

Welcome!

First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2026
BAPTISM OF JESUS



*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 *Prelude in E Minor* F. Chopin
*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.*

WELCOME Laura Cooper, *Liturgist*

TOLLING THE BELL

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

CALL TO WORSHIP from Psalm 29
Ascribe to the HOLY ONE, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the HOLY ONE glory
and strength!

**Ascribe to the HOLY ONE the glory due God's name;
worship the HOLY ONE in divine splendor!**

The voice of the HOLY ONE is over the waters; the God of glory thunders,
the HOLY ONE, over mighty waters.

**The voice of the HOLY ONE breaks the cedars; the HOLY
ONE breaks the cedars of Lebanon.**

The voice of the HOLY ONE flashes forth flames of fire; and in the temple
all say, "Glory!"

The HOLY ONE sits enthroned forever.

May the HOLY ONE give us strength!

May the HOLY ONE bless us with peace!

***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** *Sing Praise to God* Joachim Neander
No. 22, vv. 1,2,4 – *New Century Hymnal*

***RITUAL OF APPROACH**

**Corporate Confession (Unison)*

**Almighty God, you have told us never to fear, because you abide
with us always. Still, we have to acknowledge that there have
been times when we have ignored your presence, allowed fear
to take us over, and rendered your protective shelter little more
than superstition. Forgive us our lack of faith, we pray, and
guide us into new understandings of who you are and how you
are with us. For you have spoken and called us beloved children,
redeeming us in Christ's name. Amen.**

**Silence for Personal Confession*

**Words of Assurance*

Beyond our doubting, and for the benefit of all people, God revealed salvation with a new and heavenly light, offering forgiveness and renewal.

As recipients of God's grace, this day we rejoice, for our God leads us toward redemption – our best and truest selves.

May God's light ever shine in the renewal of our hearts.

We are forgiven through Jesus Christ our Savior. Thanks be to God! Amen.

**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

Johari Hunt, *Coordinator of Faith Formation*

THE WORD SHARED

From the Prophets

Isaiah 42:1-9

Pew Bible, p. 657

From the Gospels

Matthew 3:13-17

p. 879

Response

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

"His First Sermon"

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Preparation for Prayer *Breathe on Me, Breath of God*

E. Hatch

Breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with life anew

That I may love the way you love and do what you would do.

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 BLESSINGS WITH OTHERS

Opportunities to Give and Gather

**Song of Praise*

Doxology

Thomas Ken

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)*

Holy Spirit, you have birthed us into being and blessed us for our lives' journeys. And along our way we have realized talents and gifts, specific to us but with which you would bless the many. Bless all we give, that our offerings may benefit your world and establish your majesty. Amen.

***PARTING HYMN**

God, When I Came into This Life
No. 354, vv. 1,4,5 – *New Century Hymnal*

Fred Kaan

***BENEDICTION**

***WORDS OF PARTING**

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

POSTLUDE

Jubilation

G. F. Handel

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.

The cross image now gracing the sanctuary vault is a depiction of the three basic strokes in Japanese *sumi-e* painting. According to painter Chiura Obata, the brush strokes used in *sumi-e* represent physical reality (vertical), the passage of time (horizontal), and movement (circle). They closely resemble the Celtic cross in which the lines and circle are associated heaven (vertical), earth (horizontal), and eternity (circle). The intersection of these meanings led planners of our 150th Jubilee in 2016 to adopt the Sumi Cross as our historic symbol.



The Sumi Cross above you was crafted by metal-worker Kem Williams and made possible by a grant from the Dr. Rodney M. Coe Memorial Fund. This laser-cut aluminum sculpture honors First Church's historic commitment to racial equity and social justice.

Sumi-e was introduced to the U.S. by Chiura Obata, a Japanese immigrant and instructor at the University of California – Berkeley. Similarly, his wife Haruko introduced *ikebana*, a Japanese style of floral design, to America. In 1943, Chiura and Haruko joined First Church. They and their adult children had been displaced from their West Coast home by federal mandate, during World War II. First Church, like many Congregational churches, sheltered the Obatas for the duration of the war, providing them a home and work. Their son Gyo Obata, who died in 2022 at age 99, would become one of the founders of the world-renowned architectural firm, HOK.

Books by and about the Obatas are available from the church's Holaday Library.

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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.)

