

YOUTH EVENTS

Easter Breakfast—Our confirmands will be hosting & are asked to help set up the Fellowship Hall on Sat, April 20 from 10:00-12:00 and on Easter Sunday breakfast is served from 8:00-10:15. Please sign up for a work shift on the sign-up table.

SIGN UP

All Youth: Rollerskating & Arcade Games at Wooddale Fun Zone!—Come & join in the hokey pokey fun **TODAY** from 11:30-3:30. We will eat here & then head out! Cost is \$5 for pizza; \$7 Skating; \$4 Skate Rental

You asked & I listened!! I'm excited to announce a.....

High School Lock-In!!! Mark your calendars for **Sat, May 11 beginning at 6:00 pm until Sunday morning at 10:30.** We will have food, fun, games, movies, maybe some outdoor games and baking! The Youth will host for Coffee Fellowship on Sunday morning!!

Vacation Bible School—The 2019 VBS theme is “God’s Creation!” Participants will use the tools of scientific inquiry to explore the wonder and interconnectedness of God’s marvelous creation. We need many kids and volunteers. Please volunteer to help. Please also register your children and spread invitations to other children. All are welcome! The dates are **Monday through Thursday, July 29–August 1, from 9:00–11:30 am.** Registration forms are available in the church office and on the website.

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Sustainable Living: Tip of the Month—The next time you eat a meal, consider this: scientists estimate that one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of animal pollinators. Pollinators include bees, butterflies, other insects, birds & bats, among others. When they spread pollen from flower to flower, the flowers produce seeds, fruits & other products that we consume on a daily basis (including chocolate!). Here are a few ways you can help:

- Reduce or eliminate your use of pesticides, especially neonicotinoids. Source your plants and seeds from a neonicotinoid-free nursery.
- Leave some habitat. An un-mowed corner of your yard with some trees, tall grass, dead leaves and dead wood will provide shelter, food and nesting areas.
- Plant a variety of native grasses and flowers. Aim for a mix that flowers all year long.

~Brought to you by the Mission Education Committee

FINANCIAL

Treasurer’s Report

	Week of Apr 7, 2019	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 7,155	\$ 132,091
General Fund		
Operational Needs	\$ 9,284	\$ 129,976

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

New Piano Fund Drive

To add an element of fun to our new piano purchase, let’s break down the amount needed (\$10,000) into piano keys. With 88 keys on a piano, each key would cost about \$115. Our challenge to each church family: Please consider donating one key (or half a key) to our new piano purchase! Simply write your check in the desired amount, indicating on the memo line that the funds are to be directed to the Piano Fund and place in the offering plate. Thank you!

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”
~Chinese proverb

APRIL 14, 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: May 12, 19

Welcomers for: May 5, 12, 19, 26

Coffee Fellowship for: May 19, 26; June 9, 16

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

SIGN UP

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

Men’s Group—Meets every other Tuesday for coffee, treats, conversation and fellowship. Our next gatherings are **Tues, April 16 & 30 at 8:00 am.** Join us!

Easter Lilies are offered for you to honor or remember someone & grace our worship space with beauty. The lilies will be displayed on Easter morning & may be taken home following the 10:30 service. To order an Easter Lily for \$13, please fill out the form on the sign-up table & place in the offering plate or leave in the office. **Orders must be placed by TODAY.** Proceeds go to our youth fund.

After Hours Big Band Swing Dance—**Sunday, April 28 from 3:00-5:00 pm** here at church. Free admission. Sponsored by Music at First Church. Join us!

Church Pew Clean Up—We are looking for a small team to help straighten up the church pews each week. Please sign up if you are interested.

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.**

April 17—HOLY WEEK—No meal

April 24—Last Meal—Pasta bar

Easter Breakfast—The Annual Easter breakfast will be in the Fellowship Hall on **Easter Sunday, April 21.** Our confirmands serve a lovely meal consisting of pastries, fruit, eggs, sausage and blueberry French toast. Juice, coffee, tea and milk are also served. Breakfast will be served from 8:00 am (right after the early 7:00 am Sunrise Service) until 10:15 am (right before the late worship service). Please use the sign-up sheet to let us know you are coming. The cost is \$8 for the meal, all of which goes to our youth programming here at church. Please bring your friends and family!

Summer Sabbatical—Every fifth year our church provides a sabbatical time for our Senior Minister. This is time away from the responsibilities of church life to rest, renew and study. This summer Pastor Chris will again be taking a sabbatical and Pastor Dave will again be serving as our sabbatical pastor. Pastor Chris will be on sabbatical starting Monday, May 6 & returns mid August. He will be leading worship on Confirmation (May 5) & Graduation (June 2) Sundays. He will also be present during Vacation Bible School. We are extremely fortunate that Pastor Dave will be assisting us this summer. Church leaders & staff are preparing now to make sure we have a seamless transition

Book Group—The next meeting will be **Tues, April 23 at 3:00 pm at the church** to discuss **The Death and Life of the Great Lakes** by Dan Egan (nonfiction). The book, a Pulitzer Prize finalist, focuses on the past, present and imperiled future of the Great Lakes. Books available in the church office.

