

Weekly Word – For Sunday, October 18, 2020

For the next two weeks, we will only be offering online and radio worship. Hopefully, if the new technology in our HVAC system is installed and local Covid numbers begin to decline, we will offer in-person worship in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 am starting Sunday, November 1, All Saints Sunday. Please see the newsletter article about in-person indoor worship (<https://firstchurchrf.org/wp-content/uploads/October-15-2020.pdf>) in which we detail what this will look like. Again, please pray for our church leaders as they seek to find creative ways to worship that are both safe and faithful.

This Sunday we continue our fall worship series, The Gift of Faith as we look at BLESS—what does it mean to be blessed? Reading from Genesis 12, we explore the blessing of Abram and how he lived that blessing out. Also this Sunday and for the next four Sundays, we resume our wildly popular Tell Me A Story segments in worship in which church members share a portion of their faith story. This week Scott Jameson is our speaker and Pastor Chris is our preacher. Join us live at 10:00 am (archived for later viewing) or 11:00 am on WEVR radio.

Worship Link: <https://youtu.be/pJ7Hyk2CPmk>

[Sunday Bulletin 10-18-20](#)

This Week:

Sun., Oct 18	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service (online and radio only)
Tues., Oct 19	10:00-11:00 am	Yoga (Fellowship Hall)
	6:00-7:00 pm	Boards and Committees Meetings – In Person
	7:30-8:30 pm	Church Council Meeting – Zoom
Wed., Oct 21	12:00-1:00 pm	Investment Committee Meeting – Zoom
	1:00-2:30 pm	Bible Study Outside or Fellowship Hall
	5:00-6:00 pm	Wednesday Meal To-Go (Sign Up!)
	6:00-6:30 pm	Bells – Beginners
	6:30-7:00 pm	Bells – Experienced Adults
	6:30-7:30 pm	Confirmation Year 1 – 7 th Grade – Zoom
	6:30-7:30 pm	Confirmation Year 3 – 9 th Grade – Zoom
	7:00-7:30 pm	Voice/Brass
	7:30-8:00 pm	Bells – Church Interns
Thur., Oct 22	10:00-11:00 am	Yoga (Fellowship Hall)
Sun., Oct 25	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service (online and radio only)

SUNDAY SCHOOL The October Faith At Home Sunday School Resource Bag focuses on four biblical narratives: *The Samaritan Woman at the Well*; *Jesus Feeds 5,000 People*; *Zacchaeus*; and *Mary and Martha*. All four of these stories are represented by new *Picture the Bible* images. An online mini lesson is posted each week to correspond to the activities in the Faith At Home bag. Families can pick up their bags at the church.

CONFIRMATION (Grades 6-9) will 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).

All Saints Sunday, November 1: On Sunday, November 1, we will celebrate All Saints Sunday. This is the day we remember those in our church family who have lived the life of faith and now rest in God's strong care. A white rose in memory of each of our saints will be placed on the Altar Table and may be picked up by family members after worship. Also this year, if you have someone who has died in the past year, please email that name to Pastor Chris so they may be remembered in our worship service that day. May God grant peace and comfort to those who mourn on earth.

Wednesday Family Meals Return with a Twist! - Wednesday Meals have moved to a take-out format. We will have ‘runners’ who can run the meals directly out to your car. Use the back alley and drive south from Maple toward Elm Street. Cost is \$8 per person and will be served in eco-friendly containers. Meals of more than 3 will be packaged family style. The menu is below. **Orders must be placed by Tuesday night and can be picked up at church from 5:00-6:00 pm Wednesday.**

Oct 21 - Roasted turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetable, and dinner roll

Sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-wednesday2>

Oct 28 - Meatloaf, macaroni and cheese, vegetable, and dinner roll

Weekly Adult Bible Study: Weekly Adult Bible Study will meet **Wednesdays, 1:00-2:30 pm**, socially-distant in the Fellowship Hall. The group will discuss Amy-Jill Levine's book *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*. Copies are available in the church office for \$14.00. All are welcome! Please contact Stacy Myers for more information.

Church Interns: Please remember to use the sign-up link below to choose your time slot to meet with JaNae for your interview. She will be available on Sundays before and after church and on Wednesdays after school. Text her with questions 715-897-5358

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-church>

Men's Group will meet **every other Tuesday at 9:00 am** in the Youth Room. The next gathering is **Oct 27**. All men are welcome! Contact Brad Williams (bradleywilliams@comcast.net) for more information.

Book Group will meet on **Thursday, October 29, at 11:00 am** to talk about *Mom Even Said*, a memoir by and about Betty Church, one of our church “Saints.” We are circulating a limited number of book copies among our group and also will try to make copies available in the church office. (Contact Suzanne Hagen (715-425-1471) if you’re having problems getting a book.) If it were to be balmy that day, we will meet outside. If the weather is cold, we will meet (masked and distanced) in the large Youth Room in the church’s lower level. In the spirit of “pivoting,” we will also work on a Zoom connection at that time for people who don’t wish to meet in person. Watch for further details. Please join us for connection and conversation.

