

WEBSTER GROVES CHRISTIAN CHURCH

THE WITNESS • MAY 2023



Sunday, May 7 Outdoor Worship and BBQ!

As we prepare to say "farewell" to Pastor Jeff for his four-month sabbatical, we plan to celebrate and worship together on the church lawn on Sunday morning, May 7. Please plan to attend and bring guests for worship, and then stay for a BBQ lunch. Meat, beverages and dessert will be provided. WGCC members and friends are encouraged to bring salads and side dishes to share.

Pastor Jeff starts sabbatical on May 18

Pastor Jeff will begin his four-month sabbatical on Thursday, May 18. He will return to his regular pastoral duties on Thursday, September 21.

Thanks to the hard work and creativity of WGCC's Sabbatical Grant Team (Breona Hawkins, Carolyn Dyess, Pat Roseman, Keiler Swartz, Robin Woodrome, Kay Love, Carole Hughes, Laura Stuetzer), WGCC was awarded a Clergy Renewal Grant through the Lilly Foundation. The grant will pay for Pastor Jeff's motorcycle trip around the Mediterranean to visit biblical and historical sites. Grant money will also fund a program and celebration at WGCC when Pastor Jeff returns this fall, as well Bible study materials to be used by WGCC members and friends while he is away (focusing on scripture and our understandings of our past, present, and future as people of God),

and costs related to providing a part-time sabbatical pastor.

We are grateful for all of the prayers and effort that have gone into planning this sabbatical.

After attending Abbie's PhD graduation at UVA and spending a week with his family at a lake house, Jeff (and Webster, the church mouse!) will depart for Heidelberg, Germany, where he'll reunite with his motorcycle and begin his 20,000+ mile trip around the Mediterranean, visiting sites connected to biblical stories and characters, and our wider mission. Pastor Jeff intends to vlog about his experience, and will hopefully be posting videos on YouTube at "Rev around the Med." Thanks to everyone whose prayers and efforts have helped to make this sabbatical possible!

Can we meet the Stewardship Challenge?

Our WGCC 2023/2024 program budget passed unanimously at our recent congregational meeting. It is a budget that affirms care for our building, investment in our staff, and the importance of our programs of worship, education, outreach, care, and compassion.

Our budget also relies on investment income from our Legacy Fund and the use of savings from previous years' surpluses. We've run some numbers and we've found that if WGCC members and friends were to commit to increasing our giving by 7-10% each year for the next several years, we would be able to meet the financial challenges and opportunities of sharing the Good News from this place.

Will you join us in committing to increasing your giving to support the important mission and ministry of our congregation?

Here's an example: Let's say you gave \$500 last year to the general fund of the congregation - right around \$9.60 per week. A 10% increase would be challenging you to give \$550 next year - right around \$10.58 per week - an increase of less than \$1 per week. The following year, you'd be challenged to give \$605 - an increase of just over \$1 per week. You get the picture.

If we all commit to prayerfully and generously growing our giving in increments from our current commitments, WGCC will be able to continue to provide mission and ministry in all of the ways we currently do. If you did not give to the general fund of the congregation last year, we strongly encourage you to begin this year. The ministry we share is made possible through God's grace and our gifts. Together we empower mission and ministry "from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth."

WGCC Elects Board Members

At our April 23 Annual Congregational Meeting, members of WGCC elected Board members Mat DeKinder, Laura Stuetzer, Kay Love, Billie Swartz, Devoree Crist, John Burney, John Gerdes, and Beth Cooley. Thanks to these members for their leadership and service!

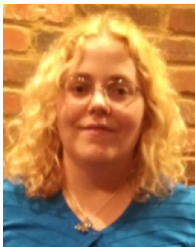
Welcome, Anna Yount!

Our newest member, Anna Yount, joined Webster Groves Christian Church on April 16.

Anna moved here from Columbia, Missouri, to live with her grandmother, Jane Yount. That was 22 years ago!

She graduated high school at Logos in Ladue and took classes at Meramec Community College for a few years. She was her grandmother's companion and caregiver for most of that time. Jane, a long time member of WGCC, was 102 years old when she died. As you can imagine, Anna was very close to her grandmother and is going through an adjustment period.

