

Weekly Word – For Sunday, August 9, 2026

Worship this Week:

When you post things on social media, what do you post? You post the good things. Your successes. The wonderful picture of you and your family on vacation. Few of us want to broadcast our failures. This Sunday we hear the story of Peter trying and failing to walk on the water. Rather than thinking of this as a failure, I wonder if it teaches us something important about faith. Put simply Peter's faith grew from this experience. How can our faith grow from our failures and disappointments? Join us at the 9:30 am summer worship service where Kristin Andes provides special music with her harp and Coffee Fellowship follows. Join us and invite a friend!

Note: We are in need of a Coffee Fellowship host and Nursery volunteer. Sign up here:

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

Nursery volunteer: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-64011296-summer>

Peach Update: The truck has left Washington state and is due in River Falls late Saturday morning. Pick up hours for those who ordered peaches will be:

Saturday, August 8 from 1:00 to 5:00 pm

Sunday, August 9 from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm

If there are any changes, we will send updates. Thanks for your patience and enjoy the peaches!

Link to Worship Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/rhVS5DSLTeY?si=fOTowoTNNC4IFQow>

Sunday Bulletin

This Week

Sun., Aug 9	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 & 1550 AM
Mon., Aug 10	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Children's Musical
Tues., Aug 11	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Children's Musical
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	12:00-1:00 pm	Women's Group
Thurs., Aug 12	9:00-10:00 am	Yoga
	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Children's Musical
	9:00 am-3:00 pm	Among Friends
	10:00-11:00 am	Knitting Group
	6:00-7:30 pm	Children's Musical Dinner and Show
	6:30-7:30 pm	NAMI Peer Group Meeting
Sun., Aug 16	8:30-9:30 am	Summer Choir Rehearsal
	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 & 1550 AM
	11:45 am	Game Day

Assisting in Sunday's worship service are:

Preacher:	Chris Myers
Celebrant:	Stacy Johnson Myers
Cantor:	David Reilly
Liturgist:	Rene Bylander

Deacons: Lance Lueck, Becky Pajac, Liz Swank, Heidi Cavaness, Brodie Lueck
Organist: Marsha Pearson
Nursery:
Live Stream: Jeff Hoffman
Trustee: Matt Bastien
Coffee Fellowship:
Counters: Diane Welsh, Scott Nelson

Loving God

Sunday School Teachers Needed: Sunday School is one of the most critical ministries we offer to support children as they learn and grow in faith. First Congregational uses a shared teaching model, so a team of three teachers shares responsibilities for an individual class. We need a *minimum* of 12 volunteers. All curriculum and materials are provided, and teachers teach approximately once every three weeks. For more information, please contact Pastor Stacy. To volunteer, please sign up at church or online:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-64860664-sunday>

Rally Day: Sunday School, Sunday Morning Bible Study, choir and bells resume, resume on Rally Day, **September 13**. All children who are three years old (and toilet-trained) are welcome in Sunday School. Previously registered students do not need to register again. New students should register. Registration forms are available at church or online: <https://firstchurchrf.org/pages/sign-up-sheets>

Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study: The Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study will resume on **Wed, Sept 16, 1:00-2:30**. The group will study Revelation. Copies of the discussion book are available in the office for \$20.00 each. The fall is a terrific time to being participating in Bible Study. For more information, 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

Kitchen Help Needed: Our church family chefs, Andy and Christina Krueger, will cook for the Children's Musical dinner on **Thurs, Aug 13**. They will need help serving and cleaning up. Please volunteer. The sign-up list is on the table in the gathering space. We still need *many* volunteers. Please help!

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 at church or online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-64011296-summer>

Journey House (Ecumenical young adult outreach, located at 143 E Cascade Ave) is getting ready for the new school year! If you're interested in contributing, here are some ideas:

- **A Welcome to School Care Kit and Goody Bag.** We are asking for a donation of \$25. These bags will be what we hand out during the Involvement Fair and given to students throughout the months of September and October when we table. We are hoping to have 50 bags sponsored (if not more).
- **A suggested donation of \$30 to help sponsor our weekly gathering, Journey Nights.** The school changed their funding model for groups (less money for us to use) on top of everything being more expensive. Those who give any amount will be recognized. Those who give \$30 or more will receive their own Journey Night passport as a thank you gift. (These are what we are giving the students that give them a fun way to engage more with our Journey Night conversation.)
- **Amazon Wish List.** We created and plan on keeping up with an [Amazon Wish List](#).

Back Bay Mission Trip Planned for April 2027: Ever wanted to go on a mission trip? Heard about the awesome experiences so many of our church folks have had at UCC related Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi? Just want to get out of town to someplace warm? Join us! Our church is sponsoring yet another trip to Back Bay Mission, **April 18-24, 2027**. A meeting will be held in early September. Please contact Carol Merriman or Pastor Chris for details. Use the sign-up sheet to register your interest.

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 them at amongfriendsrf@gmail.com

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 Donations: Needed items: New adult undergarments (underwear up to size XXL), new bras, new or like-new sweatpants up to size 4X, new or like-new T-shirts up to size 4X, new shoes (adult men and female), belts, adult socks, 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 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**.

