

APRIL 2025



WEBSTER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONALIST



United Church of Christ, Congregational
570 Klem Road, Webster NY 14580
585-671-3757

office@uccwebster.org
www.uccwebster.org



[United Church of Christ, Congregational](#)



Pastor's Notes

Upcoming Events

Spring/Summer Outreach

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Community Events

Youth & Kids

VBS

Gathering Place

Words from WISE



Pastor's Note



In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north; but one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide earth. Lyrics: John Oxenham (1852-1941)

Once upon a time, in a farmhouse far away, I led a weekend retreat for adults. I'd had a lot of fun planning and preparing with the team we'd assembled for the event. There was great participation, wonderful food, nice accommodations and cooperative enough weather that by 8 pm we were in, settled, well-fed and ready to dive-in to the chosen theme: Difference and Diversity.

Weren't we surprised to find that our first lesson was NOT what we had planned!!!! After the opening prayer we stood and launched ourselves into the opening hymn. Full voices. Talented singers. Great enthusiasm. Terrible result. It seems there are two tunes commonly associated with John Oxenham's early 20th century hymn, "In Christ There Is No East or West." For most of us, the one we learned first will always be "the" tune. For me, it is McKee -- the tune we sang at Mt. Rise when I was a kid. For others, it is St. Peter. Interestingly and in the spirit of inclusion, BOTH are included in the UCC's New Century Hymnal (#394 and #395). Completely unintentionally, we sang both. At the same time. Trust me when I say -- they are not meant to be sung together. What a perfect object lesson for a study of diversity and difference! We had diverse experiences that led to different expectations... and the choices clashed. It wasn't like saying the Lord's Prayer in a mixed group, when you simply slow down to accommodate the blend of debts, sins and trespasses that invariably result. These two tunes don't mix. It had to be one or the other. We had to choose.

Now, I know this is a simple example, but I think there's a lesson here. Participants in that weekend retreat knew each other pretty well. We worshipped together. We broke bread, attended meetings, did projects, planned events and managed budgets together. We knew each other's kids and cared about each other's parents... and had no idea that we didn't sing that song same way.

Pastor's Note continued

It was an interesting moment. Some just sang louder – hoping to lead the others onto the right path. Others dropped their voices to mere murmurings – sticking with their preference without admitting that they disagreed. A few tried to switch tunes. That's trickier than it sounds in mid-song. Some gave up in confusion and the rest just stopped and waited for someone to tell them what to do.

Me? I laughed. Well, that is, I laughed after a fruitless attempt to first sway the crowd to my version, followed by an even less effective attempt to join others in singing the other tune.

Trust me when I tell you, laughing worked best. Pretty soon we all stopped, regrouped and agreed that – at least for that evening – we would pick a different hymn.

Some differences of opinion, preference, experience or perspective can be managed by consensus, some by compromise, some by concession and some by simply choosing to do something else. Sometimes it's a matter of taking turns and other times it is best to just pick something and stick with it. But always, always, always, the first step is to acknowledge that our even our closest and most thought-aligned neighbors sometimes sing to a different tune. A little humor, a dose of grace, the assumption of good intentions, honesty and mutual respect can carry us most of the rest of the way. May God bless our efforts and light our way.

See you in church! Pastor Karen

If you want to talk more or if you or another church member needs a call or a visit, please let me know.

PastorKaren.uccwebster@gmail.com

585-236-8779 (mobile / messages)



WE WANT YOU!!

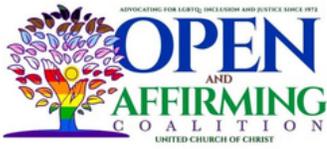
Looking for singers to sing in our choir. We rehearse on Sundays at 11 am., or when the worship service has ended. We meet to prepare for worship at 9:30 am. on Sunday mornings. Any voice part or experience level is welcome. If you play a musical instrument and would like to share your talent with the congregation please see me.

I would like to make use of the handbells and have a handbell choir. The church has a 3 octave set of handbells that are not being used currently.

