



**FIRST**  
**CONGREGATIONAL**

110 North Third Street  
River Falls, WI 54022  
715-425-2052  
www.firstchurchrf.org

# God is still speaking,

September 15, 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
- Welcome openly
- Grow spiritually
- Care passionately
- Serve generously



## Tools for Living the Gospel Today

How is your rage? This past Sunday I shared the story of a clergy colleague of mine who went to a Rage Room over the summer and loved it. If the concept of a Rage Room is new to you, it was new to me as well (you can google it for more info), but the short explanation is that it is a place where people can, for a

fee, safely blow a gasket, have an adult temper tantrum and break things (think throwing plates and using sledgehammers).

We live in an age of rage. Not all the time and thank God not everywhere, but on the periphery of life there is a sense of anxiety, worry, fear and sometimes even rage. In such an edgy time, how can our faith equip us not just to survive this, but even to thrive?

This fall we begin a new five part worship series called Tools for Living the Gospel Today. Over the first five weeks of the program year we will explore some of the spiritual tools the Christian faith has given us to grow and thrive in this uncertain and at times down right anxious time. If you miss a Sunday, paper copies of the message will be available at church and can be emailed through the church office. And soon, the worship services, including sermons, will be available online on our own church Youtube station (thank you church interns!). Stay tuned for that part!

In the meantime, here is the live version schedule, brought to you each Sunday at 9:00 and 10:30 am:

Sept 8—Faith: Trusting the Living God

Sept 15—Courage: Living the Unafraid Life

Sept 22—Prayer: More than our Thoughts

Sept 29—Love: How Can I Love Them?

Oct 6—Grace: A Way Forward?

When we began this series this past Sunday, I spoke about faith as both risking and trusting. Using the words from a wonderful children's book we used in Sunday School last week (What Do You Do With a Chance? By Kobi Yamada), we spoke about the importance of taking chances, calculated risks. Faith means risking something of yourself and that is scary. Faith also involves trusting. Trusting that God really is who he says he is. Trusting that God is an active God, a living God. Trusting that God is even now at work in our world and in your world. I ended by encouraging people to take a faithful risk this coming week trusting that God is present and will provide ways to work in and through you.

Thank God we have been given more tools in life than just rage and fear. Join us this fall as we seek to discover or re-discover some of the spiritual tools God has given us to help us thrive today.

Pastor Chris

# GROW spiritually

## Tuesday Bible Study Resumes in the Fall

Weekly Adult Bible Study resumes on **Tuesday, Sept. 17, 1:00-2:30 pm**. We will discuss Chapter 1 of *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg. Copies of the book are available for \$13.00 in the church office. Participants do not need to commit to attending every week. Come when you can.

## Wednesday School Registrations

All children in kindergarten through grade 5 are invited to participate in Wednesday School. Registration & permission forms are available on the church website and at church.

**Wednesday School begins October 2.** Please contact Stacy Myers with questions.

## Wednesday School Workers Needed

It is time to prepare for school-year programming. Wednesday School begins on **October 2**. We still need adult volunteers, drivers to transport children from school to church, and people to provide snacks. Please consider volunteering. A sign-up list is available for volunteers. Talk with Stacy Myers for more information.

## Inquirer's Class

Interested in learning more about our life and ministry at First Congregational Church? Wondering what membership of the church is all about? Come to the Inquirer's Class on **Tuesday, October 22 from 6:30 to 8 pm**. At this gathering you will meet church staff and leaders, meet

other newcomers, & learn more about our life and ministry opportunities. Dessert & coffee are served and childcare is available. Please use the sign up sheet at church or contact the church office.

## Readers Needed!

Dee Nelson, our neighbor-member next door to the church, would welcome readers/visitors to join her for several afternoons each week (as well as Sunday afternoons) from 1-4 pm to read and converse. At 100+ years of age, Dee relishes poetry and readings from her many books, and welcomes conversation on the state of the world. Days for visits are flexible, and a small corps of readers will provide for other scheduling commitments that might arise. Those interested are invited to sign up at the Gathering Area table; the office will be in touch with you to schedule days and times. This is a unique opportunity to be in ministry with Dee!

## Adult Forum

One of our church values is life-long learning. The Adult Forum is a welcoming, engaging opportunity for adults to explore faith and the biblical tradition. Come for the forum at 9:00, enjoy coffee fellowship at 10:00, and then worship at 10:30. The Adult Forum meets from 9:00-10:00 in the Youth Room.

