

March
2021



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

The Congregationalist

Monthly Newsletter

Rev. Carl Richter, Sr. Pastor
Doug Hall, Editor

Email: office@uccwebster.org
Website: www.uccwebster.org

570 Klem Road, Webster, New York 14580
Phone: 585-671-3757
Fax: 585-671-3765

Dear Members and Friends of Webster UCC, Congregational,



March? Already! I know February is a short month, but it sure seemed a lot shorter this year... didn't it?

We have begun our Lenten journey and I hope our Sunday worship and weekly meditations are providing you with some spiritual direction during this most holy season of the Church year. If any of you take on the self-discipline of giving something up for Lent, may you be strong in your denials, and if you are one who tries to take on something during Lent, may all that you do bring a sense of gratitude and gratification to your Lenten journey.

I recently saw a listing of things to give up for Lent, authored by Pope Francis, and I thought they were pretty good. I share them with you:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Fast from hurting words | ...and say kind words. |
| Fast from sadness | ...and be filled with gratitude. |
| Fast from anger | ... and be filled with patience. |
| Fast from pessimism | ...and be filled with hope. |
| Fast from worries | ...and have trust in God. |
| Fast from complaints | ... and contemplate simplicity. |
| Fast from pressures | ...and be prayerful. |
| Fast from bitterness | ...and fill your hearts with joy. |
| Fast from selfishness | ...and be compassionate to others. |
| Fast from grudges | ...and be reconciled. |
| Fast from words | ...and be silent so you can listen. |

All good things to think about – not just during Lent! (But Lent is a good time to practice!)

I was looking at last year's calendar and realized that on the third Sunday of March we made the decision to livestream our worship on Facebook for the first time. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic had begun to be felt here in New York State, and our Leadership Council felt it necessary to go this route in order to protect the members of our congregation. We had no idea that one year later we'd still be worshipping in this manner, but we want to make sure that we all remain as safe and healthy as we possibly can.

While a few of our members have experienced the virus firsthand and have recovered, we know of at least one member whose life was lost to complications brought on by COVID. For those who have or are dealing with the virus, we pray for God's strength and mercy in recovery, and for the families of those who have died, we pray for God's comfort and peace for family and friends dealing with loss and grief. Our love and prayers are with you all.

While we join in mourning the loss of over 500,000 Americans who have succumbed from the virus, and that's too many, we pray for all those healthcare workers – nurses, doctors, technicians, first-responders, caregivers – all who are working so hard in the healing of so many. We pray, too, for all those essential front line workers who put themselves in vulnerable positions each day so that we can have the things that we need in order to survive, and continue to enjoy life as normal and blessed as we possibly can.

As we observe one year of being apart from one another physically, may God keep us safe and healthy and connected as best we can until that time we able to re-gather in love and faith!

Light, Life, and Love,

Carl

“If you have faith the size of a mustard seed... nothing would be impossible to you.”
- Matthew 17:20

A Thank-You Note

We recently received the following thank-you note from RAIHN/Family Promise:

February 12, 2021

Webster United Church of Christ
570 Klem Road
Webster, NY 14580

Dear Friends,

Thank you for giving the gift of hope and home to families experiencing homelessness and those who are housing vulnerable in our community. Your \$340 donation for apartment rental on January 28, 2021 helps fulfill our mission to provide needed shelter, food and supply boxes, rental arrears and security deposits, counseling, support, and referrals for mental health, and an empathetic, listening ear.

Families experiencing poverty and homelessness are especially impacted by COVID-19, and with an estimated 15,000 households at risk for eviction in Rochester in the next few months, your generosity is critical. Currently, your gift is sheltering three families and supporting 22 families in our Aftercare Program, which follows families for up to a year after transitioning from shelter. Last year, 128 families were served through the Prevention, Diversion, and Rehousing Program in 2020, up from 47 in 2019. This program assists with funding for eviction prevention or security deposit/first month's rent.

Not only has the last year been unprecedented due to economic challenges, the virus, and an awakening awareness of racial disparity across our region and country, your generosity is also unprecedented. Together, as a community, we are working to meet the needs of our neighbors. We are truly grateful to you and others who are making a difference for families and keeping us funded and growing strong.

With deepest gratitude,

Kim Hunt-Uzelac, LMSW
Executive Director

Sharon Burke
Board Chair

Celebrating New Life...

As the 'Circle of Life' turns on and loved ones leave this earth, we stop to welcome new life in the midst of our congregation:

Caius John Dooher was born "10 minutes before kick-off on Super Bowl Sunday," February 7 to Kim and James Dooher! Caius weighed in at 9 lbs. 6 ozs., and is doing very well! His siblings, Anthony, Deaglan and Vivian are thrilled to have a baby brother!!

