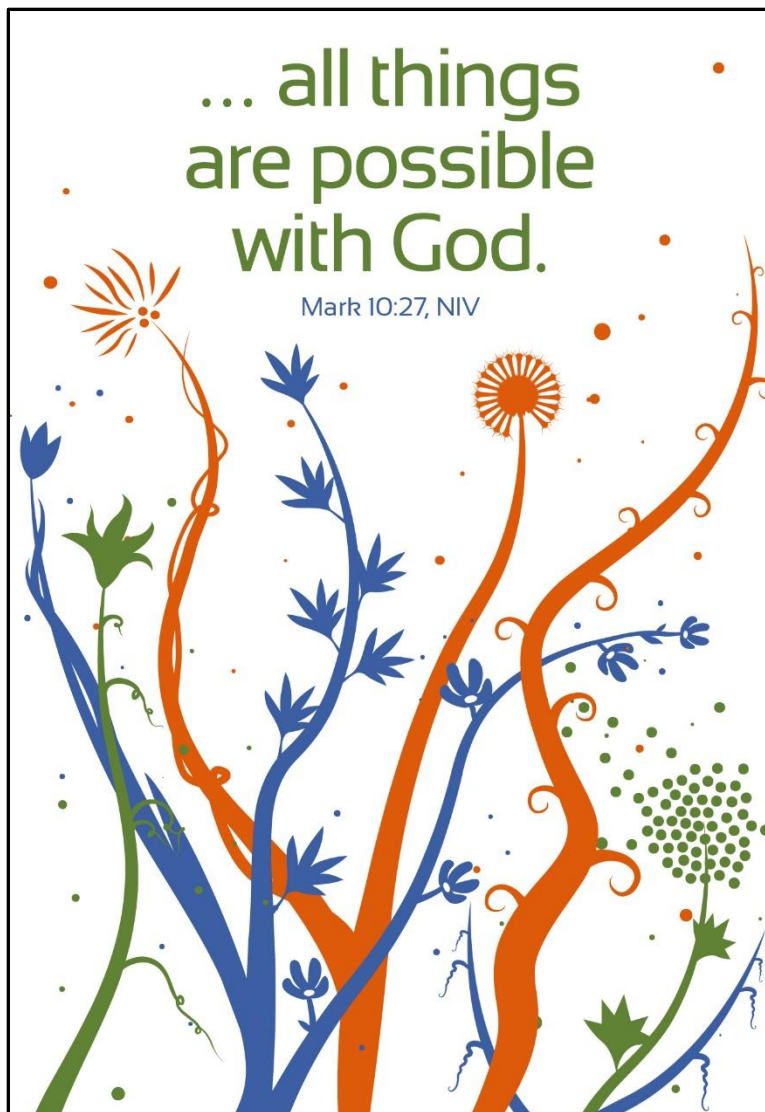


**First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
River Falls, Wisconsin**

**October 13, 2024**



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN

October 13, 2024

Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am

Gathering

“What you do with your resources in this life is your autobiography.”

“A disciple does not ask, "How much can I keep?" but, "How much more can I give?"  
Whenever we start to get comfortable with our level of giving, it's time to raise it again.”

- Randy Alcorn

Welcome to our guests who are visiting with  
us today!

- 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.

*No matter who you are. No matter where  
you are on your spiritual journey, you are  
welcome here!*

- Please stop at the welcome station for a gift.
- Please note our worship service is  
livestreamed.

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND RINGING OF THE BELL

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, so let us thank our God,

**P: For joy in living,**

L: And patience in trouble;

**P: For wisdom to walk the right path,**

L: And peace to calm anxious worry;

**P: For birthday surprises,**

L: And things in all sizes.

**P: All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above,**

L: So let your song arise and give thanks for all God’s love.

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

\*HYMN

*All Creatures of Our God and King*

Blue #23

## \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord God, if we fail to see the explosion of color around us, if we never stop to feel the sun on our faces, if we neglect to listen to the music of birds and the laughter of children, forgive us. Open our hearts to the grace and truth that surrounds and fills the ordinary days of our lives. Remind us of how you made the common uncommon. Forgive us and set us on your right path. Amen.

