

## WGCC steps up to help the most marginalized in our neighborhood

It's called the "achievement gap." It's the widening margin between black students and white students in even the most affluent of school districts - such as Kirkwood.

At Webster Groves Christian Church, we are trying to help our schools and our community to narrow that gap.

Our focus in addressing this problem is on early childhood education. Some of the steps we have taken so far:

### **Project NOW:**

We recognized a need in a local Head Start Program where children went home on the weekends to homes where there was often not enough food for the whole family. Each week we provide food for 15 families.

### **Parents As Teachers:**

We have opened our doors to this organization to provide free health screenings, parent meetings and more.

### **Preschool help:**

We have proposed a community partnership for use of our building for preschool programming. An early childhood committee of the Kirkwood School District is currently exploring options and strategies for increasing access to early childhood programs.

Our role in this effort is part of our mission to follow the teachings of Jesus by sacrificially serving the people who are most marginalized. Look for more details as plans develop.

## WHAT'S INSIDE



**THE DECEMBER BOYS**

**LEADING OUR WORSHIP**



**U2**

**CELEBRATING IN SONG**



**HERB SMITH**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL THANKS**

## Disciples Women/ CWF: Max Ott brings the bluegrass

The Disciples Women of Webster Groves Christian Church are off to a great start.

On Thursday, Sept. 1, is our first General Meeting/Luncheon for the Church fiscal year.

Our own Max Ott will be entertaining us with bluegrass music.

Thursday, Sept. 8, will be our Group Meetings:

Lydia: 9:30am Marilyn Stewart's home

Martha: 12:30pm Heritage room (WGCC)

Tabitha: 7:00pm Heritage room (WGCC)

Looking ahead to October: the luncheon and general meeting will be held on Thursday Oct. 6. Charlotte Pullen will be sharing letters from her Uncle Ray. He sent these letters home during World War I. He enlisted to learn to fly an airplane. Come to the luncheon and find out what happened!

General meeting, 11:00am, Sack Luncheon at Noon. Bring your own lunch. Drinks will be provided.

The following Thursday, Oct. 13: Group Meetings:

Lydia: 9:30am Charlotte Pullen's home

Martha: 12:30pm Heritage room (WGCC)

Tabitha: 7:00pm Heritage room (WGCC)

-Sally Smith

## Koinonia explores Syrian refugees

The Koinonia Class of WGCC would like to invite all church members to hear Sara Sabaa speak in our Gallery Area about her involvement with the Syrian Refugee Project, and about Wafaa Abuelula, whom WGCC is helping to sponsor. The class will gather in the Gallery Area at 9:00 am, this Sunday, Sept. 4.



Wafaa Abuelula with a bicycle donated by Bill and Analyn Howells. If you would like to contribute to WGCC's Refugee Aid Fund to help support Wafaa while she completes her studies, you can make out a check payable to "WGCC", noting in the memo line "Refugee Aid" or "Support Wafaa."

---

## Ringers welcome (and novices too!)

Would you like to consider ringing with us this year? The handbell choir would certainly welcome you.

Don't worry if you think that you do not read music well enough - we will happily teach you. Less experienced ringers can be given less demanding bell assignments.

If you are interested, but do not think you are able to commit to weekly rehearsals all year, that's ok. We will be very happy to have you join us a month at a time, or more if you can.

Rehearsals will be on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm as we have in the past, before choir practice at 7 pm. The rehearsals begin on Sept. 7.

In addition, we also welcome any 3rd-8th graders, and their parents, who might be interested in playing Choir Chimes.

Any potential ringers should contact Lisa Cripe  
[lisacripe@wgcc.org](mailto:lisacripe@wgcc.org)

# Get to know our proposed Constitution

The Transition Oversight Team has been working to create a clear and succinct new Constitution for WGCC. Copies were handed out at the Congregational Meeting in May, through worship bulletins Aug. 7- Sept. 11 and through email updates. A copy of the proposed constitution also can be found online at <http://bit.ly/wgccproposal>

Here are some important dates to know about the process.

