

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

110 North Third Street, River Falls, WI 54022

715-425-2052 ■ www.firstchurchrf.org

June 15, 2026

**Our mission is to love God
and serve people.**

**Everyone is welcome because
everyone matters.**



Pastor's Page

Life is busy. Too busy sometimes.

One of the jokes around the church office is this: next week is going to be a quiet, boring week (it never is). Another joke is this: next week we will all be able to get caught up (we rarely do). Life is like that. Church life is like that. We are busy. This is true even during the summer. Perhaps even more so as we try to cram in so many events into just a few short weeks.

Growing up, I remember being bored during the summer months. At the time, there were few organized activities for kids. Most of the time we would ride our bikes from one friend's house to another's, then when we were all bored together, we would end up

at the town pool. How different it is today! Today, between sports, community activities, church, camps, and daycare, summers feel very full.

Many people find it hard to schedule family vacations because our summer schedules at times look even busier than the school schedules. I'm not saying this is bad or good (I think it is a little of both), but it is the way things seem to be today.

This summer, amidst all the busy-ness, I have started a new spiritual discipline. Each morning, between Memorial Day and Labor Day, I am trying to think of five things for which to be thankful. Having just had a really busy week, here are my first five. I am thankful for:

- * A car that works
- * A lawn to mow
- * A garden to weed
- * A house to keep making payments on
- * A community in which to grow and serve

I hope at the end of the summer to come up with 99 reasons (the number of days of summer) why I am thankful.

Amidst all the busy-ness of the summer season may you take time to be thankful and to remember the source of your many blessings.

In Gratitude, Pastor Chris

Diaper Drive



The Mission Ed Committee is once again sponsoring a Diaper Drive between Mother's Day and Father's Day. Starting May 10th and running through June 21st, we are collecting 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.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, June 21

Father's Day and Summer Choir
Worship at 9:30 am

Thursday, July 9

River Falls Days Bluegrass Concert
on Front Lawn 6:00-8:00 pm

Wednesday, July 22

Red Cross Blood Drive 11 am-5 pm

Mon-Thurs, July 27-30

Vacation Bible School
9:00-11:30 am

Thursday, July 30

VBS Dinner at 6:00 pm with
Program to Follow

Mon-Thurs, August 10-13

Youth Musical 9:00 am to Noon

Thursday, August 13

Youth Musical Dinner and
Performance 6:00 pm

Monday, August 17

Tools for School Supply Give Away
4:00-6:00 pm

Funeral Helpers Needed

Our church family is in need of one or two more people who will help set tables before funeral receptions in the Fellowship Hall. For many years, Gary and Judy Grimm have done this and will now 'retire' from this job. Thank you for all your work! Al and Dianne Barnes will remain in this capacity but would like help and back up. The task is relatively easily - set tables - and takes about an hour. Please contact the church office if you are interested and talk to Dianne and Al if you want more information. Thank you!

Committee Needs for 2026-27 Program Year

During our Annual Meeting in February, we learned about a number of programs that are happening inside and outside of our church. All of these activities and endeavors need volunteers to continue going forth. The Nominating committee will soon begin the work of filling open spots in our committees. Please say **YES** when one of the committee calls, emails or talks with you about the many opportunities for you to share your time and talents.

Our committee needs are as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Nominating: 2 people | Christian Ed: 1 person |
| Deacons: 4 people | Discipleship: 4 people |
| Endowment Grant: 1 person | Trustees: 2 people |
| Mission Ed: 1 person | Music: 1 person |
| Welcoming: 2 people | Investments: 1 person |
| Scholarship: 2 people | |

Terms begin in September 2026 and run for 3 years. If you feel called to serve, please contact one of the Nominating committee members or call the church office.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Marie Roe, Norma Revels, Karen Lloyd, Marsha Pearson, Kathy Rausch



VBS Volunteers Needed

First Congregational's VBS program requires many adult and teen volunteers. Please join the excitement by volunteering to help. Please volunteer by signing the list in the gathering space of online.

VBS will be **July 27-30, from 9:00-11:30 am**. Please help!

Sunday Morning Text Study

The Sunday Morning Text Study group is done until the fall. The next session will be **Rally Day, September 13**.

Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study

The Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study is done until the fall. The next session will be **Wednesday, September 16, 1:00-2:30**. The group will undertake an ambitious study of the last book in the Bible - Revelation. Copies of the discussion book are available in the office for \$20.00 each.

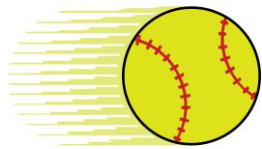
VBS Painting Work Night

Please come to help paint the VBS backdrops on **Tuesday, July 21, starting at 6:00**. The only talent necessary is the ability to paint within the lines. Please help!

VBS Volunteer Meeting

The VBS volunteer meeting will be **Thursday, July 23, 6:30-7:30 pm**. This is the most important chance to prepare for the week. Please plan to attend.

SOFTBALL News and Game Schedule



LEAGUE

Our game on Monday, June 8th was fun and exciting. The team worked well together and won by 10 runs. It was great to see everybody. Our next two games are:

June 15 at 6:15 pm

June 22 at 6:15 pm

Players, please try to show up 30 minutes before the game.

Come cheer us on! We play every Monday at Hoffman Park throughout the summer. We are the team in the red shirts. Any questions, contact Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945, debhoffman234b@gmail.com.

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. Use the sign-up sheet at church or online. Thank you!

Summer Choir

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!

JOIN US FOR A
FREE CONCERT
on the lawn

THURSDAY, JULY 9TH
 FROM 6-8 PM

featuring
SLAPDASH BLUEGRASS BAND

and food for purchase
 FROM 5:30-7:30 PM

by
ROLLIN' RIVER FOOD TRUCK

at
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
110 N 3rd St.
 RIVER FALLS, WI

firstchurchrf.org | 715-425-2052

PEACE
 BE WITH
 YOU

Vacation Bible School

All are welcome! No Charge
 Age 3 - Completed Grade 5
 July 27-30th 9-11:30 AM
 110 N 3rd St. River Falls, WI | 715-425-2052

First Congregational UCC
 Scan QR code to register
 or visit: www.firstchurchrf.org

New Art Welcomes Us to Worship

The next time you are at church, please take time to admire the congregation's new fused glass piece depicting Genesis 1:1 – "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Be sure to notice:

- Left panel: Darkness and chaos swirling in the upper left corner that turns to ordered aspects of creation, including the moon and stars, desert and desert flowers.
- Middle panel: Skies, mountain ranges, a meadow with flowers and butterflies, a sparkling stream, and a flowing river with fish.
- Right panel: The sun and a rainbow anchoring the top right corner giving way to a forest, river and deer.



The decorative borders on the right and left sides were created by pre-school and kindergarteners while the interior sections were made by elementary students, teens, and the Knitting Group women. Special thanks to the artist who helped us, Theresa Charpentier, and the anonymous donor who helped to pay for it.

It is located just to the right of the Third Street doors when you enter church. May it remind us of the beauty of God's creation and our call to be good stewards of it.

**THE
ROCK SLINGER
& HIS GREATEST HITS**

CHILDREN'S MUSICAL
August 10 -13, 2026 from 9-noon
Directed by Emma Cruciani, accompanied by Marsha Pearson
Dinner & Performance Aug. 13th, 6:00 PM
Completed Kindergarten-Grade 6

ALL ARE WELCOME NO CHARGE
First Congregational UCC
110 N 3rd St. River Falls, WI | 715-425-2052
Scan QR code to register or visit: www.firstchurchrf.org



Designed by Magnific www.magnific.com

Let's Feed Some Kids!

Join us on **Wednesday, September 9, from 6-8pm at Tattersall** as we feed 100,000 starving kids right here in River Falls. Our church is one of the sponsors of this Feed My Starving Children event and will have early access to packing times.

All our Middle and High School kids will have their first night of Confirmation/Youth Group this night, but **EVERYONE** is welcome to come and help. Sign up before July 15th to get your spot! Questions to Pastor Chris or Alex.

Summer High School and College Youth Bible Study

Our first meeting will be on **Wednesday, June 17 at 10:00 am at Selah Vie Bistro & Coffee Cottage**, 208 N Main Street, RF. Alex will buy coffee for the group!

Peaches!

We will again be hosting a peach fundraiser during the summer months which helps pay for youth programs at church like mission trips and events. Orders will begin soon. Yay! Watch for more info.

Graduation Sunday

What a great day! On Graduation Sunday our church awarded over \$40,000 in church scholarships to four graduating high school seniors and seventeen students already in college or grad school. They are future teachers, physical therapists, pilots, business people, and so much more.

Our church interns contributed over 500 hours of service inside and outside the church walls.

Thank you church, may God bless all who received scholarships and may God bless all who contributed to our church Scholarship Fund!



To Us a Child Is Given

Welcome Leo Anthony! On Sunday, May 17th we welcomed Leo Anthony Plum into the faith and family of Jesus Christ by baptism. Leo is the son of Sarah (our church Choir Director and Choir Director at River Falls High School) and Alex Plum (our Youth Director and Band Teacher at Meyer Middle School). His godparents are Tanner, Madeline, Emma and Myanna. May they help him grow in faith, wisdom and years and may his church make room for his gifts as he grows. To us a child a given! Thanks be to God!

What the Pastor is Reading

[The Future Is Peace](#) by Aziz Abu Sarah and Maoz Inan

One of the mantras I am tired of hearing is this: The Middle East is always in chaos and always will be. I tire of it for two reasons. One, it lets folks off the hook - nothing we can do! Two, it is just not true. In fact, there was a time (300 years!) when Muslims, Christians and Jews lived, worked and worshipped together and they thrived! This book is written by two tour guides, one Palestinian and one Jewish. One lost his brother to a beating by the Israeli military. One lost his parents to the October 7 Hamas attacks. They will never be on the same page politically, but they are united in wanting a better future for their people. The title of the book says it all. Not so much a road map but a brutally honest look at the violence and the outlines of a path forward. Good read.

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 at church office or on the website.

Father's Day

This year Father's Day is on **Sunday, June 21**. Join us as the 9:30 am summer worship service as we pray for and give thanks for all who are called to be Fathers. This is also the day our summer choir will grace us with music. Summer choir meets at 8:30 am for practice. Any singers are welcome! Join us.



Red Cross Blood Drive

The next Red Cross Blood Drive held at the church is on **Wednesday, July 22, from 11:00 am-5:00 pm**.

See the flyer for more info. Call 1-800-733-2767 or go to www.redcrossblood.org and enter: firstcongregationalrf to schedule an appointment.



100th Birthdays

We have two church members who will be celebrating their 100th birthday - Lyle Wood on June 17 and Darlene Sumption later this year. What an incredible accomplishment!

Those who wish to celebrate Lyle's birthday are encouraged to send him a birthday card to his residence: 80 Heritage Blvd, Unit 16, Hudson, WI 54016. He and his wife Helen and their family are planning a wonderful celebration in June. Please be sure to congratulate them when you see them and include them in your prayers of thanksgiving!

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.

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. We are now set up to receive such gifts. Talk to the church office if you need more information.

WISE Corner

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Family Support Group meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays at 6:30 pm at 113 East Elm St (Mei Mei's) & 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.

Treasurer's Report

| | Week of June 7 2026 | Year to Date |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| General Fund Income* | \$ 3,682 | \$ 246,170 |
| General Fund Operational Needs | \$ 11,308 | \$ 260,084 |

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

*Includes annual and monthly gifts.

Church Staff Contact Info

Pastor: Chris Myers - chris@firstchurchrf.org
Education: Stacy Myers - stacy@firstchurchrf.org
Office: Missy Luedtke - missy@firstchurchrf.org
Youth: Alex Plum - rfyouthgroup@gmail.com
Music: Jamie Mills - degolierjamie@gmail.com
Choir: Sarah Plum - sarah.e.plum.95@gmail.com
Building: Farnum Fuller - farnumfuller@gmail.com
Troy Zakrzewski - ztruck51ford@gmail.com
Maintenance: Tim Bylander - timthefixitguy@gmail.com

*SERVE
generously*

Grace Place

Supply needs:

- 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. Thank you!

