

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

April 5, 2026



Day of Resurrection

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN

April 5, 2026

Easter Sunday

9:00 & 10:30 am

Gathering

Easter isn't something we remember. It's something we live and breathe.

- The Rev. Jim Friedrich

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.**

PRELUDE

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

Brass Group

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing.

P: Calling us to heal the brokenness in our lives and the division in our world.

L: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing.

P: Calling us to seek out the lonely and the lost and those who need to experience God's love.

L: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing.

P: Calling us to be faithful disciples who walk in the ways of peace and love.

L: Come, let us worship. Christ is risen!

P: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

*HYMN

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Blue #288

(Verse 1: All, Verse 2: Choir, Verses 3 and 4: All)

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy and Life-Giving God, **we confess that too often we have not been faithful witnesses. Jesus stands among us, yet we fail to recognize him. Jesus reigns as Lord, but we neglect to honor him and the way of life he sets before us. Jesus moves among us through the power of your Holy Spirit, but we don't pay attention or respond. Forgive us. Guide us by your Word. Fill us with your Spirit. Free us for abundant life through the power of our Risen Lord. Amen.**

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

L: Jesus lives again and comes among us breathing grace, reconciliation, and peace.

P: Let us embrace God’s forgiveness, be reconciled with neighbors near and far, and live in peace.

L: May the peace of the Risen Christ be with you all.

P: And also with you.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

(Please greet one another with signs of peace)

***GLORIA (Sung twice)**

Halle, Halle, Halle – lu – jah, Halle, Halle, Halle – lu – jah

Halle, Halle, Halle – lu – jah, Hallelujah, Hal-le-lu-jah

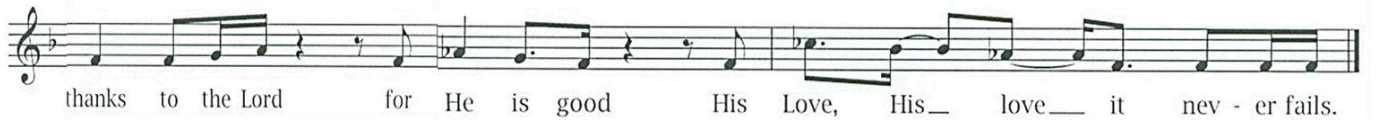
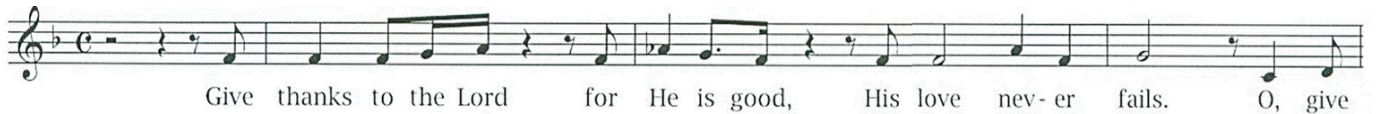
Hearing the Word

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 10:34-43

PSALM 118:1-2, 15-24

R



L: O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God’s steadfast love endures forever!

P: Let Israel say, “God’s steadfast love endures forever.”

L: There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: “The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;

P: The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.”

L: I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord.

P: The Lord has punished me severely, but God did not give me over to death. R

L: Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

P: This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.

L: I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

P: The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

L: This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

P: This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. R

SONG OF BLESSING (Children return to their families or young children may go to the nursery.
Sunday School resumes next week.)

Hymn of Promise – Blue #515

*In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*

Proclaiming the Word

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 28:1-10

SERMON

Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers

*HYMN

Thine is the Glory

Blue #310

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR EASTER

We believe in the God of Resurrection,
Who lights the dawn to chase away the darkness;
Who rolls away each stone of doubt;
Who surprises us with incredible gifts of family and friends, silence and laughter;
Who raises us from sadness and despair to the possibilities of blessing and joy.

We believe in Jesus the Christ,
Friend of the poor and searcher for the lost,
Who comes to us in our grief and longing, calls us by name and sends us on the
paths of peace to speak of an awesome love that is not overcome by death.

