

WEBSTER GROVES CHRISTIAN CHURCH

THE WITNESS • FEBRUARY 2023

Ash Wednesday online

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22. WGCC will hold an online service of worship via Zoom at 7:00 PM that evening. Please plan to join us for a time of prayer, reflection, scripture, and music. Please use the Zoom link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86816738374>

Lenten Bible Studies

There will be online Lenten Bible Studies, via Zoom, on several Wednesday evenings in Lent. Please plan to join us for prayer, reflection, and Bible study, at 7:00 PM on Wednesdays, March 8, 15, 22, 29, and April 5. Join in at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84040736144>

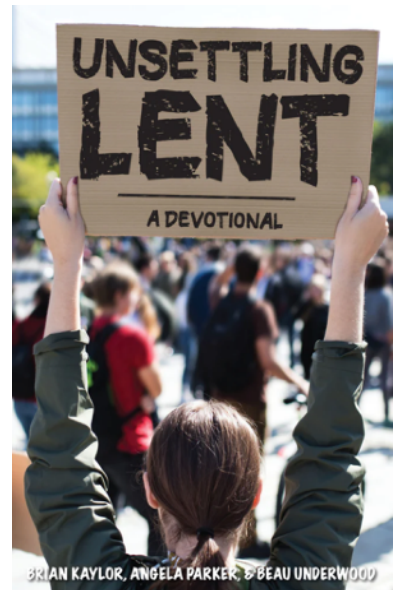
Unsettling Lent: A devotional through a social justice lens

Lenten Devotionals from Chalice Press will be available for purchase at the church office for \$4 each.

The devotional, *Unsettling Lent*, invites Christians to re-examine Biblical stories through social-justice lenses.

Unsettling Lent is not your ordinary Lenten devotional. That's a good thing, given the ways Lent's radical meaning has been diminished by our culture's false promotion of religious complacency. By connecting the biblical story to present-day realities, it invites Christians to make Lent a season of solidarity and justice-seeking. In contrast to devotionals emphasizing personal spirituality and interior transformations, *Unsettling Lent* emphasizes the public implications and communal aspects of self-denial, sacrificial love, and confrontations with power. Followers of Jesus are invited to journey to the cross in a more faithful way that promises to harness the power of this season for the renewal of ourselves, our churches, and our world.

The authors: Brian Kaylor is a Baptist pastor with a Ph.D in Political Communication. He serves as President & Editor-in-Chief of *Word&Way*, a Christian publication founded in 1896. Angela Parker is an Assistant Professor of New Testament and Greek at Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology. She is also an ordained missionary Baptist pastor. Beau Underwood is senior pastor of Allisonville Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indianapolis.



Disciples Women remember faithful servants

The first General Meeting of the Disciples Women will be the first Thursday in March. Please remember that we are not meeting in February.

The Martha Group will meet on Thursday, February 9 at 12:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room. Carol Bachman will lead the study, Vicki Ott will present the devotional and Jane Martin will be the hostess. At the January meeting, we shared great memories of our dear member Gilda Rzczowski, her wonderful Christian life and great contributions to the Disciples Women and to Webster Groves Christian Church. Gilda will be sorely missed in the church and especially in the Disciples Women. In February we will remember Marjean Davis and share good memories of her in Disciples Women.

The Tabitha Group will also meet on Thursday, February 9, in the Heritage Room at 7 p.m. Diane Mark will be the hostess and Laura Stuetzer will lead the study.

From our amazing Service Chairs, Pat Roseman and Janie Joplin, we have the following report:

WOO HOO! DW Sisters!

Together in January DW Service, we grew the Neighbor Fund \$400! You answered our call. Thank you from those whom you have served and helped. Thank you from the stranger who came to our door and you were there to reach out.

In February, our service project will benefit Promise Place, Kirkwood School District's selection of items that help underserved families with young children. In past years we have given a crib and booster seat and contributed money to their diaper fund. We have reached out asking what the need is this year, but haven't heard in time for the Witness deadline. Janie and Pat will keep Group Leaders informed. Whatever the need, we are asking for a monetary gift from DW members. If you send a check to Steve at the church, please write in the memo line: DW February Service-Promise Place. As you always do, give with your HEART! Serving for God's people. Janie Joplin and Pat Roseman.

Other church items to remember this month: make sure to stop by the card table in the tower hallway to sign Birthday Cards for our members. Please remember the Food Bank items. These items are taken once a month to Memorial Blvd. CC. Sally Smith reported that our bank items were quite sparse last month. On these cold winter days, let us remember to drop by with some good food for our bank, one of our greatest projects

through the years.

We look forward to seeing each of you at our meetings this month and sharing the word of God with you. Happy Valentine's Day to you and may your heart be filled with love for yourself and all others.

Submitted by:

Jane Martin, Secretary



Gilda Rzczowski passed away Jan 3.



Marjean Davis passed away Jan. 7.

Welcome to WGCC, Kenton Merrill!

Kenton Merrill joined our congregation on Sunday, Jan. 29. We are so pleased to welcome him into our family.

Kenton is a young man fairly new to St. Louis. He grew up in Waynesville, Missouri, and went to college at Missouri State University in Springfield. After college he started working in Springfield and joined the Brentwood Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Since he works from home, he decided to follow a friend and experience the BIG CITY!! (St. Louis). Kenton loves the Blues and the Cardinals. He lives in Dogtown, just across the street from Forest Park, so he can be found walking his dog, Zeus, in the park.

Kenton is an airplane parts buyer for Pratt & Whitney.

-Sally Smith



Sound and video help needed!

We have been blessed over the past year or so with a great technical set-up, allowing us to live broadcast the sights, sounds, and imagery of our Sunday morning and other worship experiences. We are especially grateful for those who helped to install and organize the technology that has enabled this online ministry. Special thanks to John Pahl and Daniel Moore, who have been our primary visual and audio technicians!

We have learned that after February 12, Daniel Moore will no longer be available as a sound technician for our Sunday morning services, and so we are seeking individuals willing to be trained to help with this task into the future. We would also welcome any volunteers who are interested in sharing in the video and imagery portion of our Sunday morning worship experiences.

Without one sound person and one video/imagery person, we will not be able to continue to broadcast our Sunday morning services and manage our in-sanctuary experience as we have been. Please reach out to Pastor Jeff or Steve Staicoff in the church office (jeffmoore@wgcc.org or admin@wgcc.org) to let us know if you are interested in or willing to participate as a member of our audio/visual team. Our hope is to get enough people involved so that no person has to serve every Sunday.



Special offering Feb. 19-26

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

For nearly 80 years, Week of Compassion has pursued its mission, working with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world, toward the vision of a world where God's people transform suffering into hope.

Committee will take long-term look at WGCC finances

At the last congregational meeting, it was pointed out that while Webster Groves Christian Church currently has a balanced budget, based on giving estimates and the upkeep required of the physical property, it may be difficult to maintain that posture in the future. Therefore, the **WGCC Board** has commissioned a new committee to obtain a full valuation of the church's liabilities and assets and to project the church's finances three-to-five years into the future.

This is a more focused and specialized task than the responsibilities of the current budget committee and will include 9-10 members, some of whom have expertise in valuing commercial property.

The goal is that while the church is currently on solid financial footing, the WGCC Board felt that now is the time to envision the church's finances more clearly so that the congregation may be properly informed as it considers the future mission and ministry of Webster Groves Christian Church.

The committee co-chairs are **Max Ott** and **Laura Stuetzer**. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please reach out to Max or Laura. The committee will begin its work this spring and issue its report to the congregation in November of this year.

It is important to note that the WGCC Board does not have the power to make major financial decisions on its own. Those decisions, as always, must be made by the congregation as a whole.

--Mat DeKinder, WGCC Board Chair

General Assembly to celebrate connection

The 2023 General Assembly Kindom of God, Within Us, Among Us, is a call for Disciples to strengthen their relationship with God, both as individuals and as a part of God's community through an expansive gathering of the church in Louisville. The past two years, we have had to be separated but we have also innovated new ways for God's limitless love to be revealed in our church, our communities, and around the world. God's limitless imagination holds so many possibilities for our church.

This four-day event will encourage Disciples who gather to celebrate the way that God's expansive love connects each of us as "kin" and to be part of the larger Kindom of God. Join us July 29-August 1, 2023 for worship, workshops, Bible study, opportunities to explore Louisville, mission project, and the sacred work of the church for children, youth, and adults across the life of the church.

Register now at <https://ga.disciples.org/>

KINDOM OF GOD WITHIN US AMONG US

GENESIS 11:1-9 • LUKE 17:20-21 • 2 PETER 1:3

July 29 - August 1, 2023 • Louisville

WHEN

Saturday, July 29, 2023 | Starting at 9 AM
Tuesday, August 1, 2023 | Concluding at 9 PM

WHERE

Kentucky International Convention Center
Louisville, Kentucky

Volunteer at the Doorways Food Pantry!

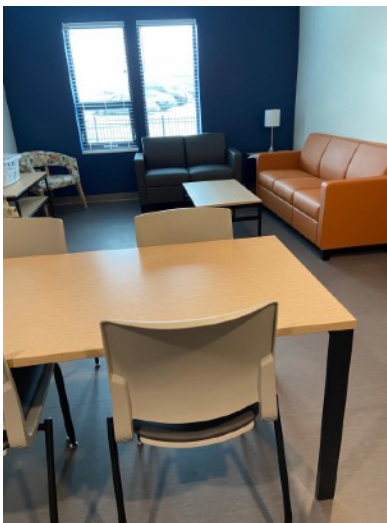
The Doorways food pantry will be staffed by volunteers and open to clients 12 pm-4 pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Clients will be able to shop outside of those hours provided that they make an appointment with their Care Coordinator. Furthermore, volunteers can still coordinate times to come in and help with the pantry outside of those hours if they email or call Pastor Jeff in advance, as there is often a need for inventory, organization, and restocking.

