

Weekly Word – For Sunday, May 17, 2026

Worship this Week:

Do you ever feel like you are living in between times? One way of living is ending and a new one is emerging, but not yet fully apparent. We all have to live through these liminal moments and transitions and our world seems to be going through one now. This Sunday is Ascension Sunday, the day we remember Jesus left this earth to be with God and his words to his disciples are instructive on how to live through these in between times. This Sunday is also Music Sunday, when our choir and bell choir will share some of their favorite selections from the year. It is also the last Sunday of Sunday School so our preschoolers will receive their scrapbooks. We will also welcome by baptism Leo Anthony Plum, son of Sarah and Alex, into the Christian faith. It will be a full, fun and faith-filled day! Join us at 10:00 am for worship and Coffee Fellowship to follow.

Note: Starting Memorial Day weekend and running through Labor Day Weekend summer worship moves to 9:30 am!

Link to Worship Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/4PZZM8PN29I?si=AuL-XNo8AXnsdDLp>

Sunday Bulletin

This Week

Sun., May 17	9:00-9:45 am	Bells and 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
	11:45 am	Game Day
Tues., May 19	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	6:30-7:30 pm	Boards and Committees Meetings
	7:30-8:30 pm	Church Council Meeting
Wed., May 20	1:00-2:30 pm	Adult Bible Study
	11:00 am-5:00 pm	Red Cross Blood Drive in the Fellowship Hall
Thurs., May 21	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	10:00-11:00 am	Knitting Group
Sun., May 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 Myers
Cantor:	David Reilly
Liturgist:	Sue Danielson
Deacons:	Liz Swank, Kathy Tomlinson
Organist:	Marsha Pearson
Nursery:	Emma Shepherd
Live Stream:	Jeff Hoffman
Trustee:	Matt Meyer
Coffee Fellowship:	Beatty Family
Counters:	Jean Smith, Vicki Sippel

Altar table flowers are given by Lillian Tan for her mother Ruth Tandias.

Loving God

Summer Worship: During the summer, between Memorial Day and Labor Day, our **Worship Service moves to 9:30 am** with Coffee Fellowship to follow. Please join us!

Sunday Morning Text Study: Please join us on Sunday mornings to discuss the Bible texts featured in that morning's worship. The group meets at **9:00–9:50 Sunday mornings in the Youth Room**. The Sunday Morning Text Study will meet through May 17 and then resume in the fall on Rally Day, September 13.

Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study: The Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study is winding up its discussions for this program year. The group will resume meeting in the fall, beginning on September 16. On the discussion schedule for the fall are the last book of the Bible, *Revelation*, and Thomas Long's *What Happens When We Die?* If you have questions or are interested in joining the group in the fall, please 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

Mother's Day – Father's Day Diaper Drive: It's that time of year again!! The Mission Ed Committee will once again sponsor a Diaper Drive between Mother's Day and Father's Day. Starting May 10th and running through June 21st, we will collect diapers and wipes in the gathering area. After Father's Day the diapers will be donated to Our Neighbors' Place, Turning Point and the River Falls Food Pantry. **Please note: Larger sized diapers are most needed.**

Summer Nursery Volunteers Needed: During the summer months our church nursery is staffed by volunteers while our weekly, faithful nursery worker Kahla Fuller enjoys some time off. Please sign up for a Sunday to staff the nursery. Thank you! Use the sign-up sheet at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-64011296-summer>

First Church Companions: Are you interested in being a companion to someone in our church connecting with them at least once a month with a call or visit? Or would you like to have someone for a companion. Please use the sign-up sheet to be a companion or request someone to visit you.

Grace Place is a homeless shelter run by the Salvation Army in New Richmond. They operate on a short shoestring budget and are delighted that we will support them with donations and meals. The shelter has three family rooms, a men's wing and a women's wing. They can house up to 50 people, two or three people to a room. If you have any questions, please see Carole Mottaz.

Grace Place Donations: Needed items: 55-gallon garbage bags, 13-gallon garbage bags, paper towels, Kleenex, napkins, Ziploc bags, aluminum foil and plastic wrap, light bulbs, batteries: AA, AAA, and 9 volt, cleaning supplies: Fabuloso, window cleaner, disinfectant wipes, toilet bowl cleaner, toilet bowl brushes, cleaning scrubbers, good buys. There is a bin at church for donations.

Empty Pill Bottles (Prescription Only): The River Falls Lions Club is collecting empty pill bottles, only the clear prescription bottles that are filled by our pharmacists, to send to Africa where there is an urgent need. The bottles will be washed, and the labels soaked off before they are shipped. A tub is in the gathering area. If you have questions, contact Carole Mottaz.

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 then at amongfriendsrf@gmail.com

Loving Self

Summer Choir is low stress and low commitment. We simply meet an hour before the service and sing a familiar song. The dates will be **June 21, July 26 and August 16.** Please consider joining us!

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, May 26 & June 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, May 26 & June 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.

Game Day Sunday: Game Day is held on the third Sunday of the month. Our next Game Days are **May 17 and June 21 at 11:45 am.** Join us!

