

# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

110 North Third Street, River Falls, WI 54022

715-425-2052 ■ [www.firstchurchrf.org](http://www.firstchurchrf.org)

April 15, 2022

*No matter who you are,  
no matter where you are  
on your spiritual journey,  
you are welcome here!*

As Jesus' courageous disciples,  
living God's grace, we strive to:

- Worship faithfully
- Welcome openly
- Grow spiritually
- Care passionately
- Serve generously



## Pastor's Page

Jane Goodall has a new book out, appropriately called, [The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times](#). In her book she tells this story.

It seems a month after the 9/11 attacks in New York City, workers were clearing away the debris of that horrible day when they found the remains of a Callery Pear tree. This poor tree was crushed between two blocks of concrete.

Its roots were broken, half its trunk was charred black. In fact there was only one living branch left on the whole tree. A recovery worker found it, asked that it not be sent to the dump, but given a chance to survive. So it was taken to the New York City Botanical Garden to see what they could do. There was little reason to believe that lifeless tree could be saved, but as Jane Goodall writes: whenever you give her a chance, nature returns, nature surprises you.

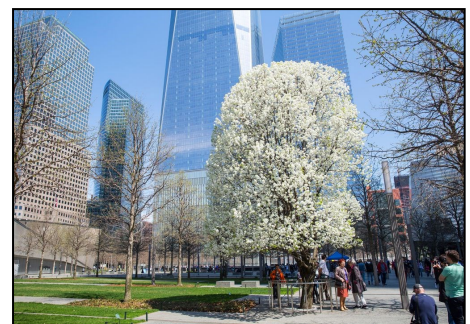
That charred tree not only survived, it thrived. In just seven years it grew 20 feet. It grew so much that it was re-planted at the 9/11 Memorial site and has come to be known as the Survivor Tree. You can see a picture of the Survivor Tree in full bloom in your bulletin today.

What makes this story even more powerful and appropriate on this Easter Sunday, is that every year seedlings from that tree are given to three communities that have endured unspeakable tragedy. Seedlings from that Survivor Tree are growing in Newtown, Connecticut outside Sandy Hook Elementary. Seedlings from that Survivor Tree are growing in Charleston, South Carolina, near Emmanuel AME church. Seedlings of the Survivor Tree

are growing in Pittsburg, near the Tree of Life Synagogue. Seedlings from that Survivor Tree are growing in Gulfport, Mississippi, where Hurricane Katrina washed over that community. And this year seedlings from the Survivor Tree are rumored to be heading to Ukraine.

What I find so powerful about this story, is not just that the tree survived, but that it keeps on giving, despite all the trauma. Despite all it has been through, it keeps on giving, it keeps on blessing others, it keeps on giving people hope. Hope that all the evil can somehow be overcome. Hope that violence will not have the last word. The Survivor Tree is a good image for us on this Easter of 2022, because you and I are survivors.

*(sermon extract from Easter  
Sunday sermon—you can watch  
the service on the church  
YouTube channel)*



## Pastor Dave Retirement Celebration

Join us on **Sunday, May 15** as we celebrate Pastor Dave Ostendorf's ministry among us. For the past 8 years as our Minister for Community and Outreach, Dave has helped us connect our faith to the larger world. He has organized the Learning Community and countless outreach and mission programs. As he retires from that position, we invite you

to join us for worship that day 10:00 am at which Dave will preach. Following worship there will be a presentation during Coffee Fellowship to honor him and his ministry. Please have any gifts for Dave into the church office by Wednesday, May 11. Please keep Dave and his wife Roz in your prayers as he prepares for this change. Please also keep our Church Council in your prayers as they seek to find qualified candidates to join our ministry team. And please join us as we celebrate Dave and his ministry among us Sunday, May 15.



### Beacon Gatherings

Beacons are lights set up high to guide and gather people. A beacon is a good image of our call in Matthew 5:15 to be a light that shines in the darkness. Or as that song we often sing around here reminds us - this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!

