

# The Hilltop Chimes

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
120 Kuckkan Lane Watertown, WI 53094  
Rev. Stephen Welch, Interim Pastor

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## FEBRUARY 2021



### Dear Church Family Members and Friends,

At a continuing education event for pastors that I attended a few years ago, we were taught an exercise that I find very compelling. I was asked to envision the next chapters in my ministry – *“As I look forward, where is my passion?” “What has heart and meaning for me?” “In this time of my life, for what am I searching?” “What satisfies me?” “What excites me?” “What contributions do I want to make?” “What actions can I take in search of that which is important to me?”*

The most interesting part of this process for me came next. I expected the seminar leader to urge us all to make a commitment to fulfill one or more of these visions. Instead, he required us to use a different vocabulary. And the wording DOES make a BIG difference.

As a result of my reflections, I needed to discern how I would complete the following phrase: **“I am a commitment to ...”** Do you hear the difference? The question is not “I make a commitment to ...”, but rather **“I AM a commitment to ...”**

As our congregation prepares for our Annual Meeting after a year of pandemic and virtual worship and virtual fellowship and separated Sunday School, I invite and urge us all to discover how we would choose to complete this phrase. For me, at the beginning of this New Year, I am excited to say “I am a Commitment to Justice”. “I am a Commitment to Mission.” “I am a Commitment to discipleship of Jesus of Nazareth.”

As we approach our virtual annual meeting on February 14, I encourage every one of us to ask ourselves the

questions I was asked: “What excites you?” “About what are you passionate?” “Where is your joy?” “Where is your heart?” “What fulfills you?”

**If you do not find fulfillment in what you are doing, then you are in the wrong place.** Even after months of COVID 19, none of us needs to be a sad, stressed, wearied, beaten down church member whose only reason for showing up is a sense of obligation or guilt. Discipleship is not about what you do ... **discipleship is about who you are.** So, my dear, dear friends. How do you complete this sentence for yourself?

***“I AM a Commitment to ...”***

Pastor Stephen, Interim Minister

### How to Join Us for Worship

- 1) Through the email link sent out weekly “Welcome to Worship” from [lbentz@firstcongwttn.org](mailto:lbentz@firstcongwttn.org)
- 2) Our church’s Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-United-Church-of-Christ-118640148151341/>
- 3) Watertown Cable channel 985 broadcasts the Sunday service on Thursdays at 10 am and 5 pm and then again on the following Sunday at 6 pm.
- 4) Our new church website (see ‘Media’): <https://firstcongwttn.org/> \_Services posted on Saturday night.
- 5) **Communion Sundays** the first Sunday of each month. Bring the bread and cup to your table at home and join in the sacraments



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 January-Juanita Edington, Susie Krueger, Mark A. Miller, and Jennie Ortega. We were fortunate to have permission to share a music video from Mark A. Miller. "God is Still Speaking" has been used recently in National UCC services. (He also composed and led the song "I Believe" with a virtual choir that we viewed around Easter 2020.)

**Mark Miller**

Mark believes passionately that music can change the world. He also believes in Cornell West's quote that 'Justice is what love looks like in public.' His dream is that the music he composes, performs, teaches and leads will inspire and empower people to create the beloved community.

Mark serves as Assistant Professor of Church Music at Drew Theological School and is a Lecturer in the Practice of Sacred Music at Yale University. He also is the Minister of Music of Christ Church in Summit, New Jersey.

Since 1999 Mark has led music for United Methodists and others around the country, including directing music for the 2008 General Conference. His choral anthems are best sellers for Abingdon Press and Choristers Guild and his hymns are published in "Worship & Song", "Sing! Prayer and Praise", "Zion Still Sings",

"Amazing Abundance", "The Faith We Sing", and others.

Mark received his Bachelor of Arts in Music from Yale University and his Master of Music in Organ Performance from Juilliard. Mark is a lifelong United Methodist. He is the grandson, son, brother, uncle, and cousin to United Methodist clergy. As a lay delegate to the 2000 and 2004 and 2012 General Conferences, Mark was a witness to Christ's mission of breaking down the dividing walls of hostility and fear in the United Methodist Church. (website biography)

*Juanita Edington*  
c.920-988-2416/h.206-6111  
[jaemusiclover@gmail.com](mailto:jaemusiclover@gmail.com)

From Your Moderator, Dale Bakke  
**Congregational ANNUAL Meeting**

**OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

Annual Meeting – Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

We welcome you to "Share the Love" at our Congregations Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup> (yes, it is Valentine's day!) at 11:00 am via Zoom. We encourage all who are able to join in to approve our annual report.

A link will be provided for you to attend the meeting via the internet with an audio or video connection or you may call in on a phone line. All active members are welcome.

