

Welcome!

First Congregational Church
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

JULY 30, 2023

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



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 blessings 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.*

PRELUDE *Prelude in C* J. S. Bach

WELCOME Doug Miller, *Liturgist*
*At this time, we invite you to complete an entry in the Friendship Booklet in your pew
and to silence the ringer on any cellular device you may have with you.*

TOLLING THE BELL

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive – Leader; **People**) based on Romans 8

Are any of us feeling weak, today? Where shall we find strength?

**God's Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know
how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit herself intercedes
with sighs too deep for words.**

We know that all things work together for good, for those who love God.

**If God is for us, who can be against us? Neither death, nor
life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things
to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything
else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the
love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

***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** *By Gracious Powers* Dietrich Bonhoeffer
No. 413, vv. 1,3,4 – *New Century Hymnal*

RITUAL OF APPROACH (Responsive)

Invitation (Responsive)

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.

**But if we confess our sin, God, who is faithful and just,
will forgive our sin and cleanse us from all
unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins.

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

**O Wisdom Divine, we remember how Solomon knew to ask you
for the wisdom to discern between what is in keeping with your
will, and what is not. We admit that we have sometimes
blundered our way through life—ignoring its nuances and
succumbing to its violence, chaos, and unexpected burdens. We**

also admit that in our struggles, we've made the wrong choice, hurt others, and clung to our shame. Forgive us, O God of Wisdom, and teach us your ways of repair. Amen.

Silence for Personal Confessions

Words of Assurance (Responsive)

If God is for us, then who can be against us? Even in all that we've done, and all that we've left undone, nothing can separate us from the love of God.

If we will let this sink in, all the way to our marrow, we will be lifted up to move in the world with accountability, love, tenderness, and forgiveness. Amen.

**Singing God's Glory* *Glory to God in the Highest* Peruvian melody

The congregation repeats each line of the following after the Minister:

Glory to God! Glory to God! Glory in the highest! To God be glory forever!

Next, the Minister leads the congregation in harmonizing the following:

Alleluia! Amen! Alleluia! Amen!

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

The children are invited forward for a time of enrichment.

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

THE WORD SHARED

From the Gospels

Matthew 13:31-32

Pew Bible, p. 889

Response.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

People: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

Rev. Denoon

"Tossing Around the Parable: The Mustard Seed"

OR

"Yes, in Your Back Yard!"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Lift Our Joys and Concerns to God

Prayer of the Day

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

Opportunities to Give and Gather

*Song of Praise

Doxology

Ken / Bourgeois

**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)

God of seed and stem, branch and leaf, we have known your protection and your comfort. So that others may know your provision and consolation, we offer gifts. Bless them to your purposes, so that they may be distributed as there is need; in Jesus' name. Amen.

*PARTING HYMN

Surely No One Can Be Safer
No. 487 – *New Century Hymnal*

Lina Sandell

*BENEDICTION

*PARTING WORDS

Liturgist: Our worship has ended.
People: Let our service begin.

POSTLUDE

Fughetta on "Praised Be Thou, O Jesus Christ"

J. S. Bach

During the Postlude, we encourage you to greet those around you, 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.

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### Wi-Fi Info

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

### Connecting Remotely to Worship

If you need to join us remotely, Sunday worship each week is streamed live on YouTube, starting at 10am ([bit.ly/FCCWG-YT](https://bit.ly/FCCWG-YT)).

### How to Donate to First Congregational Church

You may leave a donation in the offering plate in the Narthex, OR 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.



### 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 members who are homebound, in assisted living, or skilled care – Sharon Beal, Becky Scott, Margery Gable, Shirley Moore, Kitty Pearl, Jan Ver Hagen, 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 Scott
- People with mental illnesses, and those who love and care for them
- Peace with justice

### **We are Hiring!**

We are seeking a Coordinator of Faith Formation. We are particularly interested in applicants who have a strong background in religious education in a progressive theological setting, preferably including collaborative partnerships and team building.

Interested individuals should introduce themselves at [personnel@firstchurchwg.org](mailto:personnel@firstchurchwg.org) and detail why their candidacy should be of particular interest to our Christian Education Ministry. A résumé (Word or PDF) should be attached. All applications should be sent to: [personnel@firstchurchwg.org](mailto:personnel@firstchurchwg.org) with the subject “CFF Recruitment.” Telephone inquiries will not be accepted.

### **Kids Church Needs Your help!**

Ideally, there will be TWO volunteers every Sunday until that hire is accomplished: one to assist Noel, per usual, and one to assist Carina with the toddlers and preschoolers. The reality is that without two volunteers (until a Coordinator of Faith Formation is in place), Kids Church must function as a one-room schoolhouse (all ages together). Sometimes this works well; other times not so much. Let's give Noel and Carina the support they need during this transition. You can sign up at: <https://tinyurl.com/fccwg-kids-church> Thank you!

