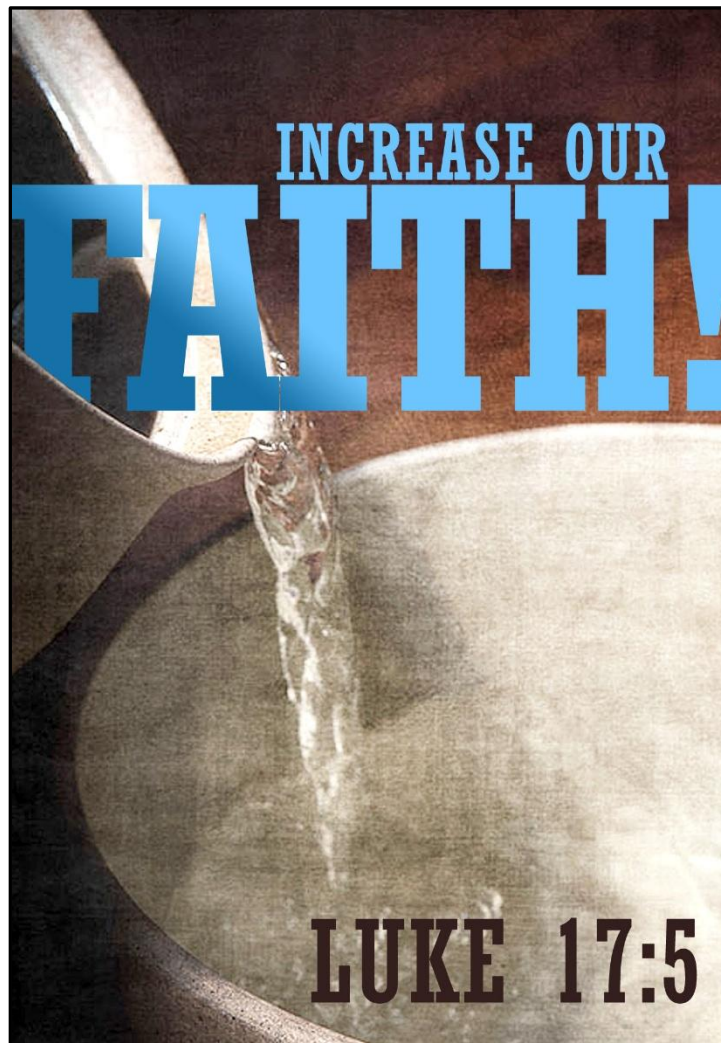


**First Congregational
United Church of Christ
River Falls, Wisconsin**

October 5, 2025



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

October 5, 2025

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am

Gathering

“Not all of us can do great things, but all of us can do small things with great love.”
- Mother Teresa

<p>Welcome to our guests who are visiting with us today!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Activity bags are available for children.- Large print bulletins are available.- Visitors please stop at the welcome booth.- Please stand when noted by the *- Congregation responses are in bold.- Please note our worship service is livestreamed.	<p>Our Mission is to Love God and Serve People.</p> <p>Everyone is welcome because everyone matters.</p>
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GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND RINGING OF THE BELL

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: The disciples gathered before Jesus and said,

P: Lord, increase our faith!

L: If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could do amazing things,

P: Lord, increase our faith!

L: Like the disciples of old, we cry to God saying,

P: Lord, increase our faith!

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

***HYMN**

All Creatures of Our God and King

Blue #23

Verses 1, 2, 3 and 5

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

L: Gracious God, if we have spoken when it was time for silence,

P: Forgive us, O Lord.

L: If we acted when it was time to wait,

P: Forgive us, O Lord.

L: And when you have called us to speak and to act, but we have remained silent and still,

P: Forgive us, O Lord. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: Our God does not want us to wallow in the sins of the past.

P: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and set free for service in his name.**

L: This is good news.

