



COVENANT NEWS

The Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Webster Groves

FROM THE PASTOR

APRIL 2019

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Really Believing

On the first day of the week, at early dawn, [Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women] came to the tomb, taking spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body... They told all this to the eleven and to... the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. (Luke 24:1-3, 9, 11)

Recently I had the pleasure of attending a lecture and seminar led by Vanderbilt University's professor of New Testament and Early Christian History, Amy-Jill Levine. (Yes, Levine!)

Somewhere in the midst of discussions about pearls and lost sheep, coins, and children, and her *Top Ten List of Stupid Things Ministers Say about Judaism*, the professor found herself ruminating among us Lent-bound clergy about Easter and resurrection. What does she think about the news of resurrection? one of us asked.

First she explained that, in the first century, most Jews believed in a coming resurrection. It was the only relief they could see for the injustice and corruption around them. Pharisees believed in it, Essenes and certainly Christians. The only ones who didn't seem to believe in it were the Sadducees, whom the evangelists take pains to point out did not believe.

Prof. Levine then told a story about when her mother was on her deathbed in the hospital. She and her husband had gone to visit her mother in hospice care, where she was heavily medicated. "In a moment of real lucidity," Prof. Levine told us, "as I sat at her bedside holding her hand, Mom said to me how she was afraid to die. I replied that she didn't need to be afraid, that she was going to be able to see Daddy again and all the people who had loved her, and that before long we would all be together, and she should take comfort in that.

"I felt my eyes filling with tears as I gave her a kiss on her forehead. She sighed and smiled and drifted off peacefully. And my husband came and put his arms around me, and there we all were. Fifteen minutes later, she was gone.

"The staff came in and tended to her body, getting her disconnected from the wires and the tubes and cleaning her up. As my husband walked me out into the hall, he said to me gently but still with a bit of amazement, 'Why did you lie to her like that? You don't believe that.'

"My love,' I said, 'in that moment with my mother I told her what we both needed to hear, and in that moment as I said it I believed every word.' And I did. Now, at this moment, of course I don't, but given the proper conditions, I might believe it again."

I've reflected with you through Lent, about the journey we are on and the passage through the wilderness. Both of these images are metaphors for our religion and spiritual life. And one more station along the way can be, I know, our doubts sometimes about the "idle tale" the women told the men, all those centuries ago.

But as this Jewish professor of New Testament said, sometimes the word we need is the Word Restored and living again. And then it's enough, for us to really believe and to gaze through our veil of tears upon the wonder of life.

Peace.



Holy Week

WORSHIP NOTES FOR APRIL

This schedule is subject to change, as need may arise.



Rev. David Denoon
Pastor

SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 9:55 AM — *Fifth Sunday in Lent.* Scriptures: Isaiah 43:16-21; John 12:1-8. Isaiah envisions making “a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” as fitting demonstrations of God’s power for setting the world in its proper order. Mary of Bethany anoints Jesus in the last home where he will stay before his arrest. Here, near the end of our travels through the Lenten wilderness, let us pause to consider our blessings. ***Message of the Day: “Along the Way – Blessing at the End of the Journey.”*** There will be a very special prelude and postlude

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 6:00 PM — Lenten Soup/Salad Dinner.
Program at 7:00, led by the Youth and Amy Brooks.

SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 9:55 AM — *Palm / Passion Sunday.* Scriptures: Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 23:1-49. After our grand celebration of the festal entry of the Messiah (portrayed by Student Minister Erick Falconer) into Jerusalem astride a humble donkey (portrayed once again by the majestic KC), Pastor Dave Denoon considers some of the problematic portions of the way we tell and retell the Passion story, in a message he is calling, ***“Walking Back the Week.”***

THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 7:00 PM — *Maundy Thursday; Sacrament of Christ’s Table.* We gather in the Sanctuary with our friends from Peace UCC to mark again the night on which Jesus was betrayed and the events we have come traditionally to associate with it. Pastor Wendy Bruner preaches in a service that includes readings, prayers, anointing, and communion.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 7:00 PM — *Good Friday Blues.* The Oikos Ensemble and Logos Readers offer jazz on a blue note for this stirring Good Friday service / concert.

