



# The SPIRE



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

November 2022

*“Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness...’*  
+ Genesis 1:26

At the heart of the Christian Gospel, we see how God is a gracious, generous giver. Over and over again, love embodied becomes God’s Grace in Action. That idea, Grace in Action, is the theme of this year’s Stewardship Season this November in which



we celebrate generosity and giving.

And since we’re made in God’s image, we’re born to be gracious and generous, too. Over the course of the first two Sundays in November, we

will be invited to consider two scriptural stories, each of which reveals one of God’s tried and true ways of putting grace into action, and look at how you, too, can embody generosity by pledging your support to our church’s mission and ministry for 2023.

In the creation story in Genesis, chapter 1, God builds galaxies and stars and worlds, and most importantly, God builds our world! The days, the nights, the land and sea, and all of us who dwell within this world. God made for us a home.

God’s generous role in our lives is as world-builder and homemaker.

I like to think of our church community as a little world, too, which we build in our individual roles as ones made in the image of a God who is always building and mending and repairing and creating. But the world is not a static place. Destruction in all kinds of forms is at work in the world – but so is God’s ongoing, tenacious creation: order out of chaos, joy out of sorrow, home out of loneliness, justice out of pain, life out of death.

Where do you see God’s continuing role in creating “home” in your life, your neighborhood, your church, your city, and the wider world? And how should that insight shape our work as homemakers, as builders of the little worlds we and our neighbors inhabit?

God is generously a “homemaker” for us. Here in this faith community we are offered a place to belong. One of my favorite authors, bell hooks, writes in her book, *Belonging: A Culture of Place*, that one of our purposes in life is finding real love, and knowing the place (physical, mental, spiritual) where you belong to that love. She writes that home is a place of belonging, a safe place, a place where “the me of me mattered.”

At First Congregational Church of Ripon, you matter. And you belong here. God has made a home here for you. With your generosity and support, we make it a home for others, too.

Welcome home,

—Pastor Jeffrey



**Prayers for health and healing...**

**For Health & Healing:** Rae Miller (ribs); Barb Mitchell's granddaughter (ER); Jonathan Gatzke (shoulder surgery); a youth having tonsil surgery; Wendy Smith (cancer); Dawn Scholtens (cancer); Loren Boone (cancer); Katie Del Ponte's cousin Jessica (tumor, health); all those experiencing health issues in need of prayer.

Prayers for the people in Florida who are affected by Hurricane Ian, including friends of Mary and Dave Iserman; and Katie Del Ponte's cousin Britney and husband and kids, cousins Amanda, Ava, Victoria, Heather, Xavier and Baby X and Aunt Maria.

Prayers for people of Pakistan who were affected by flooding.

Prayers for peace in Ukraine and Russia.

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



### Spire Deadline

Our next Spire newsletter will be for December, 2022. The deadline is Wednesday, Nov. 16, at noon. Please submit materials to the church office, or email to Maria Dietrich at dietrich.maria@gmail.com. Please mark your calendars.

## 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.



...to those who have experienced a recent loss:

Prayers for Madeline Zindrick whose husband Joseph passed away September 18. Madeline and her family are in our prayers during this time of grief. Madeline worships with us in the summer while camping at Green Lake. A memorial service for Joseph was held at Immanuel United Church of Christ in Walworth on Saturday, October 1.



- Pastor *Jeffrey Dodson*
- CE Director . . . . . *Jeanne Williams*
- Moderator . . . . . *Erin Ter Beest*
- Vice-Moderator. . . *Michele Wittler*
- Clerk . . . . . *Justus Paul*
- Treasurer . . . . . *Andy Lyke*
- Choir Director . . . . . *Kurt Dietrich*
- Faith Formation . *Barb Splittgaber*
- Finance. . . . . *Judy Neill*
- Historian . . . . . *Robin Patzlaff*
- Maintenance Officer *Lyle Mathias*
- Membership. . . . . *Deanna Boone, B. Christ, M. Lyke, A. Dalziel*
- Nominating. . *J. Christ, T. Konecny*
- Organist. . . . . *Maria Dietrich*
- Outreach . . . . . *Dawn Scholtens*
- PPRC . . . . . *Michele Wittler*
- Women's Fellowship *Susan Osteen*
- Worship . . . . . *Kathleen Hones*

### Church Contact Info

Office manager Ashley Dodson:  
920-748-5898 or  
office@riponcongregationalucc.org

If not in the office, Pastor Jeffrey Dodson can be reached at ...

