

“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, 2010

Pastor's Corner

Church Internships

How do you provide a small group, confirmation-like experience to Senior High School youth? Like many churches, our church has struggled to effectively minister to and with our Senior High School youth. With the new Pre-Confirmation program in 6th grade and the existing three year Confirmation program for grades 7 through 9, we now have small group experiences for many of our young people. This year alone we have 39 young people in these two programs. Unfortunately that leaves little regularly scheduled, small group youth ministry for our 20 senior high youth in grades 10 through 12. We hope to change that starting this September with the Church Internship Program.

Like the Confirmation programs, this will be a small group experience led by the pastor. Each intern will select one area in which to offer one year of service in any of three areas: worship, education or mission. Participants select an area of service and work with the pastor, other interns and a committee to create opportunities to grow in faith and life. At the completion of each year of service \$500 from the church scholarship fund will be credited to their account. This money may be used to further their education following high school.

Our goal is for our Senior High youth to create internships that meld their gifts with the mission of the church to love and serve in Jesus' name. The possibilities are endless. A full description of the program and an application form is on the church bulletin board and on the church webpage under the youth section (www.firstchurchr.org). Church intern proposals are due by September 1 in the church office. Please see Pastor Chris with questions.

Copies of the program and proposal will be sent to all 10th through 12th graders and their parents.

Pastor Chris

Barbara de Souza to visit RF

Our healthcare missionary who works in the slums of Rio de Janeiro, Barbara de Souza, will be with us in River Falls in mid May. Please make sure you take time to greet Barb and learn of the amazing work she does for all of us in the name of Jesus.

On Sunday, May 16 she will be preaching at both the 9 and 10:30 am worship services here at First Congregational Church. She will be the special guest at the 10 am coffee hour hosted by the Mission Committee.

On Monday, May 17 an open house in Barb's honor will be held at the United Methodist Church in their Fellowship Hall. Please stop by between 7 and 8 pm and hear an update of her ministry.

Installation and Meal

You are encouraged to join us for the installation of the Rev. Stacy Johnson Myers as our Minister of Christian Education on **Sunday, May 23** during the 10:30 am worship service. Our guest preacher that day will be our Wisconsin Conference Minister, the Rev. David Moyer. A congregational meal will be served following the worship service in the Fellowship Hall. Since all this is happening on the day of Pentecost, the day celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit, we hope you can join us for an exciting day.

Confirmands to Lead Adult Forum

This Sunday, May 16, the 3rd year Confirmands who went to Boston will be talking about their experiences. Please join them from 9 to 10 am in the Church Lounge.

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.



Country Fair

A HUGE thank you to ALL the volunteers that took part in Country Fair last Saturday.

It was once again a very successful and fun day.

TREASURER'S NOTES

Missy Luedtke

Financial Information for April and YTD:

	<u>April</u>	<u>2010 YTD</u>
Income	\$ 21,825.00	\$ 121,185.83
Expenses	\$ 29,667.29	\$ 115,114.17
Net	\$ -7,842.29	\$ 6,071.66

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

May Worship Events

- Sunday, May 16 Music Sunday and Barbara de Souza preaching
Worship at 9 and 10:30 am
- Sunday, May 23 Wisconsin Conference Minister Rev. Dave Moyer
Preaching — Worship at 9 and 10:30am
- Sunday, May 30 Memorial Day Weekend
Summer worship begins at 9:30am
Coffee hour at 10:30am

Installation and Pentecost Meal

On **Sunday, May 23**, we will officially install Stacy Johnson Myers as our Minister of Christian Education. The Rev. David Moyer, our Wisconsin Conference Minister will be here to preach. We will end the celebration with an all-church Pentecost meal. Menu includes brats, hot dogs, potato salad and lots of other picnic fare. Please sign up.

