

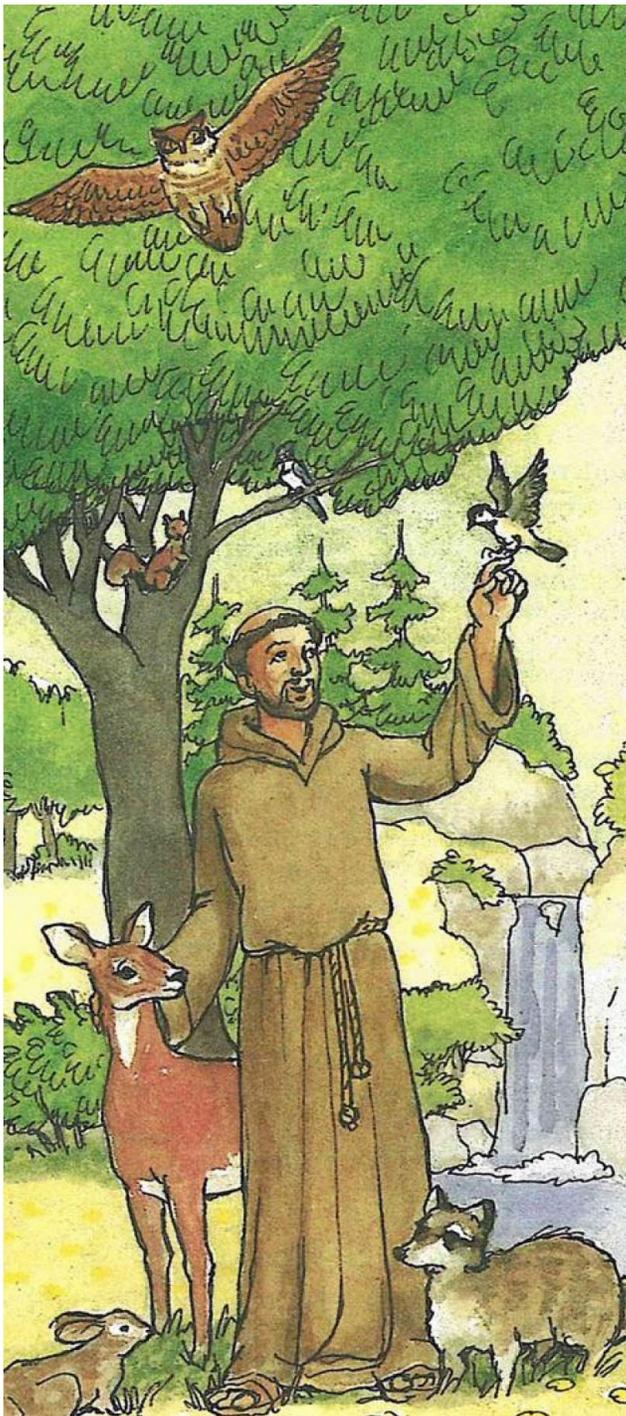
First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

OCTOBER 9, 2022

SUNDAY BEFORE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY
BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS



*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 the Congregation standing, in body or in spirit.*

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Andrea Welnick, *Liturgist*

RINGING OF THE BELL AND CHIMES

*GATHERING HYMN *All Things Bright and Beautiful* C. F. Alexander

Refrain

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colors,
and made their tiny wings. *Refrain*

The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden:
God made them every one. *Refrain*

The purple-headed mountains,
the river running by,
the sunset and the morning
that brightens up the sky. *Refrain*

God gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty,
who has made all things well. *Refrain*

*CIRCLES OF PRAISE (Responsive – Liturgist; **People**) based on Psalm 148

All dogs and cats, large and small: **Praise our God!**
All rabbits, hamsters, and guinea pigs: **Praise our God!**
All goldfish, guppies, and swimming creatures: **Praise our God!**
All robins, wrens, and singing birds: **Praise our God!**
All bats, squirrels, and raccoons: **Praise our God!**
All horses, cows, and sheep: **Praise our God!**
All lizards, snakes and creeping things: **Praise our God!**
Every animal in the sky, the sea, and the forest: **Praise our God!**

*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 OF APPROACH

**Thanksgiving and Confession*

For all the animals in the whole wide world,

We thank you, God!

