

# Welcome!

First Congregational Church  
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



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

JANUARY 14, 2024

SUNDAY BEFORE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., HOLIDAY  
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

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*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** *Sandu* Clifford Brown

**WELCOME** Joan Musbach, *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.*

**TOLLING OF THE BELL**

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

**INTROIT** *Come Sunday* Duke Ellington  
(follow along at No. 602, *New Century Hymnal*)

**CALL TO WORSHIP** based on a prayer of Rabindranath Tagore†  
(Responsive – Liturgist; **People**)

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,  
**Where knowledge is free,**  
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments,  
**By narrow domestic walls,**  
Where words come out from the depth of truth,  
**Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection,**  
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way,  
**Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit,**  
Where the mind is led forward by thee,  
**Into ever-widening thought and action.**  
Into that heaven of freedom, my God, let my country awake.  
**And let us awaken now to the presence of God's Spirit among us.  
Amen.**

† Little known outside of his native India, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was a poet, musician, artist, and activist. Often referred to as “the Bard of Bengal,” in 1913 Tagore was the first non-European awarded a Nobel Prize in Literature. Today's Call to Worship includes a prayerful poem from his book, *Gitanjali (Song Offerings)*, London: MacMillan & Co., 1913.

**\*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.**

**\*GATHERING HYMN** *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* Thomas A. Dorsey  
No. 472 – *New Century Hymnal*

**\*RITUAL OF APPROACH**  
*\*Invitation*

*\*Prayer of Confession (Unison)*

**Sovereign God, you sent Jesus to be a Light to the nations. And you call all your people to light up the world. By your Spirit, we have been inspired to follow his example of service. Even so inspired, we have more often chosen paths of least resistance rather than the path illuminated by your Light. In reply you have offered the Word of mercy in Christ's invitation to come and follow. Cause us truly to show forth the light of your redemption, so that all around and among us may recognize that we bear a true word of change and hope; in Christ's name. Amen.**

*\*Silence for Personal Confession*

*\*Words of Assurance*

based on Psalm 139:17-18

How weighty are God's thoughts!

**How vast, the entire sum of them!**

Try to count them, and they are more than the grains of sand! Each person of the earth – now, before, and after us – is a thought of God.

**By God's grace, even for all the separating and dividing of ourselves that we have done, when we come to the end, God is still with us.**

*\*Singing God's Glory*

*Glory to God in the Highest*

Tune: GLORIA (HAAS)

*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**

*The children are invited forward for a time of enrichment.  
Afterward, they may attend Kids Church or return to their seats.*

#### **SHARING THE WORD**

*From the Prophets*

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Pew Bible, p. 244

*From the Gospels*

John 1:43-51

p. 967

#### *Response*

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

#### **MESSAGE OF THE DAY**

*"Jesus the Ladder"*

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

#### **MUSICAL MEDITATION**

*Dreams and Visions*

Aerie / Bakriges

Dedicated to Coretta Scott King

Dream. Dream a world that's just and fair.

Free from hatred and fear.

Safe without want or care.

Love will be our guide—overcoming greed and pride.

Unity—dreams and visions set us free.

Dare. Dare to lift your voices high.

Speaking truth from your heart.

Now is the time to start.  
Hope points to the way—visions of a brand new day.  
Unity—dreams and visions set us free.

Ah... visions and dreams.  
Ah... visions and dreams.  
Start now! Right now!  
Start now! Right now!

Sing. Sing a song to change the world.  
Sing it out in the night.  
Sing 'til you get it right.  
Grace abides in you—ready to transform, make new.  
Unity—dreams and visions set us free.

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*We Lift Our Joys and Concerns to God*

*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*

Tune: JACOB'S LADDER

Praise God! Praise God, for our blessings.  
Praise God! Praise God, for our blessings.  
Praise God! Praise God, for our blessings.  
Sisters, Brothers, All!

*\*Prayer of Dedication (Unison)*

**Great is your faithfulness, O God, to us. Countless gifts you have given – including the ones Dr. King prayed that all your children might enjoy: fruitful labor, beloved community, and a sense of prosperity such as only you can provide. With humbleness before your abundance, we offer gifts of money, time, community, and labor, and pray your blessing upon them, that they may further establish the majesty found in Jesus' name. Amen.**

**\*PARTING HYMN**

*Lift Every Voice and Sing*  
No. 593 – *New Century Hymnal*

J. W. & J. R. Johnson

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*PARTING WORDS**

Liturgist: Our worship has ended.

**People: Let our service begin.**

POSTLUDE

*Yes, God Is Real!*

Kenneth Morris

**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; **David True**, 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, seven 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 cash offering (in an envelope on which you have written, “MICA”),
- 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)

**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.

**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.



**Day of Service – Monday, January 15 – (Being rescheduled)**

First Church will conduct a Day of Service for the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday. The Peace & Justice Team will host this even, tomorrow. We will be collecting non-perishable food items for Webster Rock Hill Ministries! **Donations will be accepted from 9am to 12pm** at the doors under the awning facing the east parking lot.

