

Weekly Word – For Sunday, January 19, 2025

Worship this Week:

Everyone loves a wedding. Even Jesus. This Sunday he is invited to a wedding with surprising results. We also learn a new word that we didn't know we needed, but which will help us stay rooted, active yet also calm in an increasingly chaotic and uncertain world. Join us this Sunday at the 10am worship service as the Bell Choir provides special music, Sunday School continues and communion is celebrated.

Link to Worship Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/5FMRS-gk8vY?si=0xsxAkaPJjH1yxxj>

Sunday Bulletin

This Week

Sun., Jan 19	9:00-9:45 am	Bells Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
	9:00-9:45 am	Sunday Morning Text Study in the Youth Room
	9:45-11:15 am	Nursery Open
	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	10:30-11:15 am	Sunday School (Pre-School – Grade 8)
	11:00-11:30 am	Coffee Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall
	11:00-11:30 am	WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM
Tues., Jan 21	11:15 am	Game Day
	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00-10:00 am	Men's Group
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	6:30-7:30 pm	Boards and Committees Meetings
Wed., Jan 22	7:30-8:30 pm	Church Council Meeting
	1:00-2:30 pm	Adult Bible Study
	3:45-5:15 pm	Wednesday School
	6:00-7:00 pm	Bells
	6:30-7:30 pm	MS Class
	6:30-7:30 pm	HS Youth Group
Thurs., Jan 23	7:00-8:00 pm	Chancel Choir
	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	10:00-11:00 am	Knitting Group
Sun., Jan 26	9:00-9:45 am	Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
	9:00-9:45 am	Sunday Morning Text Study in the Youth Room
	9:45-11:15 am	Nursery Open
	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	10:30-11:15 am	Sunday School (Pre-School – Grade 8)
	11:00-11:30 am	Coffee Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall
	11:00-11:30 am	WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM

Assisting in Sunday's worship service are:

Preacher:	Chris Myers
Celebrant:	Chris Myers
Cantor:	David Reilly
Liturgist:	Traci Hagberg
Deacons:	Laura Anderson, Becky Pajac, Brian Miller, Kathy Tomlinson, Loral Keil
Organist:	Terry Mithun
Nursery:	Kahla Fuller
Live Stream:	Jeff Hoffman
Trustee:	Louie Filkins

Welcomers: Susan Walden, Norma Revels
Coffee Fellowship: Beatty Family
Counters: Diane Welsh, Scott Nelson

Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting of the congregation will be **Sunday, February 2** in the Fellowship Hall starting at about 11:15 am. In addition to receiving reports, passing budgets and electing officers, we will also hear ministry updates from many of our teams and committees. Please sign up so we have enough food!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-54463810-annual>

Loving God

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** in the Youth Room. For more information, contact Pastor Stacy.

Adult Bible Study: The Adult Bible Study group meets on **Wednesday afternoons, 1:00–2:30 pm**. For more information, contact Pastor Stacy.

Damascus Project: Our Wisconsin Conference sponsors an online learning community called the Damascus Project with a wide variety of options to grow in faith and living. Their website is: www.the-damascus-project.org. And upcoming topics include a class on UCC History and Polity as well as Theology and Ecology. Check it out!

Loving Neighbor

Thrivent Free Money: Do you have a retirement account through Thrivent? If so, you can designate some or all of your 'choice dollars' to a non-profit such as First Congregational Church. We are now set up to receive such gifts. Talk to the church office if you need more information.

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

Among Friends Volunteers Needed: The Among Friends program for families with dementia needs more helpers. The program has expanded to two days a week and has 12 active guests which means they need more volunteers. Training is provided & the rewards are phenomenal! They are particularly in need of male volunteers but are willing to receive all. Contact the program coordinator Sarah Schaffner at amongfriendsrf@gmail.com

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

Game Day Sunday is January 19 following Coffee Fellowship. Bring a dish to share. Join us!

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 on **Feb 10**.

