hand the wonders wrought.

This is our Father's world; O let us not forget that though the wrong is great and strong, God is the ruler yet. He trusts us with his world, to keep it clean and fair – all earth and trees, all skies and seas, all creatures everywhere.

This is my Father's world; he shines in all that's fair; in the rustling grass I hear him pass, he speaks to me everywhere. This is my Father's world; why should my heart be sad? The Lord is King, let heaven ring! God reigns; let earth be glad!

STATEMENT OF FAITH (taken from the New Zealand Church)

You, O God, are supreme and holy. You create our world and give us life.

Your purpose overarches everything we do. You have always been with us.

You are God.

You, O God, are infinitely generous, good beyond all measure.

You came to us before we came to you.

You have revealed and proved your love for us in Jesus Christ, who lived and died and rose again. You are with us now.

You are God.

You, O God, are Holy Spirit. You empower us to be your gospel in the world.

You reconcile and hear; you overcome death. You are our God. We worship you.

Amen.

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

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.

MEMORIAL GARDEN DEDICATION

L: As the earth puts forth its fruit, and buds in a garden burst forth into flower, so shall our God make praise blossom from all the people. Let us pray. God our Creator, at the dawn of creation you placed your children in a garden and walked with them in the cool of the day:

P: **Be present with us as we walk in this garden and open our eyes to the beauty of your creation.**

L: Jesus, our Companion, on many occasions you withdrew from your friends to a garden for quiet and refreshment:

P: **Be present with all who come to meet You in this place, and teach them your ways.**

L: Jesus, our Redeemer, you suffered anguish and betrayal in a garden, praying that 'this cup shall pass.'

P: **Be present with all who come in sorrow and pain to this place, and give them the grace of your redeeming love.**

L: Jesus our Savior, after your crucifixion your body was laid in a tomb in a garden, and there you first revealed yourself to your friends after you rose from the dead:

P: **Be present with those who come to this place when it seems that all is lost, and awaken them to new life by your resurrection power.**

L: Holy Spirit, who breathes new life into our world and lives:

P: **Be present with all who come to this place seeking direction and strength. Fill their hearts with your faith, grace them with your peace and send them forth with the love of Jesus.**

All: **We now dedicate this Memorial Garden to the Glory of God, to the memory of all the saints who lives will be honored here, and to the hope that it will forever be a place of hope and healing. Amen.**

SONG

"Bind Us Together"

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together with cords that cannot be broken.

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together, Lord, bind us together in love.

There is only one God, there is only one King;

There is only one body, that is why we sing.

*BLESSING

POSTLUDE



SCRIPTURE LESSON: Acts 2:43-47

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Worship participants for this week:

Audio/Visual: Jeff Hoffman, Andy Myers, Virgil Jensen
Music: Natalie Nelson, Marsha Pearson, David Reilly
Preacher: Rev. Chris Myers

Treasurer's Report

	<u>May 23, 2021</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,290	\$ 245,420
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,262	\$ 194,502

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

First Congregational Church Memorial Garden - Uses our existing garden as a place to scatter or bury the cremains of our church folks. A plaque and Memorial Book will be created which will have the names and dates (birth and death) of the people interred there. The Memorial Garden concept was approved by the Church Council at its December meeting and at the church Annual Meeting on February 7, 2021. The vision of the Memorial Garden is to provide a peaceful, natural and faithful way to ensure a caring disposition for the cremated remains of the saints of the church. The policies and procedures of the Memorial Garden are to be established by the Memorial Garden Committee. The location of the Memorial garden was chosen to be a place of beauty, meditation, and gratitude.

General Guidelines for Use of the Memorial Garden

- The dignity and integrity of the Memorial Garden will be maintained by the Memorial Garden committee
- The Memorial Garden will be available to all former & present members of the church and their families.
- Families will inter the ashes of the deceased in the Memorial Garden at the spaces designated with no permanent containers or markers allowed.
- Families may choose from an approved list of plants and bulbs that will mark each spot.
- Families are encouraged to provide the full names, dates, obituaries, and a picture of each person which will be maintained in a Memorial Book located in the church office.
- A modest fee of \$300 will be charged for each cremation that would go to help maintain the garden, create a plaque with each person's name and a Memorial Book.
- The church has a pouring urn so that families can go directly from the Memorial Service in the sanctuary to the church Memorial Garden to inter the ashes.
- In the event the church closes or moves, the church has purchased a cemetery plot at Greenwood Cemetery so we can move remains and the plaques.
- Current Memorial Committee Members include Lu Lueck, JoAnne Friedell, Susan Walden, Pastor Chris.

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.

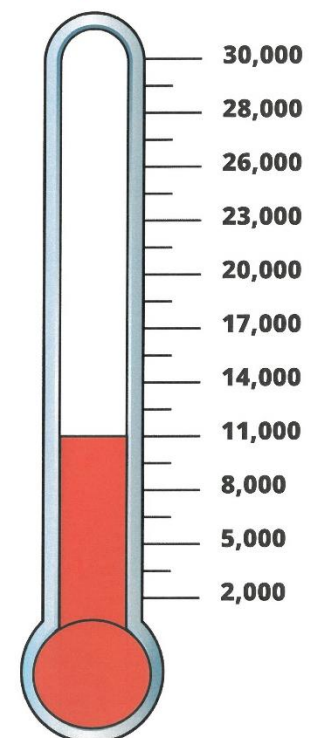
Q: How much will it cost?

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 write 'Church Van Campaign' in the memo. 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!**



Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Those who are ill or recovering:

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), Jodi (sister of Lori Johnson), Jackie Nesvig (sister of Marshall Skule), Dan (son of Betsy and Tom Westerhaus), Raelle, Jeff and Kim Jorae, Samuel (grandson of Jan and Glenn Hansen)

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For those who will rest in and enjoy our new Memorial Garden, may it kindle peace, faith and joy
- For those graduating from High School this year including...Ethan Cernohous, Nyssa George, Dennis Grisar, Zachary Johnson, Zachary Martin, Madelyn Morrow, Meridith Okal, Sophia Okal, Ellen Rayne, Kimberly Swanson, Erin Syverson, Olivia Vanasse
- 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 Carol Merriman who will be helping at Moon Beach Camp this summer and Tim Bylander who helped at the Moon Beach Work Camp, we are blessed by your dedication to our camping program
- For those to be vaccinated here at church on Wednesday, June 2 from 5-7pm, that it may speed our return to normal
- 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:

- On this Memorial Day Weekend, let us remember those who have died in the service of their nation
- For peace and resolution to the intractable problems of our world, come Holy Spirit
- For an end to gun violence and the lives it destroys
- 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
- That justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (Amos 5:24)
- For students gearing up for exams, the last days of school and grad parties—may you finish strong!
- For our fractured nation, that we may find ways to come together and solve our real problems

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

- For the Memorial Garden Committee (Lu Lueck, Marshall Skule, Susan Walden, JoAnne Friedell and Pastor Chris) who took the idea of a beautiful place for the saints of our church to rest and made it a reality—God bless you
- 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 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 Tim Bylander who is single handedly renovating the lower level bathroom—it looks mighty fine
- For the over 167 million people vaccinated so far in this country, thanks be to God

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For Paul (friend of Janice Healy) who died recently
- 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 those in mourning, including the Larson, Wymer, and Reilly 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.