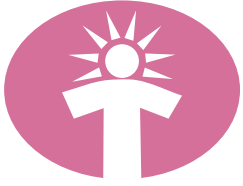


Welcome!

First Congregational Church
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

MARCH 31, 2024

**FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION
FIRST SUNDAY OF EASTER**

*We respond to God's call
by welcoming everyone
regardless of ability, age,
ethnicity, race, gender
identity,
sexual orientation or
socio-economic background.*

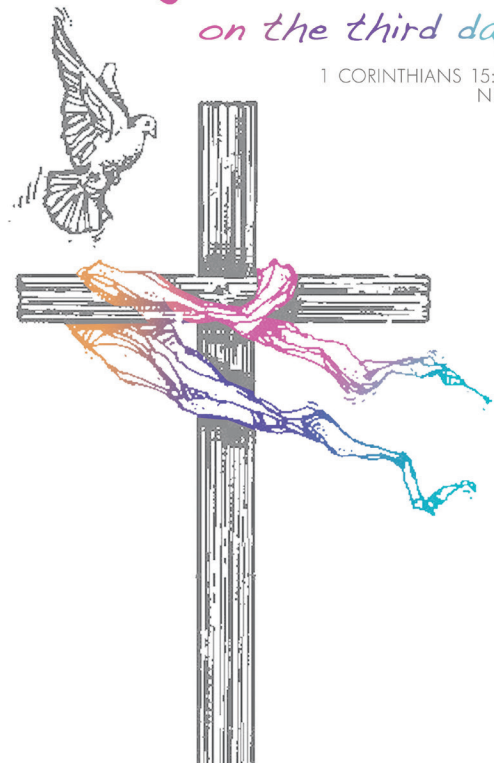
*To proclaim in word and deed
the love of Christ,
we affirm that all may share
in the full life, ministry,
fellowship, responsibilities and
blessing of our congregation.*

*No matter who you
are or where you are
on life's journey,
you are welcome here.*

CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
SCRIPTURES, AND ... HE WAS

raised
on the third day.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:3-4,
NRSV



Order of Worship

An asterisk () indicates the Congregation standing, in body or in spirit.
Please, silence the ringer on any cellular device you may have with you.*

PRELUDE	<i>La Guamina – Canzona Francese</i>	Gioseffo Guami
	(Municipal Brass Works)	
	<i>I Know My Redeemer Lives</i>	Lloyd Larson
	(Canterbury Bells)	
	<i>Canzone per Sonare, No. 2</i>	Giovanni Gabrielli
	(Brass and Bells)	

WELCOME Sharon Love, *Liturgist*

*At this time, we invite you to complete an entry in the Friendship Booklet
or to register your attendance online using the QR code appearing on the monitor.*

TOLLING THE BELL

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

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

The clouds are breaking, a new day is dawning, and there is a soft rumble in the earth. Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

The stone has been rolled away! The tomb is empty! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

After three days in the cold, still silence of the grave, Jesus is not here. Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

The empire tried to stop him. Death was powerless to contain him. Evil could not destroy him. Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

Hallelujah! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

* GATHERING HYMN	<i>Christ the Lord Is Risen Today</i>	Charles Wesley
	No. 233 – <i>New Century Hymnal</i>	

***RITUAL OF APPROACH**

**Introduction* (Responsive)

Loving God, as we remember the holy and exemplary life of your Child Jesus, we reflect upon the ways we have missed the mark in our own lives.

At this time of newness and freshness, we would leave the past in the grave and step forward into a faithful future.

**Prayer of Confession* (Responsive)

Merciful Creator, your Child Jesus preached that the greatest of your laws instruct us to love you and our neighbor. Everything we can possibly get wrong is included in those two commandments. Today, we confess we have broken these laws.

Forgive us for ways we have not loved ourselves, our families, our friends, and our neighbors. Forgive us for ways we have not loved you with our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Amen.

**Silence for Personal Confession*

**Words of Assurance (Responsive)*

We know you are faithful to remove our sins from us, as far as the east is from the west. So we gratefully receive your forgiveness today.

We renew our commitment to following you and growing in discipleship. We set our hearts and minds upon maturing in faith. Thank you for your merciful pardon. Amen.

**Singing God's Glory*

Halle-halleluja!

