

James Joel Filkins was born November 24, 1940, in River Falls, Wisconsin to Clarence and Sybil Filkins. Jims's dad Ginger owned a gas station and bulk fuel oil depot. When Ginger retired, Jim and his brother, Dan, took over the business and ran it for several years before selling it. He said, "it was a rare thing to be able to work with my dad and brother."

His competitive spirit carried through in his "athletics!" Jim loved playing poker and blackjack. He was on several bowling teams as well as on golf teams, both in Wisconsin and Arizona. He hunted pheasants in River Falls, South Dakota and Iowa. Jim served on the River Falls school board for 2 terms. He also enjoyed elk hunts in Colorado.

He served on boards as a member of the UCC Church in River Falls. He was a Stephen Minister and Elder at the Church of the Master in Mesa, Arizona. Jim was a member of the River Falls Moose Lodge, American Legion, Masons and Treasurer of the Apache Wells Shrine club for many years. He devoted 21 years as a volunteer fireman on the River Falls fire dept.

He loved catching BIG walleyes in Canada. Jim also served with the Coast Guard. He was an avid Packer (recliner coach) fan! Jim and Marge enjoyed many cruises, several trips to Costa Rica and a trip to Switzerland with family and friends.

Jim is survived by his wife of 64 years, Marge, their daughter Lisa (Gordy) Grant, son Louie (Patti) Filkins, grandchildren Christina (Tony) Small, Danielle Jo (Matt) Robbins, Samuel Filkins, Gina Filkins, great-grandchildren (who called him Papa Great or just Great!) Brendan, Aliyana and Amiyah Small, sister-in-law Eunice Filkins, many nieces and nephews, cousins and numerous friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Clarence and Sybil Filkins, his brother Daniel Filkins and granddaughter, Tara Marie Grant.

A memorial service celebrating Jim's life will be held on Saturday, January 17, 2026 at 11:00 am at First Congregational Church (110 N 3rd St.) in River Falls. Visitation will also be Saturday from 10:00-11:00 am at the church. A reception will follow the service at the River Falls Golf Club. Memorials can be directed to the Shriner's Hospitals for Children. Interment will be held in the Spring of 2026. Arrangements are with Bakken-Young Funeral & Cremation Services.

***First Congregational United Church of Christ
River Falls, Wisconsin
January 17, 2026***



**CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF
JAMES JOEL FILKINS**

NOVEMBER 24, 1940 – NOVEMBER 30, 2025

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

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JAMES JOEL FILKINS

NOVEMBER 24, 1940 – NOVEMBER 30, 2025

January 17, 2026

11:00 am

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME AND PROMISE

INVOCATION (UNISON)

Almighty God, from whom we come, and to whom our spirits return: you have been our dwelling place in all generations. You are our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble. Grant us your blessing in this hour, and enable us to put our trust in you that our spirits may grow calm and our hearts be comforted. Lift our eyes beyond the shadows of earth and help us to see the light of eternity. So may we find grace and strength for this and every time of need; through Jesus Christ our risen Savior. Amen.

HYMN *How Great Thou Art* (insert)

OPENING PRAYER

WORDS OF LIFE **Jim's Family**

SCRIPTURE READINGS **John 3**
 Ecclesiastes 3

WORDS OF FAITH **Rev. Chris Myers**

PSALM 23 (UNISON)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S 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.

HYMN *Here I Am, Lord* (insert)

COMMENDATION AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Rev. Chris Myers
Marsha Pearson, Organist

The Filkins family invites you to a luncheon to be served at the River Falls Golf Club immediately following the memorial service.

Interment will be at a later date.