Hard Copies will be mailed and emailed on February 5th. Please have your copy on hand for the meeting. The link for the meeting will be sent out on Friday February 12<sup>th</sup>.

**AGENDA**

- Welcome and Opening Prayer
- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Quorum
- Annual Report
- Motion to approve
- Closing Prayer
- Motion to adjourn





## Versiti Blood Drive Report

We had a great turnout for our January blood drive. We collected 33 units of blood. Thank you to all that were able to come out and donate.

\*For future reference, if you receive your Covid-19 vaccination, you need to wait 48 hours before you can donate any blood product.

**Our next blood drive will be held on May 27th from 1:00pm-6:00pm.** Masks are required. We will not be serving any food. Many donors are needed at this time. Our goal is to have at least 30 donors at the May drive.

If you would like to sign up to donate blood, please contact me or use this link to sign up. [https://donate.wisconsin.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/203518](https://donate.wisconsin.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/203518)

If you have any questions contact me. [mmattke@firstcongwttm.org](mailto:mmattke@firstcongwttm.org) or [iosc.mom@hotmail.com](mailto:iosc.mom@hotmail.com) or 262-719-1383

## VIRTUAL MEDITATION?

### Have you considered Virtual Meditation?

The Thursday evening meditation group that meets at 6:30 is questioning if others may be interested in joining if we were to offer these sessions virtually via Zoom or phone? Typical sessions last for 30 minutes and are a great way to refocus and relax. We are not currently set up to offer the virtual sessions, but we can easily accommodate any requests. Please contact Laurel Bentz via email or phone at [lbentz@firstcongwttm.org](mailto:lbentz@firstcongwttm.org) or 920-261-6213 and we will follow up with you.

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## Our Bible Study continues....

Our group continues to meet on ZOOM at 9am on Tuesdays. We have wonderful conversations. We are working our way through the Book of Luke. 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

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/232183369?pwd=N0pmNDhq3poTXFtdG1rT0xYazNgdz09>

## Serve in Worship Virtually



**Liturgists:** Liturgists read the scripture and other responsive readings during a worship service. We have been very successful with recording via Zoom for worship and are looking for volunteers for January.

Recordings are done Thursday mornings at 11 a.m. via Zoom from your home computer or you can come to the office and record on our laptop.

Liturgists are not yet recording in the sanctuary. If you are interested in being a liturgist for the virtual services, please contact Laurel at [lbentz@firstcongwttm.org](mailto:lbentz@firstcongwttm.org).

**Acolytes:** The purpose of candle lighting has been to “bring the light of the Holy spirit” into a worship space. To virtually light candles for our worship setting acolytes are recorded lighting candles from home. Juanita gives guidance on how to do this and assists in making it possible and meaningful.

Although it’s been children who serve as acolytes, people of all ages are invited. If you are interested in being an acolyte for the virtual services, please contact Juanita. We love to have this as part of our service!



## Confirmation



We are starting...or should we say..restarting...our confirmation class. We were not able to continue the class last year due to Covid. Students and mentors were eager to get class going again.

Now we will meet on Wednesday evenings via Zoom from 6:00-7:00 p.m. The curriculum being used is "Affirming Faith". Our plan is to celebrate confirmation on Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020.

The class is open to students in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades so, if you wish to sign up contact Pastor Stephen [swelch@firstcongwttn.org](mailto:swelch@firstcongwttn.org) or Melissa [mmattke@firstcongwttn.org](mailto:mmattke@firstcongwttn.org) They will send out the link to join the ZOOM class.

### Saturday Morning Chats:

A few people used to gather in the church parking lot on Saturday mornings just to chat. The weather is making that not much fun 😊. So, let's change it to a Zoom chat time.

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments or if you need some help with Zoom!

Here is the Link to Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81250425554?pwd=LzFOVlhFL3J3dzRmL1ZRau1US1dnZz09>

Topic: Saturday Meet Up

Meeting ID: 812 5042 5554 Passcode: 266273

### Pen Pal Club



We are continuing with our pen pal club. This will be a fun way to keep in touch with each other and get to know somebody better! Cards,

letters and personal artwork can be mailed to each other. There is no "requirement" to join this club. No limited age or number of things you can send.

If you are interested in joining, please let me know and I will "assign" you a pal!

Melissa Mattke Coordinator 262-719-1383

[mmattke@firstcongwttn.org](mailto:mmattke@firstcongwttn.org)

[josc.mom@hotmail.com](mailto:josc.mom@hotmail.com)

## From the Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries

Melissa Mattke

Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries

[mmattke@firstcongwttn.org](mailto:mmattke@firstcongwttn.org) 920-261-6213

[josc.mom@hotmail.com](mailto:josc.mom@hotmail.com) 262-719-1383

### 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!

Here is the Link to Join Zoom Meeting

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

### H2O Youth Group:

We meet on Sundays at 11:30am -They have also helped me with some of the assignments I have for my classes. We also play games 😊.

