



Tidings

JANUARY 2012

First Church of Christ Congregational UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

In the heart of West Hartford
we are called by God to grow together,
inspiring and engaging one another
through worship, learning, fellowship and outreach.

We faithfully serve our diverse community and world,
welcoming and nurturing all people
in the living Spirit of Jesus.

PREACHING & WORSHIP PLANS

10:00 a.m. - Worship

January 1

New Years Day
Barbara Frey
preaching

January 8

"An After Carol"
Geordie Campbell
preaching

January 15

"Christianity, 21"
4. What do we
know about Jesus?
Geordie Campbell
preaching

January 22

"A Whale of a Story"
Geordie Campbell
preaching

January 29

"The Mat Story"
Geordie Campbell
preaching

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Facebook
and Flickr



300 Years of First Church

Happy New Year and Happy ALMOST 300th Anniversary!

We invite you to get into the anniversary spirit NOW by visiting the special exhibit in the archives display case across the hall from the JPWebster Library and as you think about our church's history please begin to also think about our church's future and how we can celebrate our 300th anniversary.

Think about it, 300 years! Wow!

The 300th Anniversary Workgroup has begun to think about how our anniversary can be a meaningful and joyful experience that will also help us prepare for our future. We would like your help in a couple of different ways. First, we need a theme for our anniversary year. Can you think of a theme that we can use during our anniversary events that captures our energy and spirit as we look to celebrate both our past and our future? Let us know. We would like to get your ideas. Maybe you can work with your family or members of your boards and ministries. How about encouraging your children to talk to their friends in church school classes?

Second, we will be looking for ways to show our love and gratitude to First Church for being a sustaining presence in our lives. We will also look for opportunities to share our gratitude through gifts of service. We'll be planning some discussions probably as 'Let's Talk' sessions to get our ideas together. More on that in another Tidings. In the mean time, send your ideas for a theme to Liz Spencer: elspencer@aol.com.

1 7 1 3
2 0 1 3
300 Years



In 1713 our congregation began meeting in a small wooden structure at the corner of Farmington and Main Streets.

**CHURCH BULLETIN BOARD
AND FAMILY NEWS**

WEDDINGS



● First Church Administrative Assistant, **Rebecca Wright**, married **Joseph E. Poliquin** in a private ceremony at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area on December 4, 2011.

BAPTISMS



● **Charlotte Rose Cox** was baptized on December 11, 2011. Her parents are **Stacey** and **Gerald Cox**, and her Godparents are **Sherry Helton** and **Steve Cox**.

DEATHS



● **Mildred G. Higgins** passed away on December 7, 2011.

If you have an announcement to share with your church family, please call the church office: 860-233-9605.

Bible Presentation

Our 4th grade students are invited to receive their Bibles on Sunday, January 22nd during worship.



Newell Shares His Spirit

Thanks to those who made John Philip Newell's time with us on December 1st, such a special program! Over 30 spiritual leaders took part in an afternoon retreat in the chapel focused on Philip's new book, "Praying with the Earth: A Prayer Book for Peace" and his new CD, *Chanting for Peace*. Later that evening, a wonderful group shared a fellowship meal prior to John Philip's lecture on "A New Harmony: The Spirit, the Earth, and the Human Soul." We welcomed approximately 75 attendees



John Philip and Susan Izard.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SUSAN IZARD

to hear John Philip Newell's message of oneness with God and the universe. The library will have a DVD of his lecture available for borrowing in the near future and we also plan to have a YouTube excerpt available. ❖

**A Hands-On
Outreach Opportunity**

Did you know that First Church members have been serving meals at Loaves and Fishes, a local soup kitchen for 25 years? We no longer prepare the meals in our church kitchen, but help with light preparation, serving, and waiting on tables at the soup kitchen.



Some helpers are needed for about three hours, and some are only needed for the time that we are serving. Our day to work is always the fourth Tuesday of each month at Immanuel Church on the corner of Farmington Ave. and Woodland St. Serving 115 to 160 people each month is a wonderful way to live our faith.

