

YOUTH EVENTS

Upcoming youth events for February:

February 10th: Can Can Wonderland—Come and put your you know what off at this amazing artist inspired indoor mini golf course. Bring your quarters for old fashioned boardwalk arcade games and remember your dollars for cereal inspired milk shakes, malts and Sundaes. Golf price is: \$10 ages 12 and under, \$14 ages 12 and up. Let's get 15 people or more to go so we can receive a group discount of \$2 off per person. All Youth and Interns! We will have a pizza lunch here immediately following the second service, load up the vehicles and we will be back to church by 3:15. If you live in Hudson, we will meet your ride in the Target parking lot.

February 15th: Interns let's go to the Ice Castles of Excelsior! There are ice tunnels, grand archways, fire performances and sledding! Meet here at 4:30 and we will head over to Excelsior. The fire show begins at 7:00 and we will conclude with food at the end of the evening! Tickets are only available on-line! \$10.95. Get your tickets or have me purchase them for you.

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Holy Land Meeting—A gathering of those going on the Holy Land Pilgrimage will be **Tuesday, February 12 at 6:30 pm and Sunday, March 17 at 11:30 am**, both in the Fellowship Hall. Also, during many Sundays in February and March, the Adult Forum will be centered around trying to better understand Israel, Palestine and their significance in our faith and life today. These adult forums are open to all interested people!

FINANCIAL

Treasurer's Report

	Week of Feb 3, 2019	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 2,158	\$ 69,783
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,284	\$ 46,420

A full accounting of all income and expenses is available in the church office.

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

E-Giving—It is quick, easy & safe. It is designed to help both you with your home budgeting & financing of church ministries which continue even when you are away. Contact Missy (missy@firstchurchrf.org) with questions. If you give electronically, please use the e-giving bookmark in the pew as the offering plate goes by.

Building Mortgage Summary as of Dec 31, 2018

Original cost of Facilities Expansion	\$2,386,970.00
Remaining amount on Bank Loan	\$652,503.44
Cash on hand in the Building Fund	\$62,401.66
Interest Rate (Locked in through Jan 2023)	4.25%
Monthly Payment	\$8,320.41
Monthly interest paid Dec 31, 2018	\$2,453.11
Total interest paid in 2018	\$29,653.09

FEBRUARY 10, 2019

No matter who you are. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!

As Jesus' courageous disciples, living God's grace, we strive to...

WORSHIP FAITHFULLY

Sunday Volunteers Needed

Liturgists for: Mar 10, 17, 24, 31

Welcomers for: Feb 17, 24; Mar 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Coffee Fellowship for: Feb 17; Mar 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

The sign-up sheets are on the back table. Thank you!

Church Office Hours—The church office hours between Labor Day and Memorial Day are: Mon-Thurs: 8:30 am-4:00 pm; Friday: 8:30 am-Noon

WELCOME OPENLY

It Takes A Village: Sun, Feb 17, 4:00 pm at Ezekiel

Lutheran Church—The annual ecumenical fundraising concert is upon us again. It Takes A Village raises money each year for the Haitian Relief Fund, and features church choirs from the River Falls area, the Croix Chordsmen Barbershop Chorus, the Pierce County Ecumenical Choir, and the UWRF Community Choir. Annually, this concert alone raises around \$10,000 for the relief fund. The concert will culminate with three combined songs directed by Scott Perau. It is a wonderful afternoon of music that benefits a very worth cause. We hope to see you there!

Men's Group—Meets every other Tuesday in the Youth Room for coffee, treats, conversation & fellowship. Our next gatherings are **Tues, Feb 19 & Mar 5 at 8:00 am**. Join us!

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!

WELCOME OPENLY

Family Meals—Join us each Wednesday night for a healthy, home cooked family meal in the Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$7 per person with a max of \$30 per family. **Please sign up by Tuesday at noon** so we have enough food. Please also sign up to help set, serve or clean up. Whether you are single, a couple or have a minivan full, join us as a church family each **Wednesday from 5:15 to 6:15 pm**.

Feb 13—Chicken marsala, rice, salad

Feb 20—Pork chops, apples, dressing, mac 'n cheese

"Grounded in Spirit. Called to Action: From First Steps to Next Steps"—The Wisconsin Conference UCC's first webinar exploring our Christian call to care for all of creation will be happening **Thurs, Feb 21 from 7:00-8:30 pm**. You may join the webinar from home, or come participate with others at First Congregational that evening, where we will share ideas, snacks, and fellowship before and after. To learn more and to register, go to <https://bit.ly/2TJgSeG>. For more information, talk to Rebecca Ferguson or Rev. Dave Ostendorf.

Cribbage Night—The group meets on the second Monday at the church. Players are asked to donate \$2 & the group decides which charity. Playing time starts at **7:00 pm**. All players & abilities welcome. The winner of the Jan game was Lee Christianson. The next game will be **February 11**.

50th Anniversary Party—You are invited to an Open House celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Bobbie and Jim Kuhn on **Saturday, February 23 from 1-4 pm** in the church Fellowship Hall. They respectfully ask for no gifts.

Book Group Meeting—The next meeting will be **Tues, Feb 26 at 3:00 pm at the church** to discuss **Remains of the Day** by Kazuo Ishiguro (fiction). In post-World War II England, Stevens, the perfect butler, reflects on three decades of service to an English "gentleman." He begins to question the "gentleman's" values and the nature of his own life. We hope to have books available in the church office by Feb 2.

SIGN UP

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WELCOME OPENLY

Islam and Christianity, Brothers at Odds A Learning Community Gathering Tuesday, February 26, 6:30 pm

Islam and its adherents dominate the news more than most other religions and their followers. We have much to learn about Islam, far beyond the headlines, and will welcome Dr. Oweh Muhawesh, Ph.D., to share our February Learning Community and deepen our understandings.

Dr. Muhawesh will give a brief history of the development of Islam, discuss the history of Muslims and Christians through the ages, and compare the beliefs of Muslims to Christian teachings, especially in relation to Jesus and his role in our world. He will also discuss Islam's beliefs about Jesus and Mary; Jesus' miraculous birth and Jesus the Messiah; as well as the significance of Jihad and Sharia Law, and Islam's foundational teaching about terrorism and violence.

Dr. Muhawesh is an adjunct professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, where he has taught Business Law, the History of the Modern Middle East, and Islam. He is a graduate of the Global Institute for Islamic Studies where he earned his Ph.D. in Comparative Theology, and authored numerous books and essays on matters of world religions and the history of religious development. He is a regular speaker at churches, synagogues, colleges, and universities around the nation. We are fortunate that he will join us, and look forward to our conversation with him.

Veterans Gathering Sunday, March 10

Veterans from the congregation will gather again on **Sun, March 10 at 11:30 am, with lunch provided.** We will welcome Michael Medhaug, Disabled Americans Veterans NSO Supervisor, to our gathering that day to share information about the DAV. He comes to us from the DAV group at Fort Snelling, known nationally as one of the best. The DAV fulfills our promises to the men and women who served, and works with *all* veterans. Brad Williams will also share his story about how he has been assisted by the DAV. Please sign up. See Rose Rude rose.rude@uwrf.edu or 715-781-7032 if you need additional information. We look forward to seeing you and to our time together.

GROW SPIRITUALLY

Adult Forum—The forum meets Sundays 9:00–10:00 am.

Feb 10: *Holy Land Study Introduction*, Stacy Myers

In April a group from our church will journey to the Holy Lands. However, even those who are not going can share in their experience through study and listening. Over the coming weeks the Adult Forum will study history, Bible stories set in the places the group will visit, as well as some art and architecture. Please come!

Feb 17: *The Land of Canaan*, Rebecca Ferguson

For the coming weeks we will rely on a lecture series from "The Great Courses" to guide us in learning the Holy Lands. The lecture will be 30 minutes in length followed by a discussion. The lecture will be very informative. We will begin by exploring the land of Canaan.

