

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN

July 18, 2021

"Eighth Sunday after Pentecost"

9:30 am

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We have gathered as God's people, inspired by the Spirit

P: To forgive more graciously and to listen more deeply,

L: To speak more truthfully and to live more peacefully,

P: To love more energetically and to teach more eloquently,

L: To pray more seriously and to worship more enthusiastically,

P: To celebrate more joyfully, and to sing more faithfully,

L: To give more generously and to serve more compassionately.

All: Come let us worship the God who feeds us, gifts us and leads us into abundant life!

SONG

"You Are My All In All"

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Holy God, in your gracious love send some companions:

who can look in a pained face and not turn away,

who can look at bruises and scars and not pull back,

who can hear anger and rage and not run away,

who can touch a fragile body with tenderness and not pity,

who can stay through the dark nights and shadowed days.

Holy God, touch us and use us to be the neighbor, the friend to those in need. We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace and Lover of Compassion. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Jeremiah 23:1-6

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Old Rugged Cross"

Jeff Pajac

PSALM 23

"Shepherd Me, O God"

Jamie Mills and David Reilly

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 6:30-34

HOMILY

Rev. Chris Myers

SONG

"Come Away From Rush and Hurry"

***STATEMENT OF FAITH – African Creed**

We believe in the one High God, who out of love created the beautiful world and everything good in it. God created the human person for happiness in the world. God loves the world and every nation and tribe on the earth. We have known this High God in the darkness, and now we know God in the light.

God promised in the Scriptures to save the world and all the nations and tribes. We believe that God kept all promises by sending Jesus Christ, a person in the flesh, a Jew by tribe, born poor in a little village, who left his home and was always on safari doing good, curing people by the power of God, teaching about God and humankind, showing that the meaning of religion is love. Jesus was rejected by his people, tortured and nailed hands and feet to a cross, and died. He lay buried in the grave, but the hyenas did not touch him, and on the third day, he rose from the grave.

We believe that all our sins are forgiven by God. We accept the gift of baptism and in the community of faith we live in ways of love and share the bread of life. We announce the good news to all people so long as God gives us breath. We believe that the Spirit is in the world and that God cares for us in life and in death. This we believe. Amen.

THE PRAYERS & LORD’S PRAYER (debts/debtors)

Holy God ...bless us and help us to be a blessing to others.

...Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SONG

“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”

Congregation join on refrain:

***Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home;
Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home.***

***BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Those who are ill or recovering:

Augie (friend of Rose Rude), Peg Thompson, Roger Hirstein, Jim, Sam (grandson of Jan and Glenn Hansen), Barbara Stephens, Marjorie Faulks, Bernie Van Osdale, Wendy MacDougall (wife of our Association Minister Rob)

Prayers for the ministry of our congregation:

- For our congregation as it takes another step back to normal by moving worship to the sanctuary this Sunday
- For the Among Friends program as they meet to consider reopening, come Holy Spirit
- For those who will rest in and enjoy our church Memorial Garden, may it kindle peace, faith, and joy
- For the Youth Ministry Search team who are now interviewing potential Youth Ministers, that they may find someone who will love our church kids and help them grow in God's love
- For the UCC General Synod meeting online July 11-18, that they may help us grow in the love of Christ
- For Coffee Fellowship Hosts and liturgists who help enhance our Sunday morning
- For our incredibly faithful and flexible musicians, webteam and deacons who are willing to put in the extra work each week for worship
- For those who continue to support our church's ministry with their tithes, offerings and gifts--you are all a blessing

Prayers for our World:

- For rain for farmers and gardens enduring a drought
- For peace and resolution to the intractable problems of our world, come Holy Spirit
- For those who are not vaccinated and getting sick from the Delta variant
- For an end to gun violence and the lives it destroys
- For the rest of the world as it navigates an increasingly aggressive pandemic
- For police officers who are struggling with so many expectations
- That justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (Amos 5:24)
- For our fractured nation that we may find ways to come together and solve our real problems

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

- For the return to worship in the sanctuary!
- For the return of River Falls Days after last year's Covid break, hallelujah!
- For Roger and Joyce Kampstra who celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary Sunday, July 11, may your love continue to grow
- For successfully raising money for a new church van!
- For healing from cancer for Megan (daughter of Janice Healy) & Jackie (sister of Marshall Skule), thanks be to God!
- For our church mowing team: Mike Stifter, Ryan Luedtke, Larry Peterson and Joel Larsen—hallelujah!
- For Jenna Lawrence confirmed on June 27 and Cheyenne Wilson to be confirmed on August 15 (due to Covid), that they may grow in the faith and love of Jesus
- For Tim Bylander who is single handedly renovating the lower level bathroom and tiling the serving counter in the Fellowship Hall—it looks mighty fine!
- For the nearly 185 million people vaccinated so far in this country, thanks be to God

For those grieving the loss of loved ones:

- For the family of Dick Reilly who died in May and whose graveside service will be Saturday, July 31 at 10am, may he rest from his labors
- For the family of Mark Mahoney, son of Barb & Terry Mahoney who died suddenly in an accident recently and whose Memorial Service was last Sunday, that they may be strengthened by our support and God's grace and peace
- For the family of friends John Hyland who died after getting lost during his morning walk, may his family and friends receive God's grace and peace as they gathered on Monday for his Memorial Service.
- For the family of Barb Greub who died last year and whose Memorial Service was Saturday, that her husband Lou and their family may celebrate her life
- For the 610,000 Americans and over 4 million worldwide who have died of Covid, may they not have died in vain

If you have people you wish to include on our prayer list, please contact the church office or one of the pastors.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Jeremiah 23:1-6

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

<u><i>Worship participants for this week:</i></u>	
<i>Audio/Visual:</i>	<i>Jeff Hoffman</i>
<i>Music:</i>	<i>Jamie Mills, Marsha Pearson, David Reilly</i>
<i>Special Music:</i>	<i>Jeff Pajac</i>
<i>Liturgist:</i>	<i>Rebecca Ferguson</i>
<i>Coffee Fellowship:</i>	<i>Vicki Hoffman and Brad Williams</i>
<i>Preacher:</i>	<i>Rev. Chris Myers</i>

Treasurer's Report

	<u>July 11, 2021</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 9,529	\$ 283,772
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,262	\$ 259,336

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.