For all the fun and friendship we have with animals,

We thank you, God!

Sovereign God, for all the times we have hurt or neglected animals,

We are sorry.

Sovereign God, for all the times we have used poisons that have killed animals,

We are sorry.

Sovereign God, for all the times we have destroyed the homes of animals in the forests, oceans, or fields,

We are sorry.

**Silence for Personal Confession*

**Words of Assurance*

For all our sins against the creatures of Earth, God forgives us and calls upon us to honor and protect all God's animals. May the animals of Earth be our companions in life and lead us to celebrate your place in the circle of life.

Amen! Amen! Shalom! Shalom!

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Halley Kim, *Pastoral Assistant*

THE WORD SHARED

From the Prophets

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

NRSV

Response.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

"Touch the Earth Lightly"

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

PRAYER HYMN

My Maker's World

M. D. Babcock, alt.

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears,
all nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world, I rest me in the thought
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas,
his hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Mother's world, the birds their carols raise,
the morning light, the flowers bright, declare their maker's praise.
This is my Mother's world. She shines in all that's fair,
in the rustling grass I hear her pass,
she speaks to me everywhere.

This is my Maker's world. O let me ne'er forget
that though the wrong seems oft so strong. God is the ruler yet.
This is my Maker's world: why should my heart be sad?
The heavens ring; let nature sing!
God reigns, let earth be glad.

from *Hymns of Light and Truth*, First Congregational Church, UCC, Houston, TX

Source: eco-justice.org/Wondrous.asp

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Share Our Joys and Concerns

Prayer of the Day

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts that we absorb from another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

RITUAL FOR BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Reading from a Sermon of Francis of Assisi

Blessing of Each Pet

Ending Song

A Place in the Choir

Bill Staines

Refrain:

All God's critters got a place in the choir
Some sing low, some sing higher
Some sing out loud on the telephone wire
And some just clap their hands, or paws
Or anything they got.

Listen to the bass, it's the one on the bottom
Where the bullfrog croaks and the hippopotamus
Moans and groans with a big to-do
The old cow just goes MOOOOO

The dog and the cat pick up the middle
While the honeybee hums and the cricket fiddles
The donkey brays and the pony neighs
And the old coyote howls. *Refrain.*

Listen to the top where the little birds sing
On the melody with the high note ringing
The hoot owl hollers over everything
And the jaybird disagrees

Singin' in the night-time, singin' in the day
Little duck quacks, and he's on his way
The possum ain't got much to say
And the porcupine talks to himself. *Refrain*

It's a simple song of livin' sung everywhere
By the ox and the fox and the grizzly bear
Grumpy alligator and the hawks above
Sly raccoon and the turtle dove. *Refrain, twice*

***SENDING OUT**

Christ calls you to be disciples, to serve others with love and compassion, and to serve Earth by caring for its creatures. Will you care for all creation?

We will care for all creation, including all God's beloved people and animals! We will celebrate the circle of life with them!

OPPORTUNITIES ARISING

***BENEDICTION**

May the Spirit of God, who is above all and in all and through all, fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth and the presence of the Holy Spirit within you. Go in peace! Serving God and loving all creatures!

We go in peace, serving Christ and loving our animal kin.

POSTLUDE

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Connecting Remotely to Worship

Sunday worship each week is streamed live on YouTube, starting at 10am (bit.ly/FCCWG-YT).

How to Donate to First Congregational Church

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

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



Visit <http://firstchurchwg.org/donate> to make an electronic contribution, or scan the accompanying QR code.

Wi-Fi Info

Recommended: fccwg1, fccwg2 or fccwg3
Password for all: firstchurch.

