

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

110 North Third Street, River Falls, WI 54022

715-425-2052 ■ www.firstchurchrf.org

September 1, 2022

*No matter who you are,
no matter where you are
on your spiritual journey,
you are welcome here!*

As Jesus' courageous disciples,
living God's grace, we strive to:

- Worship faithfully
- Welcome openly
- Grow spiritually
- Care passionately
- Serve generously



Pastor's Page

Back to School

When you are younger, there are few joys more thrilling than getting those school supplies. Once you get that backpack (perhaps even with a matching lunch box!), you begin to fill it with all the fun things you will use for the coming school year. Markers! Crayons! Notebooks! Glue sticks! Even the most jaded middle and high school students get at least mildly

excited when they go shopping for school supplies.

This past week nearly 370 (a new record) local River Falls children received school supplies here at our church. This number makes me both sad and glad. Sad that there are so many kids in need in our community. And glad that God has called us to meet that need using our gifts and community.

For those that don't know the history, the ministry that is now called Tools for School was begun by one of the saints of this church, Bob Gustafson. A retired teacher, Bob saw the number of kids not having what they needed for the new school year and, being a follower of Jesus, decided to do something about it. Partnering with other local churches he began this school supply ministry that is now being run by one of his former students, Kim Masanz. Even more impressive is that Bob's sons and even grandkids now help out as volunteers. In fact over 145 volunteers helped this year including our own Julie Larson who provided a bag lunch for each participant. Kim has done an amazing job of involving the whole community in this event hosted at our church.

Sometimes amidst all the noise of the world, we fail to notice events like this. No newspaper covered this event. No TV station

interrupted programming. And yet through us, through you and me and our community, God was present and we saw a glimpse of God's Kingdom, God's Way come among us.

The primary way God chooses to work in the world is through people. The Bible contains story after story after story of how God chooses to work through people to make the world more as God intends. Thanks to you, 370 kids will have a better start to the year. Thank you and enjoy some pictures of the event later in this newsletter.

In Gratitude, Pastor Chris



Sunday School resumes on **Rally Day, September 11**. Following Sunday School and worship, we will have a meeting for parents of all students. Parents of children younger than confirmation age will leave after the first portion of the meeting.

The second part of the meeting will be to outline the confirmation program. All confirmands and parents of confirmands are expected to attend this meeting.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

First Congregational Church is sponsoring a series of conversations about ways to support social and emotional wellness among young people. The conversations will be on the evenings of **October 5, 12, and 19**. Presenters are:

Dr. Janette Concepcion (a PhD Psychologist),
Lauren Knapp (Psychiatric Physician Assistant), and
Dr. Kelly Delahunty (a pediatrician with expertise in psychiatry and behavior modification).

The three presentations will focus on: an overview of mental health and wellbeing; how to prevent mental illness and promote emotional wellbeing; and options to treat mental health challenges. The goal is to have as many of our parents and grandparents of school-aged children, teens, and young adults attend as possible.

Please register for these important sessions by adding your name to the list on the sign-up table or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-mental1>

Sunday School Teachers for 2022-23

Rally Day, the first day of Sunday School, is **September 11**. At this point we need three more teachers to have the *minimum* number of teachers to effectively run the Sunday School program. *Please* consider volunteering. All classes are team taught. No one teaches every week. For more information, please contact Pastor Stacy. To volunteer, please sign the list on the sign-up table or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-sunday1>

Sunday School Teachers Meeting

Sunday School teachers for the 2022-23 school year will gather for an organizational meeting **Thursday September 8, from 6:00 pm–7:00 pm**.

Confirmation, Youth Group and College Packs

Wednesday programming for 6th–12th graders will begin on **Wednesday, September 14**, for College Packs and class. We will begin with a pizza dinner, pack college packs and then meet for classes. More details will be given at the Confirmation Kick Off Event on Rally Day Sunday, September 11.

Wednesday School Registrations

All children who will be in kindergarten through Grade 5 in the fall, are invited to participate in Wednesday School. Elementary students in River Falls are picked up at the four elementary schools in town at the end of the school day. Wednesday School concludes at 5:15. Registration and permission forms are available at church and on the website: <https://firstchurchr.org/pages/sunday-school>. It is important to have advance registration in order to be adequately prepared for students, particularly due to transportation needs. Wednesday School begins **October 5**. Please contact Pastor Stacy with questions.

