

Welcome!

First Congregational Church
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

**NOVEMBER 12, 2023
CONSECRATION SUNDAY**



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.*

PRELUDE

Up the Downspout
Oikos Ensemble

Cliff Aerie

WELCOME

Roger Barnes, *Liturgist*

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

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

TOLLING THE BELL

INTROIT

Equinox
Oikos Ensemble

Coltrane / Aerie

A new day. A new way.
Surrounds you. Astounds you.
Just take my hand and offer your blessings, true.
It's easy. So easy.
The answer will surprise you.
Just share your love and offer your blessings, true.
So, stand up. Be counted.
This moment is your time,
To share your love and offer your blessings, true.

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive – Liturgist; **People**)

from Psalm 78

Give ear, my people, to my teaching; incline your ear to the utterances of my mouth –

things we have heard and known, and which our mothers and fathers have told us.

We will not hide them from their daughters and sons; we will recount them to generations to come.

**Let us tell the praiseworthy deeds of the One who speaks life,
of God's might and wonderful works.**

*GATHERING HYMN

Awake, Awake
No. 89 – *New Century Hymnal*

G. A. Studdert-Kennedy, alt.

Awake, awake to love and work!
The lark is in the sky;
the fields are wet with diamond dew;
The worlds awake to cry
their praises to the Fount of Life;
Christ Jesus passes by.
Come, let your voice be one with theirs,

shout with their shout of praise;
See how the giant sun soars up,
God's gift for all your days!
So let the love of Jesus come
and set your soul ablaze,

To give and give, and give again,
as God's own grace is free;
To spend yourself nor count the cost;
To serve most gloriously
the God who gave all worlds that are,
and all that are to be.

RITUAL OF APPROACH

Invitation to Confession (Responsive)

Jesus, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof.

But only say the word and your servant will be healed.

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Eternal One, Silence from whom our words come; Questioner from whom our questions arise; Lover of whom all human love is but a hint; Disturber in whom alone we find our rest; Mystery in whose depths we find healing and ourselves: We admit that we have felt troubled by silence, faithless in questioning, inadequate in loving; unable to rest; and wounded with mystery. Enfold us now in your presence; restore to us your peace; renew us through your power; and ground us in your grace. Amen.

Silence for Personal Confessions

Words of Assurance

based on Romans 5:10-11

We are reconciled to God by Christ's death, and saved by his life.

**More than that, we can boast in God through our Savior
because of the reconciliation we now know.**

**Singing God's Glory*

Glory to God in the Highest

Tune: 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

Johari Hunt, *Coordinator of Faith Formation*

THE WORD SHARED

From the Gospels

Matthew 25:1-12

Pew Bible, p. 903

Response

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

People: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

"Wedding Delayed"

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

MUSIC MEDITATION

Singing All My Blues Away
Oikos Ensemble

Bakrignes / Aerie

Singing all my blues away. Singing in my own sweet way.
Time is a wastin', so I've got to start: Singing all my blues away.

Dancing in the darkest night. Dancing 'til I get it right.
Stars keep on shinin', so I've got to start: Dancing in the darkest night.

Singing, dancing, standing tall; hear what I'm saying right now!
Caring, sharing, daring; so, I've just got to shout.

Singing all my blues away. Singing in my own sweet way.
Time is a wastin', so I've got to start: Singing all my blues away.

Living more than day to day. Living like I've found the way.
Life is a gamble, but I've got to play; Living more than day to day.

Praying 'til I reach the light. Praying 'cause I know it's right.
Love is erasing all my doubts and fears: Praying 'til I reach the light.

Singing, dancing, standing tall; hear what I'm saying right now!
Caring, sharing, daring; so I've just got to shout.

Singing all my blues away. Singing in my own sweet way.
Time is a wastin', so I've got to start: Singing all my blues away.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Share Our Joys and Concerns

Prayer of the Day

Prayer of Our Savior (Unison)

**Our Father, who art in heaven: hallowed be thy name; thy kin-dom
come; they 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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kin-dom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen.**

WE SHARE OF OURSELVES

Opportunities for Giving and Gathering

AFFIRMING OUR STEWARDSHIP

Introduction

John Paci

Stewardship Moment

Sharon Love

Consecrating Our Commitments

Stewardship Committee

Stewardship Hymn

Amazing Grace

John Newton, alt. Aerie

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound that saved and set me free.
I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come.
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home.

**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.

***BENEDICTION**

***PARTING WORDS**

Liturgist: Our worship has ended.

People: Let our service begin.

POSTLUDE

The Creator Has a Master Plan

Leon Thomas

Oikos Ensemble

There was a time, when peace was on the earth,
And joy and happiness did reign and each one knew their worth.
In my heart how I yearn for that spirit's return. And I cry, as time flies.

There is a place where love forever shines
And rainbows are the shadows of a presence so divine
And the glow of that love lights the heavens above
And it's free, can't you see, come with me.

