

Welcome!

First Congregational Church
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

FEBRUARY 18, 2024
FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

*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 *Adagio in F Minor* Chevalier de Saint Georges
(aka The Black Mozart)

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 THE BELL

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

***INTROIT** *Lenten Acclamation* Kenneth Kosche
Canterbury Bells

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

Beloved children of God, come to worship our Creator and Friend!

**Here we are, from the soles of our feet to the souls within
us period we are here to worship period.**

Come, siblings in Christ, and attend this gathering with your body, mind,
and spirit. Be fully present with us today.

**From head to toe, inside and out, from our prayers to our
thoughts to our dreams, we are present to worship.**

And if our minds wander, our bodies fidget, or our spirits grow drowsy,
what shall we do?

**We shall worship in wandering, fidgeting, and
drowsiness, for we can find God in our very breath. Come
now, let us worship!**

***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** *God of the Sparrow* Jaroslav Vajta
No. 32 – New Century Hymnal

***RITUAL OF APPROACH**

**Invitation*

**Prayer of Confession* (Responsive)

Holy and righteous God, you have heard the cries of the children growing
up without food, water, shelter, and care. We confess we have been
complicit in systems that exploit children and perpetuate these grave sins.

God, have mercy.

We have bought items manufactured by children.

God, have mercy.

We have turned our attention from the physical and mental health care needs of children and youth.

God, have mercy.

We have participated in systems that provide excellent education to some children and very little to others.

God, have mercy.

We have marked, belittled, posted, shared, and chastised the behavior of children and youth instead of cherishing their individual development and milestones.

God, have mercy.

We have excluded children, segregating them from the community and privileging the voices and presence of adults.

God, have mercy.

You sent Jesus to us as a child, and you continue to call us to attend to the needs of children. In our exclusion of children, we have missed out on Jesus.

Forgive us, God, and call us back to a place where we will always “let the children come.” Amen.

Silence for Personal Confessions

Words of Assurance

Our God is faithful to forgive and empower us to begin again. Receive the grace and forgiveness of God, and be at peace.

From here, we take up the mantle to protect and care for the children in our community and our world once again.

Singing God’s Glory

Sing Amen!

S. C. Molefe

No. 760 – *New Century Hymnal*

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Johari Hunt, *Coordinator of Faith Formation*

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 Epistles

1 Peter 3:17-22

Pew Bible, p. 1105

Translation from *The Message*, by Eugene Peterson

From the Gospels

Mark 1:9-15

p. 910

New Revised Standard Version, ad. Denoon

Response.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

What Wondrous Love
Canterbury Bells

arr. Lloyd Larson

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

“We’re in It with Him”

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Lift Up 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 SHARE OUR BLESSINGS WITH OTHERS

Opportunities to Give and Gather

**Song of Praise*

Doxology

Tune: OLD 100TH

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)

Great and gracious God, we gather together with our gifts as a tangible expression of our commitment to your work here on earth. Please take and bless our gifts and ourselves so that love and justice might expand among us and in our community. Thank you for the abundance you already share with us each day according to your faithfulness. Amen.

***PARTING HYMN**

Shall We Gather at the River
No. 597, vv. 1,4 – *New Century Hymnal*

Robert Lowry

***BENEDICTION**

***PARTING WORDS**

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

POSTLUDE

Reflection #4

Jason Shelton

Today's cover art is *The Ship of the Church*, created by Peter Winfried (Canisius) Koenig. View and purchase works by Peter Koenig at www.pwkoenig.co.uk

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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 at 10am
Go to 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.

Upcoming Lady Elect Meeting – February 27 at Noon in the Inglis Room

Our speaker will be Judy Burla, a travel planner who has many tips for ease in travel. Please bring a sack lunch and join us. Dessert and beverage will be provided. **RSVP to Faye Dyer.**
All women of the church are invited to attend!

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.



Learn about our newest sign-up method – Google Sheets! 10:07 AM TODAY!

Ashley Merideth will be leading a training session on the use of the app, Google Sheets, on Sunday, February 18th after worship. We are planning this as a hybrid session, so that not only can people attend in person, but they also might Zoom in to attend, and we can record the session so that others who may need the information can access it.

In addition to the schedules for Liturgists and Kids Church (see next announcement), Google Sheets is used to organize volunteers for a variety of events, such as First Saturday collections.

If you are all set technologically, good for you!

If not, please plan to join Ashley on February 18th!

(A Zoom link and meeting ID will be provided in the next editions of *Covenant News* and the bulletin.)

Volunteer Opportunities

Signups to serve as worship leaders and/or Kids Church helpers are at

Liturgists - bit.ly/Liturgists-2024

Kids Church - bit.ly/FCCWG-Kids-2024

Lent Devotional Study – “This Is My Body” After Worship (about 11:20am)

We are happy to announce a devotional study for all ages during Lent, **from Sunday, February 18 and continuing through Palm Sunday, March 24.**

Each week highlights a different story from Jesus’ life and connects it to shared human experiences – like growing up, taking naps, or drinking water. By engaging with these stories through a broad lens of embodiment, ***This Is My Body*** seeks to inspire curiosity, wonder, and awe.

