



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
OCTOBER 15, 2011

Pastor's Corner

A letter Pastor Chris sent out to our college students:

By now the newness of the school year is well gone and you have entered into some sort of a routine. I hope it is going well for you. I hope your classes are interesting, roommates bearable, and you are not feeling too overwhelmed.

When I went to college my pastor totally dropped out of my life. Some of that (most!) was my fault, but not completely. College is that strange time when we push some people away, often at the very time we need them the most. So I hope this letter speaks to you. If not, let me know how I can be more helpful to you. So here is my 5 bits of pastoral advice to you our church college kids:

1. **Go to church.** You expected that didn't you? But how about this one—go to different churches! College is a time for learning. The same thing goes for your spiritual life. Go to different churches. Go to a friend's church. Go to a Roman Catholic mass and a Lutheran church. Go to a praise music church or the tiny church down the corner. What was the same or different? What did you like? What drove you crazy? What did you miss from your home church?
2. **Remember who you are.** When I left for school one bit of good advice I received from my father was this: "Remember you are a Myers." I took this as his attempt to remind me of who I am at my core. College is, by its very nature, a time of growing, learning and experimenting. Amidst all this change it is easy to forget who you really are at your core. So remember who you are—a child of God, loved and set free by Jesus to love and serve others.
3. **Live gratefully.** Have you ever thought of how many people have contributed to this very moment in your life? Your parents, obviously. But also siblings, teachers, neighbors, aunts and uncles, friends, pastors and people at church. All of them have contributed to who you are becoming now. The fact is you won the world genetic lottery to have been born at this time and this place. As hard as some days can be, still you have been blessed. Living gratefully means being thankful for all that has been given to you and expressing that feeling of thankfulness to others by sharing who you are with others.
4. **Keep in touch.** Drop me an email (chris@firstchurchrf.org) or text (715-441-2497). Let me know what you are up to. Even better when you are home stop into the church office to catch up. Come on Sunday (yes we are open then). I, as your pastor, and we as your church community, truly want to know how life is going for you.
5. **Have fun.** You will notice I put this last as most of you have no problem this little bit of advice. Have fun this year. Take time off from studying to take a walk, be with friends, work out. Find something that feeds your body like yoga, intramurals, or music. Having fun is different from partying. Do some things that nourish not just your mind and social life, but also your body and your soul.

Have a great year. I am proud of you. I pray God's strength, wisdom and peace to you all.

No matter who you are. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!

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.

All Saints Sunday—November 6

Once a year on All Saints Sunday, we take a trip down memory lane. It is a day filled both with sadness and hope. Sadness that those we have loved are no longer with us in our daily living. But also hope that death is not the end for them or us or any who follow in Christ's way. In addition to remembering those in our church family who have died this past year, please talk to Pastor Chris if you would like to remember those outside the church family. Please provide him with three things: their full name including middle name if possible, dates of their birth and death, and relationship to you. A rose in memory of all church members who have died will be on the altar table. Family members are encouraged to take these flowers home after the 10:30 worship service as our gift.

TREASURER'S NOTE\$

Missy Luedtke

	<u>Oct 9, 2011</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Budget Income	\$ 4,728.00	\$ 248,034.52
Budget Requirements	\$ 6,837.65	\$ 280,343.65

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

Sermon Series: Eight Things Christians Do Not Have to Believe and Still be Christian

Sept 11: God Causes Cancer, Car Wrecks and Catastrophes

Sept 18: Good Christians Don't Doubt

Sept 25: Everything in the Bible Should Be Taken Literally

Oct 2: Real Christians Can't Believe in Evolution

Oct 9: Women Can't Be Preachers and Must Submit to Men

Oct 16: God Cares about Saving Souls But Not about Saving Trees

Oct 23: God Loves Straight People But Not Gay People

Oct 30: Bad People Will Be Left Behind

Adult Trip to New York City

Ever wondered what Pastor Chris does with our confirmands when he takes them to New York City? Do you ever wonder what they learn and where they go? Then come this coming Spring (Mar/April of 2012) as he leads an adult only New York City study trip. The theme is immigration and we will visit Ellis Island, The Lower Eastside Tenement Museum (first stop for many after Ellis Island), The Museum of the Overseas Chinese and host of other sights. This will be an active trip that will involve a fair amount of walking and taking the subway. A date for the trip has not been set but we hope to offer this trip sometime this Spring (March/April 2012). If you are remotely interested please use the sign up sheet to register and come to a **planning meeting on Sunday, October 23 following the 10:30 am worship service.**

Each month we hope to highlight 2 of our amazing college students. Please keep them in your prayers and perhaps even send them a note.



Alison Conley is enrolled at UW-River Falls, 620 S. 3rd St., Room 339, River Falls. She is majoring in elementary education and anticipating to graduate in 2015. She is looking forward to meeting new people, experiencing dorm life and being more independent and responsible. She also may be spotted in church once in a while.