"Strengthen the Church" Offering

During the month of May, you will find envelopes in the pew pockets for our next denominational offering. Strengthen the Church is the UCC's annual offering to help build our denominational future. Directed to our church's conference, local church ministries and The Stillspeaking Ministry, these gifts help invigorate congregations, foster new leaders and grow the UCC's presence as a community of extravagant welcome.

Baccalaureate

All graduating High School Seniors are invited to join local area churches at the Baccalaureate Service on **Wednesday, May 26 from 7 to 7:45pm** in the River Falls High School Auditorium. Pastor Chris will be giving the opening prayer and Kevin Black will be the guest speaker.

Children and Worship

Once May has arrived, the congregation's programming begins to shift from the events of the academic year to summer events. When Sunday School is complete for the year, children have the opportunity to participate in the whole worship service. I encourage everyone to realize how important it is for children to worship.

First of all, if we want children to find meaning in the church, they need to learn to worship. Worship is the central, defining activity of the church. Most people become Christian through watching others and then growing into the faith that has been passed to them. Faith is not purely or primarily a cognitive matter. Faith involves symbol, story, mystery, and belonging—realities that are conveyed through the actions of the worshipping community.

Robbie Castleman who writes about guiding children in worship states: "Baseball and ballet are taught through participation, practice and patience. Children learn best by doing. Great baseball players are not made in the bleachers. Dancing is not learned by remote control. Children learn to worship by worshipping—through participation, practice and patience."

Guiding children as they learn to worship is difficult, and some Sundays will be easier than others. A few ideas:

1. Refrain from thinking that children need to be entertained or distracted from the events of worship. Help them engage as best as they are able in the actions of the church. Children can pray. Children can sing. Children can listen to scripture. The "Passing of the Peace" is an important time for children to greet others.
2. Use a Children's Bulletin, which is available in two different age ranges. Children's Bulletins are provided because sometimes children are able to listen more carefully when their hands are busy. This activity is particularly well-suited to the sermon.
3. Help children notice the patterns of worship. The assurance of pardon always follows the confession. The sermon and the gospel are held together. We receive bread and then the cup at communion. We sing the doxology when the offering is presented.
4. Recognize that children are energetic and wiggle. This is part of childhood. This does not mean that we don't try to shape worship participation, but it does mean that the worshipping community accepts children as they are—wiggles and all.

Recall the story of Jesus with the children. Despite the disciples' attempt to keep the children away from Jesus, Jesus called the children to him and blessed them. Jesus recognized how important children were to the future of God's kingdom.

Stacy Johnson Myers
Christian Education Coordinator

Adult Forum

May 16: Confirmation Report: Boston Adventure, Third Year Confirmands & Pastor Myers—The Third Year confirmation students traveled to Boston in April to study the roots of the congregational church, and the Underground Railroad. They will provide a report of their adventures.

May 23: The History and Mission of the Church, Stacy Johnson Myers—On the Day of Pentecost, the day we celebrate the beginning of the church, the Adult Forum will discuss the history and mission of the Christian Church.



Teachers and Volunteers

We will need a minimum of 30 adult volunteers to teach and help with the August VBS program. Please consider volunteering. VBS is held August 2-5, 9:00 to 11:30 am. To volunteer, please sign the list or call the church office. This is one of the congregation's most important programs.

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.



Summer Dates

Children's Musical: <i>Rescue in the Night</i>	June 21-24, 9:00—11:30 am
Youth Musical: <i>Malice in the Palace</i>	June 21-24, 1:00—3:00 pm
Youth Adventure: <i>A Day in the City</i>	July 14, 9:00 am—5:00 pm
Teens and Adults: <i>Boundary Waters Trip</i>	July 26-29
Vacation Bible School: <i>Through the Roof!</i>	August 2-5, 9:00—11:30 am



Church Softball

Way to go Team!!!! Our softball team has started the season off on the right foot with two wins and no losses. Despite the rain last week, we had a great turn out of players and three very dedicated fans!!!! If you are still planning on joining, but haven't let the manager know yet, please call Jeff Hoffman @425-5633. Also if you have questions regarding softball, please give Jeff a call.

