

Weekly Word – For Sunday, August 17, 2025

Worship this Week:

Two things pretty much every one of us has to deal with is our faith and our families. It is great and wonderful and beautiful when our faith and family perfectly line up. But that is not how life often works. This Sunday, Jesus teaches us some powerful ways to be both good family members and faithful people. Join us at the 9:30 am Summer Worship Service with Coffee Fellowship to follow at 10:30 am. Our summer worship schedule continues through Labor Day weekend so Rally Day and the return of our 10:00 am worship schedule will be Sunday, September 7th. Join us!

We are in need of Coffee Fellowship Hosts and Nursery Workers for this Sunday and next Sunday. Please sign up here to help:

Coffee Fellowship Hosts: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-coffee>

Summer Nursery Workers: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-56894730-summer>

Link to Worship Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/5zPhzPhHnk0?si=wmcIQfdGO4saSUiN>

Sunday Bulletin

This Week

Sun., Aug 17	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
	11:15 am	Games Day
Mon., Aug 18	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Youth Musical
	4:30-6:30 pm	Tools for School
Tues., Aug 19		No Yoga
	9:00 am- 12:00 pm	Youth Musical
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends Meets at Ezekiel Lutheran Today Only
	10:00 am-12:00 pm	Tools for School
	6:30-7:30 pm	Boards and Committees Meetings
	7:30-8:30 pm	Church Council Meeting
Wed, Aug 20	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Youth Musical
	1:00-3:00 pm	Merry Widows Lunch at Culvers
Thurs., Aug 21	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Youth Musical
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	10:00-11:00 am	Knitting Group
	6:00-8:00 pm	Youth Musical Dinner and Show
Sun., Aug 24	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:	Chris
Cantor:	David Reilly
Liturgist:	Tanya Larsen
Deacons:	Cindy Gandrud, Becky Pajac, Laura Anderson, Tanya Larsen
Organist:	Terry Mithun
Live Stream:	Jeff Hoffman
Nursery:	<i>Need Someone</i>

Trustee: Scott Nelson
Coffee Fellowship: *Need Someone*
Counters: Diane Welsh, Scott Nelson

Altar table flowers are given in celebration of Troy and Cheryl Zakrzewski's wedding anniversary.

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>

Sunday School Teachers Needed: Sunday School begins again on **Rally Day, September 7**. Please volunteer to teach. All classes have teaching partners so no one teaches every week. This is an important ministry and we need volunteers. Please sign up at church or online. There will be a meeting for Sunday School teachers on Thursday, September 4, 6:30–7:30 pm. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-57689735-sunday>

Wednesday School Workers Needed: Wednesday School begins on **October 1**. We also need volunteers to provide snacks on a rotating basis. Please sign up at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-57916444-wednesday>

Rally Day: Rally Day, when Sunday School, Sunday Morning Bible Study, choir and bells resume, is **Sept 7**. All children who are three (or nearly three) years old (and toilet trained) are welcome in Sunday School.

Sunday Morning Bible Study: Sunday morning Bible study groups resumes on **September 7**. The group discuss the Bible passages used in worship. The groups meets at **9:00–9:50 Sunday mornings** in the Youth Room. Please join us! For more information, contact Pastor Stacy.

Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study: The Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study resumes on September 10. The group will study the Gospel of John. This will be an in-depth yet accessible study of John. Copies of the discussion book are available for \$20.00 in the church office. Prior to the first meeting, please read the book's introduction. You could also read the whole of John's gospel from beginning to end over the summer. If you have questions, contact Pastor Stacy.

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

Tools for School: Once again, we are collecting school supplies for local families. As you are out shopping, please start collecting everything students might need this fall (crayons, pens, pencils, notebooks, backpacks, etc.). The School Supply Event will be on **August 18 and 19** here at church. Typically, we serve about 300 students. Thank you for your generous support of this needed local ministry. Please bring donations to the church and place them in the containers in the gathering area. Please also sign up to help sort and distribute items.