Sam Quist is attending American University, Letts Hall #517, 4400 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20016. He is majoring in political science and anticipating graduation in 2015. Sam is thoroughly enjoying his new location and environment and getting to know people from all over the country. He is also taking in all the museums and landmarks this historical location has to offer.

Knock Knock - God's At The Door

Date and Time: November 18-20, 2011, Pilgrim Center; Friday 7 pm - Sunday 11:30 am

Cost: \$135 — **Early-Bird Rate: \$125 if postmarked by October 17 - Registration Deadline October 31**

At Knock Knock, your group will:

- Discover love and acceptance as the true experience of the church
- Connect faith to THEIR most pressing concerns:
 - Dealing with peers ("Friends")
 - Family Relationships ("Family")
 - Violence/Bullying ("Hurt")
 - Media Temptation ("Influence")
- Do hands-on workshops and Bible study...not just sitting around and talking
- Be inspired by our High School Drama Team
- Learn how they can keep opening doors back at home
- Bryan Sirchio will provide Musical Leadership at Knock Knock 2011!

It's a Group Thing! Come to Knock Knock together. Start a new group or fire up the one you've got, like your youth group or confirmation group. Don't come alone! Bring a least half the interested Middle Schoolers in your church, plus one adult leader for every five kids. The leaders go through the workshops with the youth. Your group will feel the impact for a long time!

Transportation and scholarships are available. See Carol or Kenzie Merriman for more information.

New Building Project

We are almost there! At least with phase one (the new addition and remodel of the old CE wing). Right now we are looking at a completion date of Friday, October 28 for phase one. Then we will have one week to move everything downstairs into our new space. Work will begin on Phase 2 (underneath the sanctuary) through November and into early December. The Thanksgiving Meal on Sunday, November 13 is looking like our first big meal in the new space. We have much to be thankful for!



Adult Forum

October 23: *The Book of Ephesians*, Stacy Johnson Myers—On October 16 in the forum Barry Butenhoff offered a traveler's perspective on Ephesus. This week the forum will consider Paul's letter to the early Christians living in this region. What are the issues Paul address? What were the concerns facing the Ephesians?

October 30: *Worship, Liturgy, and the Reformation*, Stacy Johnson Myers—On Reformation Day, 2011, the forum will consider the important impact of the Reformation on Christian worship and liturgical practices. The forum will trace key Reformation themes in contemporary worship.

Upcoming Sunday Special Events

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| Sunday, Oct 16 | Bibles given to 6 th graders |
| Sunday, Nov 6 | All Saints Sunday |
| Sunday, Nov 13 | Thanksgiving Dinner |

Wednesday School Highlights

Wednesday School is back in full swing. The children have been wonderfully accommodating of our limited quarters during the construction period. A few Wednesday School highlights:

- After reviewing the timeline picture of the “Sermon on the Mount,” the children considered how Jesus helped people to think about their lives and how they lived in different ways. We read a story, *If Everybody Did*, that through silly words and pictures reminded us how something seemingly small becomes very large if many people do it.
- The children are adding another layer of paper mache to our camel who needed a face lift (and a body lift). Eventually the paper mache will be thick and sturdy and ready for a coat of paint.
- The group is working on table centerpieces for the congregation’s Thanksgiving dinner. They will be lovely—especially in the new Fellowship Hall.
- Started reading a church history book that alphabetically features one important historical church figure. Saint Augustine was the A name. Wonder who will be next?
- The children are learning or reviewing a song/rap that tells the order of the books in the New Testament.



“WHAT WAS HER NAME???”

Perhaps it is age, or absentmindedness, or being a newcomer, or simply distraction, but most of us have had times where we simply could not remember who that was we were just talking to. Darn that’s embarrassing! Then instead of listening intently to the sermon (sorry Chris) we mentally wander off in the recesses of our memory banks, trying to bring forth that elusive name.

Well, here is a unique solution to our problems! You may have heard of them... NAME TAGS! In case you had forgotten them, they live on the storage board near the main (but currently barricaded) sanctuary entrance. They wait anxiously all week for Sunday when they get their one chance to shine... and during the renovation, some of them have been sadly forgotten in the corner. PLEASE dust them off and give them their chance to get out of that corner for an hour. Not only will you make them shine, you will be enhancing the church experience for everyone else.

Newcomers feel a sense of comfort with a name attached to a new face, and a sustained sense of ease if they can find that face and name the next time they come. Established church goers share that same comfort. (Isn’t it embarrassing to forget the name of someone you actually see all the time?)!

Remember to wear it to Coffee Fellowship too. When you wear it with pride and a smile, you radiate the warmth and friendliness of our church. YOU may be surprised at just how good it feels to hear your name used.

PS Newcomers: there are blank stick-on tags available at the entrance as well. Be sure to identify yourself so that we can greet you by name and get to know you.

Peace. The Comma Club



Sunday School Teacher Needed

We already have 25 Sunday School teachers and we need one more. Please consider volunteering. Teachers work as a team so they do not have to teach every week. To volunteer, please call the church office or contact Stacy Myers.