Cell: (719) 330-8549 or by email, at jeffrey@riponcongregationalucc.org

Jeanne Williams, CE Director  
jeanne@riponcongregationalucc.org

Rod & Peggy Freeman – Church Custodians - Cell: 920-896-2152

# GRATEFUL Thankful & BLESSED

## ***Putting Grace Into Action: November is Stewardship Month***

In our church cabinet meetings, our committee leaders collaborate on and share plans for how each committee works to put “grace into action.” Throughout the next month, Erin Ter Beest will be sharing information about the work of our committees. In November, we will come together as a church to ensure that we have the resources to continue our support of both our local and wider missions.

November is also budget month. Our committees are currently preparing and submitting their budgets projecting what resources they need to carry out our mission and our good work. In addition, our budget also will include the funds that support our wider mission conducted by our Wisconsin Conference and the broader United Church of Christ.

In early November, you will receive your pledge card in the mail, please make your commitment to support our church as we strive to “put grace into action.” You may make your pledge by following the instructions to pledge online or mail your pledge card to the church.

We are a small church, but we are generous. When every one of us pledges to support our work, we will be stronger. As the Finance Committee drafts the details of our First Congregational budget to be acted on by the Cabinet, we will look to our pledges as the most accurate estimate of the resources to which we as a church can commit.

Counting on your generosity,  
Judy Neill, Finance Committee

## ***November-December 2022 Worship Schedule***

**Sunday, November 6 | All Saints Sunday | Communion Sunday | Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost | Daylight Savings Ends**  
10:30 am Worship IN-PERSON | 4:00 pm Worship ONLINE

**Sunday, November 13 | Stewardship Sunday | Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost**

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

**Sunday, November 20 | Thanksgiving Sunday | Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost and Reign of Christ | 172nd Anniversary of First Congregational Church of Ripon**

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

**Sunday, November 27 | First Sunday of Advent**

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

**Sunday, December 4 | Communion Sunday | Second Sunday of Advent**

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

**Sunday, December 11 | Third Sunday of Advent**

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

**Sunday, December 18 | Fourth Sunday of Advent | Children’s Christmas Pageant**

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

**Saturday, December 24 | Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

4:00 pm Worship IN-PERSON and ONLINE



### ***Christian Education Director sought***

First Congregational UCC of Ripon invites candidates to apply for the open position of Christian Education Director. Part-time position, approximately 20 hours/week during program year, less time during summer. Directs Sunday School and other Christian Education programs. Full position details available by calling 920-748-5898, or emailing [office@riponcongregationalucc.org](mailto:office@riponcongregationalucc.org). Position open in December and search will continue until the position is filled.



# RECYCLING UPDATES



We are currently working with  
NexTrex  
and  
Bic Corporation

12 OCTOBER, 2022

## THANK YOU SO MUCH

FOR YOUR RECYCLING EFFORTS

To date we have collected 192 lbs of plastic for our recycling drive. That puts us at about 38% of our goal of 500 lbs by January 30, 2023. You can help by bringing in your plastic bags, bubble wrap and mailers, and other plastic film products. Thanks for your continued help!

## *From the Outreach Committee*

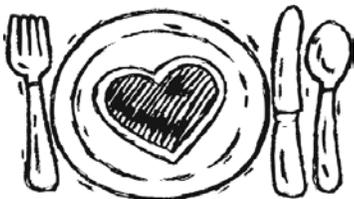
Are you a gardener? Do you have knowledge about native plants? The church is looking for a few individuals who are interested in looking into installing a native plant and/or pollinator garden at the church. We have the opportunity to apply for a **Kairos Creation Care grant** from the Wisconsin Conference to fund the project. The ad hoc committee would look at the grant application, determine if it is appropriate to apply, and then make a garden plan to submit to the grant committee. If this is something you would be interested in helping with or you know someone whose skills and knowledge could be of assistance, please contact Erin Ter Beest at [erin.terbeest@gmail.com](mailto:erin.terbeest@gmail.com) or 920-344-6758.

## *From scarcity to abundance*

Author Parker Palmer recounted being stuck on a storm-grounded airplane for hours. Though it was lunchtime, meals weren't available, and passengers grew irritable. One flight attendant apologized for the delay, expressing empathy for people's stress, and then passed around two breadbaskets, asking everyone to contribute something.

"Some of you brought snacks to tide you over, and some of you have a few LifeSavers or chewing gum," she said. "And if you don't have anything edible, you have a picture of your children or spouse ... or a bookmark or a business card." Then, she said, "we'll pass the baskets around again, and everyone can take out what they need."

Complaints soon ceased, Palmer recalled, as passengers searched for items and stopped focusing on themselves. The plane became a community of sharing as scarcity and deprivation transformed into abundance and joy.



