



The SPIRE



First Congregational Church of Ripon • 220 Ransom Street • Ripon, Wisconsin 54971
☎ 920-748-5898 • office@riponcongregationalucc.org • www.riponcongregationalucc.org

July/August 2024

“The beloved of the Lord rests in safety—the Most High surrounds him all day long—and he rests between his shoulders.” —Deuteronomy 33:12

“You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant... because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love... And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant [mighty]... although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.” —1 Kings 3:5-7

“The Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” —Luke 3:21-22

This summer at First Congo we have been planting some dreams. Dreams come to us regularly, and from time to time we receive a dream

from God. Divine love shows up when we need it the most, and in our dreams we can discover something powerful that God is planting within us. Our summer sermon series is called, “Planting Dreams,” and each Sunday we have explored one or more of the 21 dreams that appear in the Bible.

Some of these dreams are instructive, like the ones Joseph interpreted (Genesis 37, 40, & 41); some of these dreams are wild, like angels climbing to and from heaven (Genesis 28), or goats of different patterns that Jacob dreamed (Genesis 31); or even outlandish like the rolling loaf of bread that heralded Gideon’s ability to win the day! (Judges 7)

The dreams that appear in the Bible have something to say about how God might work through our own

dreams. When Joseph listened to God’s dreams, he found success and even forgiveness for his family. In kind, we might seek to understand God through our dreams and discover joy and abundance like we have never imagined, all from God. We might even find that it is never too late to offer forgiveness, or receive it.

I hope that you have dwelled a little in thought about your own dreams, and pondered how God could be speaking to you through them.

What might God be saying to you?

One of the most meaningful dreams I have had was God’s reminder to me about my own belovedness. I am loved no matter what.

Many years ago, while I was still in college, my childhood home was threatened by wildfires in the mountains of Colorado. Flames got within several miles, forcing my mom to evacuate the home. I remember feeling

anxious and worried about my family, and feeling so many feelings about the possibility of losing my home, and perhaps with it, all the childhood memories that came from the place of my youth.

One night I had a vivid dream. In the dream, I awoke in the field in front of my childhood home, mountain grass and flowers danced in the wind around me as the mountains towered above. I felt safe and a profound sense of belonging, I was home. Suddenly the sky turned red and embers danced all around me. Belongings and files and sheets of paper dashed out of the house as the building caught fire, but did not burn. I ran through the flowers, catching papers and trying to save what I could of my home and my youth, but it was useless. My mother approached me, wrapped

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Prayers for health and healing...

For Health & Healing: **Audrey Conant** (strength, healing); **Kih Bergin** (health); **Ken Hill** (cancer, Myasthenia Gravis); **Steve Arbaugh** (stroke, health); the new Afghan family's 3 year old (spina bifida); **Wendy Smith's daughter, Hannah** (melanoma); **Tammi Kenton** (cancer, health); **Katie Del Ponte's cousin and Tony Reilly's niece Jessica** (cancer); **Grandmother Cindy from the Berndt/Selz's family** (cancer); all who are experiencing health issues and are in need of prayer; all who are undergoing medical tests and awaiting results.

Prayers for peace in **Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Palestine**, and around the world.

Refugees around the world and here at home.

If you wish to see your prayer request listed in next Sunday's bulletin or The Spire, please notify the church office.

Welcome!

We've been anticipating your arrival! It's true, because we believe that every person who comes to join us for fellowship was sent by God. We look forward to getting to know you and to share with you the marvelous ways God is working in our church and beyond. If you've been thinking, praying, searching, or hoping for a place to belong, we would like, again, to say Welcome! We're glad you found us.