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 9:55 AM — *Festival of the Resurrection.* Scriptures: Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26; Luke 24:1-12. With music from Handel’s *Messiah* presented by soloists and Chancel Choir accompanied by a chamber ensemble, our celebration of Easter begins. ***Message of the Day: “Breaking Free from the Familiar Pattern”***

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 9:55 AM — *Second Sunday of Easter.* Scriptures: Acts 5:27-32; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31. With Pastor Dave Denoon on vacation and the Chancel Choir on a break, Rev. Cliff Aerie leads a worship service featuring the Oikos Ensemble and Logos Readers of his Ministry of Imagination, Creativity, and the Arts (MICA).

FROM THE ORGANIST'S BENCH



Hello all! I feel extravagantly welcomed! I am so delighted with my staff colleagues – I feel blessed.

A bit about my philosophy for music at worship:

Music should support and complement worship. For example, during this Lenten season I have been trying to avoid the “festive” sounds the organ can make and choosing darker colors. Further, I have tried to choose music that seems to wander or sound like it is on a journey so that it reflects our Lenten journey.

A bit about the organ:

We are friends and are deepening our friendship as we get to know each other. I have my quirks and it has its own quirks.

A bit about the Bell Choir:

We will make our reappearance for Easter. We would welcome more ringers! If you think you would like to learn the fundamentals of music, you are welcome

to join us. If you can read music, even better! Perhaps this is an excellent way for our musical youth to contribute to worship in a very meaningful way.

A bit about the Chancel Choir:

Choral conducting is one of my strengths and I found a small choir of valiant singers who let me push them with new songs every week. I still work as a voice teacher, and so we practice healthy singing in rehearsal and work on how we sound. Our warm-ups are like short group voice lessons with an emphasis on a vocal “tool of the day.” We would love to expand our numbers. Let me know if you are interested.

The future:

I hope to have mostly music from Handel’s *Messiah* for Easter. I am looking for members to form a “jug band” (guitar, fiddle, bass, drums or washboard or even mandolin!) for exploration of interesting repertoire from Rock to Folk to Broadway for special worship services. Please let me know if you are interested.

See you on Sunday!

Dr. Leon Burke

TRACEY'S BLESSINGS - A DONKEY, A BUNNY AND AN EMPTY TOMB



**Tracey Harris,
Director of Christian Ed.**

The title of this article sounds like the beginning of a joke. However, all of these images are important to events that happen in the month of April.

The Church recognizes the Sunday before Easter as Palm Sunday. Our Palm Sunday is a recreation of Jesus triumphant arrival into Jerusalem. Look for Pastor Erick to ride in on KC the donkey! Please read the story of the last week of Jesus’ life with your family or friends. Look to find how God works in the whole week. It will help us engage the events at church during Holy Week.

The bunny comes into the Easter Egg Hunt for ages preschool - 5th grade. The hunt begins at 10:00 am in Memorial Hall on Saturday April 20. Please gather in Memorial Hall for crafts prior to the hunt.

After all this, there will still be Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday, followed by the wonder and joy of Easter.

Blessings to all, this Holy Week!

Tracey Harris,

Director of Christian Education & Student Pastor

MODERATOR'S CORNER APRIL 2019

It's April and on the Church Calendar it is the Season of Lent. It's also the time for Annual reports and the time to finish up the nominating process. This year is the time to look at the beginning of the examination and planning that the Strategic Planning Committee is working on.

Just as Lent is a time for Reflection and Renewal, so is the work that needs to be done for the future of the Church. The Committee is reviewing and analyzing where we are, but at some point they will be asking you to actively assist in this process.

By the time you read this, Bob Moody will have filled you in with a financial analysis and challenged all of us to step up in different ways. We will be asked to reflect on our church and what it means to us. Why do we come to this church? What sets us apart from any other?

I saw an ad recently for a church in my area that has MANY members. The ad said...

"We strive to be a place where real people can gather together to find clarity, purpose, and connection. With thought-provoking messages, we aim to shed light on life's journey as we walk it together."

What a great message! Wouldn't you want to go there? Well, I know this is a Lutheran Church with a band, (not my cup of tea) but still a terrific message. In the course of things, we will be asking you to think. **What is our message? What is special and compelling about First Church? What makes us relevant in today's world?**

