

## **Weekly Word – For Sunday, December 4, 2022**

### **Worship this Sunday:**

This Sunday is the second Sunday of Advent. The scripture texts teach us about peace, true peace, as we prepare for the arrival of the Prince of Peace at Christmas. How can we take up our call to follow in his path as people of peace in a world that seems so at war with each other? After worship all are invited to the Advent Workshop which will take place in the Fellowship Hall as a part of an extended Coffee Fellowship with special snacks and treats. Join us this Sunday as the choir leads us in joyous song!

Link to Livestream Worship: <https://youtu.be/zr9gNGAEleM>

### **Sunday Bulletin**

#### **This Week**

Sun., Dec 4	9:00-9:45 am	Sunday Morning Text Study in the Youth Room
	8:45-9:45 am	Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
	9:45-11:15 am	Nursery Open
	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	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
	11:15 am-12:30 pm	Advent Workshop
Tues., Dec 6	9:00 am-2:00 pm	Among Friends
	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	12:00-2:00 pm	Christmas Luncheon
Wed., Dec 7	1:00-2:30 pm	Bible Study
	3:45-5:15 pm	Wednesday School
	5:15-6:15 pm	Wednesday Meal
	5:45-6:30 pm	Jubilee Ringers
	6:30-7:00 pm	Advent Evening Prayer
	7:00-7:30 pm	Pre-Confirmation (Grade 6)
	7:00-7:30 pm	Confirmation Years 1 & 2 (Grades 7 & 8)
	7:00-7:30 pm	Church Interns
Thurs., Dec 8	7:00-8:00 pm	Chancel Choir
	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
Fri., Dec 9	10:00am-1:00pm	Cookie Making Event in Fellowship Hall
Sun., Dec 11	9:00-9:45 am	Sunday Morning Text Study in the Youth Room
	9:00-9:45 am	Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
	9:45-11:15 am	Nursery Open
	10:00-11:00 am	Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	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
	11:15am-12:00pm	Endowment Grant Committee Meeting

#### **Assisting in Sunday's worship service are:**

Preacher:	Chris Myers
Celebrant:	Stacy Johnson Myers
Cantor:	David Reilly
Liturgist:	Marie Roe
Deacons:	Peter and Natasha Rayne, Karen Lloyd, Suzanne Hagen
Organist:	Terry Mithun
Nursery:	Kahla Fuller
Live Stream:	Jeff Hoffman

Trustee: Dan Rude  
Coffee Fellowship: Merry Widows  
Counters: Janice Healy, Roz Ostendorf

*Altar table flowers are given by Sonny and Mary Miner in celebration of their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.*

**URGENT: Two Sunday School Teachers Needed:** The Sunday School program is in critical need of two more Sunday School teachers. Teachers do not teach every week. Please consider volunteering. For more information or to volunteer, contact Pastor Stacy.

**Children's Advent Musical Rehearsal** will be **Saturday, December 17, from 10:00–12:00 noon for children in grades 1–5.** Pre-Schoolers and Kindergarteners do not need to attend the rehearsal. The musical will be presented during worship on **Sunday, December 18.**

### **Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Worship Schedule**

Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve

Carols and Candles Family Worship at 4pm

Carol and Candles, Choir and Communion Worship at 11pm

Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day

Worship at 10am with Festive Coffee Fellowship Following

### **Loving God**

**Advent Evening Prayer:** Advent is about re-centering ourselves, to sharpen our ears and focus our attention on the work and way of life God calls us to. Evening Prayer is an excellent way to re-center yourself. Please join us for worship on the Wednesdays in Advent: **December 7, 14, and 21, at 6:30–7:00 pm.** This brief service is lovely. It nourishes the soul. Please come.

**2022 Advent Devotional:** The Advent devotional resource for 2022 is a simple cardboard “tent” that will sit on your table during the Advent season. There is a scripture passage, questions to think about, and a prayer. Be sure to take home a resource and use it!

**Sunday Morning Text Study:** Sunday morning Bible text study is held at **9:00 am on Sundays.** Please join us for an engaging discussion of the texts. All are welcome!