All church members and friends are to join us at one of four Beacon Gatherings in the Fellowship Hall. We need to regather together, to see, greet and eat with one another again. God is doing some amazing things in our faith community gifting us with opportunities. We have even created a new church video which will be premiered at these gatherings. We will also hear a brief presentation from the Church Finance Team about the upcoming Capital Campaign and ways you can participate in it. Refreshments will be served, and childcare is available. Sign up today and join us at the Beacon Gatherings!

Dates are: Tuesday, May 10 at 1:00 pm and 6:30 pm; Thursday, May 12 at 1:00 pm and 6:30 pm

Sign up link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-beacon>

## Sunday Schedule

8:30 am—Coffee ready!

8:45-9:45 am—Adult Forum

9:00-9:45 am—Music Practice

10:00 am—Worship and Sunday School in Sanctuary

10:30 am—Kids Preschool thru 8th Grade leave for Sunday School

11:00-11:30 am—Coffee Fellowship in Fellowship Hall

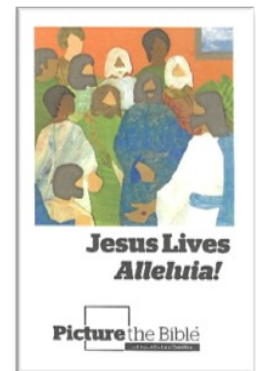
11:15 am—Sunday School Ends

We are worshipping in the sanctuary and no longer require masks. Please continue to pray for our church leadership as they seek to find ways for us to gather both safely and faithfully.

## Little Book of Easter Stories

During the Time with Children on Easter, children received a little book of stories for the Easter season called *Jesus Lives Alleluia!*

Copies are available on the table in the gathering space.



## Adult Forum

The Adult Forum discusses the Sunday's Bible texts prior to worship on Sunday mornings. The conversations focus on identifying context, asking questions, and considering what the text says to our lives and the world.

Please come! All are welcome. The Adult Forum meets in the Youth Room, **Sunday mornings, 8:45-9:45 am.**



There are two wonderful adventures planned for this summer:

The **South Dakota Trip** will be to Pine Ridge reservation and include stops at Mt. Rushmore and the Badlands. The dates are **June 20-25** and cost should be about \$400. Scholarships will be available. A flyer is available at church with details. Sign up by April 25 through [rfyouthgroup@gmail.com](mailto:rfyouthgroup@gmail.com).

And we will have 2 groups headed to the **Boundary Waters July 17-21**. Leave Sunday afternoon, camp at Sawbill Lake, then enter the BWCA for 3 days, then back. No experience necessary! Cost should be around \$250. A flyer is available at church with details. Sign up by April 25 through [rfyouthgroup@gmail.com](mailto:rfyouthgroup@gmail.com).



### Vacation Bible School

Please mark your calendars for the 2022 VBS. The theme is *Great Joy!* VBS dates are **August 1-4, 2022, 9:00-11:30 am**. Registrations are

available on the church website <https://firstchurchrf.org/pages/sign-ups-forms>. Please register your child and spread the word. All are welcome!

### VBS Volunteers

We plan to return to a pre-pandemic VBS format for the summer of 2022. We need many adult and teen volunteers. Please volunteer at this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-vbsvolunteers1> or by signing the list on the sign-up table. For more information, please contact Pastor Stacy.

## Church Scholarship Reminder

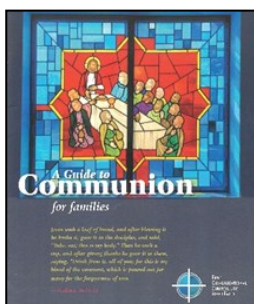
Church Scholarships are due in the office in paper form by **Sunday, May 1** and will be awarded on Graduation Sunday, June 5. Scholarships are available for graduating High School Seniors who wish to continue their education in college, vocations or tech schools. Continuing scholarships are available for those already in higher education. Letters of recommendation and/or essays are required. Forms are available on the church website or via this link: <https://firstchurchrf.org/pages/sign-up-sheets>

### Confirmation Sunday

**Sunday, May 1** will be Confirmation Sunday. Join us at the 10:00 am worship service as we welcome into the Christian faith our five Third Year Confirmands: Abby Brown, Libby Larson, Erica Sippel and Carter Sterba. A reception in their honor will follow during the 11:00 am Coffee Fellowship time. Let us make room for their gifts!