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

(Congregation joins on refrain below)



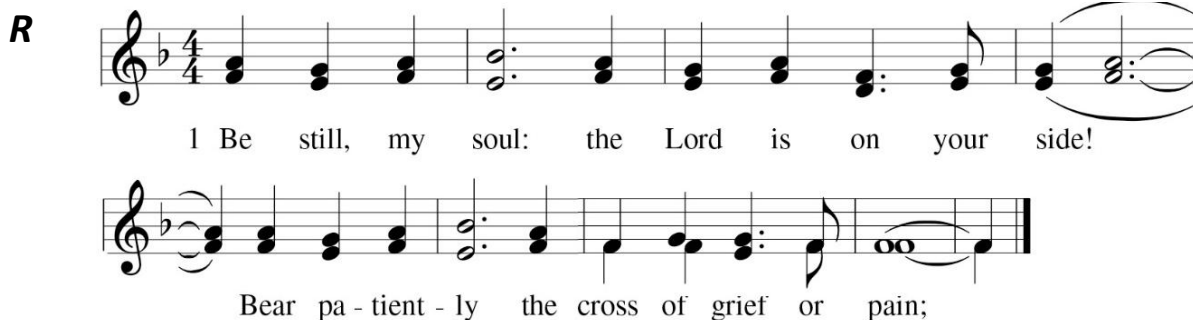
O-ver my head, I hear mu - sic in the air; o-ver my head,
I hear mu - sic in the air; o-ver my head, I hear
mu-sic in the air; there must be a God some - where.

Hearing the Word

SCRIPTURE LESSON

2 Timothy 1:1-14

PSALM 37:1-9 (Cantor will introduce; congregation, please join on refrain)



R I Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side!
Bear pa - tient - ly the cross of grief or pain;

L: Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers, for they will soon fade like the grass, and wither like the green herb.

P: **Trust in the LORD, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.**

L: Take delight in the LORD, and God will give you the desires of your heart.

P: **Commit your way to the LORD; trust in God, and God will act.**

- L: God will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday.
- P: **Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.**
- L: Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath. Do not fret—it leads only to evil.
- P: **For the wicked shall be cut off, but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land. R**

Celebrating the Meal

All Christians are welcome at the Lord's table. The bread is gluten-free. The cup is alcohol-free.
Those choosing not to commune may receive a blessing from the servers.

The Invitation to the Meal

- L: Come to the table of the Good Shepherd.
- P: **Come and listen to his voice as he calls you.**
- L: Come and see how he sets a table and invites you to join him.
- P: **Come and hear how even though we fail him, he is faithful with us.**
- All: **Let us come just as we are, and join him at his table of grace.**

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:

When the Poor Ones

Blue #624

As We Gather at Your Table

Blue #695

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Blue #72

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.)

***We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored:
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.***

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 17:5-10

SERMON

Rev. Chris Myers

***HYMN**

I Sing the Almighty Power of God

Blue #31

***STATEMENT OF FAITH - South Africa**

L: It is not true that this world and its inhabitants are doomed to die and be lost;

P: **This is true: “for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him shall not die but have everlasting life.”**

L: It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction;

P: **This is true: “I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”**

L: It is not true that violence and hatred shall have the last word, and that war and destruction have come to stay forever;

P: **This is true: “for to us a child is born, to us a son is given in whom authority will rest and whose name will be Prince of Peace.”**

- L: It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil that seek to rule the world;
- P: **This is true: “to me is given all authority in heaven and on earth, and lo, I am with you always to the end of the world.”**
- L: It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the church, before we can do anything;
- P: **This is true: “I will pour out my spirit on all people, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young people shall see visions, and your old folk shall dream dreams.”**
- L: It is not true that our dreams for the liberations of humankind, our dreams of justice, of human dignity, of peace, are not meant for this earth and this history;
- P: **This is true: “The hour comes, and it is now, that true worshippers shall worship God in spirit and in truth.”**
- All: This is the faith we confess. This is the faith we believe. This is the faith that will set us free to follow in the steps of Jesus. 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

We Are Not Alone

Chancel Choir

Arr. by Pepper Choplin

***OFFERTORY**

Now Thank We All Our God

Blue #14

***Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done, in whom his world rejoices;
Who, from our mother’s arms, has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.***

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Glorious God, above the noise of conflict, there is a song of peace. Above the world’s weeping, there is a song of hope. Above the cries of hate, there is a song of love. Bless these gifts, O Lord, that we, too, might be singers of Your song. Amen.

*HYMN

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

Blue #506

*BLESSING

POSTLUDE

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Join us for our Learning Community on **Tuesday, October 7 at 6:30 pm**
when we explore the cool cardboard art of Rudolph Bostic.
Sign up so we have enough food!



Adam and Eve Name the Animals, Rudolph Bostic

SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS

Preacher: Chris Myers
Celebrant: Stacy Johnson Myers
Cantor: David Reilly
Liturgist: Suzanne Hagen
Deacons: Lance Lueck, Paul Shepherd,
Jena Most, Melissa Oscanyan,
Liz Swank
Organist: Marsha Pearson
Nursery: Kahla Fuller
Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman
Welcomers: Rene Bylander, JoAnne Friedell
Trustee: Scott Nelson
Coffee
Fellowship: Jean Smith
Counters: Marie Roe, Scott Nelson
Altar table flowers are given by Evelyn Purdy.

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: Christopher Myers
Education Pastor: Stacy Johnson Myers
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: Marie Roe
Office Administrator: Missy Luedtke
Nursery Attendant: Kahla Fuller
Custodians: Farnum Fuller,
Troy Zakrzewski

Treasurer's Report

	<u>Sept 28, 2025</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,571	\$ 392,683
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,623	\$ 414,297

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'



Wednesday School has started! Each Wednesday we pick up at the four River Falls area elementary schools, come to church and enjoy the late afternoon together with snack, Bible story and song, crafts and play time, plus closing worship and prayer. We always begin and end the year with Dirt and Worms (ice cream served with crushed up Oreos (dirt) and gummy worms). Thanks to all our helpers and Pastor Stacy who coordinates this program!

Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Those who are ill or recovering:

Barbara de Souza, Jeff Auchampach (nephew of Yvonne Benson), Judy Schierts (sister of JoAnn Lentz), Glen Corliss (brother of Raelle Jorae), Amy (friend of Barb and Larry Peterson), Chuck Kamorowski, Jack and Donna (brother and sister-in-law of Barb Stephens), Gina (friend of Barb Stephens), Catherine (sister-in-law of Barb Stephens)

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For the gift of College Packs and those who will receive them—did you bring your items in?
- For the opening of the Rudolph Bostic art exhibit on Tuesday, October 7, may it kindle faith and curiosity
- For Roman Klink and Julianna Hanson to be married Oct 18, may they grow in love
- For those coming to the Inquirer's Class to learn more about our life and ministry as a church, may they find their place
- For our Among Friends program as they seek to find a new director, may God's Spirit be present
- For the return of Wednesday School, may it be a year full of fun, faith and food!
- For the saints of the church as we approach All Saints Sunday on November 2, may they rest in peace, and their lives continue to inspire us
- For Louise Schmahl (sister of Becky Pajac) as she continues dialysis

Prayers for our World:

- For an end to the virus of political violence and harmful rhetoric in this country
- For those going into the military, especially Ryan Luedtke who left recently for boot camp, may he be given strength and courage in these new few weeks
- For vulnerable people across the country and around the world affected by cuts in government programs
- For the hope of peace in Gaza, Palestine, Israel and Ukraine, may God's Spirit be present and may the innocent be protected
- 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 10 years of generating clean solar energy with our church solar panels, thanks be to God!
- For all those who benefit from blood given at our latest blood drive this past Tuesday
- For those taking part in the work weekend at Moon Beach Camp including Lu Lueck, Carol Merriman and Jane Wakefield, may they do good work
- For our beautiful warm late fall weather, let us enjoy each and every day!
- For our amazing Wednesday School drivers, helpers and snack providers, thank you for your generosity as we began this past Wednesday
- For those serving this program year on our committees and church council, may your leadership help us to be a more loving, more courageous and more welcoming congregation

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Tom Hall (brother of Rollie Hall) who died recently, may they be comforted
- For those who mourn, especially the families of Hing Man, Kent Tomlinson, Marjorie Faulks, Chuck White, Marc Otto, may they be strengthened at this difficult time

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

Announcements

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 Bible 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.

Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study: The group is studying the Gospel of John. This will be an in-depth yet accessible study of John. Copies of the discussion book are available for \$20.00 in the church office. If you have questions, contact Pastor Stacy.

Loving Neighbor

Neighbors in Need Offering: Neighbors in Need offering supports ministries of justice and compassion, with one third of the offering going to the Council for American Indian Ministries and the remaining two thirds supporting UCC Justice Ministries. Envelopes are in the pews, and we will be taking the offering through October. Thank you for your generous support.

Simpson Shelter Supply Needs: Men's T-Shirts Sizes M, XL, XXL, XXXL, Bras - all sizes, Personal Size Body Lotion, Personal Size Baby Oil, Nail Care Kits, Men's and Women's Shower Shoes, Textured/Natural Hair Products, Personal Size Hair Conditioner, Personal Size Toothpaste, Umbrellas, Good buys on out-of-season clothing. All items MUST BE NEW. There is a box for donations.

