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#### A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

#### "A Crime in our Community"

This week, someone took our Rainbow Banner. To be specific, they burned the ties that held it in place, so that is how we are sure it was not accidental, or an act of the wind. Several other houses of worship and private residences in Webster Groves also lost their rainbow flag or banner, their Trans Lives Matter sign, or their Black Lives Matter sign. It appears that the same person/s may have committed all these malicious acts on the night or morning hours of August 28-29.

Two members of the Webster Groves Police Department arrived to receive our report. Because of the other similar events in our community, they are considering this a hate crime. It was also necessary to show the officers some cards and letters that we have received over the course of the summer months asking us to take our rainbow banner down. These notes declared that our message of support of the LGBT+ community is not worthy of a Christian church, and not Biblically supported. These notes did not contain threatening language.

The Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the church in Galatia, relating to the many differences represented among the believers,

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

When we cloth ourselves in Jesus, we become united in a way that triumphs over all the differences that would naturally seem to separate us, those in our personal preferences, level of education, economic circumstances, politics or heritage. Jesus spoke often about poverty, generosity, giving, and the kingdom of God. Never did Jesus speak of persons who today would be referred to as members of the LGBT+ community. Jesus was never about who we should keep out, but was always about who we should include.

All this is to say that the rainbow banner is not just a trendy flag for us. It acts as a serious invitation that if you are part of the LGBT+ community, or love someone who is, you are welcome in our church. It also stands as a promise from our heart and soul. We promise that you will be honored here just as God designed you. The only thing that has changed in this invitation and promise since we voted to become a radically-inclusive Reconciling Congregation in January of 2014 is the depth of our commitment and love for our LGBT+ siblings.



The Justice Team has already ordered a new banner, (actually two in case we have to do this again), and will see that it is proudly flying as soon as it arrives. They will be also be leading us to celebrate our commitment not only in June, the celebrated month of Pride recognition, but also throughout the month of September.

If you would like to help host our shared United Methodist booth at this year's Tower Grove Pride Festival, please sign up on the Blue Connection Card this Sunday, or contact Carolyn Redmore at cdredmore@aol.com.

Grace & Peace +
PASTOR SHARON

**PRAYER** 

**CONCERNS** 

Traci Stuart;
Jackie Richert;
Clyde and Carol Gilker;
Joyce Simpson;

Joyce Simpson;

Teri Ann Wallace

and Joanne Beerman (Marcia Kennon);

John Wersching;

Randy Turman (Lettie Morse);

Josh, Allie, and Hellen (Traci Stuart);

Carolyn Keller (Julie Puckett);

Teresa Ruma, Linda Kincaid,

Regina Meyer (Marcia Kennon);

concern and support for our LGBTQIA community; meaningful gun control; and families to become more accepting of LGBTQ people.



# **CHURCH SURVEY**

Church Family,

Thank you for taking a moment to fill out this survey. This survey was approved by your Webster United Methodist Church Council, and it is designed to help the Church Council plan. By filling out this survey, you can help your Church Council understand the needs of our church and how best to focus our committees' efforts.

The questions in this survey are designed to help the Church Council understand where we are at as a congregation. These questions were intended to help us, as a congregation, accomplish our mission to love, grow, and serve. As you fill out this survey, please keep in mind that we are all engaged in this mission together, and the most helpful responses will provide the Church Council with suggestions about how we might accomplish our church's mission to love, grow, and serve.

This is your chance to share how the Holy Spirit has directed your thoughts regarding our church's programs. During the pandemic, some programs sponsored by this church ended and have not been revived. Some other activities may have disappeared long before the pandemic, and others have yet to be initiated. Your ideas about the future can help us better reach the spiritual needs of our community.

Thank you again for taking a few moments to complete this survey. You may take the survey by By clicking on the link that follows. <a href="https://forms.gle/CaA6ftJ18MYTVFfT7">https://forms.gle/CaA6ftJ18MYTVFfT7</a> or by following the QR code below.