**Adult Bible Study:** Adult Bible Study is held on **Wednesday afternoons 1:00–2:30 pm** in the Youth Room. The current focus is the New Testament book of James. All are welcome. For information, contact Pastor Stacy.

### **Loving Neighbor**

**Reverse Advent Calendar:** Each day in Advent, congregation members are encouraged to add an item of food for the River Falls Food Pantry then bring the completed items in a shopping bag to worship on or after Christmas Eve or Christmas Day worship. Extra copies of the list and shopping bags are available at church.

**Amaryllis:** Please see the table with amaryllis and enrich your Christmas by signing up to deliver one to a special church member.

**Christmas Shoebox Project:** We are collecting items to fill the boxes will deliver them to the men at the Kinnic Rehab. A list of items is at church. **We do not need shoeboxes. Please bring items to church by Thursday, December 8.** If you have questions, contact Jean Smith or the church office.

**Cookie Making Event:** We will be making cookies at the church. Please sign-up to volunteer for this cookie making event on **Friday, December 9 at 10:00 am in the church kitchen.** All supplies will be furnished. If you have a special recipe that you wish to share, please contact Jean Smith at 715-781-6880 or Eunice at 715-497-4514. Will be a fun time! We will order pizza for lunch and, of course, there will be tasting. Join us!

**Angels on Earth Giving Tree:** The unwrapped gift with the ornament needs to be at the church **no later than Thursday, December 8.** Please give the gift cards to someone in 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 office.

**Among Friends** is a community-based social respite program serving adults who have memory loss who reside in Pierce and St. Croix Counties. For more information, contact them at (715) 293-2651. Check out the website: [amongfriendsrf.com](http://amongfriendsrf.com) and Facebook page. It is held at the church on **Tuesdays 9am to 2pm.**

**Volunteer Opportunities at Among Friends:** Volunteer needed on Tuesdays to provide transportation for two female participants who live in Hudson. Clients could be picked up at 9:00 am and returned home at 2:00 pm. Mileage reimbursement would be provided. Also, need a volunteer to set up for lunch and do dishes from 11:30 am–12:30 pm. For information, call Norma at (651) 260-5725.

### **Loving Self**

**2022 Christmas Luncheon:** You are invited to attend a Christmas Luncheon on **Tues, December 6, starting at noon.** The Fellowship Hall will be decorated, the food will be delicious, the company hard to beat, and the River Falls High School Costumed Carolers provide the entertainment. Please come! We have drivers willing to pick up anyone who needs a ride. The cost is \$10.00 per person. Please make a reservation and let the office know if you need a ride. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-christmas2>

**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 18.** 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.

**Wednesday Meals:** On Wednesday nights we offer a home-cooked meal in the Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$8 per person with a family max of \$30. **Meals are served from 5:15 to 6:15 pm.** We will not be offering drive thru service this year, but you may go through the serving line and a meal will be packaged for you to take home. **Reservations must be placed by noon on Tuesdays.**

Dec 7 - Beef Stroganoff, noodles, sweet and sour cabbage, veggies, and rolls  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-wednesday47>

**Men's Group:** The church Men's Group meets **every other Tuesday from 9:00-10:00 am** for coffee, treats and conversation. Pastor Chris leads us with a brief devotion and gives us a topic to discuss. Next gathering is **December 13** when we will be making sandwiches for the Simpson Shelter! All men are welcome!

**Merry Widows:** The Merry Widows will meet on **Wednesday, December 21 at the West Wind in River Falls at 1pm.** All widows are welcome to join us for lunch and conversation! See JoAnn Lentz for more information.

**Cribbage Night:** The group meets on the second Monday at the church. Players are asked to donate \$2 which is given to a charity. Playing time starts at **7:00 pm.** All players welcome. The next game will be **December 12.**

**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.

**Inquirer's Class:** Want to know more about First Congregational Church? Join us on **Tuesday, January 24 at 6:30 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. In this 90-minute gathering, you will meet other new folks, church leaders as well as get an overview of the church's mission and ministry. After introductions and a tour of the church building, dessert will be served as church leaders share information about the church. Those who complete the class and wish to join the church as members will be received into church membership in February. Join us!