Confirmation Events

- Wednesday, October 19 Pre-Confirmation (6th Grade) meet at the church at 6:30 pm
Confirmation Year 1 (7th Grade) meet at the church at 6:30 pm
- October 21-23 Confirmation Retreat to Minneapolis for Years 1 & 2 (\$50 is due now!)
- Wednesday, October 26 Confirmation Year 2 (8th & 9th Grades) meet at the church at 6:30 pm
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Youth Bells - The Youth Bell Choir will be performing during the October 30th worship services. The rehearsal schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, October 12	6:00 - 6:30 pm
Wednesday, October 19	6:00 - 6:30 pm
Wednesday, October 26	6:00 - 6:30 pm
Sunday, October 30	8:00 - 9:00 am (perform during the 9:00 and 10:30 services)

Youth bells are open to any youth in our church from grades 5-12. If you are younger than 5th grade and would like to participate, please contact Scott Perau sperau@gmail.com.

Mission 1: Our UCC Shared Vision

"Is this not the fast that I choose, to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the opposed go free, and to break every yoke...Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house?" Isaiah 58:6-7

What is Mission 1 and why are we doing this, now? Mission 1 is a focused time effort meant to raise awareness and reduce hunger in the world now. UCC congregations, colleges, seminaries, and health and human services agencies will join together in a collective mission campaign to collect more than 1 million food items for local food banks, raise \$111,111 in online donations for Neighbors in Need (NIN), and write 11,111 letters to Congress (in support of Bread for the World's 2011 Offering of Letters) asking that U.S foreign assistance be reformed to more effectively serve the world's 2011 poorest people. The dollars raised online, the 11,111 letters, and the 11 food items are tied into this years' observance of November 11, 2011 or 11-11-11.

What will we do at First Congregational UCC, River Falls and when?

- Kick-off will be with our traditional October 2nd Neighbors in Need offering, one of our church's five for five missions.
- Next begins our four week Food Pantry collection, an opportunity for each of us to donate 11 items to our River Falls Food Shelf during the month of October. We will target the weekly offerings by focusing on the following:
 - **Breakfast item donation October 9th**
 - **Lunch item donation October 16th**
 - **Dinner item donation October 23rd**
 - **Cash or Dick's Cash Card October 30th** (for every \$1 donated, RF Food Shelf can purchase \$9 of food through Second Harvest or discounted items @ Dick's Market with the cash card.)
- Next will come our hands-on service at Feed my Starving Children on October 14th (sign up in the back of the church).
- Last will be an Offering of Letters Sunday during the coffee hour November 6th.

This is a one time, focused effort to be our sister and brother's keeper, the hands of Christ on earth, the hope of those who are hungry. Remember, God loves a cheerful giver so give as the spirit moves you.

-Mission Education Committee, respectfully submitted by Bonnie Jones Witthuhn.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

STAFF



Chris Myers - Pastor
 Lu Lueck - Parish Coordinator
 Missy Luedtke - Office Assistant
 Stacy Johnson - CE Minister
 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

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 U.S. POSTAGE PAID

PERMIT #53
 RIVER FALLS, WI 54022

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

October 15, 2011

2011 OCTOBER 2011						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
16 9:00 am Worship Service 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service — Bibles to 6th Graders 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	17 Mission Education Meeting 5:00 pm	18 Yoga 9-10:00 am Prayer Group 10:00 am 3rd Tuesday 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's Boards & Committees Meetings 6:30 pm Church Council 7:30 pm	19 3:30 pm Wednesday School 6:00 pm Youth Bells 6:30 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Pre-Confirmation (6th Gr) 6:30 pm Confirmation Year 1 (7th Grade) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 9:00 pm Worship Service on Channel 16	20 Yoga 9-10:00 am Worship Service on Chnl 16 12:00 pm	21 Confirmation Retreat Friday-Sunday	23
23 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 Adult New York City Planning Meeting	24	25 Yoga 9-10:00 am Prayer Group 10:00 am 4th Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26 3:30 pm Wednesday School 6:00 pm Youth Bells 6:30 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Confirmation Year 2 (8th & 9th Grades) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 9:00 pm Worship Service on Channel 16	27 Yoga 9-10:00 am Worship Service on Chnl 16 12:00 pm	28	29
30 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	31					

Yoga Classes

Yoga classes are led by Jan Hansen and are held every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00-10:00 am. Men and women, experienced or inexperienced—all are welcome to participate. We meet in the back of the sanctuary. Bring a yoga mat and a large towel. Come and enjoy!!



Thank you for the letter and please pass along my thanks to the youth for the box of food and goodies. It's always exciting to get mail, especially large boxes! I am also thinking that I never formally thanked the church for the scholarship I received last spring. Thank you very much for that. American University is not a cheap place to go to school and the scholarship will help out a lot. ~Sam Quist