

Welcome!

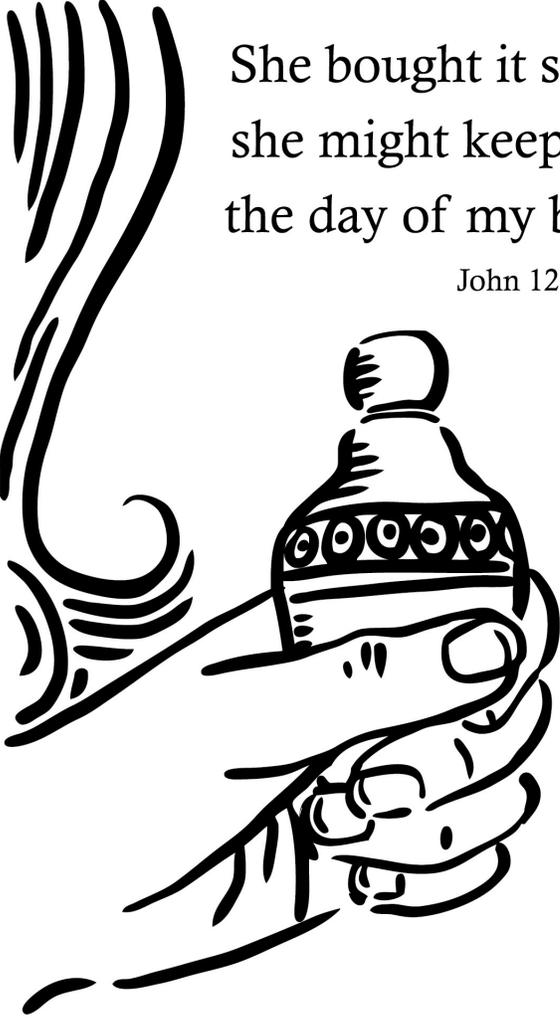
First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

March 22, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT



She bought it so that
she might keep it for
the day of my burial.

John 12:7, NRSV

*We respond to God's call
by welcoming everyone
regardless of ability, age, ethnicity,
race, gender identity,
sexual orientation
or socio-economic background.*

*To proclaim in word and deed
the love of Christ, we affirm that
all may share in the full life,
ministry, fellowship, responsibilities
and blessing of our congregation.*

*No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.*

ORDER OF WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TOLLING THE BELL

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

PRELUDE

OPENING WORDS

Disciples of Christ

Iona Community

RAISING THE COVENANT

We who are called of God into this Christian community covenant together; to seek to know the will of God, to experience the joy and struggle of discipleship, to proclaim in word and deed the love of Christ, and to work for peace and justice among all people. We trust God's promise of grace and forgiveness and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our trials and rejoicing.

GATHERING HYMN

Kindred, We Now Meet to Worship

Thommy Snell

Kindred, we now meet to worship,
Reaching out through screen and phone.
Though we dwell in isolation
We don't have to be alone.
Worshiping beyond our building,
Our connection's no less real.
Though we cannot meet in person,
Covenant unites us still.

Siblings, share a song of gladness
Lifting spirits, spreading cheer,
So that in these days of sadness
We won't be consumed by fear.
In this time of mass confusion,
Sickness, loss, and overwhelm,
Let's encourage one another
Hands not joined, but hearts are held.

RITUAL OF APPROACH

Invitation

Jesus, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof.

But only say the word, and your servant will be healed.

Corporate Confession

We confess, O God, that there have been times when we imagined ourselves more aware than we are. Like the male disciples we have chosen to speak when silence should have been observed. We have pushed against society's restraints when it would have been better to comply, to recognize one another's needs rather than our own fleeting wants. We have even selfishly sought to justify ourselves by claiming to be more righteous or holy than we are. Hear, O Holy One, our hearts' confessions to you.

Silence for Personal Confessions

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers, hear this good news: Forgiveness pours forth from God like tears of joy. No barrier you erect can obstruct the flow of these healing waters. Receive the gift of God's forgiveness that you may be restored and filled with peace. Fully forgiven, you are empowered to show great love.

Thanks be to God.

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Tracey Harris,
Director of Christian Ed and Student Minister and Rivet

THE WORD SHARED

Merrimon Boyd, *Student Minister*

From the Gospels

Matthew 26:6-13

New Revised Standard Version

While Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table.

But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, "Why this waste? For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor."

But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.

"By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

Response.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

"Pleasure vs. Authority vs. Death"

Rev. David Denoon

PRAYER HYMN

A Woman Came Who Did Not Count the Cost

R. D. Leech

A woman came who did not count
the cost of doing what she could,
She broke an alabaster flask,
and sweetness spilled on Jesus' head.
O God, you are th'Anointing One
who does not count your passion's cost.
And when we gather you will spill
the sweetness of your grace on us.

You give as she, surprisingly,
you give with beauty as she gave,
You give as she, not holding back,
you make us Christ-like with your love.
O God, you are th'Anointing One
who does not count your passion's cost.
And when we gather you will spill
the sweetness of your grace on us.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Lift Our Joys and Concerns to God

Prayers of the Day

Prayer of Our Savior

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE