



FIRST

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

God is still speaking,

110 N. Third Street, River Falls, WI 54022
715-425-2052 — www.firstchurchrf.org
Rev. Chris Myers: chris@firstchurchrf.org
Office email: office@firstchurchrf.org

APRIL 1, 2011

Pastor's Corner

This past month 20 people from our church community traveled to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi to repair houses damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Highlights of the week long mission trip included:

- a beach party and lunch hosted by Jan and Glenn Hansen at their 'snow bird' hide away on the beautiful shores of Gulf Shores, Alabama!
- worship at the contemporary worship service of Gulf Shore United Methodist Church and a Wednesday night praise service at First Missionary Baptist Church of Biloxi (such singing!)
- scraping and painting two houses from top to bottom including all trim and two coats of paint (one was mint green and the other peach colored).
- sheet rocking and painting at another house until a swarm of termites emerged from the wall!
- learning about the incredible work of Back Bay Mission, a UCC presence in Biloxi for nearly 90 years
- working at the Micah center, a day center for the homeless at the mission
- helping to stock shelves and give out food at the food pantry at the mission
- our night out for a fancy dinner at Waffle House –thank you Uncle Glenn!
- meeting homeowners and hearing their stories of faith and survival during the hurricane and afterward
- freetime at night spent playing Apples to Apples and cribbage
- shrimp eating contest between Nick, Spencer and Ben who all ate over 50 giant shrimp each (Pastor Chris bowed out at 45)
- sweet tea, grits, Sonic drive ins, Berry Sweet yogurt shop and lots of 'y'all come backs!'
- gratitude at having been given this opportunity—THANK YOU CHURCH!

Pastor Chris

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, April 17

9:00 and 10:30 am—Bells, Choir,
and Procession of Palms

Maundy Thursday, April 21

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

Good Friday, April 22

Worship at 12:10-12:50 pm and 6:30 pm

Easter Sunday, April 24

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!

Lenten Meals

Wednesday evenings in Lent, we serve
a family-style meal from 5:00-6:30 pm
with a brief Evening Prayer Service
from 6:30-7:00 pm. Please sign-up
and join us!

April 6—Taco Bar

April 13—Baked Potato Bar

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.

Thank You From the Relay for Life Team

We appreciate all who supported us with donations of money, food and prayers for the 2011 Relay for Life. As of the Closing Ceremony Saturday, March 26th our team raised \$2,817.25 and the Relay had a total of \$161,000. We can continue to raise funds through August, 2011.

TREASURER'S NOTES

Missy Luedtke

Financial Information for February and YTD:

	<u>February</u>	<u>2011 YTD</u>
Income	\$ 23,689.95	\$ 75,078.90
Expenses	\$ 24,458.04	\$ 57,020.40
Net	\$ -768.09	\$ 18,058.50

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

Thursday Morning Bible Study

The Thursday Morning Bible Study group will meet **April 7, at 10:00 am**. The study is led by Stacy Myers. All are welcome!

☺ SMILING FACES WANTED ☺

WHO? You & possibly a friend

WHAT? SUNDAY WELCOMERS

WHERE? Church entrances (Elm & Third Street Doors)

WHEN? Any Sunday @ 9:00 am AND 10:30 am

WHY? It is an easy way to share the warmth of our church!

HOW? Sign up... put on your best smile... be there!



Picture This!

We now have a committee of four generous people that have volunteered to work on our next pictorial directory. The committee will consist of Jane Wakefield, Alex Solberg, Joanie Smith and Sheila Peterson. Their initial meeting with the photographer will be August 18th and the dates for picture taking will be October 3 - 11. There will be more details in future newsletters.

King Tut Trip

The date is **April 5th** instead of April 11th

- Leave church at 8:45am
- Arrive there about 9:45am
- Coffee & rolls from 10:00-10:45am
- Omnitheater from 11:00-11:45am
- Lunch on our own from 12:00-12:30pm
- Tour of King Tut exhibit from 12:30-2:00pm
- Back in RF by approx. 3:00-3:15pm
- Cost is \$25—please pay Lu on the 5th
- Please sign up on the back table



Spring Fling News

It is time to start thinking CRAFT ITEMS. We are hoping to have some nice things to sell at this booth, so if you have something you are working on, please finish it in time for Spring Fling. Some suggested items could include colorful tote bags, embroidery items, silk flower arrangements, jewelry, etc. Thank you!

It is also PLANT time! Set some “spiders,” slip some “violets,” and sign up to help and enjoy the Spring Fling, May 8th through the 14th!

