

Weekly Newsletter

JANUARY 18, 2024



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A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Packing Jesus Away

Friends, this was written 12 years ago, but still seems appropriate to the season. In fact, we are in the process of packing away our Christmas this week.

This long weekend at the Kichline house was spent in part packing up Christmas. My husband Joel loves the lights and tinsel of the season; he would leave up our lights year round if he could. Over the years, we have negotiated leaving up the tree until after his birthday. I knew we had waited too long when, while pulling off the lights, I could hear the needles splattering on the hardwood floor like a rainstorm. I think we swept up as much tree as we took out.

I always feel a little relieved to have Christmas packed away. Now it's back to business as usual, right? But as I carefully wrapped the baby Jesus up in tissue paper and laid him in the storage box, I was struck by the action.

It is just as easy to wrap the spirit of Jesus up in tissue paper and send it to storage. It seems so, even though we have had a heartwarming Christmas experience, sharing Holy Communion at Christ's Table of Grace, and passing the light of new life in a darkened Sanctuary to every soul. It is just so expeditious to pack away our tender Christmas experience together with the ornaments and wreaths, so that we can move on to the next thing.

But our faith can be so much more than that melty sweet experience on Christmas Eve. Now is not the time to pack that glowing connection with God away...because our adventure with Jesus has only just begun! Now is the time to take that flickering light from Christmas Eve and let the Holy Spirit set the dry kindling within us afire! Now is the time to risk, to pray, to stretch, to grow in our relationship with God, as we partner with Jesus Christ in transforming the world!

Come and be part of the adventure of loving, feeding, teaching, sharing, and building. Come be a part of something bigger than yourself. Don't pack Jesus away in the attic or basement, where he is to wait for your attention next December. Carry Him in your heart.

Grace & peace +

PASTOR SHARON



PRAYER CONCERNS

Bev Mesey; Stuart/Reesor Family; Lou Stuart and Cindy (Traci Stuart); Mary Lynn Jones-Wright (Cindy Andrews); Rev. Kim Shirar; Mark Kremer; Terri Samples (Connie Kroenung); Kayla Kopp Hardin and family; Trinka (cousin of Jean Ransdell and Beth Anderson); Ginnie Hartley, Teri Ann Wallace, & Pat Delf (Marcia Kennon); and those digging out from heavy snowstorms; world leaders, and peace.

Let's End Restrictive Covenants

Webster Groves High School sophomore Samantha Enlund has been working on a project to End Racially Restrictive Covenants on property deeds in Webster Groves. She is supported by the STL Changemakers at the Missouri History Museum, the Chelsea Center of WGHS, and the City of Webster Groves.

Send your home address to Samantha at sjenlund2008@gmail.com and she will personally check if your home has a racially restrictive covenant. You can also check for yourself by following the instructions on the [City of Webster Groves website](#). This City page also has background on the issue and guidance on how to disavow/release the covenant.

The City is maintaining a registry of citizens who take action to get rid of a racially restrictive covenant. This is an opportunity for each person to "acknowledge our history and make our community more welcoming to all."

Thank you for this seed of change, Samantha!



GIRL SCOUT COOKIES FOR SALE!!

The Girl Scouts will be selling cookies in fellowship hall this year on Sundays January 14, 21, and 28, before and after church service. Please visit their table if you would like to support them.

You can also purchase online if you prefer. You fill out the online order form, pay online, and choose to have the cookies dropped off at your house by the Girl Scouts or delivered by mail. It is very easy!

Two girls, Sarah and Vivienne Vader, are selling cookies this year. We split the congregation in half by last name, please place your order online as follows:

**A-M last names purchase from Sarah at:
<https://digitalcookie.girlscouts.org/scout/sarah659990>**

**N-Z last names purchase from Vivienne at:
<https://digitalcookie.girlscouts.org/scout/vivienne744538>**



MERCY CONFERENCE AND RETREAT CENTER

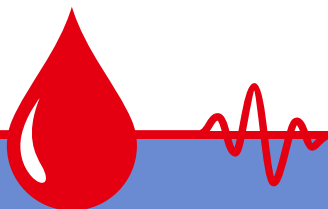
UPCOMING EVENTS

LITURGICAL COMPOSERS CONCERT

The annual Liturgical Composers Concert will be held *Thursday, January 25, 7:00-8:30 PM* at Mercy Conference and Retreat Center in Frontenac. Celebrate this evening of music and song with the composers who have enhanced our worship throughout the years. \$25 general admission. \$50 preferred seating (includes reception after the concert with the composers.) \$15 individual livestream. Register at www.mercycenterstl.org.

LOOKING BENEATH THE SURFACE: DOES HUMAN TRAFFICKING HAPPEN IN YOUR BACKYARD?

Kimberly Ritter presents an informative evening on the issue of human trafficking *Thursday, February 8, 6:00-8:00 PM* at Mercy Conference and Retreat Center, Frontenac. Kimberly spearheads Nix Conference and Meeting Management's corporate social responsibility initiative on human trafficking. Cost: \$25 in person; \$15 live stream. 6:00-6:30 PM appetizers and drinks. 6:30-8:00 PM program. Register by Feb. 2 at www.mercycenterstl.org.



RED CROSS COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE

FRIDAY JANUARY 26, 2pm - 7pm.
at the Brentwood REC CENTER

PLEASE SIGN UP AT:

redcrossblood.org

sponsor code: BWParksRec

Your DONATION WILL HELP OTHERS

Questions email aleahy2833@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINE

All articles and submissions must be sent to
secretary@websterum.org by Monday
at 5pm to be in that week's newsletter.