

JANUARY 2026



WEBSTER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONALIST



United Church of Christ, Congregational
570 Klem Road, Webster NY 14580
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www.uccwebster.org



[United Church of Christ, Congregational](https://www.facebook.com/uccwebster.org)

From the Pastor

January is upon us, and so with this New Year begins a new chapter of ministry and faith life together. I am filled with joy and with gratitude for all of the ways you, the congregation and community, have said "Yes!" to the Spirit's inspiration in bringing us together.

I am also filled with intention, even resolution, as we start this new story together, for I purpose to begin my call at Webster UCC with listening and curiosity.

My hope is to focus on getting to know you by enjoying a "Season of Presence." Much like Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany traditions center around following God's Light, so too do I desire to follow and observe the Light that is your call (individually and congregationally) to radiate the Light of justice, kindness, community, and love.

In my Season of Presence, I plan to get to know you by showing up, reaching out, and learning about you and your hopes, ideas, ponderings, interests. In preparation for me reaching out to you to set up a meeting time, I invite you to consider your community of Webster and your favorite places for coffee, meal, enjoying nature. (As both my spouse, Henry, and I are new to Webster, I look forward to exploring our new hometown in this way!)

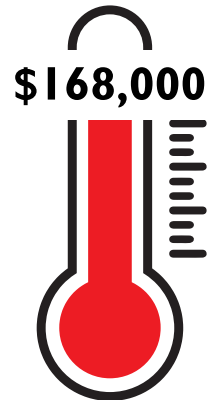
And as this is my first newsletter article, and we are getting to know each other, I also offer this introduction to the Sumption Stones! I am Michelle, a pastor in the PC(USA) seeking dual membership with the United Church of Christ. I cheer on the Minnesota Vikings, but deeply respect the Buffalo Bills. I enjoy travelling, baking, reading, running, and pub trivia with my team, the Flying Penguins. On August 23 of this year, I had the honor and joy of marrying Henry, who enjoys board games, singing, and running. He works remotely as Communications for the Center for Innovation, a think tank based out of the University of California San Francisco Law department that works with Intellectual Property law to reduce the cost of prescription drugs and create regulations for AI. I brought into our marriage a 12 year old boxer/lab Zoe, who loves running, making friends, and giving pep talks to her humans. She has appointed herself as project manager over our lives and is very passionate about keeping watch and being in charge.

MEETING NOTICE

A meeting of the congregation of Webster United Church of Christ, Congregational will be held on Sunday, January 18, immediately following worship. The purpose of the meeting is to approve our 2026 budget and to vote on an amendment to the guidance document as well as address any other issues that should come before the congregation.

Thanks to all who have pledged toward our 2026 goal. You have helped the Finance Team and Leadership Council to put together a workable budget. We're 89% to our goal! The congregation's vote is January 18. Note: We continue to accept pledges!!!!

goal
\$180,000



Hot Topics Discussion Group

The "Hot Topics" discussion group will be meeting in January on the first and third Tuesdays of the month - January 6 and 20 - at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. We will continue our conversation about socialism, focusing on income and wealth inequalities. All are welcome to participate. For more information, or to be added to the e-mail list, contact richard_kendrick@verizon.net.



Wine & Cheese

January 26th at 6:30 pm

Come as you are.

Optional: bring a snack or drink to share

free community Sunday Supper at GATHERING PLACE WEBSTER

January 11

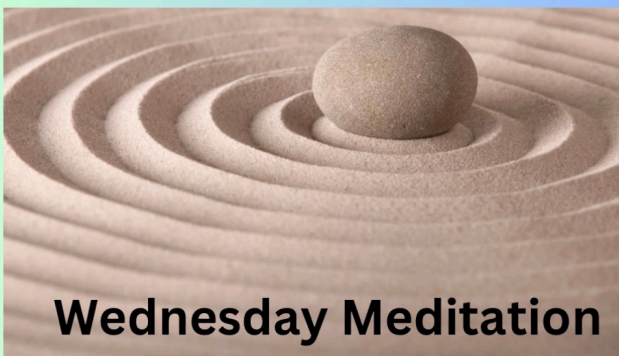
Shepherd's Pie, Tossed Salad & Brownies

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
gatheringplacewebster@gmail.com
585-667-0411



