



The Hilltop Chimes

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

Rev. Dr. Christopher Ross, Pastor

Cell: (920) 838-5630 **Please

CALL Pastor directly with pastoral concerns.

Email: rev.fatmoses@gmail.com

Office hours: M-TH 9-11 and 12-2

Office Phone/Fax: 920-261-6213

Website: www.firstcongwtn.org

August 2026



From the Pastor's Desk:

You may have noticed that it's been a bit more difficult to reach someone in the church office these days. For those of you who have been wondering what's going on, I'd like to offer some information to

the congregation.

The short answer is that the end of June and beginning of July brought another transition to our office staff. Jody—who had been working with us since early January—decided to move on. That means we have been doing our best to handle incoming calls and office visits. We apologize if we have let anyone feel as if they have slipped through the cracks.

So, here's where we are now. The office hours remain in their newer form, at least for now: Monday-Thursday, 9-11 a.m. and 12-2 p.m. Our Church Council has hired Olivia Mattke to staff our front desk on an interim basis until mid-August. (In case you're wondering, Livie has other employment obligations beginning around that time.) So, if you stop by the church office during office hours, you can expect to find Livie's smiling face!

In the meantime, the Employee Relations Committee has been meeting and figuring out how to recommend we proceed—likely by launching another search for an office staff person. We will keep you appropriately apprised with developments.

Also in the meantime, please know that I remain available. Although you may not always be able to catch me in the church office, I continue to be only a phone call away: (920) 838-5630. If you call the church office and try to reach me through the phone

menu, your call also gets routed to my number. I again offer the friendly reminder that the best way to contact me for any pastoral emergencies is through calling; I may not see an E-mail in a timely fashion, and I don't even pretend to keep up with text messages. For non-emergency communication, my E-mail address remains

rev.fatmoses@gmail.com.

Although things may feel chaotic at times, please know that we continue to be present, serving in response to God's love and grace that always remain with us. Thank you for your patience during this time of transition.

Rev. Dr. Chris Ross, Pastor

Pastor Chris – Out of Office:

Pastor Chris is on vacation starting Monday, August 31 through Monday, September 7.

The Rev. Dr. Sara Rabe is available for pastoral emergencies: (608) 209-2797.

A Gubernatorial Candidate Forum

sponsored by BWW, the Watertown *Daily Times*, and the Wisconsin Coalition for Religious Freedom has been scheduled at our church for 6:30-9p.m. on Sunday, August 2. Doors open at 6:00.



Notes from the Music Director

Thank you to Bill Edington, Laura Yurs, and Evan Chowanec who provided special music selections during July. Special music selections continue to replace the choir anthems during the summer.

Special music is simply a solo or group, vocal and/or instrumental, of open music genre which would be fitting for a church service. You can always check a selection with me or Pastor Chris if you aren't sure. I know that I will be gone for several Sundays during the summer, so I will not be able to fill the gap on those Sundays.

Looking ahead: **Unfilled August dates** are the 16th and 30th. August 9th will have us sharing in an Ecumenical outdoor service. I will be out of town on August 2nd and 16th. Please contact me to volunteer for any dates that you might wish to serve or if you have questions. Information is needed for bulletin preparation the Monday before you serve in worship, but it will be needed on August 2nd for August 16th, as we will be working that bulletin early due to my vacation Aug. 5-16th—Thank you!

Choir rehearsals will begin again on September 6th at 9:00 a.m. in the choir room. We are always looking to add new singers. We do not have any auditions, and the main requirements are an enjoyment of singing and a desire to help prepare the congregation and ourself to be ready to do God's work when we leave worship. We generally work on songs for three Sundays before singing them in service and there is a variety of musical knowledge and experience in the choir.

Juanita Edington jaemusiclover@gmail.com

c. 920-988-2416



TECH OPPORTUNITIES

Thank you to our current recording team, Pamela Martin, Dale Bakke, Jerald Martinez, Bill Edington, Juanita Edington, and Laurel Bentz.

We record each service and are looking to expand our camera operators. 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.

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

I am currently taking care of the editing, production, distribution to Watertown TV, and to Laurel for her further distribution to parishioners and the public via email, Facebook, and our website.

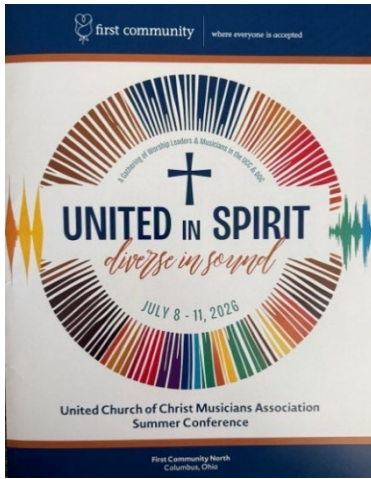
Juanita Edington jaemusiclover@gmail.com

c. 920-988-2416



Tis the season.... Would you like to help quench the thirst of our young plantings outside at the entrance to our building? Do you have spare time to join a rotation of volunteer garden stewards?

Sign up is on the Narthex table or contact the church office.



