


# The Hilltop Chimes

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

Rev. Dr. Christopher Ross,
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## November 2026

### From the Pastor's Desk



Although there's not a special liturgical season for November, it's always seemed an important time in the life of the church. It begins with a celebration of All Saints (including *Totenfest*), moves through an acknowledgment of stewardship (traditionally connected to times of harvest), into Thanksgiving (with its imagery of Pilgrims, American Indians, and meal tables), and often ends with the opening of the Advent season.

That's a lot packed into this month. The last item on that list–the opening of Advent–signals the start of a whole new liturgical year, which means that the weeks preceding that Sunday are *closing* the current church year. This reality makes November a month of great transition. The weather reminds us of this dynamic–the warmth of early fall may stick around at the beginning, but by the end of November, our thoughts have likely drifted into a winter state of mind.

Yet, everything included in November remains true: it is a time to remember all the saints who have gone before, it is a time to reflect on our gifts and how we may be called to share them, it is a time to give thanks to God for all we've received, and it is a time to begin preparation for what's next.

The rhythm and routine of the church year gets it right, I think, when it comes to what's essential in this season. If you haven't been around for a while, why not make November the right time to come back, to get back into the routine? Your church would love to see you as we move forward together in faith.

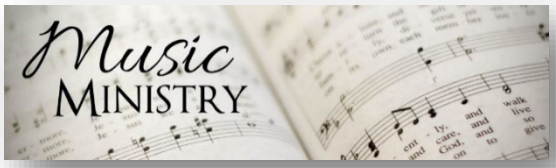
Rev. Dr. Chris Ross, Pastor




### Community Thanksgiving Service – Sunday November 22nd

4 p.m. *Community Thanksgiving Worship* at St. Paul's Episcopal Church






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

**NOTES FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR**

**Thank you to Tom Rusch for leading our keyboard music, rehearsing with, and accompanying the choir during the month of October. Thank you to our small, but mighty choir, who provided anthems each week during October.**

**Choir rehearsals continue at 9:00 a.m. in the choir room.** Advent begins on November 29th. Perhaps you might want to try out choir during this time of preparation for the birth of Christ. 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 ourselves 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 wide variety of musical knowledge and experience in the choir, so I work with who we have and where we are musically.

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.

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The season of Advent starts on November 29th and that means that plans are beginning for our annual Advent Recital. We will hold the recital on December 6, 2026, 7:00 p.m. We are looking for performers, audience members, and people who can contribute treats for the reception which will follow the recital. We accept vocal, instrumental, solo, and ensemble sacred music of the season. We always appreciate having a variety of ages perform from children right through our seniors. You do not need to be a member of the church to be involved. So, if you have a friend who you can enlist to perform, please feel free to do so. If you would like to be a part of the recital, but don't know what you would like to do, let me know and I can work with you to find some ideas.

We hope that you will schedule this event on your December calendar. It is a wonderful time to sit in our beautiful sanctuary and take in the musical gifts of our performers, while finding stillness for just a few moments.

And…..there will be goodies following the recital in fellowship hall. If you are willing to coordinate the reception, please let me know. If you have baking or cooking talents and you would like to volunteer an item for the reception, please contact me and I will pass your name onto our reception coordinator.

Juanita Edington
jaemusiclover@gmail.com




## 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.

NOVEMBER SCHEDULE:

**Nov. 1st**: Bake: Ellen Brown
Serve: Sue Harms

**Nov. 8th**:Bake: Juanita Edington
Serve: Dale Bakke

**Nov. 15th**: Bake:, Tom Rusch
Serve: Barb Weiss

**Nov. 22nd**: Bake: Lori Rhodes
Serve: Cindy Stockhus

**Nov. 29th**: Bake: _____
Serve: Sue Harms

## Loose Coin Offering
## Warming Shelter

*November and December the Loose Coin Mission Offering will go to the Building a Welcoming Watertown's Emergency Warming Shelter Program.*

***Note:** If you wish to contribute more than "coins in the plate", you can use a "Loose Coin Envelope" and enclose the cash or check (made out to 1st. Cong UCC Wttn) Memo: "Warming Shelter"*

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*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,* Is located at 208 S. 3rd St., Watertown and is another amazing local resource for our community. In addition to food items, clothing is 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/



Undie Sunday!

## In November

Sometimes children come to school without spare underwear and socks. The schools are so grateful for the donations we deliver.

We've become aware that school children in our local grade schools greatly benefit from our Undies Sundays drive mid-school year. Looking ahead to the winter months Council asks that we purchase underwear and socks to fill the cart! They will be delivered to the schools by Denyce

Once again, this special drive is to collect packages of new underwear and socks for kids. All children's sizes are welcome!

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

## Solar Project Progress Report:

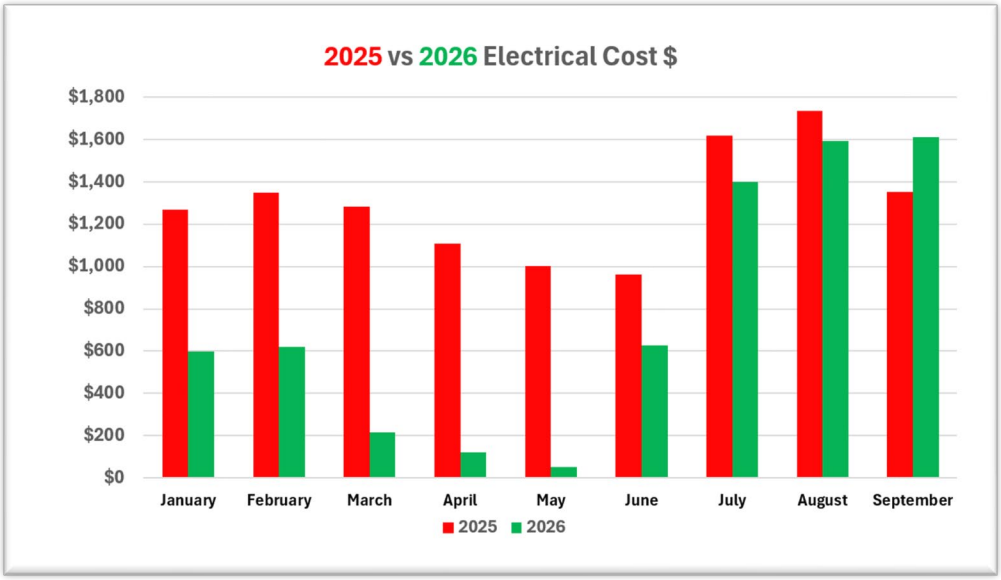
Our purchased energy from WE is down 41% year to date in both dollars and kWh (kilo watt hours) due to our investment. Our overall energy consumption from purchased plus produced has increased 60% year to date through September. We will be studying why our energy consumption has increased do much these past few months.

Grace & Peace

On behalf of the Solar Project Committee:

Dale Bakke, Adam Markus, Bill Edington, Jesse Fremont, Tom Rusch and Jim

*-Jim Ortega* Church Moderator




**First Congregational United Church of Christ Monthly Electrical Charges and Monthly kWh Usage**

| | 2023 | | 2024 | | 2025 | | 2026 | | | | 3 Yr Avg 2023-2025 | 2026 Savings Over 2025 | 2026 Savings Over 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Cost $ | kWh | Cost $ | kWh | Cost $ | kWh | Cost $ | kWh | kWh Generated | kWh Total_Use | Cost $ | Cost $ | kWh |
| January | $980 | 6,640 | $1,180 | 7,440 | $1,268 | 7,760 | $599 | 6,883 | 1,231 | 8,114 | $1,143 | $669 | 877 |
| February | $986 | 6,240 | $1,187 | 7,360 | $1,348 | 7,920 | $619 | 3,317 | 6,671 | 9,988 | $1,174 | $729 | 4,603 |
| March | $912 | 5,760 | $1,087 | 6,720 | $1,281 | 7,520 | $216 | 1,086 | 7,637 | 8,723 | $1,093 | $1,065 | 6,434 |
| April | $863 | 5,440 | $998 | 6,160 | $1,109 | 6,480 | $119 | 550 | 8,582 | 9,132 | $990 | $990 | 5,930 |
| May | $654 | 4,080 | $923 | 5,680 | $1,001 | 5,840 | $51 | 160 | 11,067 | 11,227 | $859 | $950 | 5,680 |
| June | $705 | 4,400 | $1,074 | 6,640 | $961 | 5,600 | $626 | 3,343 | 9,642 | 12,985 | $913 | $335 | 2,257 |
| July | $851 | 5,360 | $1,570 | 9,760 | $1,617 | 9,520 | $1,399 | 7,621 | 10,020 | 17,641 | $1,346 | $219 | 1,899 |
| August | $1,210 | 7,680 | $1,758 | 10,960 | $1,736 | 10,240 | $1,592 | 8,762 | 9,015 | 17,777 | $1,568 | $144 | 1,478 |
| September | $1,284 | 8,160 | $1,558 | 9,680 | $1,351 | 8,320 | $1,610 | 8,880 | 6,541 | 15,421 | $1,398 | -$259 | |
| October | $1,187 | 7,520 | $1,189 | 7,360 | $1,132 | 8,000 | | | | | $1,170 | | |
| November | $912 | 5,760 | $847 | 5,200 | $920 | 5,360 | | | | | $893 | | |
| December | $1,112 | 7,040 | $1,165 | 7,200 | $1,284 | 7,520 | | | | | $1,224 | | |
| **Totals** | **$11,656** | | **$14,537** | | **$15,009** | | **$6,831** | **40,602** | **70,406** | **111,008** | **$13,771** | **$4,842** | **23,524** |

# BOOK OF LIFE

## November Birthdays

| | |
|---|---|
| 11/04 | Danica Uttke |
| 11/06 | Emily Ortega |
| 11/07 | Elijah Fremont |
| 11/15 | Alicia Boettcher |
| 11/17 | Nicholas Miller |
| 11/19 | Peter Welbourne |
| 11/22 | Owen Schwager |
| 11/22 | Kellen Schwager |
| 11/23 | Angela Howard |
| 11/23 | Nathaniel Budewitz |
| 11/27 | Lee Hyde |
| 11/29 | Ruth Martin |
| 11/30 | Diane Koch |





## December Birthdays

| | |
|---|---|
| Jan Smith | 12/01 |
| Cindy Stockhus | 12/01 |
| William Piotrowski | 12/02 |
| Maverick Schumacher | 12/02 |
| Rob Miller | 12/11 |
| Lila Bocher | 12/15 |
| Lily Kulick | 12/16 |
| Paul Neitzel | 12/16 |
| Denyce Derleth | 12/21 |
| Rev. Chris Ross | 12/21 |
| Sophia Mattke | 12/29 |
| Joyce Larson | 12/31 |



## TOTENFEST - Service of Remembrance

### Sunday November 1st

**During 10:00 a.m. worship** we will join in a special service of remembrance. Church members are invited to send the names of loved ones who have died since last year at this time to Laurel .

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## Financial Report from the Trustees – As of September30., 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 | $18,084 | $24,219 | $23,487 | -$5,403 | -$5,403 |
| February | $19,604 | $26,585 | $20,579 | $30,269 | $24,219 | $23,306 | $6,963 | $1,560 |
| March | $19,604 | $24,011 | $20,579 | $25,339 | $24,219 | $21,026 | $4,313 | $5,873 |
| April | $19,604 | $14,900 | $20,579 | $15,600 | $24,219 | $22,724 | -$7,124 | -$1,251 |
| May | $19,604 | $17,176 | $20,579 | $17,692 | $24,219 | $21,860 | -$4,168 | -$5,419 |
| June | $19,604 | $14,697 | $20,579 | $14,697 | $24,219 | $38,586 | -$23,889 | -$29,308 |
| July | $19,604 | $15,591 | $20,579 | $16,091 | $24,219 | $17,876 | -$1,785 | -$31,093 |
| August | $19,604 | $14,562 | $20,579 | $15,127 | $24,219 | $15,364 | -$237 | -$31,330 |
| September | $19,604 | $18,016 | $20,579 | $18,584 | $24,219 | $24,155 | -$5,571 | -$36,901 |

# November 2026

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Daylight Savings Ends 1 a.m. Sunday November 1ST<br>Turn clock back 1 hour! | | | | | | |
| 1<br>**All Saints Day Sunday**<br>**TOTENFEST**<br>Communion Sunday<br>9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; Sunday School<br>10:00 – WORSHIP; Communion;<br>Coffee Fellowship<br>6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 2<br>**1 p.m. – Staff meets**<br>6:00, BSA troop 11<br>6:30, Pack 111 | 3<br>**ELECTION DAY** | 4 | 5<br>10am - Cable TV Broadcast<br>5pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 6<br>OFFICE CLOSED | 7 |
| 8<br>**Stewardship Sunday**<br>9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; Sunday School<br>10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship<br>6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 9<br>6:00, BSA troop 11<br>6:30, Pack 111 | 10 | 11<br>**Veteran's Day** | 12<br>10am - Cable TV Broadcast<br>5pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 13<br>OFFICE CLOSED | 14 |
| 15<br>9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; Sunday School<br>10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship<br>**11:30: Social Justice Team**<br>6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 16<br>**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**<br>**1:00, Rainmaker Committee**<br>6:00, BSA troop 11<br>6:30, Pack 111<br>**6:30 pm, COUNCIL** | 17 | 18 | 19<br>10am - Cable TV Broadcast<br>5pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 20<br>OFFICE CLOSED | 21 |
| 22<br>**Reign of Christ Sunday**<br>9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; Sunday School<br>*10:00 – Thanksgiving WORSHIP*;<br>Coffee Fellowship<br>4:00, Community Thanksgiving Service at St. Paul's Episcopal.<br>6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 23<br>6:00, BSA troop 11<br>6:30, Pack 111 | 24 | 25 | 26<br>**Thanksgiving Day**<br>OFFICE CLOSED<br>10am - Cable TV Broadcast<br>5pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 27<br>OFFICE CLOSED | 28 |
| 29<br>**First Sunday of Advent**<br>9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; Sunday School<br>10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship<br>6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast | 30<br>**St. Andrew's Day**<br>6:00, BSA troop 11<br>6:30, Pack 111 | Looking ahead…<br>Christmas Eve, Thursday, Dec 24th 7:00 p.m. Candlelight service with Holy Communion.<br>Christmas Day, Friday Dec 25th There will be NO worship service held | | | | |