

# Welcome!

First Congregational Church  
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



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

MAY 2, 2021

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (ORTHODOX EASTER)  
SACRAMENT OF CHRIST'S TABLE

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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.*

**God** ~~is~~ **love,**  
and those who  
**abide in** **love**  
**=**  
**abide in** **God,**  
and God  
**abides in** **them.**

1 JOHN 4:16, NRSV

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**MAY 2, 2021**  
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**SACRAMENT OF CHRIST'S TABLE**

*An asterisk (\*) indicates that worshipers are standing in body or in spirit.*

**PRELUDE** *Liebster Jesu wir sind hier* J. S. Bach

**TOLLING THE BELL**

**SPECIAL MUSIC** *Celebration* Douglas Wagner  
(Canterbury Bells)

**LIGHTING THE CANDLES**

**WELCOME** Herb Niemeyer, *Announcer*

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (Responsive – Leader; **People**) Psalm 98

O sing to the holy ONE a new song! Our God has done marvelous things!

**Make a joyful noise, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**

Sing praises to God with the lyre and the sound of melody, with trumpets and the sound of the horn.

**Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it.**

Let the waters clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy!

**O sing to the holy ONE a new song! Our God has done marvelous things!**

**\*HYMN** *Sing Praise to God* No. 22, vv. 1,4  
*New Century Hymnal*

**\*PRAYER OF APPROACH** (Unison) Rev. Merrimon Boyd, *Student Minister*

**O God, we sing songs to praise you, songs the like of which we never expected to sing! You have rejoiced our hearts, and we know that only in you can our joy be made complete. Teach us your commandments more completely, so that we may truly and faithfully abide in you. For we have so often failed to live up to the possibilities you have created for us. We have sometimes been**

**dismissive of you, ignorant about you, and we suspect that we may have missed the fullness of our joy. Forgive us and direct us anew, as you have promised to, in the name of Christ our Guide and Brother. Amen.**

**NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY**

Halley Kim, *Pastoral Assistant*

**SHARING THE WORD**

Rev. Boyd

*From the Epistles*  
ad.

1 John 4:7-12 New Revised Standard Version,

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent the only Begotten into the world so that we might live through that Child.

<sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us and sent that Child to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and God's love is perfected in us.

*From the Gospels*

John 15:1-8

NRSV, ad.

[Jesus said,] "I am the true vine, and my Abba is the vinegrower <sup>2</sup> who removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit is pruned to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

<sup>4</sup> "Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Abba is glorified by this: that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

*Response.*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

**Thanks be to God.**

**MESSAGE OF THE DAY**

*"A Lesson in Viticulture"* Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

## WE SHARE OUR GIFTS WITH OTHERS

### *Invitation*

*\*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.**

*\*Raising the Covenant (Unison)*

*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.**

## RITUAL FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CHRIST'S TABLE

Source: Iona Community

### *Invitation*

Rev. Denoon

*We Share Our Joys and Concerns*

Rev. Elston McCowan, *Student Pastor*

*\*Sursum Corda (Responsive)*

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to God.**

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

*\*Communion Prayer*

*\*Sanctus (Unison)*

**Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God most light! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God. Hosanna in the highest!**

*Prayers of Intercession (Responsive)*

Holy God, as we come to share the richness of your table... Your world is one world and we are stewards of its nourishment.

**God, put our prosperity at the service of the poor.**

We cannot drink the fruit of the vine and forget those who are thirsty.

The ground and the rootless, the earth and its weary people cry out for justice.

**God, put our fullness at the service of the empty.**

We cannot hear your words of peace and forget the world at war, or, if not at war, then preparing for it.

**Show us quickly, God, how to turn weapons into welcome signs and the lust for power into a desire for peace.**

We cannot celebrate the feast of your family and forget the Church's divisions. We are one in spirit but not in fact. History and hurt still dismember us.

**God, heal your Church in every brokenness.**

*Prayer of Our Savior (Unison)*

**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.**

*Distribution*

*Communion Music*

*There is a Love*  
(Chancel Choir)

Elizabeth Norton

*Consecration and Sharing*

*While the Chancel Choir sings, our Communion Stewards will distribute sealed portions of bread and cup. The bread is gluten free, and the drink is grape juice. Please open and consume your serving according to the direction of the Pastor.*

*Communion Music*

*\*Prayer after Communion (Unison)*

**We give you thanks, gracious God, that you come to us in bread and cup, and in the love of this gathered community. Now, send us forth from this table a nourished and empowered people, your disciples, to live your love, speak your peace, and sing your hope. Amen.**

*\*Benediction*

Go now, for you have been fed,  
you have shared the living bread;  
you have been grafted to the vine,  
you have tasted heaven's new wine.

Go now, you have been blessed.

Jesus called you each a guest.

god knows your name and says you're wanted

and in your lives god's seed is planted.  
Go now, and go in Christ's own peace  
and in your going do not cease  
to love yourself – you are God's treasure,  
and love the world – it is God's pleasure,  
and love your God in greatest measure.  
Amen.

**POSTLUDE**

*Fugue in C*

Dietrich Buxtehude

**DISMISSAL**

Herb Niemeyer

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### **We Hold in Our Prayers**

- Our residents in assisted living and skilled care – Sharon Beal, Joyce Berger, Paul Davis, Margery Gable
- All people who are living with dementia, their families and their caregivers – Bob Buerk and others
- People we love who are living with cancer – Bill Barrett, Jim Bennett, Margaret Gustafson, Peter McHugh, Bob Moody
- All those the world regards as disabled – David & Becky Scott
- People recovering from recent hospitalizations – Jean Gray, Jean Kohler
- People with mental illnesses, as well as the people who love and care for them
- People who are lonely or alone because of the pandemic
- Those whose employment and businesses are at risk
- COVID-19 patients
- Front line workers and their loved ones
- For our governmental leaders, and for healing for our country and all its people
- Peace with justice

### **Thank you to this Week's Hospitality Team**

Linda & Lazlo Kopetti • Mark & Mary Edwards • Bob Borutta • Doug Miller

## Electronic Device Users

If you wish to access our wi-fi, our network connections are: fccwg1, fccwg2 or fccwg3. The password for each is **firstchurch**.

## Finding Your Way at First Church

**The Nursery:** The Nursery is attended today. The Nursery is located through the double doors at the end of the Narthex (foyer), turn left. Nursery/Toddler Room is on your right (Dutch doors).

**Restrooms:** Family restrooms are located to the right of the Narthex (foyer) as you go to the Library (look for the blue library banner) and to the left of the Narthex just before the double doors. ***If you need to step out during worship, please use the aisle closest to your seat, and enter/exit by using the nearest door.***

## Week at a Glance – May 2 through 8, 2021

**Sunday, May 2** — Sacrament of Christ's Table

**9:30 AM - 11:00 AM** Nursery Care Available

**10:00 AM** Worship

**10:15 AM** Sunday School

**Immediately After Worship** Fellowship in the Jubilee Garden

**11:00 AM** Fellowship on Zoom

**Tuesday, May 4**

**10:30 AM - Noon** Staff Meeting (Please note: Staff will be unavailable at this time)

**1:00 PM** Communications Team Meeting

**Saturday, May 8**

**8:30 AM - 2:00 PM** Webster Groves Herb Society Plant Sale



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## Contact Information

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

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