Report of the United Church of Christ Musicians Association Conference

I would like to thank the Church Council and the entire congregation for supporting my attendance once again for this year's biennial United Church of Christ Musicians Association Conference. The Conference was held at First Community Church in Columbus, OH. It is a time of spiritual renewal for me, a time for collaboration and sharing with fellow church musicians who come from all kinds of congregations, and of course, a time of learning and inspiration.

Each day started with morning worship which included singing, prayer and a meditation led by a different pastor of the host church. With a church of two campus buildings, a membership of over 3000, and a combination of both UCC and The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denominations, you can see that they would support a rather large staff. Any of our music, whether it be in rehearsal, concert, or in sessions, was also spiritually renewing.

Lunch and dinner times, as well as our short breaks between sessions offered times for reflection and discussion, asking questions, meeting new friends, connecting with old friends, and general sharing. This conference was unique as it was open to the Disciples of Christ Musicians and Worship Leaders and we had a person who also attended who normally would have attended the American Baptist Musician Conference at Green Lake, WI, but due to a conflict with her schedule, she sought out a substitute conference, thought ours looked intriguing, decided to attend, and was very happy that she did. I spent quite a bit of time with her and we found a lot of common ground. She hopes to

attend in the future. She is the musician at an American Baptist church where three languages are spoken in north Chicago!

I attended a variety of learning sessions—*Old Tunes, New Texts* (where we even tried our hand at writing a verse on a topic to an old hymn tune), *The Aging Voice*, *Choral Music Reading Sessions I and II*, *From Song to Street: Where Inclusive Worship Meets Real-World Impact*, *Singing a Wider Story: Inclusive Worship in Contemporary Christian Music*; and *Canadian Church Choral Music and Resources*.

During my time at the conference, I found inspiration in our keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology in the United Church of Christ and is Pastor of First Congregational Church in Wellington, OH.; being part of our Conference Choir, twice daily rehearsing challenging music under the direction of Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt and singing those selections during our closing worship; attending three diverse concerts—the Klais Organ Recital performed by Dr. Collin Richardson—the First Community Choirs concert (3 different choirs), conducted by Amy Johnston Blosser and Dr. C. Andrew Blosser—the Raise Choir concert, conducted by Dr. Raymond Wise, who performed a variety of diverse African-American repertoire that included Negro spirituals, traditional hymns, choral masterworks, traditional and contemporary gospel music.

I have much more to share, including other pictures, so if you want to hear or see more, just ask.



--Juanita Edington

jaemusiclover@gmail.com

c.920-988-2416



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 Sue Harms at robsue900@charter.net or call her at (920) 261-7710

AUGUST SCHEDULE:

August 2: Bake: Diane Koch
Serve: Sue Harms

August 9: No Bakers/Servers needed.

August 16: Bake: Joyce Uglow
Serve: Jerold Martinez

August 23: Bake: Diane Scheunemann
Serve: Lexi Davis

August 30: Bake: Lori Rhode
Serve: Cindy Stockhus



Gingerbread and Gingerbread Too have been very busy this summer. As we are getting our routines and days structured at Too, we are also enrolling many more children. Our enrollment for Gingerbread is 117 and the enrollment for Gingerbread Too is 72. We are looking forward to a new school year starting! If you are interested in donating or volunteering, 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: We will be starting our Sunday School year off on September 13th at 9am. Children ages 4-10 are welcome!

"Surprise" VBS week will be held 6-7pm Aug 10-13. Please pre register so we know how many people to expect. All ages are welcome!~

Here is the link to sign up:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd4BD4YHmXqedm11LSgDP9DT4KMx0beil15NDTUcOSI3sf9bA/viewform?usp=header>

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

Loose Coin for July & August

Tri-County Unity, 120 S. 2nd Street in Watertown.

Tri-County Unity is a center dedicated to serve those in their recovery journey by supporting groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and Al-Anon.

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.)

"Love Offering" Envelopes are 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.

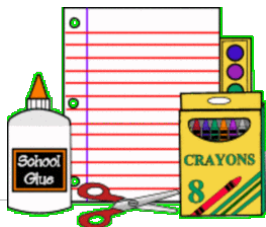
**This year distribution will be at
St. Henry's Gymnasium August
10 and 11th."**

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 2026

List of Needed School Supplies

Revised June 2026

Thanks for helping kids succeed in school !!!

- 1) Backpacks
- 2) Simple inexpensive 4 function calculator
- 3) Scientific calculator (**Solar TI-31, TI -30xiis**)
- 4) Crayons-set of 24
- 5) Washable markers-set of 8-10 bold colors
- 6) Markers set of 8-10 bold colors
- 7) School glue bottles – Elmers preferred
- 8) Glue sticks – Elmers preferred (**.7 oz preferred**)
- 9) Play Doh (4 pack)
- 10) Scissors (kids blunt or pointed, pointed adult)
- 11) Water Color Paint Set
- 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 - **Yellow**
- 19) Post-it notes – **3"x3"**
- 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, Green most requested)
- 25) Spiral notebooks- wide and college ruled
(Red, Blue, Yellow and Green most requested)
- 26) Loose leaf filler paper-wide ruled
- 27) 1", 2", 3", 3-ring binders, hard cover with front pocket
(White and Black most requested)
- 28) Dividers (5 or 8 tab) for three ring binders
- 29) Head phones for computer use
- 30) Rulers

**Prefer
Crayola**



The Rainmaker Committee needs you to help us brainstorm ideas for making it rain mission in and around First Congregational UCC, Watertown, and the world!