### September 15-October 6: *The Well-Worn Word*

Forum participants will read, explore and discuss ideas in each Sunday's worship text. Bible study is necessarily a communal task, so come & consider, listen, & hopefully deepen your connection to important biblical passages.

September 15: Isaiah 43:1-7, on fear

September 22: Luke 11:1-13, on prayer

September 29: Luke 6:27-36, on love

October 6: Ephesians 2:1-10, on grace

## Youth Events

### **Afton Apple Orchard & Corn Maze Sunday, Oct. 6, 11:30 am-2:30 pm**

Come test out your aMaze-ing skills in this 3 skill level maze. Eat caramel apples, drink hot cocoa & bring friends! Pizza will be provided following the second service. Cost is \$5.

### **College Packs**

Thanks to our confirmands who again this year packed college packs for those who recently graduated from high school. It poured rain so we moved the event inside to the church fellowship hall, packed our boxes, bonded together over an all church scavenger hunt and ended with root beer floats. Thank you to all the families who contributed to this annual event. May they be a blessing to those who receive them.

# Gatherings

## Yoga Class

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
9:00-10:00 am  
Fellowship Hall

Come and join a delightful group of people that enjoy the flexibility and exercise that yoga offers. The yoga group (men and women) meets Tuesdays & Thursdays from 9:00-10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Jan Hansen is the certified instructor. A donation is requested and is shared with local charities during the holiday season. We all look forward to seeing new faces.

## Book Group

The next meeting will be **Tues, Sept. 24 at 3:00 pm at the church**

to discuss *Paris by the Book* by Liam Callanan (fiction). A wife & two daughters seek their husband/father in Paris after he simply disappears. They follow potential clues from the Madeline books to find him. Books are available for check out in the church office.

## Men's Group Gathering

Our men's group meets every other Tuesday in the Youth Room for coffee, treats, conversation & fellowship. Our next gatherings are **Tues, Sept. 17 & Oct. 1, at 8:00 am.**

## Cribbage Night

The group meets on the second Monday at the church. Players are asked to donate \$2 and the group decides which charity to donate it to. Playing time starts at **7:00 pm.**

All players & abilities welcome. The winner of the September game was Duane Church. The next game will be **Mon, October 14.**

## Mother Bear Project

Another 50 bears are have been delivered to the Mother Bear Project and will soon be on their way to Africa. Thanks to everyone who made the bears and provided monetary support.

The Mother Bear Project is still going strong. If you knit or crochet, please consider crafting a bear for this important mission. For more information, contact Rene Bylander at 715-425-7437 or [renebylander@gmail.com](mailto:renebylander@gmail.com)

## October 13 at the Penumbra Theater in Saint Paul

Join us for a Penumbra Theater performance of "Pipeline," a new play by the acclaimed Dominique Morisseau the afternoon of **Sunday, October 13** in Saint Paul. We'll leave in the church van following second service, have lunch on the way, and return to the church late afternoon. This is a powerful new production focusing on a young student raised in the city and then attending a private prep school far from home, where he encounters racism and discrimination not unlike that experienced in his own community. Pipe Line is a searing story of a mother trying to protect her son from a world that refuses to see the little boy she loves.

Please sign up in the Gathering Area; ten discount tickets are available in the office for \$32 each. Checks should be made to the church and noted "Penumbra." This is a powerful play and an important opportunity! For more information see Pastor Dave.

# GIVE graciously

## E-Giving

Many parishioners are signing up for e-giving. It is quick, easy, and safe. It is designed to help both you with your home budgeting

and financing of church ministries which continue even when you are away. Simply complete the application form found in the sign-up area to enroll. Questions can be directed to our church treasurer Missy Luedtke. If you already give electronically, please use the e-giving bookmarks in your pew as the offering plate is passed.

## Treasurer's Report

	Week of Sept 1, 2019	Year to Date
General Fund Income *	\$ 5,520	\$ 298,171
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,284	\$ 324,940

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

\*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

## Pastoral Acts

It continues to be a busy season in our church life. Here are some of the pastoral acts performed or to be performed shortly. Please remember these people in your prayers.

### Baptisms

- For Alivia Moore, daughter of Catherine Schmahl, to be baptized on Sunday, September 15.
- For Wade Peck, son of Megan (Larson) and Lucas Peck to be baptized on Sunday, September 22.