Empty Pill Bottles (Prescription Only): The River Falls Lions Club is collecting empty pill bottles, only the clear prescription bottles that are filled by our pharmacists, to send to Africa where there is an urgent need. The bottles will be washed, and the labels soaked off before they are shipped. A tub is in the gathering area. If you have questions, contact Carole Mottaz.

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 & Facebook. It is held at church **Tuesdays & Thursdays 9am to 3pm.**

Loving Self

Learning Community: Cardboard Chronicles: Please join us for the Learning Community event on **Tues, Oct 7, at 6:30 pm.** The focus will be a conversation about the art exhibit *Cardboard Chronicles: The Art of Rudolph Bostic* that will be displayed in the Fellowship Hall starting October 1. This is the second (and final) art exhibit made possible through the grant First Congregational received from the Lilly Foundation. Please sign up.

Inquirer's Class: New to church? Want to know more about our life and ministry? Join us for the Inquirer's Class on **Tues, Oct 14 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm!** At this gathering, you will meet church leaders, other new folks and learn more about First Congregational Church. Dessert and childcare are provided. Please sign up.

Music at First Church Concert: Join us for our next Music at First Church concert on **Sun, Oct 19 at 3:00 pm.** Come and hear music by Rachmaninov, Massenet and Dvorak. Our guest musicians include Helen Chang on violin, Natalia Moiseeva on viola, Lukas Goodman on cello and Ivan Konev on piano. This is an opportunity to hear world-class music right here in River Falls. Admission is free, the concert will last an hour and a reception in the Fellowship Hall will follow. Join us and spread the word!

Fall Clean-Up, Saturday, November 1, 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 Sat, Nov 8. Please sign up and join us!

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. Our next gatherings are **Oct 7 & 21**.

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 lunch. The next meetings will be **Oct 14 & 28**.

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.

Let's Knit/Craft Together: Join us on **Thursdays at 10:00 am. We meet at Sycamore on the first Thursday of each month & the Fellowship Hall the other Thursdays**. We have a great time sharing our projects & enjoying each other's company. For more info, contact Marie Roe at 715-781-2103 or firstroe@gmail.com

WISE Team: NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Family Support Group meets the 2nd & 4th Thursdays 6:30pm at 113 East Elm St (Mei Mei's) & Peer Support Group meets the same evenings at Luther Memorial Church at 6:30pm. The WISE Team meets the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. For more info, call Marg Downing 715-307-5905.

Community Life

Wednesday 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 8 is pulled pork, vegetable and rolls.

Youth Events

College Pack Items Needed! One of the mission activities of the church youth program is to send College Packs to those off at school or the military. We ask each of our 6-12th grade families to bring items for the 30 College Packs we anticipate sending this year. Think necessary items, fun items and lightweight items as they will be shipped! Food is always good. So are dorms decs. Please have them at church asap. Thank you!

Wednesday School: All children 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. Registration & permission forms are available at church and online. Please contact Pastor Stacy with questions.

HS Field Trip to Activate! in Roseville MN, Wed, Oct 8 from 5-9pm: PLEASE sign up by Sun, Oct 5! Your HS student and a friend are invited for a fun evening at Activate in Roseville, MN! This is a high energy play experience with multiple rooms to choose from, as well as multiple game options per room. Alex has room for 13 in the van, but we can accommodate more if we have an interested driver. Details are in the sign-up, and the link is on the church website. Note also that Wednesday Night Meals will open early at 4:45pm so those going can eat before they leave.

Spring Break 2026: We have 3 spots left for the Spring Break Mission Trip to Back Bay March 14-21 which coincides with both RF and Hudson Spring Breaks. Next step will be to secure flights so please make sure we get those \$150 deposits in! Please talk to Alex for more info. We hope every high school student goes on this trip at least once. Deposits are due!

SCRIPTURE LESSON: 2 Timothy 1:1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 17:5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!' The Lord replied, 'If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea", and it would obey you.

'Who among you would say to your servant who has just come in from ploughing or tending sheep in the field, "Come here at once and take your place at the table"? Would you not rather say to him, "Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink"? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, "We are worthless servants; we have done only what we ought to have done!"'