We have started thinking of ways that we can help serve our community during these trying times. 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!

Here is the Link to Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/671375141?pwd=RWswNldOWVR4MVg4QkpXbjNXL1NVQT09>



# BOOK OF LIFE

## February Birthdays

- 02/01 Pauline Wittenwyler
- 02/02 Sarah Miller
- 02/03 Kaycee Bocher
- 02/05 Jason Schwager
- 02/07 Zachariah Koch
- 02/08 Troy Maas Jr
- 02/10 Sean Driessen
- 02/12 Robert Larson
- 02/15 Juanita Edington
- 02/18 Nicholas Bathke
- 02/18 June Schroeder
- 02/21 Sam Vogel
- 02/23 Tucker Fremont
- 02/25 Rebekah Wood
- 02/27 Desiree Livermore

**PASSING:** **Mark Leiser**, former church member, died peacefully on Jan. 8, 2021, surrounded by his loving family. He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Laureen; their sons, Andy (Trinity) and Kenny (Haley). Mark (and Laurie) were beloved members of our choir during their time with us and kept in touch after retiring to the Madison area.

## *Words of Thanks....*

To the Deacons  
 "To my church family, I want to thank you for the lovely flowers I received for Christmas. It was a surprise to have Jennifer Rhodes bring them to me and stay for a short visit. I appreciate your thoughtfulness. You are always in my thoughts and prayers. Happy New Year. From Marian Carlson



## *Prayer Request from January*

Prayers for our country and our elected leaders that we may find healing and unity for our divided nation and world.

Those living at home or in health care centers: Irene, Audrey, Arlene, Marian, Pauline.

Those who are grieving the death of loved ones and friends, especially Laurie Leiser and family who grieve the death of her husband, Mark.

Prayers for Bobbie Smith who has been admitted to hospice.

Those dealing with health issues, such as Karen who is recovering from shoulder replacement surgery, Melissa's father, Jerry who is dealing with extreme pain.

Prayers for patience.

Those friends, family, college students and community members affected by COVID 19 ... either by being sick, or infected, or living in quarantine. Such as Amy Gillingham, Vivian's daughter, Angela, and Lola's uncle Matt, who has pneumonia and COVID.

Prayers of thanks and praise for those who are recovering from illness and finishing treatments.

Prayers for those who are dealing with issues in their jobs, or in finding a job in this time of increasing unemployment.

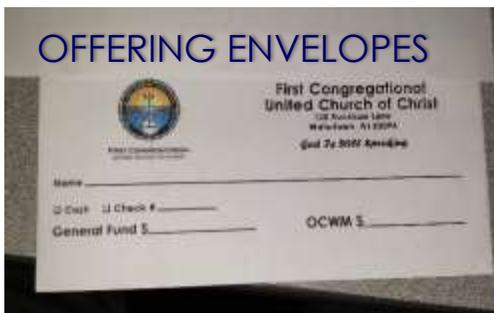
Teachers, school staff, students and parents who are facing significant issues during this pandemic.

Medical teams, doctors, nurses, those working to distribute the vaccines for this deadly virus.

## Financial Updates

### GENERAL FUND    As of December 30, 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	\$20,279	-\$4,198	-\$4,198
February	\$19,821	\$13,698	\$20,712	\$14,752	\$20,414	\$29,503	-\$14,751	-\$18,949
March	\$19,821	\$14,735	\$20,712	\$15,880	\$20,414	\$11,578	\$4,302	-\$14,647
April	\$19,821	\$15,257	\$20,712	\$15,309	\$20,414	\$12,607	\$2,702	-\$11,945
May	\$19,821	\$15,508	\$20,712	\$15,596	\$20,414	\$18,372	-\$2,776	-\$14,721
June	\$19,821	\$14,002	\$20,712	\$14,055	\$20,414	\$24,054	-\$9,999	-\$24,720
July	\$19,821	\$19,102	\$20,712	\$19,575	\$20,414	\$16,865	\$2,710	-\$22,010
August	\$19,821	\$30,316	\$20,712	\$30,664	\$20,414	\$13,136	\$17,528	-\$4,482
September	\$19,821	\$14,477	\$20,712	\$15,900	\$20,414	\$9,316	\$6,584	\$2,102
October	\$19,821	\$22,762	\$20,712	\$24,316	\$20,414	\$14,805	\$9,511	\$11,613
November	\$19,821	\$14,845	\$20,712	\$15,725	\$20,414	\$16,268	-\$543	\$11,070
December	\$19,821	\$16,047	\$20,712	\$16,961	\$20,414	\$18,996	-\$2,035	\$9,035



