

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

May 15, 2022



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

May 15, 2022

Fifth Sunday of Easter

10:00 am

Gathering

“Community cannot for long feed on itself, it can only flourish with the coming of others from beyond, our unknown and undiscovered brothers and sisters.”

Howard Thurman

<p>Welcome to our guests who are visiting with us today! Join us for coffee in the Fellowship Hall following the worship service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The nursery is available for young children.- Activity bags are available for children.- Large print bulletins are available from the ushers.- Please stand when noted by the *- Congregation responses are in bold.- Please stop at the welcome station for a gift.	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>No matter who you are. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>As Jesus' courageous disciples, living God's grace, we strive to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Worship faithfully</i>- <i>Welcome openly</i>- <i>Grow spiritually</i>- <i>Care passionately</i>- <i>Serve generously</i>
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GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

- L:** For generations we have gathered to worship God, Creator and Sustainer of all.
- P:** **For generations the communities of faith we have called home have nourished us in God's ways.**
- L:** In all times God has been with us and with all God's peoples, calling us forward, lifting us, guiding us.
- P:** **God has always been with us! God is with us this day. God is with us all our days!**
- L:** On this lovely spring day we lift our voices in song and praise and prayer to God who dwells among us!
- All:** **Thanks be to God! With great joy let us worship!**

***HYMN**

De colores (Sing of Colors)

#402

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Creator God, through times of great joy and times of deep loss you have been with us. In this time of so much uncertainty we need you. We need hope and courage and vision for the days ahead. We need to see and live out a vision of community and justice that strengthens the human family. Give us strength and faith to do so. And guide us when we waver from your way. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

L: God is with us. God is behind us, beside us, before us always.

P: God's love is everlasting from our first breath to our last, even when we forget God is near.

L: Day by day we live in God's embrace and God's forgiveness.

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**

Come All You People

*Come, all you people, come and praise the Most High,
Come, all you people, come and praise the Most High,
Come, all you people, come and praise the Most High,
Come now and worship the Lord.*

*Come, all you people, come and praise the Savior,
Come, all you people, come and praise the Savior
Come, all you people, come and praise the Savior,
Come now and worship the Lord.*

Hearing the Word

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Micah 6:6-8

PSALM 67

*R To you, O God, all creatures sing, and all creation, everything,
sings your praises, alleluia!*

L: May God be gracious to us and bless us and may God's face shine upon us,

P: That your way be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations.

L: Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. *R*

P: Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.

L: Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

P: The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us.

All: May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere God. *R*

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Rev. Chris Myers

SONG OF BLESSING

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river, in my soul.

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river, in my soul.

<h3>Celebrating the Meal</h3>

(All Christians are welcome at the table of our Lord. The bread is gluten free and wine and grape juice are offered. Those choosing not to commune may receive a blessing from the servers.)

The Invitation to the Meal

L: Come to this sacred table, not because you must but because you may. Come not because you are fulfilled, but because in your emptiness, you stand in need of God's mercy and assurance. Come not to express an opinion, but to seek a presence and to pray for a spirit. Come to this table then, sisters and brothers, just as you are. Partake and share. It is spread for you and for me, that we might again know that God has come to us, shared our common lot, and invited us to join the people of God's new age.

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: It is right and good always to give thanks, ...

The Words of Institution

L: We praise your name as 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:

As We Gather at Your Table

Congregation join on refrain:

As we gath - er at your ta - ble
earth and heav-en now em-brace; souls, u - nit-ed as one
bod - y, be - come your dwell - ing place.

The musical notation is in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff has the lyrics 'As we gath - er at your ta - ble'. The second staff has the lyrics 'earth and heav-en now em-brace; souls, u - nit-ed as one'. The third staff has the lyrics 'bod - y, be - come your dwell - ing place.' The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a final cadence at the end of the third staff.

Let Us Break Bread Together

Verses

1. Let us break bread to-geth-er on our knees; Let us break
2. Let us drink wine to-geth-er on our knees; Let us drink
3. Let us praise God to-geth-er on our knees; Let us praise

Refrain

1. bread to-geth-er on our knees; When I fall on my knees,
2. wine to-geth-er on our knees;
3. God to-geth-er on our knees;
With my face to the ris-ing sun, O Lord, have mer-cy on me.

The musical notation is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. It consists of two main parts: Verses and a Refrain. The Verses section has three lines of music, each corresponding to a verse. The Refrain section has three lines of music, each corresponding to a line of the refrain. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a final cadence at the end of the third line of the refrain.

Taste and See

Congregation join on refrain:

Refrain

Taste and see, taste and see the good - ness of the
Lord. O taste and see, taste and see the
good - ness of the Lord, of the Lord.

