

The Hilltop Chimes

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Interim Pastor: Rev. Stephen Welch

120 Kuckkan Lane Watertown, WI 53094
Email: swelch@firstcongwttn.org

Phone/Fax 920-261-6213

OCTOBER 2020

Welcome Rev. Stephen Welch



It is with great pleasure that I would like to introduce our interim pastor, the Reverend Stephen Welch, a familiar face to most of you. Pastor Stephen has been fulfilling other interim ministries since he left us over 2 ½ years ago and is just wrapping up his latest assignment.

He will begin his second tour of duty with First Congregational United Church of Christ-Watertown on October 1st, 2020. Please join me in welcoming pastor Stephen's steady hand back to our church family. I am looking forward to his seasoned leadership and spiritual guidance.

Blessings, Dale Bakke, Moderator

Contact: Dale.bakke@live.com 920-400-0265

Note: Pastor Stephen will lead our *VIRTUAL SERVICE* from the sanctuary on Sunday, October 4th (World Communion Sunday) and he asks that you bring bread and cup to your table at home to share in the sacrament.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE:
Exodus 20: 1-4, 7-9, 12-20 (NRSV)

THE EPISTLE LESSON:
Philippians 3: 4b-14 (NRSV)

SERMON
"It's World Wide Communion Sunday"



From Conference Minister, Rev. Franz Rigertz

... Dear friends, Grace, mercy and peace to you in the Spirit of Christ!

I greet you with gratitude, having experienced a time of spiritual renewal during a two-month summer sabbatical. I read a number of books, with particular interest in American history and politics, seeking a fuller understanding of our long struggle for racial justice and the acute social and cultural tensions of our day. Here are some of the books I found most compelling:

- "Christ in Crisis" by Jim Wallis
- "The Soul of America" by Jon Meacham
- "Climate Church, Climate World" by Jim Antal
- "These Truths" by Jill Lepore
- "The Universal Christ" by Richard Rohr
- "How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going" by Susan Beaumont

I did spend a few weeks mountain hiking in Colorado and enjoyed a couple fishing trips up north! But mostly I treasured the little things – a new retriever pup named Theodore, biking country roads, home projects, and simply savoring conversations with Trinn and our three twenty somethings. So, thank you for this gift of time. Special thanks to trusted staff colleagues who covered portions of my work portfolio. I feel reinvigorated and ready for the journey ahead!

That said . . . never in my fifty-four years do I remember living in such sobering times. With no pandemic end in sight and an array of stressful and worrisome troubles accompanying our social isolation, these days bring uncertainty, anxiety and distress. All of us have been affected in our mental and emotional health at one level or another. So, the biblical mandate is more important than ever

– love one another! And don't forget to be kind to yourself.

The American landscape is indeed hurting. Storms swamp the south. Fires ravage the west. A climate screams in peril. Political divisiveness renders law makers inept. Neighbors despise one another over yard signs. Safety measures for congregations preparing to gather in person so easily misconstrued as political leanings. Summer long peaceful protests brutally disrupted by riots and looting, forcing too many of us into a false dichotomy – one can support “black lives matter” and the long quest for racial justice and also denounce the violence and vandalism that has caused such destruction to local businesses.

On top of all that, we draw near a presidential election that will undoubtedly have historic consequences in terms of the collective character of our nation, the ongoing preservation of our democracy, and – at the highest level – the presence or absence of the sacred values Jesus taught: decency, honesty, humility, generosity and love for all.

Yet, together we continue this journey, seeking some unifying salve, some measure of kindness, some glimpse of hope, some steadfast reminder that God's Spirit yet yearns to fashion us into a beloved community. I believe – in this moment – our faith is vitally important precisely because the road ahead is unknown and likely to present sharp curves, unexpected bumps and dangerous intersections.

