

August  
2024



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

# The Congregationalist

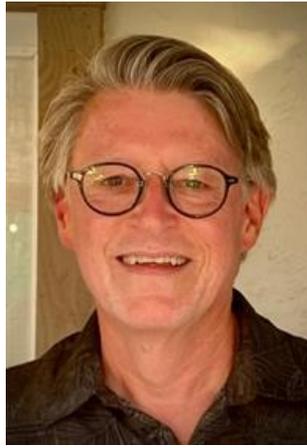
Monthly Newsletter

Rev. David S. Gregory, Interim Sr. Pastor  
Doug Hall, Editor

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## From Our Interim Minister



Dear Ones,

As I write this newsletter, the church profile has gone live and is now searchable by authorized ministers who are seeking a call. Kudos to the Search team for a gargantuan effort in composing and editing the profile and navigating the frustrating technical glitches that are part and parcel of any new platform. Be sure to follow the updates as they appear in the narthex, and as always, make plenty of patient space for the team to do their interview work confidentially.

In the meantime, our congregation can do its own work to prepare for a potential candidate. What does that look like? For one thing, it is a good time to become well versed in the Vision and Mission of the United Church of Christ of Webster.

Our Vision as stated in the Guidance Document is “inviting people into the joy of Christian community, where everyone is valued, supported and challenged to grow in faith and service.”

Our Ministry and Mission Priorities encompass the following areas:

**Worship:** To embrace a welcoming Christ-centered worship where all of God's people are valued, supported and challenged to grow in faith and service

**Small Groups:** To develop a community of small groups focused on growing, learning, caring, serving, and praying

**Children:** To help children build healthy bonds and as they continue to grow in faith

**Youth:** To develop opportunities to participate in Christ centered ministry and outreach

**Outreach:** To establish outreach initiatives that support our community, country, and world

**Our Home:** To establish our home as a center for church and community activities

**Communication:** To share our stories, stay connected, and transmit our church family's care

I am thinking that many of us have not taken the time to review the Guidance Document. It might seem irrelevant or cumbersome, so in the fall the congregation will be asked to approve some revisions to the document that reflect some streamlining, and will reflect the church not only as it is, but as we envision it to become under the leadership of a new minister. This is one of the final areas addressed under my leadership as a transitional pastor. We want our new leader to find us self-aware, well organized, and after an initial phase of getting settled in, to find us ready to move forward into a new era.

Lets take the time remaining to hone our message, to finish getting our house in order, and most importantly listening to the Voice of Spirit in whatever way is meaningful to us, so that we are ready to welcome our new leader with enthusiasm and anticipation.

With excitement,

Rev. David

## A Thank-You Note

Thank you to all my church friends for all the heart felt sympathy cards, comments and especially all the wonderful hugs, during the loss of my precious June Marie.

Jim Coakley

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### “Hot Topics” discussion group

The “Hot Topics” discussion group will take a break for the Community Concerts. We will resume Wed., August 21, at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Konrad Emmert and Susan Belair will discuss “False White Gospel” by Jim Wallis, which addresses many issues that are connected to our immigration discussion.

All are welcome. For more information, contact [richard\\_kendrick@verizon.net](mailto:richard_kendrick@verizon.net).

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### Cocktail Class: Rum.

On Tuesday, August 13th, at 6:30 PM, spend the evening with Joe Izzo investigating rum. Learn about the different types, and taste some classic rum cocktails. All are welcome. Please RSVP to [joespub.xyz@gmail.com](mailto:joespub.xyz@gmail.com) by August 6th.

### Mission Moment -

**Church World Service school kits** - August/September is the 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 **showing inches and centimeters**
- 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 in kid friendly print or solid color. No logos please. Instructions available from Linda Ims - [lindaims63@gmail.com](mailto:lindaims63@gmail.com).

# Strengthen the Church

As a Five for Five church, we donate to OCWM (Our Churches Wider Mission) via the church budget, and have four special offerings each year. The second offering was for *Strengthen the Church* and was collected during June.

Your contributions totaled \$995.

Thank you for your generous support!!!

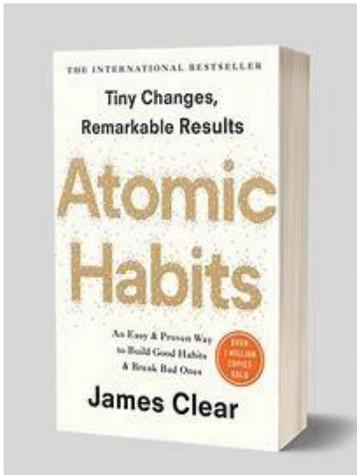


## Announcement

It is with great regret that we announce the resignation of our Office Manager Doug Hall after 17 years with Webster UCC. Doug has been an invaluable part of the team and has worked tirelessly to keep things moving as smoothly as possible, even during floods and pandemics. His time with us has included working with four different ministers, multiple staff members, interfacing with an array of church officers and committees. Not only has he run the office, but he's also given us much tech support, managed contracts and building use, maintained the church database and has been the face of Webster UCC with many community partners. Until recently he was also our treasurer. Doug will be sincerely missed and we wish him well in the days ahead. His last day with us will be August 15.

Rev. David

## Atomic Habits Group



**Purpose:** To read, understand and discuss "Atomic Habits" by James Clear, with the goal of implementing effective strategies for habit formation and improvement in personal and professional lives.

**Email Wendy to receive information about a September start-up date.**  
**wlesko88@gmail.com**



### *Spiritual Coaching Group*

*facilitated by Wendy Lesko  
certified Life Coach*

*Cultivate practices that align with  
your beliefs & values, fostering  
growth & harmony in  
all aspects of your life.*

*August meetings in the back of the sanctuary  
at 6:00pm on August 1st and 15th*

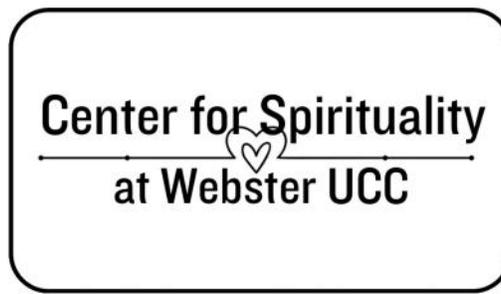
## **Lunch Bunch**

Welcome back, Lunch Bunch!

Join us

September 18th, 12 noon in Fellowship Center

See you there!



**Thursday Book Study Group:** Interested in reading thought-provoking books and discussing them with others? Thursdays at 9:30. Contact Joe Roth [jaroath462@gmail.com](mailto:jaroath462@gmail.com)

**Hot Topics Discussion Group:** Interested in making sense of our cultural madness by sifting and sorting with others in evidence-based conversation? First and third Wednesdays at 6:30. Contact Richard Kendrick at [richard\\_kendrick@verizon.net](mailto:richard_kendrick@verizon.net)

**Wednesday Meditation:** Interested in finding a quiet and calm space for spiritual openness and practice? Wednesdays at 11:00. Contact David Gregory at [david@uccwebster.org](mailto:david@uccwebster.org)

**Open and Affirming group (ONA):** Interested in promoting a just world for everyone? Contact Jeff Peck at [Jefferypeck@gmail.com](mailto:Jefferypeck@gmail.com)

**W.I.S.E. Team:** Interested in being supportive of those affected by mental health conditions and those who love them, and helping to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health? Contact Wendi Latko at [Wendi.Latko@gmail.com](mailto:Wendi.Latko@gmail.com)

**Nurture Team:** Interested in reaching out to people who would appreciate a visit, call or letter? If you or someone you know would appreciate a visit, call, or letter? Contact David Gregory at [david@uccwebster.org](mailto:david@uccwebster.org)

**Lunch Bunch:** Interested in fellowship and lunch with seniors? Third Wednesday at noon September through May. Contact Lou Erb at [Lounskip@yahoo.com](mailto:Lounskip@yahoo.com)

**Grief Group:** Interested in a grief group where you'll be embraced by understanding hearts and empowered through shared experiences? Meeting the last Sunday of the month after worship. Contact Linda Ims at [Lindaims63@gmail.com](mailto:Lindaims63@gmail.com)

**Book Group:** Interested in a book group that shares their thoughts on selected literature? Contact Heidi Zastowny at [heidizastowny@gmail.com](mailto:heidizastowny@gmail.com)

**Spiritual Coaching Group :** Interested in a group that cultivates practices that align with your beliefs & values, fostering growth & harmony in all aspects of your life? Twice monthly on Thursdays at 6:00 Contact Wendy Lesko at [wlesko88@gmail.com](mailto:wlesko88@gmail.com) for dates

**Atomic Habits:** Interested in a group that reads and discusses ATOMIC HABITS by James Clear, with the goal of implementing effective strategies for habit formation? Goal to start gathering in September. Contact Wendy Lesko at [wlesko88@gmail.com](mailto:wlesko88@gmail.com)

# The Youth & Kids Program has had a makeover



## CHANGE AGENTS

A group of youth & kids that's a force for good, dedicated to creating waves of positive change in their community & beyond

Imagine a vibrant group of youth and kids that's a force for good in their community. Through a series of impactful initiatives and projects, this group is always making a meaningful difference, inspiring others to join their mission of service and making their community a better place for everyone.

Ages preschool through grade 12. Questions ? Email Wendy Lesko at [wlesko88@gmail.com](mailto:wlesko88@gmail.com)



## ripples of kindness community

 Instigated by the  
**CHANGE AGENTS Youth & Kids Program.**

**The goal is to mobilize the community ...**

**everyone... all ages ! *Let's flood the world with kindness...wave after wave after wave.***

No act of kindness is too small.

Let's share and inspire each other!!

On Facebook... Post about an act of kindness that you instigated or that you experienced and tag

**[ripples.of.kindness.community](https://www.facebook.com/ripples.of.kindness.community)**

Not on Facebook? Then tell [wlesko88@gmail.com](mailto:wlesko88@gmail.com) and she will share on your behalf.

**Mark your calendar for a KINDNESS KICK-OFF on Sunday September 15**

# Amazing SCUBA Vacation Bible School



# After the morning at VBS, the youth stayed at church and spent the afternoons doing all sorts of community service at PROJECT IMPACT





## **BUILDING COMMUNITY TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY**

**August 3– Lasagna Making Event 9:00-11:00– all ages welcome**

**August 6– Friendship workshop– Making friends & cherishing diversity through play 3:00-4:30**

**August 8- Drop-in Community Service—Thursdays at noon– All ages**

**August 10 - Bag Lunch Outreach 10:00-11:00. Just drop in. –All ages**

**August 11 -Free Community Sunday Supper 4:30-5:30**

**August 13– Friendship workshop– Making friends & cherishing diversity through play 3:00-4:30**

**August 15- Drop-in Community Service—Thursdays at noon**

**August 20– Friendship workshop– 3:00-4:30**

**August 22- Drop-in Community Service—Thursdays at noon**

**August 24– Baber Hot Lunch**

**August 27– Friendship workshop– 3:00-4:30\**

**August 29- Drop-in Community Service—Thursdays at noon**

**For more information on any of the above events, check [gatheringplacewebster.org](http://gatheringplacewebster.org) or email [gatheringplacewebster@gmail.com](mailto:gatheringplacewebster@gmail.com)**

