

August
2021



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

The Congregationalist

Monthly Newsletter

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Dear Members and Friends of Webster UCC, Congregational,



The Olympics are coming!!

I always get excited about the opportunity to watch the summer Olympics! As a former competitive swimmer in high school and college, and also several years as a high school swim coach, I really enjoy the swimming and diving events! And each year I wonder, "How much faster can they swim? How many more records can be broken!" When I think about my best times in high school and college and compare them to the swimmers' times today, I have to laugh! It's really quite comical. But seriously, how much faster can a human body swim?

Jennifer Stuczynski Suhr is the daughter of a dear high school friend of mine, Sue Fijal. Jenn is an Olympic gold medalist in the pole vault. She won gold in London and silver in Beijing. Now, at 39, she is still a champion – and again I have to wonder, "How much higher can Jenn vault?"

How much faster, higher, further, stronger can we push our human bodies? When does the time come when there will be a declaration: We have gone as fast, as high, as far as we can go? I know the motto, "Do your best," means that we are always striving to be the best we can most possibly be, but when will we say, "This is the best I can do?"

Last Sunday I began my sermon with the questions: "When are we going to stop rewarding each other for doing too much? ...Being too involved? ...Being too over-programmed?" I went on to talk about the fact that in Mark's gospel we read about Jesus needing some 'down time,' a rest from the pressing crowd asking him to heal, to touch, to counsel, to love, to care, to preach, to teach. It was reassuring to me to think that even Jesus took time to refresh, recharge, renew his body and spirit in order to continue doing the work he was called to do. And I think the story in Mark 6 is a recommendation for all of us to slow down and enjoy life – before it passes us by – and our speed, distance, height, endurance or strength won't mean a thing to us!

I also stated that I truly believe that it is NOT God's will for us to be exhausted. Rest is always a teacher:

- We are not indispensable!
- Play is a blessing;
- In laughter, we become like children;
- In sleep, we are watched over;
- In lingering over a meal, we learn something about love we can't learn anywhere else.

I had several emails and texts after Sunday – from people thanking me for sharing this story with them. One said that she "really needed to hear this today," she acknowledged the need to slow down a little. Another said, "I feel like a complete failure when I don't make 50-55 hours a week at work. ...Working myself to death doesn't make me a hero in others' eyes." And another asked, "By pushing ourselves to crazy limits, what are we teaching our children? Perseverance is one thing, but over-achieving is another."

Summer is a great time to make time for ourselves – to rest and enjoy life a little more! Like those old Country Time Lemonade commercials... "Sit in the shade of a tree, kick off your shoes, take a swim in the lake or a nap in a hammock... the world will still be there after a nice cold glass of lemonade." I couldn't agree more!

Happy Summer!

Carl

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

Caring Community Concerts Continuing Success

Our Caring Community Concert series is underway for its 17th season. People gather on the church lawn on Wednesday evenings to enjoy a free outdoor concert. Each week a free-will offering is collected to benefit a designated local charity with 100% of the proceeds going directly to that organization. The bands are paid by the church, with some of that cost being subsidized through fundraising at our “dollar tent”.

below: An all-ages crowd enjoyed the music of the Beatles as performed by the local band “8 Days a Week” on July 29.



Join us online for Sunday worship

The pandemic forced us to use new ways to stay connected. One of these is livestreaming of worship services. Recognizing that this is a way to expand our church’s reach, we will continue to provide this service in the future even as we are able to provide in-person worship in the sanctuary. A generous gift has enabled us to upgrade our livestream equipment, including new pan-tilt-zoom cameras and a digital sound board. Soon, our Sunday worship will be available online with higher quality video, multiple camera angles and improved sound. Of course, we can expect some glitches along the way as we all learn how to make the best use of this new system.

Find the links to livestream on Facebook and YouTube by visiting our website uccwebster.org



Mission Moments -

Special Offering - What makes us a Strive For Five church? Four special offerings plus a donation to OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) from the budget. Offering for OGHS this year totaled \$1,010.00. Next special offering is Strengthen the Church which supports leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. Donations, marked for Strengthen the Church, may be made online or mailed to the church through August.

Thank you for your continued support of these special offerings!

Church World Service school kits - August/September has been our time to collect supplies for the kits. Though delivery is in the spring, school supplies are on sale now. A labeled bin is in the narthex to collect donated supplies. Monetary donations are always welcome and may be sent to the church marked for school supplies. The kits are sent worldwide as need arises. Thank you for helping with this mission project!!!