The Creator has a master plan—peace and happiness throughout the land
The Creator has a master plan—for every woman and every man
The Creator has a master plan—peace and happiness throughout the land
The Creator has a master plan—to live as neighbors, hand in hand
The Creator makes but one demand—to live as neighbors, hand in hand
The Creator makes but one demand—to live as neighbors, hand in hand
The power of love, the power of love...

Our thanks to the Oikos Ensemble for their leadership in our worship service, today. They are Kim Fuller-Barnes, vocals; Carolbeth True, piano; Ric Vice, bass; David True, percussion; and Cliff Aerie, sax.

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Jazz Noel Is Seeking Angels

The Ministry of Imagination, Creativity, and the Arts (MICA) of which the Oikos Jazz Ensemble is an important part – again invites First Church members and friends to provide underwriting for the annual presentation of Jazz Noel. The production is offered free to the public, and any offerings given at the performance are donated to a local charity. However, this is a professional music production, and the performers are each paid for their work. This year, Jazz Noel will be offered on Sunday, December 17, at 3:00 PM in the Sanctuary. Please consider providing your own financial support! Offerings may be presented in the form of a check payable to the church with "Jazz Noel" printed in the memo line. You can also give on our website at: firstchurchwg.org/donate and select "Give to MICA" from the drop down menu.

Thank you for your generous support of Jazz Noel!

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).

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.

Covenant News Articles, Information, Images and Reports

If you would like something included in one of the issues for email and for the bulletin, please *email it to Debbie by the 20th of the month prior to the beginning of the next month.*

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 (also works for 2024 pledges!).



Join us after worship for the Old Webster Annual Holiday Open House

TODAY 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Our contribution to the event will begin at 11:00am, as a North Pole employee uses our east parking lot for the “Big Guy’s” Holiday Train, offering rides to the little ones!

Information Needed to Keep Children Safe and Healthy

For parents who have children attending kid’s church please follow this link, <https://tinyurl.com/fccwg-kids> to fill out this dietary and allergy form for each child attending Kids’ Church. Thank you!

Peace Place Community Canvass

Emmanuel Episcopal Church

November 19 at 12:00 noon

On November 19 at 12 noon, volunteers from all over Webster Groves will meet for lunch (food truck onsite) and a training at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 9 S. Bompert Ave. The trained volunteers will then canvass neighborhoods to gain support for Peace Place. Peace Place is the proposed senior living development for low-income people which Peace UCC and the Housing Authority of St. Louis County are partnering to create at 204 E. Lockwood Ave..

Jan Barnes Is Collecting Blankets

Some of you have already contributed blankets to Jan Barnes’ blanket giveaway. Jan is collecting blankets to distribute to people on the street, over the next few weeks. If you would like to take part in this effort, please see Jan.

Pecans on the Way!

(We do not have a specific delivery date, but we do know UPS picked them up in Georgia on November 7 for delivery.)

Four cases of the 16 oz bags of fresh Mammoth Pecans that everyone loves are on the way here from Georgia! The price of the bags will be the same as last year, at \$14 per bag. They will hopefully be delivered sometime in the next week. The profits from the pecan sales will be used to increase the Minister's Discretionary Fund. This will allow Pastor Dave to help our members and our neighbors in need. If you are interested in purchasing pecans, please send an email to Debbie at the office, to let her know how many bags you would like. They will also be available on some Sunday mornings.

Maybe This Is the Year for You to Experience Yankee Swap?

Mike Lenard has again invited us to his home

The party is from 1:00 - 5:00 PM, on December 3rd, with a potluck meal, and then we will do our crazy gift exchange. And we will finish before dark.

Here Is the Drill:

- Bring a handmade/homemade gift (unwrapped)-one per person
- Bring a side dish, salad, or dessert for the table
- Sign up in the office for what you will bring for the table
- Pick up a map in the office.
- Call Garie Perry if you have questions. 314-698-2614
- Bring a donation for Webster Rock Hill Ministries

Mike's Address is: 1467 Heritage Valley Drive, High Ridge

What's Happening at First Church

Sunday, November 12

Consecration Sunday

In-Gathering of Pledges for 2024

9:45AM Nursery Care

10:00AM Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:05AM Coffee Fellowship - Memorial Hall
(Pie!)

