

“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

MAY 1, 2009



Congratulations Confirmands!

Confirmation Sunday was April 19. Five of our young people were confirmed into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.

Matthew Bylander, Spencer Wakefield,
Brooke Chaves, Hannah Ohlsen,
Britt Swanson



Taizé Service

The final Taizé service of the season will take place on **May 10 at 7:00 pm** in the church sanctuary. Using resources from the Taizé and Iona traditions, we will focus on peace, reconciliation and justice.

The service is meditative in nature alternating readings, scripture, simple songs and periods of silence in a candlelight setting. It is open to all.

Please contact the church office at 425-2052 for further information.

Sabbatical Contact Information

While Pastor Chris is on sabbatical, please use these numbers in case of emergency. The church office (425-2052) should always be your first call as they will have a full list of who is doing what. Outside of office hours, please use the following contacts:

Pastoral emergencies: Lu Lueck
home 425-9413 - cell 715-781-0138

Building emergencies: Tim Bylander
home 425-7437 - cell 715-497-9188

Church office or program questions:
Missy Luedtke - cell 715-222-5427

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

At the last Church Council meeting discussion took place on developing one of our goals for 2009. Listed below are some thoughts so far. Input from you, the congregation would be appreciated. Let me know what you think. Contact me at jsmithler@yahoo.com or leave a message in the moderator box in the church office.

¹fel·low·ship

1: [COMPANIONSHIP](#), [COMPANY](#) 2 a: community of interest, activity, feeling, or experience

One of the church council goals for 2009 is to develop a Fellowship Committee to help provide more opportunities for outreach and create new fellowship opportunities. Do we call it the Fellowship Committee? How about the Party People? There is also the name of Family Life. Any way you name it, the result would encompass the above definition of companionship with fellow members, new members or potential members. How do we define this group? This committee will attempt to bring a variety of new and not so new activities of interest to create a feeling of companionship with our neighbors. Those neighbors would include other church members, community neighbors, university students or should we just state "All are welcome here". This committee would coordinate with the church calendar and with the other church committees to include already existing fellowship opportunities and come up with some new ones.

Thought: *We show our love for God when we share His love with others.*

TREASURER'S NOTES

Missy Luedtke

Financial Information for March and YTD:

	<u>March</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$ 24,697.25	\$ 111,753.74
Expenses	\$ 32,044.70	\$ 89,604.50
Net	\$ -7,347.45	\$ 22,149.24

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

Unwrapping Brainstorming II—May 5 at 7:00 pm

We had a brainstorming session a couple weeks ago but want to give it another shot and hope for better attendance. We have put together a whole sheet of some pretty exciting possibilities that our congregation could be involved with. Please join us by daring yourself to get out of your comfort zone...you may surprise yourself.
~Carol, Barry & Lu

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Please plan to attend our next meeting on **Thursday, May 7 at 9:00 am in the lounge**. We will study "*Jesus and the Wisdom of God*" prepared by Stacy Myers followed by a short business meeting -- including coffee/snacks! All women, member or non-member are welcome!

2008 Deficit Update

So far \$1,190.00 has been paid toward the \$2,324.79 deficit from 2008. If you would like to help pay off this debt, please be sure to write "2008 Deficit" on your check and/or envelope. Thank you!



Summer Schedule

The summer schedule will begin on Sunday, May 24. There will be one worship service at 9:30 am.

The church office will be closed on Memorial Day—Monday, May 25.

Also, the church office will be closed on Fridays at noon beginning May 29.

Recital

Junghoon Lee, a visiting artist from Seoul, Korea, will present a voice recital at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls on **Saturday, May 2 at 3:00 pm** in the William Abbott Concert Hall of the Kleinpell Fine Arts Center.

Ms. Lee is an active performer in the area of church music as a soloist, a chorister and a conductor. She is a principal soloist with the Seoul Grand Chorus and the Lampas Choir in Korea. She currently participates in the International Musical Arts Program at UWRF. The public is invited to attend this free recital.

Feed My Starving Children

Our next outing for Feed My Starving Children is **Tuesday, June 16**. We are to be at the Eagan facility by 9:30 am so we will leave the church promptly at 8:30 am. There are 40 slots available to us and we would like to fill all of them. Children must be in at least third grade and workers are advised that they must wear closed-toe shoes.

The Missionary Education Committee is planning a picnic lunch in Eagan after the work shift. Committee will provide dessert and beverages. This is an optional ending activity for participants.

Please sign up as soon as possible so that plans can be finalized for the day.