Tuesday Bible Study meets on Tuesdays from

1:00–2:30 pm. Beginning January 8, the group will begin discussing *Christian Basics: A Primer for Pilgrims* by Dorothy and Gabriel Fackre. The book is available in the church office for \$17.00. Participants do not need to commit to attending every week. For more information, contact Stacy Myers.

Vacation Bible School—It is cold outside now but before long it will be warm. Please mark your calendars for the 2019 VBS! It is July 29-August 1. Remember we need kids...teens...adults...and lots of them!

Feed My Starving Children Christmas M & M's—On Christmas Eve we again handed out small plastic tubes filled with M & M's for people to enjoy as a Christmas treat. If those tubes were returned to the church with quarters (about \$13) 63 kids would have food. If all 500 people who were present at Christmas Eve returned them, we would have 31,500 meals or enough to feed over 80 kids for a year! So far we have received about 1500. Keep those tubes coming. You can place them in the offering plate or bring them to the church office. The tube also receives dollar bills and even twenty dollar bills! God bless you for your faithful generosity as we serve those Christ calls us to serve.

SERVE GENEROUSLY

Back Bay Mission Wish List—They are in need of items for their personal hygiene kit. **Our group will take the items when they go on the mission trip in March.**

Hand towel (16x28)
Wash cloth
Wide tooth comb
Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
Plastic soap container
Deodorant (men or women)
Razor (men or women)
Men's jeans—waist size 32 or 34 (new or gently used)

There is a box in the gathering area. Thank you!

Skates Needed—Please consider donating hockey and figure skates to Sporting World to raise funds for Big Brothers Big Sisters. There is a container in the gathering area. Thank you! Carole Mottaz

Save Your Family Fresh Receipts!—ARC gets \$1,000 for every \$150,000 in receipts, so every dollar counts. ARC is the agency funded by local churches to help address the immediate needs of people in our community (rent, utility, gas, repair help). A box for receipts is on the back table.

Simpson Shelter Needs: Cereal; Bath towels-gently used or new; Coffee (ground preferred), tea, hot cocoa; New thermals for men & women-all sizes; New waterproof hats & gloves for men & women; New bras-all sizes; New women's underwear-sizes 5 & 6; New boxer shorts-all sizes; New white t-shirts-all sizes; Disposable shaving razors & shaving cream; Hand & foot warmers; Travel size soap, shampoo, conditioner, body wash & lotion; New white socks for men & women; Dish towels for the kitchen. There is a box in the gathering area. Thank you!

Among Friends, located here at church, provides a social respite for individuals with dementia & their caregivers. We are open 9 am-3 pm every Tuesday. Please contact Norma Revels 715-293-2561 or Bonnie Jones-Witthuhn 715-307-1182 if you are interested in knowing more.

CARE PASSIONATELY

Prayer List—If you have people you wish to add to the church prayer list, please use the blue "I Wish" pew cards & put in the church office or the offering plate. If you wish to receive the weekly prayer list via email, contact the office.

Care Givers Program—An opportunity to serve members through an outreach program that pairs members providing visitors to those unable to be with us regularly in worship or activities. If you are interested in volunteering, have questions or are aware of anyone that would benefit from this, contact Jan Hansen at 715-821-4008.

Meal Ministry—Ever had a death in the family? How about something joyous & life changing like the birth of a baby? As a congregation we are called to 'care passionately' for one another & one of the ways we would like to do that is through a "Meal Ministry." A small stipend to help pay for food may be available. If you are interested, please contact the church office.

Thinking of You Cards—Please use them to send a note to someone who is ill, grieving or you just haven't seen in a while. Place them in the offering plate & we will deliver them. This is one of the ways we care for one another.

Sustainable Living Tip—Approximately 180 million cards are exchanged on Valentines Day. Consider sending e-cards instead of buying paper cards for your significant other, and for other loved ones and friends. Or you may creatively make your own cards from materials you may have on hand...i.e. old magazines, calendars. You can do the same for other Holidays and special occasions. Our fragile eco-system will benefit by the trees that will be saved. It seems like a small effort, but it is one more way you can exercise being a good steward of our environment. ~Brought to you by the Mission Education Committee