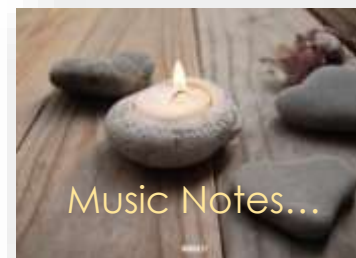
I noted earlier this week that Sunday's Common Lectionary reading from Exodus is the story of the Israelites wandering through the wilderness. A fearful journey with an uncertain future – that sure resonates! Amidst all the grumbling about their forsaken plight, and their quick desire to turn back to a familiar oppression rather than trust in further liberation, God graces them with quails in the evening and manna in the morning. Blessings in the midst of doubt. Bread for an uncertain journey. The sustenance of spiritual companionship. **I wonder – along this weary road – in what ways has God's surprising grace nourished you?**

Finally, friends, I simply want to lift up all of our pastors, lay leaders and congregations in grateful prayer. Thank you for the ways you continue to connect and nurture community life despite the many challenges. We will endure this long chapter, and we will come through on the other side with both a restoration of many things beloved to us and a transformation into some new expressions of the United Church of Christ.

In the coming weeks, I invite you to look for the launching of two Conference initiatives:

- **Kairos Call to Action** – a rollout of the 10 critically important ways your church and household can address the climate crisis . . . and
- **Tending the Soul** – a communication piece highlighting the various Conference programs that support strong and healthy congregational life.

In God's sure grace, Franz



Juanita Edington

c.920-988-2416/h.206-6111

jaemusiclover@gmail.com

We continue to seek your offering of musical gifts for our online worship. 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, but don't know how to begin. Technology shouldn't stand in the way of you sharing your musical gifts.

A big thank you goes to those who provided musical offerings during the month of September-Lily Kulick, Susie Krueger, Emily Ortega, and myself.

I have included a recent devotion from the UCC Still Speaking Devotional series, that resonated with me, and thought perhaps, might also resonate with some of you.

“How Can I Keep From Singing.....”

(continued→)

(Music Notes...continued)

How Can I Keep from Singing?

August 29, 2020

Written by **John Edgerton**

*Give praise to the LORD, proclaim God's name;
make known among the nations what God has
done. Sing to the LORD, sing praises; tell of all God's
wonderful acts.- Psalm 105:1-2 (NIV)*

It's an odd irony of hymn singing that the more I love a hymn, the less able I am to sing it. I get to my favorite lines and a lump rises in my throat and tears come to my eyes. The notes I want to belt out at full voice come out crooked, and I sound less like a crooner than I do like a bullfrog.

This is particularly true for one of my favorite hymns, "How Can I Keep from Singing." I want to really thunder out: "No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that rock I'm clinging. Since Love is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?" But before I even get to "my inmost calm," I'm in full-on frog mode with that lovely run of descending thirds eyeing me reproachfully.

Normally, the choir and congregation cover up for this moment, and my poor lumpy croaking goes unnoticed. But now that I'm singing all by myself as I worship on my couch, there's not much to cover it up. The Psalms do, indeed, tell me that I have to sing. But they never say anything about having to sing well. As long as this strange season of remote worship lasts, the choir of frogs will be in full effect.

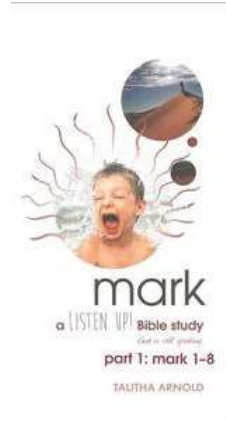
And I'll bet that as far as God is concerned, I've never sounded better.

Prayer: Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear that music ringing. It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?



About the Author: John Edgerton is Lead Pastor at First United Church of Oak Park, Illinois

LISTEN UP! JOIN OUR BIBLE STUDY



From Melissa Our group continues to meet on ZOOM at 9am on Tuesdays. We have wonderful conversations. We have just started the Book of Mark. Join our ZOOM meeting, or sign up to receive the emails for the lessons and you can work through it on your own. Join the meeting here:

From Pilgrim Press website:

Mark: Parts 1 and 2 LISTEN UP! Bible Study:

Mark's Gospel, the shortest of the four Gospels, gets right to the point and tells us what mattered most to the earliest of Christians.