School Bag Supplies:

- one pair **blunt** scissors
- three 70-count spiral bound notebooks
- one 12" ruler
- one hand held pencil sharpener
- one large eraser
- six new unsharpened pencils with erasers
- one box 24 count crayons (only 24)

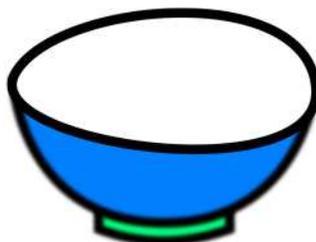
Many thanks to those who sew school bags. Each one uses a half yard of quilting cotton weight fabric. Instructions available from Linda Ims - lindaims63@gmail.com or 671-1101.

Our church kitchen—it's time to return what's borrowed!!

Along with reopening our sanctuary for services, the church kitchen will soon to be a vital part of supporting our ministry and programs. That is good news!

The bad news is that after more than a year of supposed inactivity, we have found many items missing---perhaps borrowed and not returned.... Items include full sheet pans, plastic salad serving bowls, drink pitchers, brown school trays and a crock pot, plus other concert related grill items.

If you have borrowed any of these items, we would appreciate your prompt return of them.



Happy Birthday



August Birthdays

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

08/01	LaRae Plain	08/21	Paul Kittredge
08/02	Hannah Davis	08/21	Denielle Newman
08/02	Diana Newman	08/21	Patrick Sharp
08/02	Andrew Painton	08/22	Angie Clair
08/02	Debbie Peterson	08/23	Jennifer Hermenet
08/03	Todd Enright	08/23	Ken Mihalyov
08/03	Andrea Oestreich	08/23	Jeffrey Peck
08/03	Caleb Story	08/24	Margaret Hall
08/06	John Elchisak	08/26	Dylan Balsamo
08/06	John Murray	08/27	Julianne Daly
08/06	Teri Reynolds	08/27	Pamela Killaby
08/07	Andrew Newman	08/27	Kitty Varlan
08/08	Heidi Hall	08/28	Hillary Lesko
08/08	Fredric Mis	08/28	John McBeth
08/08	Jordan Phelps	08/28	Stella Williams
08/09	Jan Salatino	08/31	Laura Abbett
08/10	Aaron Tsai		
08/11	Diane Cannarozzo		
08/12	Richard Schmitt		
08/12	Mindy Spencer		
08/14	Sharon Pratt		
08/16	Ron Orchard		
08/17	Michael Syracuse		
08/18	Cathy Perrin		
08/21	Diane Daly		

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



August Anniversaries

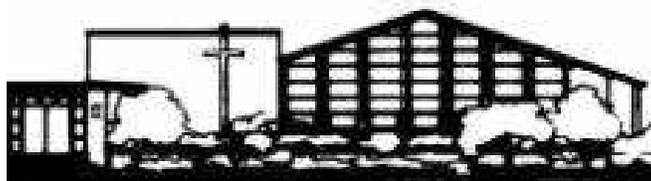
08/01	Rachel Mayer & Christiaan van Aswegen	08/17	Thomas & Heidi Zastowny
08/01	Mark & Cathy Perrin	08/20	John & Diane Gummoe
08/05	Fritz & Lori Kilian	08/22	Craig & Sharon Pratt
08/05	Jim & Melissa Painton	08/23	Caron & Wes Gregory
08/12	James & Karen Tanney	08/26	Ronald & Suzanne Milliman
08/13	Connor O'Brien-Mayer & David Mayer	08/26	William & Susan Reindel
08/13	Mark & Rosemary Shull	08/28	Lawrence & Suzanne Ford
08/14	Wendy & Steven Lesko	08/28	Charles & Susan Speer
08/15	Heidi & Ted Higgs	08/29	Don & Andrea Oestreich
08/15	Kathleen & Michael Syracuse	08/31	Wendi Latko & Mike Gerard
08/17	Tara & Catalino Mateo	08/31	Richard & Ruth Morrill
08/17	Nelson & Patricia Milne		

Sunday worship is in our sanctuary at 10am each Sunday. Services are livestreamed on Facebook. See our website for the link.

Sunday School and Youth Group are meeting online and in person. Check your email for details.

AUGUST 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
01-Aug 10am Combined Worship	2	3	4 6:30pm Caring Community Concert #4	5 9:30am Bible Study Group	6	7
8 10am Combined Worship	9	10	11	12 9:30am Bible Study Group	13	14
15 10am Combined Worship	16 6pm WISE group	17	18	19 9:30am Bible Study Group	20	21
22 10am Combined Worship	23	24	25	26 9:30am Bible Study Group	27	28
29 10am Combined Worship	30	31	01-Sep	2 9:30am Bible Study Group	3	4



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Summer Sunday Schedule

10:00 AM

*Worship Service in our Sanctuary
Plus live stream on our Facebook page*

11:00 AM

Youth group

*“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

Lorraine Speer, Nursery Coordinator

Scott Loiacono, Custodian