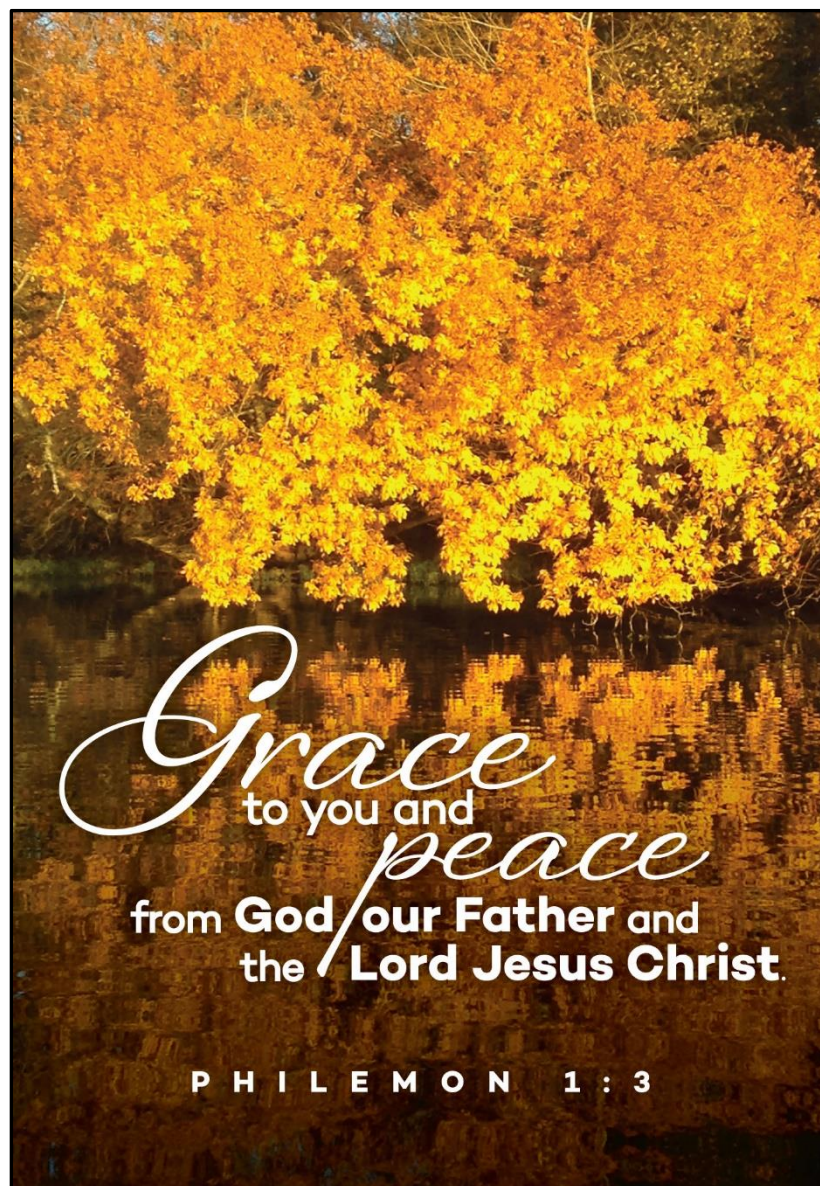


**First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
River Falls, Wisconsin**

**September 4, 2022**



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

September 4, 2022

*Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

9:30 am

<b>Gathering</b>
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*Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.  
- Anne Lamott*

<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"><li>- The nursery is available for young children.</li><li>- Activity bags are available for children.</li><li>- Large print bulletins are available from the ushers.</li><li>- Please stand when noted by the *</li><li>- Congregation responses are in bold.</li><li>- Please stop at the welcome station for a gift.</li></ul>	<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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**GATHERING MUSIC**

**WELCOME AND RINGING OF THE BELL**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**L:** God has given us holy hands:

**P:** **Hands to caress a deep ache, a tight knot of stress and tension;**

**L:** Hands to hold a hurt child, embrace a lonely friend, care for one who is ill;

**P:** **Hands to create a loving meal or a work of art;**

**L:** Hands to till the soil and make a bed;

**P:** **Hands to write to one in need or call another with good news.**

**L:** God has given us holy hands,

**P:** **Hands to bring God's touch to earth and to do God's will.**

**All:** **Come let us worship the God who calls us into life!**

\*HYMN

*Praise to the Lord, The Almighty*



1. Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the king of cre -  
 2. Praise to the Lord, a - bove all things so might - i - ly  
 3. Praise to the Lord, who shall pros - per our work and de -  
 4. Praise to the Lord— O let all that is in us a -



a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for  
 reign - ing; Keep - ing us safe at his  
 fend us; Sure - ly his good - ness and  
 dore him! All that has life and breath



he is your health and sal - va - tion!  
 side, and so gent - ly sus - tain - ing.  
 mer - cy shall dai - ly at - tend us.  
 come now with prais - es be - fore him!



