



WEST CHELMSFORD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
242 Main Street, North Chelmsford, MA 01863

Pastor: Rev. Geisa Y. Matos
978-251-4834 email: office@wcumc.us Church website: www.wcumc.us

*WCUMC Faith, Family, and Future are the
Cornerstones of this nurturing community.*

August 2025 NEWSLETTER

I never imagined I'd be away from our pulpit and our shared life together for such a long time. While I'd originally planned a brief vacation, what followed was an unforeseen and deeply painful journey through the critical illness and eventual death of my beloved brother, Luis Ramon Matos.

Ministers are sometimes told that it's after we officiate our first funeral that we truly become the pastor of a church. I've come to believe something else just as powerful: when a church carries a grieving pastor—when they surround their shepherd with love, prayer, and grace—that church becomes family. That's what you've become to me in this season.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you. Thank you for stepping up, stepping in, and stepping out in love. Thank you to the leaders and volunteers who quietly worked behind the scenes with me to keep worship flowing and the Spirit moving. Thank you for your compassion and for practicing the gospel through your actions.

While I'm still processing, still mourning, and still slowly finding my way back into daily ministry, please know how deeply I've missed you. My heart is beginning to feel light again, and I look forward to being fully reintegrated into the life of our community in the weeks ahead.

Even as I continue to move through grief, I'm reminded that life also holds space for joy, connection, and healing. Moments of shared celebration help restore our spirits, especially those that draw us closer to creation and one another. One such moment is just around the corner: our Second Annual Blessing of the Animals! This has quickly become a cherished part of our church calendar. It provides opportunity for laughter, tenderness, and sacred connection with creation. There's a beautiful service planned for all of us. I warmly encourage you to attend, invite your friends and family, and bring your beloved pets or a photo of them.

As we continue to walk through the changing seasons of life—some marked by sorrow, others by joy—I remain grateful that we walk them together.

With all my love and deep gratitude,

Rev. Geisa Matos

Prayer List

We encourage you to clip out these names and keep them in your prayers. If you would like your name to be added or removed from any of the prayer lists, please contact the church office.

Please keep Rev. Geisa and her family in your prayers. Her brother, Luis, passed away on Sunday, July 20, 2025. Luis's funeral and burial services were held in the Dominican Republic.

Those who are at home or in nursing homes:

Betty Chaput – at The Saab Center at D'Youville in Lowell
Beverley Jones – at Summer Place in Chelmsford



Prayer list for on-going health needs:

Judi and Bob Hill
Jen Weinbeck's friend, Mike, as he recovers from a kidney transplant, and
prayers for the family of the donor
Lisa Dushais

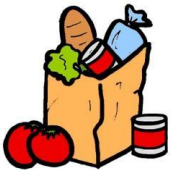
Inspirational Corner



Keep your face to the sun, and you will never see the shadows.
-Helen Keller

Do you have any favorite inspirational poems, short stories, or devotions? If so, please e-mail the church office at office@wcumc.us. I'd like to share these in upcoming newsletters.

Open Pantry Donations



Please remember the Open Pantry by making a donation online at theopenpantry.org and click on "How You Can Help".

St. Paul's Meal

The sign-up sheet for the St. Paul's Meal is now online. To volunteer, please click on the link below. The St. Paul's Meal will be served on **Wednesday, August 27, 2025**. Thank you for your support of this important mission.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040448A8AB28AAFF2-57628858-stpauls>

Missions Committee

Blessing of the Animals

Save the Date, Sunday, August 10, 2025! - Come One - Come All! Big and Small! Fur, Feathers, Scales, or Fins All are Welcome!

With the Blessing of the Animals worship service quickly approaching, you may be wondering how you can support the Lowell Humane Society in its mission to save pets in the community. There are several ways that you can help us help them:

1. You have already heard about the in-gathering for the Lowell Humane Society's Pet Food Pantry to help them provide pet food, free of charge, to those in need. If you are able, donations of all types of non-perishable pet food, in sealed packages, will be collected from now until the Blessing of the Animals event. Pet Food donation Collection Boxes are in the Education Building lobby as well as the Vestry. All types of non-perishable dog and cat food, wet or dry, bird and small animal food are welcome.
2. Clean out your closets and update your linens and things! Animal shelters go through an incredible amount of sheets, pillow cases, blankets, and towels in their daily operations. If you would like to recycle any of yours, please bring your old, but clean linens and things, marked for the Lowell Humane Society. All sizes are welcome, but they must fit into a standard washing machine. Look for the "Linens and Things" Collection Bin in the Education Building lobby.
3. Boredom for shelter pets is a real problem. Volunteers at the Lowell Humane Society would like to purchase enrichment items to help keep the animals engaged. If you can spare a dollar or two, please place them in the Jar on the Lowell Humane Society Table at the Blessing of the Animals event.