Trad. Caribbean

No. 236 – *New Century Hymnal*

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Johari Hunt and Joan Musbach

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 Corinthians 15:1-11

Pew Bible, p. 1038

From the Gospels

Mark 16:1-8

p. 929

Response.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

EASTER ACCLAMATION

Fanfare and Canticle for Easter Day
(Brass, Bells, and Choir)

Benjamin Harlan

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

"Resurrection and Recovery"

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

ANTHEM

Love Has Broken Down the Wall
(Chancel Choir)

Mark S. Miller

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Lift Our Joys and Concerns to God

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 SHARE OUR GIFTS WITH OTHERS

Opportunities to Give and Gather

**Song of Praise*

Doxology

Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Praise God, all creatures here below!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God above, you heavenly host –

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Prayer of Dedication (Unison)*

Gracious God, today we celebrate the gift of never-ending, abundant life of the Resurrection. We cannot repay you but respond with our

offerings and gifts of time, talent, and treasure, knowing you will multiply them and use them to further your reign of love and justice on earth. Take our best attempts at generosity and create something beautiful. Amen.

RITUAL FOR THE REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

Introductory Words (Responsive)

Dear friends, as we come to this font of living water, let us recall the meaning of baptism. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

Remembering Water's Blessings

**Renewal of Baptismal Vows (Responsive)*

Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ? **I do.**

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and community, in the breaking of bread, and in prayer? **I will, with God's help.**

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, respecting the dignity of every human being? **I will, with God's help.**

**Distribution of Water*

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

New Member Candidates Introduced

Preface

**Affirmation of Faith (Responsive)*

based on *Our Creed*, 1901

Do you believe in the kinship of all people as children of God? **I do.**

Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Way and the Truth and the Life?

I do.

Do you believe in the clean heart, the unworldly life, and the service of love as Jesus taught and exemplified, and do you accept Christ's Spirit and Christ's teaching? **I do.**

**Questions of the Candidates*

**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.

**Welcome to the Church (Unison)*

Moderator Doug Barton

We as members of this church, gladly welcome you to be a part with us in the hopes, the labors, and the joys of our mutual ministry. We promise to walk with you in Christian love and sympathy, and to promote, as far as in us lies, your growth in the Christian life.

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

Hallelujah! (from *Messiah*)

G. F. Handel

*The congregation is welcome to come forward and sing the Postlude with the Choir.
Copies of the music are available near the doors to the Sanctuary
or else may have been handed to you before the service from First Friends.*

***PARTING WORDS**

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

Our thanks go out, this morning to the Municipal Brass Works, who are:
Tom Bruce, Trumpet
Matt Messinghoff, Trumpet
Matthew Alton, French Horn
Ben Douane, Tuba and Baritone Horn

We welcome today into membership **Charlie Schoenherr** (sponsor Jane Porchey), **Scott & Kristy Anderson** (sponsor Sue Leary), and **Neil & Sandra Hoffsten** (sponsor Nancy Rudolph). Charlie comes to us by letter of transfer from Sts. Clare & Francis Ecumenical Catholic Communion, while Scott & Kristy and Sandra join by reaffirmation of faith, and Neil is reactivating his membership which started when he was confirmed here in 1967.

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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 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 QR code.

Volunteer Opportunities

Signup forms to serve as worship leaders and/or Kids Church helpers are at **Liturgists** - bit.ly/Liturgists-2024 | **Kids Church** - bit.ly/FCCWG-Kids-2024

Annual Reports Due on April 15

If you are the chair of one of the ministries, employees, or groups, please submit your reports to Debbie by April 15. For those new to Annual Report writing, the period we need is from May of 2023 through April of 2024.

Church Historian • Treasurer • Moderator • Endowment Counselors • Communications Team
First Friends • Parish Life Ministry • Membership • Habitat for Humanity • Benevolence
Holaday Library • Facility and Finance Ministry • Christian Ed Ministry
Coordinator of Faith Formation • Music Director • Ministry of Imagination, Creativity and the Arts
Brown Baggers • Peace and Justice • Lady Elect Guild • Journeymen
Stillpoint Multi-faith Campus Ministry at Webster University • Pastor

Calling All Puzzlers

If you like jigsaw puzzles, there will be a storage tub full of them in the office. The tub will be located under the desk by the door leading to the kitchen. Help yourself and return when it's finished. If you have puzzles to donate, just drop them off in the tub. We've discovered there are many puzzlers in our church. Enjoy!