Come, all who hear: Broth - ers and sis - ters, draw near,  
 Have you not seen All you have need - ed has been  
 Pon - der a - new What the Al - might - y can do,  
 Let the "A - men!" Sound from his peo - ple a - gain—



Praise him in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
 Met by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?  
 Who with his love will be - friend us.  
 Glad - ly with praise we a - dore him!

### **\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**L:** Lord, you call, but we do not always recognize your voice.

**P:** **Sometimes we don't listen carefully. Sometimes we're caught off guard.**

**L:** Lord, you call, but we haven't always taught others to hear you.

**P:** **Sometimes we stand in the way, allowing our voices to ring out over yours.**

**L:** Lord, you call, but we don't always believe our ears.

**P:** **Sometimes we believe we know better. Sometimes we think you can't possibly be calling us, or her, or him.**

**All:** **Forgive us, Lord, our unpracticed listening, our closed ears. Help us to hear. Amen.**

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

**L:** Our God does not want us to wallow in the sins of the past.

**P:** **In Christ, God opens a new and different future, free from sin and abundant in grace.**

**L:** So let us embrace and live the good news of the Gospel:

**P:** **In Christ we are set free. Alleluia!**

**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**

*He came down that we may have love; He came down that we may have love;  
He came down that we may have love; hallelujah forever more.*

*He came down that we may have peace; He came down that we may have peace;  
He came down that we may have peace; hallelujah forever more.*

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

**Galatians 3:23-29**



## PSALM 1

*R*



- L:** Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked or take the path that sinners tread or sit in the seat of scoffers, but their delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law they meditate day and night.
- P:** **They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.**
- L:** The wicked are not so but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
- P:** **Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous, for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. *R***

## SCRIPTURE LESSON

Philemon 1:1-21

### Proclaiming the Word

## SERMON

Rev. Chris Myers

## \*HYMN

*O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

#25

## \*STATEMENT OF FAITH – Abundance

**We believe in the bounteous God who clothes the wild flowers dressing them so superbly that they outdo Solomon in all his glory; who is the true friend of all creatures great and small who feeds wild animals and human creatures alike.**

**We believe in the God of Christ Jesus the source of abundance, full of grace, truth and power.**

**We believe in the extravagant God who turns the other cheek, goes the second mile, turns water into the best wine, brings healing with his every touch, and who welcomes all people.**

**We believe in the faithful God of Jesus Christ, who sweated blood in an olive grove, while his friends fell asleep, and who kept the faith to the very end.**

**We believe in the redeeming God who spared no cost, forgave even his brutal crucifiers, had time for a dying thief at his side, and who on the third day did a thing so amazing that his enemies were overcome with joy.**

