

# Welcome!

First Congregational Church  
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



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

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023  
JUST PEACE SUNDAY



**FORGIVE US** OUR SINS,  
AS WE **FORGIVE** THOSE  
WHO **SIN** AGAINST US.

*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** *Serenade to a Cuckoo* Rhasaan Roland Kirk

**WELCOME** Nancy Rudolph, *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**

**INTROIT** *Hasan's Dream* Benny Golson  
Lyrics by Cliff Aerie

**\*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** *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore* Henry van Dyke  
No. 4 – *New Century Hymnal*

**RITUAL OF APPROACH**

*We Share Our Stories Before God*

*Prayer of Confession (Responsive)*

**Ever-present God, when we consider our stories before you, we can find ourselves confused about your nature. We've been told you are all-powerful, all-knowing, all-good. Often, we don't really relate to that. We don't need you to be all-powerful; we need you right here, alongside us. For those times when we may have thought that you should have changed things for us, or that you showed some special favor toward us over others, please forgive us. Then, draw us ever closer with you. For it's by that grace that we most truly live. Amen.**

*Silence for Personal Confessions*

*Words of Assurance*

**\*Singing God's Glory** *Glory to God* 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. Cliff Aerie, *Director*  
*Ministry of Imagination, Creativity, and the Arts*

**THE WORD SHARED**

*From the Law*

Genesis 50:15-21

Pew Bible, p. 46

*From the Gospels*

Matthew 18:21-25

p. 895

*Response.*

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**MESSAGE OF THE DAY**

*"Limitlessness"*

Rev. Denoon

**INTERLUDE**

*Search for Peace*

McCoy Tyner  
Lyrics by Cliff Aerie

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*We Lift Our Joys and Concerns*

*Prayer of the Day*

*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.**

**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*

**God most holy, you have met us in our breaking and in our healing. Your loving kindness, forgiveness, and grace affirm for us who and how we can be. As we live your dream toward a world made whole, bless our gifts to your purposes in Christ's name. Amen.**

**\*PARTING HYMN**

*Lead Us from Death to Life*  
Based on the International Peace Prayer  
No. 581 – *New Century Hymnal*

Marty Haugen

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*COMMISSION**

Liturgist: Our worship has ended.

**All: Let our service begin.**

**POSTLUDE**

*Just a Closer Walk with Thee*

Traditional

*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.*

**Our thanks to the members of the Oikos Jazz Ensemble** for their participation in the leadership of worship today. They are **Kim Fuller-Barnes**, vocals; **Carolbeth True**, piano; **Glen Smith**, bass; **Kyle Honeycutt**, percussion; and Rev. **Cliff Aerie**, saxophone.

The Oikos Jazz Ensemble is an outreach of our Ministry of Imagination, Creativity, and the Arts (MICA). MICA takes part in Sunday morning jazz worship, six times a year, and conducts two seasonal programs – Jazz Noel and Good Friday Blues – in addition to other occasional performances. If you would like to support MICA with a gift separate from your contribution to the church, please do so with

- a check made payable to the church with “MICA” written in the memo line, or
- an electronic contribution on the Donate page of our website (find “MICA” in the pull-down menu).

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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

### **Vanessa Kersting in Concert TODAY at 3:00pm**

Pop Christian recording artist Vanessa Kersting will perform a live concert in our sanctuary on Sunday, September 17, at 3:00pm. Vanessa is a singer-songwriter from Australia, now living in the U.S. where she is building on her successful hit career, when she lived Down Under.

You can give Vanessa's music a listen in a number of ways –

- Her website: <http://vanessakersting.com/>
- YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/VanessaKersting>)
- Spotify (<https://open.spotify.com/track/6N1ZZUYCdLVisrFsP2IQGY>)

You will find her music uplifting and affirming and spirit-centered.

Tell your friends - especially your young friends - that a new voice is here, singing music they'll want to listen to and sing along with! Admission is free (suggested donation \$5). Register at <https://firstchurchwg.org/the-arts/vanessa-kersting-in-concert/> to attend.

### **Lady Elect Kicks Off New Program Year with a Potluck**

Lady elect will hold its first meeting of the new program year on Tuesday, September 26. This is always a potluck. Happy hour starts at 6 PM with potluck at 6:30. Monthly programs and dates will be discussed and planned. All the women of the church are invited! Please RSVP to Faye Dyer

### **Annual Vehicle Fair, September 30 – Attend and/or Volunteer!**

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)

### **"Not for Children Only" Volunteers**

Youth and adult members and friends of the church are encouraged to contact the Pastor about leading an upcoming "Not for Children Only" message time in worship.