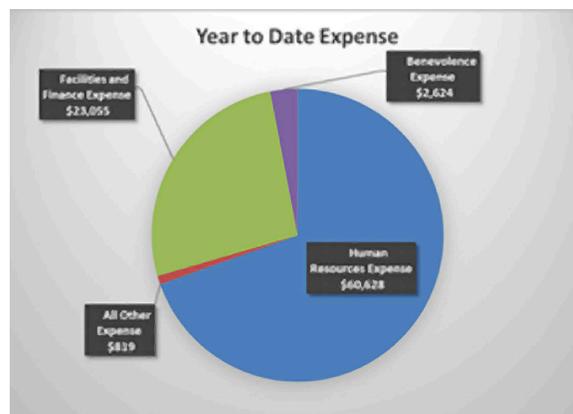
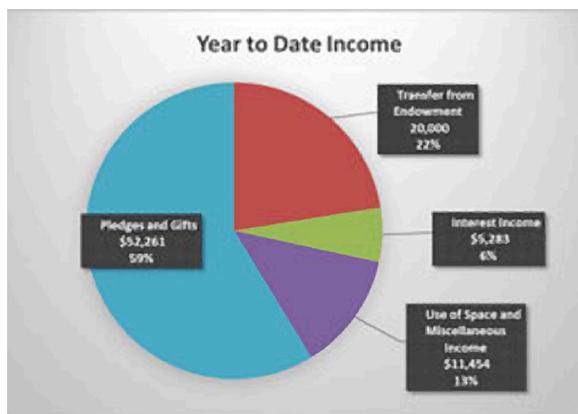
For now, let us gain some quiet strength through the reflection that is Lent and the Renewal that is Easter.

"Seeking to know the will of God"

Linda Kopetti

TREASURER REPORT - STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY THROUGH FEBRUARY 28

	2019	2018	Year to Date Budget
Total Revenue	89,198	77,678	84,876
Total Expenses	87,126	97,841	95,843
Net Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$ 2,072	\$ (20,163)	\$ (10,967)



If you have any questions or want more detail on the above results, please let me know.

Jennifer Jones

Treasurer



From the mundane tasks that arise in the office, to putting together a fundraising collection by the youth, to the enormous job of putting together the Benevolence Auction, the members make it happen. As an employee, this has and continues to amaze and impress me on a regular basis.

The willingness of the people here to jump in feet first, with a variety and abundance of skills, is something to be proud of. There are so many volunteers in so many different areas at this church, I could fill a small book listing the names. Please know you keep this church running and are appreciated by all!

Debbie Tolstoi
Office Administrator





Holy Week

PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

Sunday, April 14, 9:55 am

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thursday, April 18, 7:00 pm

GOOD FRIDAY - GOOD FRIDAY BLUES

Friday, April 19, 7:00 pm

EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, April 20, 10:00 am
Rain or Shine – Memorial Hall

FESTIVAL OF THE RESURRECTION / EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday, April 21, 9:55 am



The Good Friday Passion narrative will be told through storytelling and creative reflection by First Church's Logos Readers. Combined with the jazz artistry of the Oïkos Ensemble, for this stirring Good Friday service / concert.

Music featured by: John Coltrane, McCoy Tyner, Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, and Billie Holiday's classic, "Strange Fruit."

The Oïkos Ensemble

Kim Fuller & Arianna Aerie – Vocals • Cliff Aerie - Saxophone • Carolbeth True - Piano
Glen Smith - Bass • David True - Drums

The Logos Readers

Jan Barnes • Leon Burke • Erick Falconer • Andrea Welnick

FREE AND OPEN TO ALL!

*A free will offering will be taken to benefit MICA,
our Ministry of Imagination, Creativity and the Arts*

ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOME SPRING!

THE SECOND OF TWO PRESENTATIONS ON NATIVE GARDENING

BETTY STRUCKHOFF, MASTER GARDENER,

MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

“Bring the Natives Home”

Sunday, April 7 | 11:30 am | Memorial Hall

The program gives ideas for incorporating native plants into the home garden with suggestions for shade, sun and boggy areas. It will guide you to plant selection to make your landscape part of a natural world.

Our presenter is Betty Struckhoff, a Master Gardener since 1999 who has served on the Master Gardeners Advisory Committee. She is a winner in the Post Dispatch “Best Native Garden” contest – her home landscape is certified “Platinum” in the BCH program. She has helped create native landscapes in local parks, other public spaces and private gardens, and we are happy to have her speak with us about using native plants in our gardens and landscaping.

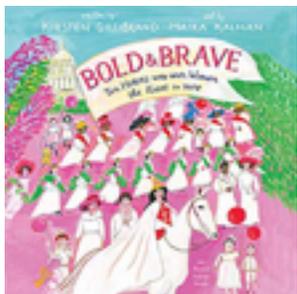
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

JIM BIGGS, SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATOR AND ACTIVIST

April 28, 2019 | 11:30 am | Memorial Hall

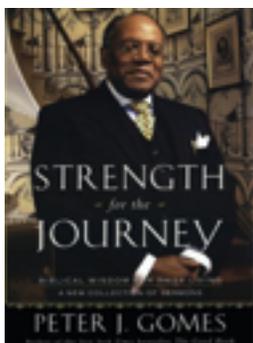
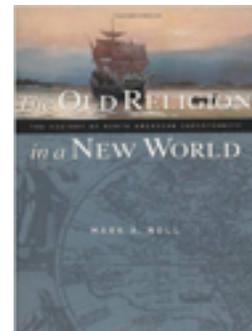
Jim Biggs is an educator and sustainability activist, who has spent the last decade dedicated to teaching about the environment. He has been a high school environmental biology teacher, Manager of Sustainability Education for the Missouri Botanical Garden, and is currently a teacher at Holy Redeemer Catholic School in Webster Groves, where he helps lead sustainability efforts for the school and parish. Holy Redeemer has created a program entitled, “*The Run to Zero Waste.*” With this program, over the past three years Holy Redeemer has eliminated landfill waste at fish fries, lowered landfill waste from the school by over 75%, and initiated annual student-led sustainability projects that have included limiting energy waste, composting in classrooms, giving “sustainability kits” to families, and student-led education of staff and students about sustainability efforts in the school. Inspired by Laudato Si’s and Pope Francis’ call for an “environmental conversion” (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laudato_si%27), Jim is now speaking at parishes, churches and schools hoping to teach others about the call to heed the needs of the planet and how they can help. He will review the history of the environmental sustainability effort at Holy Redeemer, the programs that are successfully lowering waste generation at the parish and school, and strategies and resources that others can use to pursue similar efforts in their own setting.

HOLIDAY LIBRARY ✓ IT OUT



A book for children, ***Bold & Brave*** tells the stories of 10 leaders who strove to win the right to vote for American women - a journey that took more than 70 years. From well-known figures such as Susan B. Anthony and Sojourner Truth to lesser known women, these are heroes who dreamed big and never gave up. Author, Senator Gillibrand, highlights a lesson from each woman's life from "dare to be different" to "fight together". On the eve of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which granted women suffrage, *Bold & Brave* looks both backward and forward, introducing children to strong women who have raised their voices on behalf of justice.

Mark Noll, one of the foremost historians of religion, chronicles in ***Old Religion in a New World*** the arrival of Christianity in the new America, tracing the turning points in the development of the immigrant church that have led to today's distinctly American faith. Taking a unique approach to this subject, Noll focuses on what was new about organized Christian religion on the American continent by comparison with European Christianity. In doing so, Noll provides a broad outline of the major events in the history of the Christian churches that have filled North America with such vitality and diversity.



With his characteristic eloquence and compassion, Peter J. Gomes offers a new collection of his most important sermons in ***Strength for the Journey***. They draw on the wisdom of the Bible to guide us through the year and enrich our daily lives.

CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION

Thursday, April 25 • 12 PM • The Hacienda • 9748 Manchester Road, in Rock Hill



Why wait until May to celebrate Cinco di Mayo? Please join with other First Church members for a Mexican meal on Sign up sheet in the church office.

Let's be optimistic and plan to sit outside!

DID YOU KNOW...?

The Inglis Room is on the second floor of the Sunday School Building, built in 1929 and now called Building B. In earlier years the room had a center assembly area with six Sunday school classrooms on the north and south walls. It was considered the most progressive design, at that time, for religious education. In 1952, it was designated the Laura Inglis Room. As our minister's wife, Laura, among many other endeavors, had long worked in religious education efforts. The Laura Inglis Guild was formed in the early 1960s. Laura held in high esteem by our church members died in 1952 and the new guild was named after her. In the 1980s the Sunday schoolroom walls were removed to make one large area. In the 1990s a small kitchen area was added in the southeast corner. It was renamed then the Inglis Room remembering both Laura Inglis and Irvine Inglis, our minister from 1939 to 1962.



Today the room is home to pictorial history display panels mounted on the wall under a wood carving of our church crest. There is a large table that was refurbished by August Uthoff in memory of his wife, Alice, and a Irvine Inglis portrait painted by Dorothy Quest in 1949. The oblong walnut table under the history display came from Faith Church, which was an outgrowth of our South Webster Mission Sunday School. In 1985 Faith Church disbanded and all records, assets, and some furniture came to our church. Funds realized from the sale of the property supports the Faith Fund from which we allocate monies for outreach. In 1993-4 the hospitality area of the Inglis Room was renovated by Wallace (Wally) & Bess Rinehart.