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.

River Falls Food Pantry

The pantry is currently in need of: toilet paper, cereal, peanut butter and cooking oil. Information about donations is on their website at <https://rfcfp.org/>. Donations can be brought to 705 St. Croix Street during their hours of operation:

Mondays 10:00 am–12:00 pm
and 6:00–7:30 pm

Wednesdays 1:00–5:00 pm

Thursdays 6:00–7:30 pm

Fridays 10:00 am–12:00 pm



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 at church 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 fristroe@gmail.com

Church Yoga

The yoga group meets on **Tuesdays & Thursdays** in the Fellowship Hall from **9:00-10:00 am** and via Zoom. Please contact the church office to receive the Zoom link.

Women's Group

Interested in fellowship and community with other women? You are invited to join the group at noon every 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month. Please bring a lunch. The next meetings will be **June 23 & July 14 & 28**.

Men's Group

Our church men's group meets **every other Tuesday**. We gather for conversation and fellowship around a scripture verse or story. All guys are welcome to join us at **9:00 am in the Youth Room**. Our next gatherings are **June 23 and July 7 & 21**. Join us!

Merry Widows

They will meet on **Wed, June 17, at 1:00 pm at Junior's in River Falls**. All widows are welcome to join for dinner & conversation! See Linda Morrow for more info.

Game Day Sunday

Game Day Sunday is held on the third Sunday of the month. Our next Game Day is **July 19 at 11:45 am**. Join us!

Veterans Coffee Chat

Held on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month at 9:30 am at The Sycamore in River Falls. Coffee and pastries are provided. Contact Megan at The Sycamore 715-997-3441 with questions.

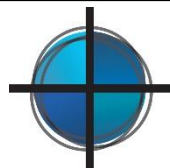
Among Friends

Among Friends is a community-based social respite program serving adults with memory loss who reside in Pierce and St. Croix Counties. For more information, contact them at 715-293-2561. Also, check out the website: amongfriendsrf.com and the Facebook page. Among Friends is located at the church and is held on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm**.



Offering QR Code

1. On your device, open Camera app or QR Code app
2. Point your camera at the QR Code
3. Click tab 'Give Online'



FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, UCC
RIVER FALLS

Office Phone: 715-425-2052
E-mail: office@firstchurchrf.org
Website: www.firstchurchrf.org

STAFF

Chris Myers, Pastor
Stacy Johnson, CE Minister
Missy Luedtke, Office Administrator
Marie Roe, Moderator
Alex Plum, Youth Minister
Jamie Mills, Music Coordinator and Bell Choir Director
Sarah Plum, Choir Director
Marsha Pearson, Organist
Terry Mithun, Organist
Tim Bylander, Building Supervisor
Farnum Fuller, Custodian
Troy Zakrzewski, Custodian

Pastor's home phone number:
Chris Myers 715-426-2075
chris@firstchurchrf.org

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**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

110 N. Third Street
River Falls, Wisconsin 54022

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NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

PERMIT #53

RIVER FALLS, WI 54022

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JUNE 15, 2026

Altar Flowers

Please sign up to provide flowers for the altar for Sunday worship. Sign up at church or on the church website: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-altar>

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 and one person is needed at the ramp entrance. Please arrive 20 minutes prior to worship. Sign up at church or here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-welcomers>

Coffee Fellowship Hosts and Liturgists Needed

Coffee Fellowship Hosts will be asked to serve Best Maid cookies which are in the church freezer, make lemonade and serve coffee. All the materials are provided; you will simply need to serve and clean up. Sign up at church or on the website: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-coffee>

Liturgists will lead us in the Call to Worship and one of the Scripture Lessons. The material will be emailed out on Thursday to practice. Sign up at church or on the website: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-liturgist>

Please note church interns can receive credit for either of these activities. Thank you for volunteering in these important ministries as we continue our journey.

Newsletter Deadlines

The church newsletter is sent out twice a month. Deadlines are the 10th and 25th of each month. Items should be sent to the church office no later than those dates.