If you have a favorite story to read/share with our young people, or if you are particularly skilled at this kind of interaction, it would be great to add your voice to our set of NFCO message-givers!

### **Webster Rock Hill Ministries – Donation Update**

First Church began donating jelly and bread in the beginning of June to supplement the WRHM peanut butter distribution. That has become so popular that WRHM wants the jelly and bread donations to continue.

Additionally, the Ministries is now distributing fresh fruit and veggies once a month, including carrots, cucumbers, and lettuces. To fully enjoy these, the families will need salad dressing. (Ranch is the most popular dressing with kids.)

You can bring your donations of jelly, bread, and ranch dressing to the church and place them in the "Sharing Our Bounty" crates in the narthex. Thank you for your generosity!

### **UCC HABITAT NEWS**

**Get Ready to Bid on our UCC Habitat Auction**  
At [biddingowl.com/ucchabitat](https://biddingowl.com/ucchabitat)

Once there, click on the upper right corner to register so you can bid and bid again!!!  
More than 50 items are waiting for your bid September 3 - October 15

Help build affordable housing as we continue to work together with Habitat for Humanity STL.  
Here are just a few items you can bid on:

- hand crocheted: afghan, animals
- Barbie handmade quilts
- restaurant gift certificates
- freshly baked foods
- a lesson to make Macarons
- a birthday party workday at Habitat
- a family portrait by a great photographer
- haircuts, massages, waxing
- hockey tickets
- tennis lessons
- and so much more!

### **CROP Walk to End Hunger** **Sunday, October 1**

The 2023 CROP Walk is on Sunday, October 1, stepping off from Eden Seminary at 5 PM. In the past, there have been 1- & 3-mile loops. Walkers of all ages are welcome, as are strollers and wagons.

Use the following link to go to our church's sign-up page. <https://tinyurl.com/2023-crop-walk>  
Seventy-five percent (75%) of the money raised will go to the relief and development work of Church World Service; 25% will go to local organizations, including Webster-Rock Hill Ministries.

Donations can be made through FCCWG's CROP Walk page at

<https://tinyurl.com/2023-crop-walk>

or by placing a check in the offering plate (made out to the church, and with "CWS/CROP" in the memo line).

### **September Meal-a-Month**

Beef Stew • Canned Carrots (low or no salt)  
Canned Fruit in own juices • Cornbread Mix (no eggs)  
Powdered Milk • Shelf Stable Milk • Soy Milk  
Toothbrushes • Toothpaste • Dental Floss

## September Birthdays

|                        |    |                |    |
|------------------------|----|----------------|----|
| Laura Cooper           | 3  | Elaine Coe     | 22 |
| Bob Moody              | 4  | Jane Porchey   | 24 |
| Bob Borutta            | 5  | Phil Roush     | 25 |
| Doug Miller            | 6  | BJ Kaul        | 25 |
| Jeff McCoy             | 7  | Kedra Tolson   | 26 |
| Nancy Rudolph          | 13 | Janice Aerie   | 28 |
| Megan Miller (Christy) | 13 | Lynn Hoganson  | 28 |
| Chip Isringhaus        | 14 | Jennifer Gomez | 28 |
| Mark Cereghino         | 20 | Beatrice Byrne | 29 |
| Debra Tolstoi          | 20 |                |    |

## What's Going on at First Church

### Sunday, September 17

**9:45AM** Nursery Care (with Oikos Jazz Ensemble)

**10:00AM** Worship

**10:15AM** Kids' Church

**3:00PM Concert:** Vanessa Kersting, Contemporary Christian Recording Artist

### Monday, September 18

**7:00PM** Scout Troops 301G and 301B

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

### Tuesday, September 19

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

### Wednesday, September 20

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

**6:00PM** Bridge Club – Inglis Room

### Thursday, September 21

**6:00PM** Canterbury Bells – Sanctuary

**7:30PM** Chancel Choir – Sanctuary

# Covenant News

September 14–20, 2023

## MODERATOR'S CORNER

This past Monday, I took the day off. Life has been busy, and I needed a moment to breathe. After driving Jack to his preschool, I drove south to St. Francois State Park, my favorite place to fish.

