

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

**May 31, 2026**



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

May 31, 2026

*Graduation Sunday*

*Trinity Sunday*

9:30 am

**Gathering**

“The wizard of Oz says look inside yourself and find self. God says look inside yourself and find the Holy Spirit. The first will get you to Kansas. The latter will get you to abundant life. Take your pick.”

- Max Lucado

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: Chapters end,

**P: New ones begin –**

L: More school or new work or something completely different.

**P: Endings carry the seeds of new possibility.**

L: Endings are never the last word in God’s eyes.

**P: There is grace surprising us,**

L: Resurrections freeing us,

**P: Hope reviving us,**

L: Life calling us,

**P: Music lifting us,**

L: Praise God for endings and beginnings.

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

**\*HYMN**

*Here I Am, Lord*

**Blue #559**

## \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, forgive us for choosing to protect our faith rather than live it, to admire it rather than to be molded by it. Forgive us, O God, when we cling to a faith too small for the challenge of this life and the hope of the life to come. Forgive us, and renew within us a great and living faith. Amen.

## \*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: When in faith we turn to Christ for forgiveness, God welcomes us with open arms.

P: **In Christ, we are freed from the sins of the past.**

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

*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
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## SCRIPTURE LESSON

Philippians 4:4-9

PSALM 8 (Cantor will introduce; congregation, please join on refrain)

**R**            *Great is your faithfulness! Great is your faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed your hand has provided.  
Great is your faithfulness, God, unto me!*

L: O LORD, our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

P: **Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.**

L: When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

**P: Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.**

**L: You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.**

**P: O LORD, our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth! R**

## Proclaiming the Word

### BLESSING OF GRADUATES

### GOSPEL LESSON

**Matthew 28:16-20**

### SERMON

**Rev. Chris Myers**

### \*HYMN

*I've Got Peace Like a River*

Black #478

### \*STATEMENT OF FAITH – from the Iona Ecumenical Community in Scotland

**L: Let us affirm our faith.**

**P: We believe in Jesus Christ, Son of the One God, maker and sustainer of earth, sea and sky. Born of Mary, faithful to the God of Abraham and Sarah, Jesus healed the sick, served the poor, and proclaimed heaven on earth. Condemned by the religious, crucified by the state, He died but transformed even death and rose to life everlasting. He blessed the disciples with his Holy Spirit and sent them forth, east and west, north and south. We commit ourselves to Jesus, to one another as brothers and sisters and to the grace of the Holy Spirit. 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.**

### PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS – Alex Plum

### GATHERING OUR GIFTS – Sarah Plum

*Send Me Out*



## \*OFFERTORY

We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be; all that we have is

6  
thine a - lone a trust, O Lord, from thee.

## \*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Holy God, **faith walks hand in hand with serving, and love expresses itself in giving.** May we be faithful, O Lord, in our serving and loving in our giving. For we do these things in your name and asking your blessing. 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: Come people of God, let us sing!
- P: Let us sing for we are God's people and God has done wonderful things.**
- L: Let us come into God's presence with joy and thanksgiving.
- P: Let us come into God's presence and let God feed us on the Bread of Life and the Cup of Blessing. Come Holy Spirit, come!**

#### *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 and everywhere 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:

### O Christ, Surround Me



God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to  
Bind to my - self the Name of Ho - ly, great cloud of wit - nes -  
Bright - ness of sun and glow of moon - light, flash - ing of light - ning,  
Walk - ing be - hind to hem my jour - ney, go - ing a - head to  
Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up - hold me.  
ses en - fold; proph - ets, a - pos - tles, an - gels wit - ness.  
stength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan - et:  
light my way, and from be - neath, a - bove and all ways,  
hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



O Christ, sur - round me, O Christ sur - round me.  
O Christ, sur - round me, O Christ sur - round me.  
O Christ, sur - round me, O Christ sur - round me.  
O Christ, sur - round me, O Christ sur - round me.  
O Christ, sur - round me, O Christ sur - round me.

### I Was There to Hear Your Boring Cry

Black #351

**You Are My All In All**

**Blue #427**

*Congregation join on refrain:*



Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name!



Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name!

**In the Lord**

***In the Lord I'll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice!  
Look to God, do not be afraid; lift up your voices, the Lord is near;  
lift up your voices, 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**

***Let All Things Now Living***

**Blue #22**

**\*BLESSING**

**POSTLUDE**

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## 2026 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

**Eleanor Adams**, daughter of Nate and Sonja Adams, will be attending Concordia College in Moorhead, MN to study Nursing and play NCAA hockey.

