

# Welcome!

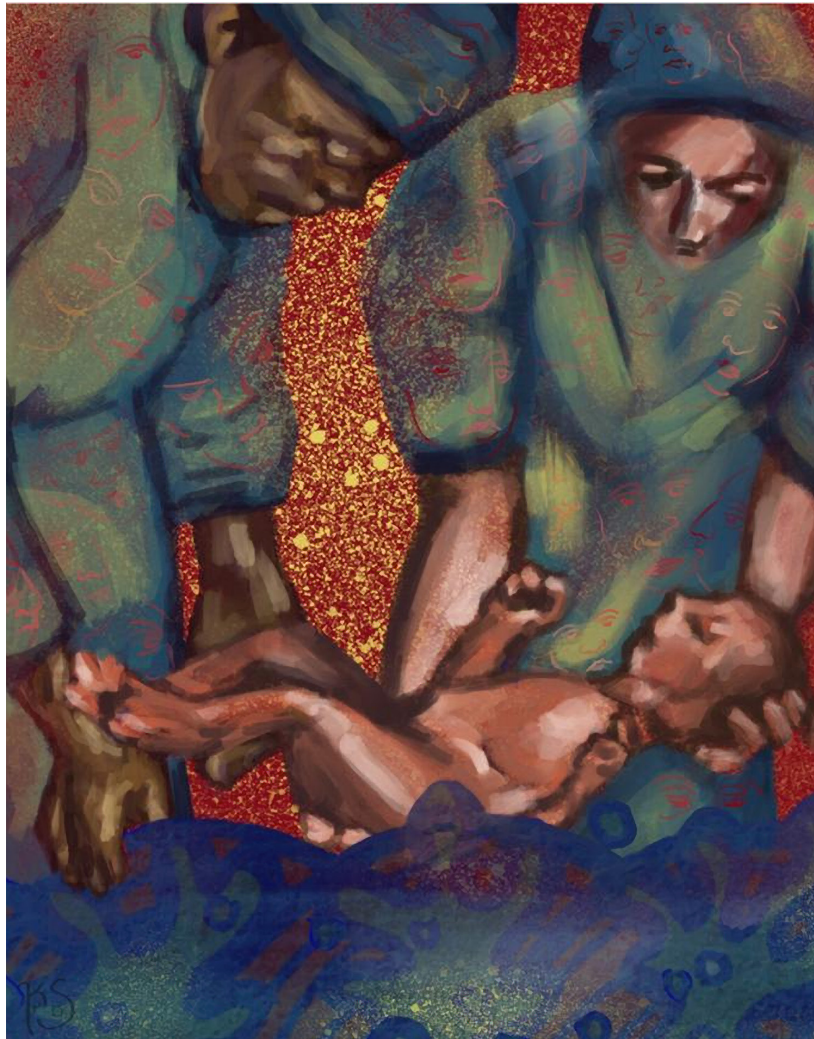
First Congregational Church of Webster Groves  
United Church of Christ



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

MARCH 27, 2022

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT  
ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING



*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

*An asterisk (\*) indicates that worshipers are invited to stand in body or in spirit.*

*If you would like a personal joy or concern read aloud and you are at home, you may text 314-858-6710, or fill out a prayer card, found in the pew box.*

**PRELUDE** *A Lenten Supplication* Rudolf Dittrich

**WELCOME** Jennifer Jones, *Liturgist*

**TOLLING OF THE BELL**

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (Responsive – Leader; **People**) inspired by Psalm 22

Our God is always delivering us: the Holy One took us all from the womb and kept each of us safe upon our mothers' breast.

**On God were we cast from birth, and since we were borne into this world the God of love and nurture has been our God.**

Never far from us, our God is present even when trouble is near and there is no one else to help.

**All you who revere the Sovereign God, praise! And let all the offspring of faithfulness glorify its Source!**

**\*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.**

**\*GATHERING HYMN** *Womb of Life and Source of Being* Ruth Duck  
(No. 274, vv. 1,4 – *New Century Hymnal*)

**RITUAL OF APPROACH** Jennifer Jones

*Introduction*

*Prayer of Confession* (Unison)

**Mothering God, we lament the sexism that is all around us. We have been complicit in discrimination against women: making snap assumptions about women's achievements; treating mothers**

**differently from fathers; or teaching children that the things they do should be gender-appropriate. Help us be curious and not defensive about how we need to grow. Open our senses to what we need to know. Guide us to resist the sexism in our world and in ourselves with a holy determination to anoint the feminine as holy. Amen.**

*Words of Assurance*

**NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY**

Halley Kim, *Pastoral Assistant*

*The children are invited forward for a time of enrichment.*

*Afterward, they may proceed to Kids' Church, or return to their seats.*

**SHARING THE WORD**

Jennifer Jones

*From the Law*

Exodus 1:8-21

*The Inclusive Bible*

A new pharaoh – one who did not know Joseph – came to power in Egypt. Pharaoh said to the Egyptians, “Look at how powerful the Israelites have become, and how they outnumber us! We need to deal shrewdly with their increase, against a time of war when they might turn against us and join our enemy, and so escape out of the country.”