Peter Kalulu and Lawrence Katumba Coming April 7 to Adult Ed at 11:20 in Memorial Hall

Peter and Lawrence are both from Uganda and will be returning to their country in May to put their studies into practice. Peter is from northern Uganda and promotes global health equity and accessibility for vulnerable populations. He strives to provide clean and safe water, and good sanitation to rural communities. Lawrence comes from Kampala, the capital city of Uganda. He is a Ugandan health worker specializing in emergency medicine. At Washington University, he specialized in epidemiology and biostatistics. The two of them met just prior to moving to the States, and they will be teaming up to improve rural communities' health by providing clean and safe water, and a project on reducing malnutrition through food banks in Uganda. Come, learn about their projects and their plans when they return to their country. They are truly remarkable men and how lucky we are to have them part of our congregation during their Washington University study.

Report from The Coordinator of Faith Formation

Spring Greetings from the Coordinator of Faith Formation! Bee, pollen, and sprouts galore, gardening and allergies are back in full swing. In the community garden we have planted leeks, carrots, onions, spinach, beets, and sugar snap peas!

I look forward to celebrating my first Easter with the congregation as the buzz has been enthusiastic among staff and members alike. There will be many songs of praise and I look forward to finishing the Illustrated Ministry Curriculum with the kids in Kids Church.

Spring sprouts in the church include kids leading a service on April 28th along with musical accompaniment, and the youth group is still trying to find a day to meet.

With summer right around the corner, and the tents making their way out of storage, I would like to encourage folks to check out the opportunities at Camp MoVal (<https://missourimidsouth.org/camp-moval>). Camp MoVal has a wide variety of programs and activities, and has been in operation since 1962. They offer an amazing and unique camp experience that includes activities such as hiking, archery, swimming, kayaking, and more!

Thanks, Johari Hunt

Moderator's Corner

Don't steal the wonder.

The advice is pure gold if you are a teacher. Children experience wonder all the time. Inspiration and curiosity created by moments of wonder bring joy to learning. A good teacher knows where the wonder lives and they don't ruin it. As an adult, wonder seems harder to catch, though we also find joy in rediscovering the wonders of our world through the eyes of a child.

I am driving my family to see the total eclipse on April 8, 2024. You read my opening paragraph, so you know a big part of my why. Here is more context:

2017 was a tough year for my family. Some days felt hard to get through, especially certain holidays. Kristy and I were struggling to stay positive about the prospects of adoption. We felt blessed to have the support of friends, family, and our church, but we also battled hopelessness. The August eclipse was something fun to look forward to. When I took my eclipse glasses off that day to view the moment totality, I felt wonder, a sense of connectedness and community, and hope.

In the ancient world, eclipses were viewed as omens or signs of divine judgment and associated with important events. Scholars use the dates of eclipses to create historical timelines. Solar and lunar eclipses can be found in the Bible. There are accounts outside of the Gospels that the moon turned blood red on the evening of the Crucifixion. According to astrophysicists, a lunar eclipse was visible in Jerusalem, on the horizon between 6:20 PM and 6:50 PM on Friday, April 3, 33 AD.

We might not take meaning from eclipses as our ancestors did, they are a moment for wonder and reflection. Take advantage of this rare opportunity to experience something amazing by traveling to the path of totality (including Poplar Bluff, Ste. Genevieve, Carbondale, Indianapolis). Wear your eclipse glasses if you are viewing from St. Louis. It will be 2044 before North America sees its next total eclipse.

God Bless,
Doug Barton, Moderator

What's Happening at First Church

Sunday, March 31

Easter Sunday / Feast of the Resurrection

9:45AM Nursery Care

9:45AM Concert: *Music for the Resurrection*

10:00AM Festival Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:15AM Coffee Fellowship featuring homemade coffee cakes!

Easter Monday, April 1

OFFICE CLOSED

7:00PM Scout Troops 301 B & G – Dickens Room

Tuesday, April 2

General Municipal Election – Memorial Hall

1:00PM Communications Team – Church Office

7:00PM Pastoral Relations Committee

Wednesday, April 3

9:30AM Yoga – Inglis Room

10:30AM Staff Meeting – Church Office

6:00PM Bridge Club – Inglis Room

Thursday, April 4

6:00PM Canerbury Bells – Sanctuary

7:30PM Chancel Choir – Music Room

Saturday, April 6

5:30PM Benevolence Event



10 West Lockwood Avenue
Webster Groves, MO 63119
314-962-0475
www.FirstChurchWG.org

Contact Information

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iyell4@aol.com

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DDenoon@FirstChurchWG.org

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Admin@FirstChurchWG.org

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Johari.Hunt@FirstChurchWG.org

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

Facilities Manager – Chip Isringhaus
ctil234@FirstChurchWG.org

Events Coordinator – Alicia McMinn
Events@FirstChurchWG.org

Custodian & AV Tech – 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
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<http://bit.ly/FCCWG-YT>

