

Welcome!

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



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

AUGUST 23, 2026



*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

Theme From Second Movement

Antonín Dvořák

From Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, "From The New World"

*At this time, we invite you to complete an entry in the Friendship Booklet,
to silence the ringer on any cellular device you may have with you,
and to quiet yourself in preparation for worship.*

WELCOME

TOLLING OF THE BELL

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive – Liturgist, **People**)

Jane Porchey, Liturgist

Like empty jars, we have come to be filled.

Like ornamental candles, we have come to be set ablaze.

Like aged wine in a cask, we have come to be poured out.

Like weary travelers, we have come to find rest.

Like lovers drifted apart, we have come to be reconciled.

Like little children, we have come to be surprised!

Hear the word of God and make your reply: "My heart has heard you say,
'Come talk with me, O my people!'"

ALL: And my heart responds, "God, I am coming!"

OPENING HYMN

You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore

Cesáreo Gabaraín

**You have come down to the lakeshore
Seeking neither the wise nor the wealthy,
But only asking for me to follow.**

Refrain

**Jesus, you have looked into my eyes,
Kindly smiling, you've called out my name.
On the sand I've abandoned my small boat;
Now with you, I will seek other seas.**

**You know full well my possessions.
Neither treasure nor weapons for conquest,
Just these my fishnets and will for working.**

Refrain

**You need my hands, my exhaustion,
Working love for the rest of the weary,
A love that's willing to go on loving.**

Refrain

**You who have fished other waters;
You, the longing of souls that are yearning;
O loving Friend, you have come to call me.**

Refrain

PRAYER OF INVOCATION: UNISON

Send for your Spirit, O God, and renew the face of the earth. Dwell among us, even though your presence will startle and unsettle us. Grant us your peace, we pray, as justice and love pour down upon the yearning earth. Amen.

**Singing God's Glory*

Glory to God in the Highest

Peruvian melody

Congregation repeats after the leader:

Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!

Congregation repeats after the leader:

To God be glory forever!

Congregation harmonizes at the leader's direction:

Alleluia, amen! Alleluia, amen!

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Johari Hunt, Coordinator of Faith Formation

SHARING THE WORD

From the Gospels

Romans 12: 1-8

Message Bible, p. 1033-34

Matthew 5 :38-48

p. 881

Response.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

Thanks be to God.

PREPARING FOR THE MESSAGE OF THE DAY

"Memory"

Jahlers, Broughton, & Koch

From Womenpsalms

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

"Five Women"

Revs. Sue Leary & Jan Barnes

***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.

WE ARE A COMMUNITY

Since Covid we haven't Passed the Peace between each other. Today we will do that, but a bit differently. Make a fist as best you can, tum to your neighbor and do a "fist bump", saying "I've got your back."

PRAYER HYMN

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

Edwin 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.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,
until my will is one with yours, to do and to endure.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God, stir in me one desire,
That every earthly part of me may glow with holy fire.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I never die,
But live with you the perfect life of your eternity.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Sue Leary

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

Rev. Jan Barnes

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)*

**O God, through the offering of these gifts may we become a
more open people...
Open-minded in hearing your Word and wisdom,
Open-hearted in healing a broken world,
Open-handed in heeding your call for charity and enacted love.
With thanks for all good gifts, we present a portion of our
substance and the whole of ourselves. Amen.**

***PARTING HYMN**

You Are the Salt for the Earth, O People

Marty Haugen

**You are salt for the earth, O people:
Salt for the reign of God!
Share the flavour of life, O people:
Life in the City of God!**

Refrain

**Bring forth the reign of mercy,
Bring forth the reign of peace;
Bring forth the reign of justice,
Bring forth the City of God!**

**You are a light on the hill, O people:
Light for the City of God!
Shine so holy and bright, O people:
Shine for the City of God!**

Refrain

**You are a seed of the Word, O people:
Bring forth the reign of God!
Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice,
Grow in the City of God!**
Refrain

**We are a blessed and a pilgrim people:
Bound for the reign of God!
Love our journey and love our homeland:
Love is the City of God!**
Refrain

***BENEDICTION**

***PARTING WORDS**

Our worship has ended.
Let our service begin.

POSTLUDE

Postlude

Alexander Schreiner

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.

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Professional Staff Times Away

Director of Music Leon Burke will be on vacation in Asunción (Paraguay), **August 24-September 3**. Pastor Dave Denoon will be away, **August 18-31**. Please contact the office if Pastoral Care is needed. Today, Jan Barnes and Sue Leary will fill in for Dave. On August 30, Marty Black will serve as pastor.