Wednesday School Workers Needed

Wednesday School begins on **October 5**. We need adult volunteers, drivers to transport children from school to church, and people to provide snacks. Please consider volunteering. Please sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2->

Church Interns

Church Interns is a program for post confirmation teens (grades 10–12) who meet monthly with Pastor Chris and Alex, engage in regular service activities and seek to deepen their faith. The first Church Interns gathering will be **Wednesday, September 7, from 6:30–7:30 pm**. We will gather for dinner first then dive into our year and sign up for potential volunteer and service activities. Mark your calendars!



Spring Break Mission Trip

A rite of passage for youth in the church is time at the UCC mission in Biloxi, Mississippi, Back Bay Mission. After many delays and cancellations due to Covid, this trip will finally happen during the River Falls Schools spring break, **March 11–18, 2023**. We will spend the week rehabbing houses, enjoying the warm sun along the Gulf Coast, exploring New Orleans, going to the beach and even going for a schooner ride. Space is limited to 22 people this year and you must be at least 14 to participate. A sign up and informational meeting will be **Sunday, September 25** in the Youth Room following worship. This is literally a life changing week. We will also need some adult volunteers and people skilled with light construction and home repairs. Join us!

Boston Meeting for High Schoolers

For about 10 years now we have taken our 3rd Year Confirmands on a 'Big Trip' to Boston as part of their confirmation experience. On the trip, they learn both about the history of our Congregational Church and nation as they converge in Boston. Highlights include the Freedom Trail (USS Constitution, Bunker Hill, Boston Common, Boston Massacre Site), worship at Old South Church, as well as a trip to Plymouth and recreated Pilgrim and Native American villages.

With the pandemic, this trip has been postponed numerous times. The date for this trip has been set for **April 20–23, 2023**. All confirmands from 2020, 2021 and 2022 as well as those who will be confirmed this spring, are eligible for this trip. A sign-up and information meeting will be **Sunday, September 18** following the 10:00 am worship service in the Youth Room. Parents and confirmands should attend.



Boston Trip in 2019

College Pack Addresses Needed!

If you have a college-aged student, please make sure the church office has their email address so we can send them a college pack! Packing the college packs has become a tradition in our confirmation and youth group programs. This will be done in mid September so please send those addresses in now! You can email them to our church secretary at missy@firstchurchrf.org. Thanks!

College Pack Items Needed

Our Middle and High School Youth will be packing college packs to send to all of our college and technical school youth. Whether they are studying away at school, or here and living at home, we will have a college pack for them (make sure you provide their address!). Items are gathered by our youth group members but we also invite the congregation to support this effort as well. Think of items you might have wanted to receive when you were away from home. We ask for them to come in packs of 5 or 10 of each item you donate. Ideal items are lightweight (so they can be mailed). Pens. Fun items from the Dollar Store or Target. Candy. Be creative! Look for the donation box in the Fellowship Hall! Thank you.



Aloha!

Thank you to the church and congregation for all of the support you have shown me while away on my college journey. A HUGE mahalo for choosing me for a continuing education scholarship! The support from all of you and the Lord is something I am forever grateful for. With love,
Dennis Grisar

Dear Congregation,

Thank you for the scholarship. I appreciate your financial support as I continue my education at UW-La Crosse. I am pursuing a major in international business and a minor in Chinese studies. Next spring semester, I will be studying abroad in either Taiwan or Malaysia. Thanks again,
Seth Larsen



Greetings from Pastor Deb Meyer to you, my new church family. I am thrilled to become your new Minister for Community and Outreach. I enjoyed meeting with the search team and am impressed with the scope of ministry that happens at First Congregational Church of River Falls UCC. I am very blessed to become part of the team. I looked forward to my first day on November 1.

Let me introduce myself. I have been in the ministry for forty years often working with my husband as co-pastor. Yes, he too is a retired minister in the UCC. I have two children, a son and daughter. Mark, who is a professor at Georgetown, Washington, DC. He is married and has a foster son. Serenity is married and is a stay at home mom with her two daughters. She lives in St. Paul, MN. My husband and I are moving to St. Paul in October so we can be close to our daughter and her family.

I grew up in Connecticut, went to Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky and then to Chicago Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. I have served churches in Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota. Throughout most of my ministry, my husband and I were co-pastors in a single position, sharing equally in the ministry of the church and as parents to our children.

