

The Hilltop Chimes

First Congregational United Church of Christ
120 Kuckkan Lane Watertown, WI 53094
Rev. Robert Koepcke, Pastor

JULY 2020

***Reopening Survey** Enclosed
Turn in your responses by
Monday, July 13th

How to Contact Us:

Office Phone/Fax:
920-261-6213

Pastor's email:
rkoepcke@firstcongwtn.org

Website:
www.firstcongwtn.org

How to Join Us for Worship:

- 1) Our weekly "Welcome to
Worship" email.
- 2) Our church's Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-United-Church-of-Christ-118640148151341/>
- 3) Watertown Cable channel 985
broadcasts on Thursdays at 10
am and 5 pm; Sunday at 6 pm.
- 4) Our new church website (see
'Media'):
<https://firstcongwtn.org/>

Services are posted on Saturday
night.

From Your Pastor

"How Long, O Lord?"

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart. (Psalm 90:1-2,12)

"Counting the days." Don't we all do this? Count the days to our birthday, anniversary, graduation; count the time we've been waiting to hear back or get paid. Seems the more that I count, the longer it feels. The watched pot never boils, and the washer keeps on spinning. "Hurry up and wait" is the human condition!

As of this week, there are roughly 30 days before my last Sunday worship. August will bring changes, both endings and beginnings. Will I finish what I need, what I want before leaving? Will we, as a church, know when we might gather? Our **Reopening Survey*** is included with this newsletter and available online (link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdFpbCLV7695PzMoRGlhVWuGHqj8Yv3hzvQK1Zymdbuqrt_ew/viewform) I encourage you to take it for your opinions will be counted.

Counting is good if we're counting our blessings, taking nothing for granted and offering our thanks. So let me thank YOU for this time as your pastor! I've learned more about life, including myself. I've seen how the church can respond in a crisis, how we support one another in sickness or health. Keep it up, will you? Likewise keep counting and don't take for granted this experience called "church" with all it can mean. With more we can do when we do it with love!

To do so is life, reborn and renewed; blessed and in hope of more life to come. How long will this take? No longer than it takes for our gratitude to rise, for our prayers to rise up and we look to our God, as the psalmist once wrote and it still counts today:

Turn, O LORD! How long? Have compassion on your servants! Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us, and as many years as we have seen evil. Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us and prosper for us the work of our hands—O prosper the work of our hands! (Psalm 90:13-17)

--Rev. Robert





Sunday, July 12th

There will be a highway cleanup on Sunday, July 12 @ 10:00 am weather permitting. We'll meet on Schumann Drive

in back of the hospital off of County CW.

Bags, vinyl gloves and vests are included, but consider wearing your own sturdy gloves. Youth 13 years & up are welcome with a parent or sponsor!

Contact Pastor Robert with questions/concerns.

From Your Moderator, Dale Bakke

"These Covid Times!"

Wow, as I write this, we have just completed the first full week of true summer already. Time surely does fly.

I just want to offer some background regarding the survey we're including in this newsletter sending out by email. We need your opinions on how we may consider having an in-person service in the sanctuary or elsewhere in the future.

We have several things that need to be taken into consideration. First and foremost is the health and welfare of our most vulnerable members as they are the ones we must truly consider and what we can do to assist them in avoiding exposure to this deadly virus.

Second is that we must physically distance ourselves from each other (not socially, just physically) by at least six feet for normal conversation with masks on. This means no hugging, handshakes, or sharing the peace in our traditional manner. This will also affect our way of participating in communion.

Third will be inability to share food and drink during Fellowship as we have in the past. While each of these risks may be severely reduced by significantly modifying our behavior, we do not have a way of completely eliminating the risk of exposure to our members. This will take major behavioral changes by all of us as I continue to have a hard time not hugging and shaking

hands, especially with my friends that I have not seen in over three months.

As of four weeks ago, churches were the second most likely place to be exposed to the Covid-19 virus after work and even worse than the infection rate coming out of long-term care facilities. It is estimated that the risk of exposure to the virus increases by 10X for mass speaking and to 60X for singing. I believe most of our congregation, like myself, enjoy participating in singing, even if I am not very good at it. I would find it hard to have a service with no music or singing "Go Now in Love and Peace" and the inability to say the "Lord's Prayer" together.

I am sure most of you are aware that a church choir in Washington State was one of the first examples of how deadly this virus is. Fifty-two of the choir's sixty members were infected with the Covid-19 virus and at least two members died back in March. Wisconsin has had a similar case just a few weeks ago. We need to be extra careful about how we move forward to sharing our presence with each other and insuring we preserve life.