SIGN UP

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WELCOME OPENLY

Countering Hatred, Building Hope A Learning Community Gathering Tuesday, April 30 at 6:30 pm

Acts of deadly violence against religious and racial communities stun the world, leaving us feeling helpless and hopeless, especially when they feel far removed from us. Yet there is much we can do, beginning with a firm understanding of the origins and history of this hatred in anti-semitism and racism. From such understanding emerges more effective responses to hatred, and to engaging in acts of hope that counter it.

This Learning Community Gathering, led by Pastor Dave Ostendorf, will cover anti-semitism and its intersection with racism in the "Christian Identity" movement advanced by Henry Ford, and surfacing in the militia movement and the horror of Oklahoma City. It will address the current domestic and international hate movements that seeded the deadly Charleston, Pittsburgh, and Christchurch attacks. And it will explore what we might do in support of our metro area neighbors who gather in worship in synagogues and mosques, and how we might engage in acts of hope right here, right now.

Since the mid-1980s Pastor Dave has been deeply engaged in countering organized hate group activity across the nation and internationally, working with Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other religious communities and grassroots organizations to develop strategies to build effective responses to that activity. His writing on these matters has been published extensively over the years. He is currently facilitating development of the Minnesota Interfaith Response Network to respond to acts of violence and hatred aimed at religious communities.

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 April game was Bob Gustafson. The next game will be **May 13**.

Please Save For VBS—Please save men's neck ties, china tea cups and saucers, license plates, and small wooden pieces of furniture. We plan to turn these old things into new creations.

GROW SPIRITUALLY

Adult Forum—The forum meets Sundays 9:00–10:00 am.
Apr 14: *Jesus' Death, Alan Tuchtenhagen*—The session will feature a 20 minute DVD segment based on Philip Yancey's *The Jesus I Never Knew*. Come to reflect on the end of Jesus' life as we begin Holy Week.

Apr 21: No Forum. Please attend the Easter Breakfast.

Apr 28: *Jesus Appears to the Disciples, Stacy Myers*
The gospels record specific episodes in which Jesus appears to the disciples following the resurrection. Come to explore these narratives & consider what they contribute to our understanding of Jesus and his resurrection.

Tuesday Afternoon Adult Study—The group meets **Tuesdays, 1:00–2:30 pm**. The group is focused on *Words for the Journey* by Martin Copenhaven & Anthony Robinson. Copies of the book are available in the church office. For more information, contact Stacy Myers.

Holy Week Schedule

Holy Week is the most important week for Christian people. In this one week, we see the full depth of our Christian faith. Join us for all of these important worship services:

Mundy Thursday with Communion—6:30 pm

Good Friday Choir Cantata—6:30 pm

Easter Sunday

Sunrise Service—7:00 am

Breakfast served by Youth—8:00-10:15 am
(please make a reservation)

Early Worship with Communion—9:00 am

Late Worship with Communion—10:30 am

UCC Synod is coming to Milwaukee June 21-25!

Surely, you want to be a part of this biennial gathering, since it's practically in our neighborhood, & our Conference is hosting. You can go for a day, or two, or the whole shebang. Plus, if you volunteer for just 6 hours (or more!), you get a great discount on the registration fees. Talk to Bob or Rebecca Ferguson, or check out the Wisconsin Conference UCC website at <http://www.wcucc.org/about-wcucc/the-general-synod/synod-volunteering/>.

SERVE GENEROUSLY

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is the Lenten Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports disaster, refugee & development activities in the U.S. and worldwide. 95 cents of every dollar given is used directly for mission programming that goes far & wide to support countless people & communities facing extremely difficult challenges & especially to domestic disaster relief. Special envelopes are in the pews. We encourage all to partner with OGHS in ministry with people who need our help in this country, its territories, & people all over the world.

Relay for Life Fundraiser—Thank you to everyone who generously donated at our annual soup night & afterwards with money that went toward the Relay for Life event. The team has raised \$642 so far. Our next fundraiser will be Mother's Day, May 12, with our plant sale. There will be hanging baskets & many annuals to create your flower pots or to beautify your gardens. The plants come from Barnyard Botanical. There will also be gift certificates available the two Sunday's prior to the sale & on Mother's Day. The certificates allow you to go out to Barnyard Botanical & choose their own basket or plants.

All funds raised from the soup night, plant sale & donations go toward the River Falls Relay for Life event & are then donated to American Cancer Society. Funds are collected until August 1. Any questions, contact Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945. Thank you for support!

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: Travel size soap, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, & lotion; Disposable shaving razors & shaving cream; Deodorant; Bath towels—gently used or new; New thermals for men & women—all sizes; New heavy duty 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; New white socks for men & women; Coffee (ground preferred), hot cocoa. ~There is a box in the gathering area. Thank you!

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.

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.

A Gift of Art for *Picture the Bible*—First Congregational is commissioning additional art for the *Picture the Bible*. The art is woven into every area of the congregation's educational life. There is one more double image available for a sponsorship at \$500. The image will depict the healing of Naaman. Please consider making a gift to this project in memory or honor of someone or a particular event. For more information, please contact Brad Williams or Stacy Myers.