## \*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: In Christ, the sins of the past are forgiven.

P: **Let us embrace the freedom of new life in Christ.**

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
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## SCRIPTURE LESSON

Hebrews 4:14-16

PSALM 90:12-17 (Cantor will introduce; congregation, please join on refrain)

**R** *O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home!*

L: So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

P: **Turn, O LORD! How long? Have compassion on your servants!**

L: Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

P: **Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil.**

L: Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children.

P: **Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands—O prosper the work of our hands! 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: Come you thankful, come.

**P: Come and eat the bread of life!**

L: Come and drink the cup of blessing!

**P: Come and gather around Christ's table as friends and family.**

L: Together let us thank the God of abundance and let us take our place as God's thankful 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 remember 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:

### **I Surrender All**

Congregation join on refrain:

*Refrain*

I sur-ren-der all, I sur-ren-der all,  
I sur-ren-der all, I sur-ren-der all,

all to thee, my bless-ed Sav-ior, I sur-ren-der all.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'I Surrender All'. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The first system contains the first two lines of the refrain, and the second system contains the final line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

### **The Summons**

**Blue #350**

### **Blest Are They**

Congregation join on refrain:

*Refrain*

Re-joice and be glad! Bless-ed are you;  
ho-ly are you! Re-joice and be glad!  
Yours is the king-dom of God!

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Blest Are They'. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a treble clef staff with guitar chords written above the notes. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The chords are: C, D7, G, D, Em, G, C, G; Am, A, D, C, D7, Em, Em7; C, Dsus, D, C, G.

*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** (Children preschool through grade 8 leave for Sunday School.)

*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**

**Mark 10:17-31**

**SERMON**

**Rev. Chris Myers**

**\*HYMN**

*Rain Down*

**Blue #444**

**\*STATEMENT OF FAITH** – United Church of Christ

**We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:**

**You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.**

**You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.**

**You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.**

**In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.**

**You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues and races.**

**You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.**

**You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. 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

*O God Beyond All Praising*

Jubilee Ringers

*Arr. by Linda Lamb*

### \*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, faith walks hand in hand with serving, and love expresses itself in giving. May we be faithful, O Lord, in our serving and loving in our giving. For we do these things in your name and ask your blessing. Amen.

### Sending

### \*HYMN

*God of Grace and God of Glory*

Blue #569

### \*BLESSING

### POSTLUDE

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### Treasurer's Report

	<u>Oct 6, 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,804	\$ 394,341
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,463	\$ 418,520

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'

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## SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS

Preacher: Chris Myers  
Celebrant: Chris Myers  
Cantor: David Reilly  
Liturgist: Traci Hagberg  
Deacons: Karen Lloyd, Marshall Skule,  
Kathy Tomlinson,  
Cindy Gandrud  
Organist: Marsha Pearson  
Nursery: Kahla Fuller  
Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman  
Trustee: Vicki Sippel  
Welcomers: JoAnn Lentz, Duane Church  
Coffee  
Fellowship: Congregational Croissants  
Counters: Diane Welsh, Scott Nelson  
*Altar table flowers are given by Traci Hagberg  
in memory of Ted and Jean Hagberg.*

## 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

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MUSIC AT FIRST CHURCH  
PRESENTS:

# THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME

FREE  
EVENT!

DRAMA - HORROR - ROMANCE

Sunday, October 20th  
3:30 PM

First Congregational UCC  
110 N THIRD ST. RIVER FALLS, WI  
715-425-2052

The 1923 Lon Chaney silent film  
WITH LIVE ORGAN ACCOMPANIMENT BY  
**DENNIS JAMES**



Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

**Those who are ill or recovering:**

Sue Taylor, Melissa Oscanyan (friend of Ann Nelson), Jeff (brother-in-law of Janice Healy), Rev. Kurt Katzmar, Barbara de Souza, Mike (friend of Mark Hudnall), Miranda

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

- For those at Moon Beach Camp for their work week October 7-13, may you travel safely there and back while doing good work
- For the Music Committee preparing for the Silent Movie on Sun, Oct 20, may it be a fun filled evening!
- For those who enjoyed the latest Learning Community on October 8 which featured the art of Japanese artist Sadao Watanabe, that it may be a time of seeing our Christian faith through new eyes
- For ALL who enabled us to recently burn our church mortgage, thank you!
- For Josh Sippel who leaves for basic training on November 4th, and Ryan Luedtke who enters the Air National Guard, may they be given strength and courage for the journey ahead