I'm sure some of you are feeling anxious, like me, about not being able to see our friends and church family on a regular basis. I encourage you to reach out to other members for contact, whether it be via a phone call, video chat or in small groups. If you have any ideas or concerns, please call our staff at the church office and we will try to assist you in any way we can.

I felt I should share my concerns with you before you complete this survey, but please participate and share your own feelings and thought on where you stand with options to move forward. I think we are feeling like Moses and his followers in exile in the wilderness from the book of Exodus. We are still wandering and not necessarily sure where and when we are going but holding true to our core values of faith and hope!

Your brother in Christ, Dale

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LISTEN UP! JOIN OUR BIBLE STUDY

From Melissa: Our ZOOM Bible study has been very well attended. We have great conversations and opinions. The group is working our way through the Book of John. We meet at 9am on Tuesdays, feel free

to join us on ZOOM, or if you would like me to email you the weekly readings and "assignments", I can add you to the email group. Several people are studying this on their own as well. Please contact me if you would like the emails.

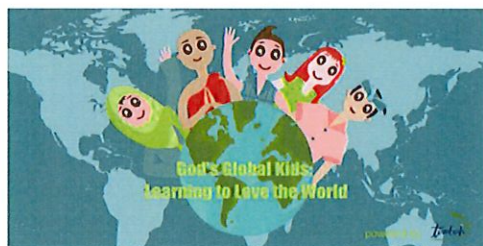
Here is the link to the ZOOM meeting:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/232183369?pwd=N0pmNDhqdz3poTXFtdG1rT0xYazNqdz09>

Meeting ID: 232 183 369

Password: 607514



Vacation Bible School in August "GOD'S GLOBAL KIDS"

We will be holding a virtual VBS in August. I am still working out the logistics and details of how this will be run. However, I do know the curriculum is awesome. It is called "God's Global Kids". It will take us around the world...exploring different beliefs and different people. Here is what the producers of the program have to say about it: *Our sincere hope is this curriculum cultivates a healthy global imagination in your students and leaves them intrigued by the world around them.* It is different than some of the other VBS programs we have used, however, I think this will be fun and give a very unique look at the world. Be watching for details as I finish up the last few touches of this! If you have any questions, please contact me.

mmattke@firstcongwtnn.org or

josc.mom@hotmail.com or 262-719-1383

From the Coordinator
of Children and Youth
Ministries



Sunday School

We have been meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 via ZOOM. We have had so much fun and had quite large groups. We are still working our way through a unit about snacks. The bottom line of this series is that God's Word can help us through tough times and they can rely on the Bible for help. We also play some games...the favorite is a scavenger hunt. It is so funny to see the kiddos leave the camera and run to find the object assigned! Feel free to pop in and join us any time! Here is the Zoom link:

Sundays at 10:30 am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/183320649?pwd=UnFLMU9TenU2b0t3b2RVUEhyV1J6UT09>

Meeting ID: 183 320 649

Password: 843538

Youth Group

We have been continuing with our ZOOM meetings every Sunday morning and Wednesday evening. Sometimes we just chat and play games, and other times we discuss the lesson we are working through. We will be starting a new lesson in June called: "Surf's Up". We will be learning to chill with the Beatitudes, Dude. Every lesson will walk us through the Beatitudes. I am looking forward to some fun summer activities, online, to teach us! Feel free to join us anytime...here is the Zoom link:

Sundays at 11:30am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/671375141?pwd=RWwNldOWVR4MVg4QkpXbjNXL1NVQT09>

Meeting ID: 671 375 141

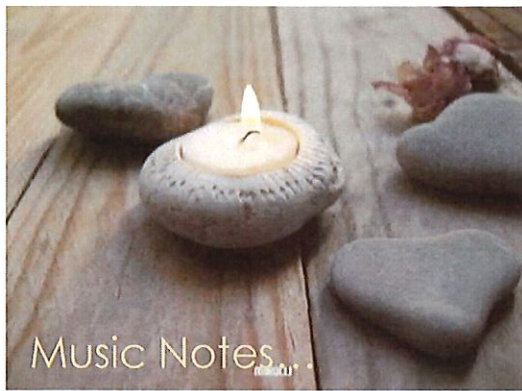
Password: 987842

Or Wednesday evenings at 6pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88168068327?pwd=WGU3U01hMmZWcU4waigzNzVzdmx2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 881 6806 8327

Password: 339052



“It is Well With My Soul”

When peace like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to know
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Refrain

It is well, (it is well),
With my soul, (with my soul)
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live:
If Jordan above me shall roll,
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life,
Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

But Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait,
The sky, not the grave, is our goal;
Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord!
Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul.

