



The Hilltop Chimes

First Congregational United Church of Christ
120 Kuckkan Lane Watertown, WI 53094

Rev. Dr. Christopher Ross, Pastor
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**ALL ARE
WELCOME
HERE**



October 2024



From the Pastor's Desk

As many of you may remember, the month of October includes my favorite holiday of all—Halloween. As I explained in this column last year, it is a holiday I think every Christian should celebrate as it is grounded in poking fun at the

forces of fear and death. With its spooky imagery as recreation, its message is the epitome of “fearing not.”

But among this same spooky imagery is a figure very much connected to the history of Congregationalism in North America: the witch. Whenever we hear about the Puritans of New England, please understand that Congregationalism came from that movement. In fact, even the very church that started the witchcraft crisis in Salem Village (now Danvers), Massachusetts was a Congregationalist (and then a UCC) church. Almost everyone involved was a Congregationalist, as Congregationalism remained the established church of Massachusetts and much of New England throughout the colonial period. In other words, the Salem Witchcraft Trials serve as one of the worst times in our own church history.

Let's allow that to sink in. We're talking about a time when “our” version of Christianity was the official religion, when ethnic strife was at a minimum, when diversity and equality were not part of our community practices, when those who were different were excluded from our social circles, when traditional values went unquestioned.

And yet, this time is considered anything but great. A social panic ignited in the Congregationalist parsonage when an enslaved foreign woman was

blamed for grooming young people for the devil. The entire community found itself in the grips of acting out of fear. Scientific findings were received with suspicion. Neighbors turned on each other. Those with wealth took advantage of those with less, accusing them of witchcraft, and taking over their property. Childless women and other outcasts were targeted for bullying, harassment, and violence. Nineteen people were hanged. One was crushed to death. Five died while incarcerated.

It should be obvious that these were terrible times. And yet, these circumstances are the closest in our history to a time when one version of Christianity reigned supreme, when diversity was guarded against as a threat, and when fear ruled the relationships between neighbors.

May we learn from our own history and seek truly to follow Jesus' call to be that shining city on the hill—where we love our neighbors, the last are first, the poor are blessed, we fear not, strangers and foreigners are welcomed, outcasts share the table with us, and we see diversity as God's gift of creation in God's own image. Those are the biblical Christian values to which we are called in every season and in every choice.

-Chris

Pastor Chris is Out of the Office:

Chris will be attending continuing education at Daycholah from October 19-26, and then will be on vacation October 27-November 2.

For that entire time of October 19-November 2, the Rev. Carina Schiltz of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church will be on call for pastoral emergencies, and she can be reached at (712) 551-7077.

Moderator's Message for October

Our church has become much more connected to the Watertown community as a whole. So much of this, I believe, stems from our new pastor. (When is he no longer considered "new"?) Chris has been extremely focused as it comes to matters of First Congregational, but he has worked diligently to **spread our wings** beyond that. Look at what we're now involved with:

- The Clergy Roundtable (of course, Chris being our attending member) has connected us with other churches through which we show our love to all.
- This connection has led to the Building a Welcoming Watertown group
- which has led to the Housing Justice Task Force. The Task Force is presenting a Forum in November to educate and support tenants and landlords as we suffer through our housing shortage.
- The Unity Project felt comfortable in approaching Chris to request using our church for Pride Fest!
- And I am sure Chris has shared in his remarks in this issue his new connection with the German Church Exchange set up by the conference. If not, you'll be hearing about it in the near future.

Our Church Profile, which we completed in July of 2022 as we began the search for a new pastor, stated that we were looking for someone who could "grow (our) faith formation and social justice educational programs for youth and adults including thoroughly understanding, embracing and practicing what it means to be an Open and Affirming (ONA) church." I think Chris is coming through very well on that expectation. And I think he's enjoying it, too!

Serving in the Christ-spirit,

Tom Rusch



TOTENFEST - Service of Remembrance

On Sunday, November 3 during 10:00 a.m. worship we will join in a special service of remembrance for those who have passed away since last year at this time.

Please send the names of loved ones who have died since November 6, 2023.

