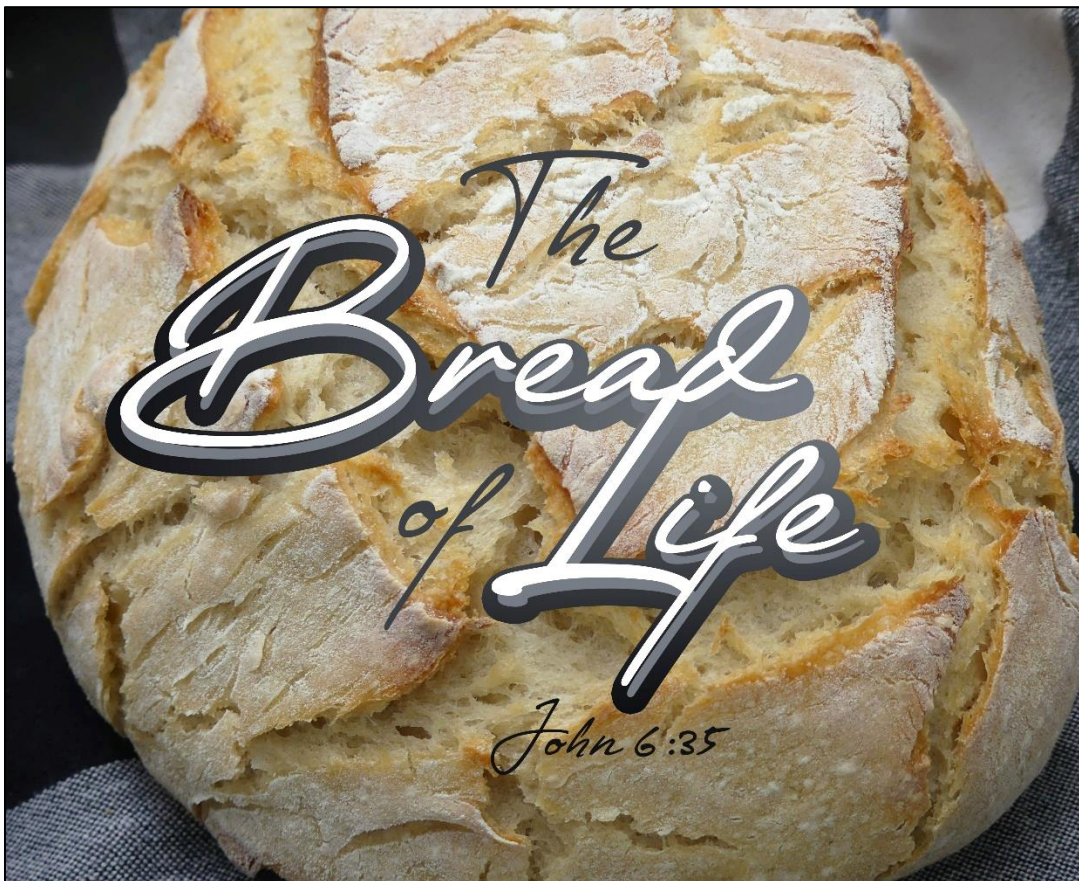


**First Congregational
United Church of Christ
River Falls, Wisconsin**

August 1, 2021



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN

August 1, 2021

"Tenth Sunday after Pentecost"

9:30 am

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Come let us gather.

P: **From home and office, playground and classroom.**

L: Come let us eat.

P: **Around Christ's one table open to all.**

L: Come let us drink.

P: **From the cup of blessing that will strengthen us.**

L: Come let us give thanks.

P: **For what God has done for us and continues to do in the world today.**

All: **Come let us gather for worship and be fed at Christ's table.**

HYMN

"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms"

Congregation join on refrain:

***Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms,
Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.***

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Grace and God of Glory, **we are thankful for your abiding presence here and in our lives. Even when we have done something to displease you, you invite us to your table to partake of a banquet only you can host. With a sense of humility, we accept your generous hospitality. We are grateful for the Word and the meal that sustain us like no other. Renewed and strengthened by the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, we will strive to share your hospitality and grace with all we encounter this week and beyond. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: Friends, hear this good news. Jesus Christ is our peace.

P: **His power is unequalled, his grace is unrestrained, his strength is steadfast, and his embrace is sufficient to carry all that we are and hope to be.**

L: Friends, let us believe and live the good news!

P: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and set free. Thanks be to God!**

L: The peace of the Lord be with you.

P: **And also with you.**

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

(Please greet one another with signs of peace)

***GLORIA**

“Love is flowing”

*Love is flowing: love is flowing, love is flowing from the fountain of life;
Love is flowing: love is flowing, love is flowing from the fountain of life.*

*Peace is pouring: peace is pouring, peace is pouring from the fountain of life.
Peace is pouring: peace is pouring, peace is pouring from the fountain of life.*

*Grace is flooding: grace is flooding, grace is flooding from the fountain of life.
Grace is flooding: grace is flooding, grace is flooding from the fountain of life.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Ephesians 4:1-5

PSALM 146:1-10

R: Lord, come and save us. Lord, come and save us. Lord, come and save us.

L: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

P: **I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

L: Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help.

P: **When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish. R**

L: Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;

P: **Who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.**

L: The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

P: **The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**

L: The LORD watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

P: **The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD! R**

GOSPEL LESSON

John 6:24-35

HOMILY

Rev. Chris Myers

HYMN

“Lead Me, Guide Me”

Congregation join on refrain:

*Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if you lead me, I cannot stray.
Lord, let me walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.*

***STATEMENT OF FAITH (World Council of Churches)**

I believe in the living God, the Maker of all humankind who creates and sustains the universe in power and in love.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God incarnate on earth, who showed us by his words and work, suffering with others, conquest of death, what human life ought to be and what God is like.