If you are interested in helping as a regular or as a substitute, call **Dottie Stone** at 860-521-0554 or **Jane Cave** at 860-521-6534. ❖

**Come to the
Potluck
Supper!**

**January 27, 2012 in the Auditorium
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

There will be a fun scavenger hunt for the kids and a chance for the adults to re-gift a Christmas present with a good old fashioned **YANKEE SWAP**. Bring an appetite, a wrapped gift, and enjoy the fun and fellowship!

**Please bring a favorite
Soup or Chili to share**

PAPER, PAPER EVERYWHERE

Did you know that Americans use enormous amounts of paper each year, equivalent to one 100-foot tall tree per person per year, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Significant amounts of that paper come in the form of newspapers and magazines. Each year, publishers in the United States print 350 million magazines and 24 billion newspapers. So, why not take a look at the online version of your favorite paper or magazine. Plus, the pictures sometimes look more clear and colorful. And, of course, don't forget to recycle newspapers and magazines that you do receive. ❖



If you have ideas to help us all become more green, please contact Bob Izard: rizard@izardnobel.com.

Stay Up-to-Date

Sign up for weekly E-Mail notices and/or to receive the full color version of Tidings electronically! Call the church office at 860-233-9605 or E-Mail the church office at: general.mail@whfirstchurch.org to be added to the list!



First Church of Christ Congregational

AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

Rev. Dr. C. Geordie Campbell, Senior Pastor
Rev. Barbara Frey, Associate Pastor

12 SOUTH MAIN STREET
WEST HARTFORD, CT 06107
P: (860) 233-9605 F: (860) 232-8183
www.whfirstchurch.org

JPWEBSTER LIBRARY (860) 232-3893

NURSERY SCHOOL (860) 232-2106

Tidings submissions are due on the 14th of every month for publication on the 1st of the following month. Please email submissions (including photos as jpegs) to editor/designer Joy Taylor: jtaylor@hometownmarketing.com.

Please share, save or recycle your **TIDINGS with your newspapers.**



Is There a Better Time Than Now?

Home, Work, Community - the three places in which we spend our lives. The third place is where First Church resides and it is, for many of us, the **Best Third Place**. This passion for First Church has been demonstrated most recently in your significant response to last Fall's Stewardship campaign.



**January '12
Moderator's Corner**

by Bob Sitkowski

But it is about a complementary aspect of support that I write now. Last time, I wrote about Church Council and its membership. Council is First Church's primary governing body, but the day-to-day work of First Church is done by the members of Boards, Ministries and Workgroups. This is where I seek you to consider putting your talent and time into action on behalf of the Best Third Place.

In March 2012 at the Annual Meeting, the Congregation will consider a slate of nominees to serve on its Boards and Ministries. There are opportunities to participate on virtually every Board and Ministry. As the following list shows, there is ample room for the pursuit of many interests and passions.

The Boards of First Church are:

- ✓ Building & Grounds
- ✓ Christian Education
- ✓ Deacons
- ✓ Fellowship
- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Service & Outreach

The Ministries of First Church are:

- ✓ Communications
- ✓ First Church Nursery School
- ✓ Membership
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Parish Care
- ✓ Personnel
- ✓ Stewardship
- ✓ J.P. Webster Library



The Council members - that is, the chairs of the Boards and Ministries - have been and are continuing to seek volunteers to fill these critical positions. I cannot more strongly urge you to consider joining us as we inspire and engage one another through volunteering. Margaret and I have benefited in countless ways from our volunteering opportunities here at First Church, and it is our hope that Dasha will carry on our commitment in her own way.



I trust that you share my urgency on this issue - there is no better time than now for your most inspired involvement in the life of our Best Third Place.

Please indicate your interest by contacting me directly via e-mail at rsitkowski@att.net or by telephone at 860-570-1072. ❖

Thank you!



Thank you to everyone who participated in the Share a Gift Tree drive for Covenant to Care for Children. There were gifts and/or gift cards donated for all 37 of the children that our two adopted social workers are working with right now. Marcia and Steve are grateful for your generosity, which helped these kids have a Merry Christmas!

