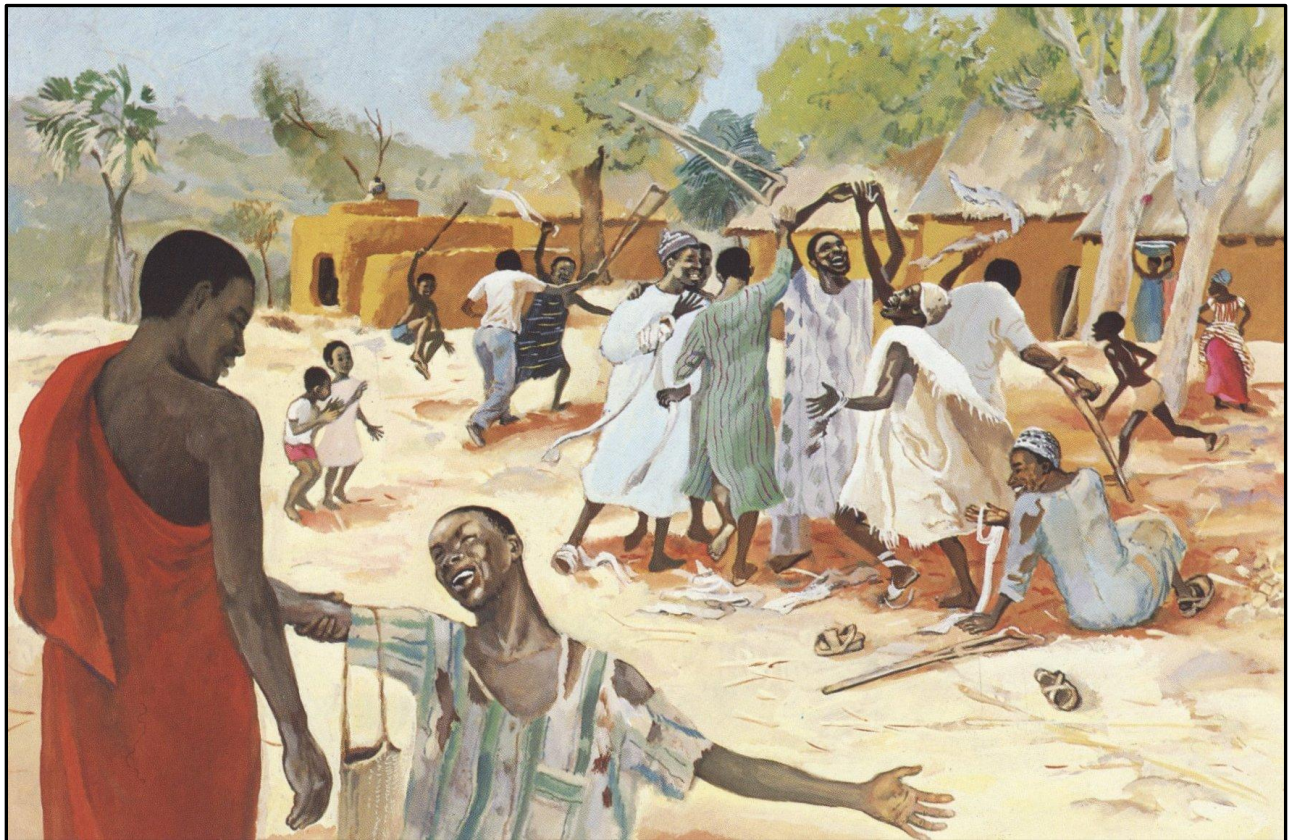


**First Congregational
United Church of Christ
River Falls, Wisconsin**

October 12, 2025



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

*World Mental Health Sunday
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

October 12, 2025

10:00 am

Gathering

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.”
- William Arthur Ward

“Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.” - Melody Beattie

Welcome to our guests who are visiting with us today!

- 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.

**Our Mission is to Love God and
Serve People.**

**Everyone is welcome because
everyone matters.**

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND RINGING OF THE BELL

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Give thanks to God,
P: For God’s creation is amazing.
L: The sun warms our day,
P: The moon lights our nighttime way.
L: The earth is filled with bounty,
P: A cornucopia of plenty.
L: Give thanks to God,
P: For God’s love is everlasting;
L: A constant source of comfort,
P: A companion in hard times.
L: God is my strength and song,
P: So my heart is filled with praise.
All: Come let us gather for worship!

***HYMN**

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Blue #358

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

- L: Wondrous God, you have blessed us with gentle rains, glorious sunsets and sun-warmed days.
- P: **Let us not forget to thank you, O God.**
- L: You bless us with loving families, kind friends, and a caring church.
- P: **Let us not forget to thank you, O God.**
- L: Let us receive these gifts with gratitude and humility.
- P: **Let us not forget to thank you, O God.**
- L: We cannot earn such generosity, but we graciously open our hearts and hands to receive.
- P: **Forgive us when we are hard-hearted and tight-handed, when we don't let your goodness flow through us, when we hide our talents and turn away from the needs of the world.**
- All: **Release us, Holy One, from fear, and create a contagious spirit of giving that touches the world with hope. Amen.**

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

- L: Trust always in the love of God:
- P: **For God is faithful, true and always compassionate.**
- L: Christ Jesus brings us God's love which is freely offered to us.
- P: **In Christ, we are now forgiven.**
- All: **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** *Come, All You People* (Sung twice)

*Come, all you people, come and praise the Most High,
Come, all you people, come and praise the Most High,
Come, all you people, come and praise the Most High,
Come now and worship the Lord.*

Hearing the Word

PSALM 66:1-12 (Cantor will introduce; congregation, please join on refrain)



- L: Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth; sing the glory of God's name; give glorious praise!
- P: **Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds! Because of your great power, your enemies cringe before you. All the earth worships you; they sing praises to you, sing praises to your name."**
- L: Come and see what God has done: awesome deeds among mortals, turning the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot.
- P: **There we rejoiced in God, who rules by might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—let the rebellious not exalt themselves.**
- L: Bless our God, O peoples, let the sound of praise be heard, who has kept us among the living, and has not let our feet slip.
- P: **For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.**
- L: You brought us into the net; you laid burdens on our backs; you let people ride over our heads;
- P: **We went through fire and through water; yet you have brought us out to a spacious place. 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 you thankful people, 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.**
- All: **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 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:

All You Works of God, Bless the Lord!

