

HOLY WEEK

Disciples Combined Maundy Thursday Worship

Union Avenue Christian
Church

Dinner at 6:00, WGCC
members asked to bring
vegetable dishes to share.
Worship at 7:00

Pray without ceasing

Sign up for one or more of
30 minute prayer times. We
will keep a vigil 24 hours
starting 8:30 p.m. Thursday,
April 13, in our own Love
Chapel after Maundy
Thursday at Union Avenue.
A sign-up board is located in
the library. If you are unable
to participate by praying in
Love Chapel, please sign up
for one or more times for
the Alternate Prayer Site,
indicating where you might
be praying (your home, in the
park, etc.)

Palm Sunday, April 9

Please join us for the annual
Palm Sunday Soup and Salad
lunch following worship.

Dessert and beverage
included.

Free will offerings will
support our NOW program
and the Disciples Mission
Fund.

The NOW spirit spreads



March has been a fruitful month for NOW project. Early in the month Julie and Mat DeKinder, along with Pastor Jeff Moore, had the opportunity to join the Kirkwood Kiwanis Club for lunch and a conversation about NOW project. It was a great chance to connect with members of the Kirkwood community and continue to spread the good news about NOW. We have recently learned that the Kiwanis will be making a monetary donation to NOW project.

Last week, members of the Kirkwood Rotary Club helped pack bags for NOW. The Kirkwood Rotary club has been very supportive of NOW project. Last summer they invited church members to talk about the program at their weekly meeting. In the fall they included NOW project as a beneficiary of money raised during their Kirkwood 10K race. Last week, in addition to donating time to packing the weekly bags, members of the club donated 100 apples to include in the bags.

Lori Rose is continuing to work her magic organizing food drives for NOW at local preschools. We have recently received food donations from the Kirkwood United Methodist preschool and the First Presbyterian Children's Center.

Next month we are looking forward to a large donation from the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. They will be donating around 250 backpacks filled with food for NOW project! More information about the amazing donation will be forthcoming.

NOW project is not just surviving, it is flourishing! And that is because of this congregation and the Kirkwood Community! - Julie DeKinder

April has Disciples women hopping

April 6th will be our general meeting and luncheon. Please attend the meeting at 11 a.m. and then we will eat our 'sack' lunches together at noon. Our program is "Music and Memory" by Denise Elam Dauw.

Palm Sunday, April 9, will be our annual Soup and Salad luncheon. This year the proceeds will go to the NOW project and Disciples Mission Fund. Julie Wood is leading again this year. She is asking for two desserts from each group. Saturday, April 8, we will be making the soup, so she needs lots of people for that. Check with Julie on times. The hall will be used by the girl scouts on that day, so she will coordinate it. Many hands will be needed on Sunday as well. Please try to help.

Maundy Thursday service will be held at Union Avenue Christian Church. See the Witness cover for details. We will be car pooling from church.

Good Friday prayer vigil will start after the service on Thursday. There is a sign up outside the sanctuary. There is an opportunity to sign up to be in the chapel OR to pray at home. The women have covered the Friday morning hours in the past. We are not limited to those hours, so please participate when you can.

April is B.R.O. used toy collection month. Please bring in your used toys and books. If you don't have any at home, consider buying some at a resale shop. Also look for knit skull hats at these stores. Each child is given a hat, and they run out fast.
- Sally Smith

Group meetings:

Tabitha group will move their meeting to April 6 at 7pm to avoid the Maundy Thursday service on the 13th. Peggy Eskridge will be the hostess.

Thursday, April 13:

Lydia: 9:30am Marilyn Stewart's house(hostess)

Martha: 12:30pm Heritage Rm (WGCC) Kitty Baumgarth & Bev Richmond (hostesses)

Special thanks

Thanks to Alice Yount for the many hand-made caps and to Peggy Eskridge and her team for all the beautiful baby quilts. Don't forget, April is our share a book and toy collection month.

-Donna Wolff Crump

Easter Lily Order Form

Lilies for Easter Sunday may be purchased for \$10 each. Please complete this form and place it in the offering tray, or return it to the church office along with your check made payable to "WGCC". Please write "Easter Lilies" in the memo line.

\$3 of each order will go to support The Shepherd's Center. Orders are due by Palm Sunday 4-9-17.