We are so pleased that she decided to formally join our congregation. Anna has been active, along



with Jane, in the Martha group of the Disciples Women Group. She has just been voted in as one of the service chairs for next year. Jane Martin says "she brings new energy to the Martha group!"

Anna got interested in service in high school. Part of her graduation requirement was 120 hours of community service. She did her service at Manor Grove Retirement Home in Kirkwood. She helped with various activities and really enjoyed the people.

We want to keep her involved in service. There is a lot of opportunity for her.

Without being TOO pushy, let her know about the various ways she can serve.

Anna enjoys exercising and uses the equipment they have in the basement. Her goal for this year is to meet as many people her age as possible.

Welcome our summer staff!

Sabbatical Pastor Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker

We are thrilled that Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker will serve WGCC as Sabbatical Pastor while Pastor Jeff is away. Dr. Baker will preach and lead worship on Sundays and will be available in case of pastoral emergencies. Our great team of lay leaders and members will provide ongoing visiting and other program support. Dr. Baker will also be supervising a student pastor for WGCC from Eden Theological Seminary, Michael Scott. Michael will be involved in worship, some preaching, visitation, and education.



Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker is the Assistant Professor of Community Engagement and Contextual Education, Director Contextual Education at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis. She is a certified anti-racism trainer for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and a trainer of faith-based community organizing in the Gamaliel network. Dr. Baker teaches Church Planting, Youth Ministry, Preaching, Faith Community Organizing, Anti-Racism/Anti-Caste, Vocational Resilience and Formation. Dr. Baker is a respected trainer and community leader who often consults and collaborates around her sustained work in community organizing, youth justice, detention/prison/jail, and faith justice movements. Dr. Baker has a Bachelor of Science degree from Howard University in Washington, D.C., a Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary, and her Doctorate of Ministry in Preaching degree from Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis. She is mother to son Cornell A. (Deuce) Baker II.

Summer student pastor, Michael Scott

Michael Scott was licensed to preach in March of 2007 at Union Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church and served as Interim Pastor of Broadway Baptist Church for three years. He is currently undergoing the Board of Examiners within the African Methodist Episcopal Church for prospective ordination while also attending Eden Theological Seminary to obtain a Master of Community Leadership (MCL).

Michael holds a BA Biology from University of MO-St Louis. After 42 years in Research at Washington University in St Louis, Michael retired to serve God full time.

Michael met Rev. Sheila L. Scott in 2014. Sheila is Pastor of Imani AME Church in Overland, MO. Together they have a blended family of six children: Sarah, Michael, Andrew, Willie, Alexis, and Isaiah. Three are still in college, and he can't wait for them to graduate.





We want your photos!

We are redesigning the WGCC website and need photos of WGCC in action! Choir photos, mission photos, worship photos, education photos, celebration photos, workday photos, children's moment photos, sound booth photos, Board photos, BBQ photos, holiday photos, sacred spaces photos...

Please send any great shots you have from the last year or so to Admin@wgcc.org. Please also be taking pictures whenever people gather.



May 12: BBQ for Cooper House

Calling all dessert-makers, grillers, and servers! We'll hold our fourth annual BBQ at Cooper House at lunchtime on Friday, May 12. This year, as always, we'll have volunteers and food from multiple St. Louis-area Disciples congregations.

Those donating desserts can leave them at church by Thursday, May 11. Volunteer grillers can arrive at Cooper House by around 10 a.m. on Friday. Volunteer servers can arrive around 11:00.

We always have great food and a fantastic time interacting with residents and staff. Plan to join us!

May 12: Webster-Rock Hill Ministry Trivia Night

Have a fun evening out while supporting Webster-Rock Hill Ministries at their Trivia Night at First Congregational Church, 1 West Lockwood Ave. \$30 per person - form a table of eight or join with others. Bring your own snacks, beer, wine or soft drinks. Enjoy a silent auction, attendance prizes, heads/tails, mulligans, and 50/50 raffle. Doors open at 6:15 p.m., game begins at 7 p.m. Please bring canned goods to help the Ministries!