Our schedule for the summer is:

May 17	UCC vs. Luther Memorial	6:00 PM Hoffman Park	Field #2
May 24	Faith Community	7:25 PM Hoffman Park	Field #1
May 31	No game on Memorial Day		
June 7	No game – bye week		
June 14	Hope Luther	7:25 PM Hoffman Park	Field #1
June 21	The River	7:25 PM "	Field #1
June 28	Servant of the Shepherd	6:00 PM "	Field #2
July 5	St. Bridget's	7:25 PM "	Field #1
July 12	Luther Memorial	6:00 PM "	Field #2
July 19	Faith Community	7:25 PM "	Field #1
July 26	No game – bye week		
August 2	Hope Luther	7:25 PM "	Field #1
August 9	The River	6:00 PM "	Field #2
August 16-23	TBD – playoff weeks		



Summer Worship Schedule

The summer schedule will begin on Sunday, May 30. There will be one worship service at 9:30 am. The church office will be closed on Memorial Day – Monday, May 31. Also, the church office will close Fridays at noon beginning June 4.



Confirmation Sunday

We received 10 young people into the church through confirmation on May 2, 2010.

Anna Brettingen
 Shelby Ducklow
 Danielle Filkins
 Lacey Killian
 Mackenzie Merriman
 Allie Miller
 Holden Ohlsen
 Joseph Querna
 Soleil Smith
 Adam Truesdill



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 4-day, 3-night trip is planned for **July 26-29** and will include multiple groups of people of varying skill levels. No experience is necessary! Use the sign-up sheet to register your interest.



Church Camp

The number of campers is slowly increasing but we still want more people to have a wonderful summer experience. We would like to take this opportunity to target students that have finished 3rd & 4th grades. The Intermediate Camp at Moon Beach is held on the same campus and at the same time as MADD Camp and there would be a good chance that transportation could be shared. This is when Mackenzie Merriman was introduced to camp and HOOKED; she has been at camp every summer since. This is a great age to introduce children to camp and with both scholarships available, this camp is quite affordable. Scholarships need to be applied for before the end of May. Your bonus is that Carol Merriman and I will be there to nurture them along. Please consider this great opportunity. Shalom, Lu

Country Fair - Plant Sale

Thank you to all who brought in plants for the Country Fair on May 8th. There were many varieties of plants to choose from. Thank you also to all the wonderful people who bought plants!



Congratulations!

Two couples celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary this month. Duane and Mary Church on May 9 and Don and Jan Charpentier on

May 21. Please be sure to wish them well when you see them.

Yoga Classes

Yoga is held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 am. They meet in the Sunday School area. Please bring a yoga mat and a large bath towel. Any questions, call Jan Hansen at 425-5211.

**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

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PASTOR'S HOME PHONE NUMBER

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

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**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

110 N. Third Street
 River Falls, Wisconsin 54022

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

May 15, 2010



2010		MAY		2010		
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
16 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 Inquirer's Class	17 Endowment Grant Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Barb deSouza Speaking at United Methodist Church 7:00 pm	18 Yoga 9:00-10:00 am 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	19 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	20 Yoga 9:00-10:00 am Kettle Bells 4:30 pm	21 Barb deSouza leaves	22
23 All Worship Sunday 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 Installation of Stacy Johnson Myers 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast 11:30 am Picnic NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	24 Journey House Meeting 7:00 pm	25 Yoga 9:00-10:00 am 4th Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26	27 Yoga 9:00-10:00 am Kettle Bells 4:30 pm	28	29
30 Summer Schedule Begins 9:30 am Worship Service 10:00 am WEVR Broadcast 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship	31 Memorial Day Church Office Closed					



First Congregational Church is now on Facebook—check us out!!

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.