New Evening Men's Group: An Evening Men's Group will meet for 3 Thursdays in February. We will meet **Thursday, Feb 13 and 20 from 6:30-7:30 pm** at The Garage Bikes and Brews then head to Feed My Starving Children to pack meals on **Thursday, Feb 27 from 7:00-8:30 pm**. Our purpose is to connect with each other and our Christian faith. Please see Pastor Chris for more details. All guys welcome! Sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-54315166-evening>

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 gatherings are **Tues, Jan 21 & Feb 4 & 18**. Join us!

Women's Group: Interested in fellowship & community with other women? You are invited to join the group at noon every 2nd & 4th Tuesday. Please bring a sack lunch. The next meetings will be **Jan 28 & Feb 11 & 25.**

Knitting Group Update: Kim Johnson from Basics for Kids will pick up hats, scarves and mittens on **Thursday, January 23rd.** Bring your finished items and place them in the special marked bin. *We have an Endowment grant to buy more yarn.* Please reach out to Marie Roe (715) 781-2103 or firstroe@gmail.com if you need any yarn. We can help you start or finish a project. Join us on Thursdays or work on your own.

Let's Knit/Craft Together: Join us on **Thursdays at 10:00 am.** We meet at **The Sycamore on the first Thursday of each month and in the Fellowship Hall the other Thursdays.** We have a great time sharing our current projects and enjoying each other's company. Any questions, contact Marie Roe at 715-781-2103 or 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 Corner: NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Family Support Group is held on the **2nd and 4th Thursdays at 6:30 pm at the River Falls Public Library.** For more info, call Marg Downing 715-307-5905.

Community Life

Learning Community: Conflict in the Middle East: Please join us for a Learning Community focused on the Israel/Hamas conflict. Dr. Andrew Latham, Professor of Political Science at Macalester College, will provide a balanced presentation that captures the complexity of the situation in Israel and Palestine. Dr. Latham will include a perspective on the role of the US in the conflict as well as imagine components in a lasting peace for the region. The event will be **Tues, Jan 28, 6:30–8:30 pm.**

Please register: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-52650250-learning>

Church Clean Up Inside: The Trustees need your help cleaning up inside the church on **Sat, Feb 1 at 9:00 am.** Cleaning supplies will be provided. Church Interns will receive double hours for helping out. Please sign up.

Connecting Through Cooking: It is cold and dark so why not learn a new skill! Join Chef Peter Kwong in our church kitchen as we learn how to cook Thai and Italian food. Cost is \$30, space is limited to 15 people and you must pay for your spot once you register. Classes take place from 5:30 to 7:30 pm and we will eat what we cook! Here are the details:

Tuesday, February 4: Thai Spring Roll, Pad Thai (w/Chicken or Beef), Tofu Pad Prig Khing (String Beans), Thai Fried Rice

Sign-up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-54404575-thai>

Tuesday, February 11: Bruschetta, Ensalada Italiana, Fettuccine Alfredo, Chicken Piccata

Sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-54404984-italian>

SAVE THE DATE! Shrimp Boil to Benefit Back Bay Mission - Tuesday, February 25 at 5:30 pm:

Menu: Peel and eat shrimp, coleslaw, breadsticks and cake. Chicken fingers for those that don't like shrimp. Tickets: Adults – \$15; Child – \$8. Tickets will go on sale Sun, Jan 26 after worship. More to come later.

Creative Catharsis Workshop - Thurs, Feb 27, from 6:30-8:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

We often put aside and neglect our creative desires and reflection of ourselves in our fast-paced, grind culture-influenced lives. This workshop aims to provide participants with an invitation to connect to their creativity and meaning-making through the process and application of collage. Using simple materials and tools, we'll explore how the simple act of sifting, sorting, cutting, and arranging paper ephemera offers a sanctuary of rest, reflection and a catalyst for self-discovery. All supplies provided. Sponsored by the WISE Team. Please sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-54235902-creative>

Youth Events

High School Ski Night – THIS Friday: Alex is planning a High School Ski Night at Trollhaugen this Friday! Cost is \$5 for those who just need lift tickets and \$15 for those who need lift tickets and gear. Friends are welcome! Church van leaves at 8pm, we ski 9pm to midnight, and will be back around 1am. It will be warm on Friday so come! Text or email Alex to sign up. We have a good crew going.