In the past, WGCC has sponsored a table of eight. We would like to do that again, but we need to get a commitment from folks and let WRHM know before the date. Please see **Diane Mark** for more details, or to commit to being at the table.

May 15: Deadline for RATI golf

Registration for the Room at the Inn 10th Annual Golf Tournament on Aug. 21 is now open. There is a wide variety of sponsorships available to spread the word about your organization or business.

The early bird discount for golf teams and players runs through May 15, so get your team together now and sign up! Click on the link to register for the tournament as a golfer, team, and/or sponsor. Don't wait! Join us for a great day at Old Hickory.

Register at: https://secure.qgiv.com/for/rati/event/871237/?blm_aid=42585

Pastor Jeff and the Otts highlight Disciples Women's meetings in April

Pastor Jeff Moore spoke at the April General Meeting. We were so pleased to hear his talk entitled "Rev-Elation on the Road: A Search for Answers and Questions." It was very exciting to hear about his travel plans for his upcoming motorcycle trip visiting sites around the Mediterranean Sea and the book which he is writing. The meeting was held in the Chapel with the Martha Group sharing the refreshments. Laura Stuetzer, vice president, led the meeting. Following the program, there was a brief Business Meeting. The Nominating Committee gave their slate, nominating the following officers for the 2023-24 year:

President: Sally Smith
Recording Secretary: Diane Mark
Vice President: Laura Stuetzer
Corresponding Secretary: Jane Martin
Treasurer: Julie Wood
Service Committee Chairwomen: Pat Roseman, Janie Joplin and Anna Yount

The slate of officers was accepted unanimously. Their service begins on July 1, 2023.

The Disciples Women General Meeting for May is on May 4 at noon in the chapel. Please bring your own lunch. The Martha Group is the hostess of the meeting. The speaker will be Betsy Solomon, Executive Director of the Shepherd's Center. We will look forward to her talk entitled; "Divine Subjects: Images of Angels in

Paintings." Vicki Ott will lead the Devotional. The May meeting will be the last General Meeting until September. We are thankful for a year of meetings in person with very good programs and fellowship.

The Tabitha Group will meet at 7 p.m. in the Heritage Room on May 11. Susan Moore will lead the study and Sally Smith will be hostess. The Martha Group will meet at 12:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room on May 11. Beverly Richmond will give the Devotional and Vicki Ott will lead the study. The Martha Group was invited to the new home of Vicki and Max Ott for their April meeting. It was a real pleasure for us to visit with them in their fabulous new home and to have our meeting there. Congratulations and thank you Vicki and Max for serving as our hosts.

The Disciples Women recently lost four wonderful Christian women, who have been outstanding members and leaders through many years. We wish to remember and honor Gilda Rzechowski, Marjean Davis, Jane Yount and Virginia Pemberton for the love we shared in Disciples Women and in the church.

We find that it has been hard to say goodbye to these marvelous friends until we meet again. May God bless their families as they grieve their loss.

-Submitted by Jane Martin

**Apples! Oranges! Bananas!
Grapes! Pineapples! Melons!**

You are very FRUITFUL. Our donations are not totally counted as of April 24. We do know your donations will be buying these healthy fruits for our NOW families. THANK YOU!

Our service for May will be an opportunity to renew WGCC's support of underserved Kirkwood children in a summer program. Daun Hashbarger led our initial giving when it was known as SPROG and Daun was our/their "Lunch Lady." Now it is Horizons St. Louis in Kirkwood.

SPROG was created as a summer program over 40 years ago to provide academic and enrichment support to underserved children in the Kirkwood area. WGCC's association with SPROG began in 2016 when we volunteered to help with its summer program by providing lunches for 100 SPROG campers.

We continued our participation for four years until SPROG partnered with Horizons National to expand its programming and is now Horizons St. Louis in Kirkwood. Although we are no longer providing lunches, Horizons still needs our Support as it is 100 percent donor funded and still serves our neighbors, the underserved children of the Kirkwood area.

Please continue helping these children. Thanks for your kind giving.



IT'S READY! THE NEW WGCC T-SHIRT

Freshen up your WGCC wardrobe! Show off our Open and Affirming pride!

Our new WGCC logo, Dyess designed, announces our pride in proclaiming the LGBTQ+ community as our own on our new tee shirt. The shirt is white and boldly displays our new logo!

The cost is \$16.50 each. The sizes available are S, M, L, XL. Order larger sizes with upcharge. Just ask!

You may order at worship May 7 or call the church office until May 12.

Make payment to WGCC with "T shirt" on memo line or use Givelify.

Their stars shine bright

A couple of WGCC's own were honored recently by the Arts For Life's eighth annual Theatre Mask Awards, for their roles in the Kirkwood Theatre Guild's comedy "Calendar Girls."

Kay Martin Love, as Annie, was named best lead actress in a comedy, and Gerry Love was named best supporting actor in a comedy.

All told, "Calendar Girls" won seven awards, including outstanding production in a comedy.

Help KAEChP on the annual Give STL Day

Did you know that preschool is not a free opportunity? Unlike K-12 education, preschool is often only available for families who can afford the cost. KAEChP seeks to increase the accessibility to high quality preschool experiences for those who would otherwise be unable due to financial constraints. Preschool is such an important experience because children who begin kindergarten behind their classmates academically are more likely to remain behind throughout their entire educational career.

KAEChP is participating in the 10th annual Give STL Day on May 10, 2023. Give STL Day, powered by the St. Louis Community Foundation, is a 24-hour, online day-of-giving event, designed to ignite the spirit of giving across the region. Since its inception in 2014, Give STL Day has raised over \$26.2 million for more than 1,000 regional nonprofits.

This year, Kirkwood Area Every Child Promise hopes to raise at least \$8,000. And because this is

our organization's FIFTH year, we would love to celebrate this milestone with as many donations with a "5" as possible. We hope that you will consider donating \$5, \$15, \$25, \$50, \$105, \$250, \$500 (or more!) on May 10th. Mark your calendar for May 10, and bookmark this giving link: <https://www.givestlday.org/KAETCHP>

Here's how to help:

- Show your support with a donation on May 10, 2023.
- If you can't participate on May 10, don't worry! You can donate during the early giving period starting April 10.
- PLUS, you have 10 extra hours to give this year! Donations will be accepted through 11 a.m. on May 11, 2023.
- Help us spread the word! Follow us on social media and share our posts!

Prayer concerns for WGCC

For Gregg Eilers, as he continues to battle cancer and recover from surgery

For Rev. Linda Tobias Doss of MBCC

For Marilyn Combs, as she transitions to a new home

For Kai Woodrome, facing health issues

For Diane Mark's son, recovering from COVID

For Karl Reinhardt, recovering from surgery

For Deb Trautman, dealing with diagnosis of GI issues

For the Lugasy family--friends of Molly Gibbons

For Donna Wolff-Crump, as she continues to heal

For Susan Burney's sister in Colorado

For Lisa Rothe's niece, Rachel

For Bev Richmond's son,

Andy, who suffered a mild stroke

For former President Jimmy Carter, as he is in a time of hospice care

For those experiencing injustice in any form, and for those serving in law enforcement

For Mary Jane Schultz, whose son passed away

For Delcia Corlew's friend Anita, hospitalized with Parkinson's Disease

For Jeff Tedford

For Barb Merrell's friend Dana, in hospice with ovarian cancer

For Barb Merrell's niece Regina, battling cancer

For James Burney's safety

For Denise Pahl's mother, battling aspiration pneumonia and RSV

For John Burney, recovering from knee replacement surgery, and for Susie

For Laura Stuetzer's friend Carm, whose ovarian cancer has returned

Carolyn Dyess asks prayers for Janice and Daryl

For Diane Mark's sister Andrea

For Diane Mark's friend, Jennifer, diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer

For Molly Gibbons' father Mark, battling leukemia

For Nina Rothe

For Bev Richmond

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 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 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

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

For the families of WGCC Project NOW program, and KAEChP.

For basic needs of food, shelter clothing and healthcare for all.

For the families served by Webster Rock Hill Ministries

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