The Rainmaker Committee's task is to review proposals for grants from our congregation's Rainmaker Fund. According to our charter, the Rainmaker Fund is intended to help finance projects that "support the spiritual, social, and economic needs of those who call Watertown and the surrounding community home." It is an extension of our church's mission—our answer to the call to care for our neighbors and all of creation, our participation in God's expansive love and wildly wide welcome, our acts of discipleship in pursuit of God's justice and joy.

The charter of our committee states that the Rainmaker Fund "is about more than holding onto money. Is it about holding onto a mission." Right now, we have money to give, but there are no proposed projects. That's where you come in!



**Please join us for a brainstorming session
during fellowship time after worship on
Sunday, September 13, 2026.**



This brainstorm will be a time for us to do some dreaming together about how we might put some of the available Rainmaker funds to good use. As we brainstorm, we trust that the Holy Spirit will blow and bluster among us to enliven us for ministries that will make a difference in the lives of our neighbors.

Of course, if any great ideas for Rainmaker Fund projects occur to you in the meantime, please fill out the attached simple application form and return it to one of the members of the Rainmaker Committee. Additional application forms can be found on the table in the narthex.

We look forward to a brainstorm that makes it rain mission!

The members of the Rainmaker Committee:

Lee Buescher (Chair), Laurel Bentz, & Laura Yurs



RAINMAKER FUND APPLICATION FORM

Today's Date: _____

Contact Name and/or Organization _____

Contact person information:

Phone number: (____) _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Amount needed: \$ _____

Date funds needed by _____

Reason for request (Benefit/Advantages/History) _____

(Please attach additional pages if needed)

For Office Use Only
Church Council Review and Decision making

Date: _____

Response: _____

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
 Carlee Winkelman 09/25
 Reed Larson 09/25
 Alexia Asher 09/27
 Brody Wood 09/30
 Jennifer Rhodes 09/30

BAPTISM: Sunday, July 12, 2026, **Emma Louise Long** was baptized and welcomed into the Church

Universal. Emma's parents are Casey & Brittany Long (Miksch.) Her Sponsors are: Stephanie Schuyler, Angelina Rios.

BAPTISM: Sunday, July 19th 2026, **Damacio Dominguez** was baptized and welcomed to the church universal.

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY: July 19, 2026, We officially welcome **Donna Heid, Chuck Fremont, Damacio Dominguez, Jessica Chivers and Josh Chivers, and** as new members to our congregation.

Financial Report from the Trustees – As of June 30, 2026

2026	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	\$16,584	\$20,579	\$19,370	\$24,219	\$23,487	-\$4,117	-\$4,117
February	\$19,604	\$26,585	\$20,579	\$31,250	\$24,219	\$23,306	\$7,944	\$3,827
March	\$19,604	\$24,011	\$20,579	\$2,015	\$24,219	\$21,026	\$19,011	-\$15,184
April	\$19,604	\$14,900	\$20,579	\$15,600	\$24,219	\$22,724	-\$7,124	-\$22,308
May	\$19,604	\$17,176	\$20,579	\$17,692	\$24,219	\$21,860	-\$4,168	-\$26,476
June	\$19,604	\$14,697	\$20,579	\$14,697	\$24,219	\$38,572	\$23,875	-\$50,351

August 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
REMINDER: LOOSE COIN OFFERING FOR JULY AND AUGUST <i>Tri-County Unity Center, dedicated to serve those in their recovery journey by supporting groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and Al-Anon.</i>						1
2 Holy Communion 10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship 12:30, BWV Board meets. 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast 6:30-9:00 – Gubernatorial CANDIDATE FORUM at our church. Doors open at 6 p.m.	3 10:00 - STAFF MEETS	4	5	6 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	7 OFFICE CLOSED	8
9 9:30 a.m. – Ecumenical Worship at the Towne Square No Services at our church. 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	10 1:30, Rainmaker committee meets. S.O.S. Distribution at St. Henry's Gym VBS 6:00	11 S.O.S. Distribution at St. Henry's Gym VBS 6:00	12 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE VBS 6:00	13 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast VBS 6:00	14 OFFICE CLOSED	15
16 10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship. 11:30, Social Justice Team 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	17 6:30 pm, COUNCIL	18	19	20 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	21 OFFICE CLOSED	22
23 10:00 - WORSHIP Coffee Fellowship. 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	24	25 6:00, Gingerbread Bd.	26	27 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	28 OFFICE CLOSED	29
30 10:00 - WORSHIP Coffee Fellowship. 6:00 - Cable TV Broadcast	31 Pastor on vacation through Sept. 7	Pastor Chris will be out of the office: Monday, August 31-Monday, September 7--Pastor on vacation. The Rev. Dr. Sara Rabe is available for pastoral emergencies: (608) 209-2797.				