

Welcome!

First Congregational Church
of Webster Groves United Church of Christ

Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

FEBRUARY 2, 2025

HERITAGE SUNDAY

SACRAMENT OF CHRIST'S TABLE



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 the Congregation standing, in body or in spirit.*

PRELUDE

The Gift of Love

Hal Hopson, arr. John Carter

WELCOME

Laura Cooper, *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

OPENING WORDS (Responsive – Liturgist; **People**)

from 1 Corinthians 13

Love is patient, love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.

Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

love does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end;

as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part;

but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.

Now we see in a mirror, dimly;

but then we will see face to face.

Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

And now faith, hope, and love abide: these three. And the greatest of these is love.

*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

The Gift of Love

Hal Hopson

Tune: O WALY WALY

Though I may speak with bravest fire and have the gift to all inspire,
and have not love, my words are vain, as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess, and striving so my love profess,
but not be giv'n by love within, the profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control, our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed; by this we worship, and are freed.

***RITUAL OF APPROACH**

**Invitation (Responsive)*

1 John 4:7-8

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God;
everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

Mindful of those times when we have failed to love as God first loved us, let us confess our sin.

**Prayer of Confession (Unison)*

God of love, the words of the apostle convict us: “love is patient; love is kind; it is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.” If we were to substitute our names for the word *love*, would our loving stand the test? Teach us a more mature love, one more accepting, one more gracious and truly unconditional. Forgive us, we pray, for those occasions of loving in which we demanded terms or required reciprocation. And help us to forgive. Your grace has been enough for us; we know that we ought to extend that same grace to others, “for faith, hope, and love abide, these three.” But the greatest is love like that which Jesus taught. As we consider here again the challenge of your call, guide us to love in Christ’s name. Amen.

**Silence for Personal Confession*

**Words of Assurance (Responsive)*

The mercy of God is upon us, extended through the Holy Spirit of Jesus the Christ.

God forgives and sets us free so that we may share in life together, and here we commit ourselves to following wherever Christ calls us, and to loving one another.

**Singing God’s Glory*

Glory to God in the Highest

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

Luke 4:14-30

Pew Bible, p. 936

Response.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Ripple

J. Garcia, R. Hunter

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

“You Can’t Go Home Again”

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

WE OFFER OF OURSELVES

Opportunities to Give and Gather

**Song of Praise*

Doxology

Thomas Ken

Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH

**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)

**We give to you, O God, our gifts and our praise which first were
presented to us from out of your charitable loving. Let your realm be
glorified through the community and service our offerings enable.
Receive our gifts and bless them; in Jesus' name. Amen.**

SACRAMENT OF CHRIST'S TABLE

**We Lift Our Joys and Concerns to God*

Communion Hymn

I Come with Joy

Brian Wren

No. 349, vv. 1-4 – *New Century Hymnal*

Fraction

Prayer for Unity

Bless us, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, that, as we receive the bread and cup from this table, we may offer you our faith and praise; be united with Christ and with one another; and continue faithful in all things.

**In the strength Christ gives us, we offer ourselves to you,
Eternal God, and give thanks that you have called us to serve
you.**

Prayer of Our Savior (Unison)

based on a translation by J. D. Crossan

**Abba in heaven: holy be your name, present be your realm,
accomplished be your will. As in heaven, so on earth: give us today
our bread for the morning; forgive us our debts as we forgive our
debtors; and prevent our temptation, saving us from evil. For present
is not only your realm but your power and glory for ever. Amen.**

Distribution

Communion

Communion is served in the pews, first the bread and then the cup.

The bread is gluten-free. Wine is white; grape juice is red.

Each is consumed when indicated, unless this presents a hardship for the individual.

Prayer after Communion

I Come with Joy, v. 5

Brian Wren

Together met, together bound, in friendship we will stay,
And go with joy to love the world
and live the way we pray, and live the way we pray.

TIME OF PASSAGE

Bidding a Happy Retirement to Debra Tolstoi

Greeting

Remembrance and Recognition

Prayer

**Benediction*

***PARTING WORDS**

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

POSTLUDE

Truckin'

J. Garcia, R. Hunter

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 worship, this morning, for a great part, celebrates the work of Debra Tolstoi who has served for eight years as our Office Administrator. And though she insists that her favorite musical artist is James Taylor, she declared that the two pieces created by the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia and Bob Hunter best express the feelings she is having today. *We thank Leon Burke, music director; David Spangler, baritone ukelele; and Mark Moynihan and Tom Lucas, guitars, for making Debbie's musical wishes come true.*

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**Connecting Remotely to Worship**

Sunday worship each week is streamed live on YouTube. Past worship and videos are also available for viewing. Go to [bit.ly/FCCWG-YT](https://bit.ly/FCCWG-YT)