**Sept. 18:** Congregational Roundtable Meeting: This will be a great opportunity to ask questions about the Constitution. Pizza will be served!

**Oct. 16:** Congregational Roundtable Meeting: Another opportunity for questions and to examine any congregational feedback received thus far.

**Nov. 13:** Congregational Meeting: We will vote on the new Constitution, which would take effect on Jan. 1, 2017.

Questions? Please contact any member of the Transition Oversight Team.

Beth Cooley

Matt DeKinder

Lea Gerdes

Diane Mark

Brian McKenney

John Pahl

John Smith

Robin Woodrome



**9/11/16** Join us at Webster Groves Christian Church for a special morning of celebration and worship

## 9 AM: Fellowship Hall

Gather for Breakfast

Sharing of Sunday School Memories

Celebrating and thanking **Herb Smith** for dedicated Sunday School leadership and teaching

## 10:30 AM: Sanctuary

When Love Comes to Town

A service of praise and worship featuring the music of U2. Clint McCann will be preaching on the theology of U2's music.

**Please write your Sunday school memory on an index card and put on Steve's desk by Sept. 7.**

# Members ‘pass it forward’ through Legacy Fund

The WGCC Legacy Fund provided \$50,972 of the total church income of \$367,717 in the recently completed 2015-16 fiscal year. That’s 13.9% of the total income used to operate the church.

The Legacy Fund is the church’s endowment, or permanent fund, in which the original gifts are permanently restricted. The fund has been invested since 1995 with the Christian Church Foundation, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Over the years, more than \$1.1 million has been given to the Legacy Fund by church members who gave in order to sustain the congregation’s ministries for the future. Donors to the fund have truly lived by “passing it forward” and we are the beneficiaries of their generosity.

As of June 30, the end of the fiscal year, the fund had a balance of \$1,287,486. More than \$638,000 has been drawn from the fund’s earnings and growth to support our ministries since 1995. In recent years, withdrawals from the fund have been limited to 4% of the total value of the fund in order to permit investments to grow over and above the withdrawals.

Unfortunately, the markets had a difficult year in the July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016 fiscal year and the WGCC investment had a negative return of -.47% for those 12 months. The first six months of 2016 saw a comeback in the market, and the return for January 1-June 30, 2016 was 5.75%. July 2016 (not shown in this report) was even better with a 2.78% gain making the 2016 year-to-date gain a vigorous 8.68%.

The anticipated draw from the fund for the 2016-17 fiscal year is \$49,000, but the Christian Church Foundation has reduced its income rate to 3.75% from the current 4% beginning in 2017. The objective of the rate reduction is to preserve a dependable stream of income for those ministries like WGCC that are dependent on endowment revenue. Trustees will meet in coming weeks to discuss this and make a recommendation to the Transitional Oversight Team for 2017.

Current trustees are Becky Piening, Max Ott, Erich Blaufuss, Craig Wood and Tom Wood. Linda Wilmoth had served as chair of the trustees but recently resigned due to her family’s move to Indianapolis. Craig accepted appointment as a trustee replacing Linda.

Trustees also oversee church investments of six other restricted funds with Christian Church Foundation. Those funds, their June 30 balance and income provided to the church in the 2015-16 fiscal year for each:

Fine Arts Fund:	\$9,728 balance	\$383.19 income
Isaiah 58-Woodhaven Fund	\$9,872 balance	\$389.51 income
June England Scholarship Fund	\$10,872 balance	\$1,428.99 income
Memorial Garden Fund	\$9,780 balance	\$385.88 income
Marcia Mrazek Scholarship Fund	\$68,808 balance,	\$2,714.95 income
Organ Maintenance Fund	\$91,452 balance	\$3,602.56 income