Youth Events for Wednesday, January 22:

3:45-5:15 pm Wednesday School

6:30-7:30 pm Middle School Class with Pastor Stacy in the Youth Room

6:30-7:30 pm High School Youth Group with Alex in Fellowship Hall

Survey for Mission Trips for Youth: We are conducting a survey to gauge youth and family interest and availability for mission opportunities for the Summer of 2025, and Spring Break (March 16-20) of 2026. Our hope is to find areas of mission work that you would be interested in and provide spiritual and personal growth. Students or parents, please take the time to look over the options and let us know of your interest in the mission trips we could offer: <https://forms.gle/wEiLueQtP97JN3Gn8>

Sign Ups

Coffee Fellowship Hosts Needed: Please sign up to help host and serve. Everything you need is provided, you just need to get there a little early to get things ready, serve and do a quick clean up. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-coffee>

Liturgists Needed: Please sign up to be a Sunday liturgist. You will lead us in the Call to Worship and a Scripture text. The bulletin will be sent via email to you on Thursday. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-liturgist>

Welcomers Needed: Please sign up to be a welcomer on Sunday morning before the worship service. One person is needed at the bottom of the stairs & one person is needed at the ramp entrance. Please arrive 20 minutes prior to the service. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-welcomers>

Altar Table Flowers: Please sign up to provide flowers for the altar for Sunday worship. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-altar>

Church App: The church has a mobile phone app. You can download it from the church website or by scanning the QR Code found on a flyer on the sign-up table and Facebook.



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'

Finances

THANK YOU to all of you for your support of the mission and ministry of our church through your tithes, offerings, and gifts. Your generosity empowers our church! Please be sure to sign up for e-giving or mail/drop off your gifts. There is also an option to give online via our church website.

Treasurer's Report

Dec 31, 2024

General Fund Income	\$ 555,541.86
General Fund Expenses	\$ 546,729.57
2024 Net Income	\$ 8,812.29

Jan 12, 2025

General Fund Income* \$ 45,515.54

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

A new budget will be approved at the Feb 2 Annual Meeting.

Current Capital Campaign – Dec 31

Total Pledged	\$596,646.00
Total Received to Date	<u>571,873.15</u>
Remaining Balance	\$ 24,772.85

People

- For Evelyn Adele Sitz born to Heather and Danny and grandparent Maxine and Tom on Friday, January 10th, who is home and safe and wonderful, thanks be to God!
- For Josh Sippel who graduates from Basic Training at Ft Jackson, SC on February 6 and will then do training at Fort Gregg-Adams located in VA, congratulations and thank you for your service
- For Marlys Peterson who keeps our church kitchen organized, you are an angel!
- For Salem Elaine who arrived on Thursday, December 19th to Marlee and Joe Querna and grandparents Wendy and John Querna, may she be welcomed in love and grace
- For Maverick Martin Bos born on December 18th to Alison and Tony Bos and grandparents Dean and Sue Grisar and proud uncle Dennis, who arrived at 7 pounds 9 ounces and 20 inches, may he grow in grace and love

Do you have upcoming news or celebrations to share with the congregation? Graduations? Birthdays and Anniversary celebrations? Please email them to office@firstchurchrf.org by Wednesday of each week to be included in the Weekly Word which is sent out on Thursdays.

Prayer: Prayer connects us with God and our neighbors. Each week in the bulletin there is a prayer list of people, situations and thanksgivings that is also sent out by email to help people in their prayer life. You can sign up by contacting the office at office@firstchurchrf.org

Church Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday – 8:30 am to 4:00 pm

Friday – 8:30 to Noon

Church Staff Contact:

Church Office - 715-425-2052

Pastor: Chris Myers - chris@firstchurchrf.org

Education: Stacy Johnson Myers - stacy@firstchurchrf.org

Youth: Alex Plum – rfyouthgroup@gmail.com

Office/Finance: Missy Luedtke - missy@firstchurchrf.org

Music: Jamie Mills - degolierjamie@gmail.com

Choir: Sarah Plum – sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com

Building: Farnum Fuller – farnumfuller@gmail.com

Maintenance: Tim Bylander - timthefixitguy@gmail.com