Thanks, also, for all the hats, mittens, blankets, etc., many of them hand-knitted, donated for the children at Klingberg Family Centers, Hartford and at Dept. of Children and Families in Middletown.

Bev and Carole, Board of Service & Outreach

JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP (Grades 5-7) UPDATE

Happy New Year to all of our Junior Youth Group Members. All meetings are 4:00p.m.-5:30 p.m. Sunday evenings unless otherwise noted. Please feel free to bring your friends.

JANUARY 2012

- Jan. 1st: No JYG - Happy New Year!
 - Jan. 8th: Wii / Game Night
 - Jan. 15th: No JYG - Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend
 - Jan. 22nd: Special Guest
 - Jan. 27th: Friday Evening Pot Luck Supper - JYG Participation
- Cindy Bemis

cindy.bemis@wbfirstchurch.org

BIBLE TIMES MARKETPLACE RETURNS TO FIRST CHURCH

**JANUARY 29 and FEBRUARY 5
HOMETOWN NAZARETH**

A unique experience for church school children will be held in the auditorium on January 29th and February 5th during the regular church school time.

We will be trying to recreate a Bible Times Marketplace, insofar as we can make it happen, so the children can experience what life was like when Jesus lived. Each class will visit the shops of the marketplace and learn about Bible time occupations by working as apprentices. They will witness events in the life of Jesus as they are enacted in their midst by street players.

Imagine, if you will, the small village of Nazareth where Jesus lived as a boy with his family. The marketplace shops are clustered around the well, the hub of social and economic life. The smell of baking bread is in the air, mixed with mouth-watering aromas from the candy shop. Above the clang from the metal worker's shop, you can occasionally hear the carpenter's tools as he fashions a yoke for oxen. The potter is busy setting up a display of his wares, and across the way, the basket weaver prepares the looms. The villagers hurry their chores, for they don't want to miss the storyteller.

You can be a part of it! You can be a shop keeper, a storyteller, a kitchen helper, or a tent

SENIOR YOUTH GROUP (Grades 8-12) UPDATE

Senior Youth Group
will meet in the
Youth Room from
11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m.
on **January 8th** and
January 22nd.
Hope to see you all!

-Dawne Quinn

dawne.quinn@wbfirstchurch.org



setter-upper, or one who helps with costumes and gathering supplies. For each shopkeeper, there is an easy script and activity and shop keepers will have experienced apprentices to assist. Please help make this experience a memorable one! ❖

Church School News

January 1st-No CS-Happy New Year!

January 8th-February 5th- Join us for Hometown Nazareth- Where Jesus Was a Kid. During this 5 week unit, we will explore Jesus' hometown through the eyes of his mother, Mary. Activities will reinforce 5 Bible points: Jesus had a family...we do too. Jesus had a name... we do too. Jesus had a home... we do too. Jesus went to church... we do too. Jesus served others...we do too. This unit will culminate with a fantastic marketplace experience in our auditorium on February 5th and 12th.

-Dawne Quinn

dawne.quinn@wbfirstchurch.org

Celebrating First Church

Curiosity is being aroused. A committee has been formed and is beginning to formulate plans. What's the buzz about? The 300th birthday of First Church West Hartford!

1713
2013
300 Years

In 1988 the church celebrated its 275th anniversary. The planning committee coordinated events and activities which would honor the past, celebrate the life and work of the contemporary church, and build a stronger foundation for the future.

The Sunday worship service on May 15, 1988 incorporated elements from the 275 years of rich worship life of the parish, including a benediction used by the Rev. Nathan Perkins in 1822. After the services, a "super old-fashioned Sunday School picnic" was held on the front lawn with games for all ages - volleyball, stilts, horseshoes, relay races, a spelling bee, and even a May pole dance.

During the anniversary year members of the congregation created a handsome historic timeline (on the wall in the upper hallway), crafted a unique appliqué quilt (in the Friendship Room), prepared the booklet *A Young Person's History of First Church of Christ* for the children, and produced posters of an original work of art celebrating the spirit of worship at First Church. An exhibition at the Noah Webster House used materials from the church archives, the museum, and other sources to tell the story of the founding of the parish which became West Hartford.

