



The Hilltop Chimes

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

Rev. Dr. Christopher Ross, Pastor

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August 2025



From the Pastor's Desk:

This summer, I have found myself mentioning to many people how busy this season has been in Watertown. The truth is that summer feels especially busy here—more than in any other place I've served. I've also

realized that summer in Watertown is busier than even the season of Lent, which is quite strange for a church.

It may not be evident on the surface. Most of the busyness has involved programs, plans, and events outside of Sunday morning worship: Conference Annual Meeting, Building a Welcoming Watertown activity, preparing for the Pride event, adult education, vacation Bible school, and other community happenings.

But in August, it all seems to come to a halt. Sure, there's one more VBS family fun night scheduled, and there's also the ecumenical community worship on the square; otherwise, things appear to grow much quieter.

But we also know this feeling is temporary—we're about to enter fall with all its back-to-school chaos and the beginning of the program year once again at church. August arrives, then, as a brief reprieve. Here is a period of time in which we can catch our breath, reflect on the experiences of the last few months, and prepare for the work ahead.

Scripture calls such a time *sabbath*. And so, I invite you to share this short time of "programmatic" sabbath with us in worship on Sunday mornings. It is a time to rest, recharge, and rejuvenate, because God's work will remain for us to join soon enough.

--Chris

CHURCH COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Parking Lot: the church parking lot will be sealcoated and lines painted. Aug 11 & 12 (weather permitting)

Gingerbread & the Church Office will be closed during that time (Monday sealcoating; Tuesday curing time needed) the building will be closed.

Normal traffic will resume on Wednesday, August 13th.

Special Congregational Meeting, Sunday July 20th was called to consider and vote on a proposal to fund/buy and have installed a ground-mounted private solar panel system to supplement our church's electrical needs. A representative from Appleton Solar spoke about the project and answered question.

The congregation voted by voice to move forward to have Appleton Solar install the solar panel system. The work is estimated to begin this fall.

Jim Ortega, Moderator

Pastor Chris – Out of Office:

Pastor Chris will be out of the office Monday, August 22 through Saturday, August 30th.

Pastoral Emergencies: Pastor Katie Van Der Linden, Ebenezer Moravian Church can be called directly at 610-442-3790



Notes from the Music Director

My heartfelt thanks go out to our July special musicians: Bill Edington, flugelhorn; Jennie Ortega, vocalist (and hymn leader); Laura Yurs, flute. Thank you to Tom Rusch for providing our keyboard and accompanying special music during the month. Weren't Tom's selections for Space Sunday delightful? I'm so sorry that I wasn't there, but I'm grateful that I could watch the recorded service.

Senior Choir-is still on a well-deserved break for the summer.

Looking forward to next fall, we can always use more singers. Have you ever thought about that sharing your gift of music in the choir or as a musician is an offering to God? You do not have to be a church member or make a weekly commitment to be a part of the choir. High school age and above are welcome (and I would consider advanced 8th graders.) Drop-ins are certainly welcome. **Start-up will be September 7th.** If you play an instrument, let me know, you never know when there might be an opportunity to play.

MUSICIANS NEEDED FOR: AUGUST 3, SEPTEMBER 21

If you know that you are going to be available on any of the dates listed and have a musical gift to share, please call or email so that I can get you in the calendar. This is not restricted to church members, so if you wish to ask a friend or family member to join you, please feel free to consider sharing your love for music and God by providing special music.

Juanita Edington

c.920-988-2416 (feel free to text)

jaemusiclover@gmail.com

† Hal H. Hopson passes away at 92

Hal Hopson, a great sacred music composer and arranger, passed away on July 21, 2025. He was a friend, mentor, and a leader among Presbyterians, among many other denominations. Hal Hopson wrote over 1,200 published pieces of music: anthems, handbell music, hymns, organ and pian music, solos, psalm settings, and incidental music.

In our New Century Hymnal he wrote #186-Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face which we typically sing on Ash Wednesday, and the choir sang his "He Was Wounded" during the 2025 Maundy Thursday service. I'm sure there are several others in the choir library since he was a composer I knew I could count on for quality, but that one came to mind since it was done recently. I know Tom has played many selections that have Hal's name attached as a composer or arranger.

-- Juanita Edington

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 Pamela Martin who recorded it during July.



Coffee Fellowship:

Rotations of servers and Bakers are needed each Sunday of the month. Bakers provide the snacks. Prior to worship, "servers"

get the coffee started and place the snacks out in time to attend worship.

****SIGN UP to help** by contacting Jennifer Rhodes at myvibe04@yahoo.com or calling her at (920) 296-1378

****Schedules are on the narthex table**, if you need to switch dates please contact one of the volunteers directly.

AUGUST SCHEDULE:

August 3: Bake:, John & Jovi Tomaneng, Joyce Uglow
Serve: Sue Harms

August 10: No Bakers/Servers needed.

