

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

**November 21, 2021**



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

November 21, 2021

*Christ the King/Reign of Christ*

10:00 am

<b>Gathering</b>
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“If you’re living for yourself, spending all your money on yourself, striving for power, focusing on your success and your reputation, you may be having a wonderful party, but according to the Bible, that kingdom is going to be inverted. The days of that kingdom are numbered.” - Timothy Keller, *King's Cross*

<p>Welcome to our guests who are visiting with us today! Join us for coffee in the Fellowship Hall following the 10:00 worship service.</p>	<p><i>No matter who you are. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!</i></p> <p><i>As Jesus’ courageous disciples, living God’s grace, we strive to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Worship faithfully</i></li><li>- <i>Welcome openly</i></li><li>- <i>Grow spiritually</i></li><li>- <i>Care passionately</i></li><li>- <i>Serve generously</i></li></ul>
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- The Nursery is available for young children.
- Church Mouse activity bags are available for children.
- Large print bulletins and hearing-impaired devices are available from the ushers.
  - Please stand when noted by the \*
- Congregation responses are in bold.



## GATHERING MUSIC

## WELCOME

### CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 100)

**L:** Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

**P:** **Worship the Lord with gladness; come into God’s presence with singing.**

**L:** Know that the Lord is God. God made us, and we are God’s people.

**P:** **Enter God’s house with thanksgiving and praise.**

**L:** Thank God and bless God’s holy name.

**P:** **The Lord is good. God’s love is steadfast and endures forever.**

**L:** God’s faithfulness knows no boundary, no end.

**All:** **Come let us sing our thanks and praise!**

*Crown Him With Many Crowns*



1. Crown him with man - y crowns, the Lamb up - on his throne.  
 2. Crown him the Lord of life, who tri-umphed o'er the grave,  
 3. Crown him the Lord of peace, whose power a scep - ter sways  
 4. Crown him the Lord of love; be - hold his hands and side,



Hark! how the heaven-ly an-them drowns all mu-sic but its own.  
 and rose vic - to-rious in the strife for those he came to save.  
 from pole to pole, that wars may cease, and all be prayer and praise.  
 those wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, in beau-ty glo - ri - fied.



A - wake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,  
 His glo - ries now we sing, who died, and rose on high,  
 His reign shall know no end, and round his pierc - ed feet  
 All hail, Re-deem-er, hail! For thou hast died for me;



and hail him as thy match-less King through all e - ter - ni - ty.  
 who died, e - ter - nal life to bring, and lives that death may die.  
 fair flowers of par - a - dise ex-extend their fra-grance ev - er sweet.  
 thy praise and glo - ry shall not fail through-out e - ter - ni - ty.



### **\*OPENING PRAYER**

Beckoning God, **you invite us to walk the narrow path and to live lives worthy of the gospel. Yet how often we hold a grudge, sustain a pout, harbor a complaint. Too often we are preoccupied with our hurts and absorbed in the little injustices done to us. We neglect our high calling to visit the sick, care for the poor, feed the hungry, confront the oppressors and work for the new reign of God.**

**Empowering God, open our eyes and strengthen our wills to care for the ill, to shelter the homeless and provide security for the abused, to feed the hungry and to pester those in control to care for the well-being of all their citizens. Let our lives be worthy of Christ the King, the Prince of Peace, the Redeemer of us all. Amen.**

### **\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

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

**P: God has rescued us from the power of darkness.**

**L: And in Jesus Christ, God has come and shown us the way to abundant life here and now.**

**P: Let us live our lives in this light.**

**L: In Christ we are forgiven!**

**P: Thanks be to God!**

**L: May the peace of the Lord be with you all.**

**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.***

***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.***

<b>Hearing the Word</b>
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### **SCRIPTURE LESSON**

**Revelation 1:4b-8**

## PSALM 93

**R** Capo 1 D *mp* F#7 Bsus<sup>2</sup> Bm Bm<sup>7</sup> Em A<sup>7</sup> Dsus<sup>4</sup> D

Ho - ly One, we thank you for your sav - ing po - wer.

**L:** The LORD is king, robed in majesty; the LORD is girded with strength.

**P:** **God has established the world; it shall never be moved;**

**L:** Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.

**P:** **The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their roaring.**

**L:** More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the LORD!

**P:** **Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O LORD, forevermore. R**

**TIME WITH CHILDREN**

**Rev. Chris Myers**

### SONG OF BLESSING

*He's got the whole world in his hands, He's got the whole wide world in his hands,  
He's got the whole world in his hands, He's got the whole world in his hands.*

*He's got you and me, sister, in his hands, He's got you and me, brother, in his hands,  
He's got everybody in his hands, He's got the whole world in his hands.*

### Celebrating the Meal

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

#### *The Invitation to the Meal*

**L:** Come to the table of Christ our King who came to rule by serving, who overcame hate by loving, and who invites young and old, rich and poor to feast at his table.

#### *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, Almighty God, ...

## ***The Words of Institution***

**L:** Together we rejoice in this holy meal as we remember 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:*

## ***Be Thou My Vision***

## ***I'll Fly Away***

*Congregation join on refrain:*

The musical score is written for a piano accompaniment in G major (one sharp). It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system is labeled 'Refrain' and includes the lyrics: 'I'll fly a-way, O glo-ry, I'll fly a-way; in the morn-ing;'. The second system includes the lyrics: 'When I die, hal-le - lu - jah, by and by, I'll fly a-way. fly a-way, fly a-way.' Chord symbols (G, G7, C, D7) are placed above the treble staff to indicate the harmonic structure.

## ***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.

**SONG** (Children preschool through grade 8 leave for Sunday School.)

***This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.***

***Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine, Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine, Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.***

Proclaiming the Word
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**GOSPEL LESSON**

**John 18:33-38**

**SERMON**

**Rev. Chris Myers**

**\*HYMN**

*Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing*

**#303**

**\*STATEMENT OF FAITH – African Creed**

**We believe in the one High God, who out of love created the beautiful world and everything good in it. God created the human person for happiness in the world. God loves the world and every nation and tribe on the earth. We have known this High God in the darkness, and now we know God in the light.**

**God promised in the Scriptures to save the world and all the nations and tribes. We believe that God kept all promises by sending Jesus Christ, a person in the flesh, a Jew by tribe, born poor in a little village, who left his home and was always on safari doing good, curing people by the power of God, teaching about God and humankind, showing that the meaning of religion is love. Jesus was rejected by his people, tortured and nailed hands and feet to a cross, and died. He lay buried in the grave, but the hyenas did not touch him, and on the third day, he rose from the grave.**

**We believe that all our sins are forgiven by God. We accept the gift of baptism and in the community of faith we live in ways of love and share the bread of life. We announce the good news to all people so long as God gives us breath. We believe that the Spirit is in the world and that God cares for us in life and in death. This we believe. Amen.**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*For the Beauty of the Earth*

**Jubilee Ringers**

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

Lord in your mercy... **Hear our prayer.**

**...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.**



## Sending

\*HYMN

### *Soon and Very Soon*



1. Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,
2. No more cry - in' there we are goin' to see the King,
3. No more dy - in' there we are goin' to see the King,
4. Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,



Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,  
No more cry - in' there we are goin' to see the King,  
No more dy - in' there we are goin' to see the King,  
Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,



Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,  
No more cry - in' there we are goin' to see the King,  
No more dy - in' there we are goin' to see the King,  
Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King, Hal-le -



lu - jah, Hal-le - lu - jah, we're goin' to see the King!



Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu -



jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah.



## \*BLESSING

## 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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### **Assisting in today's worship service are:**

<b>Liturgist:</b>	<i>Jean Smith</i>
<b>Coffee Fellowship:</b>	<i>Jean Smith</i>
<b>Deacons:</b>	<i>Karen Lloyd, Laura Anderson, Cindy Gandrud, Sheila Peterson</i>
<b>Welcomers:</b>	<i>Jean Smith, Sheila Peterson</i>
<b>Nursery:</b>	<i>Kahla Fuller</i>
<b>Organist:</b>	<i>Terry Mithun</i>
<b>Video Team:</b>	<i>Jeff Hoffman, Mike Stifter</i>
<b>Trustee:</b>	<i>Scott Nelson</i>
<b>Counters:</b>	<i>Jean Smith, Diane Welsh</i>
<b>Music Coordinator &amp; Bell Director:</b>	<i>Jamie Mills</i>
<b>Choir Director:</b>	<i>Sarah Plum</i>
<b>Church Moderator:</b>	<i>Joel Larsen</i>
<b>Office Administrator:</b>	<i>Missy Luedtke</i>
<b>Youth Pastors:</b>	<i>Alex and Sarah Plum</i>
<b>Minister for Community:</b>	<i>Rev. Dave Ostendorf</i>
<b>CE Minister:</b>	<i>Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers</i>
<b>Senior Pastor:</b>	<i>Rev. Chris Myers</i>

*Altar table flowers are given by David Reilly  
in memory of Ruth Reilly.*

### **Treasurer's Report**

	<u>Nov 14, 2021</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 11,097	\$ 411,233
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,262	\$ 426,052

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:**

Peg Thompson, Roger Hirstein, Jim, Wendy MacDougall (wife of our Association Minister Rob), Edna (friend of the Danielsons and Petersons), Rosalie Harper (cousin on JoAnn Lentz), Donna Moseman, Joan Hyland, Charles Hoffman (father of Jeff Hoffman), Tom (friend of Traci), Jean, Peter Kwong, Dirk Ficca, Neal Prochnow, Debi Bauer, Marjorie Faulks, David Lewis (friend of Jan Hansen)

**Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:**

- For our congregation as we dedicate our 2022 Financial Pledges, that together our generosity may empower the mission and ministry of our church in new and exciting ways
- For our faithful Wednesday night kitchen crew of Katy Kapaun, Evelyn Purdy, Susan Walden, Anna Anderson and Connor Rude—thanks for feeding us!
- For our church musicians, Marsha Pearson, Jamie Mills, Sarah Plum, Dave Reilly and others, who are preparing for Advent Evening Prayer and Christmas services, may they bring the hope and joy of the Christian faith back to us all
- 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 the over 100,000 people who have died from drug overdoses in the past year, may we do better
- For a safe and fruitful hunting season
- For our stressed out world, may we find the peace of Christ and the joy of faith
- For the 13,000 Afghani refugees at Fort McCoy, WI, that they may be strengthened in their journey
- For those meeting in Glasgow to help address our troubled creation as climate change rears its ugly head, that we may collectively change our behavior
- For the RFHS play Matilda, its cast, directors (including our own Sarah Plum), that it may nourish our battered souls

**Prayers of Thanksgiving:**

- For Peg Steintmetz who celebrates her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday this Sunday, November 21
- For those who shared their faith story as part of the Tell Me A Story segment this year including Scott Jameson, Marie Roe, George Beatty, Jill Paulson and Lee Lueck
- For Andy Krueger, Laura Miller, Dave Reilly, our church youth and the whole crew who served a fabulous Giving Thanks Meal last Sunday, what a gift!
- For the gift of Thanksgiving, that it may kindle generosity and gratefulness in each of us
- For Mason Meyer who celebrated his first communion last Sunday, that he may grow in faith
- For the gift of the Giving Tree and the families it will bless
- For the Shoebox Ministry to the men at Kinnic Rehab, that it may kindle joy and hope
- For our bell choir helping to lead worship today—may your notes kindle joy in our hearts

**For those grieving the loss of loved ones:**

- For Jean Hagberg, who died peacefully this past Thursday, may she rest in peace
- For Diane Crist's mother, Bonnie Mertens, who died at the age of 93, may she rest in faith
- For those mourning Judith Permann, Dorothy Friedl, Barb Wall and Jeff Peterson, may you not mourn alone
- For the 762,000 Americans and over 5 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.

**Christmas Shoebox Project:** The yoga group is again collecting items for the men at the Kinnic Drug & Alcohol Rehab Center in River Falls. We will fill the boxes and bags and deliver them to show that we all care! These shoeboxes contain socks, playing cards, puzzles, soap, toothpaste and many other items. The thick warm gloves have been a welcome addition as well as the nice warm hats! The new cribbage boards are also a great item the guys really enjoy. We will work with the Wednesday School group in decorating some Christmas bags as well as the older youth helping with wrapping the boxes. A list of items is available. Cash donations will be used to purchase any needed items. Thank you for your help. If you have questions, please contact Jean Smith at [jsmithler@yahoo.com](mailto:jsmithler@yahoo.com) or at 715-781-6880 or the church office.

**Angels on Earth Giving Tree:** If you would like to help some children have a better Christmas this year, please select an ornament from the tree and purchase a gift from their wish list. The unwrapped gift with the ornament needs to be at the church **no later than Thursday, December 9**. Please give the Gift Cards to someone in the church office. If you would like to make a cash donation instead, please send the check (made out to First Congregational Church with "AOE" in the memo line) or cash to the church office. Thank you for your generosity. If you have questions, please contact Diane Welsh (651-334-3128 or 715-386-6620) or the church office.

**The Advent Workshop:** The annual Advent Workshop for families will be held following Sunday School on **December 5**. The event will include a chance to make a variety of Christmas ornaments and simple snacks. This is a great family event. Please come and invite friends to join you! Please sign up on the table or online.

**Inquirer's Class:** Interested in learning more about our life and ministry at First Congregational? Wondering what membership of the church is all about? Come to the Inquirer's Class on **Tuesday, December 7, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm**. At this gathering you will meet church staff and leaders, meet other newcomers, and learn more about our life and ministry opportunities. Dessert and coffee are served and childcare is available. Please sign up on the table or online.

**Advent Evening Prayer:** Once again this Advent we will gather for Evening Prayer in the Sanctuary on Wednesday nights using our beloved Holden Evening Prayer. Join us on **Wednesday, December 1, 8 and 15 at 6:30 pm** for this half hour worship service. Confirmation, church intern and youth groups will join us for worship then go to class or youth group. Wednesday meals will be served in both 'in person' and 'to go' formats. There will be no Wednesday service on Wednesday, December 22. Our Wednesday Schedule in Advent will be:

3:45-5:15 pm	Wednesday School
5:15-6:00 pm	Family Meals
5:45-6:30 pm	Bell Practice
6:30-7:00 pm	Evening Prayer and beginning of Conf/Interns. Youth Group
7:00-7:30 pm	Second half of Confirmation/Interns/Youth Group
7:00-8:00 pm	Choir Practice

**Wednesday Meals:** Wednesday Meals will return December 1st.

**Poinsettias for Christmas Eve:** Order forms are on the sign-up table and are due by **December 19**.

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: Revelation 1:4b-8**

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Look! He is coming with the clouds;

every eye will see him,

even those who pierced him;

and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

**GOSPEL LESSON: John 18:33-38**

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” Pilate replied, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?” Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.” Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.” Pilate asked him, “What is truth?”