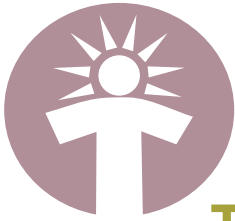


Welcome!

First Congregational Church
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

AUGUST 20, 2023

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
BACKPACK BLESSINGS



Parables *of the* Kingdom

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 *Jesus, Priceless Treasure* Johann Gottfried Walther

WELCOME Sharon Love, *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.*

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

TOLLING OF THE BELL

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive – Liturgist; **People**) based on Psalm 105

Give thanks to our God. Call upon God's name.

Let God's deeds be spoken among the people.

Sing to God, sing praises!

Tell of God's wonders everywhere.

This is our Creator and Redeemer, mindful forever of the covenant spoken to our fathers,

the promise sworn to our mothers,
confirmed as a statute among our parents and us,

an everlasting comfort to all people:

"I shall be your God,

and you shall be my people."

Praise God!

Yes, praise God!

***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** *Jesus, Priceless Treasure* Franck / Bach
No. 480 – New Century Hymnal

RITUAL OF APPROACH

Invitation

1 John 1:8-9

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

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

Prayer of Confession Together (Unison)

You who have spoken your Word so that it became flesh and dwells among us, we confess that we have often mistaken earthly treasures for the treasure you have imparted in wisdom and truth. We have

allowed our possessions to control our lives and actions. We have spent so much time and energy in acquiring and keeping the things of this world. And all you ever ask is that we live faithfully from day to day. Forgive us for overlooking your abiding treasure, and let us share your wealth. Amen.

Silence for Personal Confessions

Assurance of Pardon

Our Redeemer and Sustainer has spoken and assured us that divine love is always with us, blessing and directing us anew, always.

In Jesus Christ we have come to know how forgiveness truly works, and we shall practice it ourselves – cherishing God’s Word above all. 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

Backpack Blessings

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 13:44-46, 51-52

Pew Bible, p. 891

Response.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

*Tossing Around the Parables:
“Our Pearls”*

Rev. Denoon

INTERLUDE

What a Wonderful World

Weiss / Thiele

Performed by Mark Cereghino and Leon Burke

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Share Our Joys and Concerns

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 OFFER OF OURSELVES

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*

Divine Treasure, receive and bless our gifts. Let them be combined with others' so that all the world may come to know the comfort and security we have found in you. Amen.

PARTING HYMN

Sing Them Over Again to Me
No. 319 – *New Century Hymnal*

Philip P. Bliss

BENEDICTION

PARTING WORDS

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

POSTLUDE

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

Johann
Christoph 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](http://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

### **“First Saturday” School Supplies Overflowed!**

The most recent “First Saturday” collection event was for Webster Rock Hill Ministries’ school supplies. It was held on Saturday, August 12. Our team of volunteers received delivery after delivery of donated items - three and a half carloads worth!

Our thanks go out to the wider community and our members and friends - donors and volunteers both - who made this collection so successful.

Go to [www.firstchurchwg.org](http://www.firstchurchwg.org), to find out about upcoming “First Saturday” Collections!

### **We are Hiring!**

Our growingly diverse, progressive Christian community is 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.

If you know someone who would be particularly well-suited to this job in our community, please forward this information to them!!

Interested individuals should introduce themselves via **email** 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."

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

Kids’ Church is developing a rotation of volunteers, to assist Noel Burke, our Christian Education Support Staff, and Nursery Attendant Corina Dickie. Ideally, there are TWO volunteers every Sunday, to conduct Kids’ Church effectively (at least until a Coordinator of Faith Formation is in place). You can sign up at: <https://tinyurl.com/fccwg-kids-church> Thanks for considering giving of your time and skills, to benefit our children!

### **Garden Party at Rosemary Hensley’s House – Saturday, August 26**

There is still time to sign up for this popular Summer Garden Party. Cost \$35 per person; **register on the donate page of the church web site at: <http://firstchurchwg.org/donate>. Select "Give to Benevolence – Giving" from the dropdown box.** You may also pay by check with *Garden Party* in the memo line.

### **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 you are guaranteed to find it rewarding. Call Phil Shoulberg if you have questions. Sign up sheet is in the office.

### **Volunteers Needed for Annual Vehicle Fair – September 30**

Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, is our annual Vehicle Fair from 9 until 12. Please join us in welcoming the community for this perpetually fun event! If you would like to volunteer to help with the event, please see Chris von Weise during coffee hour or email her at [chrisvonyz@gmail.com](mailto:chrisvonyz@gmail.com)

### **Music Seminar with Dr. Burke – August 27**

After worship, next Sunday, grab a snack in Memorial Hall, and then come back to the sanctuary to meet with our Music Director, Dr. Leon Burke, who will be available to answer your music questions – anything that's on your mind, whether it has to do with church or secular music, instrumental or vocal. This is your monthly chance to tap his brain.

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

#### **Sunday, August 20**

**9:45AM** Nursery Care

**10:00AM** Worship

**10:15AM** Kids Church

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

**11:20AM** "Tossing Around the Parables" Discussion

#### **Monday, August 21**

**7:00PM** Executive Ministry (Zoom)

#### **Wednesday, August 23**

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

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

**6:00PM** Bridge Club – Inglis Room

#### **Sunday, August 27**

**9:45AM** Nursery Care

**10:00AM** Worship

**10:15AM** Kids Church

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

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



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## Contact Information

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Director of Music & Organist – Dr. Leon Burke  
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Facilities Manager – Chip Isringhaus  
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Custodian – Mark Metcalf

Weekend & Events Custodians –  
Kayla Skiles & Onyeka Igboanuzue

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

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