**Hannah Cudd**, daughter of Jena Most and Josh Cudd, will be attending CVTC to study Psychology and Social Work.

**Maggie Cudd**, daughter of Jena Most and Josh Cudd, will be attending Hastings Beauty School to study Esthology.

**Mason Peterson**, son of Cindy Peterson, will be studying either Business or Athletic Training at UWM.

**Emma Shepherd**, daughter of Paul and Mara Shepherd, will be attending Winona State University to study Movement Science and minor in Nutrition for Pre-Physical Therapy.

**Rhett Theisen**, son of Mitch and Amy Theisen, will be attending UW – Eau Claire to study Professional Sales/Business.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

### Words for Our Graduating Seniors

What words, advice, scripture texts or prayer do you have for our graduating seniors? Please use the enclosed colored paper to share your words with them.

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## **SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS**

Preacher: Chris Myers  
Celebrant: Stacy Johnson Myers  
Cantor: David Reilly  
Liturgist: Steve Koecher  
Deacons: Laura Anderson, Liz Swank,  
Heidi Cavaness, Ann Nelson,  
Paul Shepherd  
Organist: Marsha Pearson  
Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman  
Welcomers: Rene Bylander, Jo Anne Friedell  
Trustee: Matt Bastien  
Coffee  
Fellowship: Christian Ed  
Counters: Diane Welsh, Scott Nelson  
*Altar table flowers are in celebration of June  
birthdays.*

## **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

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### **Treasurer's Report**

	<u>May 24, 2026</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,680	\$ 240,262
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 11,308	\$ 237,468

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:**

Jeff Auchampach (nephew of Yvonne Benson), Eric (friend of Liz Swank), Lynn Merriman, Steve and Janice Withers (father and mother of Erik Withers), Sam Morrissette, Jeff Johnson (brother of Jenny Luedtke), Nathaniel (friend of the Kruegers), Larry Bauer, Sharon (sister of JoAnne Friedell), Bruce (father of Melissa Oscanyan)

**Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:**

- For our 2026 High School graduates, may your faith help you navigate the next adventure of your lives
- For those receiving church scholarships, may they help you on your journey
- For Leo Anthony Plum who was baptized on Sunday, May 17, may he grow in faith and love and may his parents Sarah and Alex, and big brother Anderson be given wisdom, courage and sleep 😊
- For those who worked at Moon Beach our UCC Church Camp (Rose and Dan Rude, Tim Bylander, Carol Merriman, Lu Lueck, Jane Wakefield, Chuck and Judy Sambs) getting it ready for the season
- For Maddie Giordana and Eric Sayre who were married in Minneapolis on May 16, may they grow into the promises they make to each other

**Prayers for our World:**

- For those in our armed forces and their families, may we support them and may God watch over them
- As we approach the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding, may we be given courage on the quest to become a more perfect union
- For farmers, especially small family farms, struggling to stay viable with so many economic challenges
- For stability and peace in Venezuela, Sudan, Iran, 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 gift of summer, may we savor every bit of it
- For those who have contributed to our Church Scholarship Fund over the years, may it be a blessing
- For those who donated and received blood at our last blood drive, may it bring life
- For Hope Lutheran Church who celebrates their 20th anniversary on Sunday, June 7th, may they grow in love, faith and service to their community

**For those grieving the loss of loved ones:**

- For the family of Joyce Kampstra who died peacefully at home, may her husband Roger, three adult children and three grandchildren be comforted as they prepare for her Memorial Service on Monday, June 8th at 11am
- For the family of Ally Fox (friend of the Ronnanders) who died at just 39, may her memory be cherished
- For the family of Carson Greenchurch, grandson of Duane Church who was killed in Ukraine this past week, may his memory give people strength and hope
- For the family of Keith Traynor (brother of Diane Welsh), Carol Cameron (sister of Joyce Kampstra), Terry Smith (sister of Tom Smith), JoAnn Lentz, Ronald Gandrud (father of Cindy), Loral Keil (wife of Brian)

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



# **Diaper Drive**

## **May 10 - June 21**

We are collecting your donations from  
Mother's Day to Father's Day.

We are in need of:

**All Diaper Sizes**  
(especially sizes 4 and 5)

**Baby Wipes**

Donations will go to Our Neighbors' Place,  
Turning Point and River Falls Food Pantry

First Congregational Church  
110 North Third Street, River Falls, WI

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: Philippians 4:4-9**

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

**GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 28:16-20**

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Please take time to admire the congregation's new fused glass piece depicting Genesis 1:1—  
"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Be sure to notice:

- Left panel: Darkness and chaos swirling in the upper left corner that turns to ordered aspects of creation, including the moon and stars, desert and desert flowers.
- Middle panel: Skies, mountain ranges, a meadow with flowers and butterflies, a sparkling stream, and a flowing river with fish.
- Right panel: The sun and a rainbow anchoring the top right corner giving way to a forest, river and deer.



The decorative borders on the right and left sides were created by pre-school and kindergarteners while the interior sections were made by elementary students, teens, and the Knitting Group women.