The musical notation is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff has the lyrics 'Taste and see, taste and see the good - ness of the'. The second staff has the lyrics 'Lord. O taste and see, taste and see the'. The third staff has the lyrics 'good - ness of the Lord, of the Lord.' The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a final cadence at the end of the third staff.

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.*

Proclaiming the Word

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 12:28-34

SERMON - Visioning, Living, Becoming the Beloved Community

Rev. Dave Ostendorf

***HYMN**

I Am the Light of the World

#584

Verses 2, 3, 4

***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.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Beautiful Savior

Jubilee Ringers

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**

We Are Marching in the Light of God

***We are marching, for the Lord is our light, we are marching for the Lord is our light.
We are marching, for the Lord is our light, we are marching for the Lord is our light.***

We are marching, oh, we are marching for the Lord is our light.

We are marching, oh, we are marching for the Lord is our light.

We are singing, for the Lord is our light, we are singing for the Lord is our light.

We are singing, for the Lord is our light, we are singing for the Lord is our light.

We are singing, oh, we are singing for the Lord is our light.

We are singing, oh, we are singing for the Lord is our light.

We are living, for the Lord is our light, we are living for the Lord is our light.

We are living, for the Lord is our light, we are living for the Lord is our light.

We are living, oh, we are living for the Lord is our light.

We are living, oh, we are living for the Lord is our light.

***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. You can use the QR Code to give electronically. Your generosity is the engine that powers our church community. Thank you.

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Please join us following worship for a reception in the Fellowship Hall to honor Pastor Dave as we celebrate his 7 years of ministry here at First Congregational Church and his upcoming retirement.

Cake will be served as well as a brief program offered. Join us!

Assisting in today's worship service are:

Liturgist:	<i>Sue Danielson</i>
Cantor:	<i>David Reilly</i>
Coffee Fellowship:	<i>Dave's Groupies</i>
Deacons:	<i>Peter Rayne, Karen Lloyd, Sheila Peterson</i>
Organist:	<i>Terry Mithun</i>
Welcomers:	<i>Carole Mottaz</i>
Nursery:	<i>Kahla Fuller</i>
Video Team:	<i>Jeff Hoffman, Mike Stifter, Ryan Luedtke</i>
Trustee:	<i>Tim Bylander</i>
Counters:	<i>Jane Truesdill, Diane Welsh</i>
Music Coordinator & Bell Director:	<i>Jamie Mills</i>
Choir Director:	<i>Sarah Plum</i>
Church Moderator:	<i>Joel Larsen</i>
Office Administrator:	<i>Missy Luedtke</i>
Youth Pastors:	<i>Alex and Sarah Plum</i>
Minister for Community:	<i>Rev. Dave Ostendorf</i>
CE Minister:	<i>Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers</i>
Senior Pastor:	<i>Rev. Chris Myers</i>

*Altar table flowers are given by the Ostendorf family
in honor of Dave's ministry.*

Treasurer's Report

	<u>May 8, 2022</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,990	\$ 219,085
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,909	\$ 188,271

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.



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 the tab 'Give Online'

Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Those who are ill or recovering:

Roger Hirstein, Rosalie Harper (cousin on JoAnn Lentz), David Lewis (friend of Jan Hansen), Deb Larson (Jen Meyer's mother), Zeke Wells, Margaret (friend of Dave Reilly), Dan Turner (father of Mike Danielson), Neil (son of Yvonne Benson), Suzie May and Nick Simpson, Sydney and Gloria Johnson (Tanya Larsen's folks), Alex (grandson of Barb Stephens), Carolyn Larrabee, Larry, Joan Alexander, Ken Phillips

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For our Bell Choir and their director Jamie Mills as they grace us with their music for the last time this year, thank you for blessing us with your gifts!
- For those serving the funeral meal for Kim Jorae this past Tuesday, bless you for offering the family this gift
- For our confirmands and church interns for a wonderful 'normal' year that has come to a close
- For Tim Bylander who is at Moon Beach Camp getting our church camp ready for the program year
- For our Amazing Wednesday School volunteers - Christina Krueger, Jen and Erin Syverson, Connor Rude and Anna Anderson who are there each week welcoming kids and helping out as needed—what a great year!
- For the Garden Geeks who each week keep our garden looking great, thank you
- For those who support our church's ministry with their tithes, offerings and gifts--you are all a blessing

Prayers for our World:

- For those cleaning up after strong storms, may you be graced with helpful neighbors
- For students and teachers anxiously awaiting the end of the school year
- For the greening of our earth and return to our planting season
- For those recovering from the latest Covid wave, may they heal quickly
- For peace in Ukraine, may a better way forward be found
- For those helping refugees, especially for churches helping those fleeing in Ukraine
- For our divided nation that we may work together to solve our real problems