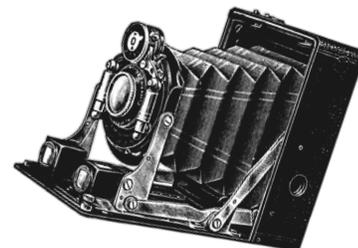
APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Marty Craig April 01
 Marshall Brooks April 03
 Jane Brader April 06
 Valerie Paci April 10
 Diane Weber April 10
 Marshall Dyer April 15
 Philip Shoulberg April 18
 Diane McCoy April 23
 John Robinson April 26
 Jonathan Kaalberg April 27
 Elizabeth Walker April 30



TIME FOR NEW PHOTOS!

Be sure to look your best on Palm and Easter Sunday. Phil Shoulberg has kindly agreed to bring his camera to church to photograph members for a new pictorial directory.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 9:00 AM Monday Morning Men 1:00 PM - 7:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	2 5:30 AM Election Day 9:30 AM Willing Workers 2:00 PM Communications Team	3 1:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing 6:00 PM Soup - Salad - Bread Supper 7:00 PM Lenten Study Series	4 10:00 AM FAITH: Continuing the Search 6:15 PM Canterbury Bells 7:30 PM Chancel Choir	5	6
7 <i>Sacrament of Christ's Table</i> 9:00 AM Brown Baggers 9:00 AM Nursery Care 9:55 AM Worship 9:55 AM Youth in Worship 10:15 AM Sunday School 11:05 AM Fellowship 11:30 AM Adult Ed – Bring the Natives Home	8 9:00 AM Monday Morning Men 1:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM Three Ministries	9 9:30 AM Mary Martha Guild 11:30 AM Devine Diners 6:30 PM Practicing Our Faith	10 9:30 AM Yoga with Jeanene 1:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing 6:00 PM Soup - Salad - Bread Supper 7:00 PM Lenten Study Series	11 10:00 AM FAITH: Continuing the Search 6:15 PM Canterbury Bells 7:30 PM Chancel Choir	12	13 5:00 PM Webster Rock Hill Ministries Trivia Night
14 <i>Palm Sunday</i> 9:00 AM Nursery Care 9:55 AM Worship 10:15 AM Sunday School 11:05 AM Fellowship	15 9:00 AM Monday Morning Men 1:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM Executive Ministry	16 9:00 AM Endowment Counselors Meeting 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM Willing Workers 7:00 PM Boy Scout Leaders	17 9:30 AM Yoga with Jeanene 1:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing 6:15 PM Canterbury Bells 7:30 PM Chancel Choir	18 <i>Maunder Thursday</i> 10:00 AM FAITH: Continuing the Search 7:00 PM Worship	19 <i>Good Friday</i> 7:00 PM Good Friday Blues	20 10:00 AM Easter Egg Hunt
21 <i>Easter Sunday</i> 9:00 AM Nursery Care 9:55 AM Worship 10:15 AM Sunday School 11:05 AM Fellowship	22 <i>Earth Day Easter Monday</i> Office Closed 1:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing	23 9:30 AM Willing Workers 7:00 PM Lady Elect 7:00 PM Boy Scout Leaders	24 <i>Administrative Professionals Day</i> 9:30 AM Yoga with Jeanene 1:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing	25 8:30 AM Journeymen 10:00 AM FAITH: Continuing the Search 7:30 PM Chancel Choir	26 5:00 PM Room at the Inn 6:00 PM Dinner & A Movie	27
28 9:00 AM Nursery Care 9:55 AM Worship 10:15 AM Sunday School 11:05 AM Fellowship 11:30 Adult Ed – Environmental Sustainability 12:00 PM Youth Group (6th - 8th Grade)	29 9:00 AM Monday Morning Men 1:00 PM Center for Counseling and Healing 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	30 9:30 AM Willing Workers				

Deadline for Covenant News Articles





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Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

APRIL Meal-A-Month

Canned Turkey • Brown Rice
Canned Corn (low or no salt)
Applesauce (in plastic, no sugar added)
Powdered Milk, shelf stable milk, soy milk
Peanut Butter • Real Fruit Jelly
Dried Fruits

Missing Someone?

Have you been missing someone for a while from worship and other church events? Please, let Pastor Dave Denoon or Parish Life Chair, know. Either will be happy to follow up for you.