Name _____

of Lilies _____ x \$10 = \$ _____

In memory/honor of: (circle one)

Breakfast fundraiser May 12 for Room at the Inn

Room at the Inn invites you to join us for our annual fundraiser, Breakfast with the INN Crowd, a breakfast event and auction on Friday, May 12, from 7 am to 9 am at the Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel. All proceeds from this event help the homeless women and families who find shelter with Room at the Inn.

In collaboration with nearly 60 interfaith congregations, including WGCC, Room at the Inn helps clients identify and address the barriers that may have contributed to their homelessness, gain self-sufficiency and maintain stable housing. Tickets are \$40/person or \$45 at the door. To purchase tickets or for more information, please visit our website at www.roomstl.org/events, or contact Mary at 314-209-9181 or maryk@roomstl.org.

Please join us for a spectacular art opening Friday March 31

"Painting All My Life" - the art of Jim Frederick and a performance by the Gateway Men's Chorus



Jim Frederick (a resident of Cooper House) will be featured in an Art Show to be held Friday, March 31, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Gallery Within Webster Groves Christian Church.

Members of the Gateway Men's Chorus will present a special performance. This is part of the congregation's Fine Art Ministry.

Sign up for summer camps

I want to make you aware of the recently added Intergenerational Camp at MoVal and remind you of the Christian Regional Youth (CRY) Festival. Information on The Christian Church of Mid-America (Disciples of Christ) Summer Programs is available at <http://www.mid-america-disciples.org/summer/> and is copied below:

Intergenerational Camp at MoVal - June 15-18, \$190 by May 1, \$210 after May 1, \$160 each if 3 or more in family

Christian Regional Youth (CRY) Festival - Drury University in Springfield, MO, July 17-20, \$210 by June 1, \$235 after June 1

This event is for youth who are completing grades 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12. Visit the CRY facebook page for more information.

Scholarships available through SEGA Permanent Fund - Applications due May 1

I serve as an Intergenerational Camp counselor and CRY Festival adult sponsor and would be happy to answer any questions you might have about either of these opportunities.

Carole Hughes, 314-814-9952

June England Scholarship benefits WGCC high school seniors

The June England Scholarship, a memorial gift established by Don England and family to honor June, is awarded to Webster Groves Christian Church graduating high school seniors for higher education study. We encourage our high school seniors who are considering further education to submit an application. Applications are available from the church office or from Pat Roseman. The submission deadline is May 1.

Walter Smith Family Scholarship is established

The family of the late Walter Smith has created a special scholarship fund to honor one or more high school seniors in the church as they prepare to enter college. Pauline Smith, who has named it the Walter Smith Family Scholarship, started the fund with a \$10,000 gift. A committee will be established to award an annual \$1,000 scholarship. Criteria will be developed, along with an application process, then publicized for the entire church.

Many detours on the path to service

My name is Jn Baptiste Wilkens, and I was born on October 27, 1990 in Cite Soleil, Haiti. I am from a beautiful and proud family. I grew up in Haiti with my mother, my father, and one sister with whom I am very close.

I have always wanted to help people, which is a desire that is deeply rooted in my Christian faith.

Because of this desire, I chose to become a doctor and enrolled in medical school in 2012. Doctors are critically needed in Haiti as most Haitians only have access to minimal health care if any at all.

During the four years I spent in medical school, I studied hard, succeeded, and felt myself getting closer to my dream of becoming a doctor. I also served as president of my class for my first two years in medical school. I trained at the top hospital in Haiti where I received the title of physio pathologist. I also studied sociology at the National University Human Science Faculty (FASCH). Now, I am here in the U.S. to ask help to find a safe place to study as my school and country is not safe for me anymore.

As the medical school grew in numbers, I realized that we needed central leadership for the student body. I talked to two of my friends about forming a school-wide committee. They both agreed, and we proposed this idea to the students, who also believed we needed this leadership.

Therefore, in my second year of medical school, the students began electing Student Body Official Leaders. There were eleven members chosen among first, second, and third-year medical students. I was elected the Vice President. The Dean praised the idea and took part in several of our meetings.

Little did I know when I first had the idea to create this committee that we would become a target of a political party. I was forced to stop

pursuing my dream of becoming a doctor and flee the country I love because I fear that I will be harmed or killed if I returned to Haiti.