As a general ministry of the Christian Church, the Foundation seeks to support the ministries of the Christian Church by providing opportunities for stewardship of accumulated resources through planned giving. The Foundation is authorized and is engaged primarily in soliciting, receiving, accumulating and distributing funds to undergird the work and mission of the Christian Church; receiving and managing property and funds held in trust or otherwise for stated purposes; and managing making distributions from its permanent funds. - Tom Wood

# December Boys reflections and music turn Grubbiness into Cleanliness



Led in worship through the reflective words and hopes of four teenage boys, our congregation was energized Aug. 28 to spend hours cleaning, scrubbing, shampooing, kitchen organizing, cobweb detecting, toy sanitizing and furnace cleaning. Sam Fink, Xander Gerdes, Khotso Moore and Adam Orr, all born in December 2001, provided the spirit for all of us to give our building a thorough cleaning.

These words of two of the December Boys are shared on the following pages.



# Khotso Moore: Being strong in our community

Luke 14:12-14

*Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. 13 But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."*



There's a lot of people in this community. Some people have all they need and much of what they want. Some people have all they need and can afford to treat themselves with something they want. Then there are those who struggle a bit more, and have trouble getting what they need, and can afford little to no wants. Finally I'd say, there are people in this community who can't afford a place to stay, who barely get enough food for themselves, let alone a family if they have one. And the thing is, they all live within this small community, not a couple minutes drive apart.

At Webster Groves Christian Church, we try to help all kinds of people. We try to follow Jesus's teaching to the best of our comprehension and ability. If we try and follow those teachings, in inviting people into worship, and and share what pooled resources we have, the lives of those who need that, will be changed drastically. We can provide them a place to stay, and a nutritious meal, not as a permanent solution, but as a crutch until they can walk.

The thing of it is, Jesus helped all types of people, no matter their social and economic status. So those who aren't having their basic needs met, are definitely in need of outside help. And it's great that we can help with that, with things like Habitat for Humanity, to help house them, and the Bridge Bread to help feed them. All of that is wonderful and fantastic that we are able to assist people who really need that.

But I think that it is important to not forget people that live good self sustaining lives, but don't know where to go from where they are, or are having a rough time of it emotionally. They might not have a church congregation to turn to. One of many groups of people who are kinda pushed to the back corner of our minds are young couples who've just started a new life together and might be looking for a church to go to. It's my hope that we can find them a place to worship, a place to feel welcome in this church.

In the future I honestly hope that on Thursday or Sunday nights, when the overnight hosts walk into their church, that there's no one there. I hope that one day Memorial Boulevard is given more food than they can give away. I hope that by inviting and sharing with the people who might not get a lot of attention, or those who get the attention they need, that our congregation can grow to even greater heights.

There's a lot of people in this community. And it'll be more than difficult to help each and every one of them by ourselves. But I hope that we can help as many people as possible, to be a strong presence in the community.

## Xander Gerdes: Imagine your life in their shoes

"How would our lives and lives of others change if we followed Jesus' teaching and invited and shared with people who are most marginalized in our communities?"



Have you ever been out with a friend, for dinner, or a movie or to see a concert and when you get there your friend says, "I'll get the tickets." You probably say, "Gee, thanks Bud. How about I'll buy the popcorn and drinks?" That's reciprocation. One person extends a kindness, the other person responds in kindness.

Now most of you have probably had this exchange at one point in your life whether it was between a friend or someone you were first meeting and wanted to impress, but what happens if this person can't repay you? Would you still take this person out for dinner or a show? Would you want to invite them over for dinner? Would you expect something in return for your kindness, your invitation, your time spent with them?

Jesus tells us to do just that: invite that friend, invite that stranger, invite that person you know is having a hard time. Also, know that you will get something even better in exchange for your kindness...you'll be blessed by God.

But the thing is, you feel that blessing. It's an "Aw Yeah" feeling, right? You get it, I know you do. Raise your hand if you have had that "Aw Yeah" feeling after extending a kindness to someone. It feels like goodness and happiness, doesn't it? That's God's blessing. That's repayment enough.