### Funerals

- For Susan Duven whose Memorial Service was September 7
- For Gus de Souza whose Memorial Service will be September 21

### Weddings

- For Dan (son of Steve and Lara Koecher) and Mari who were married on Saturday, August 24
- For Sara Veith (daughter of Norma and Roger Veith) and Trevor Kearns who will be married on Saturday, September 28.
- For Peter Rayne and Natasha Macnack who will be married on Saturday, November 16

---

## Time Out Ministry

Time Out Ministry is a new ministry that seeks to connect, support & serve our families with young children. If this speaks to your season of life, we would love to see you at one of our upcoming events!

### White Pine Berry Farm—Saturday, October 19, 10:00-11:30 am

Come and enjoy a morning in the country at this local & well known apple orchard and pumpkin patch, complete with U-pick options, corn maze and wagon rides. The address is: 1482 Oak Drive, River Falls; phone 715-222-2946.

### Make and Take Meals—Sunday, November 3, 11:30 am-2:30 pm

Come and enjoy church and a quick lunch followed by an afternoon of making freezer meals to help get us through the upcoming busy holiday season! Childcare provided.

Sign up using the sign-up sheets. Questions? Talk to JaNae Westrich at [jmwestrich@gmail.com](mailto:jmwestrich@gmail.com)

---

## Visible Signs of God's Love

In worship on Sunday, Sept. 1, we dedicated over 200 blankets that will be headed to the Simpson Shelter in Minneapolis. People were asked to take the blankets home, wash them and return them.

In one week you did this over 200 times. They will leave to the shelter this week. Thank you. May these blankets be the vehicles of God's grace, mercy and love.



---

## Asylum Committee Update

The Ecumenical Asylum Committee has bid farewell to the Gallo Santos family & wishes them success & happiness as they begin another chapter in their journey. Since we have been helping other immigrant families in the community already, we have decided to continue our support of these families & hope that our steadfast congregations will agree with our decision. While assisting Heidi & the kids in their transition to America, we met many other immigrants along the way. We would like to continue helping a family from Ecuador with the cost of their asylum as well as the new arrivals from Venezuela who have been settling in with the help of St. Bridget's congregation. We learned recently that a family from Bolivia will be arriving shortly & will need housing & assistance with asylum also. The last two families have members who have lived in River Falls before & speak English. This will certainly help in their transition & ability to find work.

We are fairly sure that there will be prayers & other support for these families. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your assistance in getting our first family on their way to becoming fully American. We would like to continue our services & hope that some of you will join us in our mission as God has commissioned us to do.

Forever grateful and God bless everyone of you. —Barb de Souza and Bobbie Kuhn

# *SERVE* *generously*

## Simpson Shelter Needs

- Bar soap and body wash
- Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Razors
- Shaving cream
- Personal tissue packets
- Towels
- Men's t-shirts—all sizes
- Men's boxers—all sizes
- Men's crew socks
- Women's crew socks
- Women's bras—all sizes
- Women's underwear—sizes 5 and 6
- Coffee

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

## Save 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.

## Among Friends

Tuesdays, 9:00 am—3:00 pm  
Norma Revels 715-293-2561  
Bonnie Jones-Witthuhn  
715-307-1182

Among Friends provides a social respite for individuals with dementia and their caregivers. They are open from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm every Tuesday here at the church.

## Neighbors in Need Offering

Neighbors in Need is the annual offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering supports a wide array of rural, urban, and national programs serving a wide range of communities in need, in association with Justice and Witness Ministries. A third of the offering supports the UCC Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) that serves 20 indigenous churches associated with the UCC, particularly in the Midwest and Plains states, including Wisconsin. Envelopes are in the pews; we will receive Neighbors in Need gifts throughout the month of September. Many thanks for your support of this vital national ministry of our congregation and the United Church of Christ!

## Community Event

A Community Forum on “Civil Discourse: Immigration, Refugees, and Population Change” will be held **Tues, Sept. 24 at The Phipps Center for the Arts in Hudson, from 7:00–8:30 pm**. A diverse panel of civic, religious, and academic leaders will discuss how we might encourage and engage in constructive dialogue about these challenging concerns. The Forum is free but reservations are requested via phone at 715-386-8409 or online at [ThePhipps.org](http://ThePhipps.org). For more information, please contact Pastor Dave.