What has led to my current situation is several incidents, including:

- The school being invaded by armed men who beat students and wanted to kidnap the Student Body Officials.
- On August 24, 2016, one of my closest friends and the Student Body Official who created the committee with me, was assassinated.
- Receiving phone calls telling me I will also be killed for my activities.
- My mother being approached by two men in October, 2016 who told her that they were looking for me.
- Every single one of the Student Body Officials has fled or is in the process of fleeing, with the exception of one who was killed.

Now, I have applied for political asylum. Because my school will not release my transcripts unless I go personally, my specific goals are to now complete an Associate in Arts in General Transfer Studies at St. Louis Community College transferring to the University of Missouri – St. Louis for a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry and Biotechnology. Then, to go to a medical school in the United States. Then, depending if the situation in Haiti has changed, practicing medicine there or in Africa.

My goal in this life is to help people, as Jesus asks us to do. It is not to be rich or pursue worldly goods. I want to be a doctor (General Surgeon) for the poor. I just need a safe place to study. I promise you that you will help many people in the future through me.

Sincerely,

Jn Baptiste Wilkens.



WGCC transforms: Dreams of a future

By Jeff Moore and John Pahl

Note: The following article is excerpted from an article that appeared earlier this month on the National Benevolent Association website.

Webster Groves Christian Church recently engaged with Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation to clarify “why” it will exist in the future. As part of this process, members of the congregation interviewed community members and leaders and gathered data on the needs and concerns of their wider community.

From the findings emerged strong themes regarding the needs of children for education, intergenerational participation, and economic, social, and emotional wellbeing. The congregation began to imagine future stories of its life and ministry, and to discern a fundamental mission: To follow the teachings of Jesus and sacrificially serve the people who are most marginalized.

In exploring possibilities for partnerships, representatives of the congregation were recently fortunate to be able to participate in a seminar designed by the NBA Incubate Initiative to equip social entrepreneurs for leadership and change. Here we gained invaluable access to eldership coaching and legal, marketing, and fundraising expertise specific to nonprofits.

WGCC’s exploration of a local school district partnership is taking exciting turns and could yet go in various directions, but three characteristics of a possible community partnership are emerging:

1. The WGCC educational building would be used for some form of early childhood and community-based children and family programming.

Possible programs include early childhood education through preschool classrooms, Parents as Teachers Initiatives, community summer education and social enrichment to help alleviate the opportunity gap, and Parent and Family social and educational support partnerships.

In addition to reading to children in a local Head Start program, the congregation is currently providing food each week for 15 families with children who previously returned to food-insecure homes, via a Nutrition on Weekends (NOW) program.

2. Programs would be supported by community partnerships and fundraising.

Our congregation is working with community members to identify partnerships and grant opportunities to help fund the building use and programming we are beginning to envision. WGCC sponsors an annual golf tournament fundraiser, and we are exploring ways to expand this event to help support the work we are imagining as we engage with families in our community.

Current conversation and planning partners include our local school district, parent educators, representatives of other congregations, and community leaders.

3. An enduring organization would be created to maintain an area early childhood promise—no child will be denied their full developmental potential due to poverty and inadequate learning opportunities.

With the help and encouragement of NBA and its partners, we are exploring ways to structure our initiatives so that they are effective, broadly based, and adaptable.

Though there are still many details to consider and connections to be made, Webster Groves Christian Church continues to be excited by our vision of partnering with our community and fully living our fundamental mission.

The family of Herbert Smith is so very grateful to WGCC for all the love and support you have given us. You have been a second family to Dad for 60 plus years. Your thoughtfulness, care and concern through the prayers, cards, food, attendance and lunch at the memorial service, and donations to WGCC and other organizations in his memory, have helped us so much during this difficult time. Our sincere thanks to all of you.



The family of Bert Combs wishes to express our thanks for many ways you have touched our lives at the passing of Bert. We have felt your love and support in the prayers, calls, cards, and visits. We appreciate the many ways WGCC has been there for Bert during his stay at Manor Grove. The memorial service was a wonderful tribute to Bert—Jeff did a fine job of summing up his life. A special thanks to all the ladies who helped with the reception.



