



# Sunday Notes

May 31, 2020



## Looking towards Sunday:

Pentecost was a miracle of speech, hearing, and understanding. In Acts 2, the disciples are gathered together in Jerusalem and as the Holy Spirit came upon them there, they were able to speak and to be understood in other languages -- so that the news about Jesus jumped the confines of its locality and was translated and carried into other cultures and languages. They said it was like "tongues of fire." What light can you give to the world in this time of pandemic? And in what areas are you noticing that the Holy Spirit is already coloring outside the lines of our expectations?

Pentecost is sometimes called the birthday of the church. God's Holy Spirit is alive and continues to move in our world. Join us online for worship, and pass the word!

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## Happening Today

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### Church School

Our Church School is available in an online platform, where our students explore our bible stories through games, videos, readings and prayer together. We have lessons on Sunday mornings at 10 am. For more information, please reach out to Lauren at [lauren.dube@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:lauren.dube@whfirstchurch.org). Our older congregants are invited to join us by reading stories, sharing games, and just checking in!

### Sunday Morning Bible Study

Sundays at 10 am via Zoom meeting

We will be studying the book of Genesis. Please join us any Sunday morning that you are available. Join by computer [here](#), Meeting ID: 740 403 746, Password: 694795; One tap mobile +16465588656, 740403746#; by phone +1 646 558 8656.

### Sunday Morning Cyber Coffee Hour at 11 am

Please join others who will gather following morning worship for a "virtual" coffee hour via Zoom! Join by computer [here](#), Meeting ID: 924 416 446, Password: 899935; One tap mobile +16465588656,924416446#; by phone +1 646 558 8656.

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## Events

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### Zoom Instructions

Many of our events are happening online with the Zoom platform. For **instructions on how to join a Zoom meeting**, click [here](#). For those hosting meetings, here is information on [Host Controls](#) and [Running a Meeting and Screen Share](#).

## Awakening the Spirit Book Group

Mondays at noon via Zoom web-conference

We are reading Barbara Brown Taylor's [\*Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others\*](#). Please join us! Contact Jennifer deSimas, JPW Library Director for Zoom link at [jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org).

## Parent Group

The Faith Formation workgroup will host an online parent group on Monday nights at 7:30 pm. This is a space to express frustrations, share creative ideas, and seek support around parenting during the pandemic. For the log-in credentials, please email Lauren at [lauren.dube@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:lauren.dube@whfirstchurch.org).

## Church School Mid-Week Check-Ins

In an attempt to foster an adaptive sense of community during a time of isolation, we will have "check-in" lessons throughout the week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 am. We also have a third check-in time on Wednesdays at 6 pm for our families that cannot make morning meetings. You can use the same link to join these meetings, where students can listen to stories, play games, and talk together as a community, all lead by Lauren.

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## Announcements

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Continue your support of the Town That Cares Fund by participating in this safe FunD run, June 5th-8th, sponsored by the Celebrate West Hartford, Town of West Hartford. The Fair has been cancelled, but the need for funds for our neighbors is greater than ever.

For a registration fee of \$20.00 + \$2.20 processing fee, registrants will receive a special commemorative T-shirt and a contribution will be made to the Town That Cares & Leisure Services Scholarship Funds. List *First Church* as the fundraiser on the form and First Church Outreach Team will get the t-shirt to you as notified by the town of your participation. Walk anytime or participate in spirit, from your couch! To Register or donate go to:

<https://bit.ly/wehafundrun>. Encouraged by the First Church Outreach Team.

## Have you completed the 2020 census form?

The results of the 2020 Census will help direct billions of dollars of funding for things that our community needs, including health care, emergency response, schools and education programs, and roads and bridges. There's still time to shape the future for our community. You can complete the 2020 Census now online, by phone, or by mail. Visit <https://go.usa.gov/xdKjQ> to complete it today. If you did it already, please encourage others to do it. Thank you.

## Church Updates

Visit our website [here](#) for up-to-date information on church happenings and closing information.

If you enjoyed the JPW Library's presentation of Marina Marchese's talk on bee-keeping, you will also enjoy her memoir, [\*Honeybee: Lessons from an Accidental Beekeeper\*](#). The JPWL has a few signed copies of the book left, available for purchase for \$10. Please contact the library at [jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org).