And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
A song in the night, oh my soul!

Please let me know if you are willing to provide a **Musical Offering as we continue our worship on-line.** I don't want technology to stand in the way of you sharing your gifts. You can record from a smart phone or computer, which are the easiest ways, but there are several other options. Let me know if you want to sing or play using my contact information at the end of this article. I certainly want to recognize those who provided musical offerings during the month of June-Erin Edington, Susie Krueger, and myself.

The Eric Whitacre Virtual Choir piece, *Sing Gently*, will be available as of July 19th. This is the virtual choir with 17,562 singers that I have mentioned before. I don't have a link for this at this time, but if you are interested in viewing it, if you simply google Eric Whitacre Virtual Choir 6 or Sing Gently by Eric Whitacre on or after July 19, you won't have a problem finding the video.

The hymn, “It is Well With My Soul,” has an interesting story behind it. Horatio Spafford had already experienced the death of his four-year-old son, and financial losses in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 and an economic downturn in 1873, when he decided to send his wife and four daughters ahead of him on a European trip. Tragically, the ship that his family was on sunk after a collision with another sea vessel. His wife, Anna, survived, but all four of his daughters drowned. Anna's briefly worded telegram stated, “Saved alone..”

When Spafford went to meet his grieving wife, he was inspired to write the words of this hymn as his ship passed near the place where his daughters had perished. Phillip Bliss, composer, named the hymn tune, *Ville du Havre*, after the name of the fateful ship that Spafford's family traveled on.

Juanita Edington
c.920-988-2416/h.206-6111
jaemusiclover@gmail.com

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BLOOD DRIVE BLOOD CENTER OF WISCONSIN

Our next drive will be held on July 30th, 2020 from 1pm-6pm. Things will still look a little different, however the need for blood donations is the same. Please plan to donate blood if you are healthy and able.

If you are not able to donate on July 30th, there are several local opportunities to do so. Please check out the Versiti Website

<https://donate.wisconsin.versiti.org/donor/schedules/zip> to see where the blood drives are being held. We will not be collecting food donations for the drive on July 30th. Thank you for your willingness to save lives. If you need to schedule an appointment, you can go online or contact me. (mmattke@firstcongwtn.org or josc.mom@hotmail.com or 262-719-1383)

Reminder: Every safety precaution will taken.

- Things will be cleaned throughout the day as well as before and after.
- No meal will be served, and congregating will be discouraged.
- The beds will be placed at least six feet apart and temperatures will be taken for everyone, including the folks working the blood drive.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment.

mmattke@firstcongwtn.org or
josc.mom@hotmail.com or 262-719-1383



LOVE FUND “ Please remember that our *Love Fund* provides grants to those needing help with food, clothing, health care, rent and utilities.

For assistance, please call the church office (920-261-6213) or Robert’s mobile phone (563-272-8670).

Prayer Concerns

- *Awareness of our personal privileges, biases or “blind spots”*
- *Peace with racial justice and meaningful reforms*
- *Public safety professionals who serve with kindness and patience*
- *Those living and working in institutions like health centers and prisons*
- *The family of Charles Bentzin, whose memorial was held on June 27*
- *Laurel Bentz’ daughter Jessie & son-in-law Andy, moving to Minnesota*
- *Barb Lottmann, receiving therapy*
- *Bill Edington’s brother Darin, experiencing health concerns*
- *Chris Braunschweig, recovering from surgery*
- *Maverick Schumacher & family upon his baptism on June 28*
- *Susie Krueger, for continued healing*
- *Lola Mundt’s mother Lorna, for health; for fiancé Zachary & his therapy*
- *Nancy Renz’ daughter Jessica*
- *Fred Schroeder, receiving therapy at Marquardt Health Center*

(please call or email with your joys and concerns)

Robert’s mobile phone (563-272-8670)

rkoepcke@firstcongwtn.org

Church office (920-261-6213) or

Birthdays in July

James Maas	07/01
Gayle Johnson	07/01
Donald Hanson	07/01
Ethel Willing	07/07
Jeff Nicholas	07/08
Emryn Milburn	07/11
Mark Ulatowski	07/14
Judy Draeger	07/18
Isabelle Day	07/19
Russell Ehnert	07/20
Evan Chowanec	07/22
Paige Driessen	07/25
Calvin Edwards	07/25
Hailey Zabel	07/27
Ryan Scheunemann	07/27