Please see me Ron Milliman or you can email me at ron.milliman@gmail.com. if any of these interest you.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Blessings! Ron Milliman



ONA Meeting

Wednesday, May 21
5:30 PM, Sanctuary

Come help plan our Pride Parade participation and other potential ONA activities!



WISE Team Meeting

Monday, May 19th
6:00 PM, Sanctuary

All are welcome to join us in planning Mental Health Sunday and other initiatives that help us live our commitment to be Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged in matters of mental health.

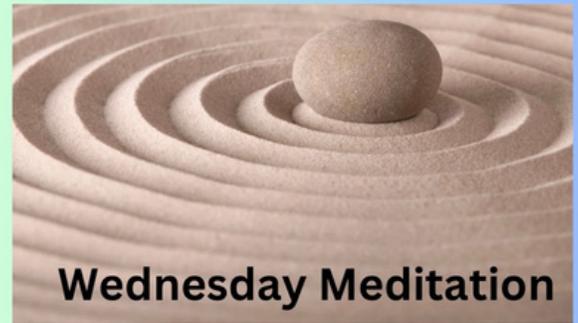


Hot Topics Discussion Group

Current Topic:



The "Hot Topics" discussion group will meet May 6th and May 20th at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. All are welcome to join us. For more information, or to be added to the "Hot Topics" e-mail list, contact richard_kendrick@verizon.net



Wednesday Meditation

Interested in finding a quiet & calm space for spiritual openness and practice? Wednesdays at 11:00.



Inside Webster UCC
570 Klem Rd
Webster NY 14580

second Sunday
of each month
4:30-5:30 pm

gluten free and vegetarian options available

for more information
gatheringplacwebster@gmail.com
585-667-0411



Lunch Bunch

May 21st at noon

Food, Fun & Fellowship



Wine & Cheese

May 27th at 6:00pm

Come as you are.

Optional: bring a snack or drink to share



Spring/Summer OUTREACH

questions? Contact Wendy wlesko88@gmail.com

“Let’s Clean” bags for families in need- due July 7
A collaboration with Webster Hope, Webster Community Chest and Gathering Place to fill 225 cleaning bags for Webster families in need. Our congregation is committed to a minimum of 25 rolls of paper towel. Collection area in narthex

225 Bags of
Cleaning Supplies
for Webster
families in need



a collaboration between
Webster Hope, Gathering Place
& Webster Community Chest



Crocheted Dishcloths for grocery bags &
Prayer Shawls: ONGOING FOREVER

Cameron Community Kids Summer Fun Bags- due June 1
Sponsored by the Confirmation Class, these fun bags will go to the 40 kids in the Cameron Community Summer program. Jump ropes, bubbles, sidewalk chalk, decks of cards, flip flops

Follow the link to sign-up

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DM5Q-VVYDmK8dKy_WIukDqidSRUG-C7cblovgl6p6hs/edit?usp=sharing

Summer Fun Bags for
Cameron Community Kids



Groceries for Glacier Goodies snack station at TRUE NORTH VBS-
due June 29

Freeze pops, juice boxes, watermelon !

Follow the link to sign-up

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1u8Ll-3FQAAX4EYVdoyvuZ7mNJo-1l9KF2WAlkf6vuh8/edit?usp=sharing>

UPDATE FROM YOUR SEARCH COMMITTEE!!

While we had all hoped we would be further along in this process at this point, we are still waiting. Our faith and patience remains positive as we know the person will present themselves when the timing is right!

One item we found out is that we are not alone in this journey of waiting...

According to the NYS UCC Website there are 8 part-time positions available. The posting dates for their profiles range from 2 weeks to 3 ½ years ago. Currently, there are 8 full-time positions available with the range of those posting from 2 weeks-2 years ago.

We were also able to find that even states surrounding us are having their own challenges filling positions: Pennsylvania has both 20 full time and 20 part time positions available, Ohio has 19 full time and 14 part time openings, Vermont has 3 full time and 6 part time. Both New Hampshire and Massachusetts have similar statistics. While this does not relieve us of our overall angst about receiving our new pastor, it does help explain to some extent why we are not filling this position as quickly as we thought.

The only answer we have at this point is to continue on this faith journey together with full transparency and prayerful reflection on the process. The Search Team is always ready to have discussions and listen to concerns, input and suggestions. We are taking this role you have entrusted us very seriously and appreciate your patience with us as well as the process.

Remember, all Search Team members have the bright green name tag...

Sincerely,

The Search Team

Mindy Spencer, Liz Green, Richard Kendrick, Heidi Zastowny, Lowell Edwards,
Lisa Izzo, Jason Duga and Karen Monachino

GATHERING OF HEARTS

alternative worship

Craving something real, rooted, and a little sacred?

Join us for Gathering of Hearts — a casual, conversational, circle-style worship experience focused on community, connection, and how we can better care for one another and our neighbors.

THIRD SATURDAYS AT 6:00

This month's theme: "The Sacred Circle: What Does Real Community Look Like?"

We'll gather under the evening sky and reflect together on what it means to belong — and how to become the kind of community our world is aching for.

Come as you are. No pressure, just presence. All are welcome. Really.

Questions? contact
wlesko88@gmail.com

On the deck weather permitting...
otherwise in Fellowship Center

Sunday
June 1
11:30-1:00



Sponsored
by the
confirmation
class

Together We Shine: A Community Event for Kids Helping Kids

Our amazing confirmation class is putting their faith into action and they want YOU to join them!

Together We Shine is a youth-led community outreach event supporting children in need in Rochester, NY. Through hands-on service, kindness, and compassion, our confirmands are leading the charge to make a difference — one small act at a time.

What to expect:

- * TONS of family-friendly activities
- * Service projects you can jump into on the spot !
- * A chance to make donations that will directly help kids !
- * Inspiration from the next generation of change-makers

It's a movement. It's young hearts leading with purpose.
It's light in the community — and we hope you'll be part of it.

Come serve. Come support. Come shine.
Together, we shine brighter.



ripple

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

We utilize a "learning & action" model to equip children & youth to first understand and then identify opportunities to live the values of Jesus through involvement in community service.

coming up for kids & youth



PROJECT IMPACT

community service for youth grades 4 & up (as of Sept. 2025)
12:15-2:00 pm
June 30, July 1, July 2

contact Wendy to register

the Current

youth led worship experience

fourth sundays at 10:00 except for this month 😊

faith in motion ~ love in action

The next Current is Sunday May 18th at 10:00 in the big green community room. Everyone is welcome.



"Seen, Known, Loved"

Bible Story: Zacchaeus in the Tree

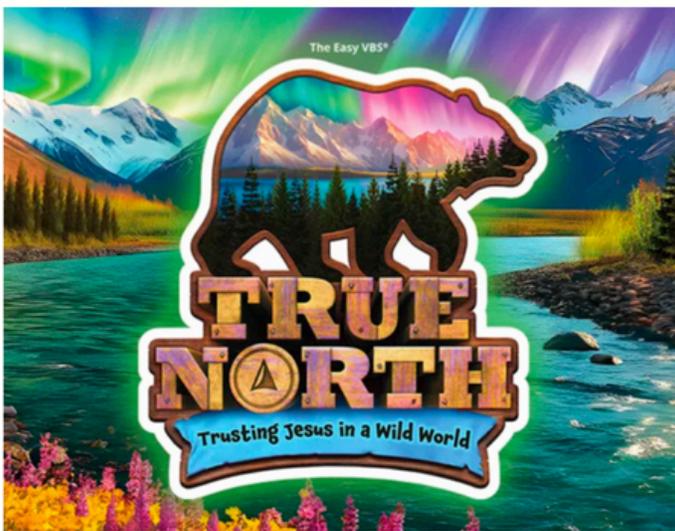
Big Theme: You are seen, known, and loved – exactly as you are.

email wlesko88@gmail.com to receive Wendy's weekly email including all the outreach and leadership opportunities for youth, kids & families

SAVE THE DATE :

Our confirmands will be "officially confirmed" on Sunday June 1st during worship at 10:00. Their project (a community event) will follow at 11:30





Trek with us on the ultimate Alaskan adventure
 June 30-July 3
 9:00-12:00

Children preschool through grade 3 as of 9/1/2025 register as campers \$40
 Kids in grade 4 as of 9/1/2025 register as campers/counselors-in-training. They do all the fun camper things while learning how to be camp counselor. \$40
 Youth grades 5 and up as of 9/1/2025 register as camp counselor \$15
 All counselors & counselors in training are invited to participate in project impact after vbs from 12:15 to 2:30.

