

# Welcome!

First Congregational Church  
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



*Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.*

APRIL 18, 2021

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

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Jesus said to him,

**Have you believed  
because you have seen me?  
Blessed are those  
who have not seen  
and yet have believed.**

John 20:29



*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.*

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## Order of Worship

**PRELUDE**

*Vocalise*

Sergei Rachmaninoff  
Arr. Marion Thomas

**TOLLING THE BELL**

**LIGHTING THE CANDLES**

**WELCOME**

Marilyn Davis, *Announcer*

Hello and welcome to worship with the First Congregational Church of Webster Groves. We are a member church of the United Church of Christ, located near St. Louis, Missouri.

Today is Sunday, April 18th, 2021; the third Sunday of Easter. I'm your announcer, Marilyn Davis. I am joined in leading worship, by Pastor Dave Denoon, Pastoral Assistant Halley Kim, our student Pastors Merrimon Boyd and Elston McCowan, and Music Director Leon Burke the third.

This service includes spoken responses, and songs to sing. To participate with us, you are encouraged to download a copy of this morning's order of worship from our website – First Church W G dot org. Most responses will be provided onscreen also.

To prepare for worship, I invite you to center yourself by taking a deep breath and exhaling (*Pause*), close your eyes and greet God's Spirit here with me and there with you (*Pause again*).

**OPENING WORDS (Responsive)**

Based on John 20

Led by the Rev. Elena Larssen

Minister for Volunteer Engagement, national setting of the UCC

One: Peace be with you.

**Many: The land drips with violence, people rage with contempt, even the air spins a path of destruction. How can we claim peace in a time like this?**

One: Peace be with you.

One: Receive the Holy Spirit

**Many: We are too afraid of this power, too enchanted by it, too disturbed by it. Is not this gift too powerful to be entrusted to humankind?**

One: Receive the Holy Spirit.

One: See my hands.

**Many: We do not want to see the wounds of the world; there are too many names to recall, too many places scored by violence. Why will you not let us forget?**

One: See my hands.

One: Reach out your hand.

**Many: We are so bound up in your love, O Christ, that your peace, your Spirit, even your pain will not let us go. Therefore we remember, take hold, receive, and move in faith.**

One: Do not doubt but believe.

**Many: Amen.**

**RAISING THE COVENANT**

*Covenant of 1977*

**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.**

**HYMN**

*Morning Has Broken*

Eleanor Farjeon

Performed by the Rev. Katie Miller

Minister of Youth and Family Life, First Central Congregational UCC, Lincoln, NE

Morning has broken like the first morning  
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning,  
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word.

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,  
Like the first dewfall on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,  
Sprung in completeness where Their feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning  
Born of the one light Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation, praise every morning  
God's re-creation of the new day!

**PRAYER OF APPROACH (Unison)**

Rev. Merrimon Ramout Boyd, *Student Pastor*

**Breathe on us with your very breath, Messiah, and touch us with your hands. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, and embrace us both within and without. We need to be reassured that we are truly yours. We have allowed doubts to get in the way of our faithfulness. We have hesitated to accept you because the truth is so hard to believe. And still you accept us. What can we do with such grace? Indeed, what can't we do, for that Spirit we share is power itself to overcome fear and regret. Let us live, let us grow, in your love. Amen.**

**NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY**

Halley Kim, *Pastoral Assistant*

**THE WORD SHARED**

Rev. Boyd

*From the Gospels*

selections from John 20 and 21

NRSV

It was evening on the day Christ was resurrected, the first day of the week. And the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the authorities. Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Sovereign...

But Thomas (who was called the Twin, and was one of the twelve) was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Sovereign."

But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."

Thomas answered him, "My Sovereign and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish.

That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."

*Response.*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

**Thanks be to God.**

**ANTHEM**

*Thine Is the Glory*

G. F. Handel

Performed by members of University Congregational UCC, Seattle, WA

**MESSAGE OF THE DAY**

*"We Mustn't Wait"*

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*Joys and Concerns*

Rev. Elston McCowan, *Student Minister*

*Prayer of the Day*

Rev. Denoon

*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.**

**WE SHARE OUR BLESSINGS WITH OTHERS**

*Invitation*

Marilyn Davis

What wonders we can accomplish together through the Church, by God's grace!  
Combining material gifts, we are able to serve and support our community and

communities all over the world. While the health crisis continues, until it is safe again to pass plates or collect in person, we'll be receiving offerings only by mail or online. If you are able financially, and you would like to support First Church with a monetary donation, please either send a check to  
First Congregational Church  
10 West Lockwood Avenue  
Webster Groves, Missouri 63119  
or go to our website – [FirstChurchWG.org](http://FirstChurchWG.org) – and to our “Donate” page. Thank you.

*Song of Praise*

*Doxology*

Tune: OLD 100<sup>TH</sup>

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God, all creatures here below!  
Praise God above, you heavenly host:  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication* (Unison)

Marilyn Davis

**You have blessed us, O God, with many things – the love of family and friends, a faith-filled community here, and, for most of us, work that gives a sense of purpose and which provides for ourselves and our loved ones. These are things we can feel with our hands and our hearts. Bless these gifts we have given from out of the bounty you have made, so that your blessings may extend beyond our reach to touch others in Christ's name. Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

*Postlude*

Anton Bruckner  
Arr. Hal Hopson

**DISMISSAL**

Marilyn Davis

That's our worship for this week at First Church. We're glad you could worship with us. Please, join us for our Virtual Coffee Fellowship, Sunday at 11am on Zoom. All of us here hope to see you there! The Virtual Coffee Fellowship link is on the homepage of our website.

Our worship next Sunday will feature a sermon by Student Minister Merrimon Boyd as he begins his Senior Capstone Project at Eden Theological Seminary.

But, as for today...

Our worship has ended. Let our service begin.





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*Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.*

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