

## Weekly Word – For Sunday, June 9, 2024

### Worship this Week:

Join us at the 9:30 am summer worship service and coffee fellowship to follow.

Link to Worship Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/x7L386GGvWk?si=t7emduCRVX6mkq6r>

### Sunday Bulletin

#### *This Week*

Sun., June 9	9:30-10:30 am	Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	10:30-11:00 am	Coffee Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall
	11:00-11:30 am	WEVR Broadcast 106.3 FM
Tues., June 11	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	12:00-1:00 pm	Women's Group
	6:30-8:00 pm	Lord's Prayer Bible Study
Thurs., June 13	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga in the Fellowship Hall
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	10:00-11:00 am	Knitting Group
Sun., June 16	9:30-10:30 am	Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Livestream
	10:30-11:00 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:	Dave Ostendorf
Celebrant:	Dave Ostendorf
Cantor:	David Reilly
Liturgist:	Kristin Andes
Deacons:	Lance Lueck, Brian Miller, Cindy Gandrud
Organist:	Marsha Pearson
Live Stream:	Ryan Luedtke
Trustee:	Rick Price
Coffee Fellowship:	JoAnn Lentz, Barb Mahoney
Welcomers:	JoAnn Lentz, Barb Mahoney
Counters:	Janice Healy, Jane Truesdill

#### *Loving God*

**The Lord's Prayer Bible Study:** You know it. Maybe memorized it. But have you ever really thought about what it means? Or how it can impact your prayer life? On **Tuesdays, June 4, 11, 18 and 25, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm**, Pastor Deb will lead a four-part interactive study on The Lord's Prayer, based on the book "Praying the Lord's Prayer" by Elmer L. Towns. Deepen your personal experience of The Lord's Prayer by joining us!

**Damascus Project:** Our Wisconsin Conference sponsors an online learning community called the Damascus Project with a wide variety of options to grow in faith and living. Their website is: [www.the-damascus-project.org](http://www.the-damascus-project.org). And upcoming topics include a class on UCC History and Polity as well as Theology and Ecology. Check it out!

#### *Loving Neighbor*

**Diaper Drive:** Between Mother's Day & Father's Day, we are collecting diapers and wipes for local families in need. Last year folks in our church donated over 5,100 diapers and as of today we have 5,224. What a wonderful way to honor our parents, support those in need locally, and be vehicles of God's grace and compassion. See Pastor Deb for details.

**Simpson Shelter Meal Volunteers Needed:** It's time for our summer picnic meal at the Simpson Shelter. The date is **Wednesday, July 17**. A sign-up sheet is on the gathering table. Please sign up to help prepare food in our kitchen or serve at the shelter. Thank you!

**Save The Date!** Feed My Starving Children is coming to River Falls! Thanks to a wonderful partnership of churches, individuals and businesses, including First Congregational Church, please mark your calendars for **Wednesday and Thursday, September 11 and 12**, when our community will pack 100,000 meals at Tattersall. Sign-ups will begin the end of July. Thank you to our Endowment Grant Team who granted \$3,000 to help pay for the \$30,000 cost of packing these meals. Exciting!

**Thrivent Free Money:** Do you have a retirement account through Thrivent? If so, you can designate some or all of your 'choice dollars' to a non-profit such as First Congregational Church. We are now set up to receive such gifts. They cost you nothing but help the church greatly. Talk to the church office if you need more information.

**Scarves, Mittens, Hats:** Join our knitting group by making scarves, mittens and/or hats for school-age children. We are supporting Basics for Local Kids in providing needed items in Pierce and St. Croix counties. You can make them at home from yarn, fleece or wool or **join us Thursdays in the Fellowship Hall starting at 10:00 am**. If you have any questions, contact Marie Roe at 715-781-2103 or [firstroe@gmail.com](mailto:firstroe@gmail.com)

**First Church Companions:** The Companions meet quarterly to support each other, help new Companions learn about this role, & discuss questions or concerns. If you are willing to visit with someone in our church community and connect at least once a month with a call or visit, please sign-up. If you are interested in receiving regular visits, there is also a line on the same sign-up sheet for Buddies. Contact Pastor Deb or Lu Lueck with questions.