The focus of my ministry has been on missions, children and youth, and pastoral care. My style of ministry is relational. I enjoy being with people and building community together. I look forward to meeting you and getting to know you - your hopes and dreams for the church and for the ministry that we engage in together.

There are three scripture verses that define my ministry. The first is from Mark 12:30-31 which I paraphrase as 'Love God, Love Others'. I believe that the whole of Christian Faith is founded on this scripture. The second is from Matthew 25:40, 'Whatever you do to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you do to me'. As Christians we are called to share our resources of time, talent and money with others. The third is from 1 Corinthians 12:12 which I paraphrase 'We are many parts but one body'. We cannot be a Christian in isolation. We are the body of Christ with Jesus as the head. Each one of us is needed to do the work of God. Together we celebrate and use our gifts for the good of all.

Once again, I look forward to being part of the ministry of First Congregational Church. May the love, peace and joy of God be with you.

In Christ's name, Deb Meyer

Adult Bible Study

Adult Bible Study will resume in the fall on Wednesday afternoons, 1:00-2:30 pm, in the Youth Room. The first session is **September 14**. The year will begin with a study of Hebrews. The book we will use is available in the church office for \$25. Please indicate your interest on the sign-up table or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-adult1>

Sunday Morning Text Study

Sunday morning Bible text study will resume on Rally Day, **September 11**. This group has formerly been called the Adult Forum, but shifted last year to a focus on the assigned Bible readings for worship, hence the new name. Please join us for an engaging discussion of the texts. All are welcome!



Church Van Is Here!

After nearly two years of waiting, the new church van is here. It has 14 seats and has already been put into use. Hopefully it will soon have the church name and logo painted on it and then we will have a dedication this fall. Thanks to all who gave gifts to purchase this vehicle!

Thank You From Pastor Stacy

Many of you have already experienced what I did this summer: the death of a parent. My mother's death can only be described as a good death. As she died, she was comfortable and not in pain; she was encircled by her husband, children, son-in-law, and grandchildren; and she was at home, reclined in a chair in the study. Since living had become a burden for her, I was ready for her to die, but it is immensely hard and rather confounding to adjust to the reality that she is now dead, that I am a daughter without a mother.

Throughout the past weeks I have received many, many cards, kind words, and gestures of care and compassion from our church family. Thank you. It was extremely meaningful to me that so many of you traveled to Minneapolis for her funeral. My mom's funeral was at the church that was my church home for 32 years. I received communion for the first time there, I was confirmed there, I was married there, I was ordained there, I served there, and I brought my babies there. Suffice it to say that Holy Trinity Lutheran Church figured prominently in my life for a long time. To have members of my present church family visit this congregation was an honor and source of solace. Thank you.

My dad and I carefully picked the scripture readings for my mom's funeral. We selected a collection of texts compiled by Johannes Brahms for his beautiful composition, *Requiem*. The opening text is Matthew 5:4: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." I am surely mourning, but you, my church family, combined with the promise of resurrection, are sources of comfort. Thank you.

Your sister in Christ, 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 contact the church office to receive the Zoom link.



Offering QR Code

1. On your device, open your Camera app or QR Code app
2. Point your camera at the QR Code
3. Click tab 'Give Online'



Cribbage Night

The cribbage group will begin meeting again on the second Monday at the church. Players are asked to donate \$2 and the group decides which charity to donate it to. Playing time starts at **7:00 pm**. All players and abilities welcome. The next game will be **September 12**.

Mortgage Summary—As of August 31

Original cost of Facilities Expansion Project	\$2,386,970.00
Remaining amount on Bank Loan	\$285,189.20
Cash on hand in the Building Fund	\$210,584.05
Interest Rate (Locked in through January 2027)	3.39%
Monthly Payment	\$2,622.76

Treasurer's Report

	Week of	Year to Date
	Aug 21, 2022	
General Fund Income*	\$ 9,279	\$ 323,626
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,909	\$ 336,906

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

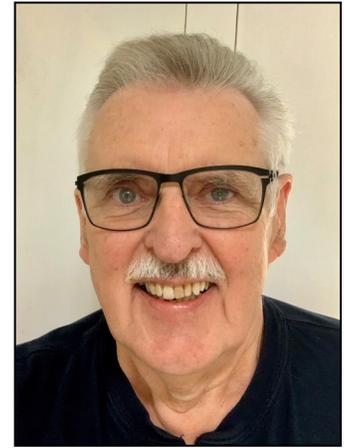
*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