### Graduation Sunday

**Sunday, June 5** will be Graduation Sunday at the one 9:30 am worship service. Join us as we recognize our graduating seniors. On this day our Scholarship Committee will award both High School Senior Scholarships and Continuing Education scholarships. A reception honoring all our students will be follow worship in the Fellowship Hall. Join us!



### Communion Resource for Families

First Congregational Church has a new *Guide to Communion*. The resource was specifically designed for families, but it could be helpful for adults as well. Copies of the guide are available on the table in the gathering space.

## Planning Your Good Funeral

In this world, the only thing that can be certain is...death and taxes. Hopefully you already have a good handle on your taxes (if not April 15 is coming soon!), but we at church can definitely help you with the first part. All of us will die. And a gift you can give your family is to plan your good funeral. Following up on a class Pastor Chris conducted back in 2019, on **Sunday, May 22 from 8:45 to 9:45 am** in the Fellowship Hall, Pastor Chris will again conduct a Planning Your Good Funeral workshop which involves for things:

- Planning:** Doing this work now is a gift we can give to our family. A helpful hand out will include a one-page document to fill out and give to your family.
- Your:** You get to help plan your celebration of life—how cool is that?
- Good:** There is such a thing as a good funeral –it is celebrative and involves tears and laughter
- Funeral:** Pastor will talk about the differences between Funeral, Memorial Services and Celebrations of Life

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## New Church Photo Directory

Online scheduling is available for photo sessions held on **May 31 to June 4**. To schedule your photography appointment online, either use the QR Code or go to [www.ucdir.com](http://www.ucdir.com), click on photography appointment scheduling login on the right side, enter **wi192** in the Church Code field and enter **photos** in the Church Password field. Follow the prompts to schedule your family's appointment time. If you have 5 or more in your family, please use 2 consecutive time slots. The online scheduling option is not available Saturday or Sunday because we will be doing paper sign-ups at church. **Appointments fill up quickly, so schedule as soon as possible to secure your preferred date and time.** Please call the church office with any questions or for help scheduling.



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## Brazilian Healthcare Mission

There is a newsletter from Barb de Souza about the Brazilian Healthcare Mission. You can find paper copies at the church or look for it on the website (click on Serve and then Our Community).

## Mortgage Summary—As of April 1

Original cost of Facilities Expansion Project	\$2,386,970.00
Remaining amount on Bank Loan	\$492,501.50
Cash on hand in the Building Fund	\$95,661.03
Interest Rate (Locked in through January 2027)	3.39%
Monthly Payment	\$2,622.76

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## Sustainability Tip

As Spring slowly rolls in, so will lawn and garden season. Before applying fertilizer or other products to your lawn or garden this year, consider testing the soil first to check the basic nutrient levels. Many lawn care companies do this as a service, or you can collect a sample yourself and send it in to a soils laboratory. Contact your local Pierce County Extension Office for a sampling kit or for more information by visiting or calling Extension Pierce County Office Building, 412 West Kinne Street, Ellsworth, 715-273-6781. The soil test results may surprise you; your lawn may not need any fertilizer or other products at all. If you do apply products, seek out only the products that your soil test recommends, and try to keep them within the bounds of your lawn. Fertilizer and other products inadvertently applied to concrete or asphalt surfaces can be washed away into the nearest lake or stream when it rains, negatively affecting water quality. *-Brought to you by the Mission Education Committee and the Care for Creation Crew*



## Judith Permann Memorial Service

Please be advised of a Memorial Service for Judith Permann, wife of our previous minister the Rev. Del Permann, here at church on **Saturday, June 18 at 11:00 am** with visitation an hour before and a lunch to follow. Judy will be interred in the church Memorial Garden. Please keep Del, adult daughters Rachel and Jennifer, and granddaughter Elena in your prayers.