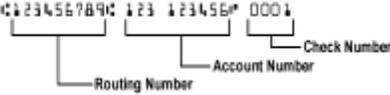
Envelopes for 2021 are available. If you have used the mailable envelopes in 2020, we have a box at church for you. New to using these envelopes? Call/email Laurel to get a box at Office: 920-261-6213 or [lbentz@firstcongwttn.org](mailto:lbentz@firstcongwttn.org)

**ELECTRONIC GIVING (EFT):** giving electronically is an option we have offered for a number of years with great success. You decide how much you want to have sent and when you want it sent through our secure Vanco program. Changes can be made easily within a day or two by contacting Laurel. Records are kept secure and confidential.

If you are interested in using this convenient method for giving to the church, **use the form on the next page** and give to Laurel in the church office. You can direct all questions to Laurel Bentz in the church office (261-6213 M-Th) or via email ([lbentz@firstcongwttn.org](mailto:lbentz@firstcongwttn.org))

# ELECTRONIC GIVING AUTHORIZATION FORM

**First Congregational UCC**  
**120 Kuckkan Lane, Watertown, WI 53094**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	ENVELOPE/DONOR #	DATE
<b>Effective date of authorization:</b> ____/____/____		
<b>Type of authorization:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> New authorization <input type="checkbox"/> Change donation amount <input type="checkbox"/> Change donation date <input type="checkbox"/> Change banking information <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue electronic donation		
Last Name	<i>First Name</i>	
Address		
City	State	Zip
Email Address		
<b>Date of first donation:</b> ____/____/____	<b>Frequency of donation:</b> (please check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 1 <sup>st</sup> <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 15 <sup>th</sup> <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-Weekly (every other week) <input type="checkbox"/> One Time	<b>Amount of first donation:</b> \$ _____
<b>CHECKING / SAVINGS</b>	Please debit my donation from my (check one): Savings Account (contact your financial institution for Routing #) Checking Account (attach a voided check below)	Routing Number: _____ <i>Valid Routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3</i>  Account Number: _____ 
	I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to my account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.	
Authorized Signature: _____		Date: _____

*If using a checking account, please attach a voided check at the bottom of this page.*

## February 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 9am - <b>ZOOM</b> Bible Study 11 AM - <b>STAFF MEETS</b>	3 4pm - Prayer Requests Due <del>6 P.M. - <b>ZOOM</b> Youth Group</del> 6-7:00 – Confirmation <b>ZOOM</b>	4 10am - Worship Broadcast 5pm - Worship Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation Group /Youth Room Masks required.	5 OFFICE CLOSED	6 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group <b>ZOOM</b>
7 <b>Holy Communion</b> 10am - Worship posted 10:30am – <b>ZOOM</b> Sunday School - 11:30am - <b>ZOOM</b> Youth Group 6pm - Worship Broadcast	8 SCRIPS orders due	9 9am - <b>ZOOM</b> Bible Study	10 4pm - Prayer Requests Due 6-7:00 – Confirmation <b>ZOOM</b> <del>6 P.M. - <b>ZOOM</b> Youth Group</del>	11 10am - Worship Broadcast 5pm - Worship Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation Group /Youth Room Masks required.	12 OFFICE CLOSED	13 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group <b>ZOOM</b>
14 10am - Worship posted 11 a.m. -Congregational Annual Meeting <b>ZOOM</b> 10:30am – <b>ZOOM</b> Sunday School - 11:30am - <b>ZOOM</b> Youth Group 6pm - Worship Broadcast	15	16 9am - <b>ZOOM</b> Bible Study 6:30, Council <b>ZOOM</b>	17 <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b> 4pm - Prayer Requests Due 6-7:00 – Confirmation <b>ZOOM</b> <del>6 P.M. - <b>ZOOM</b> Youth Group</del>	18 10am - Worship Broadcast 5pm - Worship Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation Group /Youth Room Masks required.	19 OFFICE CLOSED	20 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group <b>ZOOM</b>
21 <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> 10am - Worship posted 10:30am – <b>ZOOM</b> Sunday School - 11:30am - <b>ZOOM</b> Youth Group 6pm - Worship Broadcast	22	23 9am - <b>ZOOM</b> Bible Study	24 4pm - Prayer Requests Due 6-7:00 – Confirmation <b>ZOOM</b> <del>6 P.M. - <b>ZOOM</b> Youth Group</del>	25 10am - Worship Broadcast 5pm - Worship Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation Group /Youth Room Masks required.	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group <b>ZOOM</b>
28 <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> 10am - Worship posted 10:30am – <b>ZOOM</b> Sunday School - 11:30am - <b>ZOOM</b> Youth Group 6pm - Worship Broadcast						