Church Staff Contact Info

Pastor: Chris Myers—chris@firstchurchrf.org
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 Education: Stacy Myers—stacy@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: Farnum Fuller—farnumfuller@gmail.com
 Maintenance: Tim Bylander—timthefixitguy@gmail.com

People in the Pews: Ron Ruhnke

My great grandparents from Germany settled in the Mt Horeb area of WI and started a church in the late 1840s. It's still there. I grew up across the St Croix on a farm. The only places we went was to town on Friday night and church on Sunday. I went off to college, Air Force, grad school and career with minimal involvement with a church. Then in 2006 I received a diagnosis that sent me in a tailspin. A very good friend said, "what about your faith?" I thought, What about my faith?? She knew my family (my brother was a Methodist pastor, one sister was director of Christian education and the other a church secretary), she knew my upbringing, she knew me, and she asked THE right question. So I went about finding my answer. For a number of years I went with her to St. Francis of Assisi in Lakeland. It was a great experience, Father Jerry was great, just what I needed. I learned the prayer of St Francis (I say it every day) and how to cross myself at communion. I always drove so I called it mass transit.



But I didn't really feel it fit, it didn't feel like home. I had been seeing a massage therapist for over 15 years and because I was still trying to answer the question, "what about my faith" it became a topic during my massage. I even taught her the prayer of St Francis. She had grown up catholic but because she had a son that was gay she felt that the Catholic Church was not a fit for her anymore. So we went church shopping. For over 2 years once a month we (and occasionally another friend) would check out a new church and have coffee and discussion afterwards. We visited churches in St. Paul, Hastings, Afton, Stillwater, Woodbury and of course River Falls. We found some that were OK but not one that fit for us. So we decided to go out individually and if we found a church that seemed to fit we would then go together. One Sunday in the fall 2014 I came here. I read the bulletin and the statement of the church about on your journey of faith you are welcomed here, I was greeted by pastor Dave, Carol Mottaz and Fred and Yvonne Benson, and was impressed with pastors Chris' sermon. The liturgy was right. I came back again and again to be sure that this was a good fit because I didn't want my friend to be disappointed again. I told her I had found a church for us, and we had planned to attend together. However WE never made it. She had not been feeling well and her health deteriorated. She died before we could both attend. I believe she would have found a church home, I did.



Brodie and Bridget Schaefer, Peter Rayne, Tim Schaefer, Todd Gustafson, Matthew Thurston, Erik Withers, Jeff Hoffman, Josh Hudson, Clyde Hanson, Bryan Jaeckel, Ethan and Emma Cernohous, Will Tuchtenhagen, Ellie Rayne, Deb Hoffman

Missing from photos are Beth Antoine, Louie Filkins, Peter Yaeger
Alex & Sarah Plum, Andy Myers

Church Softball Team

Thank you everyone for a fun-filled season! It may not have been a winning season, but it was a time that brought together families and friends playing fun games of softball and fans cheering us on. The sharing of fellowship is a drive for this team and we do very good at that. Thank you all for an awesome season and we looking to seeing and playing again with you next year.

Fall 2022 Courses with the Damascus Project

Is this you or someone you know?

- *You wish you knew more about the Bible.*
- *You're leading in your church but feel overwhelmed and alone.*
- *You struggle to understand who God is in your life.*

The Damascus Project would love to help. Join one of their fall courses today! All of the courses are offered online and include a mixture of opportunities to learn on your own and at your own pace and to meet with your peers and the instructors on Zoom. See the flyer on the sign-up table and visit www.the-damascus-project.org to learn more.



Tools for School Thank You

This year we served a record number 370 local kids! This is both good and bad news. It is bad news that there are so many needy kids in our neighborhood. The good news is that thanks to your generosity these local kids can start the school year on the best foot possible. God bless you church!



Church App

The church has a mobile phone app. You can download it from the church website or by scanning the QR Code to the left. Call the church office if you need help.



Altar Flowers

Please sign up to provide flowers for the altar for Sunday worship. Sign up at church or on the church website:

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

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. Please arrive 20 minutes prior to the worship service. Sign up at church or here:

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

Coffee Fellowship Hosts and Liturgists Needed

Coffee Fellowship Hosts will be asked to serve Best Maid cookies which are in the church freezer, make lemonade and/or serve coffee. All the materials are provided, you will simply need to serve and clean up. Sign up at church or on the website: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-coffee>

Liturgists will lead us in the Call to Worship and one of the Scripture Lessons. The material will be emailed out on Thursday to practice. Sign up at church or on the website: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-liturgist>

Please note church interns can receive credit for either of these activities. Thank you for volunteering in these important ministries as we continue our journey.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

August 23, 2022

Attendance: Rev. Chris Myers, Kathy Rausch, Karen Lloyd, David Reilley, Jeff Hoffman, Marie Roe, Rose Rude, Susan Walden, Christina Krueger, Jo Anne Friedell.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Jo Anne informed the Council that Marie will provide backup for the Council Clerk.

Opening Prayer given by Pastor Chris.

Approval of Agenda: Motion to approve made by Marie R., seconded by David R and passed by Council.

Approval of May 17, 2022 Council Minutes: Motion to approve made by Karen L. seconded by Susan W. and passed by Council.

Treasurer's Report: Missy unable to attend. Pastor Chris provided a summary: Giving totals are down this summer as is worship attendance. Overall giving totals are \$10,000 over budget at this time. Motion to approve by Rose R., seconded by David R. and passed by Council.

New Business:

New Hire for Minister of Community and Outreach—The interview and hiring committee was made up of a variety of committee members. Pastor Deb Meyer has accepted the position and she will begin the 1st of November. She is a great fit for the position and was planning to move to this area prior to the job opening as well. During her group interview she demonstrated her skills as a compelling speaker-skilled in connecting with all of the committee members. Nov. 13th is the 40th anniversary of her ordination. This is the same day as the Thanksgiving celebration/dinner.

PTB Update—There is a group that has published a book using materials from PTB without permission. A copyright attorney has been retained and there is a lawsuit being pursued as a result.

Old Business:

Capital Campaign Update - exceeded the goal. Two principal paydowns have occurred.

Sign quotes have not been obtained at this point. There is concern that the audio video quotes may come in higher than what the budget allows. The priority is to make sure the balance on the building will be paid with the funds.

RFSD proposal - They did find another location for their classes.

Nominating Committee—Joel/Chris need names for replacing committee members. Deacons is full, CE has submitted names, 1 person for Discipleship. Mission Ed-could use more members, Music-at least 1, Trustees-3, Welcoming-3.

Church Van Update - brace yourselves—it ishere!--Most people can stand up in there. 14 seat bus. Waiting to have Gilby do the painting with the Church name on the sides.

Weekly Communion - the Deacons have offered to continue serving weekly communion. Will continue to hold 1 service at 10 a.m. beginning Rally Day (Sept 11). Communion will be held at the beginning of the service. Council members are to ask their committee members at their next month's meeting how they are perceiving the weekly communion.

Ministry Updates:

Christian Education-Rally Day, 10 teachers but need 2 more, (3 teachers per classroom to rotate), Intern kick off is Sept 7, Confirmation orientation follows that. They will do root beer floats and coffee fellowship that day. Boston trip orientation is on September 18th, Work continuing on Resource Room. Back Bay trip meeting will be held Sept 25th, Youth and Adult programming to resume in mid-September. Large number of individuals signed up for the Mental Health presentation.

Discipleship-The committee said goodbye to Scott Jamison and set dates for the fall campaign.

Mission Education-Multiple projects underway. Will solidify directions once Pastor Deb starts in November. They have funds available for programming and mission partners at present.

Music-Last event was the July Bluegrass performance. This will continue as a tradition as a kick-off for River Falls Days

Trustees-WM contract changes were completed with some cost savings. May rust proof van, the committee weeded around the grounds. Request made for a security camera for the backdoor, garage and van security. Painting hallway downstairs on September 10th at 9 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: September 20 (New members join us @ 6:30 in FH, then meetings 6:45-7:45, then Council @ 7:45pm)

Respectfully submitted by Jo Anne Friedell, Clerk

SERVE generously

Simpson Shelter Needs

- New men's boxers—sizes S, M, L and XL
- New men's t-shirts—sizes S, M, L, XL, and XXL
- New women's underwear—Sizes 5, 6, 7, and 8
- New bras—cup sizes B, C, & D
- Deodorant
- Shaving cream and razors
- Travel size shampoo, conditioner, body wash, and bar soap
- Haircare products for natural, textured, or curly hair
- Mending kits

There is a box at the church for donations. Thank you!