<https://uccwebster.org/donations/vacation-bible-school-signup/>



Did you know that the VBS at United Church of Christ, Congregational is run by youth?! That's right ... ALL leadership positions are held by youth. Adults are encouragers/support/back-up. At Webster UCC we grow leaders with hearts for serving their neighbors.

Questions?
 contact Wendy
 wlesko88@gmail.com



BUILDING COMMUNITY

TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY

Gathering Place Webster, a non-religious non-profit nested inside the Webster UCC building, creates a wide variety of community service opportunities designed for ALL ages.

Everyone is welcome !

DROP-IN
Community Service Hour
 Thursdays Noon to 1:00
EVERYONE IS WELCOME
 projects vary weekly

Gathering Place Webster
 building community to serve the community
 gatheringplacewebster.org

BAG LUNCH OUTREACH
 caring for our neighbors

The bag lunches go to House of Mercy

Our grand total SO FAR...
4,311 lunches !!
 Next Bag Lunch Outreach is Saturday May 17th at 10:00

WARNING
 Contents inside may include happiness, love, courage, and AWESOMENESS!
 (not a word)

CARE KIT DAY
 May 31st at 10:00
 Hygiene Kits, Period Packs, Kid Kits, First Aid Kits

Group Community Service Projects



- ✓ YOU email GP (Gathering Place)
- ✓ YOU PICK the project and the date
- ✓ GP sets it up
- ✓ YOU bring items from our wish list
- ✓ YOUR GROUP DOES GREAT THINGS



COMMUNITY SERVICE KIDS SUMMER CAMP

July 14-16
9:00 to noon

campers in kindergarten to grade 4 (in Sept 2025) will participate in a variety of community service projects

youth in grades 5 & up in Sept 2025 are camp counselors and earn 9 community service leadership hours

cost: \$25 per camper \$15.00 per camp counselor

check website ongoing programs tab to register

Calling all kids and teens who want to make a difference! This summer, Gathering Place Webster is hosting a Community Service Camp, where young leaders will give back, build friendships, and learn valuable skills through hands-on projects.

- ✓ Help your community
- ✓ Develop leadership skills
- ✓ Earn service hours
- ✓ Have fun while making an impact!

Let's work together to create positive change! Sign up today and be part of something bigger.

registration form:

<https://forms.gle/gaNYYKWw6jn6w6BT8>

Use this link to pay the registration fee:

<https://gatheringplacewebster.org/product/community-service-kids-summer-camp/>

WORDS FROM W.I.S.E.

Webster UCC is a WISE congregation - we are welcoming, inclusive, supportive & engaged in matters of mental health. May is Mental Health Awareness Month—a time to shine a light on mental well-being, break the stigma, and remind each other that mental illness is not a sign of weakness. Let's use this month as a reminder to check in with ourselves, support those around us, and speak openly about mental health. The conversation you start might be the conversation someone needs to give them the courage to seek help.

On each Sunday in May a member of the WISE team will talk about how we live our commitment to being W.I.S.E. Don't worry if you miss a week - we'll summarize them in the newsletter next month!

Wondering about Mental Health Sunday? We'll be celebrating it at a yet-to-be determined date.



Recommended by the WISE Team...

On Friday, May 9, at 9:00 PBS Great Performances will be showing the musical "Next to Normal". It is an honest depiction of mental illness and the family impact. It touches on bipolar disorder, depression, grief (loss of child).

Content warning: show includes a suicide attempt.