Mark didn't have the time, or want to take the time, to deal with anything that didn't draw a straight line from Jesus' baptism to the empty tomb. His goal is to get this good news down on papyrus and out to people now, before it lost its urgency, before any more people died or drifted away from this new faith.

Mark's is a bare-bones Gospel with a raw faith. From the very beginning of his Gospel, Mark has one purpose--to show us that this Jesus Christ was the One. The One who truly was, as the Roman centurion proclaimed at the cross when Jesus breathed his last, the "Son of God."

Mark seeks to strengthen his readers, and us, in that faith. From the very first verse, his focus is the good news that this Jesus is who he said he was--the One worth listening to, the One worth following, the One worth giving your life for. This is the Jesus we meet in the pages of Mark. That's reason enough to read this urgent, raw Gospel.

Tuesdays at 9 a.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/232183369?pwd=N0pmNDhqd3poTXFtdG1rT0xYazNqdz09>

From the Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries

Melissa Mattke 262-719-1383.

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mmattke@firstcongwtnn.org



Sunday School

We have been continuing our ZOOM Sunday School at 10:30am on Sunday. The group is working our way through the Books of the Bible. Each week we learn different "highlights" in each Book. We always end with a scavenger hunt...that is the favorite activity with these kiddos. They are now loving sending me on hunts! Feel free to join us anytime!

Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/183320649?pwd=UnFLMU9>

[TenU2b0t3b2RVUEhyV1J6UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/183320649?pwd=UnFLMU9)

Youth Group

We meet on Sundays at 11:30am and on Wednesdays at 6pm. We have been doing a lot of discussing about their feelings with the Covid-19 situation and school. They have also helped me with some of the assignments I have for my classes. We also play games 😊 We all miss eating together and playing games in person, however we are all being patient for when the time comes for us to do that safely. Feel free to join us!

Sundays at 11:30

and Wednesdays at 6:00

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

[OWVVR4MVg4QkpXbjNXL1NVQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/671375141?pwd=RWswNld)



UNLEASHING POTENTIAL (formerly Neighborhood Houses)
OF ST. LOUIS, MO

"Unleash[ing] the magnificent potential in children, families and neighborhoods that leads to a just community for all."

Denise Carter, early childhood education director, was well aware of a rather large need within the population served by Neighborhood Houses. Many of the families are low wage earners, 75% of them earn less than \$20,000 annually. Truthfully, some simply struggle to provide many of basic needs for their children.

To that end, she designed a program to meet the health and development needs of infants and toddlers. Thus, the "Baby Essentials" program was birthed. The main goal was to provide diapers and formula for all of the children enrolled at the early childhood education center for families who could not afford a consistent supply.



credit: UP - early childhood webpage

Denise met with interim director of development, Christine Krueger, and shared her desire and need for funding. Christine went in search of those sources. She applied wherever she felt the need of the program matched the granters requirements. Fortunately, she filled out an application for a NIN direct service grant and was awarded \$3,000 in 2019.

In 2020, it was reported back to us that 100% of babies ages six weeks to 12 months received milk they needed while attending the Center. 50% of those babies also received one canister of formula per month for home consumption. Lastly, 100% of babies/toddlers ages six weeks to three years had diapers needed for Center and home use.

According to Christine, "thanks to the Neighbors in Need grant, our babies are dry and their tummies are full, and parents, who are already stressed financially, socially, and emotionally, have two less potential health issues with which to contend!"

Because of your generosity, direct service programs like that of Neighborhood Houses are grant funded, communities are strengthened, and neighbors experience love without judgment.

all children have the right to simply be children...

Please join us in supporting the 2020 Neighbors In Need Special Mission Offering. Thank you!



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Send your gifts to the church. We will collect offerings for **Neighbors In Need (NIN)** during the month of October.