Save Family Fresh Receipts

ARC gets \$1,000 for every \$150,000 in receipts, so every dollar counts. ARC is the agency funded by local churches to help address the immediate needs of people in our community (rent, utility, gas, repair help). A box for receipts is on the back table.

Save Your Batteries to Recycle!

We have a container available for recycling all those old, depleted batteries. Start saving them now and bring them to church. We'll pass them on to the recyclers and keep them out of landfills and the environment in our ongoing commitment to sustainability.



Red Cross Blood Drive

There will be a Red Cross Blood Drive here at the church on **Friday, September 16, from 11 am to 5 pm.** Here is the link to the online appointment schedule: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/donation-time>

amazon smile Free Money for Church Ministries

The church has an Amazon Smile account through which the church can receive a portion of the price of each purchase you make through Amazon. 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**, 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. Last quarter the church received over \$100 for this account, but that amount could grow greatly if you add the church to your account. **Do it today!**

Empty Pill Bottles

The River Falls Lions Club is collecting empty pill bottles, both prescription and over the counter, to send to Africa where there is an urgent need. The bottles will be washed, and the labels soaked off before they are shipped. A blue collection tub is in the gathering area. Please see Carole Mottaz with questions.



Among Friends

Among Friends is open and accepting new referrals. Among Friends is a community-based social respite program serving adults with memory loss who reside in Pierce and St. Croix Counties. For more information, contact them at (715) 293-2651. Also, check out their website: amongfriendsrf.com and Facebook page. Among Friends is located at the church. **Guests are invited to join them for coffee from 9:30–10:00 am on Tuesday, September 27.**

Thank you again for your generous orders and supporting the youth. Here is recipe to try when you pick up your peaches.



Peach Pie Milkshake

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 ½ c vanilla ice cream | 1 tsp vanilla extract |
| ½ c whole milk | 1 tbsp light brown sugar |
| 2 whole peaches, chopped | ½ tsp ground cinnamon |
| 2 tbsp condensed milk | |

Place all ingredients into a blender and blend till smooth.

Pour into glass and enjoy!



FIRST
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RIVER FALLS

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STAFF

Chris Myers, Pastor
Stacy Johnson, CE Minister
Missy Luedtke, Office Administrator
Joel Larsen, Moderator
Alex and Sarah Plum, Youth Ministers
Jamie Mills, Music Coordinator and Bell Choir Director
Sarah Plum, Choir Director
Marsha Pearson, Organist
Terry Mithun, Organist
Tim Bylander, Building Supervisor
Farnum Fuller, Custodian

Pastor's home phone number:
Chris Myers 715-426-2075
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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SEPTEMBER 1, 2022



First Communion Information for Parents

When do children at First Congregational Church begin taking Communion?

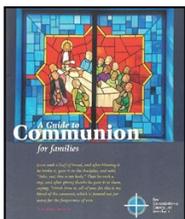
There is no uniform age at First Congregational Church when children begin participating in the Lord's Supper. Some children are pre-school age, others are in elementary school, and some wait until confirmation to begin taking Communion. The Bible and church history do not give decisive guidelines about the age to begin celebrating the Lord's Supper. The decision about when people are welcome at the Lord's Table has largely been made by local worshipping communities. Our practice is to include children when they and their parents think they are ready to participate.

How will I know when my child is ready?

Some parents choose infant communion for their children. Many parents wait until their children express an interest. Typically, children are ready to participate in Communion when they start asking questions about this sacrament. One important theme of Communion is inclusion: All are welcome at the table of the Lord. If a child feels excluded, it is a good time for that child to begin participating.

My child does not yet receive Communion. Should she/he still come forward?

Yes, all people are invited to come forward to the servers at the Communion distribution time. Children who will not be communing should keep their hands folded (as opposed to reaching out). This is a signal to the pastor and deacons that the child desires a blessing.



Communion Resource for Families

First Congregational Church has a new *Guide to Communion*. The resource was specifically designed for families, but it could be helpful for adults as well. Copies of the guide are available on the table in the gathering space.