## Saturday, April 30, 9:00 am

The Trustees have scheduled a dual cleanup day on April 30. They plan to do a deep clean inside the church and yard clean up at the same time. However, they need your help. It won't take long if we have many helping hands. The clean-up begins at 9:00 am. Please stop by the gathering area for directions as to where the help is most needed. However, if you have preferences don't be afraid to request that task. If you plan to work outside, please bring tools like rakes and tarps or if you have a leaf blower bring it along. For the inside cleaning; dusters, your favorite mop, and extra vacuum cleaners would be helpful.

Interns please join us and get double the credit toward your total! I've heard the rumor there may be snacks too. Please sign up. If you have any questions, contact Jeff at (612)804-0264 or [jeffhoffman312@gmail.com](mailto:jeffhoffman312@gmail.com)

### Church Yoga

Jan Hansen's church yoga group meets on **Tuesdays and Thursdays in the church Fellowship Hall from 9:00-10:00 am and via Zoom**. Please contact the church office to receive the Zoom link.



### Offering QR Code

1. On your mobile device, open your Camera app or QR Code app
2. Point your camera at the QR Code
3. Click tab 'Give Online'

## Funeral Help Needed

One of the many important ways we as a church community support one another is by serving meals to families after a Funeral or Memorial Service. We are in need of people to provide cakes/bars and to help work at funeral luncheons. Please consider being a part of this ministry by contacting the church office.



## Care Givers Needed

The Church Care Team identifies shut-ins and senior friends and then matches other church members to visit them in their homes. It is a tangible way of making the love of Christ visible. Many wonderful friendships have emerged from these caring relationships. The Care Team is in need of a few more members who would be willing to be matched with a senior or shut-in. Please contact the church office to volunteer or the current Care Team Members (Jan Hansen, Jill and Merle Paulson, Vicki Hoffman, Kathy Wochomurka, Callie Trautmiller, Diane Welsh, Pastors Chris and Dave).

## Treasurer's Report

	Week of	
	Apr 17, 2022	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,763	\$ 199,271
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,909	\$ 158,544

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

\*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

## Church Staff Contact Info

Pastor: Chris Myers—[chris@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:chris@firstchurchrf.org)  
 Office: Missy Luedtke—[missy@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:missy@firstchurchrf.org)  
 Education: Stacy Myers—[stacy@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:stacy@firstchurchrf.org)  
 Mission: Dave Ostendorf—[dave@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:dave@firstchurchrf.org)  
 Youth: Alex and Sarah Plum—[rfyouthgroup@gmail.com](mailto:rfyouthgroup@gmail.com)  
 Music: Jamie Mills—[degolierjamie@gmail.com](mailto:degolierjamie@gmail.com)  
 Choir: Sarah Plum—[sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com)  
 Building: Farnum Fuller—[farnumfuller@gmail.com](mailto:farnumfuller@gmail.com)  
 Maintenance: Tim Bylander—[timthefixitguy@gmail.com](mailto:timthefixitguy@gmail.com)

# Engaging the Word, Engaging the World...

## Upcoming

**May 11 and 18 Mission Ed Committee** is sponsoring a "Mental Health First Aid" class, a training for adults 18 and older, provided by St. Croix Valley United Way, and held in-person at the church from 6:00-8:45 pm. The course teaches skills to respond to signs of mental illness and substance use in adults. Costs of the course will be covered for church members by Mission Ed; participation is limited. Attending both nights and completing 2 hours pre-work online is required. The course can be used for continuing education with approval of an employer. Please sign up at the Narthex table by May 1. For more information contact Sally Steneman, [stenesal9@gmail.com](mailto:stenesal9@gmail.com)

## Updating

**Care for Creation Crew (CCC) is up and running!!** Mission Education has established the Creation Care Crew to guide the congregation into a more sustainable and environmentally friendly future at home and in the congregation. Rebecca Ferguson, Matt Meyer, Natasha Rayne, and Barbara Peterson invite you to join them in the CCC journey, aptly named in the historical context of the Civilian Conservation Corps of old. See one of them or Pastor Dave for more information. With this newsletter the CCC once again brings Sustainable Living Tips to all of us. Watch the newsletter and Weekly Word for updates and information from the Crew...

