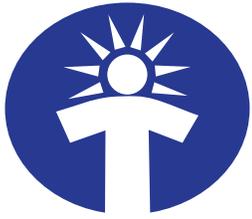


# Welcome!

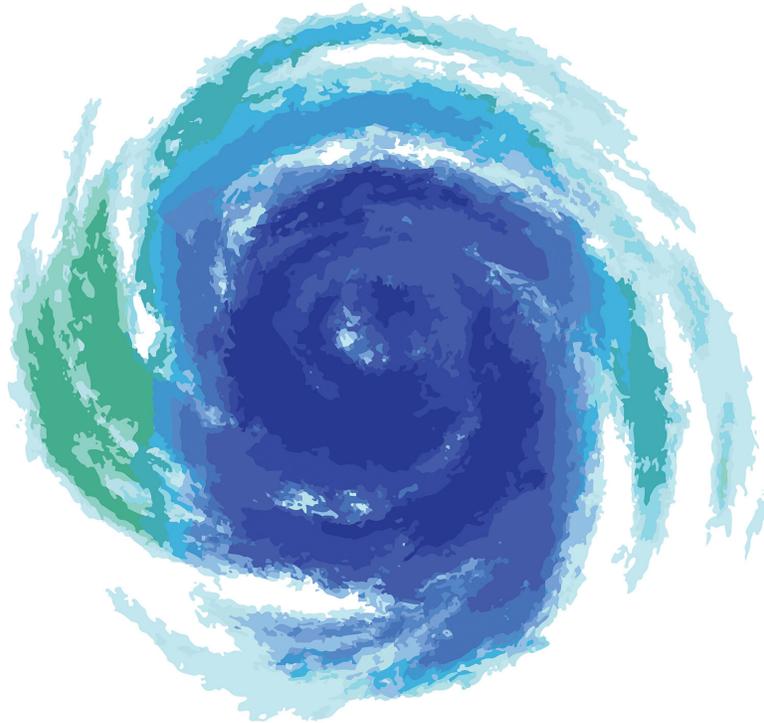
First Congregational Church  
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



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

APRIL 25, 2021  
FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER  
"BREAK THE SILENCE" SUNDAY

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*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**

*Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*

arr. Dale Wood

**TOLLING THE BELL**

**LIGHTING THE CANDLES**

**WELCOME**

Jennifer Jones, *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 25th, 2021; the fourth Sunday of Easter. I'm your announcer, Jenny Jones. 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, and our newest addition to the staff Audio/Visual Technician Mark Metcalf.

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.

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*).

**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.**

**NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY**

Halley Kim, *Pastoral Assistant*

**HYMN**

*Lead Me, Guide Me*

Doris Akers

Lead me, guide me, along the way,  
For if you lead me, I'll never stray.  
Lord, let me walk each day with thee.  
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

## THE WORD SHARED

*From the Gospels*

Mark 4:1-20

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

Again Jesus began to teach beside the sea. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the sea and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. <sup>2</sup> He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: <sup>3</sup> “Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. <sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup> And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. <sup>8</sup> Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.” <sup>9</sup> And he said, “Let anyone with ears to hear listen!”

<sup>10</sup> When he was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. <sup>11</sup> And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the commonwealth of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; <sup>12</sup> in order that

‘they may indeed look, but not perceive,  
and may indeed listen, but not understand;  
so that they may not turn again and be forgiven.’ ”

<sup>13</sup> And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables?”

<sup>14</sup> “The sower sows the word. <sup>15</sup> These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. <sup>16</sup> And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> But they have no root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. <sup>18</sup> And others are those sown among the thorns: these are the ones who hear the word, <sup>19</sup> but the cares of the world, and the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>20</sup> And these are the ones sown on the good soil: they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

Mark 4:35-41

Rev. Elston McCowan, *Student*

*Pastor*

<sup>35</sup> On that same day, when evening had come, Jesus said to the disciples, “Let us go across to the other side of the lake.” <sup>36</sup> And

leaving the crowd behind, the disciples took Jesus with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him.

<sup>37</sup> A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. <sup>38</sup> But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

<sup>39</sup> He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm.

<sup>40</sup> He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?”

<sup>41</sup> And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

*Response.*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PRAYER OF COMPLAINT**

Halley Kim

**MESSAGE OF THE DAY**

*“Do You Care That We Are Perishing?”* Rev. Merrimon Ramout Boyd  
Student Pastor

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*Joys and Concerns*

Rev. McCowan

*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**

Jennifer Jones

*Invitation*

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)

Jennifer Jones

**God of our lives and livelihoods, you have given us so much. May we never take it for granted. The fruit of our labors abounds, and we continue to grow in you. Through your Spirit, the work and witness of our church touches hearts and changes lives all around us and beyond ourselves. Bless these gifts so that the blessings may continue, in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

**BENEDICTION**

Rev. Boyd

**POSTLUDE**

*Chorale from “Gothic Suite”*

Léon Boëllmann

**DISMISSAL**

Jennifer Jones

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, today 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 be the first in a long time with worshipers joining the worship leaders in person. Go to our website for instructions about attending, or – if you subscribe to our e-newsletter – the instructions are there also. We will still be coming to you through a live stream; so, if you’re not quite ready to be in the sanctuary yet, please plan to meet us here. Next Sunday, May second, the pastor’s message will be titled, “What Saved You?” and he’ll be reflecting on how we survived the pandemic. It’s the first Sunday of a month, so we’ll also be celebrating communion. Join us online or in person.

As for today...

Our worship has ended. Let our service begin.





10 West Lockwood Avenue  
Webster Groves, MO 63119  
314-962-0475  
[www.FirstChurchWG.org](http://www.FirstChurchWG.org)

## Contact Information

Moderator – Mark Edwards

Pastor – Rev. David A. Denoon  
[DDenoon@FirstChurchWG.org](mailto:DDenoon@FirstChurchWG.org)

Pastoral Assistant – Halley Kim  
[Halley.Kim@FirstChurchWG.org](mailto:Halley.Kim@FirstChurchWG.org)

Office Administrator – Debbie Tolstoi  
[Admin@FirstChurchWG.org](mailto:Admin@FirstChurchWG.org)

Director of Music & Organist – Dr. Leon Burke  
[Leon.Burke@FirstChurchWG.org](mailto:Leon.Burke@FirstChurchWG.org)

Facilities Manager – Chip Isringhaus  
[cti1234@FirstChurchWG.org](mailto:cti1234@FirstChurchWG.org)

Custodian – Darrell Lakies

Assistant Custodian – Gus McLean

Director, Center for Counseling & Healing  
Rev. Linda E. Smith, BCRN, HTCP/I  
[lesrhs@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lesrhs@sbcglobal.net)

Director of MICA – Rev. Cliff Aerie  
[cliff.aerie@gmail.com](mailto:cliff.aerie@gmail.com)

Student Minister – Merrimon Boyd  
[merrimon.boyd@gmail.com](mailto:merrimon.boyd@gmail.com)

Student Minister – Elston McCowan  
[emccowan@eden.edu](mailto:emccowan@eden.edu)

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

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