Also, consider helping to raise money for our group by purchasing an "M & M" container for \$1. We'd appreciate it if you would fill the containers with quarters or other monetary donations so that we may take them with us on the 16th. A filled container of quarters (\$14) provides the food products for one volunteer's packaging shift. And one person's two-hour shift basically provides food for one starving child for a year.

-Missionary Education Committee



Softball Season 2009

SOFTBALL has begun. We will have our second practice **May 3 @ 6:00 pm at Glen Park**. Please try to be there to practice and discuss the year's rule changes and position desired.

Our first game is Monday, **May 4th @ 8:15 pm @ PR's Place!** Games are played on Monday evenings either at 6:30 or 8:15 pm. Locations are PR's Place and Hoffman Park. The church league rules require that players must be 14 years old.

The schedule for May is:

May 4	8:15 pm @ PR's
May 11	6:30 pm @ Hoffman Park #2
May 18	Bye
May 25	No game

Schedules will be placed in the back of the church for fans and players.

If you are interested in playing or have questions, please call Jeff and Deb Hoffman @ 425-5633. We look forward to a fun season and having our wonderful fans cheer us on.

VBS Workers Needed

Please volunteer to help during the week of Vacation Bible School, August 3-6, 9:00-11:30 am. We need teachers, helpers, painters, kitchen folks, and cookie bakers. To volunteer, please sign the list or call the church office. For more information contact Stacy Myers.

This year we have a particular need for woodworkers. The theme is *"God's Amazing World."* As part of the week the children will make birdhouses. We need people willing to pre-cut the wooden birdhouse pieces. We will also need adults willing to be "carpenters in residence" who will help small groups of children make a birdhouse. To volunteer, please sign the list.

VBS is always a lot of work, but it is also always a lot of fun. Please join us!

Please Help Us Keep the Church Secure

All doors will be locked at 4:30 pm except the Elm Street door (west) that automatically locks at 7:15 pm, Monday through Friday and 1:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday.

If you are the last person to leave the building, please make sure all doors are locked and all lights are off. Thank you for your help!

Vacation Bible School & The Summer Musical

All church families will receive registration materials for VBS and the musical. Please take time to register your children. You may also call the church office to register.

Why Do We Worship?

Last Sunday the Gospel text was “The Road to Emmaus.” The story takes place on Easter evening. Two travelers walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus. While they were walking they were joined by a stranger, Jesus, whom they did not recognize. The two travelers started to recount recent events, including Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection. The stranger helped the travelers interpret those events within the context of scripture and the faith tradition. In time the two travelers reached their destination and convinced the stranger to stay with them. That evening the stranger took bread, broke it and gave it to the two travelers. It was at that moment that the travelers recognized Jesus.

This story tells us that there are three important things that happened in order for the travelers to know and recognized Jesus in their midst: hearing the Gospel (the good news of Jesus); interpreting the Gospel in the context of scripture; and breaking bread. In its most fundamental form, this is precisely what worship is all about. In our worship today we:

- *Proclaim the Gospel.* The Gospel is read from the Bible. Worshipers are called to proclaim the Gospel through lives of service. Hymnody and liturgy convey the Gospel.
- *Interpret the Gospel in the context of Scripture.* The sermon is specifically dedicated to the proclamation and interpretation of scripture. Hymn texts, too, can offer wonderful commentaries on the context and implication of scripture.
- *Participate in the Sacraments.* We celebrate Christ’s meal and baptize in his name. In communion we take into ourselves the body of Christ and then bind ourselves to the continuing body of Christ.

We come to church for many reasons. We do not come just to hear the preacher, as important as preaching is. We come because this is where we belong and where we find meaning. Meaning will come in a variety of ways, sometimes through scriptures, through music, through interpretation, through sacraments. All of us can be blind to truth. Worship provides the opportunity to ponder truth and learn to see and recognize Jesus the Christ in our midst.

Stacy Johnson Myers
Christian Education Coordinator

Adult Forum

May 3: *From Jesus to Christ, The First Christians*, Barbara Peterson—The final segment of *From Jesus to Christ* chronicles the internal and external challenges the Christian church faced when it became separated from Judaism.

May 10: *Reflections on “Downtime: The Sacred Art of Stopping”* by Barbara Brown Taylor, Barry Butenhoff—Barbara Brown Taylor is widely recognized as one of America’s most eloquent preachers. The Adult Forum will listen to and reflect on the speech Taylor gave at the Westminster Town Hall Forum about the hectic economic times people are experiencing today.