**The Kairos Call to Action Newsletter** of the Creation Care Team is a great resource on the environment/sustainability work of UCC churches in Wisconsin, providing news, updates, and innovative actions being pursued by congregations across the State. Sign up for it at <https://www.wcucc.org/kairos-call-to-action/kairos-call-to-action-newsletter/>

**Among Friends is back, Tuesdays at the Church!** For information contact Bonnie Jones-Witthuhn (715-307-1182) or Norma Revels (651-260-5725).

**Solar at Home Learning Community** April 5 was a rousing success! Mike Noreen's presentation on home solar installation, cost, and use set the stage for an evening of conversation among 40 participants, solar companies and installers, and solar home owners. A notable comment about the evening came from a solar technician who was grateful (and somewhat surprised!) that a church was hosting such a gathering... this, we assured him, was what we do...

**Freddy's Pantry at UWRF**, a mini-food shelf for the campus, is now staffed by honors students almost 40 hours a week, providing grab-and-go food for students. While the River Falls Food Pantry helps out with Freddy's Pantry, we are also invited to put snacks in the box in the Narthex to be delivered to the University.

## Upcoming...

**Veterans Gathering.** By early summer Mission Education will host a Veterans Gathering, after a long pause due to the pandemic. If you're a veteran please be sure to complete the UCC Veteran's Contact form <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084BA8AA2AAAFD0-uccveterans> For more information contact Rose Rude at 715-781-7032 or [rose.rude@uwrf.edu](mailto:rose.rude@uwrf.edu) More details about the gathering will be coming soon...



## **Because Sometimes You Just Need to Party**

On **Thursday, July 7**, the church is hosting an epic kick off to River Falls Days Weekend: a pizza truck and a Bluegrass band out on the church lawn. Recognizing we all need something fun to look forward to at this time of the year and recognizing also how long this pandemic has dragged on, the Music Committee will be hosting a concert out on the church lawn with a local Bluegrass band providing the entertainment. Details closer as the date approaches. Mark your calendars!

## Wednesday School

Another year of Wednesday School is complete. It was wonderful to have the children back for in-person class. We had a particularly fun and engaged group of students this year. Unfortunately, the late spring and regular occurrences of Wednesday afternoon rain prevented our traditional games of *Stuck in the Mud*. Hopefully we have an extended fall for some games! Many thanks to the people who make Wednesday School possible, including: Anna Anderson, Christina Krueger, Jamie Mills, Chris Myers, Stacy Myers, Dave Reilly, Connor Rude, John Sullivan, Erin Syverson, and Jennifer Syverson. Many thanks to the volunteers who provided snacks; the snacks were always a highlight of the afternoon.

## Relay for Life Follow Up

Thank you everyone for your generosity in giving toward Relay for Life functions whether it be through simple donations, luminary bags, or the spaghetti meal. Our team reached their highest level ever, the silver level, with \$4,207 and the most luminaria bags purchased for display. **THANK YOU!!**



Overall the Relay for Life community fundraiser exceeded their goal of \$75,000 by \$12,000 and they are still collecting till August of this year. There were 262 spaghetti meals purchased and 258 luminary bags displayed. There were 26 teams raising money and many participants at the event. There were also 45 survivors walking at the event representing 675 years since their cancer diagnosis. That is awesome! We pray for many more years for all of the survivors and those experiencing cancer and their care givers. Deb Hoffman, team captain.

## Easter Thanks

Thank you to musicians and deacons, church youth and helpers, all of whom made Easter so special. Thanks to all who participated in our Wednesday Night Lenten worship services, Prayer Around the Cross. Thanks to Pastor Stacy and our Choir for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and the Good Friday choral cantata. Thanks to our youth and the Krueger clan (and their helpers Matt Cernohous, Justin Wilson and Dean Grisar) for helping with the Easter breakfast. What a great way to celebrate the good news of Easter. Christ is risen!