**Prayers for our World:**

- For a lasting peace in the Middle East that brings justice and security to all people and for those meeting after worship this Sunday to seek ways to work for a lasting peace in the Middle East, may God's Spirit be present
- For those cleaning up after Hurricanes Helene and Milton, may you be given strength, help from neighbors and others
- For civilians caught in bloody conflict in Israel, Lebanon and Gaza, Ukraine and Russia who are always the ones who suffer in times of war, may a new way forward be found to bring lasting peace
- For all of us as we work to better care for the gift of God's good creation and reduce the effects of climate change
- For families challenged by mental health issues
- For our nation as we gear up for the next election, that we may talk respectfully about issues and solve our real problems without violence

**Prayers of Thanksgiving:**

- For the fun and joy of college packs which will go out to our college kids later this week, thank you church!
- For the gift of our new church sign, the ability to fully pay off our church mortgage and a new lawn tractor, we are thankful for your generous support!
- For the gift of a cancer free diagnosis after treatment for Glenn Kees
- For Barb de Souza our semi-retired healthcare missionary in Rio de Janeiro who celebrates her 94th birthday on Oct 18, may she recover from a recent fall and continue her feisty battle for her community

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

- For the family of Ron Truesdill (husband of Jane) as they mourn his sudden death, may they receive strength and courage
- For the family of Linda (daughter of Chuck White) who died peacefully at the age of 71, the same age as her mother, may God give the White family with strength and faith
- For the family of Liz Gandrud (Cindy Gandrud's mother) who died this past week, that they may mourn with hope and faith
- For the families of Zeke Wells and Donna Ray (mother of Norma Revels), may you be given God's strength, faith and gratitude

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

## Announcements

*No matter who you are. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!*

### Loving God

**New to Church:** Are you a first-time visitor? Please stop at the welcome table in the gathering area to receive a special welcome gift from us!

**Sunday Morning Text Study:** Please join us on Sunday mornings to discuss the Bible passages used in worship. The group meets from **9:00–9:50** Sunday mornings in the Youth Room. For more information, contact Pastor Stacy.

**Adult Bible Study:** Wednesday afternoon Adult Bible Study meets from **1:00–2:30 pm**. The group is discussing *Matthew: The Gospel of Promised Blessings*, by Matthew L. Skinner. Copies of the book are available in the office for \$14.00. For more information, contact Pastor Stacy.

### Loving Neighbor

**River Falls Food Pantry:** The Food Pantry is in urgent need of monetary donations! Information about donations is on their website at <https://rfcfp.org/>. And grocery donations can be brought to 705 St. Croix Street during their hours of operation: Mon 10am-12pm & 6-7:30pm; Wed 1-5pm; Thurs 6-7:30pm; Fri 10am-12pm. Thank you!!

**First Church Companions:** The “**Companions**” meet quarterly to support each other, help new companions, and discuss questions. If you are willing to visit with someone in our church community and connect at least once a month with a call or visit, please sign-up. If you are interested in receiving regular visits, there is also a line on the same sign-up sheet for “**Buddies.**” Contact Pastor Deb with questions.

**Among Friends** is a community-based social respite program serving adults who have memory loss who reside in Pierce & St. Croix Counties. For more information, call (715) 293-2561. Check out the website: [amongfriendsrf.com](http://amongfriendsrf.com) & Facebook page. It is held at the church **Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am to 3pm**.

**Simpson Shelter Donations:** Please note that all donations to the Simpson Shelter need to be **new** items. They will not take anything that is used. Thank you.

### Loving Self

**Family Meals:** On Wednesday nights, we offer a home-cooked meal in the Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$9 per person with a family max of \$30. **Meals are served from 5:15 to 6:00 pm**. You can get your meal to go if you go through the line (indicate when you sign up). **Reservations must be placed by noon on Tuesdays**. You can make a reservation online, the sign-up table or by calling the church office. Menu for Oct 16: Parmesan crusted chicken with hollandaise sauce, rice pilaf, salad and croissants.

**A Conversation For Women About Women’s Health:** We’ve invited Dr. Morgan Barnum, a practicing OB/GYN at Hudson Physicians to discuss this question: What women need to know to be strong partners in managing their own health care, particularly amid new & dynamic medical research. The conversation will be **Thurs, Oct 24, 6:30–8:15 pm**. The evening will include a healthy (but tasty!) dessert. For more info, contact Pastor Stacy. Register at church or online.