Thank you from Open and Affirming Coalition

As an open and affirming congregation, one of our church's mission donations goes to the Open and Affirming Coalition each year. Here are some words from the thank you received for the 2020 donation:

There is a Nigerian proverb which says; "It is the heart that does the giving; the fingers only let go." In 2020, forty-seven congregations were recognized for adopting a covenant that fully affirms same-gender-loving, bisexual, and gender expansive people into the life and ministry of this church - during a pandemic. That is an incredible gift of the heart!

On behalf of the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ, thank you for your financial support over the past year and years!

**With deep gratitude on behalf of the Leadership Team and Staff of the Coalition,
Andrew G. Lang
Executive Director**

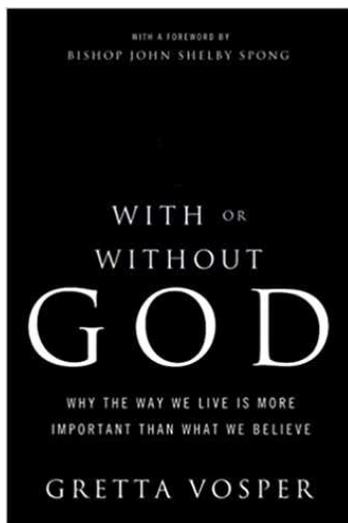
Mission Moments

What can you do with a blanket? It can provide warmth, shelter from the elements, comfort, and the knowledge that someone cares. For many years Webster UCC has had a Blanket Sunday offering to provide blankets for many via Church World Service. This year donations for Blanket Sunday can be mailed to the church or made online, payable to UCC Congregational and marked for Blanket Sunday.

Thank you!!

In 2020, Webster UCC was once again a **Five for Five** Church. This means as a congregation we donated to four special offerings - OGHS (One Great Hour of Sharing), Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund and to OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) through the church budget funded by your giving. Because of COVID, there were no bulletin inserts or envelopes but your generosity in donating came via mail and online giving. Thank you for your generosity in giving and helping others.

Thursday morning discussion group



Join the Thursday morning group for a new resource, "With or Without God: Why the Way We Live Is More Important than What We Believe." Gretta Vosper's book will challenge your beliefs while pointing you toward a Christian life. Discussions will be held through Zoom meetings.

Sessions will begin Thursday, 3/11/21, 9:30 AM

Used hardcover books about \$11

Contact Joe Roth (671-8458) for more information or to join the group.

One Great Hour of Sharing—2021



Dear Webster UCC!

This year's theme for our all-church offering *ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING* (OGHS) is “**LET LOVE FLOW.**” We'll happily receive your donations to OGHS throughout the month of March. You can make your donation online (at uccwebster.org) or by mail.

The gifts you give to OGHS are leveraged with those of others across the United Church of Christ bringing a greater impact to the work being done with local and global partners. Your support enables us to respond to a variety of global and local concerns by addressing advocacy, sustainable development, refugee and asylum issues, migration, and disaster relief, as well as assisting those most in need and vulnerable among us. The COVID-19 pandemic, wildfires, earthquakes, hurricanes and flooding have ravaged communities in the United States and worldwide, leaving families and communities in desperate need of assistance. Some of these disasters have occurred in hometowns of UCC members across the nation, or in nearby communities or the communities of family members and friends in countries thousands of miles away, across the globe. When you share your gifts, you “Let Love Flow” and your generosity ensures that, even in the midst of uncertainty, the transforming power of God's love continues to change lives here and around the world, as together we build a just world for all.

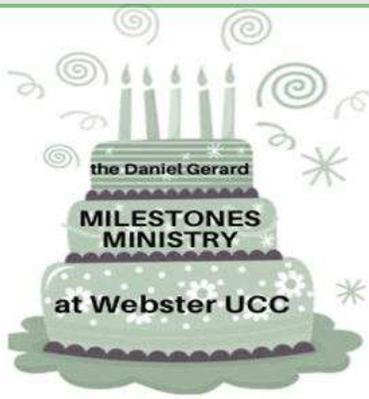
Check out these inspiring videos to learn more:

<https://youtu.be/Rrtv4REM8oc> OGHS Update with Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson

https://youtu.be/Q9y_1U425cs When Water Comes

One Great Hour of Sharing is one of the “Five for Five” offerings of the UCC. And as a “Five for Five” congregation in the New York Conference, please consider giving generously to support the important ongoing work of our denomination throughout the world.

Thank you for your support of OGHS!



Meeting Families where they are on life's journey

The Milestones Mission:

to provide gifts for children & teens for "milestone" events such as birthdays, graduations, Christmas, and Easter.

Ministry Dedication: Will be Live Streamed on FaceBook March 21 at 12:30

Contact us:

Facebook @MilestonesMinistryatWUCC

Email milestonesministryatwucc@gmail.com

**REBEL BEAT
YOUTH MINISTRY**

Register online at uccwebster.org

June 28-July 2
Mission Week 2021
An amazing week of loving
boldly, serving humbly &
changing the world.



Vacation Bible School

For children entering preschool through grade 4 as of Sept. 2021
Grade 5 and up are staff



Climb aboard for mountains of fun at Rocky Railway! On this faith-filled adventure, kids discover that trusting Jesus pulls them through life's ups and downs.