Birthdays in August

08/01	Pamela Blaszak
08/05	Diane Scheunemann
08/05	Cooper Wood
08/06	Brian Cowan
08/08	Deanna Koch
08/09	William Edington
08/10	Robert Harms
08/11	Aron Chowanec
08/14	Lauren Behlke
08/15	Lynda Eicher
08/15	Eric Ninmann
08/15	Amanda Ketchum
08/15	Elcie Milburn
08/16	Kim Ryan
08/16	Nicholas Milburn
08/16	Derek Rowedder
08/17	Robert Schmutzler
08/20	Doris Ehnert
08/21	Shawna Hyde
08/22	Richard Scheunemann
08/22	Sherie Sheeks
08/22	Eliza Zabel
08/24	Norman Hurtubise
08/24	Jim Ortega
08/30	Nicholas Maas

Book of Life

Baptised: Sunday, June 28, 2020 *Maverick James Schumacher* was baptized at home surrounded by family. Pictured are his parents Nicole and Joseph Schumacher and big brother Easton. Pastor Robert officiated and Jan Smith, Deacon Chairperson represented our church membership. Also



Senior "Congratulations parade":



This was a very fun event! We had a parade of cars traveling around town. As soon as we got to one of the houses that a Watertown High School graduate lived in...the horns were honking, yelling and shouting was happening, signs were waving and the smiles were beaming. Here

are some pictures of the seniors. Derek has been busy working, so I have not been able to get a picture with him.

Congratulations Class of 2020. Best of luck on your next adventure!



Madison Holder



Izzy Day



Livie Mattke



First Congregational UCC Reopening Survey

Please answer the following to help us understand your opinions before we reopen our church building. If you want to be contacted or share more opinions, please call our church office at 920-261-6213 or email congregationaluccfirst@gmail.com. Thank you!

* Required

return by Monday July 13th

1. Which best describes your attitude toward returning to church? *

- ☐ I will return the first opportunity we have.
- ☐ I will return the first opportunity with concerns and precautions.
- ☐ I will wait several additional weeks before I attend.
- ☐ It may be quite a while before I return.

2. Are there other signals you want to see before returning? Select all that apply:

*

- ☐ Local businesses are open again.
- ☐ Other churches meeting again.
- ☐ At least 50 people are allowed to attend.
- ☐ No limit on attendance.
- ☐ The wearing of masks is optional.
- ☐ Limits on physical distancing are relaxed.
- ☐ When Badger Bounce Back/CDC guidelines are met.



3. What precautions, if any, do you plan to take when returning to worship, meetings or classes? Select all that apply: *

- ☐ I will wear a face mask.
- ☐ I will stand or sit in places where I will be at least 6 feet from others (beyond my own family).
- ☐ I will avoid shaking hands.
- ☐ I will avoid any physical contact.
- ☐ I will take my temperature before attending worship or serving in a volunteer position.
- ☐ I will take my children's temperatures before attending worship or classes.

4. What precautions do you expect our church to take for worship, meetings or classes? Select all that apply: *

- ☐ Provide hand sanitizer stations throughout the church.
- ☐ Regular sanitation of high-touch surfaces.
- ☐ Require the wearing of masks; provide masks as needed.
- ☐ Discourage the shaking of hands.
- ☐ Encourage physical distancing, especially in the sanctuary.
- ☐ Volunteers are screened before helping with worship.
- ☐ Ask for reservations prior to each worship or gathering.
- ☐ If attendance is limited, provide two weekly worship services.



5. Will you allow your child(ren) to attend a class on Sunday morning? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Not right away
- ☐ No
- ☐ N/A

6. Will you allow your child(ren) to attend a class on a weekday or evening? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Not right away
- ☐ No
- ☐ N/A

7. What precautions should our church take with children's classes? Select all that apply: *

- ☐ Hold classes outdoors (weather permitting).
- ☐ Provide masks as needed.
- ☐ Sit at least 6 feet apart.
- ☐ Provide activities in which kids do not need to touch each other.
- ☐ Provide hand sanitizer stations in the classrooms.
- ☐ Remind kids to sneeze or cough into their elbow.
- ☐ Volunteers are screened before helping with classes.



8. When should our church start to reopen? *

- ☐ August 2020
- ☐ September 2020
- ☐ When Badger Bounce Back/CDC guidelines are met.

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