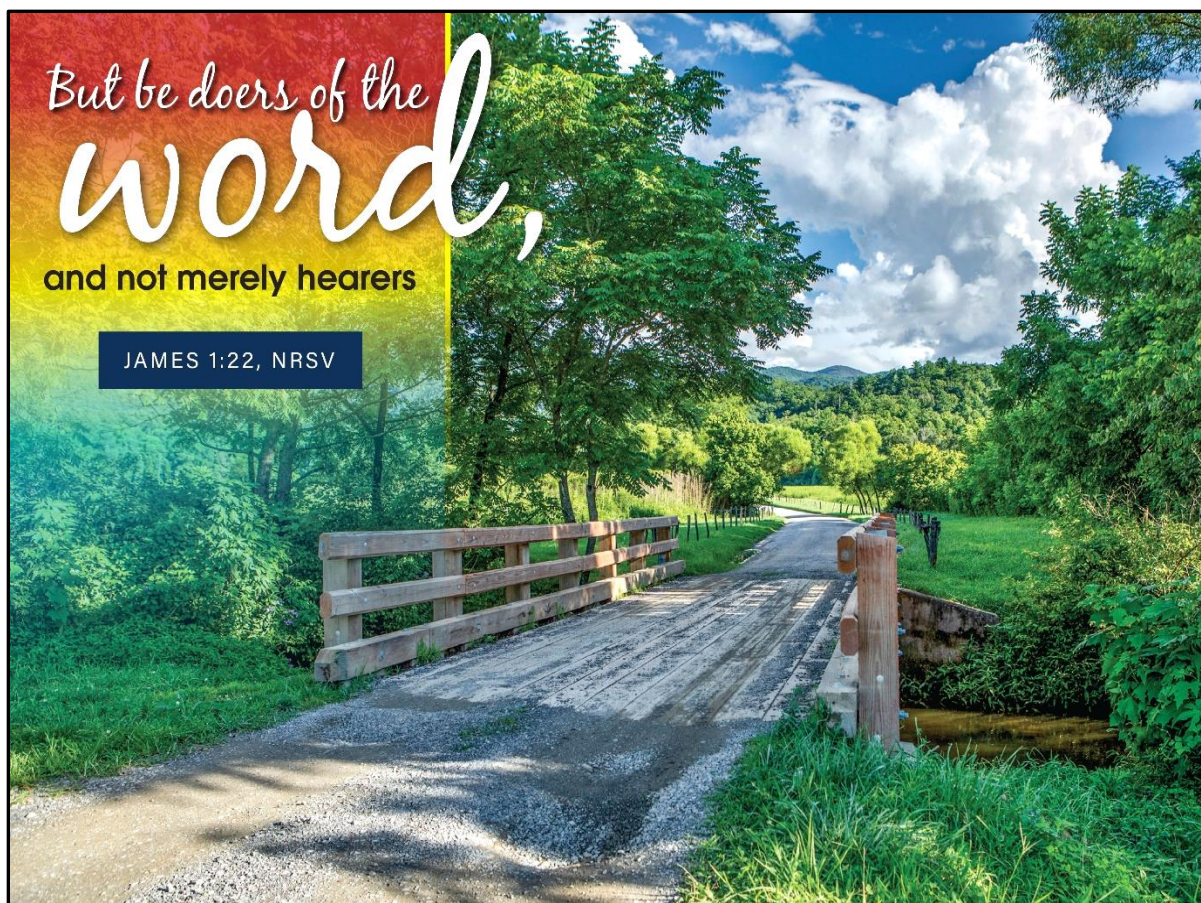


**First Congregational
United Church of Christ
River Falls, Wisconsin**

August 29, 2021



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN**

August 29, 2021

"Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost"

9:30 am

"While his lone letter had what it took to be included in the New Testament, James got tucked in near the end with his brothers Peter and John. Like most last pick players, they don't get into the game very often. They just sit and watch Paul hit home runs."

~Barbara Brown Taylor

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Holy God, calm our restless spirits, that we might truly worship you.

P: **Lift our fears, our worldly concerns, our disappointments from our hearts and help us praise you.**

L: Open our hearts, our spirits to the indwelling of your Spirit.

P: **Open our mouths and our minds, our voices and our ears to you and you alone.**

L: Come, let us be filled with the Spirit of the Living God.

P: **Let us with great joy and thanksgiving worship the Lord our God!**

All: **And let our spirits sing of life and love!**

HYMN

"I Sing the Mighty Power of God"

***I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise.
That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies.***

***I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;
The moon shines full at God's command, and all the stars obey.***

***I sing the goodness of our God that filled the earth with food;
God formed the creatures with a word, and then pronounced them good.
Oh, how your wonders are displayed, wher-e'er I turn my eye;
If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky!***

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: Friends, receive God's forgiveness.

P: **May God's love set you free this day and always. Amen.**

L: The peace of Christ be with you all.

P: **And also with you.**

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

(Please greet one another with signs of peace)

*GLORIA (Repeat)

Shout for joy, joy, joy; Shout for joy, joy, joy!

God is love, God is light, God is everlasting!

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Give Me Jesus"

Sarah Plum

PSALM 46

R The God of hosts is with us, therefore we will not fear.

L: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

P: **We will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.**

L: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

P: **God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns. R**

L: The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; God speaks, the earth melts.