## Virtual Communion

We have a brief service of communion available [here](#). You will need to provide your own bread or cracker, and cup (beverage of your choice) to be blessed. Since this is a recorded service, you can make use of it at any time and/or share it with friends and loved ones.

## Virtual Photos

Please share photos of you and your family including pets, as you are watching church services on-line. We will use them in Social Media posts and to have for future slide shows and any other church publishing. Send them as jpeg's to Amy Melvin at: [amybmelvin@gmail.com](mailto:amybmelvin@gmail.com).

Submit prayer requests [here](#).

## Text Alerts

Sign up today to receive [text alerts](#) for quick dissemination of church information, updates and reminders.

## JPW Library Now Has Curbside Service!

Click [here](#) to find out more about it, or call the library at 860-232-3893.

## May Reach Out

[Foodshare](#), [Loaves and Fishes Ministry](#), and [Town that Cares](#) continue to need your help. Monetary donations are greatly needed. You can make donations online for these organizations or send a check to the address listed for each on their websites. The church has been a strong supporter for these groups and hopes you will also be able to help them serve those in need.

The West Hartford Food Pantry is distributing more than twice the food items than last year. They are particularly short on rice, baked beans and canned fruit. Include those items in your weekly shopping and drop off at Town Hall, particularly Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. Hours to drop off food donations for West Hartford Food Pantry: Tues 3:30-5:30pm. Weds. 9-11; Fri. 10-Noon. Call the Pantry if you have really large donations. There will be a cart for you to use at the front steps.

## Hello Members & Friends of First Church,

The renewal of Easter season and Spring has arrived in the flowering trees and shrubs around First Church, even though we are not there in the Center to appreciate them! However, as a community of the faithful, sheltering in our places, First Church is also blossoming – Sunday morning online worship and a virtual Zoom coffee-hour providing socializing among many dozens of attendees; Taizé and Celtic worship also online – as well as book groups, bible study, and children’s activities Sunday’s and weekdays. Additionally, programming from the JPW Library has provided insights into bee keeping and caregiver information and support; plus, additional programs and services – such as curbside book pickup!

As we continue to be physically apart from one another, we know that the work of First Church continues on – most especially at this time of so much need in our communities. Both the Inreach and Outreach teams are at no loss for people, places, and organizations to support. To keep all these “gardens” tended we ask that you continue to stay current in sending your gifts and pledges. Online giving instructions are below, or you can always use the US Postal Service!

Please note, your donation can be designated for a particular fund, such as the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund – used by our clergy to provide for the immediate needs of members and friends, or Music & Fine Arts – among other options. Your donation can also be designated as a non-pledge donation which is gratefully used to support the needs of our community presence as well as building and staffing necessities. Thank you so much for whatever way you have, and will continue, to contribute!

Blessings,  
Eleanor Wight & the Stewardship Workgroup

## Online Giving!

Making monetary contributions to First Church is quick and easy! For peace of mind you can even sign up for auto pay! Visit our website at <http://www.whfirstchurch.org/donate/give> and click on the blue Donate Online button. Watch the video for detailed instructions on [How to Give](#). Checks can be mailed to the church at 12 South Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107.

## I’ve been spoofed again! I’m sorry to say...

### Spoofing 101:

*"Spoofing is an attempt to trick you into giving money to a cyber-thief, posing as someone else."* If you receive a “personal” email from me, or from any friend or email contact asking for money -- look at it carefully, letter by letter -- if you are suspicious, compare the email address to what you already have in your contacts.

Many lead Pastors in the greater Hartford region are currently being “spoofed” and sadly their friends and members of their congregations are falling for it. This is especially nefarious because Pastors ask for money all the time... how? By calling for an offering in worship, in stewardship letters, and for the support of all manner of worthy ministries and missions described in our newsletter and eNews. I will continue to encourage you to give to the church-- but never to me personally. Please be confident that I will never, ever, send you a personal email soliciting you for money for a pet project of mine.

**Pro tip:** If you do receive such an email, delete it. And this is a good reminder to open your email settings and have a look at your spam filters. In many cases you can get your own filters to identify these cyber thieves so you won’t have to do the detective work.

Peace friends, Erica