

Welcome!

First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2026
PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION



PALM
SUNDAY

*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 *Triumphant March* Alexander Schreiner
*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 Sharon Love, *Liturgist*

TOLLING OF THE BELL

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

OPENING WORDS Matthew 21:1-11 Pew Bible, p. 898

***GATHERING HYMN** *All Glory, Laud, and Honor* Theodulph of Orleans
No. 155 – Pilgrim Hymnal
*During the Hymn, palm branches will be distributed
by the children to the Congregation.*

***BLESSING OF PALMS** (Responsive – Pastor; **People**)

God be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to our Sovereign God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Indeed it is right to praise and bless you, eternal God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Child Jesus Christ our Savior.

We remember the day when he entered your holy city of Jerusalem and there was proclaimed King by those who spread their garments and palm branches in his path.

As we recall his coming in victory, so we ask, O God, that you will bless these branches, that they may be for us signs of the victory which is yet to come.

We pray that as we carry them in Christ's name, so we may ever acknowledge Christ in the way that leads to eternal life. All praise to you, O God, in Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

***HOSANNA** led by the Children and the Pastor
*After the Hosanna, children are excused to Kids Church,
or to sit with their families if that is preferred.*

***RITUAL OF APPROACH**

Invitation to Confession (Responsive)

Jesus, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof.

But only say the word, and your servant will be healed.

Corporate Confession (Unison)

Merciful God, as we enter Holy Week and gather at your house of prayer, turn our hearts again to Jerusalem – to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And, as we are

reminded of our shortcomings in faith and our genuine sinfulness – whether as individuals, as a community, or as a society – remind us as well of your love and compassion exemplified in the sacrifice Jesus was willing to make for our sake and for the sake of the whole world. In this way make us and all the world fit for your new Jerusalem, that home eternal in the heavens where, forgiven and blessed we may be united with Christ, you, and the Holy Spirit in glory for ever. Amen.

Silence for Personal Confessions

Assurance of Pardon (Responsive)

from Psalm 118

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This is what our God is doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that our God has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

O give thanks to the Sovereign God, who is good, whose steadfast love endures forever.

**Singing God's Glory*

Sing Amen (Masithi)

S. C. Molefe

No. 760 – *New Century Hymnal*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We Share Our Joys and Concerns

When you speak a prayer request aloud, please bear in mind the privacy of those for whom you are praying, as this worship is being live-streamed.

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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.

WE SHARE OUR BLESSINGS WITH OTHERS

Opportunities to Give and Gather

**Song of Praise*

Doxology

Thomas Ken

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.

**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.

THE WORD SHARED / MESSAGE OF THE DAY *The Passion According to Matthew*
From the Gospels Matthew 26:3-27:56 Pew Bible, p. 905-909
Anthem *He, Watching Over Israel* F. Mendelssohn
From the Gospels Matthew 27:57-66 p. 909

***PARTING HYMN** *My Song Is Love Unknown* Samuel Crossman
No. 222, vv. 1,3,5 – *New Century Hymnal*

***BENEDICTION** From the *Byzantine Vespers*

***PARTING WORDS**

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

POSTLUDE *Dernier Kyrie* F. Couperin
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.

We are grateful to the Kids Church volunteers who participated in leading today's Blessing of Palms, and to **Rebecca Novak** and **Ernestine Carter**, who took part in presenting the Passion according to Matthew.

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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**

**Can You Offer a Ride?**

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

**Hearing-Assisted System**

Take advantage of our hearing-assisted system! Simply 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**.



**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:

- I. 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).)

### **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](https://bit.ly/Liturgist-2026)

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

### **New on Sundays – Door Security Policy**

As part of our efforts toward greater safety and security, a new policy has been adopted by the First Friends. Almost all doors will now be locked at 10:00AM on Sundays. To access the building after worship has begun, please go to the Narthex entrance (east side of the building). The First Friends will let you in.

### **Annual Reports Due, End of March**

If you're the chair of a Committee or Ministry, or you lead an organization at First Church, please make sure to email your annual report to [admin@firstchurchwg.org](mailto:admin@firstchurchwg.org) before the end of March. If you're struggling with what to write, take Linda Kopetti's advice: "What would you want your group to know about this year, five years from now?" You're also welcome to contact Adam with any questions.

### **Last Call for Easter Flowers, April 1**

If you would like your name and dedication to appear in the Easter Flowers insert on Easter Sunday, please donate to the Flower Fund by Wednesday, April 1st with a dedication in the description, or fill out an Easter Flowers form in the Narthex today.

