

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

April 14, 2024



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

April 14, 2024

Third Sunday of Easter

10:00 am

Gathering

“Doubt is not the opposite of faith. Doubt, in fact, is probably a necessary ingredient to faith. Faith, by definition, is trust in spite of a lack of evidence. Faith is not knowledge. Faith is more tension-filled. It is acting as if something is true even when you have no proof that it is.”

- David Lose

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*

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND RINGING OF THE BELL

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Quiet and persistent God,

P: **You work miracles in the silent hush before dawn.**

L: Strong and surprising God,

P: **You roll away stumbling stones and bring new life to our dead ends.**

L: Whirling and dancing God,

P: **You delight in empty tombs and surprising visits.**

L: Easter God,

P: **You give us joy and cause an Alleluia to flow from head to toe.**

L: Risen God,

P: **Forever rising in us, we sing our joy.**

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

Let the Whole Creation Cry

1. Let the whole cre - a - tion cry,
2. All who strive to serve the Lord, Al - le - lu - ia!
3. Men and wom-en, young and old,

"Glo - ry be to God on high!"
Proph-ets burn-ing with God's word, Al - le - lu - ia!
Raise the an - them man - i - fold,

Sun and moon, lift up your voice,
Those to whom the arts be - long, Al - le - lu - ia!
Join with chil-dren's songs of praise,

Night and stars, in God re - joice,
Add your voic - es to the song, Al - le - lu - ia!
Wor - ship God through all your days,

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord Jesus, before you died, you prayed that we would be one, and that the world would know we are yours by our love for one another. We confess that too often we have fallen short of your call. Instead of seeking unity, we have gossiped. Instead of seeking to serve one another, we serve only our own interests. Instead of embracing the outsider, we isolate ourselves away from the world. God, save us from seeking redemption in such small ways. Lift our eyes to see your movement and work in the world. Give us the joy of finding your work and joining the movement of the Spirit. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: Christ forgives the most impossible sins,

P: Overcomes the greatest fears,

L: Comforts the loudest cries,

P: And breaks down the strongest barriers to his love and peace.

L: Through the resurrection, Christ's power in the Holy Spirit lives and works here and now.

P: So let us know we are forgiven and be at peace. Amen.

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



Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!
Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!



Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

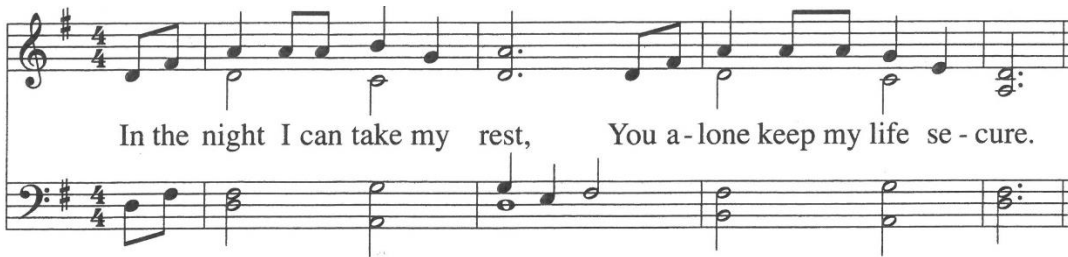
Hearing the Word

SCRIPTURE LESSON

1 John 3:1-7

PSALM 4 (Cantor will introduce; congregation, please join on refrain)

R



In the night I can take my rest, You a-lone keep my life se-cure.

L: Answer me when I call, O God of my right!

P: You gave me room when I was in distress. Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

L: How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?

P: How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies? R

L: But know that the LORD has set apart the faithful; the LORD hears when I call to him.

P: When you are disturbed, do not sin; ponder it on your beds, and be silent.

L: Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD.

P: There are many who say, 'O that we might see some good! Let the light of your face shine on us, O LORD!'

L: You have put gladness in my heart more than when their grain and wine abound.

P: I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O LORD, make me lie down in safety. R

Celebrating the Meal

(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: Today we gather at the table of the Lord where ordinary gifts of bread and wine are shared, where a vision for a new heaven and a new earth shine forth for all to see.

P: We come to be filled where once we were hungry.

L: We come to have our thirst quenched where once we were parched.

P: We come to find peace in a broken world.

All: We come and gather around the table so that together we may become God's faithful followers.

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:

The Lord's Prayer

F C F C F Dm Bb C

1. Our Fa-ther, which art in heav-en,
 2. Done on earth as it is in heav-en,
 3. And for-give all our debts, hal-low-ed - a be thy
 4. Lead us not in - to temp-ta-tion,
 5. Thine is the king-dom, pow-er, and glo-ry,
 6. A - men, a - men, a - men,

F C F C7 F C

name. Thy king - dom come, thy will be done,
 Give us this day our dai - ly bread,
 As we for - give our debt - ors,
 But de - liv - er us from e - vil,
 For - ev - er and ev - er,
 A - men, a - men, a - men, a - men,

F Bb C F Fine

hal - low - ed - a be thy name.

Let Us Break Bread Together

Blue #699

You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

Congregation joins on refrain:

Refrain

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in G minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of three flats, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on a whole note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, Bb4, and C5, then a quarter rest, and finally a quarter note G4. The second staff continues with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note C5. The third staff concludes with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note C5. The time signature changes to 3/4 at the end of the third staff.

You sat - is - fy the hun - gry heart With
gift of fin - est wheat; Come give to us, O
sav - ing Lord, The bread of life to eat.

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.

Proclaiming the Word

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Rev. Chris Myers

SONG OF BLESSING

***Rise and shine and give God the glory, glory.
Rise and shine and give God the glory, glory.
Rise and shine and give God the glory, glory;
Children of the Lord.***

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 24:36b-48

SERMON

Rev. Chris Myers

***HYMN**

Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!

Blue #293

***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.**

MISSION MOMENT – Hope for Creation

Mike Noreen

GATHERING OUR GIFTS

All Things New
By Elaine Hagenberg

Chancel Choir

*DOXOLOGY



Let us bring ev - 'ry gift, let us trea - sure ev - 'ry grace: As you've
giv - en to us, let us share. In our neigh - bor to - day we will
meet youface to face, Let your love be the rule ev-'ry - where.

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Merciful God, we rejoice that we are able to love because you first loved us. May these gifts be used by your church as agents of your love, compassion and justice, that we might provide for our neighbors' needs with more than bread alone. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sending

*HYMN

Go to the World!

Blue #553

(Verse 1 – Choir; Verses 2, 3, & 4 – All)

*BLESSING

POSTLUDE

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Treasurer's Report

	<u>Apr 7, 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,790	\$ 181,559
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,463	\$ 146,482

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'

SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS

Preacher: Chris Myers
Celebrant: Chris Myers
Cantor: David Reilly
Liturgist: Tanya Larsen
Deacons: Cindy Gandrud, Traci Hagberg,
Lance Lueck, Marshall Skule,
Lois Martin

Organist: Marsha Pearson

Nursery: Kahla Fuller

Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman

Trustee: Scott Elsesser

Coffee

Fellowship: Jerry and Pat Anderson and
Marlys Peterson

Counters: Jean Smith, Dennis Linder

*Altar table flowers are given by Jerry and Pat
Anderson and Marlys Peterson.*

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



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

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
110 N 3rd St. River Falls, WI
firstchurchrf.org | 715-425-2052


Facebook Event

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.

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), Sue Taylor, Judy (mother of Lara Koecher), Woods (grandson of Bobbie Kuhn), Melissa Oscanyan (friend of Ann Nelson), Dennis Kiel, Michael O'Brien, Glenn Kees

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For our Relay for Life Team who served a wonderful dinner with 9 different kinds of soup and who participated in 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 Pastor Stacy as she begins her sabbatical, that it may be a time of rest, renewal and growth
- For our Music Team planning a 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
- For the Northwest Association Meeting on Saturday, April 16 in Eau Claire, a gathering of the 60 some UCC churches in Northwest Wisconsin, that it may be a time of fellowship, connection and renewal

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 all those who bring snacks each week for our Wednesday School kids to enjoy, bless you!
- For all those working to put on the latest Music at First Church Concert featuring the music of Ken Burns
- For the Among Friends Program, which meets here at church on Tuesdays to help those with dementia and their families by providing a fun and safe place for them, may they be blessed with more participants and volunteers!
- For our baptism boom which is now at 8 children of God in 4 months 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 (Talia, Orion, Oliver, Tova) to be baptized on May 5, and Dean Wilhelmy (Heidi and Mason) to be baptized on May 19, may they all grow in love and faith!

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Lillian Tan whose brother James Tandias died suddenly this past week, may his family be comforted as they gather in Marinette for a Memorial Service on the 20th of April
- For the family of Dahn Carrison as they gather to celebrate his life on Friday, April 26 at 2pm with visitation an hour before and a lunch to follow, may they be comforted
- 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, 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.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: 1 John 3:1-7

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 24:36b-48

Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

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.