- Pastor *Jeffrey Dodson*
- Christian Education *Ashley Dodson*
- Moderator *Penny Allard*
- Vice-Moderator. . . *Jeanne Williams*
- Clerk *Justus Paul*
- Treasurer *Andy Lyke*
- Choir Director *Kurt Dietrich*
- Faith Formation *Ruth Retzlaff*
- Finance. *Judy Neill*
- Historian *Robin Patzlaff*
- Maintenance Officer *Gary Scholtens*
- Membership. *Bev Christ*
- Nominating. . . *J. Christ, T. Konecny*
- Organist. *Maria Dietrich*
- Outreach *Dawn Scholtens*
- PPRC *Jeanne Williams*
- Women's Fellowship *Susan Osteen*
- Worship *Kathleen Hones*

june 2-august 25, 2024



Spire Deadline

Our next Spire newsletter will be for September/October, 2024. The deadline for submissions is Wednesday, August 21, at noon. Please submit materials to the church office, or email to Maria Dietrich at dietrich.maria@gmail.com.



... to **Deanna Boone** at the passing of **Loren Boone**, who died at home on May 4. Our prayers and love are with Deanna.

Church Contact Info

Director of Administration & Communications: Kaitlyn Boscaljon:
920-748-5898 or
office@riponcongregationalucc.org
If not in the office, Pastor Jeffrey Dodson can be reached at ...
jeffrey@riponcongregationalucc.org

If you need to contact church custodians Rod & Peggy Freeman (or anyone else) please utilize the private church directory.

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me in her arms, and we sat in the meadow watching helplessly. Yet I no longer felt helpless, but safe, with a profound sense of belonging. Here in my mother's arms I was home. I was loved.

I am sure the dream interpreters out there might have much to say about such a dream, but for me it was clear as day: The world is unpredictable, and over time we lose our past, what made us young. Yet love is still there, keeping us safe, holding us close. God's love withstands the wind and flame. It was a call to belovedness.

One of the first places I heard clearly about my own belovedness was in the church.

Of course I heard a similar sentiment from my family while growing up: my parents always told me they loved me and cared for me, and my grandparents taught me about life and spent time with me. My brothers had a different way of saying they loved me, but still, their love was there, despite my older brothers' wishes to sell me as a baby so they could buy a toy. My family loved me, and so I saw my own belovedness in their love for me as a child. But in my youth I assumed they were required to say those things, because, well, they were related to me. Outside of my own family, how did I know that I mattered? How could I know my own belovedness without the biased love of my parents?

As a child I grew up in the church, and for the most part I was just present in that space. I contributed little, but I absorbed everything – every action, word, deed – and I interpreted these things as signs of love. As I grew and became able to comprehend the sayings and messages the church was giving me, I was able to hear more clearly what I knew in my bones, in my spirit. Some call it muscle memory. I knew what belovedness felt like, before I had words for it.

You see, from an early age in the church, my brothers and I were welcomed into the sanctuary during worship. I recall stories my parents tell of how I would wiggle away from them as a baby and crawl under the pews, startling the other worshipers as I moved over and between their feet. I was invited to explore the church space as if it were my own home. Because really, the church was our home. On Sundays as a family we would drive an hour to church, from our

small mountain town to the larger city of Colorado Springs, and we would spend the day going to worship, having food, hanging out with other families of the church, then sticking around for youth group. We would finally drive an hour after dark to get home. Even though it was always a long day for our family, we came home filled with God's love for us, a love that was evident through the welcome, hospitality, and way the church cared for each of the members of our family. At church, we were at home.

The lived experience of going to church as a baby and child and youth helped me know that I belonged to this community even before I had words or understanding to say what the experience was. That experience stayed with me, and I later found the words for it: belovedness. No matter who I was and no matter what my life experiences had been, I was loved and accepted by the church. I belonged to the church and the people who showed up every Sunday. They took care of me, found interest in who I was and what I was becoming, and spent time with me. To me, this is belovedness.

The church showed me this kind of belovedness when I was a child, and today as I dwell on the dreams God has given me, the future that God is planting within me, I am reminded of my childhood growing up in a church that loved me before I knew how to love, a church that showed me my own belovedness.

My dream is that my children, and all the children of our church, experience and know belovedness here. I hope you too, are reminded of your own belovedness when you connect with your faith and the church, especially when you may begin to forget that God loves you. In July and August, we will begin making Dream Catchers to help us gather these dreams, and nurture them into reality.

Child of God, you are loved, and you matter in this world. May you know deep in your bones and in your soul your own belovedness, which exists within, and even outside of your family, especially in this holy and sacred community. As you grow into your belovedness, remember, God is well pleased with you, and the best is yet to come.

In God's belovedness,



Rev. Jeffrey



Called to Care Team

Volunteer to visit at-home church members, those in the hospital, or church members in need of community and connection. We will meet monthly to discuss care plans and visits. This NEW Ministry Team is open to any new volunteers. Join us on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 9 a.m. - Pastor Jeffrey



Each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. join us in the Chapel for coffee or tea and lively discussions on various topics of the day using faith, politics, and the daily news. All are welcome!



Join us on Friday, July 12, at 5:30 p.m. at the home of Janet Vossekuil & Dave Gallops.



Summer 2024 Worship Schedule

Sundays: 9:00 am Faith Formation
 10:30 am Worship in-person (4 pm online) • 11:30 am Fellowship
 Communion every first Sunday of the month

Summer! June 2 through August 25: Worship at 9:30 am, Fellowship at 10:30

Sunday, July 7 | Guest Preacher Ariana Hones

Planting Dreams: Rolling Ahead

9:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Sunday, July 14 | Joint UCC Worship on the Village Green, 9:30 am

Special Offering: Rony's Recruit

Sunday, July 21 | Planting Dreams: Timely Wisdom

10:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Sunday, July 28 | Planting Dreams: A Stone and A Statue

10:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Sunday, August 4 | Communion | Planting Dreams: A Merciful Tree

9:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Sunday, August 11 | Planting Dreams: Four Beasts

9:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Sunday, August 18 | Planting Dreams: Do No Harm

9:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Sunday, August 25 | Last Summer Worship Service

Planting Dreams: Making All Things New

9:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Sunday, September 1 | Communion Sunday, Last

Return to 10:30 Worship Time

10:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Sunday, September 8 | Rally Sunday

10:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

Coffee Fellowship

Friday Coffee Fellowship takes place at 9:30 AM at Mugs Coffee Shop. We hope you'll join us!





KEEP BRINGING IN
YOUR PLASTIC
BAGS AND FILMS

**COLLECTED
732.2 LBS**


**GOAL: 1,000 LBS BY
AUGUST 31, 2024**



Help Stock the Pantry

During the months of July and August, the food pantry would appreciate your donations of pancake mix, syrup, juice, and kid friendly cereal. Ongoing needs include paper grocery bags, peanut butter, and personal toiletry items such a deodorant, soap, and feminine hygiene products. Cash donations are always much appreciated as well. Donations may also be dropped off at the church and will be delivered to the pantry. Thanks for your help!

—Outreach Committee



COMMUNITY DINNER

Our Community Dinners, held on the fourth Tuesday of every month, are now in a drive-through format. Our next dinners will be held on July 23 and August 27, serving at 5:30 p.m.



Altar Flowers

Sharing your special event, memory, or in honor of someone is special with a bouquet of flowers for our Sunday morning worship.

Flower coordinator Julie Mathias is available to discuss an altar flower arrangement requests. We will discuss what you would like, the date you would like to reserve, and your dedication for the arrangement. Contact Julie Mathias by phone or text message. 920-229-2305.

A special offering will go to support the Ripon Police Department with their police dog fundraiser for Rony's Recruit!