First Thursday Fellowship

The First Thursday Fellowship will meet on **April 7 at 9:15 am**. Hostesses are Terri Hegna and Marguerite Barker. Following the meeting will be the Thursday Morning Bible Study at **10:00 am**. The study is led by Stacy Myers. Please join us!

Children's Questions about God

From time to time parents tell me they have difficulty answering their children's questions about God. I've had that experience, too. It is important to recognize that not all questions have answers but that does not mean the question is not important. Even if you cannot "answer" the question because you do not know or there is no completely satisfying answer, be sure to offer a response. Children's questions need to be taken seriously. It can be helpful for children to hear: "I don't know the answer to your question, but let's think about it." Then offer thoughts you have or consider ways of finding out more information—books, asking someone else (I'm always available as is Pastor Chris), or reading the Bible.

While I certainly don't have all the answers, I offer the comments below to help parents think through their responses to challenging questions.

Why can't I see God? We can't see God because God does not have a body like we have bodies. We are people so we have bodies, but God is not a person. God is God. Jesus had a body, because he was a person. Jesus had to learn to walk, talk, share, and pray. We can't see Jesus like we see each other because after Jesus died God gave him new life.

What happens when we die? When people die, God gives them new life. We don't know what that new life is like, but we know it is good because it is with God. When people die they don't need their old bodies anymore. We know that God loves and protect us when we live and when we die.

Where is heaven? Sometimes people get the idea that heaven is in the clouds, far away from us. But when Jesus talks about the "kingdom of heaven" he is talking about our lives right here—not someplace far away. "The kingdom of heaven" is what things are like when they are as God wants them to be.

Does God hear me when I pray? Yes, the Bible tells us God hears our prayers. But that is not the same as saying that God will answer our prayers in the way we want God to answer. God answers our prayers according to what God thinks is important.

It is important to help children recognize the mystery that surrounds God. God is mysterious not because God is magic but because there is so much about God that is different from who we are and how we live.

Stacy Johnson Myers, Minister of Christian Education

Adult Forum

March 27: *The Historical Jesus, Video and Discussion*, Jean Smith

The adult forum will focus on viewing and discussing a video about how Jesus is presented in the New Testament gospels as well as in sources outside the New Testament.

April 3: *Mission Trip to Chiapas Mexico*, Carol Merriman

Carol Merriman traveled to Chiapas, Mexico in January for a mission trip. She will discuss her experiences, including work with indigenous tribes and trips to archeological sites.

April 10: *Oral and Written Traditions about Jesus*, Barry Butenhoff

The forum will consider the origins the Gospels, the earliest accounts of the words, deeds, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The forum will view and discuss a lecture about the process of collecting, recording, and circulating traditions about Jesus.

April 17: *Theology of the Cross*, Stacy Johnson Myers

The forum will consider the work of theologian Douglas John Hall who contrasts a "theological triumphalism" with a "theology of the cross." The forum will set the stage for Holy Week.



Summer Church Camp

Check out the card table in the history room for

the new Summer Camp Brochures that are also available online at www.ucci.org. If you are planning on attending any of the camps, please indicate the name of the camp and the date on the sign-up sheet.

Scholarships are available from "First Thursday Fellowship" (formerly Women's Fellowship) and also from our Wisconsin Conference. You may just want to try one of their popular family camps for your summer vacation; think about it!

Spring Fling

SILENT AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED

Please return your donation sheets by May 1.

Donated items can include crafts, food (think about donating a gift certificate for later delivery), lawn and garden care services, meals, a visit to your cabin or boat, tickets to events, and/or teaching a skill. Use your imagination to give an item or service that would be useful/appreciated by someone else!!!

Summer Programming for Kids

Registration forms for the 2011 Summer Program are available on-line. Sessions:

Elementary Musical, completed grades 1 – 5	June 20 – 23, 2011, 9:00 – 11:30 AM
Middle School Musical, completed grades 6 – 8	June 20 – 23, 2011, 1:00 – 3:30 PM
Day in the City, completed grades 6 - 12	July 6, 2011, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Vacation Bible School, age 3 – completed grade 5	August 1 – 4, 2011, 9:00 – 11:30 AM

Yoga Classes—Yoga classes will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 to 10:00 am in the Sunday School area. Yoga DVDs will be used for those interested in participating. Please bring a yoga mat and a large bath towel. There is no charge for being a yoga participant. Jan Hansen will return in April.



