

Weekly Word – For Sunday, May 7, 2023

Worship this Week:

This Sunday the Gospel lesson from John 14 calls us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ. More than a set of beliefs to get right, Jesus tells his disciples he is the way to abundant living here and now. These are appropriate words as we confirm seven of our 9th graders into the faith and family and Jesus Christ. Join us as the choir sings and communion is celebrated at the 10am worship service with a cake reception for our confirmands to follow in the Fellowship Hall during Coffee Fellowship.

Link to Worship Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/zQro-F8Y5no>

Sunday Bulletin

This Week

Sun., May 7		Confirmation Sunday
	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
Tues., May 9	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	10:15-11:30 am	Yoga Brunch
Wed., May 10	6:00-7:00 pm	Bells
	7:00-8:00 pm	Chancel Choir
Thurs., May 11	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
Sun., May 14	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:

Preacher:	Chris Myers
Celebrant:	Stacy Johnson Myers
Cantor:	David Reilly
Liturgist:	Emma Shepherd, Jaelyn Trautmiller
Deacons:	Karen Lloyd, Marshall Skule, Cindy Gandrud, Suzanne Hagen, Traci Hagberg
Organist:	Marsha Pearson
Nursery:	Kahla Fuller
Live Stream:	Ryan Luedtke
Trustee:	Dan Rude
Welcomers:	Dennis and Lynn Linder, JoAnn Lentz
Coffee Fellowship:	Deacons
Counters:	Diane Welsh, Dennis Linder

Altar table flowers are given by Marie and Roland Roe in memory of Louella DeLuca.

Loving God

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!

Confirmation Sunday: Confirmation Sunday is always celebrated on the first Sunday in May. Join us on **Sunday, May 7**, as we welcome into the Christian faith our third-year confirmation students.

Loving Neighbor

WISE Team Interest Meeting: There will be a meeting regarding becoming a WISE church that focuses on mental health and awareness on **Tuesday, May 23, at 6:30 pm**. Join us if you are interested in learning more.

Look for the Diaper Bins! Mission Education is encouraging our First family to contribute children's diapers and wipes to United Way as a way to honor the mothers and fathers in our lives. Diaper bins are located in the gathering area from now through Mother's Day and on to Father's Day. You can take a small card to let the good parents in your life know that you're thinking of them by helping other parents who need some extra assistance. Any and all sizes of disposable diapers are needed, but the most requested sizes are the larger ones, 4, 5 and 6, since children wear them for the longest period of time. Thank you for your generosity!

Relay for Life 2023 Follow Up: Thank you to everyone for supporting our Relay for Life team through your donations and participation at our annual soup night. Our team raised \$1,684 and was listed as one of the Rising Star teams. The Community total as of April 16 was over \$77,850 and funds are still coming in. Money raised by the Relay for Life event goes to American Cancer Society and the research to find ways to cure cancer. Thank you also to the very dedicated team and their wonderful support of a good cause. Your soups were awesome and it's a pleasure working with all of you. For questions about joining the team, next year's fundraisers (soup & hopefully plant sale again) and/or participating at the event, please contact: debhoffman234b@gmail.com or 612-308-4945.

Our Neighbors' Day! Always wondered what they do at Our Neighbors' Place? Here's your chance to find out! This community day features an open house and tours of the location (122 West Johnson Street, RF), freewill donation yard sale, and free meal from 4:00-6:00 pm. Stop by on **Thursday, May 11, from 10:00 am-7:00 pm**. Rain date is Thursday, May 18. All are welcome!

Family Fresh has discontinued their program of collecting receipts. You have been so wonderful in collecting the receipts in support of ARC. Thank you for your support!

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) 293-2561. Check out the website: amongfriendsrf.com and Facebook page. It is held at the church on **Tuesdays 9am to 3pm**.

HealthPartners Class: HealthPartners is offering an online class on Dementia and Family Communication. Home and hospice social worker Janelle Johnson, BSW, will cover eight helpful strategies to navigate difficult conversations and communicate with your loved ones who have dementia. The class will meet **Thursday, May 18, from 4:00-5:00 pm, online**. The class is free, but registration is required in advance. Visit healthpartners.com/classes-events to register.

Loving Self

Chocolate Boutique: A Relational Bible Experience for Women. Join Deb Meyer to renew your spirit. Last gathering is **May 9, 6:30 pm** - God's Grace is Transforming. A chocolate dessert will be served.

River Falls Garden Club Annual Plant Sale will be held on **Sat, May 13 at St. Bridget School from 9:00 am to Noon**. All are grown by local club members and UWRF Horticulture students.

You are all invited to Lou Greub's 90th Community Birthday Party to be held **Saturday, May 20** at the River Falls American Legion Hall, 701 N. Main St., from 1:00-5:00 pm. Czech Area Concertina Club will be playing from 2:00-4:00 pm. Sandwiches and snacks provided. No gifts please.

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 **May 16 and 30**. 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 **May 8**.

Merry Widows: The Merry Widows will meet **Wed., May 17 at 1:00 pm at Kingdom Buffet in Hudson**. All widows are welcome to join us for lunch and conversation! See JoAnn Lentz for more information.

Church Yoga: The 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.

Past & present yoga participants are invited to a **brunch** honoring Jan for her 20+ years of yoga instruction on **Tuesday, May 9, about 10:15 am**. Jackie Ross is the new instructor and is carrying on in Jan's tradition.

Softball News: The season begins Monday, June 5 and continues on Mondays until mid-August. Practices are at the Greenwood School ballfield area. Unfortunately, we cannot claim a field in advance, so come and search the fields. I will have someone in the parking lot with directions to where we are practicing. If you have questions, contact Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945, debhoffman234b@gmail.com or Sarah Plum at (715)-418-9393, sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com. If you are interested in playing, please sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-church3>

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.

Second Holy Land Tour: In 2019, 24 people from church participated in a Holy Land Tour to visit important places in our Christian faith like Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Galilee. We also learned about the cultural and political struggle between Jews and Palestinians and how the three great religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam literally converge in Jerusalem. Planning this tour took a long time. Pastor Chris is in the beginning stages of planning another Holy Land Tour. A date has not been announced, but if you want to be kept in the loop about developments and involved in determining the timing of a trip, please sign-up to register your interest.

Youth Group

Scholarships are Due: Just a reminder that both the High School Senior and Continuing Education Scholarships are due in the church office **by Sunday, May 7**. Please remember scholarships may require an essay and/or a letter of recommendation so start early! Forms are on the church website under the 'connect' then 'sign up' tabs. For questions, please talk to Jenny Luedtke, chair of the Scholarship Team.

Boundary Waters Trip: Alex shared an email to everyone who signed up for the Boundary Waters Trip. **There are still four spots available!** If you have not received an email and would like to, please reach out to Alex at rfyouthgroup@gmail.com. **Dates are Sun, July 16–Thurs, July 20.** [Summer Boundary Waters Google Signup](#)

June Service Trip: Select 2-3 mission opportunities in the Twin Cities to serve the community. Trip will be determined on group size and skill set. Hotel stay at the Great Wolf Lodge and will have plenty of time spent in the waterpark. Lunch at Midtown Global Market. \$75 trip deposit and total cost! For youth grades 6 through graduated and will need a few chaperones. Please fill out the Google form: [Summer Service Trip Google Signup](#) - so Alex can find dates and make reservations.

Middle School Retreat to Action City – Fall: Any middle school students interested in a retreat to Action City/Waterpark in the fall, 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>

Summer Programs

Vacation Bible School 2023: VBS in 2023 will be: "DIG! The World When Jesus Lived." It will be held **July 31–August 3, 9:00–11:30 am**, and is open to all children age 3 through completed grade 5. As always, we will need many adults and teen volunteers. Registration forms for students and sign-up sheets to help are all on the church website under the 'connect' button or available at church. Please register and invite friends, relatives, and neighbors to participate.

VBS Design and Builders Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-vbsdesign>

VBS Volunteers Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-vbsvolunteers2>

Registration Form: <https://firstchurchrf.org/grow/pages/vacation-bible-school>

Summer Kids' Musical: Following a several-year hiatus, we will again have a children's musical in July for children who have completed kindergarten through grade 6. The show is "Oh, Jonah!" and tells the Old Testament story of Jonah and the whale. Rehearsals are **July 17–20, 9:00–noon**. The performance will be July 20 and will include dinner. Registrations are available online or at church. For more information, contact Pastor Stacy.

Musical Volunteers Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-musical>

Registration Form: <https://firstchurchrf.org/grow/pages/vacation-bible-school>

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>April 30, 2023</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 7,115	\$ 187,920
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,268	\$ 184,824

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

Mortgage Summary – As of April 15, 2023

Original Cost of Facilities Expansion Project	\$2,386,970.00
Remaining Amount on Bank Loan	\$192,017.14
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>391,168.42</u>
Remaining Balance	\$205,477.58

People

- For Duane Church as he celebrates his 90th birthday on Wednesday, May 10 and he and his wife Mary celebrate their 63rd wedding anniversary the day before, on Tuesday, May 9th, may God continue to bless you both
- For a night of bowling as we end the program year for our 6th-12th graders (see picture)—thanks for a great year!
- As Wednesday School ends for the year, we are thankful for our amazing volunteers: Jen and Erin Syverson, Connor Rude, Kim Swanson, John Sullivan and Christina Krueger, you folks rock!
- For our Trustees, Garden Geeks and their helpers who cleaned up our church grounds last week, it looks awesome!
- For Pastor Deb leading a three-part women's Bible Study on Tuesday nights, may it kindle joy and faith
- For Jan Hansen who for many years has led our church yoga group and is retiring from that role, that she bask in her accomplishments at the May 9th brunch in her honor
- For local families benefiting from a diaper drive sponsored by our Mission Team as a way to honor our parents (we collect between Mother's Day and Father's Day)
- For the second successful EarthFest held on Earth Day in which over 2000 people attended
- For the chaperones on the Boston Trip—Jena Most, Callie Trautmiller, Cindy Peterson, Kit Luedtke, you were awesome!
- For Lorraine, the matriarch of the Van Dell family, who will celebrate her 102nd birthday with family on May 7th, that their gathering may be blessed with love and gratitude

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