WORSHIP ON THE VILLAGE GREEN

Sunday, July 14
9:30 am



Hosted at First Congo in case of rain



WISCONSIN



Ticket Only
15



FAITH &

Free Soda

• **Baseball Night** •

Free Popcorn



FAMILY

Friday,
August
2nd

Night at the Ballpark

Gate open at 5:00pm | Pre-Game Kickball starts at 5:30pm | Game starts at 6:40pm



Worship Participation Schedule

Date	Lector	Ushers/Greeters	Tech Booth	Coffee Fellowship Hosts
July 7	Tim Lyke	Solberg Family	Daniel Volkmann	Christ and Dietrich
July 14	Judy Neill	Debbi Konecny/Amber Dalziel	Erik Dietrich	Worship Committee
July 21	Barb Mitchell	Scott Henke/Tony Reilly	Gary Scholtens	Edwards, Volkmann/Tumas
July 28	Ruth Retzlaff	Justus Paul & Lynn Grout-Paul	Tim Lyke	Hones and Schwemmer
Aug 4	Rachel Minch	Janis & Cal Edwards	Gary Scholtens	Grady and A. Lyke
Aug 11	Gary Scholtens	Jeanne Williams/Janet Vossekuil	Sarah Seidler-Halwas	T&M Lyke and Berndt
Aug 18	Nate Berndt	Lou & Ed Scholtens	Daniel Volkmann	Seidler-Halwas and Retzlaff
Aug 25	Sarah Joy Solberg	Judy & Bill Neill	Erik Dietrich	Williams, E&L Scholtens

Thanks
for your
participation

Please try to meet this schedule. If you cannot help on the Sunday assigned...

- Please switch Sundays with someone else and then notify the church office (748-5898 or office@riponcongregationalucc.org) of the change.
- We all appreciate your participation!

JULY/AUGUST 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	July 1	2	3	4	5	6
9:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship	6 pm RACT rehearsal	12 pm Noon Kiwanis 6 pm RACT rehearsal	9:30 Prayer Shawls 6 pm RACT	6 pm NA meeting 6 pm RACT	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs 6 pm RACT	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship	6 pm RACT rehearsal	12 pm Noon Kiwanis 6 pm RACT rehearsal 6:30 pm Cabinet	9:30 Prayer Shawls 6 pm RACT	10:30 am Discussion 6 pm NA meeting 6 pm RACT rehearsal 7 pm Green Lake Festival of Music concert	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs 5:30 pm FOG at Janet Vossekuil's 6 pm RACT reh.	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:30 am Worship on Village Green (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Outreach, Worship	6 pm RACT rehearsal	12 pm Noon Kiwanis 6 pm RACT rehearsal	9:30 Prayer Shawls 6 pm RACT	10:30 am Discussion 6 pm NA meeting 6 pm RACT rehearsal	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs 6 pm RACT	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Membership comm	6 pm RACT rehearsal	5:30 pm Community Dinner 6 pm RACT	9 Called to Care 9:30 Prayer Shawls 6 pm RACT	11:30 am Discussion 6 pm NA meeting 6 pm RACT	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs 6 pm RACT	
28	29	30	31	August 1	2	3
9:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship	6 pm RACT rehearsal	6 pm RACT	9:30 Prayer Shawls 6 pm RACT	10:30 am Discussion 6 pm NA meeting 6 pm RACT	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs 5 pm Family Baseball Night 6 pm RACT	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Outreach, Worship			9:30 Prayer Shawls	10:30 am Discussion 1 pm Tea & Cookies at Prairie Place 6 pm NA meeting	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Membership comm		6:30 pm Cabinet	9:30 Prayer Shawls	10:30 am Discussion 6 pm NA meeting	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship			11 pm PEO mtg 9:30 Prayer Shawls 12 pm Spire Deadline	10:30 am Discussion 6 pm NA meeting	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
9:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 10:30 am Fellowship		5:30 pm Community Dinner	9 Called to Care 9:30 Prayer Shawls	10:30 am Discussion 6 pm NA meeting	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs	
September 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10:30 am Worship (4 pm online) 11:30 am Fellowship				10:30 am Discussion 6 pm NA meeting	9:30 am Coffee at Mugs	

First Congregational Church of Ripon

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

220 Ransom Street • Ripon, Wisconsin 54971

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Enter to Worship—Go Forth to Serve