Red Cross Blood Drive: The next Red Cross Blood Drive held at the church is scheduled for **Tues, Sept 30, 11:00 am–5:00 pm**. Call 1-800-733-2767 or go to www.redcrossblood.org and enter: firstcongregationalrf to schedule an appointment.

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.

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

Night of Dinner/Theater: You are invited to a night of dinner and a show on **Thursday, August 21.** Dinner will be served starting at **6:00 pm**, followed by the main feature: the musical *Malice in the Palace: The Story of Esther*. The show has wonderful music and clever lines. Please come to support the young people in the congregation. You may sign the reservation list on the sign-up table, call the church office or use this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-57541517-musical>

Merry Widows: They will meet on **Wed, August 20 at 1:00 pm at Culvers.** All widows are welcome to join us for dinner and conversation! See JoAnn Lentz for more information.

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, Aug 26 & Sept 9.** 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, Aug 26 & Sept 9.**

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 113 East Elm Street (Mei Mei's) 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: Another shorthanded game, yes, it's the end of the season. Despite the loss, the team played well with the shuffling of some players and positions. This team is the best with their flexibility and let's just make it work and have fun attitude. Our present record is 5 wins, 4 losses and one rain out. Next week we will make up our rain out game against Spirit of Grace. The August 25th game will depend on if we need to break a tie. If not, it might be our end of the year picnic. Monday night's game will determine what happens on August 25.

August 18 at 6:00 pm at Hoffman Park Field #2

August 25 - Time and Field TBD

Thanks to our faithful fans who cheer us on. Come join in the fun whether you are playing or cheering the team on. If you have questions, please contact Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945, debhoffman234b@gmail.com.

Journey House Summer Send-Off - Aug 22, 6:00-8:45 pm: All young adults (18-40ish) are invited to join Journey House (143 E. Cascade Ave) for a campfire and outdoor game night - an evening of fun, fellowship, and connection with fellow young adults from River Falls and neighboring communities! S'mores, food, and snacks will be provided. You will also have an opportunity to learn more about Journey House and the exciting new Young Adult Ministry they are starting. Register before August 20th and receive a fun surprise at the event: <https://journeyhousecampusminist.subspla.sh/frtn2sz>

Youth Events

High School and College Bible Study: Join Alex and others for the summer weekly Bible Study. We meet at local coffee shops on either Tuesday or Wednesdays. Text Alex to get on the list.

Summer Musical: Please spread the word and invite children to participate. All are welcome and there is no cost.

Musical: *Malice in the Palace: The Story of Esther*

Dates: August 18-21, 2025, 9:00 to 12:00 pm; Participants: Kindergarten through Completed Grade 6

Director: Emma Cruciani; Pianist: Marsha Pearson

Fall Confirmation Orientation: Required Meetings: The 2025 Confirmation Orientation Meeting for Middle School students will be after worship on **Rally Day, September 7**. This meeting is **required** for all confirmands in grades 6–8 and their parents.

The 2025 Confirmation and Church Intern Orientation Meeting for High School students will be after worship on **Sunday, September 14**. This meeting is **required** for 9th graders and High School students who will participate in the Church Intern program and their parents.

Wednesday School: All children who will be in kindergarten through Grade 5 in the fall of 2025, are invited to participate in Wednesday School. Elementary students in River Falls are picked up at the four elementary schools in town at the end of the school day. Wednesday School concludes at 5:15. Registration and permission forms are available on the church website and in the church office. It is important to have advance registration in order to be adequately prepared for students, particularly due to transportation needs. Wednesday School begins **October 1**. Please contact Pastor Stacy with questions.

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>Aug 10, 2025</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 9,543	\$ 319,236
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 10,623	\$ 339,936

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

People

- For the gift of peaches and the youth ministries they will enable
- For Tools for School, a local ministry that helps local families with school supplies, what a gift to our community
- For our Trustees who recently repainted the Fireplace Room, bless you!
- For our church building team of Tim, Farnum and Troy who have been working overtime fixing the bell tower, moving tables and keeping everything clean, we appreciate you!
- For those who served the funeral receptions for the White and Faulks families, you are a blessing
- For these last few weeks of summer, may we squeeze in all the joy we can

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