Open your bulletin, look at the top of the inside page: Our Mission is following Jesus' teachings by sacrificially serving the people who are the most marginalized.

Who would that be? Who do you encounter in your daily lives who are the most marginalized? Who do you avoid who is the most marginalized? Now imagine your life in their shoes.

When I think of the most marginalized, I think of people of different races. I especially think of kids who are living in poverty. Can you imagine being a poor, hungry child trying to learn? Trying to "fit in" at school? Possibly trying to keep your family's struggles to yourself and not tell your friends?

Two of the ways I see our church serving the "most marginalized" is by Room at the Inn and by Project NOW.

With Room at the Inn we give people a safe place to sleep, they are fed, at least for one night. Do we want anything in return? Do we expect reciprocation? No.

With Project NOW we help children and their families have food and snack on the weekend. Do we want anything in return? Do we expect reciprocation? No.

That's the thing with these very marginalized groups, they can't repay you. They can't reciprocate in the way you've been kind to them. They're so fought against that people seem to forget that they are their own people, too. And when we're not fighting against them we just plain ignore them. Would you ignore your child if they were in need? Why then, would we ignore a child of God?

So yes: be selfless, be kind and pay for a meal, or a ticket, or whatever it is but just remember that it's not about being repaid: You will be blessed by God.

# Arming yourself for the fight against racism

The Christian Church in Mid-America is committed to becoming a Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racist Church. As one of its top four priorities, Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism (PRAR) is intimately tied to our church's mission to be a church that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality and a passion for justice. This initiative seeks to nurture the wholeness of the church through educating and engaging congregational leaders and members to dismantle systemic racism and other oppressive structures that impact our daily lives. To help our congregations meet the challenge of this priority the region is providing opportunities for education and training.



From 9 am to 2 pm on Saturday, Sept. 24, The St. Louis Summit on Racial Justice will take place at Webster Groves Christian Church. The morning will feature a film "Injustice Anywhere," from Ferguson and St. Louis. The afternoon will have sessions on awareness training around race and an introduction to organizing for change. you can register at <http://www.mid-america-disciples.org>

On Thursday, Oct. 6, the PRAR Team, in partnership with Drury University History, Philosophy & Religion, is hosting a Pre-Assembly Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism Workshop, from 1 pm - 5 pm at Drury University Findlay Student Center. \$10.00 includes registration and workshop materials.

---

## Join the Habitat Matching Challenge!

From now through Sept. 30, Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church will match your donation to Habitat for Humanity Saint Louis dollar for dollar...up to a total of \$30,000!

WGCC has stated a mission goal of raising \$1,500 for Habitat--if we can do this by mid-late September, our gift will become \$3,000!

Remember - this is a limited time opportunity to raise much-needed funds - and the clock is ticking! Thank you for any gift you can share between now and Sept. 30 to help us take full advantage of the Ladue Chapel Challenge.



## A thank you from Evan Stanfill

Thank you all so much for awarding me the Mrazek Scholarship and the very generous love offering that you sent with it. I cannot thank this congregation and Jeff enough for being such a pivotal and enriching part of my XPLOR experience. The love and encouragement that flows from WGCC is a testament to who this church is and what it believes. I know it follows me as I make my way to San Francisco for the next part of my journey. It's been a blessing to be part of the Webster Groves Christian Church family and it is exciting to know we are both moving toward new and amazing things. Thanks again for all the incredible support.