The First Church Fund had been established in 1982 as a source of funds to maintain and enhance the church property. During the 1988 anniversary year, members were asked to pledge support to the Fund for major renovation projects including the repair and painting of the steeple and replacing the bellows for the Meeting House organ.

November 13, 1988 was Rededication Sunday. Dr. Leander Keck, Dean of Yale Divinity School, preached at the morning worship service. Lunch was served in the auditorium and a large number of invited guests were recognized. These included former ministers, representatives from our mother and daughter churches, fifty year members, and Dr. Nelson Burr, the Town Historian. When the festivities were concluded, the congregation gathered in the Meeting House to renew their covenant with God and to share the sacrament of Holy Communion.

It All Started Here... 300 Years Ago
Barbara Goodwin, FCC Archivist



**JOHN P. WEBSTER
LIBRARY**
Resources for Faith & Life

Patricia Malahan, Director

(860) 232-3893

HOURS:

Sunday - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

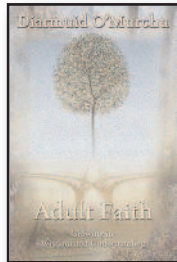
Monday, Wednesday & Thursday - 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday - 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Friday & Saturday - Closed

Christian Classics Book Group

We will resume meeting on Monday, January 9th at noon when we will begin our discussion of chapters 1-3 of *“Adult Faith: Growing in Wisdom and Understanding”* by Diarmuid O’Murchu. O’Murchu wrote the class *“Quantum Theology”*, *“Evolutionary Faith”* and *“Ancestral Grace”*.



Food for Thought Book Group

This popular book group discussion is usually held on the first Thursday of each month, from October through May, from 5:45 to 7:00 p.m. Participants are invited to bring their own “brown bag” supper and the library provides beverages and dessert. Our next meeting will be on *January 5 when we will discuss “Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close,”* by Jonathan Safran Foer.

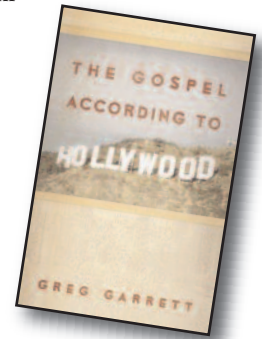


Foer tells the story of an intellectually curious and precocious nine year old boy, Oskar Schell, whose father died in the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center. Oskar finds a hidden key left by his father and his obsession to locate the lock that matches the key takes him on a journey around New York. Intertwined with Oskar’s quest is the story of his grandfather, who survived the bombing of Dresden in World War II. Foer uses “humor, tenderness, and awe” as well as a creative graphic style to convey grief, loss and recovery. Our February selection will be “The Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet.”

NEW RESOURCES

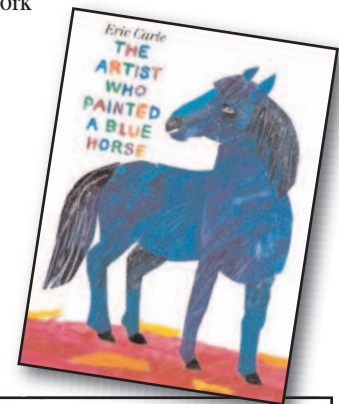
Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction

- Acts of faith: the story of an American Muslim, the struggle for the soul of a generation by Eboo Patel
- Breathing under water: spirituality and the twelve steps by Richard Rohr
- Celtic Pilgrimage with John O’Donohue (DVD)
- Christmas is not your birthday: experience the joy of living and giving like Jesus by Michael Slaughter
- Extremely loud & incredibly close by Jonathan Safran Foer
- Finding our way again: the return of the ancient practices by Brian McLaren
- The girl from foreign: a search for shipwrecked ancestors, forgotten histories, and a sense of home by Sadia Shepard
- The Gospel according to Hollywood by Greg Garrett
- Hurry less, worry less at Christmastime: having the holiday season you long for by Judy Pace Christie
- Jerusalem: the biography by Simon Sebag Montefiore
- Lectio divina—the sacred art: transforming words and images into heart-centered prayer by Christine Valters Paintner
- Nearing Home: Life, Faith, and Finishing Well by Billy Graham (also Audio)
- Sacred threshold: crossing the inner barrier to a deeper love by Paula D’Arcy
- Second simplicity: the inner shape of Christianity by Bruno Barnhart
- Seeking With All My Heart: Encountering God’s Presence Today by Paula D’Arcy
- Standing alone: an American woman’s struggle for the soul of Islam by Asra Q.
- Waking up to this day: seeing the beauty right before us by Paul D’Arcy