**How to Donate (and Pledge!) to First Congregational Church**

If you would like to support First Church with a monetary gift, here are a few ways to do that:

- Take advantage of the brass offering plate on the small table in the Narthex
- Send a check made payable to FCCWG at:

**First Congregational Church  
10 W. Lockwood Ave.  
Webster Groves, MO 63119**

- Visit [FirstChurchWG.org/donate](https://FirstChurchWG.org/donate)
- Scan the **QR code**



**To make a pledge for 2025**, please go to our website's Donate page – [FirstChurchWG.org/donate](https://FirstChurchWG.org/donate) – by navigating there in your web browser or by using the QR code.

**Endowment Counselors Presentation, Today at 11:15am**

Today we will celebrate the Heritage of Our Church. This will include a presentation by representatives of the Moneta Group, the financial management firm that administers our Endowment.

In 1968 an Endowment Trust was established through the contributions of at least sixty individuals. Commitments have been made by current and recent members through the signing of a "Statement of Intention." This form is available in the church office. Members who have made this commitment are honored as the **First Congregational Church Legacy Group**:

Helen & Robert Moody • Mark Cereghino • Dan & Marilyn Claggett •  
Kenneth\* & Joan Musbach • Sue Stepleton • Jan & Katy\* Ver Hagen •  
Paul Davis\* • Jennifer Jones • Tom Waltz • Ken\* & Garie Perry • John\* & Betty Kerr  
\*deceased

There are a number of ways to make a commitment of your own: Beneficiary of an IRA, Charitable Remainder Gift, Charitable Remainder Trust, Last Will and Testament Living Trust, among others. For more information contact any of the Endowment Counselors. **You can participate in protecting the future of First Congregational Church.**

### **Newcomers' Orientation Session – Today at 11:30am**

If you have been wanting to find out more about First Congregational Church - who we are, who we've been, and who we are called to be - then Pastor Dave Denoon invites you to join him for an **Orientation Tour, today at 11:30 am**. He has a slideshow to present and a tour for you to take part in, about First Church's people, denomination, history, and hopes. Even if you haven't registered for this, you can still attend. Meet him in the Sanctuary at 11:30.

### **Chocolate Sunday–February 9th**

The Parish Life Ministry cares about our health! Were you aware of that? That is why they are hosting a **Chocolate Sunday on February 9th**-to take care of us. Advanced research says that chocolate contains more antioxidants than apples. Chocolate may help reduce stress. Parish Life members have found that to be true for them! There are other ways chocolate can benefit us, too. The fellowship around a chocolate fountain can lift our spirits, give us reason to smile and make us happy to be together. So plan to stay after worship for Chocolate Sunday, and enjoy time at the Chocolate Fountain.

**If you would like to contribute a favorite chocolate baked good or other item** to your faith community's general well-being on Chocolate Sunday, please deliver it plated and ready to serve, to the kitchen, on your way to worship. Nut-free delicacies need no special labeling.

### **Lenten Worship Planning**

#### **“Stories on the Journey” – Sunday, February 9, 8:30AM (Includes breakfast!)**

Pastor Dave Denoon, Faith Coordinator Johari Hunt, and MICA Minister Cliff Aerie invite you to join them for a breakfast meeting on Sunday, Feb 9 at 8:30AM, in the Parlor (2nd floor room). **They are working on a Lenten worship series, including stories from faith journeys – stories of turning points, new directions, or spiritual gifts realized.** If you have such a story (not to take the place of the Message of the Day but simply to share with others), Dave, Johari, and Cliff would love to hear from you... and to feed you! Please, sign up at [bit.ly/FCCWG-Lent2025](https://bit.ly/FCCWG-Lent2025).

### **AN AUCTION FOR HUMANITY – February 28-March 9**

The title only looks like a misprint! A UCC-sponsored online auction to benefit Habitat for Humanity St. Louis will run from February 28 to March 9. In addition, Samuel UCC's traditional St. Patrick's Dinner will be held on Saturday, March 15. Mark your calendar!

You can support **An AUCCtion for Humanity** as a volunteer to ask businesses and friends for items. You can also help with administrative tasks you can do from home. Please call or text Kirkwood UCC member Bob Steen who can explain ways you can help at 314-980-7699 or email Bob at [AUCCtion4Humanity@outlook.com](mailto:AUCCtion4Humanity@outlook.com).

### **Gala of Grace returns Saturday, March 29th**

Experience a fully catered, fine dining experience, plus the best desserts in town made by our very own First Church bakers. **Stay tuned for more details!**

With gratitude, your 2025 Gala of Grace Committee,  
Rebecca Novak, Jeanene Harris, Rosemary Hensley, Cathy Buerk, Laura Cooper

### **Help for First Friends**

Calling out you friendly people of our church. We are seeking a few volunteers to supplement our “First Friends Alternates” list. We currently have six teams of six people. These folks do a wonderful job of the hospitality tasks each Sunday: they welcome us, hand us a bulletin, fix our coffee (sometimes just the way we like it!), and look out for our needs, and our safety.

However, as you also know we are a traveling folk and the need for substitutes is frequent. We have had people who have been “on call” to meet the occasional empty slot. But we have had some retirements lately, for a variety of reasons. So if you feel that you could help from time to time, please let me know. If you'd like to know more before deciding, contact Linda Kopetti.

## More Sunday Morning Volunteer Opportunities

Please, consider these volunteer opportunities:

- a **Liturgist** (conducting different portions of worship and reading scripture); sign up at [bit.ly/Liturgist-2025](http://bit.ly/Liturgist-2025), and/or
- a **Slideshow Presenter** (advancing the slides displayed in worship); sign up at [bit.ly/Slideshow-2025](http://bit.ly/Slideshow-2025), and/or
- an **A/V Assistant** (working closely with Mark Metcalf, coordinating the sound in the sanctuary and the live stream of the service online); sign up at [bit.ly/Audio-Video-2025](http://bit.ly/Audio-Video-2025)

Questions? Contact the Pastor.

## Good News: Wandering Musicians Finding Food & Shelter Overnight, April 5-6

Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to make possible the visit from the **Good Vibrations Handbell Choir from the First Congregational Church of Crystal Lake, Illinois (UCC)**, who will be performing in our worship service on April 6 and staying overnight in members' homes, the night before. Members so far have provided sufficient accommodations for all of the bell choir. **Thanks to all those who said Yes** to providing these young people beds and breakfasts! **But just to be safe (in case things change)** for our host households: ***If you can spare a bed or two (or more) in your home and would be willing to house and breakfast wandering handbell artists, please contact the Pastor.***

### February Birthdays

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

## What's Going on at First Church

### Sunday, February 2

#### Heritage Sunday

#### Sacrament of Christ's Table

**9:00AM** Brown Baggers

**9:45AM** Nursery Care Available

**10:00AM** Worship

**10:15AM** Kids' Church

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

**11:20AM** Endowment Counselors Presentation

**11:30AM** Nominating Committee – Library

**11:30AM** Orientation Tour – Sanctuary

~~**2:30PM** "The Organ in a New Light"~~

(EVENT POSTPONED; NEW DATE TBA)

### Monday, February 3

**7:00PM** Scout Troop 301 - Dickens Room

### Tuesday, February 4

**1:00PM** Communications Team Meeting

### Wednesday, February 5

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

**10:30AM** Staff Meeting - Office

**6:00PM** Bridge Club - Inglis Room

### Thursday, February 6

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

**7:30PM** Chancel Choir - Sanctuary

### Sunday, February 9

#### Scouting Sunday

#### Chocolate Sunday

**9:45AM** Nursery Care Available

**10:00AM** Worship

**10:15AM** Kids' Church

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

**11:15AM** Adult Ed:

Kathy & Bob Hill's Trip to Mongolia



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## Contact Information

Moderator – Doug Barton  
iyell4@aol.com

Pastor – Rev. Dave Denoon  
DDenoon@FirstChurchWG.org

Office Administrator – Adam Levin  
Admin@FirstChurchWG.org

Coordinator of Faith Formation – Johari Hunt  
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Director of Music & Organist – Dr. Leon Burke  
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ctil234@FirstChurchWG.org

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Custodian & AV Tech – Mark Metcalf  
Mark.Metcalf@FirstchurchWG.org

Weekend & Events Custodians –  
Onyeka Igboanuzue

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

**THE VISION** of First Congregational Church of Webster Groves, United Church of Christ, is to be a dynamic Christian community expressing God's love, hope, joy, and peace for all people.

### OUR MISSION is to provide:

- Worship that praises God
  - ◇ Shows commitment to the teachings of Jesus
  - ◇ Celebrates the Holy Spirit in ways that express the diversity of our experiences
  - ◇ Encourages spiritual growth and commitment
- Educational activities that promote faith and intellectual growth for children and for adults.
- Advocacy and care for those in need in our community and throughout the world.
- Community that seeks justice, loves kindness, and walks humbly.
- Hope, love, and encouragement to all who seek our support.
- Grace and forgiveness for ourselves and all who seek the ministries we share in worship, music, and fellowship with others on life's journey.

## Follow us on

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@FirstChurchWG

Instagram

@webstergroves\_firstchurch

YouTube

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

