

“The Congregator”

First Congregational United Church of Christ - 110 N. Third Street - River Falls, WI

Phone: 715-425-2052 - Website: www.firstchurchr.org

Rev. Chris Myers: chris@firstchurchr.org - Office email: office@firstchurchr.org

APRIL 1, 2010

Pastor's Corner

I went to a Methodist seminary and so sometimes a little bit of Methodism sneaks into my thinking. John Wesley, founder of Methodism used to advise his itinerant preachers to ‘preach the faith until you have it.’ By that I think he meant that it is important to keep reiterating the faith that we have until it become the faith we want. Of course, we never really ‘have’ this faith. It is more accurate to say that this faith ‘has us.’ God comes to us even before we can come to God. But sometimes when it comes to believing in Jesus, the first thing to do is to believe that Christ desires our faith, that he will come to us and give us the faith we need.

I remember hearing lecture in seminary by a Greek Orthodox priest who lectured to us about the historic creeds of the church and how they came about. At the end of the lecture, a student friend of mine rose and asked, “But what do you do when you have trouble believing some part of the Creed? What can you do when you, in integrity cannot affirm the whole Creed?”

The priest smiled and replied simply, “You can keep saying it until you believe it. Give yourself time; it will eventually come to you.”

The resurrection on Easter morning greets us with a truth that is hard for us to fully believe—death is not the end, new life is possible and it begins here and now.

A blessed Easter to each and every one of you!

Pastor Chris



Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday, April 1

Worship at 6:30 pm—Communion and 3rd Year
Confirmands wash feet of their parents

Good Friday, April 2

Worship from 12:10 to 12:50 pm

Easter Sunday, April 4

7:00 am—Sunrise Service and Baptismal Renewal

8:00 to 10:15 am—Breakfast Served by

Confirmands (Please make a reservation and
bring the family!)

9:00 and 10:30 am—Worship, Choir,
Communion and Sheer Joy as we celebrate the
resurrection

Will Our Children Have Faith?

A Christian Education Discussion

On April 25, parents are invited to a discussion about Christian education and faith development. The discussion will also consider the Sunday School schedule. This is an extremely important event for families with children of all ages. Lunch will be served to families following the 10:30 service. Children will have fun playing, building and racing Lego cars, and needle felting while adults participate in the discussion. The event will conclude by 1:30. Please RSVP. For more information contact Stacy Myers.

We believe...

~The Christian faith is a life-long learning process.

~Our church family aspires to be the living presence of Christ in the world.

~Our faith in Jesus is demonstrated through our lives, actions, and commitments.

~We are striving to become a congregation of life-long givers.

~Worship is the center of our life together.

MODERATOR NOTES Submitted by Jean Smith

Our February and March meetings have been busy discussing the goals that we want to accomplish in 2010. The various committees presented their goals at our last council meeting and I will be highlighting those in future issues. The Church Council decided on our goals for 2010. They are listed as follows:

CHURCH COUNCIL GOALS 2010

- Provide leadership and support to the Capital Campaign Cabinet as well as the building and finance committees when necessary
- Intentionally grow the church by twelve families
- Develop a marketing strategy for First Congregational Church River Falls
- Strategic planning/thinking for the future of First Congregational Church River Falls
- Cultivate a culture of generosity

If anyone has any comments or questions please feel free to contact me at 715-531-1552 or at jsmithler@yahoo.com

Thought: **The living God can take the fear out of living.**

TREASURER'S NOTES

Missy Luedtke

Financial Information for February and YTD:

	<u>February</u>	<u>2010 YTD</u>
Income	\$ 17,698.56	\$ 56,074.28
Expenses	\$ 29,173.52	\$ 29,604.41
Net	\$ -11,474.96	\$ 26,469.87

A full accounting of all income and expenses is always posted outside the church office door on the bulletin board.



THANK YOU for your support of the Relay for Life. Our team has raised \$2,308.75 because of your efforts. The Relay total on Saturday morning was \$172,000. We can continue to accept donations until the end of August.

It's Official, Mark the Date!