May 17: *A Conversation with the Timeline Artist, Amy Sands*—The artist of First Congregational’s pictorial timeline, Amy Sands, will be in the forum to discuss the process of creating the images.



The Wednesday School kids had fun putting their handprints on our new sidewalk.

Thank you to Tim Bylander and Dan Meier for all their hard work on this project!

YoUthCC Corner

30 Hour Famine—Thank you to all who attended the 30 Hour Famine. We had 16 kids participate in the event. We want to extend A BIG THANK YOU to Father Jerry Harris and Barb Peterson for taking time out of their Friday evening to share information about the River Falls Homeless and River Falls Food Pantry. We truly appreciate their help in sharing information about our own city and allowing us to realize hunger is not just in third world countries and the big cities.

Thank you also to our youth and parents for bringing milk or eggs to donate to the RF Food Pantry. Since these items are perishable, they are rarely donated and will be a treat to those receiving food from the Food Pantry.

Valley Fair—A change of date has occurred for Valley Fair. If you have already marked your calendars, please change the date to **June 6th**. We plan to leave the church @ 9:00 am and return around 7:00 pm. More details will be sent out soon. Diana Villeneuve (763-443-7035) and Deb Hoffman (425-5633) will be coordinating this event so please contact them if you have any questions.



Thank you all for your generous support of our youth. We truly appreciate your support and interest in their efforts. God Bless you all, Deb Hoffman

Experience Yoga

Jan Hansen, a certified Hatha and Senior Yoga instructor, will offer yoga classes to those that express an interest—men, women, young, old and everyone in between. Experience the benefits of mind, body and spirit joining together to give you the ability to relax and become balanced, centered, achieve inner calm and peace of mind, improve your physical health, tone your muscles, strengthen your bones and gain flexibility in body and mind. What more could you want!!!

Please sign up on the sheet provided on the back table or call me at 425-5211. Those that express an interest will decide on how often they would like to meet and the days. I am available Tuesday, Thursday or Friday. Time will be 8:30 to 9:30 am or 9:00 to 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Cost – donation.

Interested in Hosting an International College Student?

International students will be arriving in River Falls in August 2009 for college at UWRF. We are looking for host families for 3 Kenyon students from the end of August 2009 through May 2010. Host families will be responsible for providing a student with a room, most meals, and laundry.

What you will gain – providing an opportunity for a student who would not have one without your assistance, make a difference for a person as well as a village, and learn about another culture. You are not obligated if you seek more information on hosting an international college student. **For more information contact: Jen Syverson at 715-821-6614.**

Summer Camp

Moon Beach and Pilgrim Center offer camps for all ages. Now is the time to start thinking about this wonderful opportunity. Their family camps are great, inexpensive opportunities for summer vacations.

Class of 2009 Scholarships and Graduation Worship

Scholarship forms have been sent to all graduating seniors. **Forms are due back at the church office by Monday, May 18.** Applicants must complete a brief essay and list activities after confirmation.

Awards will be presented in worship on **Graduation Sunday, June 7 at the 9:30 am service.** All graduating seniors should plan on being present and wear their gowns. Coffee Fellowship following the worship service will be in your honor.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

STAFF



Chris Myers - Pastor
 Lu Lueck - Parish Coordinator
 Missy Luedtke - Office Assistant
 Stacy Johnson - CE Coordinator
 Sarah Parks- 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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 U.S. POSTAGE PAID

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

May 1, 2009

2009 MAY 2009						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 Country Fair 8:00 am- 1:00 pm
3 Music Sunday Communion Sunday 8:00 am Jubilee Ringers 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	4 Softball at PR's Place 8:15 pm	5 Unwrapping Brainstorming 7:00 pm	6 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	7 Women's Fellowship 9:30 am	8	9
10 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 7:00 pm Taizé Service NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	11 Missionary Education Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Softball at Hoffman #2 6:30 pm Endowment Grant Requests Due	12 2nd Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's Journey House Meeting 7:00 pm	13 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	14	15	16
17 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 LAST DAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast 3:00 pm Louise Black Memorial	18 Endowment Grant Meeting 6:30 pm Softball - Bye	19 3rd Tuesday Soup 'n Sandwich 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's Boards and Committees Meetings 6:30 pm Church Council 7:30 pm	20 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Barb DeSouza Speaking Here 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	21	22	23
24 Summer Schedule Begins 9:30 am Worship Service 10:00 am WEVR Broadcast 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship	25 Memorial Day Church Office Closed NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26 4th Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's	27	28	29 Begin Office Closed at Noon on Fridays	30
31 9:30 am Worship Service 10:00 am WEVR Broadcast 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship						