

A consideration of openness and affirmation

Dear Members and Friends of WGCC,

In early 2019, the Board of Webster Groves Christian Church asked a team to explore the prospect of formally becoming an Open and Affirming congregation, as officially recognized within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) – which would entail proactively including persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities in the life of our congregation.

The team, led by John Pahl, then began the work of meeting with members of the congregation on an individual basis for conversations on what it would mean for WGCC to become Open and Affirming. At that same time, the team attended workshops, met with leaders of other congregations who had gone through the process of becoming Open and Affirming and hosted Bible study on the subject.

Unfortunately, like most things in 2020, the outreach of the team was put on hold as much of the planned discussion and discernment with the congregation was designed to take place in person. However, the team has continued to meet and work during the past year and are eager to re-engage with the process.

In the coming weeks, during worship, members of the congregation will tell a personal story about how our lives and the ministry of welcoming are rooted in the life and ministry of Jesus and about how that experience has informed them about what it would mean to be an Open and Affirming congregation.

As we listen to these stories, we ask that you come to them with an open heart and continue to think on and pray about these issues as we move forward together in this important work.

With Peace and Love,

Webster Groves Christian Church Board

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

WEEKLY LENTEN STUDIES

We'll host weekly Lenten online studies at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays
Mar 3; Mar 10; Mar 17;
Mar 24; Mar 31. Join us on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82507329265>

MAUNDY THURSDAY

We'll worship together with UACC and CCC on Maundy Thursday, April 1 (We'll have more details about this soon.)

GOOD FRIDAY

We'll have a Facebook Good Friday Service at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 2.

PALM SUNDAY & EASTER SUNDAY

Join our streaming worship services at 10:30 a.m. on Facebook every Sunday.

Disciples Women continue to shine a light

February has been a very busy month for Disciples Women with a wonderful Service Project for Promise Place. We bought a booster seat and diapers for them. Several church members received cards from the Disciples Women because of surgeries, deaths in the families and hospital visits for various reasons.

We had a Zoom luncheon monthly meeting and the Tabitha Group also met on Zoom. Both meetings were beneficial to those attending. The Martha Group sent an email study to all members.

We will begin March with a Zoom luncheon on Thursday, March 4. The Martha Group will give the devotional and **Diane Mark** will announce the program. The Tabitha Group will meet again on Zoom on March 18. **Susan Moore** will lead the study.

Our treasurer, **Julie Wood**, told us that we only need to contribute to the Service Project in March. We are on target with our budget, thanks to some great donors early this year.

We are announcing a save the date notice for the 40th Women's Interfaith Conference on Zoom at 10 a.m. on April 8. The program will be "Women of Faith: Beyond Stereotypes to Truth". Information on the Zoom link for the meeting will be announced later.

In March, the Nominating Committee will work up a slate of officers for Disciples Women for next year. The voting will take place in April. Should you wish to serve as an officer, please contact **Sally Smith**.

News on a wonderful Service Project for March from **Pat Roseman** and **Janie Joplin** is as follows:

Our March Service Project is for an organization with which we are familiar, yet we have never had them as a Service Partner.

The Doorways Jump Start Program is our focus for March.

What is Jump Start? Jump Start, designed for homeless families living with HIV/AIDS in St. Louis, provides vital services that allow parents to maintain independence and provide a safe and stable environment in which they can raise their children. Services provided include rent and utility assistance and other supportive services. Today, there are about 10 families in Jump Start, mostly mothers with children. Jump Start helps parents provide a safe, stable home for their children, which has been found to result in better health and happier, more successful children and parents.

Families must buy such things as cleaning items, personal hygiene items and light bulbs on their own and often do not have the money for them. This will be our focus.

As you consider your donation for our March Service Project, keep in mind women who need personal hygiene items, children studying in dim lighting due to lack of light bulbs and trying to keep a home clean with limited cleaning items. We will purchase the items with your contributions.

Thank you to Pat and Janie for continuing to bring us great service work and for their shopping for items for us during the pandemic.

We will look forward to meeting in person for our meetings within the coming months.

Jane Martin





Easter Offering

a special day offering of Disciples Mission Fund
March 28 and April 4, 2021

Imagine
what God can do
when we share our gifts.

The Easter Offering reaches deep and wide with the limitless power of the risen Christ.

- developing Disciples
- forming new faith communities
- connecting with ministry partners around the world
- serving God's people in need

Imagine what God can do:

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. — John 20:1

The Easter Offering supports these general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ):

Center for Faith and Giving • Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries
Communication Ministries • Christian Unity and Interfaith Ministry
Disciples of Christ Historical Society • Disciples Home Missions • Disciples Women
Division of Overseas Ministries • Higher Education and Leadership Ministries
National Benevolent Association • National Convocation
New Church Ministry • North American Pacific/Asian Disciples
Office of the General Minister and President • Treasury Services



As you may recall, we unfortunately had to have a virtual Hike last year! However, despite the challenge, we made our goal of \$13,000. It appears we will have to have the Hike virtually again this year.

Memorial Boulevard Christian Church (MBCC) and Webster Groves Christian Church (WGCC) are working together for a joint partnership on the Hike this year. How exciting is that?! If it is successful, maybe we could expand it to another church next year! Oh, the possibilities when you allow the Spirit to move among us!

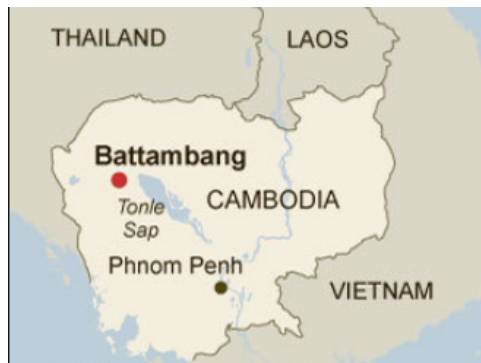
Over the last 46 years MBCC has raised over \$513,000! PRAISE GOD!

Our Hike project this year is to bring God's love to the people of Cambodia, who have been one of the hardest hit regions in Southwest Asia due to COVID-19 and restrictive actions to slow the virus' spread, especially poor farmers.

Predominant among these are households that used to have income sent home from relatives working in Thailand, and now have no income at all. More than 120,000 Cambodians that migrated to Thailand for work had to return home. The humanitarian emergency created by these returns persists with growing concerns of socio-economic vulnerability for them and their families.

Others harmed by the COVID19 crisis are those who live in chronic poverty because of few or no paid work options in their rural villages. Many are women-headed households or single elderly people. Many are not receiving any humanitarian help.

We're hiking again. Can we meet the challenge?



Download a sponsor sign-up sheet at <http://bit.ly/21wgchike>

There is a severe need for livelihoods, food security improvements, water, sanitation and hygiene work, especially for the most vulnerable families in villages affected not only by COVID19's impact, but also by the drought and floods.

With funds to meet this new request, at least 290 of the most affected families in Bavel and Thma Koul districts in Battambang province will be helped.

The plan is to remit \$85 per family: \$35 for one month of rice, fish sauce and cooking oil, plus \$50 conditional cash assistances for livelihood recovery support that families will buy (i) new seeds, cultivation inputs and tool to restart home farming and/or (ii) livestock (chickens and piglets).

Total amount needed for this project is \$26,499.

Are we up the challenge?

As I indicated earlier, unfortunately, this year we will be having a virtual Hike. We would encourage you to still get sponsors, but then plan your own Hike. You may want to take a short video of your walk that we can share with each other.

Chuck Levy, Memorial Boulevard Christian Church.

A special thanks from our neighbors at Webster-Rock Hill Ministries

I am writing to thank Webster Groves Christian Church for your support of our Thanksgiving Basket and Adopt-a-Family Christmas programs.

As I came on board in early December, I was heartened by the strong support for these holiday programs. Churches, individuals, neighbors and community groups answered the call to help make the holidays a happier time in a very challenging year. With that support, we were able to provide grocery gift cards for a Thanksgiving meal and a box of staples from our food pantry for more than 100 families.

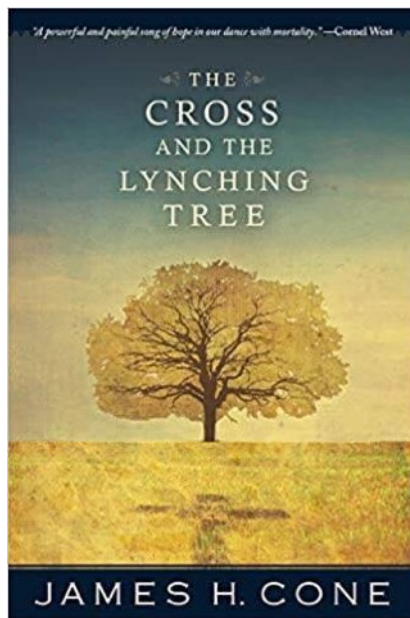
As Christmas neared, our list of families requesting support expanded as did the care demonstrated by our community. Our Christmas program distribution was a joyful morning despite the cold weather. That morning and through the following week, 125 families picked up grocery gift cards for a Christmas meal, additional gift cards for Christmas presents and a box of staples from our food pantry. Thanks to some unexpected, and very generous, donations, parents were able to select additional toys for children and winter hats and gloves. We even kept our activity room open for a few nights the week before Christmas to ensure parents had a chance to select something.

Our mission statement calls us to be the hands and feet of the Lord. Thanks to your congregation, we were able to meet that call and make the holiday season a little brighter for many families and demonstrate that our community cares about all of our residents.