11:00AM - 4:00PM Santa's Helper Train -
East Lot

11:20AM Volunteers for Peace Place Canvass
- Parlor

Monday, November 13

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

7:00PM Three Ministries - Hybrid

Tuesday, November 14

10:30AM Staff Meeting

Wednesday, November 15

9:30AM Yoga with Jeanene

6:00PM Bridge Club - Inglis Room

Thursday, November 16

6:00AM Canterbury Bells - Sanctuary

7:30AM Chancel Choir - Music Room

Sunday, November 19

Thanksgiving Sunday

Trans Day of Remembrance (observed)

9:45AM Nursery Care

10:00AM Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:05AM Coffee Fellowship - Memorial Hall

11:20AM Adult Education: Meet Johari Hunt

12:00PM Webster Churches Canvass for
Peace Place (Emmanuel Episcopal)



Covenant News

FROM THE PASTOR *Genuine Thanksgiving*

Praise is due to you, O God, in your sanctuary:
and to you shall vows be performed, O you who answer prayer!
(Psalm 65:1-2)

Thanksgiving is nearly here. Along the way, we're acknowledging our thankfulness before God by consecrating our commitments of generosity for 2024. Every year, I hold my breath a little, concerned about what our collective gifts will be able to do. Some of this is a hesitancy, worried for what we maybe won't be able to do. Will we have to part with programming? with staff? Will we incur upon the Endowment's value to such an extent that we cripple future generations' hopes and efforts?

This is no easy era for churches. The public in general seems to have lost their faith in us – not so much their faith in God, maybe, but lost their faith in the institutions that affirm and celebrate God. Some say we're not relevant enough, some that we're inauthentic.

I have been working hard – sometimes on behalf of the church, sometimes just to satisfy my conscience – to try to bridge both the gaps of relevancy and authenticity perceived by those who are watching us. You may have seen me busy in public meetings, in the newspaper, or on TV.

I know that you strive to lead with your own faith. We all have important work to do, and the faithfulness that we are able to demonstrate among ourselves and in our wider community will not only provide comfort to our siblings at First Church but might even go toward healing the brokenness in our world.

This Thanksgiving time, as we commit together for a new year with a genuine sense of who we are and why we are and what is possible, I pray that our deeds may inspire a world grown suspicious and cautious about us.

Peace.



First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ

Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

OUR VISION is to be a dynamic Christian community expressing God's love, hope, joy, and peace for all people.



FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR November Report

Hello all!

(Before I begin, please permit me to promote another of my musical enterprises: Those of you who came here, last season, to a piano concert of women composers given by Christina Harnisch will be interested in her performance of the Clara Schumann *Piano Concerto* with the **University City Symphony on November 19 at 3:00pm** (pre-concert talk with me at 2:15!) – St. Rita's Catholic Church near University City, off Page. This promises to be one of the highlights of my year with the orchestra. It includes two World Premiers – *String Variations Based on a Dream* and a *Concerto for Drum Set and Orchestra*! Also, a ballet/tone poem by an Afro-Panamanian composer which is a fantastic piece of music! Go to ucso.org/calendar for more.)

Friends, November and December will provide a veritable musical feast here at church! Your Music department is cooking up the feast now. Be on the lookout for our **Blue Christmas service** on Sunday morning, November 26, with **Martin Mills** featured singing *Blue Christmas* and *Are You Lonesome Tonight!*

As the weather shifts again and we hunker down for the holidays, put the **Xylem Wind Collective** on your calendar for **December 3 at 2:30pm** in the sanctuary which will feature a free, **family friendly**, short concert with narrator for *Hansel and Gretel* and *The Lonely Aardvark*.

Canterbury Bells and the Chancel Choir both are busy preparing for **Hanging of the Greens** on December 10, but this is going to be quite a season, so... ***Please consider joining us*** musically (either bells or voices). There are still 3 or 4 rehearsals before Hanging of the Greens! This is your chance to learn the music at a slower pace than we usually have. Contact me if you would like to participate in either ensemble, and even if you are interested in singing or playing only for the month of December: I always like it when the ensembles look like our congregation. It would be good to include some of our musical youngsters, too.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Leon Burke
(314) 566-1149



Deciding What to Give

While there are many ways to support the congregation, our annual campaign provides a chance to think in a particular and prayerful way about the choices we make with our money in support of the church.

Without your gifts, we would not be able to engage in the programs, projects, ministry, and worship experiences that define our community life.

Deciding how much of our income to donate to charitable organizations can be difficult. We encourage our community to think of giving as a percentage of annual income.

The average gift to charitable causes in our country is 2% of annual income (per household). It is hard to imagine what our world would look like without these generous gifts that do so much good. Fortunately, we are not being asked to consider what the world would be without these gifts! Instead, we are being asked to imagine what just 1% or more might make happen! How many more lives can be changed because you and

I have decided to grow in our own giving? Imagine more people being able to say, **“Because of you, our church changes lives”**.

We are each on a journey toward abundant generosity. What next step can you take in your generosity journey?

Every gift to our congregation helps strengthen who we are and what we can do together. Because of you, our church changes lives.

CONSIDER YOUR PLEDGE AS A PERCENT OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	63	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042
150,000	12,500	250	375	500	625	1250
200,000	16,667	333	500	667	833	1667

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity. Giving even 1% more of annual income to charity would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in our community.



Because of **YOU** our church changes lives.



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314-962-0475
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