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-2026

Slideshow Presenter – bit.ly/FCCWG-Slides • **A/V Volunteer** – bit.ly/SE-Corner

Adult Education, Today

All About Gateway Open & Affirming (GONA)

This morning, we are happy to welcome Barbara Biedenstien, church coach of the Gateway Open and Affirming Coalition (aka "Gateway ONA"). Barbara will be offering a presentation about the work of the Coalition and how we might as individuals and a church strengthen our connections and advocacy. First Church has been ONA since 2008, meaning that we affirm and empower all our members regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation or socio-economic background. **Please, join Barbara at 11:20 in the Inglis Room.**

Personal Hygiene & Food Drive for WRHM for MLK Weekend, January 18

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.

Holiday Closing, January 19; Early Closing, January 26

The Church Office will be closed on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, January 19.

The Church Office will close at 1PM on Monday, January 26.

Heritage Sunday, January 25

In the true spirit of our Congregational Heritage, we will celebrate with a classic Potluck. Bring your favorite main dish or side dish casserole, salad or dessert to share. This is the time to

resurrect a 9 x13 size recipe that you do not usually prepare. **A signup sheet IS NOW AVAILABLE** in the office so as to spread out the available selections. The event will also include a brief presentation relating to ensuring our future as we celebrate our past. Mark your calendar for another enjoyable morning dining together.

Lady Elect Chair Yoga Event, January 27

You are cordially invited to the January 27th (11:30) Lady Elect meeting, featuring Chair Yoga with Jeanene Harris. Wear comfy clothing and bring a sack lunch to eat after the workout. To RSVP, just text Marilyn at (314) 894-2046. Include your name.

Creating Pathways to Local Homeownership for Working Families, February 1

Our Adult Education session on Sunday, **February 1**, starting at **11:20** in **Inglis Room**, will focus on the **Webster Groves Community Land Trust**, a new community-governed nonprofit organization that helps create pathways to local homeownership for working families. **Acting Executive Director Farrell Carfield** will explain how a community land trust balances the opportunity to build equity and wealth with keeping homes affordable and diverse for future generations. There will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions and to find out how you can help! Learn more at www.webstergrovesclt.org.

Save The Date – St. Pat’s Dinner, February 28

Samuel UCC will be hosting a St. Patrick’s dinner on February 28, 2026, from 4-7PM. All money goes to the UCC Habitat Build. 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.

Flower Fund Needs You!

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.

F&F Update

Good news: Our building insurance premium dropped by \$7,000 this year, while coverage will increase slightly. There's a slight rise in our Workman's Comp, while the Umbrella Policy and auto premiums are unchanged. Huge thanks to Mark Cereghino for handling this, even though he's no longer on F&F.

Church Merch Still Available!

We still have some First Church merch! Adult sized tees are \$15, youth sizes are \$10. You can buy your shirt at the website’s donate page, and pick it up in the office.

January Meal-a-Month Shopping List

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

January Birthdays

Helen Moody - January 1
Mike Lenard - January 1
Faye Dyer - January 7
Coco Denoon - January 7
Maggie Galloway - January 7
Erin Prange - January 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

Sunday, January 11

Baptism of Christ

9:00AM Worship Rehearsals

9:45AM Nursery Care Available

10:00AM Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:05AM Coffee Fellowship

11:20AM Adult Ed: Gateway ONA: Inglis Room

Monday, January 12

7:00PM Three Ministries (Hybrid)

7:00PM BSA Troop 301 - Inglis Room

Tuesday, January 13

10:30AM Staff Meeting - Church Office

Thursday, January 15

6:00PM Canterbury Bells - Sanctuary

7:30PM Chancel Choir - Sanctuary

Sunday, January 18

Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Weekend

Jazz Worship

9:15AM Chancel Choir Warmup

9:45AM Nursery Care Available

10:00AM Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:05AM Coffee Fellowship

Monday, January 19

MLK Day - Office Closed



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

Contact Information

Moderator – Chris von Weise
chrisvonyz@gmail.com

Pastor – Rev. David Denoon
DDenoon@FirstChurchWG.org

Office Administrator – Adam Levin
Admin@FirstChurchWG.org

Coordinator of Faith Formation – Johari Hunt
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
Mark.Metcalf@FirstChurchWG.org

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.

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YouTube

@1stChurchWG