### **Good Friday Blues, April 3**

**This year's Good Friday Blues, at 7pm on April 3**, introduces us to Niki and Ari - two people who have just experienced a traumatic scene that makes them wonder whether they could have done anything to prevent it. Major questions about faith and responsibility tinge their conversation as they process what has happened. And it all arises in the Shadow of the Cross. We're looking for three actors and three readers to assist the Oikos Ensemble in this provocative and poignant performance. **Actors will have rehearsals between March 23 and 30**, and all will be needed for a dress rehearsal at 4pm on Good Friday (supper provided). *If you would be interested in participating as an actor or reader, please contact the Pastor.*

### **Coffee Cakes Needed for Easter Sunday, April 5**

On **Easter Sunday, April 5th**, please bring coffee cakes to share during Coffee Fellowship. Parish Life requests that the cakes be pre-plated and ready-to-serve. **Remember not to include nuts.**

### **Office Closed on Easter Monday, April 6**

The Church Office will be closed the Monday after Easter Sunday, April 6.

### **Benevolence 2026, May 2**

This year's Gala of Grace will have a Derby Day theme, recognizing the annual Running for the Roses in Kentucky which will finish just as we are gathering! Purchase your tickets at [bit.ly/FCCGalaTickets](https://bit.ly/FCCGalaTickets), or in the Narthex or Memorial Hall on Sundays. **Reserve yours by April 15.** To learn more about how to volunteer your time, product, or service, check this week's Covenant News.

### **Curious about First Church?**

Pastor Dave Denoon will be hosting an Inquirers Gathering on **Sunday, April 12, after worship** for those interested in finding out more about First Church and the United Church of Christ. Attendees will be eligible to be received into membership on April 26, or at a later date. To register, please contact the Pastor.

### **Flowers for Jubilee Garden Cross**

You may have noticed the draped cross that has been in the Jubilee Garden throughout the season of Lent. After Maundy Thursday's service with Sts. Clare & Francis Church, the drape will be removed. This will leave a wire mesh on the cross where the beams meet. From morning on Saturday, April 4, until the time of worship on Easter Day, April 5, members and friends are encouraged to bring their favorite flowers which they can place in the mesh, to decorate the cross with symbols of resurrection and renewal.

### **Old Community Church Fish Fry, April 3**

Our sister congregation, Old Community Missionary Baptist Church, 238 W. Kirkham Ave., Webster Groves, will serve a Fish Fry on Good Friday, from 11:30AM until 6:00PM. Offerings include catfish, whole jack, chicken wings – sandwiches and dinners. Call for further details or to pre-order at 314-962-3117.

### **Further Observances Mentioned in Covenant News**

Check out this week's Covenant News at <http://conta.cc/4bUW0uR> for events taking place in

- Webster Groves (Community Land Trust meeting, April 8; Covering House Introductory Coffee, April 11),
- the Missouri Mid-South Conference (MoVal Workday, April 25; Women's Retreat, May 1-3),
- the region ("Courageous Faith in Tumultuous Times" Interfaith Gathering, April 17-19)
- and the country (LGBTQ+ Student Day of Silence, April 10).

Also, find out about how to support a Girl Scout Gold Award project at Camp MoVal.

### **March Birthdays**

Elle Polaske - March 5  
Ruthie Meyer - March 6  
Emery Fisher - March 9  
Brennan Butler - March 12  
Kris Rinne - March 14  
Kitty Pearl - March 18  
Lauren Gomez - March 20  
Jim Harris - March 21  
Casen Hood - March 21  
Nick Suber - March 25  
Amy Byrne - March 26  
Danny Smith - March 29

*There are no member birthdays registered in our database, from March 30 – April 5.  
If you know otherwise, please contact the office with name and date (month-date-year).*

### **March Meal-A-Month Shopping List**

Canned Ham • Macaroni and Cheese • Canned Green Vegetable (low or no salt)  
Canned Fruit in own juices • Powdered Milk, shelf stable milk, soy milk  
Toothbrushes • Toothpaste • Dental Floss

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

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

**Sunday, March 29**

**Palm Sunday of the Passion**

9:45AM Nursery Care Available

10:00AM Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:05AM Coffee Fellowship - Memorial Hall

**Monday, March 30**

7:00PM Scouting BSA Troop 301 - Memorial Hall

**Tuesday, March 31**

10:30AM Staff Meeting - Church Office

**Wednesday, April 1**

9:30AM Yoga with Jeanene - Inglis Room

**Thursday, April 2**

**Maundy Thursday**

7:00PM Worship w/ Sts. Clare & Francis ECC – Sample Chapel

**Friday, April 3**

**Good Friday**

7:00PM Good Friday Blues: Jazz Lament  
“Can We Change?”

**Sunday, April 5**

**Celebration of the Resurrection**

9:00AM Canterbury Bells Warmup

9:15AM Chancel Choir Warmup

9:45AM Nursery Care Available

9:45AM Festival Music Begins

10:00AM Worship

10:15AM Kids' Church

11:05AM Coffee Fellowship (w/coffee cakes!) - Memorial Hall

**Monday, April 6**

**Office Closed**



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

## Contact Information

Moderator – Chris von Weise  
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Custodian & AV Tech – Mark Metcalf  
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Weekend & Events Custodian –  
Onyeka Igboanuzue

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