

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

**March 31, 2024**



**Easter Sunday**

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

March 31, 2024

*Easter Sunday*

9:00 & 10:30 am

**Gathering**

*The evidence of Easter is a reconfigured Easter people, people who are no longer afraid of the dark, people who dare to live by their affections and not by their fears, people who know that they need not die in order to truly experience resurrection living, . . . people who fear neither death nor life. . . In short, people such as you and me who aspire to be people like that. We are the Easter people, for death, in all of its cynical, calculating, greedy ways, no longer has control over us. We have a better idea, we claim a greater truth, we live because we are loved; and because we are loved, we can live.  
- Peter Gomes, What We Forgot to Tell You*

Welcome to our guests who are visiting with us today!

- 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*

**PRELUDE**

***All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name***

**Brass Group**

**WELCOME**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**L:** The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing.

**P:** **Calling us to heal and transform the brokenness and violence of our world.**

**L:** The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing.

**P:** **Calling us to seek out the lost and lonely, those who need to experience God's love.**

**L:** The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing.

**P:** **Calling us to be disciples, healing injustice and announcing the good news to all.**

**L:** Christ is risen!

**P:** **Christ is risen indeed! Come let us worship! Alleluia!**

**\*HYMN**

***Christ the Lord is Risen Today***

**Blue #288**

## \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Holy God, you have shattered the power of sin and death. Yet too often we remain captive to power of fear and anxiety.

P: **Come Holy God, resurrect our faith!**

L: Bring new life where we are worn and tired.

P: **Come Holy God, resurrect our faith!**

L: Bring new love where we have turned hard-hearted.

P: **Come Holy God, resurrect our faith!**

L: Bring forgiveness where we feel hurt and wounded.

P: **Come Holy God, resurrect our faith!**

L: Give us the joy and freedom of your Holy Spirit when we are prisoners of doubt and division.

P: **Come Holy God, resurrect our faith! Amen.**

## \*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: Women, children, men, young and old alike, come and join the song.

P: **Jesus makes us free to live again!**

L: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

P: **Thanks be to God!**

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

P: **And also with you.**

## \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

(Please greet one another with signs of peace)

## \*GLORIA

### *Celtic Alleluia*

*(Choir introduces, then all sing twice)*

The image displays a musical score for a Celtic Alleluia, consisting of two systems of music. Each system features a treble and bass staff joined by a brace, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. The lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.' are written below the notes. The first system ends with a double bar line. The second system begins with a repeat sign and includes a 9/8 time signature change, followed by a final 6/8 measure ending with a double bar line.

## Hearing the Word

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 10:34-43

### PSALM 118:1-2, 15-24



**L:** O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!

**P:** **Let Israel say, "God's steadfast love endures forever."**

**L:** There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;

**P:** **The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hands of the Lord does valiantly."**

**L:** I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord.

**P:** **The Lord has punished me severely, but God did not give me over to death. *R***

**L:** Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

**P:** **This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.**

**L:** I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

**P:** **The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.**

**L:** This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

**P:** **This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. *R***

### TIME WITH CHILDREN

Rev. Chris Myers

### SONG OF BLESSING

*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 16:1-8

### SERMON

Rev. Chris Myers

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR EASTER**

**We believe in the God of Resurrection,  
Who lights the dawn to chase away the darkness;  
Who rolls away each stone of doubt;  
Who surprises us with incredible gifts of family and friends, silence and laughter;  
Who raises us from sadness and despair to the possibilities of blessing and joy.**

**We believe in Jesus the Christ,  
Friend of the poor and searcher for the lost,  
Who comes to us in our grief and longing, calls us by name and sends us on the  
paths of peace to speak of an awesome love that is not overcome by death.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit our Guide,  
The hidden partner, the gentle messenger of God,  
Who fills our every breath with blessing;  
Who guides us in the dark, beckons us to do good, speaks to us in dream and image,  
and watches over us with tender compassion.**

**We believe in the church,  
An instrument of God in this present moment, striving for justice, celebrating in joy,  
clawing at despair, living in hope, praying for healing and forever proclaiming the  
Good News of God's persistent and redeeming love. 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.**

**GATHERING OUR GIFTS**

***Crown Him!***  
***arr. Dan Forrest***

**Chancel Choir & Brass Group**

**\*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, in joy we meet you here. We are thankful that you have blessed us with these gifts of bread and wine so we might be encouraged and strengthened for our journey as your followers. When we feel overburdened or afraid, bring forward the memory of this joyous feast — a sign of your steadfast love. Amen.