**We believe in the God of Jesus Christ, the Source of abundance wherever we turn and no matter what we do. Amen.**

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

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

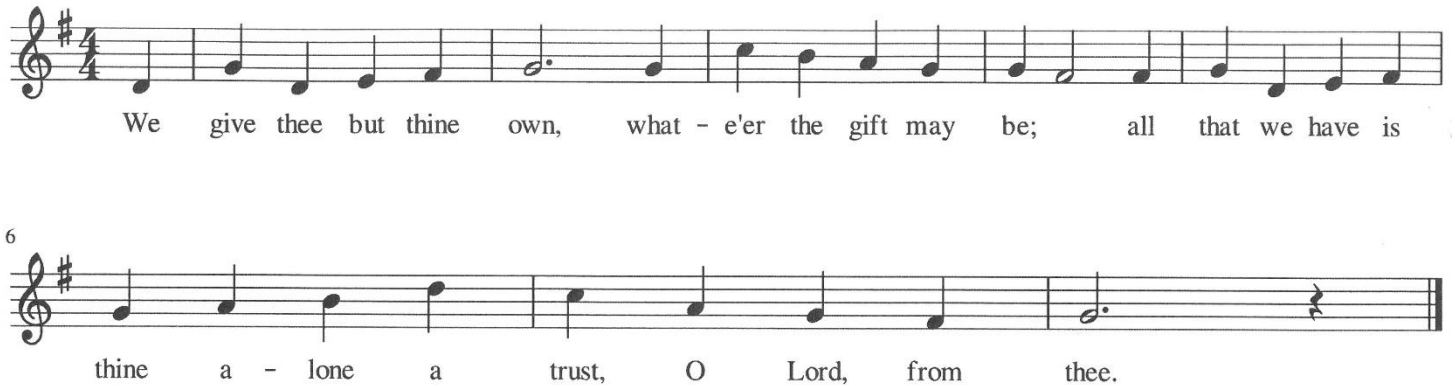
**...Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

### OFFERTORY

*He Leadeth Me*

Sarah and Alex Plum

### \*DOXOLOGY



### \*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**O God, we work for you in whatever we do. Paid labor, volunteer work, our home life – all our time we spend for you. Thank you for meaningful work that supports us. We share the fruit of our labor with you, knowing that you are the Great Provider. Use these gifts to do your work in our world, providing good news, healing and hope to all people. Amen.**

### Celebrating the Meal

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

#### *The Invitation to the Meal*

- L:** God of Good Labor, who calls us to meaningful work and to labor for the Kingdom of God,
- P:** **Let your grace shine upon us.**
- L:** God of Renewal, who created the Sabbath as a time to worship and rest,
- P:** **Let your peace surround us.**
- All:** **Come God, send your Holy Spirit upon us and on our world that we may be refreshed on our journey as disciples of Jesus Christ.**

## ***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:*

## **Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness**

Spir - it, spir-it of gen-tle-ness, blow through the wil-der-ness, calling and free, \_\_\_\_\_

10

Spir - it, spir-it of rest-less-ness, stir me from plac-id-ness, wind, wind on the sea.

**You Are My All in All**

Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name!

Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name!

## ***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**

***I Sing A Song of the Saints of God***

**#295**

**\*BLESSING**

**POSTLUDE**

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

<b>Liturgist:</b>	<i>Suzanne Hagen</i>
<b>Cantor:</b>	<i>David Reilly</i>
<b>Coffee Fellowship:</b>	
<b>Deacons:</b>	<i>Karen Lloyd, Marshall Skule, Traci Hagberg, Natasha Rayne</i>
<b>Organist:</b>	<i>Marsha Pearson</i>
<b>Video Team:</b>	<i>Mike Stifter</i>
<b>Trustee:</b>	<i>Matthew Thurston</i>
<b>Counters:</b>	<i>Marie Roe, Allen Barnes</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>CE Minister:</b>	<i>Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers</i>
<b>Senior Pastor:</b>	<i>Rev. Chris Myers</i>

#### **Treasurer's Report**

	<u>Aug 28, 2022</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,534	\$ 325,660
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,909	\$ 346,815

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, Deb Larson (Jen Meyer's mother), Zeke Wells, Margaret (friend of Dave Reilly), Neil (son of Yvonne Benson), Suzie May and Nick Simpson, Gina (friend of Barb Stephens), Neal Prochnow, Harry (friend of Ann Nelson), Peyton, Mike Joosten (Sarah Plum's dad), Dorothy Sorenson, Ryan Malm

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

- For the 370 local kids who received school supplies through our Tools for School ministry, may it contribute to a great school year!
- For the trips, experiences and work that will be accomplished through our peach ministry whose proceeds go to the Youth Fund
- For our new Minister of Community and Outreach, the Rev. Deb Meyer, who begins her ministry here November 1
- For the Sunday and Wednesday School volunteers who are needed, is God calling you to teach this year?
- For those who each Sunday volunteer as liturgists, deacons, trustees, nursery workers, garden geeks
- For those who support our church's ministry with their tithes, offerings and gifts--you are all a blessing

**Prayers for our World:**

- For a great first week back at school, may it be a better year
- For those going off to college and getting ready for back to school season, may you know you are not alone
- For the people of Pakistan dealing with massive flooding, may the world respond
- For those getting Covid in the latest wave, may they rest and not spread it
- For the farmers dealing with either too much or too little rain
- For peace in Ukraine, may a better way forward be found