Please include their birthdate and date of death when you send it to Laurel in the church office no later than Wednesday October 30th..

lbentz@firstcongwttn.org



LOOSE COIN - MISSION OFFERING

The Watertown location was home to the former Watertown Cares Clinic who provided medical care for low income and uninsured patients in the Watertown area since 2008. In 2019, the Rock River Community Clinic was established, joining the two free clinics and community dental clinic in Jefferson and southern Dodge counties, allowing them to align operations and transition to an integrated, [community-based health care model](#).

Mental health is
a universal
human
right

"God will not falter or lose heart until
justice prevails throughout the earth."
Isaiah 49:19

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
NEIGHBORS IN NEED 2024
ucc.org/nin



UNDIES SUNDAY IN OCTOBER

Back by popular demand! Undies Sundays are in October ! Once again, our church holds this special drive to collect packages of new underwear and socks for kids in our local grade schools.

Sometimes children come to school without spare underwear and socks. The schools are so grateful for the donations we deliver. All children’s sizes are welcome!

Let’s fill the Undies Collection Cart in the narthex.

--Denyce Derleth

KOATS FOR KIDS (AND ADULTS)

What: New or gently used coats, scarves, mittens, gloves, snow pants

Where: Drop Off at church Sunday mornings, or at the Office M-TH 10-4:00.

When: Starting October 1st.

LEARN MORE about this annual collection

visit: <https://www.cacscw.org/koats-for-kids/>

Jennifer Rhodes at 920-296-1378
Chair of First Congregational UCC
"Coats for Kids" Campaign



BLOOD DRIVE REPORT

Blood Drive: We had a successful blood drive in September. We had 15 donors. This was a little short of our goal, but it was great to have so many people!

Watch the bulletin/website for information on the next drive.

--Melissa Mattke

October Special UCC Mission Offering

What is the “Neighbors in Need” special mission offering?

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC’s Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice.

Who participates in Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering?

Anyone can give a donation by contributing to the Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering (NIN SMO) either through their congregation’s annual collection drive or anytime online at ucc.org/nin.

How is the offering used?

Through this offering we express our deep commitment to reaching out and touching our neighbors with justice and compassion. This allows us to speak prophetically to those in power and to advocate for a society where all people have a voice in decisions that affect their lives. In the spirit of Christ, we will seek to confront evil in the world and to alleviate suffering. We will do this through direct service as well as advocacy.

THE WATERTOWN FOOD PANTRY,

located in Immanuel Lutheran Church serves the people of Watertown to provide fresh food for individuals and families.

FOOD PANTRY HOURS ARE:

Mondays 10 a.m.- 12 p.m., Tuesdays 1 p.m. - 3 p.m., Wednesdays 12 p.m. - 2 p.m., Thursdays 1 p.m.-- 3 p.m. and Fridays 10 a.m. -12 p.m.

THE BREAD BASKET PANTRY, located in the YMCA building in Watertown. Another amazing local resource for our community

THE BREAD BASKET HOURS ARE:

Mondays 12:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Fridays 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- In addition to food items, Coats and winter clothing are especially needed. Many individuals and families don't arrive prepared for our winters.
- **Bread Basket** is in need of egg cartons. Vivian Howard will get them over to them.
- There is a shopping cart in the narthex. You are welcome to bring any food at any time.



Our church participates in the **Community Shared Mission** project “Weekend Food to Go and Grow”. A number of children in need in the Watertown School system receive a duffel bag full of nutritious food items for their family for the weekend. Please consider dropping off the following items at church on Sunday.

October: blueberry Muffin mix

Denyce Derleth, who is our representative, is the contact person.

Report from Support Our Students (SOS)

Our church joined a group of 13 other churches to provide school supplies to 168 students who attend school or are home schooled in Watertown.

All supplies were gathered and sorted on Monday August 19th into individual, grade level bags for each child who had been registered by a parent. Families drove up to St. Henry's to receive their bags the next day. Many who registered late were able to receive supplies on Wednesday.

Items not given out on the 20th and 21st were either given to the schools or stored for next year. Fifty-six volunteers helped on Monday, 47 on Tuesday and 20 on Thursday. All volunteers were busy.

We were also grateful for donated money. In late July and early August many shoppers drove all over to get the lowest price on multiple items. A conservative estimate of all supplies was \$15,949.

Again, we thank you for your support!

--Denyce Derleth



The new school year has started! We have 104 children enrolled! All of our rooms are full of laughter (and crying)! We have 50-60 friends here every day! Then we have 12-15 friends come on the bus after school. Thank you all for your continued support!

If you ever want to come and read a story to our friends, please contact me and we will set up a time for you to do that! Our toddler playground is almost completed! Come check it out.

We are now officially part of the federal food program! This is wonderful news! We will get reimbursed for some of the groceries we purchase. If you would like to donate here is our current “wish list”: Walmart or Piggly Wiggly gift cards, 100% juice, white paper, and paper plates.

--Melissa Mattke, Director

Gingerbread Phone: 920-261-9727

Email: gbchildcare120@gmail.com Website: www.gingerbreadchildcare.com



Notes from the Music Director

Thank you to Tucker Fremont who I missed thanking as contributing as a special musician during August. Thanks to Tom Rusch and Cooper Wood who played keyboard during September, and to Tom, who accompanies the choir, as well.

Senior Choir-continues to rehearse at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. We rehearse and sing in service almost weekly, but there will be some pre-planned days off. We can always use additional singers and you do not have to make a weekly commitment to be a part of the choir. High school aged and above are welcome.

Juanita Edington
c.920-988-2416 (feel free to text)
jaemusiclover@gmail.com



Tech Opportunities

We record each service and are looking to expand our recorders. The primary responsibilities are to run the camera focusing

on the “action at the moment” (the liturgist, acolyte, minister, choir, or special musician/s) and make microphone adjustments as needed. I am currently taking care of the editing and production.

Please contact me if you are interested and when you are available. Training is available. Thanks.

Thank you to Bill Edington and Pamela Martin who recorded during September.

Juanita Edington
c.920-988-2416 (feel free to text)
jaemusiclover@gmail.com

From the Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries



SUNDAY SCHOOL: Ages Preschool - grade 5

Sunday School: Sunday School has started! We will be having fun starting at 9am on Sundays. If you are interested in teaching Sunday School, please see me. I would like to set up a rotation for teachers.

YOUTH GROUP: Middle School and High School

If you are interested in participating in Youth Group, please let me know! We would be meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday evenings, or Sundays after church.

Melissa Mattke
Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries
josc.mom@hotmail.com 262-719-1383



☞ DAILY DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS ☞

Upper Room (through October) & These Days (through November) devotional booklets are available in the church Narthex.

You can stop by during the week during office hours or pick them up on Sunday.

All are welcome to pick one up, however, \$1 donation helps to defray the cost.

-- Laurel W Bentz

How to Join Us for Worship

- 1) Through the email link sent out weekly “Welcome to Worship” from lbentz@firstcongwtnn.org. Join our mailing list.
- 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://firstcongwtnn.org/> Services posted on Monday

Book of Life



October Birthdays

Jeffrey Pauli	10/01
Jennie Ortega	10/02
Zachary Fuchs	10/02
Lexy Davis	10/02
William Lamp	10/02
Greg Kulick	10/03
John Welbourne	10/03
Stacy Winkelman	10/10
Louise Lemke	10/11
Bruce Bentz	10/11
Jack Mattke	10/12
Pam Lohaus	10/13
Ayden Kulick	10/15
Clarence Zabel III	10/15
Easton Schumacher	10/16
Camie Wood	10/18
Roger Martin	10/19
Mari Ulatowski	10/21
Joseph Schumacher	10/21
Janet Stangler	10/21

The Euterpe Music Club is holding their October program meeting on October 7, at 7:00 pm at First Congregational UCC church. The program features the music of Lukas Jaeger, Baritone Vocalist & Violinist with Rhonda Kwiecien, piano.

The program is open to the public and is free of charge, but donations are accepted for the Euterpe scholarship fund, which helps area students attend summer music camp or college.

POSTING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Church council meets each month and the minutes from meetings will be posted on the bulletin board in the office area hallway.

If you have questions or concerns please feel free to speak with our Moderator, Tom Rusch

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

In order to get this church communication out and in people's hands before the 1st of the month. These are the new deadlines:
October 23rd for November newsletter

Quarterly Giving Statements: 3rd quarter giving statements will be delivered (first class /email) the 2nd week of October. Please check your email around October 9th. Look it over and contact Laurel in the church office if you have questions.

Reminder: the last day for donations to be included in 2024 is Monday, December 30th. (the office will be open that day)

Financial Report from the Trustees – As of August 30., 2024

2024	BUDGETED CONTRIBUTIONS	ACTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	BUDGETED TOTAL INCOME	ACTUAL TOTAL INCOME	BUDGETED EXPENSES	ACTUAL EXPENSES	MONTH GAIN OR LOSS	YEAR GAIN OR LOSS
January	\$19,604	\$15,875	\$20,579	\$17,588	\$22,889	\$19,538	-\$1,950	-\$1,950
February	\$19,604	\$15,095	\$20,579	\$15,620	\$22,890	\$26,020	-\$10,400	-\$12,350
March	\$19,604	\$22,442	\$20,579	\$23,077	\$22,890	\$20,900	\$2,177	-\$10,173
April	\$19,604	\$21,334	\$20,579	\$22,153	\$22,889	\$18,755	\$3,398	-\$6,775
May	\$19,604	\$16,679	\$20,579	\$16,907	\$22,890	\$21,817	-\$4,910	-\$11,685
June	\$19,604	\$19,959	\$20,579	\$22,527	\$22,890	\$35,378	-\$12,851	-\$24,536
July	\$19,604	\$16,513	\$20,579	\$17,719	\$22,890	\$17,409	\$310	-\$24,226
August	\$19,604	\$14,945	\$20,579	\$14,995	\$22,890	\$16,012	-\$1,017	-\$25,243

October 2024 -REVISED

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Pastor Chris is Out of the Office: October 19 – November 2nd. <u>Pastoral Emergencies:</u> Call Rev. Carina Schiltz of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church at (712) 551-7077.</p>	October 19 –	1 6:00 p.m.- Adult Christian Civics	2	3 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5
<p>6 World Communion Sunday 9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir 9 a.m. <i>Sunday School</i> 10:00 – WORSHIP ; Communion Coffee Fellowship 6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast</p>	<p>7 1:00 p.m. Staff meeting 7:00: EUTERPE Music Club Concert</p>	8 6:00 p.m.- Adult Christian Civics	9	10 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	11 OFFICE CLOSED	12
<p>13 9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; 9 a.m. <i>Sunday School</i> 10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship 6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast</p>	<p>14 Indigenous People’s Day 4:15 Hospitality Committee meets at the Globe Apts.</p>	15 6:00 p.m.- Adult Christian Civics	16	17 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	18 OFFICE CLOSED	19 Pastor Out of Office We host the conference ONA workshop
<p>20 9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; 9 a.m. <i>Sunday School</i> 10:00 – WORSHIP; Rev. Rachel Bauman visits. Coffee Fellowship 11:30: Social Justice Team 12:30: Building Welcoming Wttn. @ Public Library 6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast</p>	<p>21 Pastor Out of Office NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 6:30 pm, COUNCIL</p>	<p>22 Pastor Out of Office 7:00 pm, Gingerbread Bd.</p>	23 Pastor Out of Office	<p>24 United Nations Day Pastor Out of Office 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast</p>	25 Pastor Vacation OFFICE CLOSED	26 Pastor Vacation
<p>27 Reformation Sunday Pastor Vacation 9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir 9 a.m. <i>Sunday School</i> 10:00 – WORSHIP; Guest: Rev. Lowell Farris Coffee Fellowship 6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast</p>	28 Pastor Vacation	29 Pastor Vacation	30 Pastor Vacation <i>Reminder:</i> Send Names to be included in Totenfest	31 Pastor Vacation All Hallow’s Eve		