Wednesday Meditation

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

**Carrying on
Jesus'
Mission
of Love
Peace
& Justice**



an inclusive space
where young
people can
connect, explore
their faith, and
serve together

The Rebel Beat — Carrying On Jesus' Mission of Love, Peace, and Justice brings kids and youth from ages 3 to grade 12 together in a shared Sunday school experience. The Rebel Beat offers a rich and meaningful opportunity to build connection, deepen faith, and embody the mission of Jesus in powerful, age-bridging ways.

the Current

youth led worship experience

faith in motion  **love in action**

The next Current is **Sunday January 25th at 10:00** in the green community room. Everyone is welcome.

Seeds in the Snow
The Parable
of the
Mustard Seed
(Mark 4:30-32)



January can feel cold, slow, or "blah," like nothing is growing. But Jesus reminds us that God does some of the most important work when no one can see it yet.

Winter is not wasted time—
it's underground time,
root time,
quiet growth time,
seed time.

Just like the mustard seed is tiny but mighty, so are the small acts of hope, kindness, and courage we plant every day.

Seeds don't look powerful. But they change everything.



Purchase homemade soup after worship. All proceeds support outreach projects for the kids and families at Family Promise.

**prepaid orders taken
on Sundays in January**

REBEL BEAT PROGRAMS to keep your eyes on



CARRYING THE MAT MINISTRY



CARRYING THE MAT PODCAST



**youth & kids
chime choir**

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.

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

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



Children preschool through grade 3 as of 9/1/2026 register as campers \$40

Kids in grade 4 as of 9/1/2026 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 9/1/2026 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.

TREK WITH US THROUGH THE
ULTIMATE RAINFOREST
ADVENTURE
JUNE 29- JULY 3

online registration opens February 1



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.



WUCC MISSION



LEARN AND SERVE

January

For the month of January WUCC will...

1. Learn about the programs at FPGROC
2. Collect hats/gloves for the families
3. Fill Move-in kits for families graduating from the shelter program
4. make lunch for the staff at the day center

February



BLANKET THE WORLD IN LOVE

When you support the CHURCH WORLD SERVICE Blankets program, you offer more than just warmth—you provide hope and love to those facing challenging times.

Envelopes available in February. Together, we can continue to make a difference.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR : Blanket Sunday Fashion Show February 1

March



Rochester Advocates
For Children
Lenten Outreach

Groceries and basket fillers
collected

February 1- March 8



Easter
groceries



Easter Baskets
for grandchildren



WELCOMING INCLUSIVE SUPPORTIVE ENGAGED for mental health

Beat the Winter Blahs: Tips to Brighten Your Mood

As we welcome January, it's easy to feel the weight of the winter blahs. But winter doesn't have to be dreary! Here are some simple ways to keep your spirits high until spring.

1. **Embrace the Light:** Natural light can work wonders for your mood. Open the curtains during the day and consider using a light therapy lamp to mimic the sun's rays. Even a brisk walk outside on sunny days can boost your energy.
2. **Stay Active:** Exercise releases endorphins that naturally lift your spirits. Whether it's yoga, a home workout, or sledding with the kids, staying active keeps the winter blues at bay.
3. **Stay Social:** Don't let the cold isolate you. Host a cozy movie night, try a virtual game with friends, or explore local winter festivals to stay connected.
4. **Practice Self-Care:** Warm up with a good book and a cup of tea, treat yourself to a bubble bath, or try journaling. Taking time for yourself is a powerful mood booster.
5. **Try Something New:** Learn to bake, knit, or tackle that DIY project you've been putting off. Keeping your mind engaged can bring a sense of accomplishment and joy.