We believe in the Holy Spirit our Guide,
The hidden partner, the gentle messenger of God,
Who fills our every breath with blessing;
Who guides us in the dark, beckons us to do good, speaks to us in dream and image,
and watches over us with tender compassion.

We believe in the church,
An instrument of God in this present moment, striving for justice, celebrating in joy,
clawing at despair, living in hope, praying for healing and forever proclaiming the
Good News of God's persistent and redeeming love. 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

Alleluia, He Lives

Chancel Choir, Brass Group,

Arr. by Joel Raney

Jubilee Ringers

*OFFERTORY

O God Beyond All Praising



O - God be-yond all prais - ing, we wor-ship you to - day and - sing the love a - maz - ing that



songs can - not re - pay; for we can on - ly won - der at - ev - 'vry gift you send, at —



bles - sings with - out num - ber and mer - cies with - out end: we lift our hearts be - fore - you and



wait up - on your word, we hon - or and a - dore you, our great and might - y Lord.

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Holy God, let us be faithful witnesses to the power of your love. Let our lives bring hope in the midst of despair; let our deeds be filled with compassion in a world of bruising indifference; let our words be truthful when misinformation holds center stage; let our forgiveness build new bridges of reconciliation. Let Easter joy linger in our hearts and fill us with courage and hope. Bless us as we offer our gifts and selves to you. Amen.

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: Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week, Jesus Christ was raised from death and appeared to Mary Magdalene. In the evening on the same day, he walked and talked with two disciples and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

P: **This is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, young and old, come from the east and the west, the north and the south, and gather about Christ's table.**

L: This table is for all people who desire to know the power and presence of Jesus Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

P: **We are ready to come to the table to be fed.**

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:

Now the Green Blade Rises

Brass Group

Christ Has Arisen

Congregation joins on refrain:



Let us sing praise to him with end - less joy.



Death's fear - ful sting he has come to de - stroy.



Our sins for - giv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!



Je - sus is liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks

Blue #291

Congregation joins on refrain:



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, give thanks to the ris - en Lord.

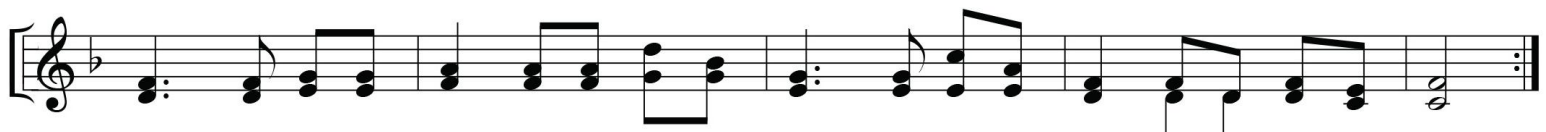


Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, give praise to his Name.

In the Lord I'll be Ever Thankful



In the Lord I'll be ev - er thank - ful, in the Lord I will re - joice! Look to God, do not be a -



fraid. Lift up your voic - es, the Lord is near. Lift up your voic - es, the Lord is near.

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.

Sending

***HYMN**

The Day of Resurrection

Blue #298

***BLESSING**

L: May the God who shakes heaven and earth,
whom death could not contain,
bless you with power to go forth
and proclaim the gospel.

P: Amen.

L: Christ is risen!

P: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Brass Group

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Please note the church office will be closed on Easter Monday.

2026 Back Bay Mission Trip



SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS

Preacher: Stacy Johnson Myers
Celebrant: Chris Myers
Cantor: David Reilly
Liturgist: 9:00: Steve Koecher
10:30: Jill Paulson
Deacons: 9:00: Lance Lueck, Ann Nelson,
Heidi Cavaness, Becky Pajac
10:30: Laura Anderson,
Liz Swank, Paul Shepherd
Organist: Marsha Pearson
Nursery: Kahla Fuller
Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman
Trustee: Rick Price
Coffee
Fellowship: Easter Breakfast
Counters: Trish Graves, Mark Anderson
Brass Group: Ben Jaeckel, Ella Pierce,
Jackson Machtemes, Ben Allen,
Tim Mills

