

“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 15, 2009



Rev. Barb de Souza will be visiting!

Rev. Barb de Souza, medical missionary in Brazil, will be preaching at the United Methodist Church on Sunday, May 24 at both the 9:00 and 10:30 am services. She will be speaking at our church in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, May 20 from 6:30 to 8 pm.

In 1993 Barb and Gus moved to Rio de Janeiro to teach women about health education. Their community health education and prevention center started on a roof top with the women from this health course and some volunteer doctors and nurses from the area. Now it has grown to 3 small buildings that care for over 15,000 residents of the Canal do Anil neighborhood. Come and hear an inspirational update of the clinic, and how much Barb and Gus appreciate our church's support. They are "our hands in mission!"

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

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



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

Email Addresses Needed

By fall of 2009, we want to send out a weekly church email update. We need you to get your current email address to the church office as soon as possible. Thank you for your help!

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.



Building Committee Update

As a result of the input from many of the user groups within the congregation, the floor plans for the renovation and expansion of the facilities have been taken to a final draft. With this the Building Committee has determined that the space requirements requested can, for the most part, be met within the proposed footprint of the addition and renovations. Our next step is to finalize and submit the request for a variance from current set back requirements along the alleyway behind the church to the City of River Falls.

A variance is needed to proceed with the project as planned. Approval will allow us to bring the project to the congregation for final approval. The variance will ask the city to allow us to maintain the building boundary along the alley behind the church. This will provide for a uniform façade and maintain the existing look and feel of the current facility. Part of the process includes a public hearing. We have requested to be on the city calendar for Wednesday, June 3rd. You will see announcements in the River Falls Journal on the last two Thursday's of the month, the 21st and 28th.

In preparation for the hearing, we are inviting our neighbors who own property within 300 feet of the church to attend an informational discussion on the project. This will provide our neighbors an opportunity to ask questions and make comment prior to the formal hearing. They will also receive a notice from the City of River Falls informing them of our application for a variance. This discussion will take place at our church in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, May 21st at 7:00 PM. Please feel free to join us for this discussion.

If you have questions or would like to discuss this project further, please don't hesitate to contact Bill Herris, the committee chairperson, at 715-426-5047 or any of the other members of the Building Committee.

TREASURER'S NOTES

Missy Luedtke

Financial Information for April and YTD:

	<u>April</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$ 20,384.39	\$ 132,174.72
Expenses	\$ 24,417.93	\$ 114,096.43
Net	\$ -4,033.54	\$ 18,078.29

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

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—

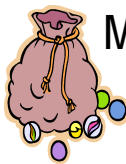
Monday, May 25. Also, the church office will be closed on Fridays at noon beginning May 29.



Women's Fellowship would like to express a huge "Thank You" to everyone who participated in any way in making our annual Country Fair a success. That would include all the

craft items donated, the soups made, the linens provided for the sale, those who spent time making pies or other goodies, the prepared meals, the food items prepared for the lunch, all booth and kitchen workers, etc – the list goes on and on. I think all that volunteered in any way experienced a lot of good fellowship and conversation – and that's what it's all about. Thanks so much.

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!



Marble Mania—Want to experience fun and excitement during River Falls Days? Engage yourself either as a volunteer or a participant in Marble Mania. The Comma Club is sponsoring this event in conjunction with RF Days.

Marble Mania starts at 11:00 am on Friday, July 10, with marble instruction. Tom Fletcher, owner of Essence of Nonsense in St. Paul, will serve as our guide. From noon until 1:00 pm entrants will have an hour of practice time.

Starting at 1:00 pm a single-elimination tournament with age categories follows. Awards will be given to top finishers. This event is open to people from 7 to 107. For a \$2 entry fee, each participant will receive a take-home marble package as well as supporting the purchase of marbles for children in Barb de Souza's Brazilian mission project. Application forms are available in the church office or at firstchurchrf.org. **Fee must accompany application form. Volunteers are needed for the event.** Contact Bob Gustafson at 425-2516. We want this to be an intergenerational event so hone your marble skills and join the fun.

