

Weekly Word – For Sunday, June 1, 2025

Worship this Week:

On this first full summer weekend, it is Graduation Sunday. We will award scholarships to 18 of our High School Seniors and College Students. Join us as we bless them (and their parents!). On the church calendar, it is also Ascension Sunday, the day we remember Jesus left his disciples until his final return which is fitting on a day when we pray for our college students. How do we follow in Jesus' way today when he is no longer physically present? Join us for the 9:30 am summer worship service and graduation cake to follow!

Link to Worship Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/dLz8aZeAN5s?si=PemrEsuetyuEqaZO>

This Week

Sun., June 1		Graduation Sunday
	9:15-10:45 am	Nursery Open
	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 3	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00-10:00 am	Men's Group
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
Thurs., June 4	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	10:00-11:00 am	Knitting Group
Sun., June 8	9:15-10:45 am	Nursery Open
	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:	Chris Myers
Celebrant:	Stacy Johnson Myers
Cantor:	David Reilly
Liturgist:	Carole Mottaz
Deacons:	Karen Lloyd, Jena Most
Organist:	Marsha Pearson
Nursery:	Kahla Fuller
Live Stream:	Jeff Hoffman
Trustee:	Scott Nelson
Coffee Fellowship:	Christian Education Committee
Counters:	Trish Graves, Allen Barnes

Loving God

Summer Nursery Help Needed: During the summer months, our church nursery is staffed by volunteers. Please sign up to help in the church nursery. Summer worship time moves to 9:30 am and the nursery is open from 9:15 to 10:45 am. Please contact the church office for more information. Use the sign-up sheet at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-56894730-summer>

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. And upcoming topics include a class on UCC History and Polity as well as Theology and Ecology. Check it out!

Loving Neighbor

Strengthen The Church Offering: This offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ. Thank you for your support, Mission Education Committee.

Diaper Drive: In honor of the parents in our lives, the Mission Education Committee is again offering you the opportunity to contribute diapers to the RF Food Pantry, Our Neighbors' Place, and Turning Point. These three local organizations serve folks who need diapers for their babies and infants. If you can add a package to your own grocery shopping, or find good sales at other stores, you'll see how expensive they can be - imagine the challenge for parents living in their cars, or on a friend's sofa, or without a job in this difficult time. Please help them if you can - and encourage your friends to help, too! The Food Pantry and Turning Point especially need sizes 4 and 5 diapers (and wipes) for the bigger kids. (Mission Ed has also found a few other local groups to help out for some other months; would your work place, social or community groups, or extended family also be able to help?)

Simpson Shelter Supply Needs: Men's T-Shirts Sizes M, XL, XXL, XXXL, Bras - all sizes, Personal Size Body Lotion, Personal Size Baby Oil, Nail Care Kits, Men's and Women's Shower Shoes, Textured/Natural Hair Products, Personal Size Hair Conditioner, Personal Size Toothpaste, Umbrellas, Good buys on out-of-season clothing. All items MUST BE NEW. There is a box at the church for donations.

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. Talk to the church office if you need more information. Last year we received \$433.

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 and Thursdays 9am to 3pm.**

Among Friends Volunteers Needed: The program meets two days a week and has 12 active guests. Training is provided & the rewards are phenomenal! They are particularly in need of male volunteers but are willing to receive all. Contact the program coordinator Sarah Schaffner at amongfriendsrf@gmail.com

Loving Self

VBS Volunteers: We need adult and teen workers. VBS will be July 28–31, 9:00–11:30 am. To volunteer, please sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-56618342-vbsvolunteers>

Men's Group: Our church men's group meets **every other Tuesday from 9:00-10:00 am** in the Youth Room. All men are welcome to join us for coffee, donuts and lively conversation. We gather for an hour and Pastor Chris leads us into a brief discussion. Our next gatherings are **Tues, June 3 & 17.** Join us!

Women's Group: Interested in fellowship & community with other women? You are invited to join the group at noon every 2nd & 4th Tuesday. Please bring a lunch. The next meetings will be **Tues, June 10 & 24.**

Let's Knit/Craft Together: Join us on **Thursdays at 10:00 am.** We meet at **The Sycamore on the first Thursday of each month and in the Fellowship Hall the other Thursdays.** 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

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.

WISE Corner: NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Family Support Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 6:30 pm at the River Falls Public Library and the Peer Support Group meets the same evenings at Luther Memorial Church at 6:30 pm. Our church WISE Team meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. For more info, call Marg Downing 715-307-5905.

Community Life

Softball News: Let the season begin! **June 2nd is our first game at 7:45 pm at Hoffman Park.** Practices will be at the Greenwood Elementary practice fields. The roster is still open for more players, and we would encourage you to join the team. Our team players' ages range from high school to kids in their early 60's wishing they didn't ache so much the next morning. You don't have to be a professional, but rather someone who likes to play softball, enjoy a little exercise and have a few laughs with the team. The softball team is part of the River Falls Church Family League. The family league is a co-ed division that allows players to play at the age of 14. The co-ed description requires teams to have three women on the field at all times, so ladies please don't be afraid to sign up. The games are played on Monday nights at Hoffman Park. Games will begin on the first Monday of June and continue until the middle of August. Come join in the fun whether playing or cheering on the team. If you have questions, contact Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945, debhoffman234b@gmail.com. If you are interested in playing, please sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-56369464-church>

Youth Events

Summer Dates for Kids: Dates for the 2025 children's summer programs are:

VBS: July 28-31, 2025

Children's Musical: August 18-21, 2025

VBS is for children age 3 to completed grade 5. We will need adult and teen volunteers for VBS.

The musical, *Malice in the Palace: The Story of Esther* is for children in kindergarten through completed grade 6. Emma Cruciani will be the director.

VBS is for children age 3 to completed grade 5. We will need adult and teen volunteers for VBS. Please sign up to help either online or via the sign-up sheet in the gathering space.

Survey for Mission Trips for Youth: We are conducting a survey to gauge youth and family interest and availability for mission opportunities for the Summer of 2025, and Spring Break (March 16-20) of 2026. Our hope is to find areas of mission work that you would be interested in and provide spiritual and personal growth. Students or parents, please take the time to look over the options and let us know of your interest in the mission trips we could offer: <https://forms.gle/wEiLueQtP97JN3Gn8>

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>May 18, 2025</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 6,701	\$ 230,714
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,623	\$ 212,460

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

Current Capital Campaign – May 18

Total Pledged	\$ 596,646
Total Received to Date	\$ 598,039

People

- For Katie Krueger and Hunter Pesik who will be married on June 14th, may you keep growing in love
- For Duane Church who celebrated his 92nd birthday on May 10th and shared his birthday cake with us during Coffee Fellowship, but who is also recovering from a broken hip, may you heal quickly
- For those who were at our church camps getting things ready for the program year – Carol Merriman, Tim Bylander, Lu Lueck, Norma Revels and Dan Rude – God bless your work
- For our Garden Geeks keeping our church gardens looking great and for Louie Filkins who made the new archway in our Memorial Garden, God bless you all!
- For the new River Falls Fire Chief, our own Justin Wilson, congratulations and thank you for pursuing this calling!
- For Josh Sippel who will be graduating from Advanced Individual Training on May 19, from Fort Gregg-Adams in VA, and who will be using that training with the Wisconsin Army National Guard
- For Marjorie Faulks who will celebrate her 102nd birthday on Saturday, June 14th with a party at St Croix Lanes from 1-3pm, you are an inspiration!

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 – Closed

Church Staff Contact:

Church Office - 715-425-2052

Pastor: Chris Myers - chris@firstchurchrf.org

Education: Stacy Johnson Myers - stacy@firstchurchrf.org

Youth: Alex 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