-Evan Stanfill

# IN OUR PRAYERS ...

## Recent Concerns

- Nick, a student of Robin Woodrome's dealing with health issues
- For the leadership of the Transition Oversight Team as they guide us through changes
- John and Shah Smith's grandson Michael, who is back in school after suffering an aneurysm
- For family and friends of Louise Larsen, who passed away in July
- Robin Woodrome's brother-in-law's brother, recently diagnosed with cancer
- Communities in central Indiana, recently hit by tornadoes
- Recent violence in Haiti, where Wilkins reports a school vice president was recently shot and killed
- Marilyn Stewart's sister Marjorie Kilpatrick, who was in the hospital with pneumonia
- For the safety of Laura Stuetzer's stepdaughter, who is working as a probation and parole officer
- Ann, the oldest sister of K.J. Reynolds, after surgery
- For all the students in the congregation and elsewhere, as they begin to prepare for the academic year ahead
- Jan, a friend of Lori Rose, who is fighting cancer

## Thanks for ...

- The December Boys, for sharing their musical gifts and for their thoughts on scripture
- Herb Smith and his Sunday School leadership
- The Xplore fellows, and blessings as they move to their next service

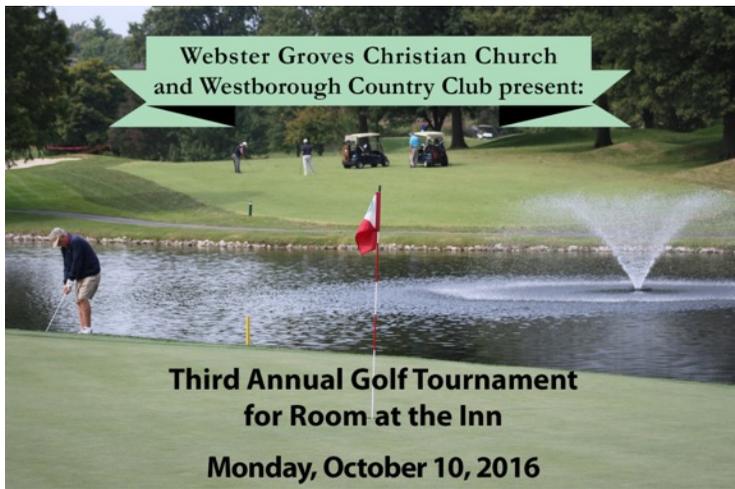
## Community prayers

- Flood-ravaged people of Louisiana, including 27 families from First Christian Church, Baton Rouge, who were evacuated from their homes
- Understanding and support during a difficult political year

- People in Italy who recently were hit with an earthquake
- The Oakland Peace Center, having financial challenges
- For all victims of terrorism around the globe
- For the families of Meacham Park struggling with poverty
- For patience and understanding in dealing with social media

## Ongoing concerns

- Bill Woodrome
- Gloria Bitza
- Marion Cadwallader
- John Norris
- Doris Derickson
- Kathy Carson
- Michelle Fielden
- Hap & Jane Michener



You're invited to attend Room at the Inn's Third Annual Golf Tournament. This event is a collaboration between Webster Groves Christian Church and Westborough Country Club to raise awareness and support for the homeless in the St. Louis region. All proceeds from the event will be used to support Room at the Inn's shelter programs.

Room at the Inn serves up to 20 people daily, about 150 each year, half of whom are children. In addition to food and shelter, Room at the Inn helps clients identify and correct the underlying causes of their homelessness, regain self-sufficiency and avoid future episodes of homelessness. It is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Divine Providence.

Westborough Country Club

631 S. Berry Road, St. Louis, MO 63122

Registration: 10 a.m.

Lunch: 11 a.m.

Shotgun Start: 12 p.m.

Dinner and Auction: following golf

Foursome: \$500

Individual Player: \$150

All player registrations include cart, greens fees, drinks, lunch and dinner!

### **Can't play?**

**Here's  
how you  
can help**

**We are  
looking for  
volunteers to  
stuff goody  
bags in  
October, and  
for 5  
volunteers to  
serve as  
witnesses on  
holes**

## **Take a moment to reflect in our Memorial Garden**

I would like to invite all members and visitors to take a short stroll through our Memorial Garden, only a few steps toward the Education building if you are leaving or arriving from the back lot. Perhaps you will see names of family or friends, and you might feel inspired to say a prayer for them.