**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](http://amongfriendsrf.com) and Facebook page. It is held at the church on **Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am to 3pm**.

### **Loving Self**

**Summer Celebration for Hope For Earth and Mike Noreen:** Hope for Earth is a group of River Falls churches who join together to care for the gift of God's good creation. They invite you to a Summer Social at Glen Park Pavilion on **June 13 at 6:00 pm**. Part of this year's celebration will be an opportunity to thank Mike Noreen for his service to the city. Come out and enjoy the good creation and the good work Mike has done for the past 10 plus years in our community!

**Birthday Celebration:** Marge Faulks will be turning 101 on June 14th. Her family is hosting a party for her on **June 16th from 1-4 pm at St Croix Lanes** in River Falls. Please come and help her celebrate! (No gifts, please.)

**Game Day Sunday** will be **June 23** following Coffee Fellowship. Please sign up.

**Young Families Gathering:** Attention young families who are interested in getting connected with each other! The church is hosting a young families and kids dinner on **Wednesday, June 26 at 5:30 pm!** A child-friendly menu will be catered and families can eat and connect with each other! Cost is \$10/family. Kids will have opportunities to play with each other with church supervision so our young parents can connect as a group! Please sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-49958473-young>

**Summer Choir:** The UCC Chancel Choir will be performing 3 Sundays this summer: **June 16, July 21, and August 25!** If you're interested in a low-stakes singing opportunity, please join us! This is your chance to sing without committing to the year's schedule. We rehearse one hour before the service! All are welcome!

**Softball News:** Our softball season has begun. Our next few games are June 10 at 6:30 pm vs St. Bridget Church and June 17 at 6:30 pm vs. Luther Memorial. Come join in the fun, laughs, and family togetherness whether you are playing or cheering for the team. If you have questions, contact Sarah Plum at (715) 418-9393 or Deb Hoffman at (612) 308-4945.

**WISE Corner:** NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Family Support Group will be held **Thursdays at 6:30 pm at the River Falls Public Library**. For more information, call Marg Downing 715-307-5905.

**River Falls Days Kick-Off Concert:** On **Thurs, July 11, from 6:00-8:00 pm**, join us out on the lawn for a concert with the Slapdash Bluegrass Band! There will also be the Rollin' River Food Truck with food to purchase. In case of bad weather, it will move inside the Fellowship Hall. Join us as we kick off River Falls Days weekend!

**VBS Backdrop Painting:** Please volunteer to help paint the backdrops for VBS. The big painting day with the artist will be **Tuesday, July 16, starting at 6:00 pm**. Excellent artistic skills are *not* required. Rather, the ability to paint inside the lines is the name of the game. Please sign up.

**VBS Volunteers:** Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help with VBS 2024. We do still need a large number of additional adult and teen workers. VBS will be July 29–August 1, 9:00–11:30 am. To volunteer, please sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-47864154-vbsvolunteers>

**VBS Cookie Bakers Needed:** Homemade cookies are a special part of the VBS snack, so we need volunteers to make some. Each volunteer is asked to bring four dozen cookies. A sign-up list is available on the table.

**Merry Widows:** They will meet on **Wed, June 19 at 1:00 pm at Azul Tequila in Hudson**. All widows are welcome to join us for lunch and conversation! See JoAnn Lentz for more information.

**Women's Group:** Interested in fellowship & community with other women? Pastor Deb invites you to join her at noon every 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month. Please bring a sack lunch. The next meetings will be **June 11 & 25**.

**Let's Knit Together:** Calling all who knit, crochet, or have a craft that can be brought to church. Join us on **Thursdays at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall**. We have a great time sharing our current projects and enjoying each other's company. Any questions, contact Marie Roe at 715-781-2103 or [firstroe@gmail.com](mailto:firstroe@gmail.com)

**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.

### **Youth Events**

**Day Trip to the Cities for Grades 6-12:** Alex is planning a fun-filled day in the Twin Cities visiting various locations based on group interest! You are welcome to invite a friend or two as we will travel in style in our church van. The final group itinerary will be determined based on group interest. Dates will be determined based on group availability. Please fill out the Day Trip to the City Interest form or email/text Alex at [rfyouthgroup@gmail.com](mailto:rfyouthgroup@gmail.com) or 612-224-5894. [Day Trip to the City - Interest Form](#)

**Late Summer Youth Retreat for Grades 6-12:** Alex is planning a Late Summer Retreat to the Metropolis Resort and Action City! Our goal is to find two days between July 26-Aug 10 where we can stay in a [Bunk House](#) located right off the Metropolis water park. [Action city](#) is located inside the Metropolis resort. Passes include access to...