Dates: Monday through Friday
June 28-July 2
Time: 9:00 am to noon
Place: United Church of Christ
570 Klem Road
Webster NY 14580
Cost: \$35 (includes t-shirt)

Space extremely limited to 50 campers
Register Early!

Register online at www.uccwebster.org



March Birthdays

Did we miss anyone? If you know someone who has an anniversary or birthday in March who isn't listed please contact the church office.

02/29	Julia Henderson	03/17	Clare Boehly
03/01	Ana Chatfield	03/17	Barbara Henry
03/02	Hannah McAdoo	03/17	Lindsay Shull
03/02	Susan Mitchell	03/19	Norman Seitz
03/03	Cleda Kuttruff	03/20	Peter Zarcone
03/03	Tony LaDuca	03/21	David Babcock
03/04	Carole Gabbert	03/22	Fritz Kilian
03/05	Donna Fonda	03/23	Ian Fellows
03/05	Margaret Tsai	03/23	Alison Reindel
03/06	Emily Duga	03/23	Jayne Stephens
03/06	Amanda Dunn	03/24	Clive Barnsbee
03/07	Taylor Peterson	03/25	Garrett Reeves
03/08	Lori Kilian	03/26	Bethany Patterson
03/09	Joelle Boland	03/26	Becky Sollame
03/09/	Lynne Sweeney	03/28	Tamra O'Donnell
03/10	Shannon Liptak	03/28	Michael-Ann Peterson
03/10	Marian Payne	03/29	Jim Beachner
03/11	Lyn Foster	03/29	Sarah Bila
03/11	Danielle Hollis	03/29	Chester French
03/11	Holly Marushak	03/29	Michael Green
03/11	Debbie Miller	03/30	Anthony Biuso
03/11	Josh O'Mailey	03/30	Kaitlyn Minichiello
03/12	Joyce French	03/31	Jan Farling
03/13	Trey Breedy	03/31	Joseph Gerard
03/13	Wendy Lesko		
03/13	John Norton		
03/14	Ethan Bell		
03/14	Benjamin Karam		
03/14	Carole Roth		
03/15	Jack Bickford		



March Anniversaries

03/22 Dan & Donna VanHousen
03/24 David & Shirley Babcock
03/31 Craig & Sheryl Akins

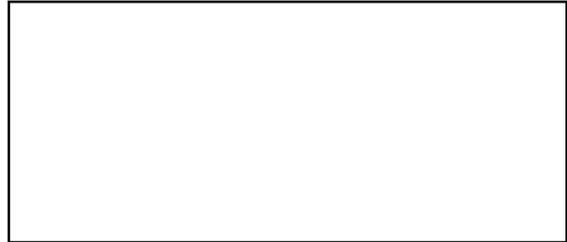
Live stream of Sunday morning worship is at 10am each Sunday.
 Sunday School and Youth Group are meeting online. Check your email for details.

MARCH 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 10am Combined Worship	01-Mar First Day of Women's History Month	2 7pm Carl and Wendy's Lectionary Adventure	3 7pm BSA Troop 113	4 9:30am Bible Study Group	5 5pm Drama Kids	6
7 10am Combined Worship	8	9 7pm Carl and Wendy's Lectionary Adventure	10 7pm BSA Troop 113	11 9:30am Bible Study Group	12 5pm Drama Kids	13
14 Daylight Saving Time starts 10am Combined Worship	15	16 6pm WISE group 7pm Carl and Wendy's Lectionary Adventure	17 St. Patrick's Day 7pm BSA Troop 113	18 9:30am Bible Study Group	19 5pm Drama Kids	20
21 10am Combined Worship	22	23 7pm Carl and Wendy's Lectionary Adventure	24 7pm BSA Troop 113	25 9:30am Bible Study Group	26 5pm Drama Kids	27
28 Palm Sunday 10am Combined Worship	29	30 7pm Carl and Wendy's Lectionary Adventure	31 7pm BSA Troop 113	01-Apr 9:30am Bible Study Group	2 5pm Drama Kids	3

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Tentative Sunday Schedule

*10:00 AM
Worship Service live stream
on our Facebook page*

*11:30 AM
"Sunday School has left the building!"
on ZOOM*

[details at uccwebster.org](http://uccwebster.org)

*"The United Church of Christ,
Congregational of Webster is an Open and
Affirming community of faith. We welcome
and affirm God's people of every sexual
orientation, gender identity, gender
expression, race, ethnicity, marital status,
mental ability, physical ability, economic
circumstance, and spiritual tradition to
fully participate in the life and ministry of
our church family."*

Webster UCC Staff

the Rev. Carl J. Richter, Sr. Pastor
Wendy Lesko, Director Christian Education
Ronald Milliman, Music Director
Doug Hall, Office Manager
Oleksandra Yurchenko, Accompanist
Loraine Speer, Nursery Coordinator
Scott Loiacono, Custodian