Winter may be chilly, but with the right mindset, it can also be a season of warmth and renewal.

Event Request Form

To ensure proper coordination of our facilities, all individuals or groups wishing to use the church building for special events outside the scope of a normal Building Use Agreement are required to complete an "Event Request Form". Submission of the form allows adequate time for review, approvals, safety considerations, and logistical planning. The completed "Event Request Form" must be submitted a minimum of 4 weeks in advance of the requested event or activity date. If you have questions or need assistance obtaining or completing the form, please contact the church office. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding as we work to be good stewards of our shared space.

Dear Webster UCC friends,
What a wonderful surprise to receive your lovely Christmas bonus! Thank you to everyone who contributed to this lovely gesture. It was such a pleasure to walk with you these last four months. And you top it off with this wonderful gift! How grateful I am to you!
Please know that you will be in my prayers as you begin a new era with Pastor Michelle. God is with you!
Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Deborah

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

The church Leadership Council, people elected by the congregation to facilitate the work of the church, met on Dec. 18. The following were points of discussion and action items.

Stewardship Update—\$156,000 (83% of our goal) had been received as of that date

Budget Proposal—based on an anticipated \$60,000.

Replacement for Church Windows Software—Discussion around the pros and cons of different software platforms and options.

Building and Grounds Updates—the Scout Troop that meets in our building would like to place a shed at the back of property, near the dumpsters. The Leadership Council approved that request, pending approval from the town and signed documentation recommended by our attorney.
Pastoral Relations Team—In accordance with our guidance document, recommendations were made about who should make up the team and some people were “nominated” to fill the positions.

Guidance Document Amendment for signatories—Richard is working on the language to propose an amendment to the Guidance Document that would allow for people other than just the moderator to sign documents on behalf of the congregation

Woodside Updates—continuing to work to keep the lines of communication open between the church and the school. The work of the Council is not secret. Anyone can attend a meeting, and if you'd like more details regarding any of the topics mentioned here, please reach out to any Council member to ask your questions.



Printing soon!

New Church Directory

We will be sending the directory to print in February and don't want to leave anyone out!



Family name

First name

address

city, state zip

phone (First name)

sample.email@sample.com (First name)

Everyone is welcome to be included - both members and friends.

To update your entry:

- Follow the link below to easily upload your own photo to insert into the church directory, or snap a quick 'selfie' now and upload.
- Email a photo to wendi.latko@gmail.com and she will upload it

Link (login with the email address that your church emails come to):

<https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/e6338a4b-b47d-463c-b06c-bc569b90301e/family/new>

Trouble logging in? Email wendi.latko@gmail.com

More questions? Email Beth (office@uccwebster.org) or Wendi Latko (wendi.latko@gmail.com)

FROM THE FINANCE TEAM

December 2025

	Income	Expense
Monthly	\$19,998	\$20,992
Year To Date	\$224,370	\$225,193
	December 31 Balance	% change for year
Investments		
Endowment	\$699,817	15.1%
*Other Funds	\$207,016	
Total	\$906,833	

* Cell phone proceeds, transfers and stock gifts

From the Security Team

Rescheduled - Threat Awareness and Response Training

There will be one additional session offered for anyone that did not attend in October and would like to attend this worthwhile training.

Recent events across our nation have renewed our commitment to providing a safe space for progressive Christian witness and worship. It is sometimes hard for churches and community outreach organizations to think about these things, but unfortunately the threats are very real. The only way to help mitigate them is by being aware and prepared. Please join us in this training on Sunday January 18th, at 11:30 a.m. at Webster UCC for an Awareness and Response Training led by Joe Monachino. The session includes among other things a discussion about active shooter response, and "Avoid, Deny and Defend" principles. The more our entire congregation is tuned in to this training, the better the outcome should an issue ever arise. Please come and invite someone to come with you. The event is free of charge and open to all, but please contact the office to reserve a spot so that we can adequately plan for this session.

