



# The Caller

## First Congregational United Church of Christ

### MUSINGS ALONG THE WAY

Dear Friends,

Jesus gave us two great commandments: “Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind,” and “Love your neighbor as *you love yourself*” (italics added, Matthew 22:37-39). I like to think of that second commandment as a beautiful blueprint for **self-care**.

Pastors are often reminded to care for themselves. It's easy to set aside our own well-being when we're deeply committed to ministry, yet it's absolutely essential for a journey that is both sustainable and fulfilling. Ministry, after all, is a marathon, not a sprint. While we can prepare for busy seasons such as **Advent and Lent**, unexpected demands—like **funerals, community crises, or conflicts**—will inevitably arise, often requiring more energy than we have in reserve.

At our church, we believe that **everyone is a minister**, as stated on the back of our Sunday bulletin: “Ministers: The Congregation.” This means self-care applies to everyone, as we all share in the ministry of our church.

And what better time to embrace self-care than **summer**! This season of vacations and getaways offers a perfect opportunity to step away. To rest. To relax. To enjoy an *al fresco* meal (if you want a sophisticated way of saying: “Have picnics”). To simplify things (like wearing shorts and sandals to work). To simply slow down and take it easy. Please remember, self-care isn't selfish.

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Our mission is to  
create and nurture a  
family of faith  
to do God's work,  
modeling the gospel  
of Jesus Christ.



## Summer 2025

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**The First Congregational United Church of Christ** of Corning, NY believes we are all made in the image of God and we are called to celebrate our God-given identities regardless of age, class, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical ability, marital status, race, ethnicity, or mental ability. Jesus calls us to love each other as we are loved by God, and we welcome, affirm, and support all people into our full life and ministry.  
**No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!**



"The Caller" is published by the  
First Congregational  
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171 West Pulteney Street  
Corning, NY 14830

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**Office hours:**

Thurs./Fri.: 9:00 a.m. - noon

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Web: [www.corningucc.org](http://www.corningucc.org)  
Facebook.com/FCUCCC  
Instagram: @corningucc  
Secretary: Brenda Passmore

## Office hours

**Church Office:** Brenda is in the office on Thursday and Friday mornings from 9:00 a.m. – noon. Please leave a message if she's not there to answer the phone, and she will return your call.

**Pastor Henry's Office Hours:**

Tuesday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
His visitations are scheduled on  
Tues. - Fri. afternoons. **Mondays and Saturdays are his days off.**

## BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment. Care for the poor.  
Forgive often. **Reject racism.**  
**Fight for the powerless.**  
Share earthly and spiritual resources.  
Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life.



The deadline for submitting  
articles for "*The Caller*" is the  
25th of each month.

It's a vital practice, deeply rooted in the biblical teachings about rest and renewal, a core concept of the *Sabbath*. In fact, many spiritual disciplines—like Bible reading, prayer, journaling, solitude, meditation, and silence—gently invite us to slow down so we can truly engage with them.

So, dear friends, please take good care of yourselves. Remember: *As you love yourself.*

Have lots of fun this summer!

Yours for the Journey,  
Pastor Henry

The office will be closed  
**Friday, July 4th**  
for the holiday weekend.

Rev. Gary Brown is available for  
pastoral emergencies July 2—5th because  
Pastor Henry will be out of town.

**Best wishes for a safe and happy  
Independence Day!**



### Looking for help?

If you are sick, have a problem, or just want to talk with the Pastor or one of our Tender Loving Care (TLC) Responders, or if you know someone who does, please contact the church office. You can call and leave a message at 607-962-7423, or email [office@ucccorning.org](mailto:office@ucccorning.org). The office voice mail is checked regularly, and the pastor can be reached directly at [pastor@corningucc.org](mailto:pastor@corningucc.org).



### Combined Summer Worship

It's been a while, but we're combining for worship with our friends at Emanuel Lutheran Church again this summer. Emanuel Lutheran Church is just a couple blocks from our church at 149 West William Street, and it looks like we'll enjoy the music of Brass Works at both services!

All are welcome! Hope to see you there.

**We'll be at Emanuel on  
July 13th at 10:00 a.m.  
and they'll be here on Sunday, August 3rd.**



**EMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Sunday, July 13th at 10 a.m.**

*\*We'll all gather for worship at Emanuel,  
so there won't be a service at First  
Congregational United Church of Christ.*



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC**  
**Sunday, August 3rd at 10 a.m.**

*\*We'll enjoy worship together at FCUCC,  
so no worship service at Emanuel.*



### July Birthdays

1 <sup>st</sup>	Laura Cooper
6 <sup>th</sup>	Gary McCaslin
12 <sup>th</sup>	Jennifer Fais
12 <sup>th</sup>	Madelyn Pusateri
12 <sup>th</sup>	Will Madison
17 <sup>th</sup>	Liane Watson
19 <sup>th</sup>	Gina Burdick
28 <sup>th</sup>	Dick Bennett
29 <sup>th</sup>	Claudia DeMeritt
29 <sup>th</sup>	Nathan Webb

### August Birthdays

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Chris Walker
4 <sup>th</sup>	Ruth Nelson
5 <sup>th</sup>	Luke Webb
7 <sup>th</sup>	Finn Barber
7 <sup>th</sup>	Carter Wilken
7 <sup>th</sup>	Gary Brown
9 <sup>th</sup>	Thomas Kowalik
18 <sup>th</sup>	Karen Madison
24 <sup>th</sup>	Ed Lewis
27 <sup>th</sup>	Aimee Lester

Mid Day Fellowship is planning a Mystery Trip



They haven't decided on an exact date yet, but it will be in July. It will be a short distance from the church, and there will be a lunch afterwards. There should be a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall soon.



## Mission and Outreach

### August Shepherd's Table

The Mission/Outreach team will be preparing the Shepherd's Table meal at the Salvation Army on Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup>. Do you have a favorite "crowd-pleaser" recipe for a hot summer day? A new twist on an old standby to share?

Area churches, businesses and organizations rotate responsibility for this free community meal. The Salvation Army fills so many needs. The Sunday meal is one such ministry throughout the year.



Happy Summer!

Rachel Gustina, Pauletta O'Donnell, and Lynn Decher

Dear Lynn and Mary,

I wanted to take a quick moment to recognize the incredibly important work you and the rest of your church are engaged in -- especially in this present moment.

Extravagant welcome has always been central to my understanding of what church is, and what makes the UCC unique. Our shared commitment to living into our call to love our neighbors and to seek justice, love mercy and to walk humbly with our God is exemplified by folks like you who have answered the call to accompany the newcomers in our midst. This work has never been easy and has certainly only been made more difficult by the recent shifts in federal policy. As we all know, these policy changes have reduced, and in many cases eliminated, the critical support structures that make the resettlement process successful. At the same time, additional policies continue to create an environment where newcomers in our midst have been thrust into an unnecessary and malicious environment of fear where tomorrow always holds the uncertainty that they could be striped of the communities they now call home.

In these days when our world seems to slip further and further from humanity's realization of equity and justice, stories like yours, and the work of communities like First Congregational in Corning, give me hope and confidence that our tomorrow may ever be brighter than today.

Thank you for your tireless efforts. If there is ever anything we can do to assist you, please do reach out. With much appreciation for your efforts, thanks for your commitment, and gratitude for your care,  
Andrew

**Andrew Long-Higgins** (he/him)

Minister and Team Leader

Global HOPE –

*Humanitarian: Opportunities, Partnerships, Empowerment.*

United Church of Christ, National Ministries



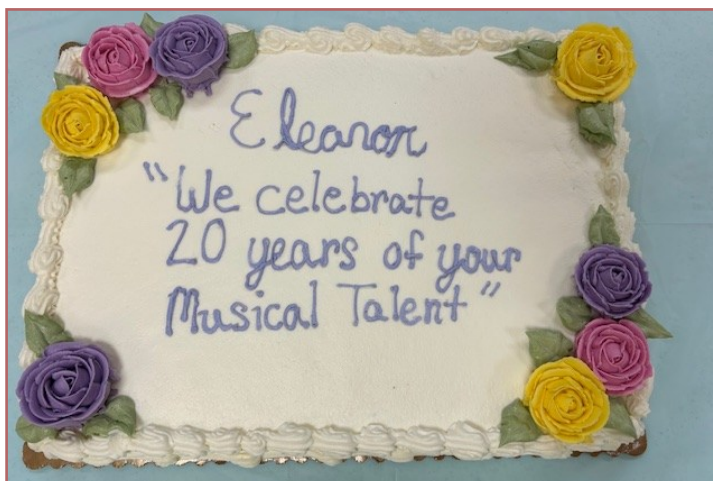


## Photo Gallery



On Sunday, June 22nd, we celebrated 20 years of dedicated organ playing by our organist, Eleanor Perry!

We thank Eleanor for the many years she's served this church, and we deeply appreciate her dedication and all the beautiful music she's played over the many, many Sundays she's been our Organist!



We enjoyed the Family Night at Dunn field for the Elmira Pioneer game. Lots of smiles from our group - despite the rain.







First Congregational UCC was pleased to have a table at the Corning Pride Festival on Market Street again this year.

The festival is many things.  
It's a celebration of all identities.  
Of all genders. Of all sexualities.  
Of rights for all, and we were proud to be there to bear witness to God's inclusive love that knows no bounds.

A heartfelt thank you to all who attended and helped, and a special appreciation to Lynn Decher for leading the way.



# Congratulations!

Sarah Paige McCall,  
daughter of Mark & Allene McCall,  
granddaughter of Jan Kostolansky,  
graduate of West Virginia Wesleyan  
College, Buchanan, WV

Nadine Kohnke,  
Patrick Wilken,  
and Gwen Zimmerman  
all graduated from  
Corning-Painted Post High School.

Nadine is enrolling in Penn State  
University at State College next fall  
as an intended Civil/Architectural  
Engineering major.

Gwen will attend University of South  
Caroline to study Biological Science to  
prepare for a career in the medial field.



Gwen Zimmerman



Nadine Kohnke



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