Make checks payable to:
"First Congregational UCC Watertown"
In the memo section write "NIN"
Thank you in advance for your generosity

Book of Life

October Birthdays



Jeffrey Pauli	10/01	Jack Mattke	10/12
Jennie Ortega	10/02	Andrew Behlke	10/13
Zachary Fuchs	10/02	Ayden Kulick	10/15
Lexy Davis	10/02	Clarence Zabel III	10/15
William Lamp	10/02	Irene Neitzel	10/15
Greg Kulick	10/03	Easton Schumacher	10/16
John Welbourne	10/03	Camie Wood	10/18
Rob Rowedder	10/04	Roger Martin	10/19
Dan Winkelman	10/06	Mari Ulatowski	10/21
Dianna Stai	10/07	Joseph Schumacher	10/21
Molly Ryan	10/09	Janet Stangler	10/21
Stacy Winkelman	10/10	Cheryl Rowedder	10/25
Louise Lemke	10/11		
Bruce Bentz	10/11		

November Birthdays



Tyler Willing	11/03	Peter Welbourne	11/19
Danica Uttke	11/04	Owen Schwager	11/22
Emily Ortega	11/06	Kellen Schwager	11/22
Elijah Fremont	11/07	Nathaniel Budewitz	11/23
Chrysa Wescott	11/10	Angela Howard	11/23
Brent Wallen	11/12	Valerie Ewing	11/27
Alicia Boettcher	11/15	Lee Hyde	11/27
William Evans	11/16	Ruth Martin	11/29
Nicholas Miller	11/17	Diane Koch	11/30
Cathie Wallen	11/18		

BLOOD DRIVE UPDATE

Thursday, October 1st 1-6:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

Sign up now by contacting Melissa Mattke.
mmattke@firstcongwtn.org or
josc.mom@hotmail.com or 262-719-1383

YOU CAN ORDER SCRIPS CARDS

Call/Email church your order to Laurel in the church office on Mondays. Jennifer Rhodes will deliver them to your house. Make checks payable to "First Cong. Ucc - Watertown"

How to Contact Us:

Office Phone/Fax: 920-261-6213
Office email: lbentz@firstcongwtn.org

Financial Report of the General Fund as of August 31, 2020

2020	BUDGETED CONTRIBUTIONS	ACTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	BUDGETED TOTAL INCOME	ACTUAL TOTAL INCOME	BUDGETED EXPENSES	ACTUAL EXPENSES	MONTH GAIN OR LOSS	YEAR GAIN OR LOSS
January	\$19,821	\$15,066	\$20,712	\$16,081	\$20,414	\$20,318	-\$4,237	-\$4,237
February	\$19,821	\$13,698	\$20,712	\$14,752	\$20,414	\$29,503	\$14,751	-\$18,988
March	\$19,821	\$14,735	\$20,712	\$15,880	\$20,414	\$11,578	\$4,302	-\$14,686
April	\$19,821	\$15,257	\$20,712	\$15,309	\$20,414	\$12,607	\$2,702	-\$11,984
May	\$19,821	\$15,508	\$20,712	\$15,596	\$20,414	\$18,372	-\$2,776	-\$14,760
June	\$19,821	\$14,002	\$20,712	\$14,055	\$20,414	\$24,054	-\$9,999	-\$24,759
July	\$19,821	\$19,102	\$20,712	\$19,575	\$20,414	\$16,865	\$2,710	-\$22,049
August	\$19,821	\$30,316	\$20,712	\$30,664	\$20,414	\$13,136	\$17,528	-\$4,521



Virtual Worship in October:

World Communion Sunday, October 4

Pastor Stephen asks that you bring bread and juice to your table at home and join in the sacraments

Sunday, October 11--Rev. Stephen Welch

Sunday, October 18--Rev. Stephen Welch

Sunday, October 25--Rev. Stephen Welch

How to Join Us for Worship:

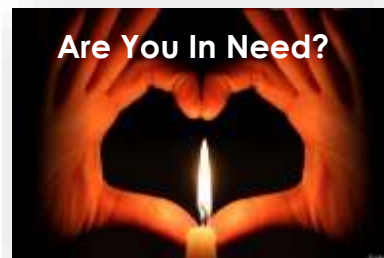
- 1) Through the link sent out weekly "Welcome to Worship" email.
- 2) Our church's Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-United-Church-of-Christ-118640148151341/>
- 3) Watertown Cable channel 985 broadcasts on Thursdays at 10 am and 5 pm; Sunday at 6 pm.
- 4) Our new church website (see 'Media'):
<https://firstcongwtn.org/> Services posted on Saturday night.
- 5) **Communion Sundays** the first Sunday of each month. Bring bread and juice to your table at home and join in the sacraments