Loving Self

Summer Choir is low stress and low commitment. We simply meet an hour before the service and sing a familiar song. The last date will be **August 16**. Please consider joining us!

Harp Concert: Experience the calming, soothing effect of live therapeutic music. You are invited to a free concert by Certified Therapeutic Musician Kristin Andes and her harp on **Tues, Aug 25, from 6:30-7:30 pm**. Join us! Presented by the WISE Team

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 18 & Sept 1**. 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 11 & 25**.

Game Day Sunday: Game Day is held on the third Sunday of the month. Our next Game Days are **Aug 16 and Sept 20 at 11:45 am**. Join us!

Merry Widows: They will meet on **Wed, Aug 19 at 1:00 pm at Tattersall in River Falls**. All widows are welcome to join us for dinner and conversation! See Linda Morrow for more information.

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 First Congregational Church at 6:30 pm. For mental health issues, please call 988. For more info, call Marg Downing 715-307-5905.

Community Life

Softball News: We have one more regular season game on **August 10 at 7:30 pm** against The River. The last two nights, August 17 and 24, are playoffs games with the times yet to be determined. August 24th will also be a fun night for the teams with a picnic plus the finals of the playoffs. Come cheer us on! We play at Hoffman Park. We are the team in the red shirts. Any questions, contact Deb Hoffman at (612)308-4945, debhoffman234b@gmail.com.

Night of Dinner/Theater: You are invited to a night of dinner and a show on **Thursday, August 13**. Dinner will be served starting at **6:00 pm**, followed by the main feature: the musical *Rock Slinger and His Greatest Hit*. In case you can't tell, it is the story of David and Goliath. The show has fun 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/904054BA9AD29A4FF2-64675757-musical>

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 17 & 18** 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 distribute items.

Committee Needs Update: The Nominating Committee has been busy calling people, talking in person and leaving voicemails with a number of people in our congregation this summer. Thank you to all that said **YES!!** when asked to serve. **We are still in need of 2 Deacons and 1 person for the Christian Ed Committee.** Please consider giving of your time to help our church in any of these openings. The term begins in September 2026 and runs for three years.

Red Cross Blood Drive: The next Red Cross Blood Drive held at the church is on **Monday, September 28, 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.

Endowment Grants: Each quarter the Endowment Grant Committee meets to evaluate proposals for new ministries and projects submitted through our church committees. Consider applying for an Endowment Grant! All proposals must come from a committee, and the next due dates are **October 4 and December 6**. Forms can be accessed through the church office or on the church website.

Learning Communities for the Fall:

Tues, Oct 13 at 6:30 pm: A Night in the National Parks! - Ever wanted to visit three of our most famous national parks: Tetons, Yellowstone and Glacier? Planning a trip there for next summer? Join Pastor Chris as he leads us on a quick 90-minute tour of three of our nation's most outstanding national parks. He will talk about both the beauty and grandeur of the parks as well as practical logistical things - where to stay, what to do and most important, how far out to plan and book! Join us for a night in our National Parks!

Tues, Nov 10: The Churches of River Falls - River Falls has lots of churches, but do you know their history. Join us as River Falls native and historian Mark Anderson tells us some of the stories behind the churches of River Falls, including our own.

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

Summer Children's Musical: August 10-13, 9:00 am to Noon. The show will be *Rock Slinger and His Greatest Hits*. The musical is for children who have completed kindergarten through completed grade 6. Emma Cruciani will be the director. Registration forms are at church & online: [Registration Form](#)

Summer Youth Group Events: Sun, August 16 - **Kayaking the Kinni** – Join us for kayaking the Kinni! The group will decide if we are kayaking the upper or lower. When you sign up, please let me know if you have your own kayaks or will need to borrow one. Please email Alex at rfyouthgroup@gmail.com to confirm going!

Fall Confirmation Orientation: The Confirmation Orientation for grades 6–8 will be on Rally Day following worship on Sunday, Sept 13. This meeting is **required** for all confirmands and their parents. The Orientation for High School Confirmands (grade 9) and Church Interns will be following Sunday, Sept 20. This meeting is **required** for all confirmands and their parents. *Please reserve the dates and time now to avoid conflicts.*

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 2, 2026</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Income*	\$ 5,427	\$ 341,245
General Fund Operational Needs	\$ 11,308	\$ 350,548

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
- For Bobbie Kuhn who celebrates her 80th birthday on Thursday, August 27, may you enjoy many more!
- For our Garden Geeks who tend our church garden and our Lawn Mowing Team who keep everything looking great, God bless you all!
- For those who helped out with VBS last week with snacks, crafts, teaching, serving, God bless you all!
- For all those who cooked, served and cleaned up after the VBS meal, we could not do this without you
- For the gift of summer, may we savor every bit of it
- For those who gave blood at our last blood drive on Wednesday, July 22, may it bring life

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

Building: Troy Zakrzewski – ztruck51ford@gmail.com

Maintenance: Tim Bylander - timthefixitguy@gmail.com