Below is an updated sign-up form for Disciples who are interested in volunteering on Thursdays through the end of March:

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c094ca5a822a7fbc34-food1#/.](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c094ca5a822a7fbc34-food1#/)

Volunteers are also welcome to sign up for other days through the general form sent to all volunteers: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c094ca5a822a7fbc34-food#/>

It is more than okay to have multiple volunteers staffing the pantry at the same time, so consider signing up with a friend!



Pat Roseman took these photos at the Doorways new facility when she was volunteering. It offers 50 outstanding new apartment homes for those effected by HIV plus life-help services for residents.



FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Strong Families Build Strong Communities

Family Connections Program Training Sunday, February 19, from 5:00 - 8:00 PM

As WGCC prepares to start our new **Family Connections program**, providing hospitality and care for family visits for biological families with children in foster care who are working toward court-approved reunification, our first training session will be **Sunday, February 19, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM**. Please plan to join us for this important training event. It will be an opportunity to learn more about the program and to begin to understand more fully the many ways we can be involved in this ministry of hospitality and care. Please contact Pastor Jeff for additional information.

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/>

For those worshipping at home on Sunday mornings, worship documents--including a bulletin and scriptures--can be accessed at the link below.

<https://wgcc.org/worship-advent-documents/>

Your support is crucial

Just a reminder that your ongoing faithful financial support of WGCC is still crucial. 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>

Memorial Boulevard Soup Kitchen Lunch, Thursday, February 16

Come help prepare and serve lunch for neighborhood residents around Memorial Boulevard Christian Church! WGCC members prepare lunch at MBCC on the third Thursday of each month. Please consider volunteering to prepare and serve lunch from 9:30 or 10 am to noon or 1 pm on Thursday, February 16. Please contact Pastor Jeff with any questions.



Prayer concerns for WGCC and MBCC

- For Gregg Eilers, who is facing another round of chemotherapy in his battle with cancer, and an upcoming surgery in January
- For the life of Gregg Eiler's cousin Richard, who recently passed away
- For those experiencing injustice in any form, and for those serving in law enforcement
- For Delcia Corlew's friend Anita, hospitalized with Parkinson's Disease
- For John Christensen, recovering from COVID
- For Jeff Tedford
- For James Burney's safety
- For Kay Love's friend Karen, facing major health issues
- For Denise Pahl's mother, battling aspiration pneumonia and RSV
- For John Burney, facing knee replacement in February
- For the family and friends of Rhonda, a colleague of Keiler Swartz, who passed away suddenly
- For the family and friends of Jane Martin's friend Diane, who recently passed away
- For Karl Reinhardt, facing surgery
- For the family of Paul Murphy, Arlene Sullivan's son, who recently passed away
- For Laura Stuetzer's friend Carm, whose ovarian cancer has returned
- For Laura Stuetzer's friends Joan, Rhonda, and Elizabeth--all of whom are facing medical issues
- Carolyn Dyess asks prayers for Janice and Daryl
- For Diane Mark's sister Andrea, in rehab following a stint in ICU
- For Diane Mark's friend, Jennifer, diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer
- For Molly Gibbons' father Mark, battling an aggressive form of leukemia
- For Nina Rothe, starting stem-cell therapy
- For Bev Richmond
- For Marilyn Combs
- For Susie Burney, recovering from her fourth surgery on the same hip
- For Vicki Ott's high school friend, struggling with homelessness and health issues
- For Devoree Crist's brother-in-law, in hospice with a progressive palsy disease
- For Kay Love's friend Lauren, facing breast cancer treatments
- For Chris and Sara Webb. Chris has been diagnosed with early stages of dementia, and has been moved to a residential facility in Potosi
- For Barb Merrell
- For Jim Hashbarger
- For Bill Woodrome
- Jesse Gibbons asks prayers for a friend of his in KC
- For Harper, the 5-year old child of Billie Swartz's friend, who has an inoperable brain tumor. For Lisa Cripe's friend, Gretchen, facing several health issues, and for Graham, the son of Lisa's friend, who is awaiting a heart transplant
- For Devoree Crist's friend, Deb
- For Susan Burney's sister Carol, suffering from Alzheimers
- For Susan Moore's family in Chicago, and her aunt who has been placed into hospice
- For Pauline (Smith) England
- For Shirley Arther
- For Eva Moutrie
- For Gregg Eiler's sister-in-law, as she battles breast cancer.
- For Jane Yount
- Prayers for DeVere and Bev Shoop
- For Mildred Baker
- For Bill and Arlene Sullivan
- Analyn Howells is asking prayers for her twin sister, Evalyn Morrison, and her battle with cancer. She is dealing with side effects due to treatment

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-america-disciples.org/>

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