IN OUR PRAYERS

Recent Concerns

- For Deb Werner’s nephew, Jacob Culp, who has been deployed to Afghanistan. Pray for his unit, family and the people of Afghanistan.
- For Robin Woodrome’s uncle Bill, who recently had a stroke.
- For Carole Hughes and Dick and Donna Savage, who recently were battling illness.
- For Bill, the uncle of Max Ott’s son-in-law, battling cancer.
- Dave Pieining's dad, Bob, and Becky Pieining’s mom, Marianne, who face health concerns.
- Ed, the brother-in-law of Diane Mark, who is entering hospice.
- For the family of Christy, a friend of the Roses, who recently lost her daughter to a drug overdose.
- For the Stephens family from Cleveland who recently lost their father.
- Stan, a friend of Pat Roseman, who recently had heart surgery.
- For Dev Crist’s cousin Stephanie, who recently lost her parents.
- For Adam Rose, traveling to Jamaica on a mission trip and for other spring break travelers.
- The Links kids, who helped with packing NOW lunches.
- The Kirkwood Rotary, Kiwanis and all the schools who have contributed to the NOW program.
- The family of Timothy Hearn would like to thank all who sent cards following the passing of Tim’s mother.

Community prayers

- For the people of Haiti and Honduras
- For refugees and immigrants around the world
- For families and others who have lost children to the hands of domestic violence
- For all victims of terrorism around the globe
- For the families of Meacham Park struggling with poverty

Thanks for ...

- The recovery of Robin Woodrome’s mom and stepdad, who had health issues.
- A group of youngsters in the church who are contemplating the next step of baptism.

UPCOMING EVENTS ACCESS THE CALENDAR AT WGCC.ORG

Take me out to the ball game.

The Compton-Drew Concert Band, under the direction of WGCC member John Gerdes, is once again playing at Busch Stadium before a Cardinals game. We will be performing "God Bless America" prior to the national anthem on Wednesday, May 3. The Cardinals play Milwaukee at 7:15 pm. The band will perform at 6:55 pm.

To support our endeavor, we are selling tickets to this game. We have Loge Reserve tickets in section 269 for \$20. These seats normally sell for \$32.

Contact John if you are interested. Proceeds from the profits on the tickets will go to help support summer music lessons and band camps for C-D band kids.

FRIDAY , MARCH 31:	5 p.m. Art gallery opening
SUNDAY, APRIL 2:	9 a.m.: Christian formation 10:30 a.m.: Worship
MONDAY, APRIL 3:	10 a.m.: Gospel of John Bible study
TUESDAY, APRIL 4:	6:30 p.m.: Painting group
THURSDAY, APRIL 5:	CWF group meetings 6:30 p.m.: Financial Peace University
SUNDAY, APRIL 9	9 a.m.: Christian formation 10:30 a.m.: Palm Sunday Worship noon: Soup and salad luncheon 5 p.m.: Room at the Inn
MONDAY, APRIL 10:	10 a.m.: Gospel of John Bible study
THURSDAY, APRIL 13:	6 p.m.: Maundy Thursday (Union Ave.)
SUNDAY, APRIL 16	9 a.m.: Christian formation 10:30 a.m.: Easter Sunday Worship
MONDAY, APRIL 17:	10 a.m.: Gospel of John Bible study
TUESDAY, APRIL 18:	6:30 p.m.: Painting group
THURSDAY, APRIL 20:	9:30 a.m.: Stitch & Sew for BRO
SUNDAY, APRIL 23:	9 a.m.: Christian formation 10:30 a.m.: Worship
MONDAY, APRIL 24:	10 a.m.: Gospel of John Bible study
THURSDAY, APRIL 27:	9 a.m.: Cardmakers 5 p.m.: Room at the Inn
SUNDAY, APRIL 30:	9 a.m.: Christian formation 10:30 a.m.: Worship

**Thank you,
grass
trimmers
and pancake
flippers!**

A huge thanks to last Sunday's grounds crew: the DeKinders, Gerdeses, Gibbons, Moores, Eric Blaufuss, Ray Brown, Bill Howells, John Pahl, Sally Smith, Charlotte Pullen, and Lawrence Ludwig. With approximately 20 people raking and trimming, there were 62 bags/bins filled with yard waste. - Ken Rainey

Thanks to the fixers and the mixers, the flippers and the sippers, the feeders and the eaters. Through the Pancake Supper Feb. 28 YOU provided \$324 for the Neighbor Fund and \$324 for the Webster Groves Meals on Wheels. - Donna Wood

Webster Groves Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

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

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