

Weekly Word – For Sunday, November 21, 2021

Worship this week:

This Sunday is the last Sunday of the church year before we enter a new church year next Sunday with Advent. As we all prepare for Thanksgiving, the scripture texts for this Sunday point us toward the new year with hope and vision. We are worshipping at 10:00 am in the sanctuary with the Bell Choir providing music, communion celebrated and Coffee Fellowship to follow in the Fellowship Hall. The High School Youth Group will meet for movie night at 6:00 pm this Sunday. Also items for the Angels on Earth Giving Tree are available for you to choose a gift to bring for a local family—act fast they go quickly. Join us!

Link to Livestream Worship: <https://youtu.be/9b5vtVwNQwQ>

Sunday Bulletin

This Week:

Sun., Nov 21	8:45-9:45 am	Adult Forum in the Youth Room
	9:00-9:45 am	Bell Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
	9:45-11:15 am	Nursery Open
	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	10:00-10:30 am	Children in Worship
	10:30-11:15 am	Sunday School (Pre-School – Grade 8)
	11:00-11:30 am	Coffee Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall
	11:00-11:30 am	WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM
Tues., Nov 23	6:00-8:00 pm	High School Youth Group Movie Night
	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall and Zoom
	9:00 am-2:00 pm	Among Friends
Wed., Nov 24		No Wednesday Programs
Thurs., Nov 25		Thanksgiving Day – Church Office Closed
Fri., Nov 26		Church Office Closed
Sun., Nov 28	8:45-9:45 am	Adult Forum in the Youth Room
	9:00-9:45 am	Music Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
	9:45-11:15 am	Nursery Open
	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	10:00-10:30 am	Children in Worship
	10:30-11:15 am	Sunday School (Pre-School – Grade 8)
	11:00-11:30 am	Coffee Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall
	11:00-11:30 am	WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM
	6:00-8:00 pm	Middle School Youth Group Movie Night

2022 Pledges Due: If you have not yet returned your 2022 Pledge Sheets, please do so today. Your generosity provided in your pledges is what powers our church ministry. We ask three things of you:

- If you don't pledge, please begin this year
- If you do pledge, please consider increasing your pledge
- If you have not signed up for electronic giving, please do so—it is quick and easy

Thank you for the financial support of our church's mission and ministry. Together we are making great things happen inside and outside our church walls.

Wednesday Family Meals: Meals will begin again on December 1st.

The Advent Workshop: The annual Advent Workshop for families will be held following Sunday School on **December 5**. The event will include a chance to make a variety of Christmas ornaments and simple snacks. This is a great family event. Please come and invite friends to join you! Please sign up.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-advent3>

Youth Group Gatherings:

Sun, November 21 - HS Movie Night, 6pm (Rescheduled from Nov 7)
Sun, November 28 - MS Movie Night, 6pm
Wed, December 1 - HS Youth Group
Sun, December 5 - HS Cookies/Gingerbread House Decorating
Wed, December 8 - MS Youth Group
Sun, December 12 - MS Service Project
Wed, December 15 - HS Interns
Sun, December 19 - MS Cookies/Gingerbread House Decorating
Wed, December 22 - MS Youth Group

Advent Evening Prayer: Once again this Advent we will gather for Evening Prayer in the Sanctuary on Wednesday nights using our beloved Holden Evening Prayer. Join us on **Wednesday, December 1, 8 and 15 at 6:30 pm** for this half hour worship service. Confirmation, church intern and youth groups will join us for worship then go to class or youth group. Wednesday meals will be served in both 'in person' and 'to go' formats. There will be no Wednesday service on Wednesday, December 22. Our Wednesday Schedule in Advent will be:

3:45-5:15 pm	Wednesday School
5:15-6:00 pm	Family Meals
5:45-6:30 pm	Bell Practice
6:30-7:00 pm	Evening Prayer and beginning of Confirmation/Interns/Youth Group
7:00-7:30 pm	Second half of Confirmation/Interns/Youth Group
7:00-8:00pm	Choir Practice

Poinsettias for Christmas Eve—Poinsettia sales "In Honor of" or "In Memory of" someone special has begun. The order forms are on the sign-up table or call the church office. The cost is \$15.00 each. Please return the order form with payment by **December 19**. The plants will be on display for the Christmas Eve services. You may pick your plants up after the 11:00 pm service on Christmas Eve. Proceeds of the sales go toward youth activities.

Christmas Shoebox Project: The yoga group and members of First Congregational have supported a "Christmas Shoebox" for the men at the Kinnick Drug and Alcohol Rehab Center in River Falls. We are collecting items and will fill the boxes and bags and deliver them to the Kinnick Rehab to show that we all care! These shoeboxes contain socks, playing cards, puzzles, soap, toothpaste and many other items. We will work with the Wednesday School group in decorating Christmas bags as well as the older youth helping with wrapping the boxes. A list of items is at the church or call the church office. Cash donations will be used to purchase any needed items. If you have questions, please contact Jean Smith at jsmithler@yahoo.com or at 715-781-6880 or call the church office.

Angels on Earth Giving Tree: If you would like to help some children have a better Christmas this year, please select an ornament from the tree and purchase a gift from their wish list. The unwrapped gift with the ornament needs to be at the church **no later than Thursday, December 9**. Please give the Gift Cards to someone in the church office. If you would like to make a cash donation instead, please send the check (made out to First Congregational Church with "AOE" in the memo line) or cash to the church office. Thank you for your generosity. If you have questions, please contact Diane Welsh (651-334-3128 or 715-386-6620) or the church office.