Biblical Timeline Celebration

Our “year of the timeline” is coming to a close. Beginning on the first day of Sunday School in September, we have unveiled a new biblical image nearly every week. Each image represents a specific biblical story or event. Together the images create a biblical timeline that move us from the early days of creation through the beginning of the Christian church. While the images will no longer be new each week, they will continue to occupy an on-going place in the worship and educational life of the church.

Biblical literacy is critically important for Christian people. It is through the events and stories of the Bible that God and God’s are revealed to us. In order to be shaped by the vision of life represented within the Bible, people simply must know the stories.

“Knowing” Bible stories means that people are familiar with the details, images, and events proclaimed by biblical texts. It also means that people are able to interpret and critique the texts; notice parallel themes running across many texts; place the text within its proper historic, social, political, economic, cultural, and theological context; and possess the skill and the will to ask how the text speaks to us and our lives today.

In the sermon on Sunday, May 17, I will attempt to pull together some of the themes and ideas proclaimed in the timeline. If technology works the way it is supposed to, we will enjoy “visual aids” (projected images of the timeline) to complement the sermon. As important as each individual image and text is, their real significant comes in the way they relate together. On this day the timeline artist, Amy Sands, will also be with us. Please be present to celebrate the timeline.

Stacy Johnson Myers, Christian Education Coordinator



As my second year of seminary is coming to an end, I would like to say thank you for all of your continual support and encouragement of my journey. My exciting news from last week is that I passed my oral evaluation which means that I have learned what my professors think I should have learned by this point and that I am able to verbally articulate my faith to their expectations.

This summer I will be in CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) so I will be staying here in St. Louis. Thanks again for your support as I continue this journey. Hopefully I will see you all soon if I can get a weekend home before my summer program starts. Blessings, Katie Jo Fuller

Adult Forum—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.

Spread the Love – Strengthen the Church

Journey UCC, just four months old, in upstate New York holds worship services in the converted bar of a defunct restaurant. Studies showed that nearly half of all people living in the area were not affiliated with any faith. Journey, as their name implies, had a lot to offer: a spiritual home where the path is as important as the destination, questions are as important as answers and actions are as important as words. Using ads produced by the God is Still Speaking Ministry; Journey bought 36 ads on local radio and reached nearly 60,000 people. Not bad for a church not even old enough to blow out its first birthday candles!

How were they able to do this? By using grant money from the Strengthen the Church funds of the greater UCC church. Strengthen the Church funds also support new church starts, youth ministries, and nurtures lay leadership.

During the month of May, the UCC conducts the Strengthen the Church fund raising campaign. Offering envelopes are in our pews for your use and will be collected in May until May 31st. Thank you for considering this worthwhile effort.



Valley Fair—The date for this outing is **Saturday, 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.



Spring is a time of many new beginnings and growths, how are you going to begin something new in your spiritual mission? It’s easy to say you don’t have the time, but make time for God and his message, you’ll find yourself pleased with the satisfaction of doing something not just for yourself, but more importantly for others. God Bless you all, Deb Hoffman

**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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RIVER FALLS, WI 54022

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

May 15, 2009

2009 MAY 2009						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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 Neighborhood Discussion in the Fellowship Hall 7:00 pm	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						

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.

Softball Season 2009

The first game of the season went to our opponents, but our team showed spirit and lots of potential. We have many new players and it's fun getting to know their families.



Next Monday, May 18, we will have practice at 6:30 pm. Practice field is TBD. Our next official game will be Monday, June 1st @ PR's Place at 6:30 pm. Schedules will be placed in the back of the church. If you have questions, please call Jeff and Deb Hoffman @ 425-5633.

Vacation Bible School & The Summer Musical

All church families have received registration materials for VBS and the musical.

Please take time to register your children. You may also call the church office to register.