August 17: Bake: Juanita Edington, Lynda Eicher
Serve: Sue Harms

August 24: Bake: Lori Rhodes, Jennifer Rhodes
Serve: Fran Milburn

August 31: Bake: Tom Rusch, Jennifer Rhodes
Serve: Barb Weiss

The Fun Team was formed to increase our congregation's morale, camaraderie, and collaboration. In a stressful world, we all need to smile and play. Thank you to all who have participated in the *Fun Team challenges*. We have lifted our spirits while making Gratitude Chains and playing games. We shared jokes, riddles, and would you rather... situations.

Until the end of the year, the Fun Team will be creating new and fun ways for us all to come together and have a good time after services. On the first and second Sundays of the month, we will be setting up a fun table with new, funny, creative, and silly adventures for you to try.

We have enjoyed your feedback and look forward to having more laughter-filled times with you.

Pam Martin & Jennifer Bakke



Gingerbread: Summer attendance has continued to grow and most of our classrooms are full! We are busy looking ahead to schedules for the Fall and new enrollments. Come check out our art work and crafts hanging in the hall! If you would like to volunteer to read a book to the class, please let us know!

--Melissa Mattke, Director

Gingerbread Phone: 920-261-9727

Email: gbchildcare120@gmail.com

Website: www.gingerbreadchildcare.com



From the Coordinator of
Children and Youth
Ministries

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Ages Preschool - grade 5

Sunday school: Yay! It's the time of year that we start thinking about Sunday School. Our first day will be September 7th. Sunday school will begin at 9am and end at 9:45am so we can participate in worship service. Watch for registration forms on the Narthex table.

Melissa Mattke

Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries

mmattke@firstcongwtn.org 920-261-6213

josc.mom@hotmail.com 262-719-1383

How to Join Us for Worship

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



THE BREAD BASKET PANTRY



Is located at 208 S. 3rd St., Watertown and is another amazing local resource for our community. In addition to food items, clothing are especially needed. Many individuals and families don't arrive prepared for our seasons

There is a shopping cart in the narthex. You are welcome to bring any food at any time. **There is always a need for** egg cartons

THE BREAD BASKET HOURS ARE:

- Mondays 12:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesdays 11 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- Fridays 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Learn more at their website:

<https://www.breadbasketwisconsin.org/>

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 3 p.m.—5:30 p.m.
- Fridays 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Learn more at their website:

<https://www.watertownfoodpantry.org/>



THE LOVE FUND: Our Love Fund is an anchor for our church's ability to care for individuals and families in need. However, *at this time*, we are severely challenged to provide for specific needs in our community. Housing, food insecurity and transportation.

- Housing: Includes rent/security deposits. The uptick in lack of housing opportunities and the loss of employment. 2 week delays/wait for their first paycheck. Domestic Abuse victims seeking help. Winter and summer temperatures are life threatening for those whose only shelter is their car.
- Extreme food insecurity: we are able to provide Gift cards for Groceries
- Transportation to work: we are able to provide "Fuel Only" gas cards

We are seeing people who have NEVER had to ask for help before and suddenly fallen short in providing food and housing for themselves and their families. Locating affordable housing in Watertown is a crisis as more families are homeless and living in their cars.

(Please note that we work with our contacts through case workers in Jefferson and Dodge County, CAC Community Action Coalition and the caseworker at the Police Department. In addition, we also coordinate assistance with St. Paul's Episcopal church, the Moravian churches and Immanuel ELCA.)

Please use "Love Offering" Envelopes included in today's bulletin and always available at the entrance to the sanctuary. Thank you for the continued support during time like these.

*S.O.S. (Support Our Students)

Once again, Watertown schools are gearing up for a school supply demand in August.

We can help students be ready to learn in September by participating in *the Shared Community Mission's* annual school supply distribution event (SOS) Supporting Our Students by collecting school supplies and offering a FREE distribution.

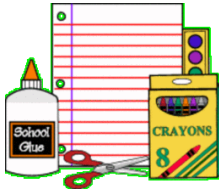
The goal is to collect enough supplies so that any family in need has supplies for school. Leftover supplies are distributed to various schools as resources for students throughout the school year.

Families pre-register their students and list their grade and the school they will be attending. This year distribution will be at St. Henry's Gymnasium August 11 & 12th

DONATE SUPPLIES in the drop off cart. The list of needed school supplies is included below. *Watch for sales and go shopping..*

DONATE FINANCIALLY by making checks payable to 1st Cong. UCC with the *memo: SOS*

Thanks for helping kids succeed in school !!!
Church contact: Denyce Derleth



SOS: Supporting Our Students 2025

List of needed school supplies

Revised June 2025

Thanks for helping kids succeed in school !!!

1. Backpacks
2. Simple inexpensive 4 function calculator
4. Crayons-set of 8 large
5. Crayons-set of 24
6. Washable markers-set of 8-10 bold colors
8. School glue bottles – Elmers preferred
9. Glue sticks – Elmers preferred
10. Scissors (kids blunt, pointed adult)
12. Pencil box for elementary
13. Pencil bag for RMS and WHS
14. Large pink erasers
15. Standard #2 pencils (**Prefer Ticonderoga or Dixon – need some sharpened**)
16. Set of 10-12 colored pencils
17. Dry erase markers (black and colors)
18. Highlighters
19. Post-it notes
20. Red pens
21. Black or blue pens
22. Composition books-wide ruled
23. Index cards
24. Folders: 2 pocket – need with and without center clips -plastic or heavy paper (red, blue, yellow and green most requested)
25. Spiral notebooks- wide and college ruled (red, blue, yellow and green most requested)
26. Loose leaf filler paper-wide and college ruled
27. 1 inch wide and 2 or 3 inch ring binders (White and Black most requested)
28. Dividers (5 or 10 tab) for three ring binders
29. Ear buds or head phones for computer use

Prefer Crayola Brand

Book of Life

August Birthdays

08/01 Pamela Blaszak
 08/05 Diane Scheunemann
 08/05 Cooper Wood
 08/06 Brian Cowan
 08/08 Deanna Perschke
 08/09 William Edington
 08/10 Robert Harms
 08/11 Aron Chowanec
 08/14 Lauren Behlke
 08/15 Lynda Eicher
 8/17 Frank Hrasky
 08/21 Shawna Hyde
 08/22 Rick Scheunemann
 08/24 Jim Ortega
 08/24 Royal Pauli



Jan Sanders Butterfly Garden
 Swamp Milkweed in Bloom

September Birthdays

Colette Kuehl 09/01
 Angela Viola 09/02
 Carol Yager 09/04
 Kristin Chowanec 09/05
 Lori Schwager 09/06
 Norm Uglow 09/09
 Keegan Behlke 09/18
 Owen Behlke 09/20
 Dale Bakke 09/20
 Daryll Boettcher 09/22
 Josie Mack 09/23
 Tyler Chowanec 09/23
 Cindy Williams 09/24
 Constance Swenson 09/24
 Carlee Winkelman 09/25
 Reed Larson 09/25
 Alexia Asher 09/27
 Brody Wood 09/30
 Jennifer Rhodes 09/30



Financial Report from the Trustees – As of June 30, 2025

2025	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	\$17,590	\$20,579	\$19,186	\$23,969	\$21,044	-\$1,858	
February	\$19,604	\$16,034	\$20,579	\$16,049	\$23,969	\$19,106	-\$3,057	
March	\$19,604	\$15,964	\$20,579	\$16,964	\$23,969	\$23,574	-\$6,610	
April	\$19,604	\$14,667	\$20,579	\$14,667	\$23,969	\$19,029	-\$4,362	
May	\$19,604	\$15,096	\$20,579	\$16,311	\$23,969	\$24,117	-\$7,806	
June	\$19,604	\$13,757	\$20,579	\$14,007	\$23,969	\$33,126	-\$19,119	-\$42,812

August 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Pastor Chris will be out of the office: Monday, August 22 through Saturday, August 30th. <u>Pastoral Emergencies:</u> Pastor Katie Van Der Linden, Ebenezer Moravian Church can be called directly at 610-442-3790</p>					1 OFFICE CLOSED	2
3 Holy Communion 10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	4 1:00 - STAFF MEETS	5	6	7 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	8 OFFICE CLOSED	9
10 9:30 a.m. – Ecumenical Worship at the Towne Square 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	11 Parking Lot Sealcoating <i>Offices Closed</i> <i>Gingerbread Closed</i> S.O.S. Distribution at St. Henry's Gym	12 Parking Lot Sealcoating <i>Offices Closed</i> <i>Gingerbread Closed</i> S.O.S. Distribution at St. Henry's Gym	13	14 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	15 OFFICE CLOSED	16
17 10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship. 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	18 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 6:30 pm, COUNCIL	19	20	21 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	22 Pastor on Vacation OFFICE CLOSED	23 Pastor on Vacation
24 Pastor on Vacation 10:00 - WORSHIP Coffee Fellowship. 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	25 Pastor on Vacation	26 Pastor on Vacation 6 p.m. Gingerbread Board meets	27 Pastor on Vacation	28 Pastor on Vacation 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	29 Pastor on Vacation OFFICE CLOSED	30 Pastor on Vacation
31 10:00 - WORSHIP Coffee Fellowship. 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast						