At the February 7 Annual Meeting we unanimously called Stacy Johnson Myers as our Minister of Christian Education. We will celebrate this event at her installation on **Sunday, May 23** during the 10:30 am worship service. Rev. David Moyer, the Wisconsin Conference Minister will be preaching and the annual end of the year Sunday School picnic will follow. Please mark your calendars and plan on joining us.

Time and Talents: Did you return your blue Time and Talents Sheet? Please do so today. Extras are available online and at the church office. Please return to the church office ASAP.

Thanks to all who helped make this year's Lenten meals and worship such a great success: to those who set up, cooked and cleaned up; to those who played music, sang, read or simply worshipped to the beautiful words of our Evening Prayer worship service—**THANK YOU!!**

Spring Clean Up Day has been set for Thursday, April 29 starting at 4:00 pm.

We are asking for volunteers with rakes, clippers, hedge trimmers, leaf blowers, etc. With many hands, the job will get done quicker, and the grounds will look good for Country Fair, which is on May 8th.



Women's Fellowship

Please mark your calendar for Women's Fellowship on **Thursday, April 1 at 9:30 am** in the church lounge. Stacy Myers will present *"The Intersection of Scripture and Imagination"*. Devotions provided by Judith Permann and our Hostesses are Joanie Smith and Violet Wright. All women are welcome. Come join the fun!

Dead Sea Scrolls Trip

A traveling exhibit of the famed Dead Sea Scrolls is coming to the Science Museum of Minnesota this spring. The church has reserved 30 spots for **Tuesday, April 13, 2010**.

We will leave the church at 10am, have a bite to eat, enter the exhibit at noon. Our time at the museum should end around 2pm and we will return to the church around 3pm. The cost is \$20 and includes admission to the museum, exhibit and an audio guide. We must have payment when you sign up for the trip. We will take the church van and need others to drive. Please see Pastor Chris for more info.

Painting—Saturday, April 24, 10:00 am

There is some touch-up painting that needs to be done outside at the church. If you are able to help, please sign up on the back table. Thank you!

Please remember our 3rd Year Confirmands as they journey to Boston April 9-12. They will be studying and visiting spots from our Congregational Church history: Plymouth Rock, Plymouth Village and Old South Church.



Boundary Waters Trip

If you are interested in joining a church group trip to the Boundary Waters canoe area this summer, please contact Pastor Chris. The 3-day, 2-night trip is planned for **July 26-29** and will include multiple groups of people of varying skills levels. No experience is necessary! Use the sign-up sheet to register your interest.

Katie Fuller

Our homegrown seminarian is edging closer to her graduation from Eden Seminary in St. Louis on May 14. Katie is now in the final process of preparation for graduation and hopefully ordination. Once she has obtained a call for a local church setting, she will be ordained. In honor of her accomplishment, the church is collecting funds to present her with a handmade stole by the same artist who makes our church banners. If you wish to contribute, please drop off a check in the office or offering plate marked "stole fund."

Weekly Email

Do we have your current email address? The "Weekly Word" is a weekly email sent out on Thursdays that highlights upcoming church activities. Please send the church office your updated email address at office@firstchurchrf.org.

Indeed...Will Our Children Have Faith?

Three decades ago, John Westerhoff, an Episcopal priest, father, and Christian Education professor, posed the question: Will our children have faith? He addressed his question in a book by that title, as well as in numerous lectures and other writings. His central concern was this: Christian Education has been largely modeled after secular educational paradigms rather than recognizing that faith formation happens in the midst of families, congregations, and community life. Westerhoff criticized Christian education programming that focused on learning facts about the Bible rather than preparing children and adults for a life of discipleship.

In 2000, Westerhoff revised his book, *Will Our Children Have Faith?* The intervening decades softened some of his arguments and sharpened others. He is concerned that too often Christian education programming is not built upon a solid theological foundation. He reiterates his concern that congregations do not have an awareness of how to nourish and nurture faith.

I've said it before, and I say it again: Christian Education is second only to worship in the life of a congregation. In fact, the two are (or should be) held tightly together, each informing and shaping the other. It is absolutely necessary to understand how it is that faith is passed on through the generations. Sunday School attendance does not guarantee that one will live as a person of faith. Faith needs to be nurtured, tended, and shaped with great care and intention.

On April 25, the Board of Christian Education is holding an event to explore how faith is nurtured. The discussion will include an exploration of faith development, talking to children about issues of faith, resources for families (including how to select a Bible for children), and the framework behind First Congregational's educational programming. The discussion will also include a consideration of how the Sunday morning schedule relates to worship and education. Please, please come. If your children are involved in the congregation's educational programming, this session is for you. If you have important children in your life who are growing in faith, come. If you are interested in our Sunday morning schedule, come. Please register by calling the church office or signing the sheet on the sign-up table. Fun (really fun) activities and supervision for children are provided.

Stacy Johnson Myers
Christian Education Coordinator

Adult Forum

April 11: *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, Stacy Johnson Myers

Prior to the congregation's trip to view the Dead Sea Scroll exhibit, the Adult Forum will consider the history, content, and significance of the ancient treasure.

April 18: *Taxes to Caesar*, Alan Tuchtenhagen

For centuries Christians have wondered how to reconcile life in an imperfect world with a commitment to faithful discipleship. How do our theological ideas shape our understanding of political and economic issues?

April 25, *Seeking Balance*, Dan Randall

Many people today lead hectic lives filled with commitments. Dan Randall will discuss ways of seeking balance and responding to stress in daily life.

May 2, 9: *A Study of Mark's Gospel*, Barbara Peterson

Just as Jesus' ministry was grounded in peace and justice, so too is the ministry of the UCC. The forum will explore the implications of ministry focused on a sense of justice and a commitment to peace. Mark's Gospel will provide the foundation for the study.



Puppet Ministry

The 'Puppet Force' Ministry Group needs some strong "arms" [youth: 2nd grade and up, middle/high school, and adults] for their upcoming performance on Sunday, April 25th. Rehearsals for this short-term commitment will be held each Wednesday (beginning April 7th @ 6:30-7:30 pm) and on Sundays (beginning April 11th @ 9:00-10:00 am) – that's only 6 rehearsals!! Not sure what your "arms" will fit into – how about puppets, prop/scenery making, or helping behind the scenes? The possibilities are endless! So, come join the fun and see for yourself what "Puppet Fever" is all about.

Questions? Call Cheryl Solberg @ 715.377.1028 or 715.220.9844. Hope to see you in the 5th grade classroom on Wednesday, April 7TH!

Summer Dates

Summer is just around the corner. Registration sheets are on the sign-up table.

Children's Musical: June 21-24, 2010 (morning rehearsals)

Youth Musical: June 21-24, 2010 (afternoon rehearsals)

Vacation Bible School: August 2-5, 2010

Summer Musical

Did you enjoy Godspell last summer? Once again our church is planning on performing a musical this summer. We will need many members in order to make this a success. Whether you want to be on center stage singing a solo or a part of the chorus, we will find a place for anybody that wants to be a part of this production.

If interested, please sign up on Scott's door. Contact Scott Perau (sperau@gmail.com) with any questions or concerns.

Got Choir?

Chancel Choir is the place for you! Our Chancel Choir at First Congregational is open to anyone post-confirmation age and up. The choir rehearses every Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 pm and performs two times per month. No previous experience is necessary, and the choir is always looking for more members of any voice part. Contact Scott Perau for more details.



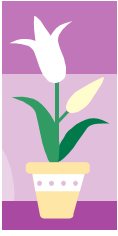
Wanted: Empty ice cream buckets and plastic containers for leftovers in the church kitchen. Please drop off clean containers in the kitchen. Thank you!

Wanted: If you have any 100% wool sweaters that you are looking to get rid of, please contact Eunice Filkins at 425-5437.

Please note:

The church office will be closed Easter Monday, April 5, 2010.

YoUthCC Corner



Easter Lilies—Thank you very much to those that purchased lilies "in Memory of" or "in Honor of" someone special through the youth annual Easter fundraiser. With your generous gifts we will be able to form the traditional cross in front of the church for display on Easter Sunday. All lily sale proceeds will be used for the upcoming mission trips and service projects. Please pick up your lily (s) after the 10:30 am worship service on Easter Sunday, April 4th. Thank you again for your generous support of our youth.