<b>Celebrating the Meal</b>
-----------------------------

(All Christians are welcome at the table of our Lord. The bread is gluten-free. 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:** Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week, Jesus Christ was raised from death and appeared to Mary Magdalene. In the evening on the same day, he walked and talked with two disciples and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

**P:** **This is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, young and old, come from the east and the west, the north and the south, and gather about Christ's table.**

**L:** This table is for all people who desire to know the power and presence of Jesus Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

### ***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***

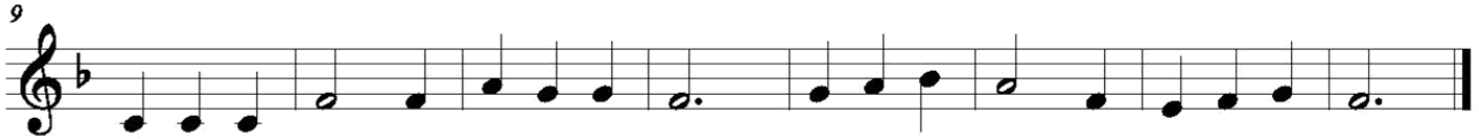
*Hymns during the distribution of the elements:*

### **Christ Has Arisen**

*Congregation joins on refrain:*



Let us sing praise to him with end-less joy. Death's fear-ful sting he has come to de-stroy.



Our sins for-giv-ing, al-le-lu-ia! Je-sus is liv-ing, al-le-lu-ia!

### **Alleluia, Sing to Jesus!**

**Blue #320**

### **Alleluia No. 1**

**Blue #291**

### **This is the Body of Christ**

***This is the body of Christ, broken that we may be whole;  
This cup, as promised by God, true to his word, cradles our Lord;  
Food for the good of the soul.***

### **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**

***Thine is the Glory***

**Blue #310**

**\*BLESSING**

**POSTLUDE**

Reprinted music used by permission under the following licenses:  
OneLicense.net A-703731; CCLI License 2892021



---

## **SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS**

Preacher: Chris Myers  
Celebrant: Stacy Johnson Myers  
Cantor: David Reilly  
Liturgist: 9:00: Rebecca Ferguson  
10:30: Alan Tuchtenhagen  
Deacons: 9:00: Karen Lloyd, Jena Most,  
Lance Lueck, Traci Hagberg,  
Suzanne Hagen  
10:30: Cindy Gandrud,  
Laura Anderson, Brian Miller,  
Marshall Skule, Karen Lloyd  
Organist: Marsha Pearson  
Nursery: Kahla Fuller  
Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman, Ryan Luedtke  
Trustee: Louie Filkins  
Welcomers: Dennis and Lynn Linder,  
Susan Walden  
Counters: Trish Graves, Allen Barnes  
Brass Group: Brenna Frank, Asher Herrera,  
Jamie Mills, Tim Mills,  
Alex Plum, Taylor Wolff

## **CHURCH STAFF**

Pastor: Christopher Myers  
Education Pastor: Stacy Johnson Myers  
Community &  
Outreach Pastor: Deb Meyer  
Youth Minister: Alex Plum  
Music Coordinator &  
Bell Director: Jamie Mills  
Choir Director: Sarah Plum  
Organists: Terry Mithun,  
Marsha Pearson  
Building Manager: Timothy Bylander  
Church Moderator: Kathy Rausch  
Office Administrator: Missy Luedtke  
Nursery Attendant: Kahla Fuller  
Custodian: Farnum Fuller

---

## **Treasurer's Report**

	<u>Mar 24, 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,783	\$ 164,250
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,463	\$ 125,556

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:**

Dorothy Shavers (mother of Rene Bylander), Carsten (grandson of Duane Church), Art Rice, Sue Taylor, Jeff Jorae (son of Raelle), Judy (mother of Lara Koecher), Woods (grandson of Bobbie Kuhn), Melissa Oscanyan (friend of Ann Nelson)

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

- For our Relay for Life Team who served a wonderful Wednesday night dinner, and who are looking forward to the Relay event at RFHS on Friday, April 12
- For those from our Mission Team and others planning Earth Fest at UWRF on April 20 from 11am (talk with Paul Douglas) to 4pm, may it inspire us to better care for God's gift of the good creation
- For our Music Team planning a piano concert celebrating the music from Ken Burns documentaries here at church on Sunday, April 14 at 4pm in the sanctuary, may it kindle joy in our world