Children’s

- The artist who painted a blue horse by Eric Carle
- Ashley learns about strangers by Sarah Mountbatten-Windsor York
- Bean bag activities & coordination skills (CD) by Georgiana Liccione Stewart
- Bear’s loose tooth by Karma Wilson
- Christmas cookies: bite-size holiday lessons by Amy Krouse Rosenthal
- Grandpa Green by Lane Smith
- Llama Llama holiday drama by Anna Dewdney
- The Man in the Moon by William Joyce
- The Polar Express (DVD)
- The snuffles for Bear by Bonny Becker
- YogaKids (DVD)



John P. Webster Gallery

In January, the gallery will welcome local artist Matthew Kirshman. More information about his exhibit and reception will be listed in Sunday Notes.

Soup and Scripture

On Tuesdays from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. a basic meal of soup and bread is served, and our group reads scripture and has a brief informal discussion of the readings.

Reach Out

(A column from Service & Outreach)

Fourth Sunday Special Offering:

This month the Fourth Sunday Special Offering will benefit Church World Service, a cooperative ministry of 35 denominations that work to eradicate hunger and poverty by providing sustainable self-help and development, disaster relief and refugee assistance around the world. CWS projects range from supporting foods banks to sustainable fishing and agriculture programs to hurricane relief.

Through your generous contributions, last month's Special Offering raised over \$977 for the benefit of West Hartford Food Pantry.

Service and Outreach sponsors a Special Offering every fourth Sunday of the month to benefit a service organization that helps those in greater need than ourselves. In this time of economic uncertainty, we hope you will be able to support those who most need our help. If you support organizations that need the Church's wider support, please let us know. To make sure that your Reach Out contribution is properly allocated, make sure to check the "Reach Out" box on the "Your Gift" envelope. Thank you for your support. ❖

First Church Planned Legacy Gift Program

The First Church Council has established a committee to develop a Planned Legacy Gift Program for the Church. As the committee works toward a planned gift program they have several goals:

1. Encourage First Church members and Friends to consider leaving a planned gift or Legacy to First Church.
2. Provide support information and easy to use materials regarding how to leave a planned gift or legacy to First Church.
3. Develop an ongoing legacy program which will be coordinated by the Stewardship Ministry.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact any of the committee members. The Planned Gift Legacy Committee Members are: **Jim Barlow, Bob Carter, Bob Cave, Gail Hamblett, Anne Selden, George Stone and Dale Wolfe.** ❖

Troop 12 News



Troop 12 Boy Scouts and leaders posing in front of a Pequot war canoe at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum.



Troop 12 Scouts began work on the Indian Lore merit badge with a day-long visit to the Mashantucket Pequot Museum in November. The morning workshop, Native American Games and Sports, taught about the many games and sports common to Northeastern tribes. We had a chance to play with some Native American toys and hear about modern games that began with Native American sports. We were also told about many Native Americans who have been Olympic champions for the United States. We then went on a guided exhibit tour looking

at how Pequot children lived in the past.

The afternoon workshop, entitled "From the Earth," taught us about the history of clay pottery created and used by Pequot and other Native people of the Northeast. We then made a traditional-style pinch pot out of clay. This workshop was followed by another guided exhibit tour looking at exhibits about the land in which the Pequots lived.