The booklets for adults or families are NOW AVAILABLE FOR FREE in print or PDF format. Print copies may be found on the large narthex table. The download link for the Families booklet is <https://bit.ly/FCCWG-Lent01>. The download link for the Adult booklet is <https://bit.ly/FCCWG-02Lent>

Chicago United Eden — CUE Seminaries of the United Church of Christ

An offering will be collected on Sunday, February 25, to benefit the UCC Seminaries of the Midwest - Chicago, United of the Twin Cities, and Eden.

One of the first recipients of offerings from First Church was Chicago Theological Seminary. In 1927, we added Eden, and in 1957 the Twins Cities seminary. If you would like to contribute to the theological education of future UCC clergy, please give to the CUE fund either

- by writing a check payable to FCCWG with the letters "CUE" in the memo line, or
- by using the handy pulldown menu at our website's Donate page.

To learn more about the CUE seminaries, please visit the CUE webpage at <https://www.cueseminaries.org/>.

Thank you!

St. Pat’s Dinner to Benefit Habitat for Humanity

March 9 from 4:00 to 7:30 PM at Samuel UCC, 320 N. Forsyth Blvd., Clayton

For 30 years, Samuel and our United Churches of Christ have built houses with Habitat for Humanity St. Louis. For more than a dozen years, Samuel has hosted the St. Pat’s Dinner to help raise funds. **Tickets:** A suggested donation of \$20 or more for adults and \$6 for children

EVERY CENTER YOU GIVE goes to support the UCC Habitat Build. All meat and other foods are given by the Kern Meat Company and others.

Call (314) 727-9540 or (314) 374-4183 for tickets or reservations.

**The Parish Life Ministry of First Congregational Church presents
“Gala of Grace” — A Night of Giving and Gratitude
Saturday, April 6th**

Please join us in our effort to raise over \$20,000 dollars for local Webster and greater St. Louis charities and ministries. "Gala of Grace: A Night of Giving & Gratitude" is your opportunity to attend a dazzling event featuring a multi-course dinner, live music from three renowned artists, and a live auction hosted by the legendary Rod Cooper. Don't miss this once in a lifetime event to treat yourself, while helping those in need. **Details to follow.**

February Shopping List

- Canned Tuna, packed in Water • Tuna Helper • Canned Carrots (low or no salt)
- Canned Fruit in own juices • Powdered Milk, shelf stable milk, soy milk
- Diapers • Diaper Wipes • Formula with Iron

February Birthdays

- Charlie Brader 5
- Mary Edwards 6
- K Wentzien 6
- Chris von Weise 8
- Kathy Hill 11
- Phoenix Hill 14
- Doug Barton..... 15
- Erick Falconer 16
- Pat Doyle-Grace.....20
- Martin Mills.....21

What's Happening at First Church

Sunday, February 18

First Sunday in Lent

9:45AM Nursery Care

10:00AM Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:05AM Coffee Fellowship

11:20AM Lenten Study - Memorial Hall

11:30AM Google Sheets training - Inglis Room

Please note that Pastor Dave Denoon will be away on family leave, February 19 - 22. For Pastoral Care needs, please contact the office, and you will be connected with someone who can help.

Monday, February 19

OFFICE CLOSED – President's Day

7:00PM ~~NO Scout Troops B & G~~

Tuesday, February 20

10:30AM Staff Meeting – Church Office

Friday, February 23

3:00 - 7:00PM Visitation with the family of Elizabeth Kellett - Sanctuary

Saturday, February 24

1:00PM Funeral: Elizabeth Kellett - Sanctuary

A reception will follow, in Memorial Hall;
interment will be private.

Sunday, February 25

Second Sunday in Lent

Church Vocations and Seminary Sunday

Special Offering for CUE Seminaries

9:45AM Nursery Care

10:00AM Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:05AM Coffee Fellowship

11:20AM Lenten Study - Memorial Hall



From the Coordinator of Faith Formation

Winter has been a season unlike any other for me. I have been brought into many new social and familial rituals from my Midwest family and friends while experiencing the joys of the Midwest climate to a whole new extent.

With the coming of spring, I look forward to the new rituals and events that this season brings to the church and the greater Saint Louis Area. I have ardently entrenched myself into gardening alongside my friends this coming spring and summer season; I look forward to growing a variety of crops with my heart set on Okra and Jalapenos, wish me luck!

New growth to keep an eye out for our church is the sprouting Youth group. The town hall was a success, and I am excited to further the fellowship with young folks here. We will be investigating the rituals of Lent and personal reflection, this February.

I am enthusiastic for this season of Lent to teach the children and youth alike, the stories of lent, why we engage in these rituals of reflection, and how it is this season that sets Christianity apart from its Abrahamic siblings. Furthermore, I am eager to engage with the Illustrated Ministry curriculum, *This Is My Body*; this resource provides a unique engagement this Lenten season in imaging our body as a source of connection to Jesus. Each week we will be following Jesus' path in growing up.

I'm already anticipating the curious conversations and contemplations from children and adults alike that this season of thought and penance will bring as the community is brought back to a moment of stillness.

Thanks,
Johari Hunt