I believe that the Spirit of God is present with us now and always, and can be experienced in prayer, in forgiveness, in the Word, the Sacraments, the community of the Church and all that we do. Amen.

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

Holy God ...Come and feed us.

...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.

THE COMMUNION

(All Christians, regardless of denomination, tradition or age are welcome at the table of our Lord.)

The Invitation to the Supper

L: Sister and Brothers in Christ, this is the table where our Savior Jesus Christ wants to feed us on the Bread of Life. Let us feast on his grace that forgives us. Let us feast on his peace that calms us. Let us feast on his love that frees us. Come just as you are, and be fed by him.

The Great Thanksgiving

L: The Lord be with you.

P: **And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

P: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

L: We offer you praise, ...

The Words of Institution

L: As together we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Prayer of Consecration

Distribution of the Elements

Hymns during the distribution of the elements:

“Taste and See”

Congregation join on refrain:

***Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord,
O taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.***

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

Congregation join on refrain:

***When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.***

Prayer of Thanksgiving

All: We give you thanks, Almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN

“Bread for the Journey”

Congregation join on refrain:

***Give us bread for the journey, give us bread.
Give us bread for the journey, give us bread.
When our legs are getting heavy, and we’re hanging down our heads,
Give us bread for the journey, give us bread.***

***BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

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Peaches: 450 boxes of sun-ripened Washington state peaches are ordered and soon should be on their way. We anticipate their arrival at church this coming Thursday with pickup times Thursday night, Friday, and Saturday. We will send out an all church email when they arrive and will need helpers to unload the truck on Thursday when it arrives. Stay tuned and get ready!

Tools for Schools: Sign up to help on Monday and Tuesday August 16 & 17. Please also bring any school supplies to church by Sunday, August 8. Checks can be made out to the church marked ‘Tools for Schools’ in the memo. Over 300 local children will benefit from this ministry.

Van: A new church van is ordered! Thank you for your support. Any extra funds will be used to purchase new booster seats for Wednesday School and detail the church name on the van. We hope to have a dedication in the fall.

Worship participants for this week:

Audio/Visual: Jeff Hoffman
Music: Jamie Mills, Marsha Pearson, David Reilly
Liturgist: Traci Hagberg
Coffee Fellowship: Jensen Family
Welcomer: Laura Miller
Trustee: Allen Barnes
Preacher: Rev. Chris Myers

Upcoming Events

Mon., Aug 2	5:00 pm	Endowment Grant Committee Meeting
Tues., Aug 3	9:00 am	Vacation Bible School
	9:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall and Zoom
Wed., Aug 4	9:00 am	Vacation Bible School
Thurs., Aug 5	9:00 am	Vacation Bible School
	9:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall and Zoom
Sun., Aug 8	9:30 am	In-Person Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall
	11:00 am	WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM

Treasurer's Report

	<u>July 25, 2021</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,202	\$ 302,556
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,262	\$ 277,860

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:

Augie (friend of Rose Rude), Peg Thompson, Roger Hirstein, Jim, Sam (grandson of Jan and Glenn Hansen), Barbara Stephens, Bernie Van Osdale, Wendy MacDougall (wife of our Association Minister Rob), Troy Veith, Edna (friend of the Danielsons and Petersons)

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For our VBS program which starts this week, that it may be a time of growth, connection, and renewal
- For all those collecting school supplies through Tools for School, that it may be a blessing to our local community
- For the Among Friends program as they plan their October 5 re-opening, come Holy Spirit
- For our choir as it meets for a backyard party on August 11, and summer choir on August 22
- For Coffee Fellowship Hosts, welcomers and liturgists who help enhance our Sunday morning
- 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 a safe and wonderful summer in Olympics in Tokyo
- For the gift of rain this past week for farmers and gardens enduring a drought
- For peace and resolution to the intractable problems of our world, come Holy Spirit
- For those who are not vaccinated and getting sick from the Delta variant, please talk to your doctor
- For an end to gun violence and the lives it destroys
- For renters who are worried about paying their rent and landlords wondering how they can maintain their properties

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

- For the gift of bread that nourishes our bodies, and communion that feeds our souls
- For VBS and the way it brings together so many people in creative, intergenerational ways
- For not just one but two new Youth Ministers—Alex and Sarah Plum who begin in late August—thanks be to God!
- For Bailey Plackner who is recently engaged to Alex Boyer and are planning a July 2022 wedding, may you grow in love
- For successfully raising money for a new church van!
- For Jenna Lawrence confirmed on June 27 and Cheyenne Wilson to be confirmed on August 15 (due to Covid), that they may grow in the faith and love of Jesus
- For the nearly 190 million people vaccinated so far in this country, thanks be to God

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Dick Reilly who died in May and whose graveside service was Saturday, July 31 at 10am, may he rest from his labors
- For the families of Gus de Souza and Wayne and Marian Wolfe who will be interred in the church Memorial Garden on Thursday, August 12 at 10:30 am, that they may rest in a beautiful and welcome environment
- For those in mourning including the families of Mark Mahoney, John Hyland and Barb Greub, that they may receive the peace of Christ
- For the 611,000 Americans and over 4 million worldwide who have died of Covid, may they not have died in vain

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

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Ephesians 4:1-5

I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

GOSPEL LESSON: John 6:24-35

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.