

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

May 29, 2022



Ascension Sunday

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

May 22, 2022

*Ascension Sunday
Seventh Sunday of Easter*

9:30 am

Gathering

*We are not permitted the luxury of gazing at Jesus' feet.
No, we must get on with Jesus' work.
- Peter J. Gomes, Chaplan at Harvard University*

Welcome to our guests who are visiting with us today! Join us for coffee in the Fellowship Hall following the worship service.

- 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.

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*

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND RINGING OF THE BELL

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Welcome home.

P: **God bids us to come,**

L: Find rest for our weariness,

P: **Find peace deeper than our worry.**

L: Welcome home.

P: **All you lost, wandering or stuck in despair.**

L: All you ready for new adventures, thankful for what has been entrusted to you.

P: **Welcome home.**

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

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

L: If we choose to protect our faith rather than live it,

P: Forgive us, O God.

L: If we admire our faith, rather than be molded by it,

P: Forgive us, O God.

L: If we cling to a faith too small for the challenge of this life and the hope of the life to come,

P: Forgive us, O God.

All: Forgive us and renew within us a great and living faith. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

L: God's mercy is sure.

P: God's grace is more powerful than our sin.

L: In Christ we are forgiven and set free for service in his name.

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**

Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down.

Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down.

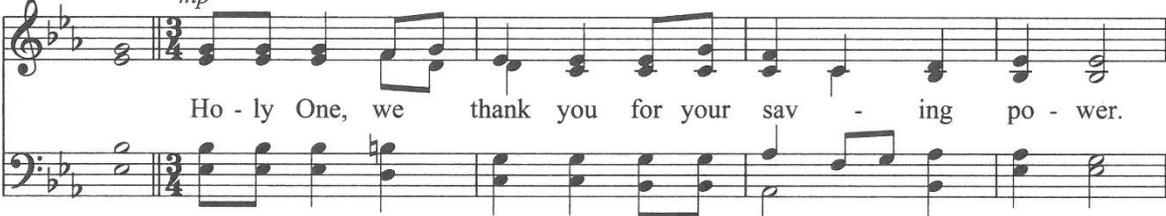
I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burdens down.

I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burdens down.

Hearing the Word

PSALM 93

R Capo 1 D *mp* F#7 Bsus² Bm Bm⁷ Em A⁷ Dsus⁴ D



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

L: The LORD is king; robed in majesty; the LORD is robed; 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**

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 24:44-63

Proclaiming the Word

SERMON

Rev. Chris Myers

*HYMN

Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!

#257

*STATEMENT OF FAITH – The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

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.

***DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Holy God, **with great joy we offer these gifts to you. You have blessed us richly and poured out your generosity and love on us without restraint. Bless these gifts and use them to spread your light into the world. Amen.**

Celebrating the Meal

(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 let us remember. As we gather at the table of our Lord, let us remember what he did here on that night long ago. Let us remember how he fed people. Let us remember how he forgave people. Let us remember how he gave his followers good work to do. Let us remember that even though he is not physically present among us, he sent the Holy Spirit upon us that we might be his body at work in the world today.

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:

Bread for the Journey



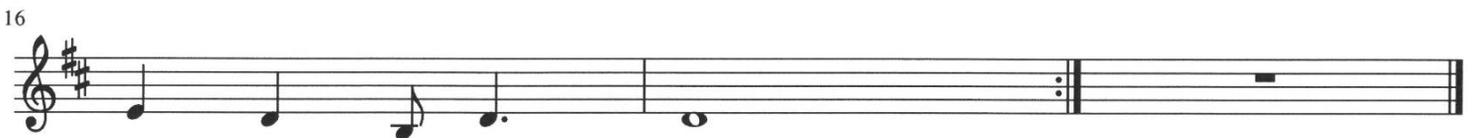
1,5 Give us bread for the jour - ney give us bread. Give us
2 Guide our way as we trav - el guide our way. Guide our
3 Make us one with each oth - er make us one. Make us
4 Lead us home to the gar - den, lead us home. Lead us



bread for the jour - ney give us bread. When our legs are get - ting
way as we trav - el guide our way. With so ma - ny roads be -
one with each oth - er make us one. All the walls we've built a -
home to the gar - den, lead us home; where we'll live with all cre -



heav - y, and we're hang - ing down our heads, give us bread for the
fore us where to go is hard to say. Guide our way as we
round us: may we learn to tear them down. Make us one with each
a - tion find our place and nev - er roam. Lead us home to the



jour - ney, give us bread.
trav - el guide our way.
oth - er, make us one.
gar - den, lead us home.

This is the Body of Christ

gently

The musical score is written for a piano in 3/8 time, featuring a treble and bass clef. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below the notes. The lyrics are: 'This is the bo - dy of Christ, — bro - ken that we may be whole; — this cup, as prom - ised by God, true to his word, cra - dles our Lord: — food for the good of the soul. —'. The score consists of three systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff.

This is the bo - dy of Christ, — bro - ken that we may be
whole; — this cup, as prom - ised by God, true to his
word, cra - dles our Lord: — food for the good of the soul. —

Breathe on Me Breath of God

*Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew
That I may love the way you love and do what you would do.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,
Until with you I will one will, to do and to endure.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God, stir in me one desire:
That every earthly part of me may glow with holy fire.*

*Breath on me, Breath of God, so shall I never die,
But live with you the perfect life of your eternity.*

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.

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



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

Assisting in today's worship service are:

Liturgist: *Rebecca Ferguson*
Cantor: *David Reilly*
Coffee Fellowship: *Andy and Christina Krueger*
Deacons: *Laura Anderson, Karen Lloyd, Marshall Skule*
Organist: *Marsha Pearson*
Welcomers: *Dennis and Lynn Linder*
Nursery: *Emma Cernohous*
Video Team: *Jeff Hoffman, Mike Stifter, Ryan Luedtke*
Trustee: *Louie Filkins*
Counters: *Marie Roe, Roz Ostendorf*
Music Coordinator & Bell Director: *Jamie Mills*
Choir Director: *Sarah Plum*
Church Moderator: *Joel Larsen*
Office Administrator: *Missy Luedtke*
Youth Pastors: *Alex and Sarah Plum*
CE Minister: *Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers*
Senior Pastor: *Rev. Chris Myers*

Treasurer's Report

	<u>May 15, 2022</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,110	\$ 221,695
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,909	\$ 198,180

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

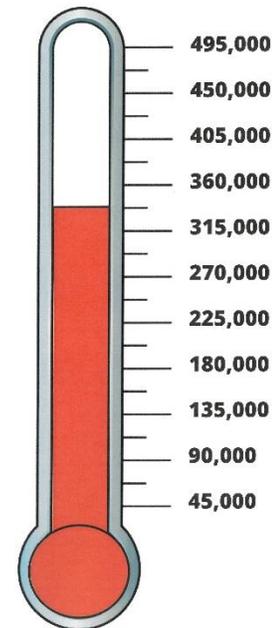
*Includes annual and monthly gifts.



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'

**Capital Campaign
\$495,000 Goal!**



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, Susan (niece of Barb Stephens), Carolyn Larrabee

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For those graduating from High School this year, especially our church seniors including Anna Anderson, Wyatt Bjork, Justin Elsesser, Virgil Jensen, Evan Luedtke, Aeva Noreen, Josh Sippel and Monty Wilson, may God guide and provide wisdom for the next stage of your living
- For Pastor Dave and all who gathered to celebrate his ministry, may he retire well!
- For Diane Welsh who is coordinating our new church photo directory, God bless you (and remember to sign up!)
- For those volunteering to staff the church nursery over the summer, may you be blessed by hanging out with our youngest folks
- For Tim Bylander, Carol Merriman and Glenn Kees who are back from Moon Beach Camp where they helped get our church camp ready for the program 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 the people of Uvalde, Texas, may we do better for our children
- 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 the gift of summer, bring it on!
- For our new church van that is FINALLY in production and should be delivered in the next 4 weeks, hallelujah!
- For Diane Welsh and Marlys Peterson who served the funeral reception for the Alexander family this week, thank you for offering this gift
- For our Garden Geeks, Lu Lueck and Linn Lawrence, who keep our garden looking so beautiful
- For those graduating from high school and college, may the future be bright as you use your God given gifts to solve problems
- For the over \$14,000 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 Joan Alexander who died peacefully at home with her husband Dick by her side and whose Memorial Service was here at church last Tuesday, may God give you 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 now one million 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

Loving God...

We Are Hiring! With the retirement of Pastor Dave last week, the church will be hiring a new part time Minister for Community and Outreach. Please see job description on the sign-up table and website. If you know someone, reach out to them or let the church office know.

Graduation Sunday is Sunday, June 5 during which we will bless our graduating high school seniors and award church scholarships. A reception in their honor will follow during Coffee Fellowship. Seniors, please make sure the office has your post-graduation plans and a senior photo!

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.

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. Working through our partner church in Hungary, we will regularly send financial support. We have sent over \$14,000. **Our next deadline is Monday, June 6.** Thank you for your prayerful support.

Loving Neighbor...

Simpson Shelter Meal will be served by our congregation on **Thursday, June 30**. We will need many hands and bodies to cook and serve. See sign-up sheet or talk to Carole Mottaz for more details. This is an awesome service event for families and young people.

New Church Photo Directory: Photo sessions held **May 31 to June 4**. To schedule your 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 appointment. If you have 5 or more, please use 2 consecutive time slots. The online scheduling is not available on Saturday or Sunday because we will be doing paper sign-ups at church. Please call the church office with any questions or for help scheduling.

Loving Self...

Pizza Party! Kick off River Falls Days with pizza and a bluegrass band out on the church lawn. Join us **6-8 pm on Thursday, July 7**. Concert and pizza are free, but you do need to register for the pizza ahead of time. Sign up online or at the sign-up table today!

Canoe Trip: Alex is leading a Boundary Waters Canoe Trip open to youth and adults on **July 17-22**. See flyer on the sign-up table and contact Alex for more details.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Acts 1:1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 24:44-63

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and they were continually in the temple blessing God.