

The Hilltop Chimes

JULY 2021 - Celebrating 176 years

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

Contact Information:
Phone/Fax: 920-261-6213
Pastor's email: swelch@firstcongwttn.org

Latest update from the Reopening Committee and Council

Effective immediately reservations will no longer be required to attend services. We have plenty of space to accommodate our summer attendees and still maintain proper social distancing.

Also, effective immediately, per the CDC guidelines, the wearing of masks to services will be **optional for fully vaccinated** attendees, but masks are **recommended (and requested) for all unvaccinated participants**.

Further, we request that all congregants that want to participate in choral pieces, except for the choral leader in front of the sanctuary, **wear a mask while singing**. Vaccinated participants are free to remove their masks after singing but are requested to mask prior to singing. (see *Juanita's related article on page 2*)

We plan to begin with an outdoor Fellowship after the Sunday, July 11th service. This is also the service where we will celebrate the 176th anniversary of the founding of our church.

We plan to voluntarily survey Sunday service attendants as to whether they are vaccinated. This information will be used to determine further modifications to our reopening policy. This will be a simple Yes or No checkbox that is to be anonymously left in the offering plates as you either enter or exit the Sanctuary.

<input type="checkbox"/> YES
<input type="checkbox"/> NO

Thank you in advance for your understanding and compliance with our changing policies.

Dale Bakke, Moderator

From the Pastor's Desk:



Dear Church Family,
Yesterday, Sunday, June 27 was Open and Affirming Sunday in the United Church of Christ. Despite the fact that being an ONA faith community here at

First Congregational has such a faithful, devoted, inclusive, welcoming, and affirming history I believe that there may be some church members who do not know what Open and Affirming really means. We all are living the meaning of this designation in such a way that we assume that we do not need the title anymore.

Not true. YES, we are living out our faith here at First Congregational that welcomes ALL people, but still there are many in our community who do not understand. There are even so-called Christians who seek to use our faith as a weapon against Lesbians, Gays, Bi-Sexual, Transgender and Queer sisters and brothers, mothers and fathers and daughters and sons. (LGBTQ)

That is why we need to intentionally take the time to again lift up, name, proclaim, love, and celebrate God's love and blessing and welcome and care for ALL.

The testimonies of these ministries proclaim the truth of God's power to transform cultures of hate and violence into communities of healing and reconciliation. They give witness to God's continuing testament and how the gifts of God are being liberated for service to the world and in the world.

Our congregation became one of those ONA congregations on July 13, 2014. It was a difficult process that required a lot of listening, praying, learning, and risking. In the end, a large majority of our congregation joyfully affirmed that we

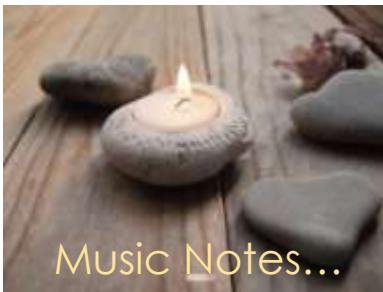
(*Pastor's Desk* continued..)

are Open to all and Affirming of all of God's children. *This means we joyfully and faithfully welcome LGBT people into the full life and leadership of our community.*

In the years since we have joined in the struggle for civil rights, blessed many couples, celebrated the 2015 ruling for same-sex marriage rights. We continue to work for the full inclusion of people regardless of sexual orientation and gender expression.

I hope and pray that you understand the meaning of ONA and affirm that this is the church that we were created to be, and this is the discipleship that Jesus challenges us to fulfill. ***"Jesus doesn't reject anyone; neither do we."***

--Pastor Stephen Welch



Notes from the Music Director

These musicians contributed during the month of June: Susie Krueger, Jennie Ortega, and myself. Thank you for willingly sharing your gifts of time and talent.

We are seeking your offering of musical gifts for our worship. As we have been sharing in-person worship, it is now suggested to have congregational singing only when masked and appropriate distance between family groups. We need to remember that while many may be vaccinated in our congregation, there are those who are not yet eligible to receive vaccines, or cannot, for various reasons.

****** Please note, one of the sources that was used in this decision comes at the end of my column. For our second month of in-person services, we are moving to the less restrictive guideline highlighted in yellow. This is well within the

common practice for churches of members in the United Church of Christ Musicians Association, although many are still not having congregational singing.