So they oppressed the Israelites with overseers who put them to forced labor; and with them they built the storage cities of Pitom and Ra'amses. Yet the more the Israelites were oppressed, the more they multiplied and burst forth, until the Egyptians dreaded the Israelites. So they made the Israelites utterly subservient with hard labor, brick-and-mortar work, and every kind of field work. The Egyptians were merciless in subjugating them with crushing labor.

Pharaoh spoke to the midwives of the Hebrews – one was Shiphrah, and the other Puah – and said, “When you assist the Hebrew women in childbirth, examine them on the birthing-stool. If the baby is a boy, kill it. If it is a girl, let it live.”

But the midwives revered God, and they ignored Pharaoh's instructions, and let the male babies live. So Pharaoh summoned the midwives and asked why they let the male babies live. The midwives responded, “These Hebrew women are different from Egyptian women; they are more robust, and deliver even before the midwife arrives.”

God rewarded the midwives, and the people increased in numbers and in power. And since the midwives did indeed revere God, the Holy One gave them families of their own.

*Response.*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

**Thanks be to God.**

**ANTHEM** *Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth* Jean Janzen  
(No. 467, *New Century Hymnal*) Julian of Norwich

**MESSAGE OF THE DAY** *“Rebel Midwives, Shiphrah and Puah”* Rev. David Denoon,  
*Pastor*

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*We Lift Our Joys and Concerns to God*

*Prayer of the Day*

*Prayer of Our Savior*

**Our Mother in heaven, make your name holy. Reveal your love, and teach us your way. Make earth alike with heaven. Provide bread for today, so that we do not worry about tomorrow. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Keep us from things that would keep us from you, but deliver us from the evil one. For here is your love: where power and glory are shared, now and forever. Amen.**

**\*PARTING HYMN** *I Was There* John Ylvisaker  
(No. 351, *New Century Hymnal*)

**OPPORTUNITIES ARISING** Jennifer Jones

**\*BENEDICTION** Rev. Denoon

**POSTLUDE** *Dona Nobis Pacem* Martha Sobaje

*During the Postlude, we encourage you to greet those around you safely, or to remain at your seat to enjoy the music until it has ended. In the spirit of diversity, please be attentive to the possibility that one who is seated may be meditating. When you are ready, please enjoy refreshments in Memorial Hall.*

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**One Great Hour of Sharing**

Our annual collection for this relief fund administered by Church World Service occurs today. Envelopes are provided, or you can give online at <https://firstchurchwg.org/donate> by using the pull-down menu and selecting "Give to One Great Hour of Sharing."

Sunday worship each week is shared in person for those who wish to attend and streamed live on YouTube, starting at 10:00am ([bit.ly/FCCWG-YT](https://bit.ly/FCCWG-YT)).

**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.

## We Hold in Our Prayers

- Our residents in assisted living and skilled care – Sharon Beal, Joyce Berger, Paul Davis, Margery Gable, Shirley Moore
- All people who are living with dementia, their families, and their caregivers
- People we love who are living with cancer – Margaret Gustafson
- Leo Gomez
- All those the world regards as disabled – especially David & Becky Scott
- People with mental illnesses, as well as the people who love and care for them
- Peace with justice

## Lenten Enrichment Session, this Wednesday, March 23 at 7:00pm on Zoom (go to [bit.ly/FCCWG-Lent](https://bit.ly/FCCWG-Lent))

Join us each Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, as we are reintroduced to important biblical women – **Shiphrah and Puah** (today and March 30, Dave Denoon); **Huldah** (April 3 and 6, Halley Kim). Sermons on **Mary of Nazareth** and **Mary of Magdala** also will be featured on Palm Sunday and Easter, respectively, but without enrichment sessions.

**Maundy Thursday** worship, on April 14 at 7:00pm, and **Good Friday Blues**, on April 15 at 7, will also present perspectives of and about biblical women – the ten who were likely at the Last Supper table (Thursday) and others who suffered similar fates to that of Jesus (Friday).

## First Saturday Collection for April

A “drive-thru” collection for supplies needed by families with newborn children will be conducted on **Saturday, April 2, from 9:00am until 12:00 noon.**

Go to the Nurses for Newborns website for a complete list of items requested:

<https://www.nursesfornewborns.org/donate/missouri-wishlists/>

Then, bring your donations in April.