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

- For our new church van that is FINALLY in production and should be delivered in the next 4 weeks, hallelujah!
- For our Brass Group who graced our worship service last week and our Bell Choir providing music this week, you are gifts
- For our Garden Geeks, Lu Lueck and Linn Lawrence, who keep our garden looking so beautiful
- For those recently confirmed into the faith and family of Jesus Christ: Abby Brown, Alice Follstad, Libby Larson, Erica Sippel, Carter Sterba, may you grow in faith, service and love
- For the fun of bowling enjoyed by our confirmands and interns as we bowled together at St Croix Lanes on the last day of programming for this year
- For the over \$12,000 given by church members to help refugees fleeing the Ukraine, may it quickly make a difference
- For Alex and Sarah Plum who completed their first program year as our new Youth Ministers, we are thankful for you!

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Kim Jorae whose life was celebrated this past Tuesday, may God grace his family with peace as they gathered to remember his life
- For the family of Donald Matzek, father of Sue Danielson who died at 100 years old and whose funeral will be at St. Bridget's Church on Sunday, may he rest from his labors
- For the family of Jim Kuhn who died peacefully at home recently surrounded by his family, may they be strengthened as they gather at Glen Park on Friday, May 20 to celebrate his life
- For the family of Cathy Taylor, Yvonne Benson's sister-in-law who died this past week in Red Wing, that her family may be given peace
- For the family of Judy Permann planning a Celebration of Life for Judy on June 18, may the Holy Spirit fill you with strength and gratitude
- For the 998,000 Americans and over 6.2 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Planning Your Good Funeral: Join Pastor Chris on **Sunday, May 22, at 8:45 am** in the Youth Room as he once again leads a class on how to plan for a good funeral. Handouts and coffee provided!

Graduation Sunday: **Sunday, June 5**, will be Graduation Sunday where we will honor our graduating seniors, church interns and award church scholarships. Graduates please submit a photo and your graduation plans.

Summer Trips: Alex is leading two summer trips. See flyers on the sign-up table.
The South Dakota Trip for Middle and High Schoolers June 20-25.
A Boundary Waters trip July 17-22 (open to all).

New Church Photo Directory: Photo sessions held **May 31 to June 4**. To schedule your photography appointment online go to 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, 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.

Vacation Bible School: Please mark your calendars for the 2022 VBS! The dates are **August 1–4, 2022**. Our plan is to return to a pre-pandemic VBS format. This means we need lots of people: kids to participate, teens to help, and adults to guide students. Please register your willingness to help by signing up on the volunteer list on the sign-up table.

Softball News: Wow! What a response to people wanting to play softball. Thank you. We have reached more than maximum players. Practices have begun on Monday and Thursday evenings at Greenwood ball fields at 6:30 pm.

Games will be held on Monday nights and are at Hoffman Park at either 6:30 or 7:45 pm. The scheduled has not been finalized, but our first game may be as early as May 23 or after Memorial Day on June 6. Games will continue until the second week of August ending will playoffs. Come join in the fun and cheer us on!!!!

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

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN KICK OFF



All church families will be receiving an invitation this week to participate in the 2022 Capital Campaign. This campaign will do three important things:

- Pay off our bank debt of \$495,000 from the building project
- Update our antiquated church sound and video systems
- Install a new church sign

All of these projects are long overdue. Our church sound and video systems are cobbled together from the 1980's and 90's. Our church sign is from the 1970's and does not have the ability to be changed or updated in any way. And our building debt costs the church \$2,622 each month.

Our church building is more than a structure, it is the place where we celebrate so many of the important moments of our lives: baptisms and weddings, confirmations and marriages, funerals and celebrations of life. Our new Fellowship Hall is used for yoga and family meals, coffee fellowship and big celebrations like our annual Giving Thanks Dinner. Our classrooms, youth and music rooms are used each week for programming and outreach like our Among Friends program for families with dementia. Our church building enables our church ministries.

We kindly ask you to review the materials provided and return your pledge sheet to the church office by the end of May. Look to the newsletter and weekly word for updates on our progress. Together we move our church forward with the tools we need to expand our ministry and outreach.

Thank you for your generous support!

The Building Finance Team

Fred Benson, Scott Jameson, Joel Larsen, Carole Mottaz, Pastor Chris, Brad Williams

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Micah 6:6-8

“With what shall I come before the LORD
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”
He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God?

GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 12:28-34

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Then the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; and ‘to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength’ and ‘to love one’s neighbor as oneself’—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” After that no one dared to ask him any question.