Prayer Concerns

- Audrey Lamp, Fred Schroeder, Irene Neitzel, Marian Carlson, and Pauline Wittenwyler, living at home or in health centers
- Adam Markus' friend Kevin, recently diagnosed with an inoperable tumor
- Barb Lottmann, receiving therapy; Barb's daughter Heather
- Bill Edington's brother Darin, dealing with health concerns
- Kathy Lamp (daughter-in-law of Audrey), for healing
- Kelly, recovering from the coronavirus
- Lola Mundt's cousins, Shari and Stephanie who have Covid.
- Nancy Renz and her daughter, Jessica Greene
- Lynda Eicher's friend, Charlie, diagnosed with cancer.
- Schools, colleges and universities as they prepare for the coming year

(Call or email prayer requests by Wednesdays)

Church office (920-261-6213) or
lbentz@firstcongwtn.org



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

For confidential assistance, please call the church office

How to Contact Us:

Office Phone/Fax:
920-261-6213

Interim Office email:
lbentz@firstcongwtn.org

OCTOBER 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				<p>1</p> <p>10am - Worship Broadcast</p> <p>5pm - Worship Broadcast</p> <p>BLOOD DRIVE 1-6:00</p> <p>6:30-7:00 – Meditation Group meets in Youth Room Masks required.</p>	2	<p>3</p> <p>5</p> <p>5pm - Worship posted</p>
<p>4</p> <p>10am - Worship posted</p> <p>10:30am – ZOOM Sunday School</p> <p>- 11:30am - ZOOM Youth Group</p> <p>6pm - Worship Broadcast</p>	5	<p>6</p> <p>9am - Church Staff meets</p> <p>9am - ZOOM Bible Study</p>	7	<p>4pm - Prayer Requests Due 6 P.M. - ZOOM Youth Group</p>	8	<p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>12</p> <p>10am - Worship Broadcast</p> <p>5pm - Worship Broadcast</p> <p>6:30-7:00 – Meditation Group meets in Youth Room Masks required.</p> <p>5pm - Worship posted</p>
<p>11</p> <p>10am - Worship posted</p> <p>10:30am - ZOOM Sunday School</p> <p>- 11:30am - ZOOM Youth Group</p> <p>6pm - Worship Broadcast</p>	12	<p>13</p> <p>9am - ZOOM Bible Study</p> <p>6:30pm - Church Council -</p>	14	<p>4pm - Prayer Requests Due 6 P.M. - ZOOM Youth Group</p>	15	<p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>19</p> <p>10am - Worship Broadcast</p> <p>5pm - Worship Broadcast</p> <p>6:30-7:00 – Meditation Group meets in Youth Room Masks required.</p> <p>5pm - Worship posted</p>
<p>18</p> <p>10am - Worship posted</p> <p>10:30am - ZOOM Sunday School</p> <p>- 11:30am - ZOOM Youth Group</p> <p>6pm - Worship Broadcast</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6:30pm - Trustees - TBA</p>	<p>20</p> <p>9am - ZOOM Bible Study</p>	<p>21</p> <p>4pm - Prayer Requests Due 6 P.M. - ZOOM Youth Group</p>	<p>22</p> <p>10am - Worship Broadcast</p> <p>5pm - Worship Broadcast</p> <p>6:30-7:00 – Meditation Group meets in Youth Room Masks required.</p>	23	<p>24</p> <p>26</p> <p>5pm - Worship posted</p> <p>-</p>
<p>25</p> <p>10am - Worship posted</p> <p>10:30am - ZOOM Sunday School</p> <p>11:30am - ZOOM Youth Group</p> <p>6pm - Worship Broadcast</p>	26	<p>27</p> <p>9am - ZOOM Bible Study</p>	<p>28</p> <p>4pm - Prayer Requests Due 6 P.M. - ZOOM Youth Group</p>	29	30	31