**Civil Rights Pilgrimage:** Our church has a history of pilgrimage trips. In addition to the bi-annual mission trip to Back Bay Mission, our youth head to Boston to learn more about both their Congregational Church heritage and our nation's history. We also have led a Holy Land Pilgrimage to learn more about the biblical roots of our faith. This fall we will add a new experience - A Civil Rights Pilgrimage. This 5-day pilgrimage will include stops in Atlanta, Birmingham, Selma and Montgomery. We will literally be walking in the steps of history to learn more about our country and our Christian faith. There will also be time to enjoy southern cuisine! The trip will take place in the end of October and an informational meeting will be held over the winter. Please contact Pastor Chris for info and use the sign-up sheet to register your interest. Space is limited to 15 people.

### **Youth Group News**

**Sun, Dec 4, 11:00 pm - Advent Workshop:** Volunteers needed to help at each station. Please sign up to help. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-youth2>

**Wed, Dec 14, 6:30 pm - MS Youth Group Christmas Cookie Decorating:** Please sign up so we can have enough supplies. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-middle9>

**Wed, Dec 21, 6:30 pm - HS Youth Group Christmas Cookie Decorating:** Please sign up so we can have enough supplies. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-high4>

**Sun, Jan 15 - Badlands Snow Tubing 1:30-4:30 pm:** Please sign up. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-youth3>

**Winter Retreat for High Schoolers – Jan 27-29:** All high school youth are invited to join Alex for an awesome winter retreat at ARC retreat center in Osceola, WI. We leave Friday afternoon, spend all day Saturday at the retreat center, then leave early on Sunday to return home and help lead worship. The date is Friday, January 27 to Sunday, January 29. The retreat center offers tubing, an indoor gym, human football, and lots of other fun activities. Cost is \$75 per person for pledging families. We are excited to resume this retreat after a two-year absence! Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-winter>

### **Sign Ups**

**Coffee Fellowship Hosts Needed:** 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 & one person is needed at the ramp entrance. Please arrive 20 minutes prior to the 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>

**Church App:** The church has a 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.



### **Offering QR Code**

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

### **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.

	<u>Nov 27, 2022</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 8,002	\$ 455,072
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 9,909	\$ 475,632

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

\*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

**Do you Smile? Do you Amazon Smile?** - Did you know the church has received nearly \$500 from Amazon through its Amazon Smiles charity program? It is fast, free and easy to set up. If you have an Amazon account go to smile.amazon.com and register First Congregational Church of River Falls. Then each quarter the church will receive a small portion of total amazon shopping. Start smiling today!

### **Mortgage Summary – As of November 30, 2022**

Original cost of Facilities Expansion Project	\$2,386,970.00
Remaining amount on Bank Loan	\$279,776.19
Cash on hand in the Building Fund	\$222,664.06
Interest Rate (Locked in through January 2027)	3.39%
Monthly Payment	\$2,622.76

### **People**

- For Sonny and Mary Miner celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary, may you be blessed with many more years together
- For the two beautiful Christmas trees from Linn Lawrence's family farm put up by Tim Bylander and Farnum Fuller, may they kindle joy in all of us
- For Laura and Mark who arranged the flower pots outside the church entrance, they are beautiful!
- For Judy Grimm and Diane Christ who decorated our Sanctuary, Gathering Area and Fellowship Hall, bless you
- For those taking (and returning!) ornaments from the Angels on Earth Giving Tree, that you may be blessed in your giving
- For the gift of our choir director Sarah Plum, bless you for the gifts you bring to our church

Do you have upcoming news or celebrations to share with the congregation? Graduations? Birthdays 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. 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:**

Church Office - 715-425-2052

Pastor: Chris Myers - [chris@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:chris@firstchurchrf.org)

Minister for Community and Outreach: Deb Meyer – [deb@firstchurchrf.org](mailto:deb@firstchurchrf.org)

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

Youth: Alex and Sarah Plum – [rfyouthgroup@gmail.com](mailto:rfyouthgroup@gmail.com)

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

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

Choir: Sarah Plum – [sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com)

Building: Farnum Fuller – [farnumfuller@gmail.com](mailto:farnumfuller@gmail.com)

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