10 meaningful things you can do to support Mental Health Awareness

1. **Start a Daily Mental Health Check-In Journal:** Take 5 minutes each day to note how you're feeling, what you need, and one thing you're grateful for.
2. **Post a Mental Health Story or Fact on Social Media:** Use your voice to reduce stigma — even sharing one fact or personal insight can make an impact.
3. **Practice a New Self-Care Habit Each Week:** Try things like breathwork, screen-free evenings, mindful walking, or setting firmer boundaries.
4. **Send Encouraging Notes to 5 People (or even just one!):** A handwritten note or text that says "I'm thinking of you" can be powerful.
5. **Take a Mental Health Day:** Rest, recharge, and do what helps you feel whole — no guilt, no pressure.

continued...

continued from WISE

6. Read a Book or Watch a Movie about Mental Health: Deepen your understanding and empathy through storytelling.

7. **Learn the Warning Signs of Mental Health Struggles:** Educate yourself on symptoms of depression, anxiety, and burnout to better support yourself & others.

8. **Create a Personal “Calm Kit”:** Fill a box with items that soothe you — a soft blanket, calming playlist, tea, journal, affirmations, etc.

9. **Commit to Saying “No” Without Guilt:** Protecting your peace is a mental health superpower. Practice setting kind but firm boundaries.

10. **Write Yourself a Letter of Compassion:** Reflect on your journey, affirm your resilience, and remind yourself that you are doing your best.

FROM THE FINANCE TEAM

	income	expense
April	\$13,904	\$18,926
Year to date	\$90,262	\$72,177
Investment balances		
Endowment	\$608,365	
Cell tower proceeds	\$220,133	

Birthdays and anniversaries will be included in the May 11 announcements



Free to a good home!



We have a piano that is no longer in use that we'd love to see find a home. See Wendy or Beth if you are interested.

From the MISSION Team



Our generous congregation contributed supplies to fill 69 school kits that were delivered in April to CWS for distribution globally as needed. Monetary donations covered the asked for shipping contribution.

Thank you to all
and to all those who sewed the bags
to hold the supplies.

WEBSTER UCC Volunteer Corner



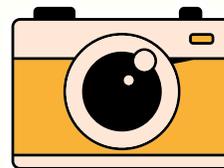
Looking for volunteer opportunities? Check it out ...

1. Coffee Hour set up and takedown -Signup in Fellowship Center
2. Weeding of flower beds
3. Summer concerts - A signup sheet will be available soon
4. VBS security detail
5. Community garden weeding- see Wendy
6. Baber Hot Lunch prep and serve- See Wendi
7. Sunday Supper prep and serve-See Wendy
8. Building & Grounds outdoor Spring chores- See Pete



New Church Directory Time for YOUR help!

We are making slow but steady progress on our directory. 22 families have completed their profiles. As a reminder, there are multiple ways to update your profile:



ONLINE

You can set up your online account at members.InstantChurchDirectory.com and follow the prompts under “Sign In” to “Create a login now.” You must use the email address that is on file with the office (that is one of the security features). If you have difficulty, email wendi.latko@gmail.com.

Once you are logged in, you will be able to add or change any details as necessary. You can also upload a photo.

IN PERSON

If you would rather we help you, we'll be set up in the Lounge at the following times to help update information and take photos. It's quick and painless!

- Sunday May 11 - 9:00-10:00 AM and 11-11:30 AM
- Sunday May 18 - 9:00-10:00 AM and 11-11:30 AM
- Sunday May 25 - 9:00-10:00 AM and 11-11:30 AM

(*we'd love to have a volunteer or two to help with these slots. If you're interested, see Wendi or Wendy)

Frequently asked questions:

- Is my information secure?
 - You can read about Instant Church Directory's security features here: <https://www.instantchurchdirectory.com/online-church-directory-security>. Our church directory will only be accessible to our members, and you will be able to select what information is visible.
- Do I need a computer to be in or use the directory?
 - Not at all! We will help you update your information and load a photo. Once everyone's profile is complete, we will have copies printed for anyone who would like one.