I look forward to working with you in our community.

Derek Bastian

Interim Executive Director



All are invited to join the WGCC Koinonia class for a Sunday morning Zoom study of James Cone's *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*, led by Breona Hawkins and Jeff Moore. The study will be from 9-10 AM each week through Easter Sunday, April 4. Print and e-copies of the book can be found at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

The Koinonia Zoom link is:

Topic: WGCC Koinonia

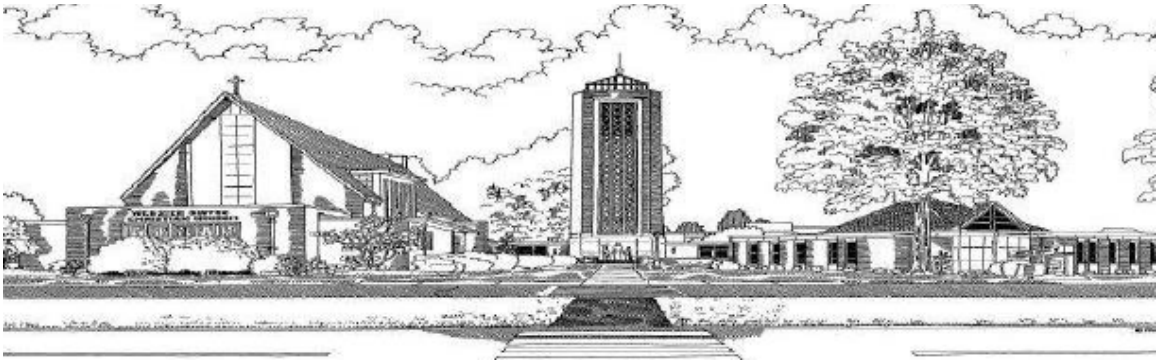
Time: Sundays 9:00-10:00 AM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/652179864>

Sunday morning worship services will continue to be live-streamed on Facebook every Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome - please invite your family and friends to tune in!

**The link to the page is:
<https://www.facebook.com/WGCCDisciples/>**



Your support is crucial

Just a reminder that even though WGCC's building is closed, **the financial needs of fulfilling our mission and ministry are still there.** Our ongoing faithful financial support of WGCC is still crucial. During these weeks when we are not physically gathering to worship together, please prayerfully and generously consider giving via check by mail, bank draft/direct deposit or through Givelify using this link:

<https://www.givelify.com/givenow/1.0/NzQw/selection>

Join us for our virtual Bible study or Sunday class

Join us on Mondays for our Zoom Bible Study on the Books of Luke and Acts.

If you have a smart phone, it helps to download the free Zoom app, but the program will also work on most desktop computers if you have a camera and microphone installed.

Bible Study

Mondays, 3 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/381789752>

Or dial in: 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 381 789 752

Koinonia Sunday School Class

Sunday, 8:45 a.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/652179864>

Meeting ID: 652 179 864

Password: 012104

Recent prayer concerns

- For Marilyn Combs' sister, Kay Hartman, who is having continual severe spinal pain.
- For John Dyess, who is recovering from heart valve replacement surgery on January 20.
- For Dev Crist's neighbor Joe, who recently suffered a stroke.
- For the Rose family, following the death of Lori's mother, Linda.
- For Susan Burney, recovering from hip surgeries, and James Burney as he recovers from injuries sustained on the job as a police officer.
- For the family of Doug Richmond, who passed away earlier this month..
- For Janet Silvey's daughter-in-law Becca and family, following the death of her grandma Ula Brakefield.
- For Bill and Arlene Sullivan.
- For Barb Farmer, whose surgery has been rescheduled for April 6.
- For Courtney Brautigam's grandmother-in-law, Clara Brautigam.
- For Barbara Merrell's friend Percy Gibbar, who has several serious cancers.
- For Donna Wolff-Crump's friend, Michelle.
- For DeVere Shoop.
- For Breona Hawkins.
- For Janet Kingston's brother-in-law, Bill Kingston.
- For Deb Werner, recovering from broken bones and a dislocated ankle following a fall.
- For Analyn Howell's brother Brian, who is recovering from COVID-19.
- For Brian O'Donnell, who is preparing for surgery.
- For all health care "frontline" workers, and all essential workers.

WEBSTER GROVES CHRISTIAN CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT:

Our mission: Following Jesus' teaching and sacrificially serving the people who are the most marginalized.

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

Rev. Dr. Jeff Moore, Pastor

jeffmoore@wgcc.org

Robin Woodrome, Choir Director

Lisa Cripe, Organist

lisacripe@wgcc.org

Jeff Wolf, Lead Custodian

jeffwolf@wgcc.org

Gary Smith, Custodian

Steve Staicoff, Office Manager

admin@wgcc.org

Witness Articles

brosepd@hotmail.com