Youth Service Board—What is the youth service board? It's the right half of the bulletin board located in the Fellowship Hall. This Youth Board will be dedicated to displaying photos or interesting facts about our church youth. Presently, there are photos of some of our youth at FMSC and Urban Immersion. There are also a couple of pictures showing our youth relaxing and playing bells. The photos or articles will change periodically, so keep an eye on the board and you may be the next person caught on candid camera. Also, if you have a photo you would like to display, contact Deb Hoffman.

With the signs of spring upon us and the renewal of the Easter Season strengthening our faith, look into your heart to share some form of friendship with a friend or loved one. It may be as simple as a smile or more dedicated as cleaning someone's yard who is no longer able to complete the task.

May God bless you and keep you safe,
Deb Hoffman



Church Camp

We are really on a roll now.....we have **one** signed up for summer camp! We want many more. We especially want to remind you that there is a \$75 scholarship available from our association and also a \$100 scholarship from Women's Fellowship; now that makes it pretty reasonable for a whole week at church camp. Campers love the food; there are selections that will satisfy everyone, and we don't have to remind you how much fun they'll have and friendships they will make.

Habitat ReStore

Area residents can help the St. Croix Valley Area Habitat for Humanity build homes for families without picking up a hammer! The Habitat ReStore, located at 928 N. Knowles Avenue, New Richmond, is a new discount home improvement store that will sell new, gently used and salvaged merchandise. All items are attractively priced at generous discounts for sale to the general public. Monies raised by the store will help build decent, affordable homes for St. Croix Valley neighbors.

The Habitat ReStore accepts all types of household items: building materials, furniture, electronics, carpeting, built-in and large appliances, lawn equipment and more. The only exception is hazardous material. Vehicles, boats and campers are also welcome! How to donate? Call the Hotline (715) 246-4441. Then you can drop your donation off at the ReStore or they can come and pick it up.

We had minimal but mighty volunteers on Saturday, March 13 to wash piles of windows, doors, etc. to prepare them for sale. The store will open to the public on April 10th from 9am-2pm and will continue to be open every Friday and Saturday.

We will be looking for volunteers in the near future so keep an eye out for details in upcoming newsletters and bulletins



COUNTRY FAIR

Saturday, May 8, 2010 from 9:00 am—1:00 pm

First Congregational will be holding the annual Country Fair on Saturday, May 8th. Please consider donating your time and/or talents as the committee chairs commence calling for volunteers.

CRAFTS—In past years our craft tables have overflowed with lovely handmade items donated by members of our church. If you have a dish towel to embroider, remember to return them to Virginia Hilden. Virginia has more for those who would still like to help.

ATTIC TREASURES & TOOLS & STUFF—As you do your spring cleaning, please consider those things that might be used for Country Fair! Jewelry, books, household items, linens, garden and lawn tools, even sporting equipment!

PLANTS—We will have a variety of plants, herbs and blooming hanging baskets.

BAKED GOODS, PIES, CANDY BOOTH—Do you have a favorite goodie to donate to our sale? The Chairs of these committees will be setting up sign-up sheets soon!

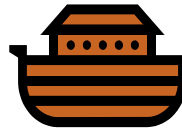
RUGS—Stella Ray and Polly Wymer will have their handmade rag rugs for sale! A must in every household.

LUNCH SERVED—Come hungry, Marge Mittelstadt and Kris Ainsworth are again in charge of the kitchen. Food will be delicious and this year's new addition is "The Walking Taco". Bring a friend.

SHOES - The Travelin' Shoes Gospel Choir

"Making a difference, one step at a time" Performing on **Sunday, April 11, 7:00 pm at St. Bridget's Catholic Church**, 211 East Division Street, River Falls. Come experience the unique, exciting music and stories! A free will offering will be taken. Funds raised will go towards the purchase of the Homeless Shelter Building.

