

Weekly Word – For Sunday, February 26, 2023

Worship this Sunday:

Join us for Pack The Church Sunday! The Rev. Michael Jones, our new Associate Conference Minister in the Wisconsin Conference, will be our guest preacher this Sunday. The Association Minister provides guidance and support to the churches and pastors in Northwest part of Wisconsin. Join us for Congregational Croissants and Catholic Donuts for Coffee Fellowship this Sunday!

Link to Worship Livestream: <https://youtube.com/live/ioWIPCSZ534?feature=share>

Sunday Bulletin

We are postponing Ash Wednesday Worship until next Wednesday, March 1, at 6:30 pm.

This Week

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---|
| Sun., Feb 26 | 9:00-9:45 am | Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary |
| | 9:00-9:45 am | Sunday Morning Text Study in the Youth Room |
| | 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 |
| Tues., Feb 27 | 11:00-11:30 am | WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM |
| | 9:00 am-3:00 pm | Among Friends |
| | 9:00-10:00 am | Yoga |
| Wed., Mar 1 | 3:45-5:15 pm | Wednesday School |
| | 5:15-6:15 pm | Wednesday Meal |
| | 6:00-7:00 pm | Bells |
| | 6:30-7:30 pm | Ash Wednesday Worship Service |
| | 6:30-7:30 pm | All Confirmands Attend Ash Wednesday Worship |
| Thurs., Mar 2 | 7:00-8:00 pm | Chancel Choir |
| | 9:00-10:00 am | Yoga |
| Sun., Mar 5 | 9:00-9:45 am | Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary |
| | 9:00-9:45 am | Sunday Morning Text Study in the Youth Room |
| | 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 |

Assisting in Sunday's worship service are:

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|--------------------|---|
| Preacher: | Rev. Michael Jones |
| Celebrant: | Rev. Chris Myers |
| Cantor: | David Reilly |
| Liturgist: | Rebecca Ferguson |
| Deacons: | Karen Lloyd, Laura Anderson |
| Organist: | Marsha Pearson |
| Nursery: | Kahla Fuller |
| Live Stream: | Ryan Luedtke |
| Trustee: | Trish Graves |
| Coffee Fellowship: | Merry Widows – St. B's Donuts and Congregational Croissants |
| Counters: | Marie Roe, Trish Graves |

Altar table flowers are given by Brian Miller and Loral Keil to honor their granddaughter Alma Shoshana.

Loving God

Ash Wednesday Worship: We are postponing Ash Wednesday Worship until next **Wednesday, March 1, at 6:30 pm.**

Preparing for Lent: On Wednesdays in Lent, March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for Prayer Around the Cross. Prayer Around the Cross is a time for fellowship, prayer, singing, and contemplation. In the midst of busy lives, it is a chance to center yourself, draw close to God, and listen. The 2023 Lenten theme is “Be Still.” To help leaders prepare, please offer your responses to the following prompts:

When I am still, I imagine...

When I am still, I understand...

When I am still, I worry...

When I am still, I remember...

When I am still, I regret...

You may give your responses on paper (forms on the sign-up table) or via email to: office@firstchurchrf.org. Your responses can be as short as one or a few words or as long as paragraphs. We hope many people will participate. For questions, please contact Pastor Chris or Stacy.

Wednesdays in Lent: The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. Lent is a time to prepare our hearts and minds for Easter and Holy Week. Each Wednesday evening during Lent, we will gather for a brief 30-minute ‘Prayer Around the Cross’ worship service in the Fellowship Hall. Our theme this year is ‘Be Still’ and worship will allow time for prayer, scripture, singing and a brief message as we gather around a candle lit cross. Join us at 6:30 pm for worship and at 5:15 pm for the Wednesday Night meal.

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. For more information, talk with Pastor Stacy.

Loving Neighbor

Relay for Life: Once again our church is participating in Relay for Life and raising money for American Cancer Society. The Relay for Life event is **Friday, April 14, from 6:00 to 11:00 pm held at the River Falls High School**. How can you participate or help?

1. **Soup Night - Wednesday, March 8 from 5:15 to 6:15 pm.** The Relay Team is having their annual Soup Night where you can come and sample a variety of soups or enjoy just one for the Wednesday night meal. What’s new this year is a piece of pie is included with your soup. The pie is being provided by Joy Seekers, a new committee inviting people to have a chance to form new friendships, join an activity at church, or share time with shut-ins. Cost of the meal is a donation or the recommended \$8/person and \$5/child or a minimum of \$30/family.
2. Join the **Relay for Life Team**.
3. Help provide an item/idea for the Relay for Life’s **Silent Auction**.
4. Purchase a **Luminary Bag** “in Honor of” or “in Memory of” a special person. They will be available at Soup Night, on Sundays prior to, and at the Relay for Life event.
5. **Participate at the Relay Life Event** by enjoying a **Spaghetti Supper from 6:00- 7:30 pm** or **walking around the track**. This year’s event has shortened the hours to 6:00 to 11:00 pm.
6. On March 6, join the **Survivor Reunion** which includes a meal.

Stay tuned for more information in the upcoming weeks. Have questions, want to participate, or join the team, please contact Deb Hoffman at debhoffman234b@gmail.com or phone 612-308-4945.

