

Weekly Word – For Sunday, January 10, 2021

Worship this week:

Worship this Sunday will be via the 10:00 am livestream on the church YouTube channel (archived for later viewing) and on the radio on WEVR at 11:00 am. This Sunday in Mark's gospel 1:4-11, we hear again the story of Jesus' baptism and remember how that was the beginning of his ministry. For us as Christians, baptism is the beginning of a life of ministry and blessing. How can we live into the vows made at our baptism today and continue Jesus' ministry of blessing through our lives? Join us!

YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/8XnkhLAY9BM>

Sunday Bulletin 1-10-21

This Week:

Sun., Jan 10	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service – Livestream (also on radio at 11:00 am)
Wed., Jan 13	1:00-2:30 pm	Adult Bible Study – Zoom
	6:30-7:15 pm	Pre-Confirmation (Grade 6) – Zoom
	6:30-7:15 pm	Confirmation Year 2 (Grade 8) – Zoom
	7:00-7:45 pm	Church Interns (Grades 10-12) – Zoom
Sun., Jan 17	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service – Livestream (also on radio at 11:00 am)

Sunday School: Faith At Home Bags–Ready for Pick Up: The next Faith At Home bag is ready to be picked up starting on Sunday, January 10 between 8:00–11:00 am in the church gathering space. Please return your last bag with the empty red folder and storybook. If you would like to pick up your bag from the new outdoor Little Church, please call the church office or email Stacy to make arrangements.

Confirmation and Interns: Confirmation and Church Interns continue, for now, online via Zoom. Please watch for the weekly Confirmation Update emails and talk to Pastor Chris with any questions (chris@firstchurchrf.org).

Annual Reports Due: All Committees, please submit your Annual Reports, preferably electronically, by **Monday, January 11**, to Missy Luedtke at missy@firstchurchrf.org. Thank you!

Drive-Thru Communion: On the first Sunday of each month, the deacons and pastors will offer drive-thru communion. Please pull up in front of the Elm Street doors of the church and a deacon will bring individual communion elements to you in your car, then one of the pastors will pray with you. All will be wearing masks and stay outside so we can serve communion as safely and faithfully as we can. We serve from 9:00-9:45 am so people can be home for the 10:00 am livestream worship service. You do not need to sign up for this. Thank you to our deacons and pastors who are again pivoting.

Quarantining: With the spread of COVID-19, more and more families are having to quarantine at some point. Please know that your church stands ready to support and help you as we can. We have volunteers who can run errands, pick up medicine or food, even deliver your Sunday School materials if you are quarantined. Please also know church staff are here to help you navigate the intense emotional pressures these situations bring with them. Contact the church office for more information ([715-425-2052](tel:715-425-2052)—office@firstchurchrf.org)

Sign Up Sheets: All of the current sign-up sheets are on the church website. Go to the Resource page and then click on Sign Up Sheets.

Weekly Adult Bible Study: Weekly Adult Bible Study meets Wednesdays, 1:00–2:30 pm via Zoom. On January 13, we will begin *First and Second Corinthians* by John Proctor. The Proctor book is available in the church office for \$25.00. All are welcome! Please contact the church office for a Zoom link to participate.

Marriage Tune Up: This pandemic has many of us spending lots more time together which can be stressful, even when you are married. One of the tools Pastor Chris uses to help couples as they prepare for marriage is an online assessment that helps couples see both their marriage strengths and growth areas. This same assessment can help those already married improve their marriage. As we wait for the end of the pandemic, perhaps now is the time for a ‘Marriage Tune Up?’ Couples will complete an online assessment and then meet privately with Pastor Chris either in person or via Zoom to go through the results. Couples will retain a copy of their confidential report. He has led hundreds of couples through this process and uses it in his own marriage. The cost is \$35 which is paid online to the company that scores the assessment. Want to know more? Check out <https://www.prepare-enrich.com> or contact Pastor Chris directly (chris@firstchurchrf.org).