Our Memorial Garden is maintained through donations and the purchases of a paver or stone for future memorializing after a death. We have up-to-date records concerning those of you who have reserved "a spot." Paver bricks are for remembrance; large stones are for those whose remains are in the garden.

Please remind children it is not a playground. Our grandchildren know how to find Great Pa Pa Wolfe's paver and that they shouldn't step on that one. This often leads to "olden days" stories.

If you would like to help with funds for the garden, please indicate Memorial Garden on your check.

If you have questions, please contact me at [susanbrny@aol.com](mailto:susanbrny@aol.com).

-Susan Burney

# UPCOMING EVENTS

- THURSDAY, SEPT. 1:** 11 a.m.: CWF general meeting, followed by luncheon
- SUNDAY, SEPT. 4:** 9 a.m.: Christian formation, Koinonia on Syrian refugees  
10:30 a.m.: Worship
- TUESDAY, SEPT. 6:** 6:30 p.m.: Painting and drawing meet up group
- WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 7:** 6:30 - 8 a.m.: Coffee ministry in parking lot  
6 p.m.: First handbell practice  
7 p.m.: First choir practice
- THURSDAY, SEPT 8:** 7:30 a.m.: Foodbank Run  
9:30 a.m.; 12:30 p.m., 7 p.m.: CWF group meetings
- SUNDAY, SEPT 11:** 9 a.m.: Christian formation breakfast celebration  
10:30 a.m.: U2-themed Worship  
5 p.m.: Room at the Inn
- THURSDAY, SEPT 15:** 9 a.m.: Cardmakers
- SUNDAY, SEPT 18:** 9 a.m.: Christian formation  
10:30 a.m.: Worship  
noon: Congregational meeting and luncheon.
- TUESDAY, SEPT. 20:** 6:30 p.m.: Painting and drawing meet up group
- THURSDAY, SEPT 22:** 9:30 a.m.: Stitch and Sew for BRO  
5 p.m.: Room at the Inn
- SATURDAY, SEPT. 24:** 9 a.m.-2 p.m.: St. Louis Summit on Racial Justice
- SUNDAY, SEPT. 25:** 9 a.m.: Christian formation  
10:30 a.m.: Worship  
Reconciliation offering
- TUESDAY, SEPT. 27:** Deadline for next witness

## A new address for Bill and Gloria Hutchings

Their new mailing address is 8660 Grant Road, St. Louis, MO 63123. Their new telephone numbers are (314) 853-4906 and (314) 276-7917.

Their e-mail addresses are: [hutchuw20606@gmail.com](mailto:hutchuw20606@gmail.com) (for Bill) and [hutchgoodglo@gmail.com](mailto:hutchgoodglo@gmail.com) (for Gloria).

# Webster Groves Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

A Global Mission Congregation  
1320 West Lockwood Ave.  
St. Louis MO 63122



**The SEGA connection newsletter is available at <http://www.mid-americadisciples.org/>**

## **Webster Groves Christian Church**

1320 West Lockwood Avenue

Saint Louis, MO 63122

Phone: 314-961-3232 / Website: [www.wgcc.org](http://www.wgcc.org)

Rev. Dr. Jeff Moore, Pastor

[jeffmoore@wgcc.org](mailto:jeffmoore@wgcc.org)

Robin Woodrome, Choir Director

Lisa Cripe, Organist

[lisacripe@wgcc.org](mailto:lisacripe@wgcc.org)

Jeff Wolf, Lead Custodian

[jeffwolf@wgcc.org](mailto:jeffwolf@wgcc.org)

Gary Smith, Custodian

Steve Staicoff, Office Manager

[admin@wgcc.org](mailto:admin@wgcc.org)

Witness Articles

[brosepd@hotmail.com](mailto:brosepd@hotmail.com)