

The Hilltop Chimes

FEBRUARY 2022

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



Dear Church Family Members and Friends,

I miss you. All of you. Each of you. I miss my church family at First Congregational UCC, Watertown. I miss all visitors and friends and those who may

have found a link to this newsletter. I miss my children and grandchildren and brothers and sisters and my mom. I miss you.

I miss sharing your smile, your joys, your struggles, your prayers. I miss YOU. This pandemic is stretching out longer and longer than I ever imagined. Isolation is a truth that we all are experiencing.

Virtual worship and virtual Bible Study and virtual "Get togethers" on Saturday morning through zoom are a plus, but they do not replace your hug, your friendship, your thoughtful sharing, your visits, and in-depth conversations. I miss you.

Hopefully, you can see yourself in at least one of those descriptions. Because I want YOU to know the truth. I miss all that you bring to my life and the life of this church family.

I am aware that these last couple of years have upset us all and that the closing of "in person" worship once again is deeply disappointing to us all. I do not question or disagree with the decision. What I am recognizing is that it hurts, and it is having consequences that are not easy to accept.

And so, I promise to find healthy and safe ways to stay in communication with you. I trust that you are doing the same. Phone calls. Emails. Letters and cards sent in the mail. Zoom Bible Study.

Zoom Get Togethers. Zoom Sunday School. Zoom Youth Groups. Virtual worship that is available to us all online. It may take extra efforts, but they are worth it. Your friendship is worth every investment of time and devotion that is needed. Your participation in the life of this congregation is essential to the fulfillment of our mission and ministry goals.

On a daily basis I invite and cherish your prayers. Count on you and I promise that you can count on me.

"I miss you" is not the end of the story. It is the next beginning. Let's do it together!

Pastor Stephen, Interim Minister

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Annual Meeting – Sunday, February 13th, 2022

We welcome you to our Congregations Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 13th 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.

Your copy will be mailed/emailed on February 4th. Please have your copy on hand for the meeting. The link for the meeting will be sent out on Friday February 11th.

---Dale Bakke, Moderator

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 on Sundays at 10 a.m.. in the sanctuary. If you are interested in being a liturgist for the virtual services, please contact Laurel at lbentz@firstcongwtn.org.

Would you be interested in leading the hymns during worship on a Sunday? Would you be interested in sharing a musical offering? I am looking for musicians to serve our church by sharing their musical gifts. The musical offering can be vocal or instrumental. Please contact me if you would be interested. Thank you!

Thank you to Susie Krueger and Juanita Edington who provided the musical offerings during the month of January.

Finally, I wanted to share a Still Speaking Devotional that recently got me thinking. I think it speaks to everyone, musician and or not, especially the closing prayer.

“Sing Because You Have To”

by Molly Baskette | published on Jan 16, 2022

But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. – Psalm 59:16 (NIV)

Last Thursday the singer Bobby McFerrin, hero of the late '80s number 1 hit, “Don’t Worry Be Happy,” was singing at my church.

The occasion: a hippie 12-hour singalong on the penultimate day of the year, called “Sing for Your Life.” A small group of us, masked and tested, stood on the chancel and filled the sanctuary with nonsense sounds. We matched pitch, found harmonies, introduced discordant notes, took things in wild new directions, or just swayed to the music like insane sea anemones.

Bobby, who led us, is 71 now. He is slender and moves slowly because of the Parkinson’s that has been gradually consuming him. His eyes have a hundred-yard stare, but every once in a while the slackness of his face erupts into the impish visage of yore. He doesn’t have the vocal range he once did, but he’s still got the chops: a wild range of syllables and tones that froth up from the leviathan depths of the ocean within him, each of them starting a conversation.

At one point he paused the music, and cupping the mic, said slyly: “Anyone have any answers they want questioned?”

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

Notes from the Music Director

As we have been sharing in-person worship, it continues to be recommended to have congregational singing only when masked and appropriate distance between family groups (The Hymn Society recommendations). 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. Aerosols expelled by singing move outward farther than those of ordinary breathing or talking.

We are seeking your offering of musical gifts for our worship. 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 for the in-person congregation and the congregation attending on-line.

My teenage son raised his hand. "I know how much Parkinson's is taking away from you because I've seen it ravage my aunt, who was once so independent. How do you find your fire?"

Bobby answered, "I get up every day, and I sing. I sing while I feed the dog. I sing while I get my wife breakfast, slowly. I sing because I have to. I still have so much music left inside of me."

Prayer: God, wake us up and make us sing, every day, no matter the burdens we carry. May we sing, as an exercise in emptying our lungs of old breath. May we sing, because it's how we know we're still breathing after all that has happened. May we sing to be Your lungs in the world, whether we are worried or happy. Amen.+

About the Author: Molly Baskette pastors at First Church Berkeley (CA) UCC. She is the author of several books about church renewal, parenting & faith, and spirituality. You can connect with her by subscribing to her newsletter, [Doomsday Dance Party](#).



Reminder: Thursday MEDITATION

The Thursday evening meditation group meets at 6:30 in the Youth Room. Typically, sessions last for 30 minutes and are led by church member, Pam Martin. Participants say that it's a great way to refocus and relax. No RSVP needed, Masks are required.

Please contact Laurel Bentz via email or phone at lbentz@firstcongwtnn.org or 920-261-6213 and we will follow up with you.



Our Bible Study continues....

Our group continues to meet on ZOOM at 9am on Tuesdays. We have wonderful conversations. Please feel free to join us at any time! We will continue with the "Listen Up" series with a 3 part study of the Book of Genesis. Workbook materials are provided.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/232183369?pwd=N0pmNDhq3poTXFtdG1rT0xYazNqdz09>

A new book study, Grounded by Diana Butler Bass, will begin Friday, February 18th at 9 a.m. Books will be available to "borrow" through our Frater Library Fund. Alternatively, you may also purchase one to keep.

A Zoom link will be available prior to the first class.



From the Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries

Melissa Mattke

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

Sunday School:

We have been continuing our ZOOM Sunday School at 9am on Sunday. The group is starting a new unit titled "The Talent Show". Each week we learn different gifts that each of us have and how we can use them in the kingdom of God. 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/87621677567?pwd=ZnErNTJST3hBeWJESThXSUZBVERzUT09>

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H2O Youth Group:

Youth Group on Zoom will begin at 11:15am and end at 12:30pm. We are not meeting on Wednesday evenings anymore. I will be sending home materials that we will be working through together during our Zoom Time! We are struggling a bit with everybody's schedules to get us all together at the same time to meet. We are hoping to meet in person soon, it will all depend on the community Covid numbers. Here is the new Zoom Link for Sundays:

Here is the Link to Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87423748627?pwd=anFzaXRSWDBjUnk4Y2RiaW1RRFhLZz09>

Melissa Mattke

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



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.

Here is the link if you would like to join. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments or if you need some help with Zoom! Every week on Sat at 10am Melissa Mattke is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Link to Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87871939725?pwd=TKUwdTdCRHINV3lvMDJsOENXOVNoUT09>

Meeting ID: 878 7193 9725 Passcode: 339374



Versiti Blood Drive Report

BLOOD DRIVE: A blood drive was held at First Congregational UCC on January 13, 2022. This drive was very successful with a total of 26 units collected! Just ONE unit collected could save 3 lives!!!

Our next blood drive is scheduled for May 26, 2022. Feel free to sign up anytime:

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

If you have any questions contact me.

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



Created by the StillSpeaking Writers' Group



The Daily Devotional is a spiritually deep and refreshing well, to which thousands of readers are drawn each day.

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Check it out at the link below and you can choose to get daily devotionals sent to your inbox.

<https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/>



BOOK OF LIFE

February Birthdays

- 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

Cyndi Stockhus's father, Robert, died January 6, 2022.
 Mike and Anna Wineke's daughter, Alison Wineke, died January 7, 2022.
 Kate Driessen's grandfather, Jim, died January 18, 2022.
 Lola Meyers grandmother, Yvonne Crum died January 22, 2022. Lola's uncle, Kevin Crum, died January 20, 2022.

How to Join Us for Worship

- 1) Through the email link sent out weekly "Welcome to Worship" from 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 Mondays.
- 5) **Communion Sundays** the first Sunday of each month. Bring the bread and cup to your table at home and join in the sacraments if you watch the recording.

OFFERING ENVELOPES or EFT

Envelopes for 2022 If you have used the mailable envelopes in 2021, we have a box at church for you.

Wish to get envelopes? Call/email Laurel to get a box at Office: 920-261-6213 or

lbentz@firstcongwttn.org

Financial Update – General Fund 12/31/2021

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
June	\$17,805	\$16,118	\$18,719	\$17,194	\$18,588	\$25,480	-\$8,286	-\$1,571
July	\$17,805	\$14,237	\$18,719	\$14,396	\$18,588	\$12,886	\$1,510	-\$61
August	\$17,805	\$21,005	\$18,719	\$21,142	\$18,588	\$14,332	\$6,810	\$6,749
September	\$17,805	\$16,039	\$18,719	\$16,889	\$18,588	\$15,314	\$1,575	\$8,324
October	\$17,805	\$14,335	\$18,719	\$15,144	\$18,588	\$7,769	\$7,375	\$15,699
November	\$17,805	\$22,420	\$18,719	\$24,276	\$18,588	\$11,255	\$13,021	\$28,720
December	\$17,805	\$17,593	\$18,719	\$20,275	\$18,588	\$23,882	-\$3,607	\$25,113

February 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 9am - ZOOM Bible Study 11 AM - STAFF MEETS	2	3 4pm - Prayer Requests Due BREAD & ROSES – our turn to help 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM
6 Holy Communion 10:00 – NO IN-PERSON WORSHIP 9:00 am – ZOOM Sunday School 11:15 a.m. - ZOOM Youth Group 6:00 – Cable TV Broadcast	7	8 9am - ZOOM Bible Study	9	10 4pm - Prayer Requests Due 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-7:00 Meditation Youth Rm	11 OFFICE CLOSED	12 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM
13 10:00 – NO IN-PERSON WORSHIP 11 a.m. -Virtual - Congregational Annual Meeting ZOOM 9:00 am – ZOOM Sunday School TBD - ZOOM Youth Group 6:00 – Cable TV Broadcast	14	15 9am - ZOOM Bible Study	16	17 4pm - Prayer Requests Due 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-7:00 Meditation Youth Rm	18 OFFICE CLOSED 9am - ZOOM BOOK Study	19 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM
20 10:00 – NO IN-PERSON WORSHIP 9:00 am – ZOOM Sunday School 11:15 a.m. - ZOOM Youth Group 6:00 – Cable TV Broadcast	21 SCRIPS orders due	22 9am - ZOOM Bible Study 6:30, Council ZOOM	23 Newsletter Deadline	24 4pm - Prayer Requests Due 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-7:00 Meditation Youth Rm	25 OFFICE CLOSED 9am - ZOOM BOOK Study	26 10 a.m. – Morning Chat Group ZOOM
27 10:00 – NO IN-PERSON WORSHIP 9:00 am – ZOOM Sunday School 11:15 a.m. - ZOOM Youth Group 6:00 – Cable TV Broadcast	28	REMINDER; The Congregational Annual Meeting will be held Sunday February 13 th at 11 a.m. using a ZOOM link. The meeting will not be held in person.				