

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

November 10, 2024



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

November 10, 2024

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am

Gathering

Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you. - Saint Augustine

Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith. - Henry Ward Beecher

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: The blessing of God,

P: Rests on our shoulders.

L: The love of God,

P: Dwells in our hearts.

L: The word of God,

P: Informs our speech.

L: The compassion of God,

P: Stirs us to care.

L: The grace of God,

P: Compels us to sing.

L: The mystery of God,

P: Leads us to worship.

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

I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

With a backbeat G C G Am7 G

1. I'm gon-na live so God can use me
(I'm gon-na live so) (God can

G7 C G7 C Am G C

use me,) an - y time and an - y - where
(yes an - y time) (yes an - y -

G G C G B7

where) I'm gon-na live so God can use me
(I'm gon-na live so)

Em C G A7 D7 G C G

an - y time and an - y - where.
(an - y time,) (yes an - y - where).

2. I'm gonna work...

3. I'm gonna pray...

4. I'm gonna sing...

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

L: Gracious God, we are quick to judge others by what they fail to do and how quick we are to give excuses for our actions.

P: Forgive us, Holy God.

L: How easy it is for us to look askance at how someone is spending their money and how fast we are to make allowances for our own spending habits.

P: Forgive us, Holy God.

L: We are so eager to hold everyone accountable to the letter of the law and to give ourselves a large measure of grace.

P: Forgive us, Holy God.

L: Release us from the harshness of our ways and fill us with the love of Christ that we might extend the gift of grace which has been so graciously given to us.

All: Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

L: Listen! Hear this good news! The grace of God surrounds us and goes before us.

P: God's love for us is stronger than any of our misdeeds.

L: In Christ you are forgiven!

P: In Christ you are forgiven!

**All: Let us receive this good news and breathe in the breath of God's forgiving love.
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 (Sung twice, first by choir, then all)**



I thank you, Je-sus, thank you, Je - sus,
thank you, Je - sus, my Sav - ior God, for you brought me, yes, you
brought me from a might-y, a might-y long way, a might-y long



I thank you, Je-sus, thank you, Je - sus,
thank you, Je - sus, my Sav - ior God, for you brought me, yes, you
way.
brought me from a might-y, a might-y long way, a might-y long way.

Hearing the Word

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 12:38-44

PSALM 146 (Cantor will introduce; congregation, please join on refrain)

R



Lord, come and save us. Lord, come and
save us. Lord, come and save us.

L: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

P: **I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

L: Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help.

P: **When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish.**

- L: Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;
- P: Who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.**
- L: The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
- P: The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**
- L: The LORD watches over the strangers; God upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked God brings to ruin.
- P: The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD! 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 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:

When the Poor Ones

Blue #624

Choir - Verse 1; All - Verses 2, 3 and 4

I Surrender All

Blue #474

Congregation join on refrain:

***I surrender all, I surrender all,
all to thee my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.***

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

Blue #132

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.)

***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.***

SCRIPTURE LESSON

1 Kings 17:8-16

SERMON

Rev. Chris Myers

***HYMN**

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above
(Verses 1, 3 and 4)

Blue #56

***STATEMENT OF FAITH – African Creed**

We believe in the one High God, who out of love created the beautiful world and everything good in it. God created the human person for happiness in the world. God loves the world and every nation and tribe on the earth. We have known this High God in the darkness, and now we know God in the light.

God promised in the Scriptures to save the world and all the nations and tribes. We believe that God kept all promises by sending Jesus Christ, a person in the flesh, a Jew by tribe, born poor in a little village, who left his home and was always on safari doing good, curing people by the power of God, teaching about God and humankind, showing that the meaning of religion is love. Jesus was rejected by his people, tortured and nailed hands and feet to a cross, and died. He lay buried in the grave, but the hyenas did not touch him, and on the third day, he rose from the grave.

We believe that all our sins are forgiven by God. We accept the gift of baptism and in the community of faith we live in ways of love and share the bread of life. We announce the good news to all people so long as God gives us breath. We believe that the Spirit is in the world and that God cares for us in life and in death. This we believe. 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 – Basics for Local Kids

Renee Whipple

GATHERING OUR GIFTS

Battle Hymn of the Republic

Chancel Choir

Arr. Mark Hayes

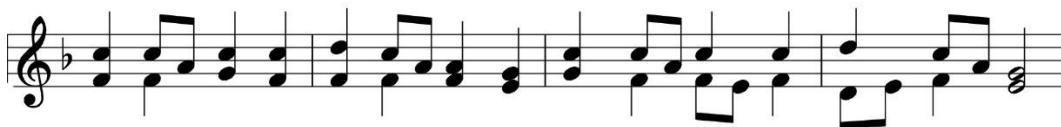
*OFFERTORY



For the life that you have giv - en, for the love in Christ made known,



with these fruits of time and la - bor, with these gifts that are your own:



here we of - fer, Lord, our prais-es; heart and mind and strength we bring;



give us grace to love and serve you, liv - ing what we pray and sing.

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Extravagant God, as you have lavished your grace and blessings upon us, so we delight to share our bounty with others. Thank you for the privilege of participating in your kingdom. Use these gifts, we pray, to bring healing, comfort and hope to a world in need of you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sending

*HYMN

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

Blue #572

*BLESSING

POSTLUDE

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SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS

Preacher: Chris Myers
Celebrant: Stacy Johnson Myers
Cantor: David Reilly
Liturgist: Traci Hagberg
Deacons: Laura Anderson, Brian Miller,
Kathy Tomlinson, Loral Keil,
Cindy Gandrud
Organist: Marsha Pearson
Nursery: Kahla Fuller
Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman
Trustee: Tim Bylander
Welcomers: Dennis and Lynn Linder
Coffee
Fellowship: Luedtke Family
Counters: Jean Smith, Scott Nelson
*Altar table flowers are given by Tom and
Maxine Sitz in celebration of their 50th
wedding anniversary.*

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>Nov 3, 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,947	\$ 429,091
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,463	\$ 460,372

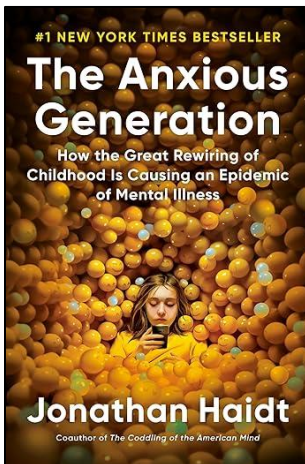
A full accounting of all income and expenses is available in the church office.

*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'



Kids (and adults) are struggling today with mental health often caused by technology and social media. Based on *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt, Pastor Chris will share insights from the book about how we got to this point as well as strategies and best practices to help all of us toward better mental health and appropriate use of technology and social media. Joining us will be our Youth Minister (and teacher) Alex Plum and church member and veteran teacher Jenny Luedtke. This is a REALLY important issue, and we hope you can join us and invite friends and family to join you. Join us on **Tuesday, November 12th at 6:30 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. Coffee and treats will be served.

Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Those who are ill or recovering:

Sue Taylor, Jeff (brother-in-law of Janice Healy), Rev. Kurt Katzmar, Barbara de Souza, Mike (friend of Mark Hudnall), Larry Bauer, Kevin (friend of Tanya Larsen), Crissy (daughter of Brad Williams), Dave Mountain

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For the Krueger Clan and their team who are gearing up for the Giving Thanks Meal on Sunday, November 17th, that we may all stop and give God thanks (and sign up early too please!)
- For Pastor Deb as she retires from her church position to spend more time with family and as we celebrate her two-year ministry here on her last Sunday, December 1st, may God grant her rest and renewal in this next stage of her life
- For our Discipleship Team as they work to secure pledges to fully fund our church ministry for 2025 as we dedicate our financial pledges on Sunday, November 17, may we be blessed with generous hearts
- For those getting ready for the next Learning Community on Tuesday, November 12th on the Anxious Generation book which seeks to find ways to better help and support our young people
- For Josh Sippel who left for basic training on November 4th, and Ryan Luedtke who enters the Air National Guard likely in January, may they be given strength and courage for the journey ahead

Prayers for our World:

- For our nation as we digest this last election and move forward in faith
- For families and staff affected by the sudden closure of Jacob's Ladder, may a quick solution be found
- For veterans as we approach Veteran's Day on Monday, November 11th, may we remember your sacrifice
- For lasting peace in the Middle East that brings justice and security to all people and for those working for a lasting peace in the Middle East, may God's Spirit be present
- 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

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

- For those who helped at the funeral lunch for Jan Charpentier on Saturday, November 9, you are angels in disguise
- For Tom and Maxine Sitz who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on November 9th, may you be blessed with warm memories and many more years together
- For Don and Ginny Larson who celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on November 20th, may God continue to bless you both! Wow!
- For our Trustees, Garden Geeks and others who helped get our church grounds ready for the fall
- For all those who will help cook, serve, set up and enjoy our big all church Giving Thanks Meal on Sunday, November 17th, God bless you and sign up today!

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Jan Charpentier as they mourn and gathered here for a Memorial Service on Saturday, November 9, may they be given peace
- For the saints of First Congregational as we remembered them on All Saints Sunday, November 3rd: Susan Koosmann, Bill Olson, Fred Volkmann, Sheila Peterson, Dahn Carrison, Dorothy Sorenson, Dick Alexander, Neal Prochnow, Harold Fosmo, Richard Wells, Ron Truesdill, Janice Charpentier

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

GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 12:38-44

As he taught, he said, 'Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.'

He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, 'Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.'

SCRIPTURE LESSON: 1 Kings 17:8-16

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah, saying, 'Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.' So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, 'Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.' As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, 'Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.' But she said, 'As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.' Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth.' She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.



Last call for the Giving Thanks Meal next Sunday.
Sign up by Wednesday as space is limited!