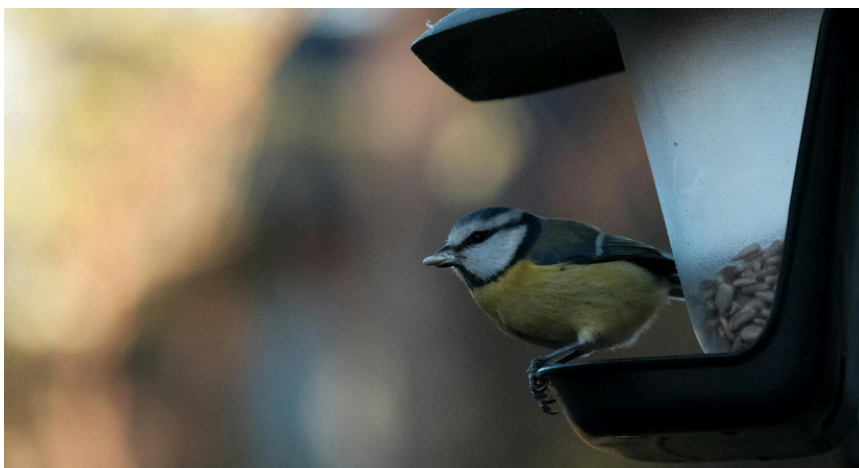


The Caller



First Congregational United Church of Christ of Corning



Musings along the way

By Pastor Henry

Dear Church Family,
Winter out! Spring in! The deep freeze has retreated—slowly, stubbornly... but surely. Breathe in that thawing mud as the soil warms and releases trapped moisture. Never mind the unpleasant smell caused by decomposing leaves. Instead, delight in the crocuses—those symbols of joy and rebirth.

Time also to watch for returning hummingbirds. Get the bird feeders ready!

When Des and I lived in Dalton, MA, we kept ours empty. Our landlord warned us that feeders attract bears. Des claimed she saw one, not just once. True confession, I just didn't want to do any cleaning. Hummingbird feeders need a scrub every 2-3 days

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to prevent mold and bacteria that can harm those iridescent little visitors. Thankfully, our other regulars—the ducks and turkeys—were much more low-maintenance guests.

But this rhythm of nature is more than a change in weather. There is a deep spiritual truth written into the soil: *life does not cease in the cold; it simply waits.* God's creation is hardwired for a comeback.

For many, our church life has felt like a long winter. Like most mainline churches today, we face the chilling reality of declining membership. In moments like this, it is easy to look

at the religious landscape and feel as though the ground is permanently frozen. But look closer. The seeds of renewal are often growing beneath the surface long before we see a blade sprout, as the *Parable of the Growing Seed* reminds us (Mark 4:26-29).

So, take off the heavy coats of worry. God is quietly doing something new in the world. While many young people felt pushed away by judgmentalism, exclusivity, or hypocrisy in the church, the hunger for meaning and connection never left.

...”it simply
waits,” ...

Research organizations such as *The Barna Group* and the *American Enterprise Institute* have reported a surprising trend of renewed interest in Christianity among Gen Z men, although the findings are more nuanced.

As we welcome spring, let us set aside our discouragement and watch for signs of growth. Our invitation is to be open to the Spirit's movement today.

Spring is here, and with it, the promise that all things can be made new. As God declares, “*Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up!*” (Isaiah 43:19, CEB)

Yours for the journey,
Pastor Henry

This Month's Events

Visit our website at comingucc.org for Sermons, Events, and other Happenings at FCUCCC



April Mission

Arbor Housing and Development, the Net Domestic Violence Services, see pg. 5 on how you can help



Midday Fellowship

Wednesday April 8, 2026 at 11:30am in Fellowship Hall.

Reminder: the March/April 2026 edition of *The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide* is available in the Narthex. Please help yourself.