**Volunteers will be needed, between 8:30am and 12:30pm**  
**Volunteer for the Day of Service**  
(receiving and/or sorting and/or delivering food to WRHM)  
[bit.ly/MLK-2024-Signup](http://bit.ly/MLK-2024-Signup)

### **More Volunteer Opportunities**

Signups to serve as worship leaders and/or Kids Church helpers are at  
**Liturgists** - [bit.ly/Liturgists-2024](http://bit.ly/Liturgists-2024)  
**Kids Church** - [bit.ly/FCCWG-Kids-2024](http://bit.ly/FCCWG-Kids-2024)

### **Next Lady Elect Meeting** **Tuesday, January 23 – Inglis Room**

This will be a noon meeting so bring a sack lunch. Beverages and dessert will be provided. This meeting features our Book /Media Reviews. Each of us will have an opportunity to briefly share what we have been reading or watching recently. Please RSVP to Faye Dyer at [southernillinoisdyer@gmail.com](mailto:southernillinoisdyer@gmail.com) **All women of the church are welcome to attend!**

### **Midwinter Potluck** **Sunday, January 28, after worship**

As part of our annual Heritage Sunday observance, the Midwinter Potluck will take place on **Sunday, January 28** after the service. Parish Life Ministry will provide a variety of main dishes (pasta, jambalaya, smoked meat). Please bring a **plated** side dish, salad or dessert. You can drop off your side, salad, or dessert to the kitchen before the service.

### **Pastoral Sabbatical to take place Summer 2024** **Presentation on January 28 (Heritage Sunday) – after worship**

Pastor Dave Denoon has been discussing his scheduled sabbatical for 2024 with members of the Executive Ministry and Pastoral Relations Committee, for a few months now. It will take place during the summer of 2024. The pastor will be offering a presentation about his upcoming time away on Sunday, January 28, 2024, after worship, as part of our Heritage Sunday observance. Where is he going? What is he doing? Find out, January 28!

Link to the Pastor's blog post at <http://tinyurl.com/fccwg-pastor>, to learn about developments regarding our last Heritage Sunday topic!

### **Stacks of Wax Seeking Crafters!**

Over a span of decades, candles - lots of them! - have accumulated in our Office Storage. These pillars and columns and tapers, in stearic and beeswax, are in a limited variety of colors: white mostly, but also purple and pink. If you are a crafter who creates candles or you're looking for a light source for an upcoming blackout, oh golly, can we help you! Please contact the Pastor, to learn more.

### **Church Merch – Stained Glass Window Stickers**

There are still some stickers remaining, after our initial public offering at Christmastime! **Round stickers depicting the "Paul Davis Window"** over the chancel in the sanctuary are available from the office for purchase. Terrific as a gift or to put on your own water bottle, computer, or any other surface you decide to decorate with a reminder of your beloved sacred space, they are three inches in diameter and \$5 in cost.

### **Discount Tickets to Big Muddy Evolution Available through Tonight!**

The Big Muddy Dance Company's Executive Director (and church member) Erin Prange has let us know of a special promotional code for First Church members and friends, for a discount to The Big Muddy's upcoming main stage production of Evolution, at COCA on January 11-14. Please visit <https://www.thebigmuddydanceco.org/evolution> and enter the promo code FCCWG24 for 20% off tickets.

### **January Birthdays**

Helen Moody - 1  
Coco Denoon - 7  
Faye Dyer - 7  
Erin Prange - 8  
Roger Barnes - 11  
Kin Lavender - 12

Richard Smith - 14  
Bob Hill - 16  
Jan Barnes - 23  
Jacquie Bryant - 26  
Ashley Merideth - 26  
Mark Metcalf - 26

### **January Meal-a-Month Shopping List**

Boxed Whole Grain Pasta • Canned Green Vegetable (low or no salt) • Canned Fruit in own juices •  
Sugar free juices in plastic bottles  
Powdered Milk, shelf stable milk, soy milk  
Cold Cereal (no sugar) • Plain Oatmeal (no sugar)

### **There's Still Time to Submit Your 2024 Pledge!**

The Stewardship Committee reminds members and friends of the church that, if you haven't had the chance yet to make your financial commitment to First Church for 2024, promises of generosity are **still being accepted!** You can go [FirstChurchWG.org/donate#pledge](https://FirstChurchWG.org/donate#pledge) for an online commitment form. Or contact the office for a paper form.

Your gifts support our outreach and programs, making possible some truly transformative ministry! **Because of YOU our church changes lives!**

### **Submitting 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 at [admin@firstchurchwg.org](mailto:admin@firstchurchwg.org) by the 20th of the month prior to the month in which you want your item included.



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[www.FirstChurchWG.org](http://www.FirstChurchWG.org)

## Contact Information

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Weekend & Events Custodians –  
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## What's Happening at First Church

### Sunday, January 14

**9:45AM** Nursery Care  
**10:00AM** Jazz Worship  
**10:15AM** Kids' Church  
**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

### Monday, January 15

#### Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

#### OFFICE CLOSED

**9:00AM - Noon (Being rescheduled)** "Day of Service" Donation Event  
**7:00PM** Scout Troops 301B & 301G Court of Honor – Memorial Hall

### Tuesday, January 16

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

### Wednesday, January 17

**9:30AM** Yoga with Jeanene – Inglis Room  
**6:00PM** Bridge Club – Inglis Room

### Thursday, January 18

**6:00PM** Canterbury Bells – Sanctuary  
**7:30PM** Chancel Choir – Music Room

### Saturday, January 20

**12:00PM** Young Adult Town Hall – Inglis Room

### Sunday, January 21

**9:45AM** Nursery Care  
**10:00AM** Worship  
**10:15AM** Kids' Church  
**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship  
**11:20AM** Peace & Justice Team

## Follow us on

### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/FirstChurchWG/](https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchWG/)

### Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/firstchurchwg/>

### YouTube

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