**Prayers of Thanksgiving:**

- For Pastor Dave who celebrates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination. He was ordained on Sunday, September 3, 1972 at the Evangelical United Church of Christ, Godfrey, Illinois. May God continue to bless him in his retirement
- For all those who helped unload, sort and sell 530 boxes of peaches this past week, thank you!
- Congratulations to Andy and Christina Krueger who celebrated their 35<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on August 22, may your love continue to grow!
- For the 370 kids who were helped by the Tools for School ministry this past week, thank you!
- For Danni Filkins and Matt Robbins who were recently engaged and are planning a July 2023 wedding
- For Thea Jane, daughter of David and Jennifer Querna, who was baptized recently, may she grow in faith, love and service

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

- For the family of Dorothy Helmrick, mother of Kurt Helmrick, who died recently and whose Memorial Service is Saturday, September 3, may she rest in God's strong care
- For the family of the Rev. Don Laue who died recently. Don was ordained at this church many years ago and lived in Colorado. A graveside service at Greenwood Cemetery is being planned for September 10 with a reception in our Fellowship Hall. Don served churches in Iowa, Wisconsin and Colorado.
- For the families of Jen Syverson and Stacy Johnson as they mourn their dad and mom, may God comfort you

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...*

**Starting next Sunday, September 11, Rally Day,** we return to our program year schedule of worship at **10:00 am** with the return of Sunday School and the Adult Forum.

**New Fall Worship Series: Living the Prayer:** The Lord's Prayer is one of the most familiar parts of our Christian faith. And yet how well do you know it? Over this 6-week worship series, we will explore this foundational prayer and how it can inform our living today. Join us each Sunday at 10:00 am, or via the livestream, or the radio broadcast at 11:00 am.

Sept 11	Hallowing—Finding the Holy
Sept 18	Whose Will?
Sept 25	Daily Bread
Oct 2	Forgive Us
Oct 9	Lead Us
Oct 16	Power and Glory

### **Rally Day Sunday, September 11 Schedule:**

8:45-9:45 am	Adult Forum
9:00-9:45 am	Choir Rehearsal
10:00-11:00 am	Worship
10:30-11:15 am	Sunday School
11:00-11:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
11:15 am-12:00 pm	All Parent Meeting

**Rally Day Parent Meeting:** Sunday School resumes on **Rally Day, September 11**. Following Sunday School and worship we will have a meeting for parents of all students. Parents of children younger than confirmation age will leave after the first portion of the meeting. The second part of the meeting will be to outline the confirmation program. All confirmands and parents of confirmands are expected to attend this meeting.

**Sunday School Teachers for 2022-23:** The first day of Sunday School is September 11. At this point we need three more teachers to have the *minimum* number of teachers to effectively run the Sunday School program. Please consider volunteering. All classes are team taught. No one teaches every week. For more information, please contact Pastor Stacy. To volunteer, please sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-sunday1>

**Wednesday School Workers Needed:** Wednesday School begins on **October 5**. We need adult volunteers, drivers to transport children from school to church, and people to provide snacks. Please consider volunteering. Please sign the list on the sign-up table or volunteer online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-wednesday38>

### *Loving Self...*

**Cribbage Night:** The cribbage group will begin meeting again on the second Monday at the church. Players are asked to donate \$2 and the group decides which charity to donate it to. Playing time starts at 7:00 pm. All players and abilities welcome. The next game will be **September 12**.

## PEACH THANKS

Thank you to all who purchased peaches! Thanks also to those who unloaded, sorted, and sold 530 boxes of peaches this year. All proceeds go to the church Youth Fund. Special thanks to Deb Hoffman for all her coordination.



**SCRIPTURE LESSON: Galatians 3:23-29**

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be reckoned as righteous by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: Philemon 1:1-21**

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To our beloved coworker Philemon, to our sister Apphia, to our fellow soldier Archippus, and to the church in your house:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God always when I mention you in my prayers, because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. I pray that the partnership of your faith may become effective as you comprehend all the good that we share in Christ. I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

For this reason, though I am more than bold enough in Christ to command you to do the right thing, yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me so that he might minister to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel, but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for the long term, no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to me. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.