We would like to continue the practice of sharing music in a safe way to enrich our worship. The plan includes a solo vocalist leading the hymns for the day at a safe distance, unmasked and with a microphone for clarity.

Would you be interested in leading the hymns during worship on a Sunday? Would you be interested in sharing a musical offering (now that technology isn't a problem?) I am looking for some interested musicians for these parts of worship. The musical offering can be vocal or instrumental.

Please contact me if you would be interested.

Thank you!

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

****** THE HYMN SOCIETY'S RECOMMENDATION:
WE DO NOT CURRENTLY RECOMMEND THAT CONGREGATIONS SING.

1. The CDC still indicates that for unvaccinated people gathering and singing together is a high risk activity.
2. 27,000 new cases are still being reported daily in the U.S.
3. Worship services are by their very nature public events which include a number of variables that, depending on how each variable plays out, can quickly change the risk-factors involved in a gathering.
4. The new recommendations for unmasking only apply to those who are fully vaccinated, which still makes up far less than 50% of the total U.S. population.
5. The CDC guidelines for [Communities of Faith | CDC](#) have not changed or been updated since February 19th, 2021.

For any public group that does sing, wearing a mask will reduce the risk of spreading infection.



Bible Study continues....

Our group continues to meet on ZOOM at 9am on Tuesdays. We have wonderful conversations. We are studying the book of Romans. We plan to continue meeting over the summer months so we can stay connected!

Join our ZOOM meeting, or sign up to receive the emails for the lessons and you can work through it on your own. **Starting July 6th, there will be a new link!** Join the meeting here:

Here is the link to join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82456791631?pwd=S0M5R3RCS3dkcFJaODVQUHBWQ0Yvdz09>
Meeting ID: 824 5679 1631
Passcode: 074171



Saturday Morning Fellowship:

Every week on Sat at 10am join in Morning Fellowship for some chat time (and enjoy seeing church family and friends.)

It's not a Bible Study or a congregational meeting (although Pastor Stephen will be there) Its more like Coffee Fellowship except you provide your coffee and snacks and you can wear cozy slippers.

We may be meeting in person in the future, and all are welcome to attend that as well. Regular attendance is not necessary. We just meet and chat about life...lots of laughs are also had!

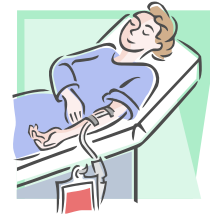
Starting July 3rd, there will be a new link to join!

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/87871939725?pwd=TKUwdTdCRHINV3lvMDJsOENXOVNoUT09>
Meeting ID: 878 7193 9725
Passcode: 339374

How to catch up if you missed Worship

- 1) Through the email link sent out weekly "Welcome to Worship" from lbentz@firstcongwtn.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 <https://firstcongwtn.org> Services posted on Saturday night. (see 'Media" tab)



BLOOD DRIVE

BLOOD CENTER OF WISCONSIN

CANCELLED

Versiti Blood Drive: Due to the lack of staffing on the part of Versiti, our July 29th Blood drive is cancelled. Please stay tuned for a rescheduled date! You do not have to wait for the blood drive to be held in our building, if you see another drive that you are available to donate at, please do so. They are desperately seeking donors.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

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



From the Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries

Melissa Mattke

Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries
mmattke@firstcongwtn.org 920-261-6213
josc.mom@hotmail.com 262-719-1383

Sunday School and H2O Youth Group

Sunday School and Youth Group on Zoom is taking a break for this summer. We need to figure out the logistics of how to have me in the service and doing programing at the same time! 😊 Be watching for more information as our reopening committee continues to strive to make things safe for us to return!



Watertown Food Pantry and Personal Essentials Pantry Open House in September

The Watertown Food Pantry and PEP Pantry have had facelifts and we would love for you to see their new space. Come to our Open House on Saturday, September 25th from 12-2pm.

Please take a few minutes to learn about **your** Watertown Food Pantry. Board members will be happy to show you our facilities and share how our program works. Patrons are able to select fresh meat and a huge variety of many purchased and donated items on a monthly basis.

We partner with the Personal Essentials Pantry, located next to us, and they will also be showcasing their program at the same time. PEP provides personal essentials ranging from laundry soap to toothpaste to shampoo and everything in between.

We both operate with volunteer teams of dedicated people. We live in a very generous community and are grateful for every volunteer and donor, and our ability to share with others.

We are located in the basement of Immanuel Lutheran Church, 209 N. Ninth Street. Come meet us!!

"Christmas in July Tree":

Jennifer Rhodes has offered an alternative focus to this annual mission project. "Ornament Gifts" on the tree this year will go to "Lueder Haus" which is a crisis stabilization facility in Jefferson County that is the bridge between people with mental heath concerns and a fully productive and safe life in the community.

Our gifts will give assistance with some very basic needs for clients that are admitted and often times have nothing but the clothing on their backs.

Watch for the tree through July 25th.



DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS July-August available

Upper Room and These Days devotional booklets are available in the narthex. You pick one up after church on Sundays OR you can stop by and pick one up during the week (please call ahead.)

Peace and grace, Laurel W Bentz



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

Book of Life

✝ **Passing:** *Justin "Jay" M. Fuchs*, son of, Craig and Kay (Brom) Fuchs passed away on Friday, June 18, 2021. He was born on July 20, 1980 and confirmed in our church in 1995. Justin had worked as an executive chef at Heartis Seniors Living in Brookfield. A memorial service was held on Wednesday, June 23, 2021. at Hafemeister Funeral Home with Rev. Stephen Welch officiating.

Prayers of comfort and deepest sympathy go out to his parents, his brother, Zachary Fuchs; his sister, Nicole (Joseph) Schumacher including his nephews Easton and Maverick Schumacher.



Birth: *Nora Lynn Kuehl* was born June 2 ,2021 to Kevin and Colette (Swenson) Kuehl. Rev. Stephen Welch will officiate at her baptism in our sanctuary on Sunday, July 11, 2021 during our worship service.



We had two high school seniors graduate in 2021.



Helen Ulatowski graduated in March and is employed at EK Machine in Fall River. She is hoping for a paid apprenticeship by the fall. She is the daughter of Mari and Mark Ulatowski.

Paige Driessen graduated in June. She will be attending UW-Oshkosh in the fall to pursue a degree in nursing. She is the daughter of Kevin and Kate Driessen.

The Congregation is so very proud of these graduates and please continue to keep them in your prayers!

Financial Report from the Trustees – As of May 31, 2021

2021	BUDGETED CONTRIBUTIONS	ACTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	BUDGETED TOTAL INCOME	ACTUAL TOTAL INCOME	BUDGETED EXPENSES	ACTUAL EXPENSES	MONTH GAIN OR LOSS	YEAR GAIN OR LOSS
January	\$17,807	\$15,325	\$18,715	\$16,399	\$18,586	\$15,669	\$730	\$730
February	\$17,805	\$18,042	\$18,719	\$18,992	\$18,586	\$16,521	\$2,471	\$3,201
March	\$17,805	\$17,685	\$18,719	\$21,170	\$18,587	\$19,298	\$1,872	\$5,073
April	\$17,805	\$15,600	\$18,719	\$16,684	\$18,588	\$14,630	\$2,054	\$7,127
May	\$17,805	\$14,840	\$18,719	\$14,942	\$18,588	\$15,354	-\$412	\$6,715

July 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Join us for our 176 th Anniversary Worship Service Sunday, July 11 th at 10 a.m. And a Special Outdoor Coffee Fellowship				1 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation- Youth Room	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM
4 Communion Sunday 10:00 - IN PERSON WORSHIP 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	5 Office Closed	6 9am - ZOOM Bible Study 11 AM - STAFF MEETS	7 4pm - Prayer Requests Due	8 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation- Youth Room	9 OFFICE CLOSED	10 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM
11 10:00 - IN PERSON WORSHIP 176 th Anniversary of our Church. Baptism: Nora Lynn Kuehl Outdoor Coffee Fellowship 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	12 SCRIPS orders due	13 9am - ZOOM Bible Study	14 4pm - Prayer Requests Due	15 Memorial Service: Pauline Wittenwyler at Schmutzler/Vicks Visitation 1-2 p.m. Service to follow at 2 p.m. 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation- Youth Room	16 OFFICE CLOSED	17 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM
18 10:00 - IN PERSON WORSHIP 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	19	20 9am - ZOOM Bible Study 6:30, COUNCIL	21 4pm - Prayer Requests Due	22 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation - Youth Room	23 OFFICE CLOSED	24 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM
25 10:00 - IN PERSON WORSHIP 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	26	27 9am - ZOOM Bible Study	28 4pm - Prayer Requests Due	29 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-7:00 – Meditation -Youth Room	30 OFFICE CLOSED	31 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM