

Welcome!

**First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ**



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2025
KWANZAA CELEBRATION
FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMASTIDE**



*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 *What Child Is This?* Greensleeves

WELCOME Rev. Dr. Laurel Hayes, *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 *Wexford Carol* Trad. Irish Carol

CALL TO WORSHIP Dr. Hayes

***GATHERING HYMN** *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing* Felix Mendelssohn
No. 144 – *New Century Hymnal*

AT THE KINARA

Music for the Occasion

Kwanzaa Celebration

Rev. Joyce Haynes-McCowan

Rev. Elston McCowan

Johari Hunt, Coordinator of Faith Formation

Baba Kunama Mtendaji, drum

The Nguzo Saba (Seven Principles) of Kwanzaa

Umoja – Unity

Kujichagulia – Self-Determination

Ujima – Collective Work and Responsibility

Ujama – Cooperative Economics

Nia – Purpose

Ku'umba – Creativity

Imani – Faith

THE WORD SHARED *Message of the Carols* Luke 2

Journey's Destination

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by
Yet in the dark street shineth, the everlasting Light
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight

The Birthplace

Once in David's Royal City

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for His bed
Mary was that mother mild Jesus Christ her little Child

A Child is Born
Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for His bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay

The World Awakens

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold!
Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, from heaven's all gracious King!
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

A Holy Message

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Good Christian friends, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before Him bow; and He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Visit the Child

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him born the King of angels:
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Bells: Heaven and Earth

Ding-dong, Merrily on High

Ding-dong merrily on high the Christmas bells are ringing:
Ding-dong! verily the sky is filled with angel singing
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis! Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Lift Our Joys and Concerns to God

Prayer of the Day

Prayer of our Savior

Rev. Cliff Aerie, *Director, MICA*

New Zealand Prayer Book

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts that we absorb from another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

WE SHARE OUR BLESSINGS WITH OTHERS

Opportunities to Give and Gather

**Song of Praise*

Doxology for Christmas

Tune: OLD 100TH

**Praise God with songs that never cease!
Praise God who fills the earth with peace!
Praise God for love and joy within!
The Holy Child is born again. Amen.**

***RAISING OF 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.

***PARTING HYMN**

Joy to the World

Tune: ANTIOCH

No. 132 – *New Century Hymnal*

***BENEDICTION**

***PARTING WORDS**

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

POSTLUDE

Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

Trad. English Carol

*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.*

Thanks to our Logos Readers: Laurel Hayes, Jan Barnes, and Roger Barnes

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**Connecting Remotely to Worship**

To view worship livestream and videos online, go to [YouTube.com/@1stChurchWG](https://www.youtube.com/@1stChurchWG)

**Wifi Connection**

Please connect to the network **first\_church\_guest** using the passcode **firstguest**

**Hearing-Assisted System**

To take advantage of our hearing-assisted system, download the **Listen Everywhere** app from the App Store or Google Store. If your phone is incompatible with the **Listen** system, we also have stand-alone receivers. Please see an attendant at the A/V station for assistance.

**How to Donate to First Congregational Church**

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

- Take advantage of the brass offering plate on the small table in the Narthex

- Send a check made payable to **First Congregational Church, 10 W. Lockwood Ave., Webster Groves, MO 63119**
- Visit **FirstChurchWG.org/donate**
- Scan the **QR code**.



### **Can You Offer a Ride?**

If you can provide transportation to either of our newly non-driving church members, some Sunday soon, please find their **signup sheets on clipboards in the office** to volunteer a ride.

### **Let Breeze Serve as Your Church Directory**

**Access the church directory or check on your donations on the Breeze app!**

Here are a few simple steps to access info from and about the church on your personal device:

1. Download the Breeze app via the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play store (Android)
2. The app will ask you to provide your Church ID, which is: **fccwgstlmo**
3. Use your Username and Password to log into the app! (If you don't know your Username, contact Office Administrator Adam Levin at [admin@firstchurchwg.org](mailto:admin@firstchurchwg.org).)

### **Kwanzaa Celebration, Today**

Thanks for joining us for a Kwanzaa Celebration and music to bring our hearts and spirits into the New Year! The Kwanzaa observance (and the candle of Ujima) includes West African drummer Baba Kunama Mtendaji.

### **Sunday Volunteers**

Please consider signing up for one or more of the following opportunities, by going to the links next to the volunteer roles (top of next page). Worship staff will provide training as needed!

**Liturgist** – [bit.ly/Liturgist-2025](https://bit.ly/Liturgist-2025)

**Slideshow Presenter** – [bit.ly/Slideshow-2025](https://bit.ly/Slideshow-2025) • **A/V Volunteer** – [bit.ly/SE-Corner](https://bit.ly/SE-Corner)

### **Office Closure**

The church office is closed until Monday, January 5.

### **Adult Education, January 11**

#### **All About Gateway Open & Affirming (GONA)**

What is Gateway Open & Affirming (GONA), and why is it important that our church is a part of it? After worship on January 11, we will hear information about GONA. background information about GONA can be accessed at [bit.ly/FCCGONA](https://bit.ly/FCCGONA). Barbara Biedenstein, who serves as the GONA coach for the United Church of Christ in the area, will present. Please join us in the Inglis Room on 1/11/26 at 11:20AM.

### **Save The Date – St. Pat's Dinner, February 28**

Samuel UCC will be hosting a St. Patrick's dinner on February 28, 2026, from 4 to 7PM. All money goes to the UCC Habitat for Humanity building project. A suggested donation of \$20 or more is suggested.

### **Lost-and-Found Items**

There are several items still in our office that have not been claimed. These items include a walking cane, two sets of eyeglasses, a black women's overshirt, and more. Please claim these items if they are yours. In late January, we will donate these items to Webster-Rock Hill Ministries.

### **Personal Hygiene & Food Drive for WRHM for MLK Weekend**

In recognition of the MLK, Jr., holiday and honoring its tradition of conducting a Day of Service, on Sunday, January 18, 2026, First Church will be holding a Collection Drive for Webster Rock Hill Ministries. Items sought include personal hygiene items and non-perishable food items. For more information and a complete list of items needed, please visit [bit.ly/FCCMLK26](https://bit.ly/FCCMLK26).

### **Poinsettias**

Did you enjoy the Christmas Eve services' poinsettias? If you are interested in helping us recoup their cost, please donate to the Flower Fund at [firstchurchwg.org/donate](https://firstchurchwg.org/donate).

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

Canned Ham • Brown Rice • Instant Mashed Potatoes • Canned Green Vegetable (low/no salt)  
Canned Fruit in own juices • Powdered Milk, shelf stable milk, soy milk  
Baby Fruits • Baby Vegetables • Baby Cereal • Toilet Paper

### **January Birthdays**

Helen Moody - January 1  
Mike Lenard - January 1  
Faye Dyer - January 7  
Coco Denoon - January 7  
Erin Prange - January 8  
Maggie Galloway - December 8  
Roger Barnes - January 11  
Kin Lavender - January 12  
Richard Smith - January 14  
Ryder Hoepfer - January 14  
Bob Hill - January 16  
Charlie Schoenherr - January 22  
Jan Barnes - January 23  
Jacquie Bryant - January 26  
Mark Metcalf - January 26  
Ashley Merideth - January 26  
George Conlee - January 28  
David von Weise - January 28

## **What's Going on at First Church**

For a complete schedule of all church events, observances, and building use,  
please visit our online calendar at  
[FirstChurchWG.org/Calendar](http://FirstChurchWG.org/Calendar)

**OFFICE CLOSED THRU JANUARY 5**

### **Sunday, December 28**

**Fourth Day of Christmas**

**Third Day of Kwanzaa**

**9:45AM** Nursery Care Available

**10:00AM** Worship

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

### **Sunday, January 4**

**Epiphany (Celebrated)**

**Sacrament of Christ's Table**

9:00AM Brown Baggers

9:45 Nursery Care Available

**10:00AM** Worship

**10:15AM** Kids' Church

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship (featuring King Cakes!)



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## Contact Information

Moderator – Chris von Weise  
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Weekend & Events Custodian –  
Onyeka Igboanuzue

Director of Ministry of Imagination, Creativity  
and the Arts (MICA) – Rev. Cliff Aerie  
Cliff.Aerie@FirstChurchWG.org

**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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@1stChurchWG