Annual Meeting: Each year, our congregation holds its Annual Meeting on the first Sunday of February. This year’s meeting will be on Sunday, February 7 at 11:00 am, following the 10:00 am worship service. The meeting will take place via Zoom. To receive a link, please sign up and a link will be sent to you prior to the meeting. In addition to our normal business of electing officers, passing budgets and hearing reports, we will receive brief 90-second updates from our committees answering the question: How did Covid change your ministry? We will also vote on a proposal to establish a Memorial Garden for the interment of cremains in the current church garden. Please attend.

Annual Meeting via Zoom: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-annual>

Church Yoga: Jan Hansen's church yoga group will begin again on Tuesday, February 2 via Zoom and a small group of people in the Fellowship Hall. Details will follow shortly. You can always access the yoga classes through their YouTube channel and view archived lessons (available on the church website).

Free Money for Church Ministries: The church has created an Amazon Smile account through which the church can receive a portion of the price of each purchase you make through Amazon. It is important to know that you need to do two things for the church to receive this money. First, go to Amazon Smile by typing in smile.amazon.com and then add First Congregational Church River Falls to your Amazon Smile. Second, every time you order you must order through your Smile account by going to smile.amazon.com. Once you do this, the church will receive 0.5% of each eligible order. Please contact the church office if you have questions.

Finances: THANK YOU to all of you for your support of the mission and ministry of our church through your tithes, offerings, and gifts. Your generosity empowers our church! Please be sure to sign up for e-giving or mail/drop off your gifts. Soon there will be a way to give online via our new church website.

	Dec 31, 2020
General Fund Income*	\$ 485,439.69
General Fund Expenses	<u>476,810.47</u>
Net Income	<u>\$ 8,629.22</u>
	Jan 3, 2021
General Fund Income*	<u>\$ 28,140.47</u>

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

A new budget will be approved at the February 7th Annual Meeting.

People:

- For the webteam (Brad Richter, Rene Bylander, Scott Jameson, Vanessa Withers, Brad Williams, Pastor Chris) who are redesigning and upgrading our church website, that they may be given inspiration and creativity
- For Cindy Gandrud and Ron Ruhnke who are our new communion bread bakers at church—you are a blessing to our community
- For those who graduated from college recently including Nick Miller, Baily Plackner and Alyssa Larsen

- For Spencer Wakefield and Kim Engler who will be married on January 23, that they may grow in love
- For the gift of COVID vaccines and the hope that this will all end sooner rather than later
- For the blessings of daily life, even in a pandemic

Do you have other upcoming news and celebrations to share with the congregation? Graduations? Birthday and Anniversary celebrations? Please email them to office@firstchurchrf.org by Wednesday of each week to be included in the Weekly Word which is sent out on Thursdays.

Prayer: Prayer connects us with God and our neighbors. If ever there were a time we need connection, it is now. Each week in the bulletin there is a prayer list of people, situations and thanksgivings that is also sent out by email to help people in their prayer life. You can sign up by contacting the church office (office@firstchurchrf.org).

Church Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday 8:30 am to 4:00 pm

Friday 8:30 am to 12:00 pm

Church Staff Contact:

Pastor: Chris Myers - chris@firstchurchrf.org - 715-441-2497

Office/Finance: Missy Luedtke - missy@firstchurchrf.org - 715-222-5427

Education: Stacy Johnson Myers - stacy@firstchurchrf.org - 715-338-6406

Mission: Dave Ostendorf - dave@firstchurchrf.org - 715-441-6559

Youth: JaNae Westrich - jmwestrich@gmail.com - 715-897-5358

Music: Jamie Mills - degolierjamie@gmail.com - 715-419-0850

Building: Dave Mountain - focusfan2001@yahoo.com - 715-245-6854

Maintenance: Tim Bylander - timthefixitguy@gmail.com - 715-808-2900