- Indoor go-kart track; Laser tag course/laser maze vault room; Arcade (over 150 video arcade, redemption games, and racers); Trampoline park which houses two dodgeball courts; an open jump arena; airbag stunt jump; basketball slam dunk stations; fidget ladder; jousting; three challenging ninja warrior courses

Once we have a strong group signed up, we will make reservations and plan around the group's interests! You are welcome to invite a friend! Male and female parents/chaperones are requested. Pricing will be determined soon but will be reduced for church members with the youth fund. Please fill out the Interest form or email/text Alex at [rfyouthgroup@gmail.com](mailto:rfyouthgroup@gmail.com) or 612-224-5894. [Late Summer Youth Retreat - Interest Form](#)

**Vacation Bible School:** Children age 3 through completed grade 5 are invited to Vacation Bible School. The theme is *Christian Art: Stop, Look, Listen* and will feature Bible study, children’s literature, Christian art and architecture, music, and an engaging variety of art projects from painting to felting. VBS is free and open to all community children. Registration forms are online or at church. Dates are **July 29–August 1, 9:00–11:30 am.**

**Summer Children’s Musical:** Children who have completed grades 1-6 are invited to produce the musical *Rescue in the Night: The Story of Daniel in the Lions’ Den*. Rehearsals include singing, learning lines, and working on the set and props. After four days of a whirlwind of rehearsals, the show will be presented on Thursday evening. The musical is directed by elementary music teacher Emma Cruciani and will be a fun week. All are welcome and there is no charge. Registration forms are online or at church. Dates are **August 19-22, 9:00 am–Noon for Rehearsals and August 22, 6:30 for Dinner and the Show.**

### **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 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 an option to give online via our church website.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

	<u>June 2, 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,373	\$ 246,002
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,463	\$ 230,186

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

\*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

### **Mortgage Summary – As of May 1, 2024**

Original Cost of Facilities Expansion Project	\$2,386,970.00
Remaining Amount on Bank Loan	\$0

(Reminder: Still need to pay for sound/audio upgrade and new church sign!)

## **Current Capital Campaign**

Total Pledged	\$596,646.00
Total Received to Date	<u>514,761.33</u>
Remaining Balance	\$ 81,884.67

**A Debt Paid!** We did it! Twelve years after we embarked on an ambitious 2.5 million dollar expansion and renovation of our church facility, we just paid off our bank mortgage! Thank you, thank you, thank you for your generous giving which enabled this to happen. Please also remember the Building Campaign continues because now that the bank debt is paid, we still need to pay for an upgraded sound/video system and a new church sign. The campaign runs through May 31, 2025, and we look forward to having enough money to complete these last two projects. We are also planning a mortgage burning party in the fall. Stay tuned. And once again, thank you!

## **People**

- For those graduating from high school and college, may you look for God's guidance as new opportunities arise
- For those celebrating graduation parties, may you be graced with many friends, lots of food and good weather!
- For Joyce and Roger Kampstra who celebrate their 60th anniversary on July 11, may your love continue to grow!
- For our baptism boom which is now at 9 children of God in 5 months including Evie Pearson (Mike and Justine) baptized Jan 14, Hope Withers (Erik and Vanessa) baptized Feb 25, Laney Sitz (Heather and Dan) baptized March 3, Nora Koecher (Dan and Mari) baptized on March 10, and four Thompson children (Talia, Orion, Oliver, Tova) baptized May 5, and Dean Wilhelmy (Heidi and Mason) baptized May 19, may they all grow in love and faith!

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 – Closed

## **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 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)