## Church Softball News

Once again our church will sponsor a softball team in the River Falls Church Family League. The family league is a co-ed division allowing players to play at the age 14. The league prefers players to be 14 years old for safety reasons and city league rules. The co-ed description requires teams to have three women on the field at all times, so ladies please don't be afraid to sign up and play. The games are played on Monday evenings at Hoffman Park. Games will begin around the end May and continue until the second week of August. Practices begin in April. Come join in the fun and laughs.

If you are interested in playing on our team, please sign up on the softball signup sheet in the gathering area or online <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-church2>.

If you have questions contact Matthew Thurston at (715) 781-3626 or Deb Hoffman at (612) 308-4945.

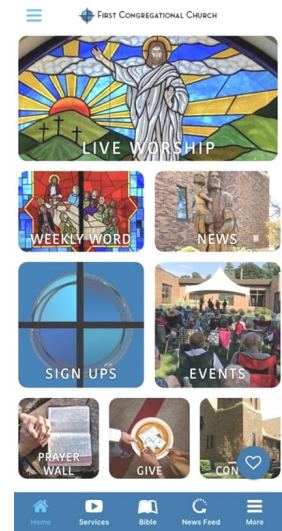


## Church App

The church has a mobile phone app. You can download it from the church website or by scanning the QR Code to the left (directions below). The App includes: Live and Past Services, Weekly Word, Newsletters, Sign Up Sheets, Events Calendar, Prayer Wall, Giving, Bible, News Feed, Push Notifications. Call the church office with any questions or if you need help.

Five easy steps to get our church app on your mobile device:

1. On your mobile device, open your Camera app or QR Code app
2. Point your camera at the QR Code above or visit: <https://bit.ly/FCCApp>
3. Click on the link that pops up
4. Install the Church App - Tithe.ly onto your device
5. Open the Church App (skip login if prompted) and get connected with our church



## Altar Flowers

Please sign up to provide flowers for the altar for Sunday worship. Sign up at church or on the church website:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-altar>

## Welcomers Needed

Please sign up to be a welcomer on Sunday morning before the worship service. One person is needed for at the bottom of the stairs at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Entrance. Please arrive 20 minutes prior to the worship service. Sign up at church or here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-welcomers>

## Coffee Fellowship Hosts and Liturgists Needed

**Coffee Fellowship Hosts** will be asked to serve Best Maid cookies which are in the church freezer, make lemonade and/or serve coffee. All the materials are provided, you will simply need to serve and clean up (at this point we are using disposable cups). Sign up at church or on the church website: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-coffee>

**Liturgists** will lead us in the Call to Worship and one of the Scripture Lessons. The material will be emailed out on Thursday to practice. Sign up at church or on the church website: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-liturgist>

Please note church interns can receive credit for either of these activities. Thank you for volunteering in these important ministries as we continue our journey.



# SERVE generously

## Simpson Shelter Needs

- Twin, full, and queen size blankets and sheet sets—new
- Pillows—new
- White t-shirts—new, sizes small & medium
- Large tubs of Country Time Lemonade and Kool Aid mixes (we use these in Igloo containers for meals)
- Hot sauce
- Coffee—ground, caffeinated
- Products for textured and natural hair
- New shower curtains and shower rings

There is a box at the church for donations. Thank you!

## Save Family Fresh Receipts

ARC gets \$1,000 for every \$150,000 in receipts, so every dollar counts. ARC is the agency funded by local churches to help address the immediate needs of people in our community (rent, utility, gas, repair help). A box for receipts is on the back table.

## Save Your Batteries to Recycle!

We have a container available for recycling all those old, depleted batteries. Start saving them now and bring them to church. We'll pass them on to the recyclers and keep them out of landfills and the environment in our ongoing commitment to sustainability.

## Ukraine Relief

Many of you are asking what you can do for the people of Ukraine. Please pray and please consider making a financial contribution to help them. Pray for changed hearts. Pray for world leaders to find a way to peace. Pray for people fleeing violence that they may find safe places to stay. Pray for those opening their homes and schools and churches.