Don't forget to sign-up for Flowers, Coffee Hour and Faith Formation Leaders. The sheets are located on the NEW Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall

Upcoming Plans for Church and Family Life

- Earth Day – April 22nd, another clean-up project for us. Check out details on FLX
- Biking at Pine Creek – May 30th, back up May 31st
- Kayaking and Picnic – Cowanesque Dam – September 26th, back up September 27th
- Rochester Baseball Game – September 30th

SAVE THE DATE:

June 12th-13th: We Bloomed Anyway Southern Finger Lakes Pride's 7th Annual Pride Festival Weekend. More information to come, stay tuned!

We love to hear from you!

If you have not already filled out the Church's Future Working Group's survey, please consider it. Surveys are available in Fellowship Hall and are sent as an attachment with the Sunday Bulletin on Fridays.

Another way you can help is writing a review. Yelp.com and Faithstreet.com feature reviews. This aides those searching for a Church or place of Worship to get a sense of the service and membership. Click on either link below to share your thoughts!

[Yelp.com](https://www.yelp.com)

[Faithstreet.com](https://www.faithstreet.com)

Follow us



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April Birthdays

3 rd - Christian Bratti	16 th - Judith Graf
4 th - Michael Walker	20 th - Pamela Schmitt
12 th - Cathy Hogan	21 st - Matthew Hageman
14 th - Carole Fimlaid	Maxwell Jennings
Pat Iddings	24 th - Nina Howard
Ellis Wilken	26 th - Tess Barber
15 th - Christine Wilken	Marcia Bratti

Earth Day Tree Planting is Coming!

The Corning Street Tree Project and the Southside Neighborhood Association are pleased to announce a new collaboration to plant trees throughout the Southside neighborhood and the City of Corning this spring, mid-April. The initiative will offer high quality saplings to residents free of charge in order to increase the City's tree canopy and create greener, more welcoming streets.

Volunteers from both organizations will work together to identify residents who would like to receive a tree. Residents have an opportunity to select from a variety of street trees designed to thrive in different types of urban environments. The project is part of an ongoing effort to enhance neighborhood sustainability, reduce urban heat, and beautify community spaces. Community members will be invited to participate in planting days. The Corning Street Tree Project also welcomes contributions to offset the cost of purchasing trees.

For more information or to volunteer, residents are encouraged to contact the Corning Street Tree Project through their website at <https://corningtrees.sprout.site/> and look for "Volunteer with Us," or contact the Southside Neighborhood Association at snacorning@gmail.com.

Contributions to the Corning Street Tree Project can be made through the Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes. To donate, visit <https://corningtrees.sprout.site/> and select Donate.

What a St. Patrick's Day feast Midday Fellowship put on after church on Sunday, March 15th! So many thanks to the Chief Cooks, Greg Brown and Michele, for their expert cooking.

Thank you, too, to other Midday Fellowship members for the tasty soda bread, rye breads, and special green desserts.



Mission for April - Domestic Violence Services

A program of Arbor Housing and Development, the Net Domestic Violence Services serves over 500 victims of domestic violence every year.

The DV services provides secure, temporary shelter, a 24-hour crisis hotline, support groups as well as legal advice for crime victims.

By providing them with a safe environment, the Arbor Housing and Development's Domestic Violence Services enables domestic violence survivors and their children to begin rebuilding their lives.

Donations may be made during the entire month of April, payable to the First Congregational UCC, with Arbor Housing and Development - DV fund on the memo line.

Or online donations may be made at www.corningucc.org/give



April Midday Fellowship Meeting

The April Midday Fellowship Meeting will be held Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 11:30am in Fellowship Hall.

John Brown will present a powerpoint show about his trip to Utah and the Navajo Reservation.

We will have a dish to pass luncheon of soup, salad and dessert. All are welcome!

Payment Information

Add \$1.80 to cover the processing fee
The fee would be \$0.76 for an ACH bank transfer.

Give \$50.00

An Optional Way to Maximize Your Impact

Your generosity is so important to sustain our church! When you donate online, a small processing fee is applied. If you're able, you may choose to cover this fee by check marking the box to cover the processing fee.