Church Yoga: Jan Hansen's church yoga group will meet in the Fellowship Hall (with masks) from 10:00-11:00 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays. You can also access the yoga classes on their own YouTube channel with archived classes. The link is here and also on the church website.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDKl4WmalDidWZwixjZGSFw?view_as=subscriber

Simpson Shelter Supply Needs: White t-shirts—new, all sizes and bath towels—gently used or new. There is a box at the church for donations. Thank you!

Reverend Jack Merner turns 100 years old: A few members of our congregation will remember Rev. Jack and Betty Merner. They served our church from January 1955 to January 1962. The family occupied the (then) brand new parsonage where our fellowship hall now exists. Betty passed away several years ago & Jack lives in senior housing in downtown Seattle. He is still quite active & in good health. His daughters, Leslie and Sarah who live in the area, visit him or call every day. On October 17th Jack will turn 100 years young. Since no party can be held, they are inviting cards and letters from church families he served as a way to celebrate this important day. If you want to send an email or video, send it to sarahmerner@hotmail.com, & she will make sure he gets it. Jack loves people, & his love for his many congregations is what has kept him going all these years. He would love to hear from you. Memories, photos & stories from the past are welcome as are short videos. Or you can just say “Hello from River Falls.” Send to: Rev. John Merner, Fred Lind Manor, 1802 – 17th Ave., Apt. 222, Seattle, WA 98122

Learning Community Gathering with Ron and Andrew Laue - Thursday, November 19 at 7:00 pm:

James Laue, the father of Ron and Andrew, grew up in this church, graduated from UWRF, and went on to a distinguished civil rights career committed to racial justice. His sons, Ron and Andrew, will join us virtually from St. Louis to share the powerful story of their father and their family, and the rich legacy they leave us today. Mark your calendar for this unique Learning Community event.

Giving Thanks Meal 2020: Good news! The 2020 Giving Thanks Meal will take place this year! The even better news is that you can enjoy this meal from your home! Each year our church serves a huge Thanksgiving Meal in mid-November. It is a fun festive day in which our 7th grade confirmands get their aprons, the Youth have a pie auction, we dedicate out pledges and at the end of it all we gather in the Fellowship Hall for a huge Thanksgiving Meal. Because of the pandemic, it is not safe for us to gather together in the Fellowship Hall so the Miller and Kruger families are working on a way of moving this meal to a drive thru format, much like our Wednesday Family meals. The date will be Sunday, November 15, so mark your calendars and stay tuned for further updates!

Christmas Shoebox Project 2020: Our Christmas Shoebox Project will go on even during these strange times of a Pandemic! For many years, the yoga group & members have supported a “Christmas Shoebox” for the men at the Kinnic Drug & Alcohol Rehab Center in River Falls. Even though these are strange times, the NEED is still there, & we will again collect items, wrap, & deliver the boxes to show that we all still care! These shoeboxes contain socks, playing cards, puzzles, & many other items. One really wonderful item last year was the thick warm gloves that a member purchased! They were a big hit as well as a new cribbage board. The look on the faces & the thankfulness is something I wish all of you could see. A list of items is below. Your donations will be most welcome. Please leave donations in the church office. Cash donations will be used to purchase any needed items. If you have questions, please contact Jean at jsmithler@yahoo.com or at 715-781-6880.

Items: Wall calendar, games (Uno-puzzles-table), shampoo & body wash in one, toothpaste-full size, toothbrush, floss, deodorant, coffee mug, hot chocolate mix, chapstick, combs, razors, nail clippers, socks, paperback books, pens, winter gloves, packaged snack or popcorn, wrapped candy, DQ gift card, ruled notebooks (these go to the Director), disposable facemasks (new this year!), LARGE empty shoe boxes. If we can get new ones and at least 60: sewing kit, personal size calendar, stamps, envelopes, and dominos.

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: Please maintain your financial pledge or even consider an extra gift. Gifts can be mailed, dropped at the church office, or even better, sign up for e-giving through this form (Electronic Giving Form). There is also a secure mail drop in the right-hand pillar of the front entrance of the church building which is checked daily.

	Week of	
	Oct 11, 2020	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 8,205	\$ 367,200
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,582	\$ 392,862

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

People:

- For the Rev. Jack Merner, former pastor of First Congregational, who turns 100 years old on October 17. You can send cards to him at: Fred Lind Manor, 1802 – 17th Ave, Apt 222, Seattle, WA 98122
- For Jan Hansen who delivered this month's treat bags to our shut-ins, you are a blessing!
- For Barb de Souza who will celebrate her 90th birthday on October 18 (cards can be sent to her at 620 West Walnut Street, River Falls, WI 54022), that she may continue to stay busy and involved
- For the Garden Geeks, led by Lu Lueck, who took care of our outdoor plants all summer long—bless you
- For Dan and Eunice Filkins celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on Friday, November 13, may you enjoy many more years together!
- For Mark Anderson who is building a little church which will be outside the church door and be a place to drop off and pick up items after church hours—it will be like our little church from VBS which sits to the right of the main church doors

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 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