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 and Facebook page. It is held at the church on **Tuesdays 9am to 3pm.**

Loving Self

Wednesday Meals: On Wednesday nights we will 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, 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.** You can make a reservation online, the sign-up table or by calling the church office. See the menu below.

March 1 – Lasagna and chicken alfredo, salad, garlic toast

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-wednesday51>

March 8 - Relay for Life Soup Supper

March 15 - Corned beef and cabbage, red potatoes and carrots OR Swedish meatballs, parsley potatoes, veggies, and rolls

March 22 - Parmesan chicken over rice, salad, croissant

March 29 - Boneless BBQ ribs, mac and cheese, potatoes, veggies, rolls

April 5 - Holy Week - no meals

Joy Seekers Event – Let’s Bake Pie! – Tuesday, March 7, 5:00 pm: Joy Seekers is a new group in the church that will host opportunities to find joy: in learning, doing, and interacting. Join us as we make pie crust from scratch. Pies will be baked and served March 8 at the Wednesday meal. A light supper will be offered. No cost, but please sign up on the table or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-joyseekers>

Easter Breakfast: Join us again this year for Easter Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall served by our church youth. The menu is still being determined (right now egg prices are crazy!), but we will again be serving a delicious home-made meal prepared by Chef Andy and his crew and served by our confirmands and interns. All proceeds go to our Youth Fund. Parents of teens, please put this on your calendars, invite your friends and families to come, and look in the confirmation update about sign-ups for work shifts. All confirmands and interns are expected to help set up and serve, cook and clean up. And we can also use some adult helpers! Talk to Alex to volunteer! Sign-ups start next Sunday!

Easter Lilies are offered for you to honor or remember someone and grace our worship space with beauty. The lilies will be displayed on Easter morning and may be taken home following the 10:00 service. To order an Easter Lily for \$15, please fill out the form on the sign-up table and place in the offering plate or leave in the office. **Orders must be placed by April 2.** Proceeds go to our youth fund.

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. **We will meet again on March 7 and 21.** All men are welcome!

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 **March 13.**

Merry Widows: The Merry Widows will meet **Wed, March 15 at the Table on Main in River Falls at 1:00 pm.** All widows are welcome to join us for lunch and conversation! See JoAnn Lentz for more information.

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

Civil Rights Pilgrimage: Our church has a history of pilgrimage trips. This fall we will add a new experience - A Civil Rights Pilgrimage. This 5-day pilgrimage will include stops in Atlanta, Birmingham, Selma & 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 October 25-29, 2023.** Please contact Pastor Chris for info. Space is limited to 14 people.

Boundary Waters Trip: If you are interested in a Boundary Waters trip this summer, Alex is collecting a list to begin planning! The dates we are looking at are **July 16-20**, but there may be some flexibility. We may need 4-6 adults if we need to separate into two groups. **An informational meeting will be March 1, after the 6:30 pm service.** Please sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-summer1>

Youth Group

Wed, March 1 - Ash Wednesday Service and Summer Event Meeting - An informational meeting will follow the Ash Wednesday Service to introduce the summer Boundary Waters Trip, and gain interest for a summer Mission Trip.

Summer Boundary Waters Trip with anticipated dates of July 16-20 – Ages: Recommended 7th grade and up. Please reach out to Alex at rfyouthgroup@gmail.com if you have any questions about the trip. Please sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-summer1>

Middle School Retreat to Action City – Late May – Any middle school students interested in a retreat to Action City/Waterpark in late May, please sign up here. An official date will be selected based on interested students’ availability. Please sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-middle10>

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>Feb 19, 2023</u> | <u>Year to Date</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| General Fund Income* | \$ 8,425 | \$ 72,051 |
| General Fund Operational Needs | \$ 10,268 | \$ 82,144 |

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

Mortgage Summary – As of February 15, 2023

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|--|----------------|
| Original Cost of Facilities Expansion Project | \$2,386,970.00 |
| Remaining Amount on Bank Loan | \$196,132.71 |
| Interest Rate (Locked in through January 2027) | 3.39% |
| Monthly Payment | \$2,622.76 |

Current Capital Campaign

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Total Pledged | \$596,646.00 |
| Total Received to Date | <u>374,569.12</u> |
| Remaining Balance | <u>\$222,076.88</u> |

People

- For the birth of Alma Shoshana Miller born on Valentine's Day to parents Luther and Mira and proud grandparents Loral Keil and Brian Miller, may she grow in love
- For Jenna Lawrence and Carter and Tyler Sterba, all of whom qualified for the state wrestling tournament in Madison, may you be given strength
- For the return of Wednesday Night Family Meals (hint sign up today)!
- For Lou Greub who celebrated his 90th birthday on February 18th, you continue to amaze and inspire us!
- For church leaders preparing for Ash Wednesday and our Lenten Prayer Around the Cross worship services on Wednesday nights, may they fill us with God's peace and purpose
- For Suzanne Hagen who each week washes A LOT of communion cups keeping us clean and green, God bless you!

Do you have upcoming news or celebrations to share with the congregation? Graduations? Birthdays 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 12:00 pm

Church Staff Contact:

Church Office - 715-425-2052

Pastor: Chris Myers - chris@firstchurchrf.org

Minister for Community and Outreach: Deb Meyer – deb@firstchurchrf.org

Education: Stacy Johnson Myers - stacy@firstchurchrf.org

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

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

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