This is entirely optional, and we are sincerely grateful for your support in any form. Thank you for supporting First Congregational UCC!

<https://www.corningucc.org/pages/give>

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 Meta and John Spiegler Holocaust Remembrance Lecture Series

CORNING MUSEUM OF GLASS AUDITORIUM

Admission Free and Open to the Public

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 7 PM

Dori Katz was born in Antwerp, Belgium to Polish and Czech parents a year before the Germans invaded and occupied Belgium in 1940. With the exception of Dori and her mother who survived separately in hiding, her entire family, including her father, was deported to Auschwitz where they perished. Reunited after the war, she and her mother came to America in 1952.

She earned a PhD. in Comparative Literature from the University of Iowa and is currently Professor Emeritus of Modern Languages and Literature from Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, where she taught French and Modern European Literature for several decades.

She has published many poems and translations from the French in anthologies, journals, and reviews, and has published a bilingual book of poetry, *Hiding in Other People's Houses*, with her poems translated into Spanish.

Her memoir *Looking for Strangers: The True Story of my Hidden Wartime Childhood* has been published by the University of Chicago Press. It was a finalist for an award from The National Jewish Book Council for 2013.

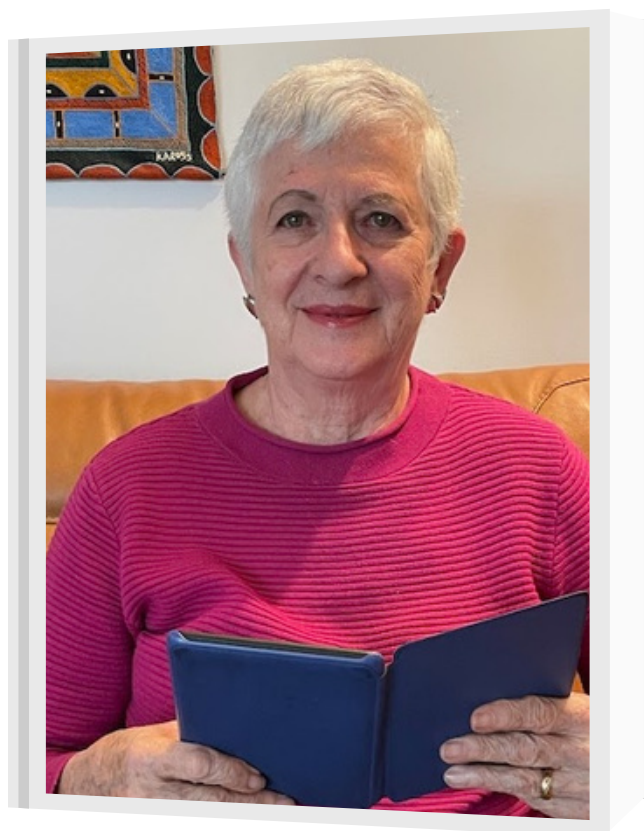
There will be a Question and Answer period at the end of Dr. Katz's talk followed by a book signing.

Book give-away!

The Southeast Steuben County Library in Corning, partnering with Card Carrying Books on Market Street, has donated 40 copies of Lola Lafon's *When You Listen to This Song*, a book that Dr. Katz highly recommended!

Additional copies of the book will be available for sale at the event.

For more information on the event, please email us at: spieglerholocaustlecture@gmail.com





If you are interested in learning more about our church, please visit our website at corningucc.org or scan the QR code on the right.



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

Office hours:

Tues/Fri: 9:00am-Noon

Pastor Office Hours:

Tuesday-Friday:

9:00am - 2:00pm

His visitations are scheduled on Tues - Fri afternoons. Mondays and Saturdays he is off.

Sunday Service

In-person worship and Zoom worship every Sunday at 10 AM
<https://www.corningucc.org/>

Nursery

Nursery provided from 9:30am-11:30am for children under 4.