**Game Day Sunday is TODAY** following Coffee Fellowship. Join us.

**Merry Widows:** They will meet on **Wed, October 16 at 1:00 pm at Tattersall**. All widows are welcome to join us for lunch and conversation! See JoAnn Lentz for more information.

**Cribbage Night:** The cribbage group meets the second Monday. Players are asked to donate \$2 & the group decides which charity. Playing time is **7:00 pm**. All players & abilities welcome. The next game is **Oct 14**.

**Men's Group:** Our church men's group meets **every other Tuesday from 9:00-10:00 am** in the Youth Room. All men are welcome to join us for coffee, donuts and lively conversation. We gather for an hour and Pastor Chris leads us into a brief discussion. Our next gathering is **Oct 15** (Bring Justice). Join us!

**Women's Group:** Interested in fellowship & community with other women? Pastor Deb invites you to join her at Noon every 2nd & 4th Tuesday. Please bring a sack lunch. The next meetings will be **Oct 22 & Nov 12**.

**Let's Knit Together:** Calling all who knit, crochet, or have a craft that can be brought to church. Join us on **Thursdays at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall**. We have a great time sharing our projects & enjoying each other's company. Any questions, contact Marie Roe at 715-781-2103 or [firstroe@gmail.com](mailto:firstroe@gmail.com)

**Church Yoga:** The church yoga group meets on **Tuesdays and Thursdays** in the church Fellowship Hall from **9:00-10:00 am** and via Zoom. Please contact the church office to receive the Zoom link.

**WISE Meeting:** The next WISE Team meeting is **October 27** after worship.

**WISE Corner:** NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Family Support Group is held the **2nd & 4th Thursdays at 6:30 pm at the River Falls Public Library**. For more info, call Marg Downing 715-307-5905.

### ***Community Life***

**Palestine-Israel Conflict:** There will be a meeting **TODAY** following worship to start a group study of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This is a complex, long-standing struggle. The goal will be to prayerfully approach the issue by looking at biblical texts, historical context and current political realities. Please use the sign-up sheet to register.

**Music at First Church Presents: The Hunchback of Notre Dame** – The 1923 Lon Chaney silent film with live organ accompaniment by Dennis James. Join us on **Sunday, October 20, at 3:30 pm** at the church for this free event!

**Fall Clean-Up, Saturday, November 2, 9:00 am:** Please bring your gloves, rakes, blowers, pruning shears, etc. to help clean up the grounds at the church. Back-up date is Saturday, November 9. Please sign up and join us!

**Anxious Generation Learning Community on Tues, Nov 12:** It is clear families & kids are struggling today, often because of changes & challenges of technology. Pastor Chris will be presenting his insights from a wonderful book: *Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*. Other presenters will include Middle School Teacher Jenny Luedtke & our Youth Minister & High School Teacher Alex Plum. If you want to read the book, please sign up. Copies are \$20 each and are available from the church office.

**Giving Thanks Meal:** The Annual Giving Thanks Meal will be **Sunday, November 17**, after the 10:00 am worship service in the Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$10 per meal. Join us for a home-cooked Thanksgiving meal as we kick off the season of giving thanks. Please include your pie choice of pumpkin or apple and let us know if you will bring a side dish. Sign up by November 13 at church or online.

### ***Youth Events***

**Wednesday School:** All children who are in kindergarten through Grade 5 are invited to participate in Wednesday School. Elementary students in River Falls are picked up at the four elementary schools in town at the end of the school day. Wednesday School concludes at 5:15 pm. Registration forms are available at church and on the website. Please contact Pastor Stacy with questions.

**Wed, Oct 16, 6:30-7:30pm – Middle School Youth Group Bonfire:** This will be from 6:30-7:30 pm on the church lawn. Please encourage your child to invite some friends, bring lawn chairs, and come for a fun evening of middle school youth group! We will be making s'mores, playing lawn games, and enjoying each other's company.

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: Hebrews 4:14-16**

Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 10:17-31**

As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, 'Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: "You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.'" He said to him, 'Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.' Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, 'You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, 'How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!' And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, 'Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.' They were greatly astounded and said to one another, 'Then who can be saved?' Jesus looked at them and said, 'For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.'

Peter began to say to him, 'Look, we have left everything and followed you.' Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.'