Sincerely, J Mark Leslie, on behalf of the Church Council



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Kick-Off SEPTEMBER 10 Youth Group SEPTEMBER 10 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Faith & Life
New Learning Group
SEPTEMBER 10

Wild Wednesday SEPTEMBER 13



# CREAM, GAMES, & MORES SICE CREAM, GAMES SICE CREAM

God is wild about fun and games

COME JOIN US! SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

5:30PM - 7PM

ADDRESS

600 N BOMPART AVE, WEBSTER GROVES, MO 63119





9:00-10:00AM

Adult and Teen Learning Hour (with Discover Room for children)

10:00-10:30AM

Fellowship Time

10:30-11:30AM

Worship and Living Stones (children ages 5-6th grade)

11:30-12:30PM

Potluck Dinner

(beverages and cake provided)









# A BOLD VISION FOR SENIOR HOUSING

**September 12, 2023, 5:15 - 6:15 pm** 

Learn about Peace UCC's partnership with St. Louis county to develop senior affordable housing in the heart of Webster Groves.

#### Webster Groves Public Library Meeting Room, 301 East Lockwood Ave



In conjunction with Welcome Neighbor StL, Webster United Methodist invites you to a WNSTL Syrian Drive Through Dinner on September 30 th at 5:00 PM. These meals present an opportunity for immigrant and refugee families to share knowledge and skills unique to them. It is also an opportunity for us to get a glimpse into their culture. These fundraising efforts can set them on a path of greater independence and confidence in their lives here in the USA. Drive through the church parking lot to pick up your to-go dinner on Saturday, September 30th from 5:00–6:00 PM. Menu includes: hummus dip & mp; pita bread, grape leaves stuffed with rice, tabouleh salad, chicken shawarma sandwich, and baklava.

Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased only online at: <a href="https://welcomeneighborstl.org/events/syrian-drive-thru-dinner-at-webster-united-methodist-church/">https://welcomeneighborstl.org/events/syrian-drive-thru-dinner-at-webster-united-methodist-church/</a>

We will need 12-14 volunteers to help with assembling/packing meals and delivering them to cars as customers drive through our parking lot. To volunteer, see the Connection Card on Sunday morning.



The Senior Cruisers groups has not been active for quite a long time. It is time to pick up where we left off and go on a new adventure. I have selected the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center. The Danforth Center was founded in 1998 to help create a world where all people have enough food and energy while preserving a livable, sustainable environment, now and for the future. The tour will include history of the Danforth Center along with:

- **▼** Fundamental plant science and useful research to support our mission to improve the human condition through plant science
- The role of principal investigators
- Discovering new knowledge

Our FREE tour is set for Tuesday, September 19th at 11:00 AM. We will meet at the church at 10:00 to carpool.

Please wear comfortable shoes for the one-hour walking tour. There will be benches and elevators along the way. If you have questions, please call Marcia Kennon or email mehackkennon@gmail.com.





#### 25th Anniverasary Celebration

Visit with friends - Share Memories

### OCTOBER 20, 2023 | 12 NOON Kirkwood United Methodist Church

201 W. Adams, Kirkwood, MO 63122
Buffet Luncheon - Volunteer Recognition
\$50/Person - Ticket Sales
www.shepherdscenter-wk.org
or call 314-395-0988

#### Sponsored by Cardinal Ritter Senior Services

## United Women in Faith Fall Brunch

Saturday, September 30th 10:00 a.m.–Noon \$10 per person

<u>Ingathering: Items for the Bodega</u> at LifeWise StL

Underwear for Girls-All Sizes

Underwear for Women–Large (7), XL (8), XXL (9 & amp;10)

NEW items only please!

#### **Guest Speaker**



Barbara Phifer
Retired UMC Minister,
Current State Representative,
District 90



**START GATHERING YOUR DONATIONS:** 

- CLEAN CLOTHING IN GOOD REPAIR
- HOUSEHOLD ITEMS
- TOOLS
- BOOKS, PUZZLES, TOYS, GAMES

PLEASE NO FURNITURE & NO ELECTRONICS

DONATIONS ACCEPTED AT
CHURCH FOLLOWING SERVICES
OCTOBER IST THROUGH OCTOBER 5TH



#### **NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINE**

All articles and submissions must be sent to <a href="mailto:secretary@websterum.org">secretary@websterum.org</a> by Monday at 5pm to be in that week's newsletter.