Our Bible Journey, Wednesday nights

Our Bible Journey is a weekly gathering on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM in the Church Parlor. The object of the Bible Journey is eventually to explore the entire Bible with others, beginning “in the beginning.” If you would like to be part of Our Bible Journey but cannot attend in person, please contact the Pastor and he'll send you a link that you can use to take part. To see the reading plan we are following for this Bible Journey, pick up a copy from the big narthex table, and follow along with us.

Confirmation Students and Mentors, starting September 8

A new Confirmation Class is starting in September. Especially for young people who rising 7th through 9th Graders, but also available to older youth who haven't gone through the Confirmation process yet, the class will meet on Tuesdays at 6:30PM, from September 8, 2026, through May 18, 2027 (with Confirmation Sunday on June 6, 2027). As in the past, part of this Confirmation season will be the participation of **adult mentors** who will go with the students through the process, offering support and encouragement. If you would like to be considered for mentoring, or if you would like more information, contact the Pastor.

Hanging Autumn Hands in the Sanctuary, August 26

Volunteers will be setting up for the backpack blessing and upcoming events in the Sanctuary on Wednesday, August 26. The space will be unavailable for much of the day.

Blessing, Ice Cream, & Pool Party, August 30

Be sure to bring your sunblock and swimsuit with you this year as we bring in this academic year with prayer. We're also celebrating this moment of transition with a pool party! Join us after the ice cream social at the **Webster Groves Pool!** We will be meeting at **noon**.

CROP Walk to End Hunger, September 27

The 2026 St. Louis Metro CROP Hunger Walk will be held on Sunday, September 27 at Eden Theological Seminary. 1-mile and 3-mile routes are available around Webster Groves. Check-in/registration at 1:30PM and Walk at 2:00. To find out how to register, contact Laurel Hayes or see the latest Covenant News.

Serving Meals at St. Patrick Center, October 7

Thanks to K Wentzien, St. Patrick Center opened the door for us at First Church to offer aid. St. Patrick Center has offered ministries to the homeless in the area, including housing programs, health services, employment services, and more, since 1983. **We are planning to bring dinner to the residents of the Center, around 25, on Wednesday, October 7. You are invited to stay and share the meal and conversation with residents on that evening.** If you are interested, please contact **Pat Doyle-Grace or K Wentzien**.

More in This Week's "Covenant News"

See all of the announcements in this morning's bulletin with accompanying graphics, as well as announcements from other churches and organizations about their activities, by going to this week's online newsletter - <https://conta.cc/4hF8TO2>

Connecting Remotely to Worship

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

Wifi Available

Please connect to the network **first_church_guest** using the passcode **firstguest**

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.



Sunday Volunteers – Sign up, today!

Liturgist – bit.ly/Liturgist-2026

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

August Birthdays

Peter Kalulu – August 3
Sue Stepleton – August 10
Luke Ferguson – August 13
John Paci – August 13
Gwen Denoon – August 14
Julie McHugh – August 20
Sharon Beal – August 23
John Claggett – August 30

August Meal-a-Month Shopping List

Canned Chicken • Brown Rice • Canned Soup (low or no salt)
Canned Corn (low or no salt) • Canned Fruit in own juices
Powdered Milk, shelf stable milk, soy milk • Diapers
Diaper Wipes • Formula with Iron

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

Sunday, August 23

9:45AM Nursery Care Available
10:00AM Worship with Rev. Jan Barnes & Rev. Sue Leary
10:15AM Kids' Church
11:05AM Coffee Fellowship

Tuesday, August 25

~~**10:30 AM** Staff Meeting – Church Office~~ **Cancelled**

Wednesday, August 16

Hanging of Autumn Hands - Sanctuary
9:30AM Yoga with Jeanene - Inglis
7:00PM Our Bible Journey - Parlor

Sunday, August 30

Backpack Blessing
9:45AM Nursery Care Available
10:00AM Worship with Rev. Marty Black
10:15AM Kids' Church
11:05AM Ice Cream Social
12:00PM Pool Party - Webster Groves Pool



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Contact Information

Moderator – Chris von Weise
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Events Coordinator – Alicia McMinn
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Custodian – Stuart Chase

Lead A/V Technician – Mark Metcalf
Mark.Metcalf@FirstChurchWG.org

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.

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