Finally, help us get the word out! Take a few hard-copy flyers and ask to leave a copy at any establishment that you visit! Your Hair Salon or Barber Shop, Nail Salon, Gym, Pizza Place, Senior Center, Grocery Store, or any place that will allow it! Tell your friends and neighbors. You would be surprised at how many people would love to help an animal in need. And don't forget your Social Media presence! When you see the WCUMC Facebook Post, forward it to your Facebook friends and groups! Keep the momentum going!

If you have any questions about the Lowell Humane Society in-gathering, please contact the Missions Committee.

Instant Church Directory

The Instant Church Directory is almost done. The directory needs your input. If you did not receive the email from the office on July 27th, Roberta has the instructions on how to access the directory.

The link to access the Instant Church Directory is: <https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/>.

You will be asked to enter your email address as it's listed in our directory. If your email address isn't listed in the directory, let [Roberta Stratton](#) or [Lori Evans](#) know so it can be added. If you do not have access to email and want to be added to the directory, please contact Roberta in the church office (978-251-4834), and she will add you.

If you would like to have your picture in the directory, please send your picture to Roberta (office@wcumc.us). Please make sure that the picture is no larger than 10 MB.

Thank you to the Congregational Care Team for their help in setting up the directory.

Roberta Davidson-Stratton

Rolling Ridge Retreat

Into the World, Unafraid; A Day of Retreat at Rolling Ridge Retreat Center. North Andover, MA on **Friday, September 26, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.**

Don't miss this opportunity to gather with our church in this peaceful place! We'll come together to find perspective on our turbulent times and experience some techniques to channel our fears in positive ways. We'll explore our Christian calling to understand others, and work to find courage and hope as individuals and as a community of faith. Morning coffee and luncheon are included with the registration fee of \$85 per person. Space is limited, so register soon to secure your spot by contacting the church office at office@wcumc.us. **Payment is due by September 7, 2025** (confidential scholarships are available, see Pastor Geisa).

Rummage Sale

It's time to start thinking about our annual rummage sale. Here's a notice that appeared in a church bulletin somewhere. "Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands." Well, first, I don't think I need to address "ladies" only. We have a very helpful group of men who are wholeheartedly involved in the running of our rummage sale. I am asking everyone to start thinking about what you would like to see for our rummage sale this year. Whether or not you are able to physically help, your ideas are welcome.

Some of us have discussed the amount of energy needed to provide this sale, and that the amount of money made does not seem to match the effort put in. Should we accept only soft goods, clothes, linens, purses, belts, socks, hats, etc.? Should we have a toy room? If we do accept houseware items, is there someone to help us distribute the leftovers? What days and hours should we be open? Last year, we sold only about half of what we collected, and donating the leftovers took away some of our profit. How can we gently remind people that we would like only gently used items? I believe our "café" is important and profitable. Contact me, Holly Cerullo, at hbcteach@comcast.net, or talk with me after church.

Church Office Information

- During the months of July and August, the Church Office will be open on Tuesday mornings from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM and Friday mornings from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM. The office phone number is 978-251-4834 and the email address is office@wcumc.us.
- We have six e-mail addresses:
office@wcumc.us – for general church business
pastormatos@wcumc.us – for Rev Geisa only
music@wcumc.us – for Karen Leonard, Music Minister
treasurer@wcumc.us – for Kimberly Stewart, Church Treasurer
fin_sec@wcumc.us – for Ellen O'Neill, Financial Secretary
trustees@wcumc.us – for the Trustees
- Church Website is www.wcumc.us
- Items for the **mid-week email** are due in the church office by **Monday morning**.
- Items for the **church bulletin** insert are due in the church office by **Tuesday morning**.
- Items for the **monthly Newsletter** are due in the church office on the third Monday of each month. **All articles must be signed.** The next submission deadline is **Monday, August 19, 2024 for the September 2023 Newsletter**.



August 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 1:00PM-Private Event in Fellowship Hall
3 9:30AM-Worship Service In-Person & via Zoom 10:30AM – Coffee Hour	4	5	6	7	8	9 12:00PM-Private Event in Fellowship Hall
10 9:30AM-Worship Service In-Person only. Blessing of the Animals Service 10:30AM – Coffee Hour	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 9:30AM-Worship Service In-Person & via Zoom 10:30AM – Coffee Hour	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 9:30AM-Worship Service In-Person & via Zoom 10:30AM – Coffee Hour	25	26	27 St. Paul's Meal	28	29	30
31 9:30AM-Worship Service In-Person & via Zoom 10:30AM – Coffee Hour						