Merry Widows: They will meet on **Wednesday, May 20 at 1:00 pm at Jonesy's Local in Hudson** (1801 Ward Ave between Maurices and the Bowling Alley). All widows are welcome to join us for dinner and conversation! See Linda Morrow for more information.

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 St (Mei Mei's) and the Peer Support Group meets the same evenings at First Congregational 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: The church league softball games begin June 1st and go through the middle of August. Want to play softball, but not sure if you should play because of a couple Monday commitments? We aim to have extra players, so you don't have to feel guilty missing a week or two. The family league is a co-ed division that allows players to play at the age of 14. This division also requires a team to have three women on the field at all times, so ladies please don't be afraid to sign up and play. The games are played on Monday evenings at 6:15 pm and 7:30 pm at Hoffman Park.

We have had two practices and would like the team to come to the two remaining practices on May 18th and TBD at 6:30 pm at the Greenwood softball field. Looking forward to another fun season seeing friends and families play softball. To sign up there is a sign-up sheet at church or contact Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945, debhoffman234b@gmail.com.

Red Cross Blood Drive: Donors still needed next week! Please join our **Wednesday, May 20th First Congregational Church Spring Blood Drive from 11am – 5pm.** May is Trauma Awareness Month, every 2-3 seconds someone in the U.S. needs lifesaving blood resources! 1 donation, 1 hour of your time can help ensure readily available blood products for patients in the coming weeks. Appointments appreciated, walk-ins welcomed. All donors will get a new Red Cross beach towel to get summer ready - [Click here to sign-up today!](#)

Gardeners and Mowers Needed! We love our church gardens and lawns! Please help us maintain them by joining our Garden Geeks and/or Lawn Mowing Team. You sign up for a week that works for your busy schedule. Training is provided and it is so appreciated! Use the sign-up sheets or talk to Lu Lueck about Garden Geeks or the office for mowing.

VBS Volunteers: It is time to turn our attention to the upcoming summer program. Please volunteer to help with VBS. We need a large number of adult and teen volunteers. To volunteer, please sign the list in the gathering space or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-63968730-vbsvolunteers>

Needed Items: The choir is in need of more file drawer hanging file frames and folders for the choir music. Please let the church office know if you have these items to donate. Thank you.

Endowment Grants: Each quarter the Endowment Grant Committee meets to evaluate proposals for new ministries and projects submitted through our church committees. Does your group have a new idea you want to pursue? Is there a need in the church or community your group wants to address? Consider applying for an Endowment Grant! All proposals must come from a committee, and the next due date is **July 5**. Forms can be accessed through the church office or on the church website.

Name Tags: We encourage you to wear your name tags so that everyone can call you by name. It would also help the deacons when you take communion. If you do not have one, please let Missy in the church office know at missy@firstchurchrf.org. In appreciation, the Welcoming Committee.

Youth Events

Graduation Sunday: Mark your calendars as we celebrate Graduation Sunday on **May 31st** at the 9:30 am summer worship service. We will honor our graduating high school seniors as well as award church scholarships. Let us celebrate their many accomplishments together as a church family!

VBS and Summer Children's Musical: Dates for the 2026 children's summer programs are:

VBS: July 27-30, 9:00 to 11:30 am. Theme is: My Peace I Give to You

Children's Musical: August 10-13, 9:00 am to Noon. The show will be *Rock Slinger and His Greatest Hits*

VBS is for children age 3 to completed grade 5. The musical is for children who have completed kindergarten through completed grade 6. Emma Cruciani will be the director. We will need adult and teen volunteers for VBS. Please save the dates and invite friends & neighbors! Registration forms are at church & online: [Registration Form](#)

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 10, 2026</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 2,607	\$ 180,155
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 11,308	\$ 214,852

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

People

- For the gift of our choir and bell choir and their leaders Jamie and Sarah, thank you for sharing your gifts
- For Tanner Pietz who is stepping in for Sarah Plum after the birth of Leo Anthony, thank you for your generosity
- For our wonderful Sunday School teachers on this last day of Sunday School, God bless you all!
- For Kahla Fuller, our faithful nursery worker during the program year and for those faithful volunteers who staff the nursery over the summer, thank you
- For those who received Pre-School scrapbooks this Sunday, may they help you grow in faith and joy
- For those who will donate and receive blood at our next blood drive on Wednesday, May 20th, may it bring life
- For Hope Lutheran Church who celebrates their 20th anniversary on Sunday, June 7th, may they grow in love, faith and service to their community

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@firstchurchr.org

Education: Stacy Johnson Myers - stacy@firstchurchr.org

Youth: Alex Plum – rfyouthgroup@gmail.com

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

Music: Jamie Mills - degolierjamie@gmail.com

Choir: Sarah Plum – sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com

Building: Farnum Fuller – farnumfuller@gmail.com

Building: Troy Zakrzewski – ztruck51ford@gmail.com

Maintenance: Tim Bylander - timthefixitguy@gmail.com