The park's entrance twists down a long and steep, heavily wooded slope before reaching the valley floor and the Big River. The canopy arching over the river coupled with cool, spring-fed waters can make a sweltering summer day feel perfectly pleasant. Despite its name, the Big River is not big or wide. Where the waters run briskly over shallow, rocky riverbeds, the current undercuts the tree roots on the bank's edge. These undercuts are the perfect ambush point for smallmouth bass. Armed with a long, flexible fishing rod and light tackle, the right lure can be skipped with precision like a rock across the river to an undercut.

When you wade, you really get to know the river. You move slowly, stalking as you go, feeling the bottom changing from hard and rocky to sandy and soft. Warm, deep, slow-moving waters can suddenly turn chilly when you discover one of the river's many springs. A wade fisherman finds fishing spots others can't reach from the shore.

Twenty-five years ago, I could wade down river within 100 yards of the access point and catch two dozen fish in a couple hours. But the river changes from visit to visit, season to season, and year to year. Flood waters have washed sediment down river, sometimes overpowering charming bends into dull, sandy straightaways. Over time I have begun wading further and further downstream to find fish. My old fishing spots are gone. This past Monday, I only caught three fish.

*"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."* (New International Version, Isaiah 43:18-19)

Disappointment in a slow fishing day kept me from realizing God's amazing gift. For the first time in my long history with the river, the changes to its shape make it possible to wade *upriver*. The Big River stretches for three miles through St. Francois State Park, and I am excited to see what God has created.

Like a river, our church also changes over time. Thanks to the dedicated efforts and generosity of members and staff, we now broadcast services online, share our mission and promote events on an electronic signboard, and create new revenue streams through 10 West Lockwood. We continue with joy to welcome new families into our growing faith community. We have so much to be thankful for.

Be on the lookout for the new opportunities that God blesses us with!

Doug Barton, Moderator



Artist: Alexis

Age: 15

Congregation: Trinity United Church of Christ, St. Louis MO



# Behold!

*"God saw everything God made  
and behold, it was very good."* Genesis 1:31

## Mayflower United Church of Christ practices what it preaches.

It called for divestment from fossil fuels, and Mayflower Foundation became one of the first church organizations to invest in the Beyond Fossil Fuels fund of United Church Funds. It authored a resolution for General Synod that champions electrification to transition from fossil fuels to combat climate change, and it has committed itself to becoming a carbon neutral church by 2030. You can see the congregation's commitment to caring for God's creation in its 204 solar panels, its pollinator garden, its protests against fossil fuel pipelines, and its regard for Earth Sunday as a high holy day like Easter and Christmas. Get inspired by watching this video about Mayflower's commitments to creation justice: <https://bit.ly/MayflowerInspiration>



# Prayer

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Dear God,

Each day we behold the beauty and goodness of all that you have created.

Each day we breathe in your air, drink your water, and enjoy your fields of harvest.

We rejoice and give thanks for the gifts of your creation!  
Amen.

# Litany of Wonder

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**Leader:** Let us behold the wonders of creation. Let us marvel at the infinite artistry of nature.

**People:** Let our senses take it all in: each tree, each flower, each blade of grass.

**Leader:** All around us are gifts that have been bestowed upon us by God.

**People:** Today, we renew our spirits and fill our hearts with gratitude

Behold!

**With your generous support, The United Church of Christ, thorough the **Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering**, helps its members live out their beliefs via acts of service.**

**Please donate today!**

**For more resources and to share and learn best practices for environmental justice, visit**

**[ucc.org/nin](http://ucc.org/nin)**

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Two-thirds of your donations to NIN support advocacy, programming, and grants. One-third of your generous gifts directly support CAIM.

**[www.ucc.org/nin](http://www.ucc.org/nin). Thank You!**





10 West Lockwood Avenue  
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314-962-0475  
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## Contact Information

Moderator – Doug Barton  
iyell4@aol.com

Pastor – Rev. David A. Denoon  
DDenoon@FirstChurchWG.org

Office Administrator – Debbie Tolstoi  
Admin@FirstChurchWG.org

Director of Music & Organist – Dr. Leon Burke  
Leon.Burke@FirstChurchWG.org

Facilities Manager – Chip Isringhaus  
cti1234@FirstChurchWG.org

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  
cliff.aerie@gmail.com

Chaplain, Stillpoint Campus Ministry  
Webster University – Rev. Dr. Laurel Hayes  
laurel.hayes@sbcglobal.net

Director, Center for Counseling & Healing  
Rev. Linda E. Smith, BCRN, HTCP/I  
lesrhs@sbcglobal.net

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

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