

2020 definitely did not end up being the year we anticipated. It turned into a year of stress, anxiety, and separation from our routines, family and normal lives. One thing remained constant though, and that was our congregation. Throughout this difficult and challenging year, we pulled together to continue to show [We Are The Church](#), no matter where we are.

During the past year:

- We met all of our Mission Awareness Project (M.A.P) and Mission Team Commitments and outreach.
- The Community Garden was tilled and planted and had an amazing harvest.
- The Outdoor Food Pantry continued to be stocked and a new pantry was built.
- We continued to find ways to worship together.
- We held Bible study and book clubs
- We hosted virtual Women's Wine and Cheese and Men's Group gatherings.
- The Sunday School and Youth Group continued to meet.
- The Summer Concert Series was held virtually and five benefactors were supported.

Webster United Church of Christ continues to be a welcoming, caring and giving community where we have been able to adapt during uncertain times and find ways to provide a space for traditional and nontraditional worship. We found ways to continue to provide hands-on opportunities to serve others, and continue personal connections. We are reaching out to all members to ask:

1. If you have not done so already, and are able to do so, please consider providing the funding you pledged to the church for 2020.
2. Please consider pledging to the church for 2021 by completing the enclosed pledge card and return it to Webster United Church of Christ 570 Klem Rd. Webster, NY 14580 OR by visiting www.uccwebster.org, click on Signups and Donations and click on Make a Pledge.

We have shown that we continue to be **US** no matter the circumstances and will continue to [Be The Church](#) for each other and the community.

To be **US** we need **YOU** now more than ever.

Our church does **not** receive any type of funding from a larger UCC organization. 100% of our budget depends on giving. This is mostly made up by:

Regular giving from members (weekly, monthly etc.): This is the main source of funds for the church. Every year, church members are asked to commit to donating to the church for the upcoming year. These pledges assist the church in the budgeting process to understand how much funds are available for things like making sure our spaces are lit, warm, safe, staffed and ready to help those in need.

Fundraisers and miscellaneous donations: Fundraisers and miscellaneous donations can help to supplement the church budget. These sources of income are usually unknown when planning the budget and are not guaranteed. Fundraisers also need volunteers to help organize, plan and manage. *If you have a fundraising idea or would like to lead a group to run a fundraiser, please talk to any member of Leadership Council, Wendy or Carl!*

Funds for supporting church activities: Certain activities, such as Summer Mission Week, VBS, Pet Food Pantry, etc., charge participants a fee or depend on separate donations to pay for the program.

Money from non-church members: Certain funds are received from building use from people or organizations outside of the church such as the cell tower lease and groups using our building for meetings or classes.

Church endowment and memorials and special gifts: is made up of gifts from members who have generously contributed to our church in their wills or other special occasions. While we are lucky to have these resources, it is our desire to use them in a responsible manner that will enable us to preserve the funding for the future.

Over the next few weeks, you will see more information on the importance of pledging to the budget of the Webster UCC. By completing and submitting a pledge card, you are ensuring that **we** can be **us**.

Below are some Frequently Asked Questions about pledging and the church budget. If you have a question that is not on this list, please do not hesitate to reach out to a member of Leadership Council.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a pledge to the Webster United Church of Christ?

A pledge is a commitment to provide a certain amount of money in the upcoming year to use towards church activities.

Who sees the amount of my pledge?

Pledge amounts are kept confidential and only the Financial Secretary has access to the information for tracking and processing purposes. Individual pledge information is not shared with anyone else - including the staff or Leadership Council.

Do I have to pay my pledge all at once?

No. If you pledge an amount of money for the upcoming year, that money can be paid all at once or throughout the entire year. Whatever works best for you and your budget.

I'm not sure right now how much money I'll have to pledge to the church next year?

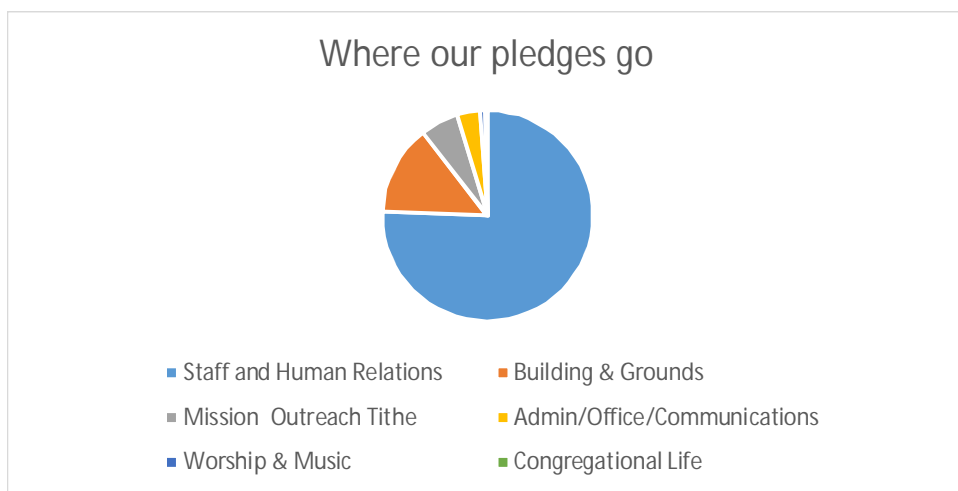
It's hard to know what expenses might pop up in the new year. Any pledge you can make is helpful to us in planning the budget for the upcoming year. This allows us to plan if any additional fundraising efforts are needed and consider if possible cuts may be needed in order to not exceed what we can spend.

If I commit to a specific dollar amount, am I tied into that amount for the year?

All pledges are appreciated. We ask parishioners to consider sticking to the amount of money they have pledged in order to help us make sure we have the incoming revenue to support our budget. However, members who would like to contribute more throughout the year are welcome to do so. It's also understandable that unforeseen circumstances may prevent people from honoring their original pledge.

What are the pledges used for?

Operating a church costs money. Pledge funding helps pay expenses including: staffing, building, grounds, and other church activities.



How is a pledge to the church different from when I make donations to specific church activities and causes?

A pledge from our congregational members is counted on as church revenue for budget purposes. Throughout the year, there are activities and mission opportunities that are not a part of the budget. These are times where additional donations are helpful and appreciated.

If I don't fill out a pledge but put money in the basket every week, isn't that the same thing?

All donations are greatly appreciated. The difference between a pledge and a spontaneous weekly donation is that a pledge allows us to have an idea of how much money to expect from our members to use towards the budget to ensure that all of the programs we have can continue.

I have limited resources and cannot pledge a significant amount of money to the church budget.

We understand that money can be tight and it can't be said enough that all pledges and donations are greatly appreciated. It is important to know that while pledging is important to the church budget, members can contribute in different ways. If you are not able to provide a pledge, you could consider chairing a committee to run a fund raiser for the church. It takes members' time, talent and treasure to help our church run smoothly and serve the community.

Don't we get money from the United Church of Christ Association

No. Unlike certain denominations, the United Church of Christ does not have a centralized fund that it allocates to its various churches. As a matter of fact, each UCC church pays a fee to the UCC Association. Each United Church of Christ is independent and responsible for its own finances.

Why do we need pledges from church members when we have an endowment?

Our church is fortunate to have something called an endowment. This endowment started with one member's generous gift and has grown through continuing donations and interest earned. The church guidance suggests that the church should only use 6% of the endowment for operating expenses to ensure that sufficient funds remain in the endowment to allow the endowment to be a perpetual source of funds for the church.

What happens to donations people make to the church in their wills?

When members remember the church in their wills, the funds are dispersed in accordance with the church member's wishes. If the will specifies that the money should go towards the endowment, the funds are transferred into that account. If the church member specifies that the funds should go towards a specific project or mission, the funds will be allocated to those specific areas. If no specific direction is provided, the funds go into an account called Memorials and Special gifts which get allocated towards special projects not part of the regular church budget.

To be US...We need YOU.

For church records

Please return by 12/15/20

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I plan to give \$ _____ each week month year

Beginning _____ for an annual total of \$ _____

I understand that this commitment can be changed at any time by giving notice to the appropriate church officer.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

For your records

Date _____

I plan to give \$ _____ each

week month year

Beginning _____

for an annual total of

\$ _____