January Birthdays

Heidi Zastowny 1/1
Jo O'Neill 1/3
John Dennis 1/5
Doug Farling 1/8
Kay Orchard 1/9
Carter Calus 1/17
Doug Hall 1/18
Jim Coakley 1/19
Katherine Hall 1/19
Ivan Yurchenko 1/19
Cheryl DiTucci 1/23
Daniel Zastowny 1/23
Carla Biuso 1/24
Polly Ellstrom 1/25
Vivian Montanaro 1/25
Rick Kunz 1/28
Wendi Latko 1/28
Anna Beth Sollame 1/29
David Marcellus 1/31

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the event of inclement weather or other unforeseen situations that require cancellation of Sunday Worship or other activities during the week, the closure will be announced via:

- UCC-announce email
- Church Facebook page (United Church of Christ, Congregational)
- Church website (uccwebster.org)

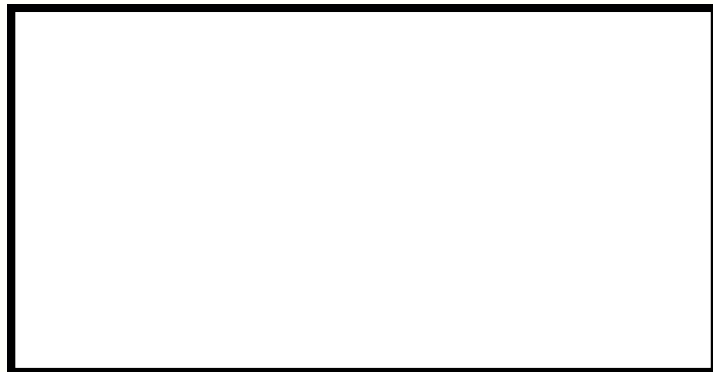
If Webster school activities are canceled, the church, including the office, will also be closed.

Channel 13/WHAM no longer announces church closures on air. If you do not have internet access and would like to be added to a phone tree, please let the office know.

28	29	30	31	1	2	3
REBEL BE Worship S	Lounge Re	Lounge Re	Lounge Re Wednesda scouts in C	Rockers at Thursday		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
REBEL BE Worship S	Lounge Re	Lounge Re Girl Scout HOT TOPIC	Lounge Re Wednesda scouts in C	Thursday Classroom Drop-in Co private we Woodside	communit	bag lunch private cu
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
REBEL BE Touch the Worship S Free Com	Lounge Re Webelos in	Lounge Re	Lounge Re Wednesda scouts in C	Rockers at Thursday Drop-in Co Woodside		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
REBEL BE Worship S Active Th	Lounge Re scout pack	Lounge Re Girl Scout HOT TOPIC	Lounge Re Wednesda scouts in C	Thursday Classroom Drop-in Co communit		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
REBEL BE THE CURR Worship S	Lounge Re wine & che	Lounge Re GS Troop C	Lounge Re Wednesda scouts in C	Thursday Drop-in Co Woodside		

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Sunday Schedule

10:00 am

Worship Service

(also live stream on Facebook & YouTube)
Rebel Beat
(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

The Rev. Michelle Sumption Stone
Senior Pastor

Beth Royer, Office Manager

Wendy Lesko, Director of Family
Programming & Community Outreach

Ronald Milliman, Music Director

Oleksandra Yurchenko, Accompanist

Webster UCC Leadership Council

Lisa Izzo, Moderator

Richard Kendrick, Vice Moderator

Wendi Latko, Immediate Past Moderator

Konrad Emmert, Stewardship

Heather Himes, Worship

Linda Ims, Mission

Ken Mihalyov, Personnel

Pete Sollame, Building & Grounds

Mindy Spencer, Outreach & Family Programming

Heidi Zastowny, Congregational Life

Judy Short, Finance

Marcia Kendrick, Memorials & Special Gifts