Blue #39

Morning Has Broken

Blue #35

For the Beauty of the Earth

Blue #40

Eat This Bread

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.

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.)

Jesus loves the little children, All the children of the world.
Every color, every race, all are covered by His grace.
Jesus loves the little children of the world.

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 17:11-21

SERMON

Rev. Chris Myers

***HYMN**

The Healing Hand of Jesus



I know the heal-ing hand of Je - sus;
Ly-ing bro - ken in my dark-est hour,
As he knelt be - side me in my sor - row



I have felt his mer - cy and his grace.
bruised and beat - en, left with-out a prayer,
I could see the scars there in his hands,



I have heard his words of com - pas - sion
then I felt that heal-ing hand of pow - er
And I re - a - lized this wound-ed heal - er,



and I know that he is in this place
when the Sav - ior came and found me there.
all my pain, he tru - ly un - der - stands.



So I will raise my voice in praise to God, I will



kneel be - fore the Lamb; I will give my heart as an



of - fer - ing, I will give you, God, what I am.

***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 *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

Chancel Choir

Arr. by Jay Althouse

***OFFERTORY**



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 you face to face, Let your love be the rule ev - 'ry - where.

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Generous God, we marvel at your lavish gifts to us: life and breath, food and shelter, opportunities for work and play, and, most especially, hope and peace in Christ. May our lives mirror and reflect the glory of your self-giving love, to continue in the pattern of generosity we see revealed in Christ. Amen.

Sending

***HYMN**

I Sing the Almighty Power of God

Blue #31

***BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

Reprinted music used by permission under the following licenses:
OneLicense.net A-703731; CCLI License 2892021

Today we celebrate World Mental Health Day with green ribbons and Psalm zines.
If you have good mental health, thank God daily for this gift.
Please join the WISE team in prayer for all who are challenged by lack thereof.

SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS

Preacher: Chris Myers
Celebrant: Chris Myers
Cantor: David Reilly
Liturgist: Traci Hagberg
Deacons: Becky Pajac, Laura Anderson,
Ann Nelson, Melissa Oscanyan
Organist: Marsha Pearson
Nursery: Kahla Fuller
Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman, Casey Beatty
Welcomers: Arthur Rice & Elaine Dixen
Trustee: Andy Krueger
Coffee
Fellowship: Marg Downing
Counters: Trish Graves, Mark Anderson
*Altar table flowers are given by Traci Hagberg in
celebration of Ted and Jean Hagberg's wedding
anniversary (would be their 70th).*

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>Oct 5, 2025</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,537	\$ 407,907
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,623	\$ 424,920

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'

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), Eric (friend of Liz Swank)

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 Rudolph Bostic art exhibit in our Fellowship Hall this month, 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 move be present
- For the Endowment Grant Team who meet this Sunday to evaluate proposals to strengthen the ministry of our church, may they be given wisdom
- 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:

- Today we celebrate World Mental Health Day with green ribbons and Psalm zines; if you have good mental health thank God daily for this gift
- On the second anniversary of the October 7th attack on Israel, let us remember the 67,000 Palestinians killed, the 1,195 Israelis killed and pray for the release of all hostages, may this madness end
- 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, you are angels
- 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 and return home safely
- For our beautiful warm late fall weather, let us enjoy each and every day!
- For our amazing Wednesday School drivers, helpers & snack providers, thank you for your generosity

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: Women's white crew socks, men's white crew socks, men's t-shirts sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL, personal size shampoo, personal size conditioner, personal size body lotion, rain ponchos, eye masks, umbrellas, washcloths, padlocks, good buys on out-of-season clothing. All items **MUST BE NEW**. There is a box at the church 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

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 - 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 Moiseeve 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!

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!

Art Exhibit: The art exhibit *Cardboard Chronicles* is displayed in the Fellowship Hall until Nov 13. The exhibit features 25 original paintings by Rudolph Bostic that depict biblical stories painted on cardboard with enamel & house paint. Artist Rudolph Bostic is a longtime member of the Second African Baptist Church in Savannah, Georgia. Bostic found inspiration in the works of masters such as Rembrandt, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michelangelo. His art has appeared in folk art museums and galleries, particularly in the southern United States. Bostic paints as a reflection of his own spirituality. He wrote, "I try to express my love for God and the world."

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 & lively conversation. Our next meetings are **Oct 21 & Nov 4**.

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 15 is Swedish meatballs, butter and parsley potatoes, vegetable, 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.

Spring Break 2026: We have 2 spots left for the Spring Break Mission Trip to Back Bay March 14-21. Next will be to secure flights so please make sure we get those \$150 deposits! Please talk to Alex for more info. We hope every high school student goes on this trip at least once.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Ephesians 5:15-20

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 17:11-21

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' Then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.'

Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There it is!" For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.'

*Music of
Rachmaninov,
Massenet
and Dvorak*

SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 19
3:00PM

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH
110 N THIRD STREET, RIVER
FALLS WI 54022

HELEN CHANG, VIOLIN

NATALIA MOISELEVA, VIOLA

LUKAS GOODMAN, CELLO

IVAN KONEV, PIANO

FREE ADMISSION