Inquirer's Class: Interested in learning more about our life and ministry at First Congregational? Wondering what membership of the church is all about? Come to the Inquirer's Class on **Tuesday, December 7, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm**. At this gathering you will meet church staff and leaders, meet other newcomers, and learn more about our life and ministry opportunities. Dessert and coffee are served and childcare is available. Please sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-inquirers>

Hope for Creation Invites You To: Entering Advent – A Candlelight River Walk – Sun, Nov. 28 at 6:30 pm. Meet at Veteran's Park. We will gather by our beautiful Kinnickinnic River to walk, reflect and greet Advent. Please bring a candle or flashlight. All are welcome!

ARC Fundraiser: ARC is excited to partner with Common Man Tap & Table in Ellsworth for a fundraising event. On **Sat, Nov. 27**, Common Man will donate \$3 to ARC for every order of a sandwich or burger. Great place to grab a bite, take a break from shopping and decorating, and support ARC's mission of providing financial assistance to residents of River Falls and Ellsworth to meet their basic needs. www.arcriverfalls.org

Church Book Club change of meeting date to December 2: Our church book club will meet at 3:00 pm on Thursday, December 2, to discuss *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. Winner of the National Book award, this novel follows the life of Junior who is a budding cartoonist on the Spokane Indian reservation. Born with a variety of medical problems, he is picked on by everyone except his best friend. Determined to get a good education, Junior leaves the Rez to attend an all white school in the neighboring farm town where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Copies are available in the church office. Come join us for a good conversation about this novel. For more details, contact Rebecca Ferguson, Jan Johnson, Suzanne Haugen, or Bonnie Jones Witthuhn.

Adult Forum: The Adult Forum is held **Sundays from 8:45–9:45 am** in the Youth Room.

Adult Bible Study: The Adult Bible Study group meets **Wednesday afternoons, 1:00–2:30 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. On November 17, the group will begin discussing a new book, *I Heard God Laugh* by Matthew Kelly. This is a short book. Anyone considering Bible Study might enjoy attending for conversation about the new book as a way to “try out” Bible Study. Books are available in the church office for \$10.00. For more information, contact Pastor Stacy.

Church Yoga: Jan Hansen's church yoga group meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the church Fellowship Hall from 9:00-10:00 am and via Zoom. Please call the office to receive the Zoom link.

Coffee Fellowship Hosts Needed: Coffee Fellowship is back! Please sign up to help host and serve. Everything you need is provided, you just need to get there a little early to get things ready, serve and do a quick clean up. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-coffee>

Liturgists Needed: Please sign up to be a Sunday liturgist. You will lead us in the Call to Worship and a Scripture text. The bulletin will be sent via email to you on Thursday. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-liturgist>

Welcomers Needed: Please sign up to be a welcomer on Sunday morning before the worship service. One person is needed for at the bottom of the stairs at the 3rd Street Entrance and one person is needed at the Ramp Entrance. Please arrive 20 minutes prior to the worship service. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-welcomers>

Altar Table Flowers: Please sign up to provide flowers for the altar for Sunday worship. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-altar>

Sign Up Sheets: All current sign-up sheets are on the website. Click on “Connect” and then “Sign Ups/Forms.”

New Church App: The church has a new mobile phone app. You can download it from the church website or by scanning the QR Code found on a flyer on the sign-up table and Facebook.

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. There is also now an option to give online via our church website.

	Nov 14, 2021	Year to Date
General Fund Income*	\$ 11,097	\$ 411,233
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,262	\$ 426,052

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

Building Fund Update:

Original Cost of Facilities Expansion Project	\$2,386,970
Remaining Amount on Bank Loan	\$546,538
Remaining Amount of Church Endowment Loan	\$300,000
Cash on Hand in the Building Fund	\$108,592
Interest Rate	4.725%
Monthly Payment	\$3,300

People:

- For Peg Steintmetz who celebrates her 90th birthday this Sunday, November 21
- For those who shared their faith story as part of the Tell Me A Story segment this year including Scott Jameson, Marie Roe, George Beatty, Jill Paulson and Lee Lueck
- For Andy Krueger, Laura Miller, Dave Reilly, our church youth and the whole crew who served a fabulous Giving Thanks Meal last Sunday, what a gift!
- For the gift of Thanksgiving, that it may kindle generosity and gratefulness in each of us
- For Mason Meyer who celebrated his first communion last Sunday, that he may grow in faith
- For the gift of the Giving Tree and the families it will bless
- For the Shoebox Ministry to the men at Kinnic Rehab, that it may kindle joy and hope
- For our bell choir helping to lead worship today—may your notes kindle joy in our hearts

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. 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

Church Office Hours:

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

Friday – 8:30 am to Noon

Church Staff Contact:

Pastor: Chris Myers - chris@firstchurchrf.org

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

Education: Stacy Johnson Myers - stacy@firstchurchrf.org

Mission: Dave Ostendorf - dave@firstchurchrf.org

Youth: Alex and Sarah Plum – rfyouthgroup@gmail.com

Music: Jamie Mills - degolierjamie@gmail.com

Choir: Sarah Plum – sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com

Building: Dave Mountain - focusfan2001@yahoo.com

Maintenance: Tim Bylander - timthefixitguy@gmail.com