Finding Your Way at First Church

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

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, Jan & Katy VerHagen, Joan Whitford
- All people who are living with dementia, their families, and their caregivers
- People we love who are living with cancer – Margaret Gustafson
- Leo Gomez
- David & Becky Scott
- People with mental illnesses, and those who love and care for them
- Peace with justice

2022-2023 Concert Series – Kaiwei Zhi, piano TODAY at 3PM

Our 2022-2023 Concert Series season opens with a performance, today at 3:00pm, by internationally renowned pianist Kaiwei Zhi.

Kaiwei will perform a concert of works by Brahms, Chopin, Scriabin, Debussy, and Stravinsky in the sanctuary. Admission is free. Any donations received will support future presentations in our Afternoon Concert Series.

Congregational Meeting on the 2023 Budget Sunday, October 16 after worship

The Executive Ministry has recommended a budget for 2023. We will vote on that budget in a Congregational Meeting following worship, Sunday, October 16. All church members and contributors are encouraged to attend. Once the budget is passed, our Stewardship efforts will begin. Printed copies of the budget are available now from the Narthex table.

Klezmer Music in Worship on October 16!

On October 16 during the service, we will once again have special guests Klezundheit! (That's right, their name has an exclamation mark.) If you remember them from last year, you already know the great enhancement they brought to worship. ***If you didn't hear them live last year, don't miss the October 16 service! It is guaranteed to be joyful!***

"Living Buddha, Living Christ"

Sunday, October 16 – Inglis Room, 11:20 AM

Student Minister Gabriel Requadt will be the leader of our next Sunday Morning Book Discussion. He has chosen the classic work, Living Buddha, Living Christ, by Vietnamese Buddhist monk and peace activist Thích Nhất Hạnh (1926-2021). In this wonderfully insightful interreligious meditation, Thích Nhất Hạnh offers his perspectives on the similarities and resonance of Christianity and Buddhism. Along the way, he offers plenty of helpful advice about how to practice your religion so that it benefits not only you but everyone and everything around you. Practicers of these two religions, he argues, ought themselves to become living Buddhas and living Christs!

Please find a copy for yourself at your favorite bookstore or library. Then, on Sunday, October 16, Gabriel invites you to meet him in the Inglis Room at 11:20am, to be introduced to the book and the discussion series which will continue through November.

Wish Upon a Cloud: Funding Off-Budget Projects

Wish Upon a Cloud donations give us the opportunity to purchase items that are not in our budget. For more information, grab a form off the board in the Narthex, or visit the Wish Upon a Cloud page (<https://firstchurchwg.org/donate/wuac/>) on our website. **Example: We are seeking to purchase two 85" video monitors for the sanctuary, to enhance our worship experience.** These monitors will project relevant images and information during worship services and can be used for other events in the sanctuary. The cost for each is approximately \$1,400.00. You can donate a portion of the cost, or the full amount, according to your ability!

Habitat for Humanity Updates

Save the date for our First Church Habitat Work Day on Saturday, December 2. We will be working in the Lookaway neighborhood. Watch for further details.

What's Going On at First Church

Sunday, October 9

Pet Blessing – Outdoor Worship – Jubilee Garden

9:45 AM Nursery Care Available

10:00 AM Worship

10:125 AM Kids' Church

11:05 AM Coffee Fellowship

3:00 PM Concert Series opens: Kaiwei Zhi, piano

Monday, October 10

Indigenous Peoples Day

7:00 PM Scout Troops 301B & 301G - Dickens Room

7:00 PM Three Ministries - Hybrid

Tuesday, October 11

10:30 AM Staff Meeting

7:00 PM Summer of Conversations Reflections - Inglis Room

7:00 PM Practicing Our Faith - Parlor

Wednesday, October 12

9:30 AM Yoga - Inglis Room

6:00 PM Bridge Club - Inglis Room

Thursday, October 13

6:00–7:00 PM Canterbury Bells

7:30–8:30 PM Chancel Choir

Sunday, October 16

9:45 AM Nursery Care Available

10:00 AM Worship

10:15 AM Kids' Church

11:05 AM Congregational Budget Meeting - Sanctuary

11:15 AM Coffee Fellowship

11:20 AM Book Discussion: *Living Buddha, Living Christ* - Inglis Room



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Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

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