### COMMUNITY DINNER

Our Community Dinners, held on the fourth Tuesday of every month, are temporarily in a drive-through format due to COVID-19. Our next dinner will be held on November 22.

## *Help Stock the Pantry*

During the month of November, the food pantry would appreciate your donations of baking supplies. Ongoing needs include paper grocery bags, peanut butter, and personal toiletry items such as deodorant, soap, and feminine hygiene products. Cash donations are always very much appreciated as well. Donations may also be dropped off at the church and will be delivered to the pantry. Thank you for your help!

—Outreach Committee

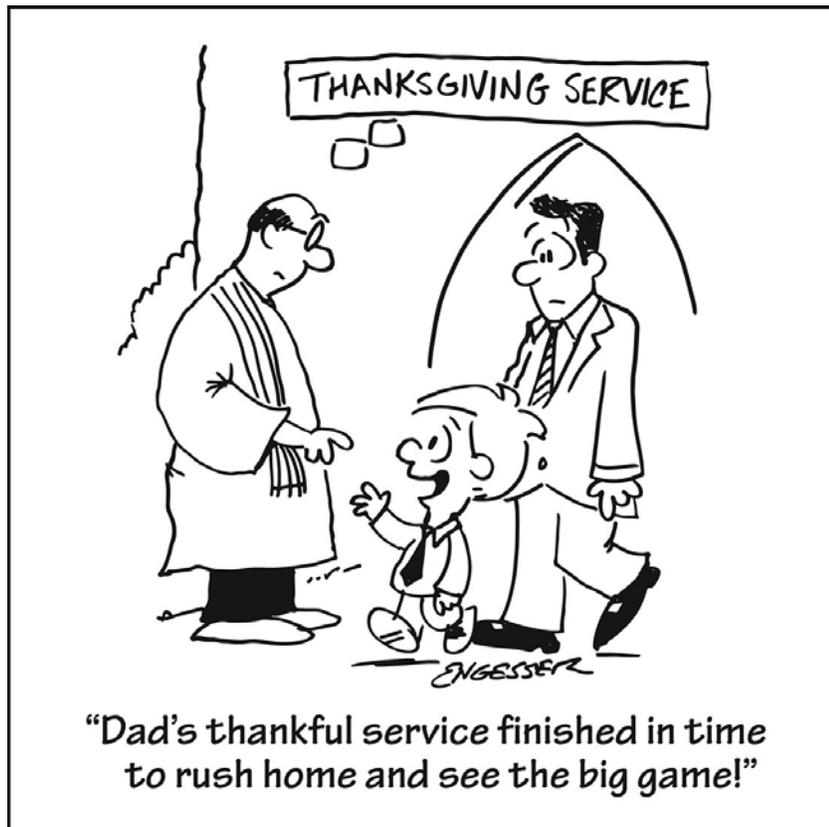
## From the Treasurer: Donation Statements

I mailed out the donation statements a week or so ago. As I stated in my note, thank you for your contributions! There was one problem that I didn't anticipate - many of the pledges were understated. When printing the statements, I requested information only for the first 3 quarters of the year (through September 20). I didn't realize that the pledges on the statements would be prorated to match. In short, the pledges listed were 3/4 of what they should be for the full year! If you have any questions about my goof or anything else regarding your statement, please let me know. - Andy Lyke, treasurer

## Lists!

One frustration I've heard many times from our members is how our mailing lists are outdated. Fortunately, we have a great database that has all the information anyone could want. The database can generate any type of list needed, whether it be a list of birthdays in November, a query of everyone who lives on Thorne or Watson, or men who are over 40 who pledged to the church last year, to name but just a few examples. If you have your own list, please see Ashley or me and we can make sure we can reproduce your list with our database (and to confirm the information in the database is correct!) It's important to keep the database up to date as that's what I use to record donations and more importantly, create lists for everyone else!

In short, if you have a change of address or contact information, or other change in your life, let Ashley or me know so we can update the database. If you need a list, let us know and we'll get it for you ASAP. - Andy



## Links of GRATITUDE

Make this meaningful decoration for your Thanksgiving table.



### What you need:

- Construction paper (in fall colors)
- Scissors
- Pen
- Jar
- Stapler
- Adult help

### What you do:

1. Cut the paper into strips about 2 inches wide.
2. Place the strips and pen in the jar. Then set it in a prominent place in your home.
3. Throughout November, have family discussions about what you're thankful to God for. Write or draw each item on a paper strip.
4. Make a paper chain by linking and carefully stapling the strips.
5. Keep adding to your decoration and display it during your Thanksgiving meal.



## Faith Formation - What Are We Learning?

**In the Sunday School Classroom** - Children in preschool through grade 4 are learning about Jesus' parables (pronounced PAIR-uh-bullz). Parables are short stories (some of them under 200 words) that teach a moral lesson or spiritual truth. There is a long tradition of parables in world cultures—the Anansi stories from Africa, Zen Koans, and Aesop's fables, for example. The Leo Lionni stories we read during Summer Sunday School are also a kind of fable called apologues. These feature fantasy details like talking animals. Jesus parables are stories about

the everyday people in his life (travelers, workers, merchants, etc.) and are recorded as part of his teaching ministry, especially in Matthew and Luke. We are exploring the parables through storytelling, acting, games, and arts and crafts. These are the parables we will learn about this semester.



- The Good Shepherd
- The Good Samaritan
- The Workers in the Vineyard
- The Lost Coin
- The Found Son
- The Ten Talents



There are several children's books that feature Jesus' parables. Miss Jeanne recommends the book "The Parables of Jesus" by Tomie dePaola that is available on Amazon.

### In the World Religions Class

Which came first Hinduism or Christianity?

What are the three world religions that trace their history back to Abraham?

What was the first recorded monotheistic religion?

Why did the followers of Zoroastrianism move from their home in Iran to India?

What is the Jewish ritual that is the basis for our communion ritual?

These and other questions can be answered by the 5th-7th grade students who are learning about world religions with Miss Jeanne in our pre-confirmation, world religions class. Over the year, we will visit religions around the world and learn how religions are alike and how they are different.

**Family Activities for Fall Semester** - See the graphics in this issue of the Spire for more information.

1. Sunday, October 30th - Trunk or Treat at noon. (A light lunch will be provided during coffee hour.)  
Trick or Treat in Ripon is 3-5 p.m.
2. Sunday, November 20th - Festival of the Greens - After worship.
3. Friday, December 9th - Parents' Night Out - 5:30-8:30 p.m. Snacks, games, and other activities .
4. Wednesday, December 14th - Pageant Practice, Recording, and Pizza Dinner - 4:00 p.m.
5. Sunday, December 18th - Christmas Pageant and Family Lunch

— Submitted by Barb Splittgaber, Faith Formation Committee Chair, and Jeanne Williams, C.E. Director

# FIRST CONGO KIDS 2022

FALL EVENTS SCHEDULE

**OCT 30** TRUNK OR TREAT  
12 PM

FESTIVAL OF THE GREENS **NOV 20**  
12 PM

**DEC 9** PARENTS NIGHT OUT  
5:30-8:30 PM

PAGEANT PRACTICE **DEC 14**  
4 PM

**DEC 18** PAGEANT AND FAMILY LUNCH  
10:30-1:00 PM

WEEKLY ON SUNDAYS  
10:45 4K-4 SUNDAY SCHOOL  
12:00 PRE-CONFIRMATION AND CONFIRMATION

WEDNESDAYS AT 5:30 YOUTH GROUP

First Congo Kids

parent's NIGHT OUT

Friday, December 9th

Fellowship Hall  
5:30-8:30 PM

FREE Snacks, games, and other activities will be provided.

Please plan to provide dinner for your child/ren before dropping off!

First Congregational Church of Ripon

TRUNK OR TREAT

COSTUMES • GAMES • FOOD • CANDY

Please wear your costume to church!  
Please provide gluten-free and sugar-free options!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30 - 12:00

FESTIVAL OF THE GREENS

Don your best Christmas Sweater and join us Sunday, November 20 | 12:00 PM to help decorate the church for Advent! Hot cocoa and cookies will be provided! All are welcome!

***“Who assigned me to do coffee hour?”***

***“Why am I a lector?”***

***“I didn’t sign up to be an usher.”***

Such sentiments have been expressed lately, particularly by folks who are relative newcomers to our church.

On behalf of the Worship Committee, I apologize that we haven’t made a better effort to share with you how we all participate in serving our church during worship time. Or that you weren’t told when you joined the church that membership in a Congregational setting includes responsibilities to help out on an occasional Sunday morning.

Many years ago we had sign-up sheets for folks to volunteer to be ushers, lectors or bring “coffee-hour” eats. That didn’t work very well as the sheets had many vacancies.

So about 8-10 years ago we created an “opt-out” system where we signed folks up to help out, without their permission, with the understanding that they could “opt out” of those tasks for which they felt unqualified or uncomfortable. This has worked well and assured that no burden falls too heavily on any one individual or family.