Newcomers and seasoned members work alongside each other at each First Saturday event. If you would like to be part of the April First Saturday Collection team, please take advantage of our SignUp Genius page (<https://tinyurl.com/fccwg-nurses>).

## Annual Reports

Please submit your annual reports to Debbie in the office by April 8. She will accept MS Word, Pages or pdf files. [admin@firstchurchwg.org](mailto:admin@firstchurchwg.org)

## Webster Groves Mayoral Candidates Forum – Thursday, March 31 from 7:00-8:00 PM

Churches Together for Justice will host a forum for the candidates for mayor in Webster Groves. Join other members of CTFJ at Peace United Church of Christ, 204 E. Lockwood, or on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/WGMayorForum> on the evening of March 31 from 7 to 8 PM.

### **Free Piano Recital by Ryan Fogg – Sunday, April 3 at 3:00 pm**

Prepare to have your spirits lifted by a free to all piano recital by Ryan Fogg. The playing of pianist Ryan Fogg has been described as “brilliant, with a high level of polish, impressive technical command, musical understanding and sensitivity.” As an artist, he strives to convey the musical line with clarity while capturing the coloristic sonority of the instrument. Audiences agree that his balanced and varied programming is quite effective in combining the standard masterpieces of the repertoire with less frequently heard but equally deserving works.

Originally from Houston, Texas, Dr. Fogg holds degrees in piano performance from The University of Texas at Austin, The University of Houston, and East Texas Baptist University. His major teachers include Gregory Allen, Danielle Martin, Robert Brownlee, and Randall Sulton. He pursued additional studies at the Aspen Music Festival with Gabriel Chodos and the Adamant Music School with Deirdre O’Donohue, and he has performed in masterclasses for pianists Horacio Gutierrez, Angela Cheng, Ann Saslov, Baruch Meir, and Menahem Pressler. He currently holds the position of Professor of Music and Director of Keyboard Studies at Carson-Newman University in Jefferson City, Tennessee, where he teaches a wide range of courses.

### **Update from Community Support Group on Refugee Family**

We first were assigned a family of 10 from Afghanistan and had just begun our journey with them when it was discovered that they already had a community support group from another organization. The International Institute of St. Louis then reassigned us another family, this time from Eritrea. The family includes a single woman and her 6-year-old twins. Although they have been in the US since September circumstances have made it difficult for her to learn English and gain employment, though she did work as a beautician in Eritrea. The children both attend school.

Because she is not yet gainfully employed the community support group is working with her social worker from the International Institute to expedite that process with other cooperating agencies in St. Louis and is seeking as many sources of income as she is entitled to receive. The goal of the International Institute is to promote independence of the refugees, so we always keep that in our minds. We are given 3 months to help a family achieve that independence. A tall order!

Feel free to contact us if you want to know more or if you would like to participate in the future with another family.

The Community Support team includes Laura Cooper, Joan Musbach, Annie Sampath, Pat Doyle-Grace, Kay Roush, and Marilyn and Dan Claggett

### **How to Donate to First Congregational Church**

You may leave a donation in the offering plate in the Narthex. Send a check made out to FCCWG at:

First Congregational Church  
10 W. Lockwood  
Webster Groves, MO 63119

visit <http://firstchurchwg.org/donate> to make an electronic contribution

or scan the QR code



## **What's Going on at First Church**

### **Sunday, March 27**

**9:45 AM** Nursery Care Available

**10:00 AM** Worship

**10:15 AM** Kids' Church

**11:05 AM** Coffee Fellowship

### **Monday, March 28**

**7:00 PM** Scout Troop 301B – Memorial Hall

### **Tuesday, March 29**

**6:30 PM** Confirmation Class – Inglis

### **Wednesday, March 30**

**9:30 AM** Yoga with Jeanene – Inglis Room

**6:00 PM** Bridge Club – Inglis Room

**7:00 PM** Lenten Enrichment: “Shiphrah & Puah” (go to [bit.ly/FCCWG-Lent](https://bit.ly/FCCWG-Lent))

### **Thursday, March 31**

**6:00 PM** Canterbury Bells Practice

**7:00 PM** Scout Troop 301G – Parlor

**7:30 PM** Chancel Choir Practice

### **Saturday, April 2**

**9:00 AM – 12:00 PM** First Saturday Collection for Nurses for Newborns

### **Sunday, April 3**

**9:00 AM** Brown Baggers

**9:45 AM** Nursery Care Available

**10:00 AM** All Ages Worship

**11:05 AM** Coffee Fellowship



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[www.FirstChurchWG.org](http://www.FirstChurchWG.org)

## Contact Information

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

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<http://bit.ly/FCCWG-YT>