P: **The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Come, behold the works of the LORD; see what desolations God has brought on the earth.**

L: God makes wars cease to the end of the earth; God breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; God burns the shields with fire.

P: **Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth."**

All: **The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. R**

SCRIPTURE READING

James 1:22-26; 2:14-17

HOMILY

Rev. Dave Ostendorf

HYMN

“Be Doers of the Word of God”

*Be doers of the word of God,
Not simply those who hear.
Be ones who look into God's word,
Obey, and persevere.
Be quick to listen, slow to speak,
And slow to anger, too.
Put wrath aside; instead, be meek
And let God work in you.*

*O Christ, you save us by God's grace
From having to obey.
Then freed to love, we can embrace
A life that seeks your way.
May we be doers of the word;
May faith shine through our deeds;
And as we seek to trust in God,
May ethics follow creeds.*

***STATEMENT OF FAITH – United Church of Canada**

L: We are not alone, we live in God's world.

P: We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

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

...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.

HYMN

“Guide My Feet”

Congregation join on refrain:

For I don't want to run this race in vain.

***COMMISSIONING**

May God bless you and keep you this day, this week, and always. May God watch over you, lead you, guide you. May God lift your spirit, strengthen your faith, be with you as you live and practice your faith. May God give you strong hands endless resolve, and deep courage to do God's work! **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

Note about offering: During the pandemic we are not passing the offering plate. We thankfully receive your gifts, tithes and offerings in the offering plate on the back table. Your generosity is the engine that powers our church community. Thank you.

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Worship participants for this week:

<i>Audio/Visual:</i>	<i>Jeff Hoffman</i>
<i>Music:</i>	<i>Sarah Plum, David Reilly</i>
<i>Organist:</i>	<i>Terry Mithun</i>
<i>Liturgist:</i>	<i>Steven Koecher</i>
<i>Ushers:</i>	<i>Karen Lloyd, Marshall Skule</i>
<i>Coffee Fellowship:</i>	<i>Kimberly Swanson</i>
<i>Welcomer:</i>	<i>Marie Roe</i>
<i>Trustee:</i>	<i>Jeff Hoffman</i>
<i>Preacher:</i>	<i>Rev. Dave Ostendorf</i>

*Altar table flowers are given by Traci Hagberg
in memory of Ted Hagberg.*

Upcoming Events

Tues., Aug 31	9:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall and Zoom
Wed., Sept 1	6:00 pm	Jubilee Ringers
	7:00 pm	Chancel Choir
Thurs., Sept 2	9:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall and Zoom
Sun., Sept 5	9:30 am	In-Person Worship Service in the Fellowship Hall and Livestream
	10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall
	11:00 am	WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM
Mon., Sept 6	Labor Day – Church Office Closed	

New Church App: The church has a new mobile phone app. You can download it from the church website or by scanning the QR Code found on a flyer on the sign-up table and Facebook.

Treasurer's Report

	<u>Aug 22, 2021</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,561	\$ 328,824
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,262	\$ 314,908

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, Wendy MacDougall (wife of our Association Minister Rob), Troy Veith, Edna (friend of the Danielsons and Petersons), Bill Olson, Rosalie Harper (cousin on JoAnn Lentz), Carolyn Larrabee, Donna Moseman, Jake, Tom (friend of Barb Stephens), Pat (friend of Jean Smith), Don Larson

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For our church softball team and their first place win in the church softball league tournament!
- For all our church ministries getting ready for the fall, may God guide them as they seek to find creative and faithful ways to gather
- For all who helped with our peach fundraiser which provides over \$2300 to our Youth Ministry—God bless you!
- For all those who received 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 Coffee Fellowship Hosts, welcomers and liturgists who help enhance our Sunday morning
- For Gus de Souza and Wayne and Marian Wolfe who returned home and were recently interred in the Church Memorial Garden, may they rest from their labors
- 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 teachers and kids getting ready for school, may they have a much better year
- For our military at the airport in Kabul and their families, may God watch over them
- For the people of Afghanistan, especially its women
- For the people of Tennessee cleaning up after 17 inches of rain
- For our troubled creation as climate change rears its ugly head, that we may collectively change our behavior
- For those fighting forest fires, may God speed their work
- 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 Matthew Bylander who graduates from Army Prime Power School August 26 and who will be deployed to Saudi Arabia, thank you for your service
- For the birth of Thomas Jay Crosby first grandson to Allen and Dianne Barnes (11pounds!), may he bring great joy
- For our Three Peach Queens—Deb Hoffman, Laura Miller and Diane Welsh who helped organize and distribute all our peaches!
- For the weekly Mini Farmers Market in our Fellowship Hall when people (Roland Roe and others) bring in their fresh veggies for us to enjoy, bless you
- For the birth of Ella Suzanne Middlestaedt, new and first grandchild to Ann and Scott Jameson
- For not just one but two new Youth Ministers—Alex and Sarah Plum who began in late August—thanks be to God!
- For Bailey Plackner who is recently engaged to Alex Boyer & is planning a July 2022 wedding, may you grow in love
- 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 those in mourning including the families of Mark Mahoney, John Hyland and Barb Greub, that they may receive the peace of Christ
- For the 630,000 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 READING: James 1:22-26; 2:14-17

But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.