### **Pastoral Relations Committee, August 1**

The next meeting of the Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) will take place on Tuesday, August 1. Although everyone in our faith community is encouraged to express concerns or praise directly to the pastor or other staff member, sometimes this is not possible. The PRC seeks to maintain open communication between pastor, staff, and congregants. Although not a personnel or policy-making committee, their discussions are confidential and wide-ranging.

Current members include **Jared Cohen, Annie Sampath, Liu Lin Thio, Patrick Byrne, Jane Porchey, and Pat Doyle-Grace** (Look for the PRC gold hearts on their name badges!) Ex-officio members are Moderator Doug Barton and Pastor David Denoon.

### **Habitat Workday**

We have a work date! On Saturday August 26th, we will combine forces with future homeowners and a group from Emmanuel UCC to work at the Lookaway Build site which is near the Chain of Rocks bridge. This is a full day (8:00 AM to 3:00PM) commitment, and I promise you will find it rewarding. Call Phil Shoulberg if you have questions. Sign up sheet is in the office.



**School Supply Drive for Webster Rock Hill Ministries**  
**August 12th from 9am-12pm**

We are pleased to partner with Webster Rock Hill Ministries (WRHM), for providing school supplies and backpacks for their **Back to School Backpack Program**.

Every year, WRHM distributes backpacks to students in need of school supplies. These backpacks are filled with grade-level appropriate materials, including items like:

- **Notebooks**
- **Paper**
- **Pencils**
- **Pens**
- **Crayons**
- **Three-ring Binders**
- **Erasers**
- **Note Cards**
- **Folders**

This will be a drive-thru style event in our east parking lot.

*If you are unable to make it on August 12,  
there will be a box in the narthex for school supplies and backpacks.*

**Volunteers are needed for this event ,too!**

Please go to <https://bit.ly/FCCWG-Back2School> to sign up!

**Peace & Justice Team meets, 4th Mondays**

All members and friends of First Church are encouraged to attend our monthly meetings of the Peace & Justice Team. We consider the wide variety of social and environmental justice issues that are before us, every day. We also are the organizers of our First Saturday collections. If you have an issue that you are especially concerned about, and want to discuss how the church might address it, or if you would just like to connect with others who have a heart like yours, please consider attending.

*P&J's latest projects include:*

collecting signatures for the Minimum Wage/Earned Sick Leave Ballot Initiative

preparing/recruiting for First Saturday collection, August 12

**school supplies** for Webster Rock Hill Ministries

preparing/recruiting for CROP Walk to End Hunger, October 1

**Aid for First Congregational Church of Spencer, Massachusetts**

Roger Barnes is collecting donations for the historic First Congregational Church of Spencer, Massachusetts. The church burned in a horrific fire on June 2nd.

The church was formed in 1744 with the signing of their Covenant by eight members. In 1772, a larger church replaced the original building. This larger church burned on January 1, 1862, and a new structure was built and dedicated in 1863. Many changes and improvements had been made over the years. After 160 years of serving the town, it was this church building that was destroyed by the fire on June 2. The Rev. Dr. Bruce MacLeod is the interim pastor for both this church and their neighbor, the First Congregational Church of Leicester. For now, the members of the Spencer church are worshipping at the Leicester church.

It is important to offer our hand in support of churches that need help, especially those that share our heritage. (On a personal level, Roger reports that he has some Barnes ancestors

buried in the Spencer churchyard.) Roger says, “It would be awesome to show our love to this church in need. Thanks for helping.”

Please direct your donation to aid the Spencer church, either

- with a check payable to *FCCWG*, including “*Spencer church*” on the memo line, or
- by taking advantage of the **Special Projects Fund** found on the dropdown list, on the Donate page of our website ([firstchurchwg.org/donate](http://firstchurchwg.org/donate)); be sure to include *Spencer church* in the Note there.

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

#### **Sunday, July 30**

**9:45AM** Nursery Care

**10:00AM** Worship

**10:15AM** Kids Church

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

**11:20AM** Music Seminar with Dr. Burke

#### **Tuesday, August 1**

**1:00PM** Communications Team – Church Office

**7:00PM** Pastoral Relations Committee

#### **Wednesday, August 2**

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

**10:30AM** Staff Meeting – Church Office

**6:00PM** Bridge Club – Inglis Room

#### **Sunday, August 6**

***Sacrament of Christ's Table***

**9:00AM** Brown Baggers

**9:45AM** Nursery Care

**10:00AM** Worship (All Ages)

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship



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

## Contact Information

Moderator – Doug Barton  
[iyell4@aol.com](mailto:iyell4@aol.com)

Pastor – Rev. David A. Denoon  
[DDenoon@FirstChurchWG.org](mailto:DDenoon@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  
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Student Minister – Gabriel Requadt  
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Custodian – Mark Metcalf

Weekend & Events Custodian –  
Kayla Skiles

Assistant Custodian – Gus McLean

Director of Ministry of Imagination, Creativity  
and the Arts (MICA) – Rev. Cliff Aerie  
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Chaplain, Stillpoint Campus Ministry  
Webster University – Rev. Dr. Laurel Hayes  
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*Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.*

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