So while we are grateful for your continued help on Sunday mornings, please be assured that should you have a task you’re not comfortable doing or are not available to do during a particular stretch of time, you can let church administrative assistant Ashley know so that she doesn’t include you on future volunteer charts. The corollary also is possible: If you’d like to do something not on the chart, please let Ashley know, too!

Reminder that if you are signed up to help out on a Sunday, please find your own substitute if you are unable to serve.

Thanks all, for recognizing that “many hands make light work” (Nehemiah 3:8).

— Tim Lyke on behalf of the Worship Committee



### ***Worship Volunteer Schedule***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lector</b>	<b>Ushers/Greeters</b>	<b>Worship Slides</b>	<b>Coffee Fellowship Hosts</b>
Nov. 6	AVAILABLE	Mary & Tim Lyke	Erik Dietrich	Mitchell and AVAILABLE
Nov. 13	Judy Neill	Dawn & Gary Scholtens	Katie Del Ponte	Ter Beest family
Nov. 20	Dawn Scholtens	Susan & Preston Osteen	Tim Lyke	Boone and Christ
Nov. 27	Erik Dietrich	Bev & Jack Christ	AVAILABLE	Volkman and Hones
Dec. 4	Judy Neill	Lynn Grout-Paul & Justus Paul	Gary Scholtens	Moniz and Allard families
Dec. 11	AVAILABLE	AVAILABLE	Tim Lyke	AVAILABLE
Dec. 18	Kathleen Hones	Debbi & Tom Konecny	Erik Dietrich	Dietrich and Wittler families
Dec. 24	Worship Comm.	Worship Committee	AVAILABLE	Worship Committee

*Thanks*  
for your  
participation

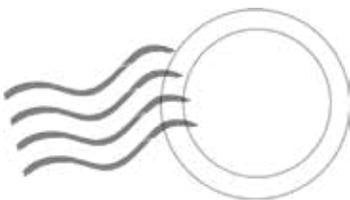
Please try to meet this schedule. If you cannot help on the Sunday assigned...

- 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!

# NOVEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>30</b> 10:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 11:30 am Fellowship 12 pm Trunk or Treat! 4 pm Online Worship	<b>31</b> Happy Halloween! 	<b>1</b> 4 pm CCF Men's Small Group 6-8 pm Girl Scouts	<b>2</b> 5:30 pm Youth Group	<b>3</b> 6 pm NA meeting 7 pm RC Choral Union	<b>4</b> 9 am Coffee at Mugs	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> Daylight Savings Time Ends 10:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 11:30 am Fellowship 12 pm Pre-Conf/Confirmation 4 pm Online Worship	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 4 pm CCF Men's Small Group 	<b>9</b> 5:30 pm Youth Group	<b>10</b> 6 pm NA meeting 7 pm RC Choral Union	<b>11</b> 9 am Coffee at Mugs	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 10:30 am Worship - Stewardship Sunday 10:45 am Sunday School 11:30 am Fellowship 12 pm Pre-Conf/Confirmation 12 pm Worship Committee 4 pm Online Worship	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 4 pm CCF Men's Small Group 5 pm Sharing the Table at Grace 6:30 pm Cabinet meeting	<b>16</b> 12 pm Spire deadline 5:30 pm Youth Group	<b>17</b> 6 pm NA meeting 7 pm Membership Committee 7 pm RC Choral Union	<b>18</b> 9 am Coffee at Mugs	<b>19</b> 8 am-1 pm Girl Scouts
<b>20</b> 10:30 am Worship - 172nd Anniv. of FCUCC 10:45 am Sunday School 11:30 am Fellowship 12 pm Hanging of the Greens 4 pm Online Worship	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 4 pm CCF Men's Small Group 5:30 pm Community Dinner	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 6 pm NA meeting 	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 10:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 11:30 am Fellowship 12 pm Pre-Conf/Confirmation 4 pm Online Worship	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 4 pm CCF Men's Small Group	<b>30</b> 5:30 pm Youth Group	<b>1</b> 6 pm NA meeting 7 pm RC Choral Union	<b>2</b> 9 am Coffee at Mugs	<b>3</b>

**Future Events:**  
 Dec. 9 Parents' Night Out  
 Dec. 14 Pageant Practice & Pizza  
 Dec. 18 Children's Pageant and Family Lunch  
 Dec. 24 Christmas Eve candlelight service at 4 pm



Paper and ink and postage - oh my! If you're getting a hard copy of this Spire and would prefer an electronic version, please give the church office your email address. Send it to [office@riponcongregationalucc.org](mailto:office@riponcongregationalucc.org). Thanks!

**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***