Our last activity was to see the movie about the Pequot wars. Both the boys and their leaders found it very emotional and interesting. It gave us a chance to see how different Native American tribes in our area interacted with each other and with the European settlers. It explained how the Pequots were legislated out of existence for many years.

Congratulations to Jason Marshall, Arbaz Syed, and Alex Tranquilli who recently attained the "Scout" rank; to Emory Burke and Douglas Lombardi who recently attained the "Tenderfoot" rank, and to Keith Szabo who recently attained the "Star" rank. ❖

Troop 12 meets weekly on Tuesdays from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at First Church's Youth Room and welcomes all boys 11 to 17. You may contact Scoutmaster Fred Brown - fredbrown3@aol.com - for more information.

Women's Retreat

Theme: "Embracing Hope"

March 23rd at 5:00 p.m. to March 24th at 3:00 p.m.



It's time to sign up for the Women's Retreat. Once again we will be traveling to Wisdom House in Litchfield, CT for our retreat. The theme this year is "Embracing Hope." This will be a time for fellowship, reflection, quiet and fun. **Susan Izard** will be the leader. Please call the church office to make your reservation, 860-233-9605. The cost of a room and three delicious meals is \$102. Members and friends of First Church are invited. ❖

May your New Year be filled with as many giggles and grins as we have at First Church Nursery School!

When families come to visit the school, they comment that it is such a happy place. We're very grateful for the staff we have and the support we get from our families! Did you know that we have teachers who have been with us almost 30 years, 27 years and 22 years? It is amazing!

Once again, thank you for helping to make our Scholastic Book Fair such a success! So many of you made purchases and stopped to chat. As a "pay it forward" endeavor, each family was asked to bring a gently used book as their entry ticket to the fair. We collected 158 books which we were able to donate to The Family Resource Center at Charter Oak School.

We are continuing our food collection and are planning a walking trip to the Food Bank at Town Hall. We thank our nursery school families for bringing so much food to help fill the Thanksgiving Baskets and for the many pairs of mittens and hats for those in need. It is so helpful for us to have concrete ways for our children to learn to understand the difference between needs and wants. Thanks, First Church!

Blessed to be here,

—**Ruthie Johnson**, *Director*

KNITTING MINISTRY!

All knitters - experienced and novices - are welcome on January 9th at 7:00 p.m. to join us in the Quiet Room. Yarn is available. Please bring size 11 needles and we will teach you how to knit a prayer shawl ❖

Taizé



Sunday, Jan. 8th
at 5:00 pm in the Chapel

First Church Carolers at Blue Back Square

December 11, 2011



CHRIS WHALLEY PHOTOS

Find even more photos on our [flickr](#) page! At flickr.com search for "in the heart of West Hartford"





JANUARY 2012

Tidings

First Church of Christ

Congregational UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

12 SOUTH MAIN STREET
WEST HARTFORD, CT 06107



First Church of Christ
Congregational

CALL TO THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL MEETING

Sunday, January 29, 2012
following the 10:00 a.m. Worship Service
in the Meeting House

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Financial Meeting of the First Church of Christ, Congregational, of West Hartford, CT will be held Sunday, January 29, 2012 following the 10:00 a.m. worship service in the Meeting House to transact the following items of business:

1. To hear and act upon the 2011 Annual Financial Report.
2. To consider and act upon the following:
 - a. the First Church 2012 Proposed Budget;
 - b. the John P. Webster Library 2012 Proposed Budget; and
 - c. the 2011-2012 First Church Nursery School Proposed Budget.
3. To take such other action as may legally come before this meeting.

Given January 1, 2012
Elizabeth Carabillo, Church Clerk

JOURNEYMEN:

Meetings are at 8:15 AM on the first and third Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Room

Interested? Give Ken Taylor a call (860-243-2502) or e-mail kentaylor@snet.net.

FIRST CHURCH FAMILY PICTURES

LifeTouch Photographers will be taking pictures of First Church members for a new directory.



Sign-up at coffee hour in January, or follow the link on our website. The picture-taking days are: February 9th-11th and (if needed) April 12th-14th. Watch Sunday Notes and E-blasts for more information.