

## Weekly Word – For Sunday, May 23, 2021

### **Worship this week:**

This Sunday is Pentecost, the day the Spirit of God blew through a room transforming a group of scared followers of Jesus into courageous leaders who took the good news of the gospel to the ends of the earth. If ever there were a biblical story needed for us today, it is this one. This year we celebrate Pentecost outside on the church lawn at 10:00 am and church members will lead prayers in Chinese, French and Dutch in addition to English. Following CDC and health department guidance, we will no longer need to mask outdoors for worship, but for now, we will still mask if worship moves indoor due to rain. We will also no longer need to register for worship. We also hope to restart coffee fellowship in June. This Sunday Stacy will have an outdoor art project for children and families. Join us on the lawn!

Link to Livestream Worship: <https://youtu.be/CZHTQVnjJkY>

### [Sunday Bulletin](#)

**COVID Vaccine Clinic at Church:** The Pierce County health department will be at church on **Wednesday, June 2 from 5:00-7:00 pm** for a COVID vaccine clinic. They will be administering the Pfizer vaccine which has been authorized for people 12 years and older. Those younger than 18 must have parental authorization. You do not need to sign up, but we would like to know the approximate number of people to expect so please sign up here:

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

### **This Week:**

Sun., May 23	10:00-11:00 am 11:00-11:30 am	In-Person Worship Service on the Church Lawn and Livestream WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM
Tues., May 25	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall and Zoom
Wed., May 26	6:30-7:30 pm	Youth Ministry Meeting
Thur., May 27	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall and Zoom
Sun., May 30	9:30-10:30 am 11:00-11:30 am	In-Person Worship Service on the Church Lawn and Livestream WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM
Mon., May 31	Memorial Day – Church Office Closed	

### **Upcoming Important Dates:**

Sunday, May 30 - Memorial Garden Dedication  
Sunday, June 6 - Graduation Sunday  
Saturday, June 19 - Ruth Reilly Memorial Service  
Sunday, June 20 - Sitz Baptism  
Sunday, June 27 - Fuller Baptism  
August 3-5 - Vacation Bible School

**Graduation Sunday** is June 6 at the one 9:30 am outdoor worship service. Graduates please make sure you have submitted a recent photo and your graduation plans sheet ([Graduation Plans](#)) by May 24! Scholarships will also be awarded that day.

**Church Van Campaign:** The church is need of a new 15 passenger van for its ministry. \$32,000 will be needed to purchase a slightly used (about 50,000 miles) van and have it lettered. Please see the recent newsletter for details. Checks can be made out to First Congregational Church with ‘Church Van’ in the memo line or you can give online through the website. We hope to buy the van at auction by August and have it ready by September, but we cannot purchase it until we have the full amount raised.

**Two Church Lawn Mowers Needed!** - Our team of two lawnmowers is now down to one. We REALLY need two more people to join the three-person church lawn mowing team. Training provided, we work with your schedule and the team signs up for weekly shifts making sure our church lawn looks its best for Sunday mornings. Interested? Want more info? Contact the church office 715-425-2052 or [office@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:office@firstchurchrf.org)

**Calling All Softball Fans!** - It appears that the River Falls Church Softball league will happen this year! Please stay tuned for more information or contact Matthew Thurston at 715-781-3626 or Deb Hoffman at 612-308-4945 or [dehoffman234b@gmail.com](mailto:dehoffman234b@gmail.com). Please sign up if you are interested in playing. Games are played on Monday nights at Hoffman Park.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-church1>

**Donations for Shut In Bags Needed:** One of the good things to come out the pandemic are the 25 shut in bags that are delivered each month by volunteers. We are looking for donations of small gifts or handmade items that can be put in these gift bags. Home baked cookies, small handmade items, even seasonal dollar store items are all great additions to this ministry, but there must be 25 of them. Contact the church office for more info.

**Weekly Adult Bible Study:** Bible Study will resume on September 15, 2021.

**Looking to Fall: Family Conversations on the Lawn:** Every so often it is a good idea to stop and take stock of where we are and what we do. After a year of COVID, it is time to reflect on our congregation's faith formation program in general and Sunday School in particular. To help the Christian Education Committee and pastoral staff make decisions, we need your input. We ask parents of students age 3 through church interns to come for a one-hour conversation in June. While we know families are tired and stressed, we truly hope parents will come and help envision what we want to keep and what we hope to change.

***Please come to one of these conversations:***

- Wednesday, June 16, 6:30–7:30 pm on the church lawn (Fellowship Hall if rainy)
- Tuesday, June 22, 6:30–7:30 pm on the church lawn (Fellowship Hall if rainy)

Please sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-family>

**Church Yoga:** Jan Hansen's church yoga group meets on Tuesday & Thursday in person with a small group of people in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00-10:00 am & via Zoom. Please call the office to receive the Zoom link.

**Sign Up Sheets:** All of the current sign-up sheets are on the church website. Click on "Connect" and then "Sign Ups/Forms."

**At-Home Communion:** If you would like to take communion at a different time, the Deacons are available to bring communion to you! We are happy to come to you for doorstep or even contactless Communion. We will bring the elements to you and share a short prayer if you would like. Please let the church office know if you or anyone you know would benefit from this service, and we'll contact you to arrange a time.

**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 though 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](https://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](https://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.

**Paying It Forward:** Many have asked how they can help share their stimulus money to help bless others. Here are two concrete ways:

- **Compassion Fund**—Just this month we have paid 3 people's rent checks. All money stays in the River Falls area and benefits families hit hardest by COVID and the economic downturn.
- **Building Fund**—Each month the church still needs to pay the bank \$3300. The Building Fund enables us to pay our mortgage until we can hold a Building Fund Campaign after COVID.

**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.

	May 9, 2021	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 13,580	\$ 223,875
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,262	\$ 175,978

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

\*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

### **People:**

- For Catherine Engstrom and Steve Papp who are the proud parents of Margaret Jean Papp born April 29 at 7 pounds 5 ounces and 20.5 inches long in Hudson with happy siblings Brandon, Wes and Trudy—may she grow in love and trust
- For Mike Noreen, member of our church and conservation officer for the City of River Falls who has made River Falls second in the nation in its use of renewable energy
- For Sawyer Sitz, son of Heather and Dan Sitz to be baptized on June 20 and Weston Fuller, son Kahla and Farnum Fuller to be baptized on June 27—that they may grow in grace and years
- For Marshall Skule who has created a pouring urn to be used to inter ashes in our new Memorial Garden
- For Tim Bylander who is single handedly renovating the lower level bathroom—it looks mighty fine
- For the over 160 million people vaccinated so far in this country, thanks be to God

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](mailto: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 office at [office@firstchurchrf.org](mailto: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](mailto:chris@firstchurchrf.org) - 715-441-2497

Office/Finance: Missy Luedtke - [missy@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:missy@firstchurchrf.org) - 715-222-5427

Education: Stacy Johnson Myers - [stacy@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:stacy@firstchurchrf.org) - 715-338-6406

Mission: Dave Ostendorf - [dave@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:dave@firstchurchrf.org) - 715-441-6559

Music: Jamie Mills - [degolierjamie@gmail.com](mailto:degolierjamie@gmail.com) - 715-419-0850

Building: Dave Mountain - [focusfan2001@yahoo.com](mailto:focusfan2001@yahoo.com) - 715-245-6854

Maintenance: Tim Bylander - [timthefixitguy@gmail.com](mailto:timthefixitguy@gmail.com) - 715-808-2900