Please also consider making a financial contribution. Working through our partner church in Hungary, the Reformed Church, which borders Ukraine and has been housing refugees in houses and churches, we will regularly send financial support. We have sent over \$12,000. Our next deadline will be **May 15**. Thank you for your prayerful support.

## amazon smile Free Money for Church Ministries

The church has created an Amazon Smile account through which the church can receive a portion of the price of each purchase you make through Amazon. You need to do two things for the church to receive this money. First, go to Amazon Smile by typing in [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and then add First Congregational Church River Falls to your Amazon Smile. Second, every time you order you must order through your Smile account by going to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). Once you do this, the church will receive 0.5% of each eligible order. Please contact the church office if you have questions. Last quarter the church received over \$100 for this account, but that amount could grow greatly if you add the church to your Amazon account. Do it today!

## Empty Pill Bottles

The River Falls Lions Club is collecting empty pill bottles, both prescription and over the counter, to send to Africa where there is an urgent need. The bottles will be washed, and the labels soaked off before they are shipped. A blue collection tub is in the gathering area. Please see Carole Mottaz with questions.

## Freddy's Pantry at UWRF Donations Requested

Freddy's Pantry is part of the River Falls Food Pantry serving UWRF students. It is located in Rodli Hall and is open and free for all students. It opened in February 2022 and has already served about 10% of the student population. There is a need on campus for food that requires little to no food prep. For more information, please see the link: <https://www.uwrf.edu/AcademicSuccess/Freddys-Pantry.cfm>. A donation box is in the Narthex. Items requested include:

- Single-serve oatmeal or cereal
- Single-serve and microwavable meals (mac & cheese, ravioli, beefaroni, etc.)
- Protein bars
- Juice boxes/Capri Sun
- Tampons
- Small bags of chips/snacks
- Beef or meat sticks



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RIVER FALLS

Office Phone: 715-425-2052  
E-mail: [office@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:office@firstchurchrf.org)  
Website: [www.firstchurchrf.org](http://www.firstchurchrf.org)

## STAFF

Chris Myers, Pastor  
Dave Ostendorf, Minister for Community and Outreach  
Stacy Johnson, CE Minister  
Missy Luedtke, Office Administrator  
Joel Larsen, Moderator  
Alex and Sarah Plum, Youth Ministers  
Jamie Mills, Music Coordinator and Bell Choir Director  
Sarah Plum, Choir Director  
Marsha Pearson, Organist  
Terry Mithun, Organist  
Tim Bylander, Building Supervisor  
Farnum Fuller, Custodian

Pastor's home phone number:  
Chris Myers 715-426-2075  
[chris@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:chris@firstchurchrf.org)

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
110 N. Third Street  
River Falls, Wisconsin 54022

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT #53  
RIVER FALLS, WI 54022

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

APRIL 15, 2022

## First Communion Information for Parents

### When do children at First Congregational Church begin taking Communion?

There is no uniform age at First Congregational Church when children begin participating in the Lord's Supper. Some children are pre-school age, others are in elementary school, and some wait until confirmation to begin taking Communion. The Bible and church history do not give decisive guidelines about the age to begin celebrating the Lord's Supper. The decision about when people are welcome at the Lord's Table has largely been made by local worshipping communities. Our practice is to include children when they and their parents think they are ready to participate.

### How will I know when my child is ready?

Some parents choose infant communion for their children. Many parents wait until their children express an interest. Typically, children are ready to participate in Communion when they start asking questions about this sacrament. One important theme of Communion is inclusion: All are welcome at the table of the Lord. If a child feels excluded, it is a good time for that child to begin participating.

### My child does not yet receive Communion. Should she/he still come forward?

Yes, all people are invited to come forward to the servers at the Communion distribution time. Children who will not be communing should keep their hands folded (as opposed to reaching out). This is a signal to the pastor and deacons that the child desires a blessing.

**Sign Up Sheets:** All of the current sign-up sheets are on the church website. Click on the "Connect" button at the top of the page and then select "Sign Ups/Forms."