# 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.

08/02	Hannah Davis	08/27	Pamela Killaby
08/02	Diana Newman	08/27	Kitty Varlan
08/02	Andrew Painton	08/28	Hillary Lesko
08/03	Andrea Oestreich	08/28	John McBeth
08/03	Caleb Story	08/28	Stella Williams
08/06	John Murray	08/31	Laura Abbett
08/06	Teri Reynolds		
08/07	Andrew Newman		
08/08	Heidi Hall		
08/08	Jordan Phelps		
08/11	Diane Cannarozzo		
08/12	Richard Schmitt		
08/12	Mindy Spencer		
08/14	Sharon Pratt		
08/21	Diane Daly		
08/21	Denielle Newman		
08/21	Patrick Sharp		
08/23	Ken Mihalyov		
08/23	Jeffery Peck		
08/26	Dylan Balsamo		
08/27	Julianne Daly		



## August Anniversaries

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

# AUGUST 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 10am Kids Group & Youth Group 10am Worship Service 11am Grief support group	29 8:30am Lounge Reserved	30 8:30am Lounge Reserved 3pm Friendship Tuesday	31 8:30am Lounge Reserved 11am Wednesday Meditation Group - Sanctuary 5:30pm Youth Leadership Workshop, Wednesday, Jul 31 · 5:30-7:30 PM 6pm Caring Community Concert	01-Aug Woodside board 8:30am Rockers at Nutcracker 9:30am Thursday Study Group 12pm Drop-in Community Service 12:00 Thursdays in Cong Hall- Everyone Wel- 6pm Spiritual Coaching Group	2	3 8am community service event-making Lasagna for Lasagna Love
4 10am Kids Group & Youth Group 10am Worship Service	5 8:30am Lounge Reserved	6 8:30am Lounge Reserved 3pm Friendship Tuesday	7 8:30am Lounge Reserved 11am Wednesday Meditation Group - Sanctuary 6pm Caring Community Concert 6:30pm Hot Topics discussion group	8 9:30am Thursday Study Group 12pm Drop-in Community Service 12:00 Thursdays in Cong Hall- Everyone Welcome	9	10 10am bag lunch outreach
11 10am Kids Group & Youth Group 10am Worship Service 4:30pm Free Community Sunday Supper	12 8:30am Lounge Reserved	13 8:30am Lounge Reserved 3pm Friendship Tuesday 6:30pm Joe's Pub rum TASTING - CH	14 8:30am Lounge Reserved 11am Wednesday Meditation Group - Sanctuary	15 8:30am Rockers at Nutcracker 9:30am Thursday Study Group 12pm Drop-in Community Service 12:00 Thursdays in Cong Hall- Everyone Welcome 5pm Search Team 6pm Spiritual Coaching Group	16	17 Private Event 9am Search Team meeting
18 10am Kids Group & Youth Group 10am Worship Service	19 Woodside contract 8:30am Lounge Reserved	20 8:30am Lounge Reserved 3pm Friendship Tuesday	21 8:30am Lounge Reserved 11am Wednesday Meditation Group - Sanctuary 6:30pm Hot Topics discussion group	22 9:30am Thursday Study Group 12pm Drop-in Community Service 12:00 Thursdays in Cong Hall- Everyone Welcome	23	24
25 10am Kids Group & Youth Group 10am Worship Service 11am Grief support group	26 8:30am Lounge Reserved	27 8:30am Lounge Reserved 3pm Friendship Tuesday	28 8:30am Lounge Reserved 11am Wednesday Meditation Group - Sanctuary	29 9:30am Thursday Study Group 12pm Drop-in Community Service 12:00 Thursdays in Cong Hall- Everyone Welcome 6pm Spiritual	30	31

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### *Sunday Schedule*

*10:00 AM  
Worship Service  
(also live stream on Facebook & YouTube)  
Youth Group  
Sunday School*

*“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. David Gregory, Interim Sr. Pastor  
Wendy Lesko, Director Christian Education  
Ronald Milliman, Music Director  
Doug Hall, Office Manager  
Oleksandra Yurchenko, Accompanist