## Sustainable Living: Tip of the Month

Do you have old household chemicals or prescriptions that you're not sure what to do with? Many of these items could be harmful to our health and to the environment if not properly recycled or disposed of. There is a free hazardous waste & pharmaceuticals collection even for residents of Pierce & Pepin County on **Sat, Sept. 21 8:00 am to noon at the Pierce County Recycling Center in Ellsworth**. If you live outside of this area, check with your local recycling authority for information on recycling these hazardous items. -Brought to you by Mission Education Committee

## Health Care Directives Support

Identifying and articulating your desires regarding personal health care wishes to be followed by other people in the event you are not able to make decisions for yourself is a wise thing to do as well as a gift for your loved ones. A folder with all needed materials is available in the church office. Linn Lawrence, member of the congregation and registered nurse, is willing to help people and families navigate the materials as they make these plans. For information, please call the church office or speak to one of the pastors.

**First Congregational United  
Church of Christ**

Office Phone: 715-425-2052  
E-mail: office@firstchurchrf.org  
Website: www.firstchurchrf.org



**STAFF**

Chris Myers, Pastor  
Dave Ostendorf, Minister for Community and Outreach  
Stacy Johnson, CE Minister  
JaNae Westrich, Youth Pastor  
Missy Luedtke, Office Coordinator  
Brad Williams, Moderator  
Jamie Mills, Music Coordinator and Bell Choir Director  
Marsha Pearson, Organist  
Terry Mithun, Organist  
Tim Bylander, Building Supervisor  
Dave Mountain, Custodian

Pastor's home phone number:  
Chris Myers 715-426-2075  
chris@firstchurchrf.org

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

110 N. Third Street  
River Falls, Wisconsin 54022

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT #53  
RIVER FALLS, WI 54022

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SEPTEMBER 15, 2019



2019 SEPTEMBER 2019						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:30 am <b>Worship Service</b> 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	2 Labor Day Church Office Closed  Among Friends Board Meeting 6:00 pm	3 Yoga 9-10:00 am  Among Friends 9:00 am-3:00 pm	4 6:00 pm Bells Intro Night 6:30 pm Church Intern Draft 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 9:00 pm Worship on Chnl 16	5 Yoga 9-10:00 am  Sunday School Teachers' Meeting 6:30-7:30 pm	6	7
8 Rally Day 8:00 am Choir Practice 9:00 am <b>Worship Service</b> 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am <b>Worship Service</b> 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast 11:30 am Parent Meeting	9 Cribbage 7:00 pm	10 Yoga 9-10:00 am  Among Friends 9:00 am-3:00 pm  Newsletter Deadline	11 3:00 pm Among Friends Volunteer Training 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Bonfire Night for All Confirmation Classes 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 9:00 pm Worship on Chnl 16	12 Yoga 9-10:00 am	13	14
15 8:00 am Choir Practice 9:00 am <b>Worship Service</b> 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am <b>Worship Service</b> - Alivia Moore Baptism 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	16	17 Men's Group 8:00 am Yoga 9-10:00 am Among Friends 9:00 am-3:00 pm Bible Study 1:00-2:30 pm Wellhaven Gathering 3:00 pm Boards and Committees Meetings 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting 7:30 pm	18 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Confirm Yr 1 (7th Gr) 6:30 pm Confirm Yr 3 (9th Gr) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 9:00 pm Worship on Chnl 16	19 Yoga 9-10:00 am	20	21
22 8:00 am Bells Practice 9:00 am <b>Worship Service</b> - Wade Peck Baptism 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am <b>Worship Service</b> 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	23	24 Yoga 9-10:00 am  Among Friends 9:00 am-3:00 pm  Bible Study 1:00-2:30 pm Book Group 3:00 pm	25 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Pre-Confirm (6th Gr) 6:30 pm Confirm Yr 2 (8th Gr) 7:00 pm Church Interns 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 9:00 pm Worship on Chnl 16 Newsletter Deadline	26 Yoga 9-10:00 am	27	28 Kearns/Veith Wedding 2:00 pm (offsite)
29 8:00 am Choir Practice 9:00 am <b>Worship Service</b> 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am <b>Worship Service</b> 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	30 Strategic Planning 6:00 pm  Endowment Grant Requests Due					