Please see the flyer on the bulletin board for more information or contact Our Neighbors' Place Day Center, 136 North River Walk, River Falls, 715-426-9000, ourneighborsplace.org



Service Opportunity—Volunteers Needed

The Assistance and Resource Center of River Falls (ARC) is seeking additional phone volunteers. If you are willing to work a 2-hour shift, 10:00 am to Noon or 7:00 to 9:00 pm, one to two days a month, Monday through Friday, this is a great opportunity to help the River Falls community. Training will be provided on basic call intake procedures.

The Mission of ARC is to provide short-term financial assistance to members of the community to meet their basic needs and to provide access to additional resources.

Please contact Joan Mayen at 715-760-1755 or joan.mayen@uwrf.edu

Tille Quints

Please look into your hearts & calendars & find a spot to help out this very deserving and TIRED local family! The babies at 7 months are incredibly cute and alert and so extra hands to feed, hold & play are ALWAYS needed. Angela & Heath graciously rely on volunteers around the clock... with 2-3 volunteers per 3 hour shift, 24 hours a day... that is 150 opportunities for you to help out!!! Many volunteers take one or more regular shifts a week, but many more are needed to fill in the blanks, especially due to absences during this cold season.

Several members of our church have given our hearts over to this wonderful "little" family... ask us how you can help, go to their website www.tillefamily.com or call volunteer coordinator Brenda @ 426-3604. Thanks so much! Wendy Hill, Mary Church, Maxine Sitz

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

STAFF



Chris Myers - Pastor
 Lu Lueck - Parish Coordinator
 Missy Luedtke - Office Assistant
 Stacy Johnson - CE Coordinator
 Scott Perau - Music Coordinator
 Organists - Marsha Pearson,
 Barb Wall
 Tim Bylander - Building Supervisor
 Dave Mountain - Custodian
 Jean Smith - Moderator

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

PASTOR'S HOME PHONE NUMBER

Chris Myers 715-426-2075
 chris@firstchurchrf.org

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

110 N. Third Street
 River Falls, Wisconsin 54022

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 RIVER FALLS, WI 54022

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

April 1, 2010

2010 APRIL 2010						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Women's Fellowship Meeting 9:30 am Kettle Bells 4:30 pm Maundy Thursday Worship at 6:30 pm	2 Good Friday Worship at 12:10-12:50 pm	3 Easter Breakfast Set-Up 10:00 am
4 Easter—All Worship Sunday 7:00 am Sunrise Service 8-10:15 am Easter Breakfast 8:00 am Jubilee Ringers 8:00 am Chancel Choir 9:00 am Worship Service 10:00 am K-5 Music Practice 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	5 Church Office Closed Endowment Grant Committee Mtg 6:30 pm	6	7 3:30 pm Wednesday School 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Pre-Confirmation (6th & 7th Grades) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	8 Kettle Bells 4:30 pm	9 3rd Year Confirmands Leave for Trip to Boston	10 Habitat ReStore Grand Opening 9 am-2 pm NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
11 8:00 am Chancel Choir 9:00 am Worship Service 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	12 Mission Education Committee Mtg 6:30 pm Confirmands Return from Boston	13 Dead Sea Scrolls Trip 10:00 am-3:00 pm 2nd Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's	14 3:30 pm Wednesday School 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Confirmation Year 2 (8th Grade) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 7:30 pm Confirmation Year 3 (9th Grade)	15 Kettle Bells 4:30 pm	16	17
18 8:00 am Jubilee Ringers 9:00 am Worship Service 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	19	20 3rd Tuesday Soup 'n Sandwich 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's Boards and Committees Meetings 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting 7:30 pm	21 3:30 pm Wednesday School 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Pre-Confirmation (6th & 7th Grades) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	22 Kettle Bells 4:30 pm	23	24 Northwest Association Meeting in Eau Claire 9 am-3 pm
25 8:00 am Chancel Choir 9:00 am Worship Service 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast 11:30 am Christian Education Discussion NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26 Journey House Meeting 7:00 pm	27 4th Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's	28 3:30 pm LAST Wed School 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:00 pm Confirmation Banquet 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	29 Spring Clean Up 4:00 pm Kettle Bells 4:30 pm	30 Johnson Wedding Rehearsal 6:00 pm	