More questions? Email Beth (office@uccwebster.org) or see Wendy or Wendi

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>27</p> <p>10am - THE CURRENT</p> <p>10am - Worship Service</p> <p>11am - Gathering Meeting</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>6:30pm - Cub Scout - den</p>	<p>29</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>6pm - wine and cheese</p>	<p>30</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>11am - Wednesday</p> <p>7pm - Scouting Troop 113</p>	<p>1</p> <p>8:30am - Rockers at</p> <p>9:30am - Thursday Study</p> <p>11am - Drop-in Community</p> <p>11am - Lunch Bunch</p> <p>6:30pm - woodsides board</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4</p> <p>10am - Change Agents :</p> <p>10am - Worship Service</p> <p>11am - prayer shawl group in</p> <p>12pm - group community</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Cinco de Mayo</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>9am - woodsides cong hall</p> <p>6:30pm - Cub Scout - den</p>	<p>6</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>6:30pm - Hot topics group at</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>11am - Wednesday</p> <p>7pm - Scouting Troop 113</p>	<p>8</p> <p>9am - middle school class</p> <p>9:30am - Thursday Study</p> <p>11am - Drop-in Community</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11</p> <p>Mother's Day</p> <p>10am - Change Agents :</p> <p>10am - Worship Service</p> <p>4:30pm - Free Community</p>	<p>12</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>6pm - community service at</p> <p>6:30pm - Cub Scout - den</p>	<p>13</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>9am - woodsides cong hall</p> <p>5:30pm - Community Service</p> <p>6:30pm - Summer Concert</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>11am - Wednesday</p> <p>6pm - Girl Scout Troop 6:00-</p> <p>7pm - Scouting Troop 113</p>	<p>15</p> <p>8:30am - Rockers at</p> <p>9:30am - Thursday Study</p> <p>11am - Drop-in Community</p> <p>1pm - cong hall set up for</p>	<p>16</p> <p>8am - cong hall set up for</p>	<p>17</p> <p>10am - bag lunch outreach in</p> <p>6pm - Gathering of Hearts</p>
<p>18</p> <p>10am - Change Agents :</p> <p>10am - Mental health Sunday</p> <p>10am - Worship Service</p> <p>11am - THE CURRENT -</p>	<p>19</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>6pm - Cub Scout Pack 113</p> <p>6pm - WISE meeting at 6:00</p>	<p>20</p> <p>8am - Fellowship set up for</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>6:30pm - Hot Topics group 6:</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8am - Lunch Bunch- event is</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>11am - Wednesday</p> <p>5:30pm - ONA parade</p> <p>7pm - Scouting Troop 113</p>	<p>22</p> <p>9:30am - Thursday Study</p> <p>11am - Drop-in Community</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25</p> <p>10am - Change Agents :</p> <p>10am - Worship Service</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Memorial Day</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>6pm - community service at</p> <p>6:30pm - Cub Scout - den</p>	<p>27</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>6pm - Wine & Cheese</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8:30am - Lounge Reserved</p> <p>11am - Wednesday</p> <p>6pm - Girl Scout Troop 6:00-</p> <p>7pm - Scouting Troop 113</p>	<p>29</p> <p>9:30am - Thursday Study</p> <p>11am - Drop-in Community</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>10am - CARE KIT DAY in</p>

United Church of Christ, Congregational
570 Klem Road
Webster, New York 14580

Phone: 585-671-3757
office@uccwebster.org
www.uccwebster.org



Sunday Schedule

10:00 am

Worship Service

(also live stream on Facebook & YouTube)

Change Agents

(a.k.a. Youth & kids program)

*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

Rev. Dr. Karen Bailey-Francois
Bridge Minister

Beth Royer, Office Manager

Wendy Lesko, Director of Family
Programming & Community Outreach

Ronald Milliman, Music Director

Oleksandra Yurchenko, Accompanist

Webster UCC Leadership Council

Wendi Latko, Moderator

Lisa Izzo, Vice Moderator

Konrad Emmert, Stewardship

Heather Himes, Worship

Linda Ims, Mission

Ken Mihalyov, Personnel

Pete Sollame, Building & Grounds

Mindy Spencer, Outreach & Family Programming

Heidi Zastowny & Polly Ellstrom, Congregational
Life