**Prayers for our World:**

- For civilians caught in bloody conflict in Israel and Gaza who are always the ones who suffer in times of war, may a new way forward be found to bring lasting peace
- For those leading and helping plan Earth Fest on April 20 at UWRF, may it drive home our need to be better stewards of God's gift of this good creation
- For those fighting cancer and those working to find a cure, may your efforts be fruitful

**Prayers of Thanksgiving:**

- For the sheer joy of Easter
- For our deacons, musicians, pastors, breakfast crew and all who worked so hard to make Easter special
- For our Spring Break Mission Team safely home from their week at Back Bay Mission
- For our baptism boom including Hope Withers (Erik and Vanessa) baptized February 25, Laney Sitz (Heather and Dan) baptized on March 3, Nora Koecher (Dan and Mari) baptized on March 10, and four Thompson children to be baptized on May 5, may they all grow in love and faith!
- For our amazing choir who participated in the It Takes a Village Choir Concert which raised over \$19,000 for the village in Haiti supported by River Falls area churches and for their work and extra effort on the Good Friday Cantata and Easter Sunday Worship

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

- For the Rausch family mourning Bill, the Fosmo family mourning Harold, the Prochnow family mourning Neal, the Sorensen family mourning Dorothy, the Carrison family mourning Dahn (whose service will be this spring), may you be strengthened through the care of others

If you have people you wish to include on our prayer list, please contact the church office or one of the pastors.

## **EASTER LILIES 2024**

*Given by:*

*Allen Barnes*

*Fred and Yvonne Benson*

*Filkins Five Family*

*Traci Hagberg*

*Suzanne Hagen*

*Stu Henning*

*Jeff and Deb Hoffman*

*Michelle Jensen*

*Skip Koosmann*

*Andy and Christina Krueger*

*Barb Mahoney*

*Laura Miller*

*The Myers Family*

*Scott and Ann Nelson*

*Diane Olson*

*Jeff and Becky Pajac*

*Marsha Pearson, Michael, Justine,*

*Liam and Evie Pearson*

*Larry and Barb Peterson*

*Peter and Natasha Rayne*

*Norma Revels*

*Rose Rude*

*Jean Smith*

*Randy and Diane Welsh*

*In memory of JoAnne Barnes*

*In honor of Chuck and Ruth Anne White*

*In memory of Neil and Phyllis Taylor*

*In memory of Wes and Irene Field*

*In memory of Ted and Jean Hagberg*

*In memory of Margaret and Norris Johnson*

*In memory of Judie Henning*

*In honor of our mothers, Marilyn and Nancy*

*In memory of Floyd Miller*

*In memory of Cadence Allen*

*In memory of Susan Koosmann*

*In memory of Dr. William Krueger*

*In memory of Terry and Mark Mahoney*

*In memory of Robert Miller*

*In memory of Mike Kelly*

*In memory of Vernon and Hattie Myers*

*In memory of William and Elizabeth Sortor*

*In memory of Barbara Johnson*

*In memory of Jack and Janie Swanson*

*In memory of Orv and Sylvia Nelson*

*In memory of Patty Hoppe*

*In memory of Harold Fosmo*

*The hydrangea is in memory of Marshall & Vonita Ward,  
Bob & Sadie Pearson, Patti Haigh, and Maynard Pearson*

*In honor of our church's service to others*

*In memory of Benny Macnack*

*In memory of Bill Rayne*

*In honor of her mom, Donna Ray*

*In memory of her parents, Delbert and Joyce Kliebenstein*

*In memory of Marlyn and Bernice Mohr and Lois Smith*

*In memory of Diane's sister Shirley*

# Making Magic with Ken Burns Jacqueline Schwab in concert

*"Jacqueline Schwab brings more feeling and intensity  
to music than anyone I know," - Ken Burns*

FREE CONCERT

Sunday, April 14th  
4:00 PM



Facebook Event

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC  
110 N 3rd St. River Falls, WI  
[firstchurchrf.org](http://firstchurchrf.org) | 715-425-2052

Known for her work in over a dozen Ken Burns' documentaries, pianist Jacqueline Schwab will perform pieces from *Civil War*, *Baseball*, and *Mark Twain* as well as traditional Scottish tunes and her own works inspired by Ken's piercing window into American history.

This poster has been designed using assets from [Freepik.com](http://Freepik.com)

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: Acts 10:34-43**

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

**GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 16:1-8**

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.' So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.