Plastic Easter Eggs Needed

The Lions Club Community Easter Egg Hunt is on **Saturday, April 16 @ 11:30 - 1:00 pm at Glen Park**. Last year about 400 kids participated and we are anticipating even more this year. We are seeking donations of new or gently used plastic Easter eggs for it. There will be a box in the entrance way.

Thanks in advance. If you have any questions or would be interested in volunteering for this event, please contact Rose Rude, Chair, at 715-426-0585 or RoseRude@uwrf.edu

Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 16, 2011

11:30 am-1:00 pm

Glen Park in River Falls

Free carnival games and raffles

Concession stand available

Bring a Food Shelf donation

Donate your used eye glasses and cell phones

Sponsored by: River Falls Lions Club & UWRF

Americorps volunteers

Church Softball

Despite the snow outside, it's that time of year again when our minds begin to think of being outside and church softball. Our team is co-ed and is open to anyone 14 years and older. The division rules require 3 ladies to be on the field at all times. Games are played on Monday nights @ Hoffman Park. Exact times and days of games are still being determined, but you can plan on the first game to be the first or second Monday of May. We have a change of managers this year; Mike Schorn and Josh Kruegar have agreed to be our coaches. They plan to have a few practices prior to the first game and will get that info to you as soon as they know this season's schedule. There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the sanctuary or you may call Mike @ (612)481-0519. It's great to be on a team with your siblings, friends, spouse, and even parents. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Schorn @ (612)481-0519 or Deb Hoffman @ (612)308-4945. We appreciate our faithful fans too. We look forward to seeing you again or for the first time to cheer us on at the ball park.





The group of 20 in front of Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS.

Back Bay Mission Trip March 12-19, 2011



We love ladders, paint and safety (does everyone have 3 points of contact at all times?)



Glenn & Jan Hansen hosted the group for a beach party and lunch at their condo in Gulf Shores, AL.



Painting and then installing a fence was one of many small jobs.



The shrimp boil on Friday night.



One of 4 houses we worked on. We call this the "mint chocolate chip" home.



A ride on a shrimp schooner was a welcome break from painting.



A gaggle of painters at the last of 4 houses we worked on.



Do you think all 12 of our kids eat free at the Waffle House? (No)



The final house before we finished.

**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
 Suzanne Hagen - 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

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

110 N. Third Street
 River Falls, Wisconsin 54022

STANDARD PRESORT
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 PERMIT #53
 RIVER FALLS, WI 54022

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

April 1, 2011



2011 APRIL 2011						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 Communion Sunday One Great Hour of Sharing Offering Received 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 8:30 pm Confirmands return from New York Trip	4 Building Committee Meeting 6:30 pm	5 Yoga 9-10:00 am Prayer Group 10:00 am King Tut Trip Leave Church at 8:45 am	6 3:30 pm Wednesday School 5:00-6:30 pm Lenten Meal 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30-7:00 pm Lenten Worship 7:00 pm Pre-Confirmation (6th Grade) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 7:30 pm Church Interns	7 Yoga 9-10:00 am First Thursday Fellowship 9:15 am Bible Study 10-10:30 am Mean Dads 7:00 pm	8	9
10 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 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	11 Mission Education Meeting 6:30 pm	12 Yoga 9-10:00 am Prayer Group 10:00 am 2nd Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's	13 3:30 pm Wednesday School 5:00-6:30 pm Lenten Meal 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30-7:00 pm Lenten Worship 7:00-7:30 pm Confirmation Year 1 (7th & 8th Grades) & Confirmation Year 3 (9th Grade) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	14 Yoga 9-10:00 am	15	16
17 Palm Sunday 8:00 am Choir/Bells 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	18	19 Yoga 9-10:00 am Prayer Group 10:00 am 3rd Tuesday Soup 'n Sandwich 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's Boards & Committees Meetings 6:30 pm Church Council Mtg 7:30 pm	20 3:30 pm Wednesday School 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Pre-Confirmation (6th Grade) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	21 Yoga 9-10:00 am Maundy Thursday Worship Service 6:30 pm	22 Good Friday Worship 12:10-12:50 pm and 6:30 pm	23 Easter Breakfast Set-Up 10:00 am
24 Easter Sunday All Worship Sunday 7:00 am Sunrise Service 8:00 am Chancel Choir 8-10:30 am Easter Breakfast 9:00 am Worship Service 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	25 Easter Monday Church Office Closed NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26 Yoga 9-10:00 am Prayer Group 10:00 am 4th Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's	27 3:30 pm LAST Wed School 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:00 pm Confirmation Banquet 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	28 Yoga 9-10:00 am	29	30