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>Mar 29, 2026</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 2,489	\$ 141,356
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 11,308	\$ 147,004

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), Glen Corliss (brother of Raelle Jorae), Eric (friend of Liz Swank), Jim Larson, KayLee (friend of Barb Stephens), Lynn Merriman, Dave Ostendorf, Rose Rude

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For our pastors, choir and musicians who worked so hard this Holy Week and Easter, God bless you all!
- For our Among Friends program for those with dementia, that they may receive more funding and volunteers
- For those preparing for EarthFest on Saturday, April 25th at UWRF, may we all be better stewards of the gift of God's good creation
- For our teens and young people serving the Easter Breakfast and Chef Andy and his crew cooking, may all be fed and Easter joy increased – join us!
- For housing insecure folks in our community and those planning for Wellspring Village, a community of Tiny Homes to meet housing insecurity needs in our community, may God grace them with vision and courage
- For Louise Schmahl (sister of Becky Pajac) as she continues dialysis

Prayers for our World:

- For the people across the Middle East living through war, may a lasting peace soon come
- For those in our armed forces and their families, may we support them and may God watch over them
- For those in treatment and rehab, may you be given strength for the journey
- For farmers, especially small family farms, struggling to stay viable with so many economic challenges
- For stability and peace in Venezuela, Gaza and Ukraine
- For those living with dementia and families trying to care for them, may they all be given strength, grace and help along the way

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

- For the love and joy of Holy Week and Easter
- For the \$25,000 given by church folks to help refugees in Ukraine, you are angels
- For the recent Relay for Life Soup Supper and for their Hotdish Night Wed, April 8th, may we be fed and cancer end
- For those who received blood from the March 16th blood drive in our Fellowship Hall, may it bring life
- For the last of our Wednesday Family Meals which this year is the Relay for Life Hotdish Night on Wed, April 8th from 5:15 to 6pm, may all be fed

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Loral Keil, wife of Brian Miller, and one of our deacons, whose Memorial Service was at Bakken and Young yesterday, may her family be comforted
- For the family of Carol Cameron, sister of Joyce Kampstra, who died this past week, may her family grieve in hope
- For the families of Terry Smith (sister of Tom Smith) and Ronald Gandrud (father of Cindy Gandrud)

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

EASTER LILIES 2026

Given by:

Susan, George, Murphy and

Casey Beatty

Dyan Carrison

Bob and Rebecca Ferguson

Cindy Gandrud

Gustafson Family

Suzanne Hagen

Jeff and Deb Hoffman

Arlene Johnson

Steve and Lara Koecher

Skip Koosmann

Chris and Stacy Myers

Lori Otto

Marsha Pearson, Michael, Justine,

Liam and Evie Pearson

Larry and Barb Peterson

Peter and Natasha Rayne

David Reilly

Jean Smith

Alan Tuchtenhagen

Randy and Diane Welsh

In memory of George Beatty and Dan Filkins

In memory of Dahn and Roseann Carrison

In memory of Ruth Duck (friend, pastor, hymn writer)

In memory of Ron and Liz Gandrud

In memory of Bob Gustafson

In honor of Ann Gustafson

In memory of Margaret and Norris Johnson

In honor of our mothers – Marilyn Hoffman and

Nancy Neu

In memory of parents and spouse

In memory of Steve's dad – Arlyn Koecher

In memory of Susan Koosmann

In honor of Eva and Anna

In memory of Barbara E. D. Johnson, Vernon and

Hattie Myers, William and Elizabeth Sortor

In memory of the matriarchs of our family –

Bernice Nesbitt - grandmother,

Patricia Johnston - mother

The hydrangea is in memory of Marshall & Vonita Ward,

Patti Haigh, and Maynard Pearson

In honor of friendship with Barb Mahoney

In honor and memory of Benny and Deborah Macnack

and Bill and Jeanne Rayne

In memory of Ruth Reilly and Bill Reilly

In memory of Marlyn and Bernice Mohr and Lois Smith

In memory of Lorraine Scott

In memory of our parents and grandparents

Thank you for your support of our youth group.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Acts 10:34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 28:1-10

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him." This is my message for you.' So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'