

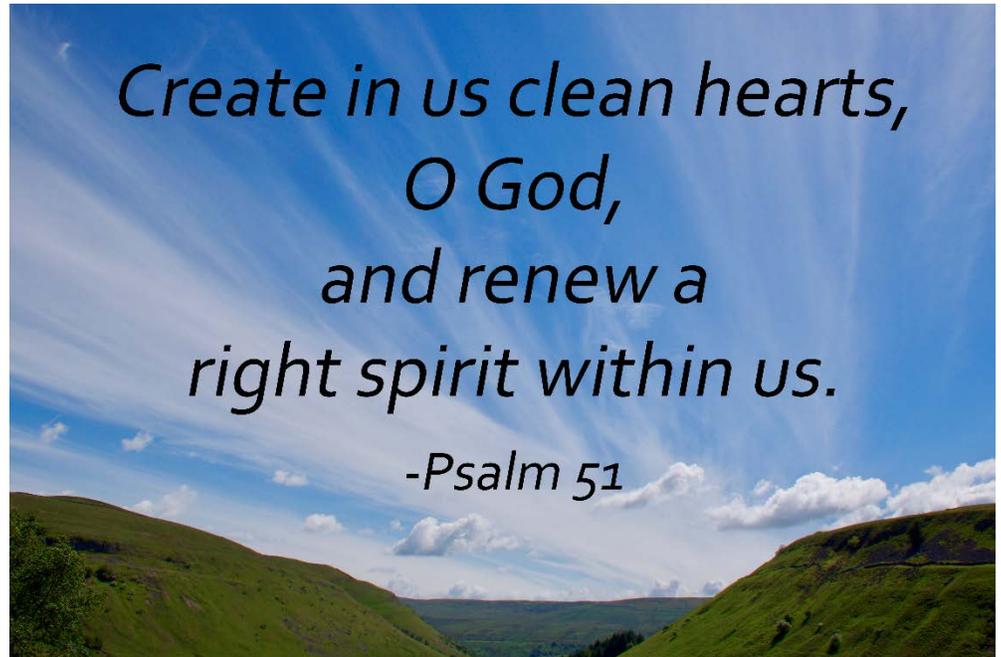


# Sunday Notes

July 12, 2020



This Sunday we are invited to reflect on the Parable of the Sower. It's a lovely Gospel reading for a summer Sunday and gives us the opportunity to think about how we till the soil of our souls. Susan Izard will be preaching. Please join us for virtual worship at 10 am and then for our virtual coffee hour at 11 am. All are welcome.



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## Happening Today

### 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!

### Summer Bible Study

Sundays at 10 am via Zoom meeting

You are invited to join the Bible Study group as they finish their exploration of the book of Genesis on July 12th and begin reading Exodus on July 19th. Led by Jim Warner, the group meets via Zoom Sunday mornings at 10 am. For more information, please contact Jennifer deSimas at 860-232-3893.

### Cyber Coffee and Conversation

Sundays at 11 am via Zoom meeting

Join us for reflections on the Sunday morning worship themes, check-in, and discussion. Make your own coffee or tea and drink it where you are. Visitors welcome! 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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## Upcoming Events

### 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](#).

### 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. 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.

Submit prayer requests [here](#).

## Text Alerts

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

## Outdoor Carillon Concert Series

Thursday evenings in July (weather permitting) from 6 to 7 pm on the Front Lawn

Bring a chair or blanket AND your own refreshments to the lawn of the church. We ask family groups to space out 6 feet apart to practice social distancing. Our concert lineup: 7/16 - Tatiana Lukyanova, 7/23 - Paul Butler, 7/30 - Jon Lehrer.

## First Church READS

Mondays through August 10th, at 7 pm via Zoom

After watching Black Lives Matter rallies and speeches on TV you may be asking "What can I do? Where do we start?" Here's one answer: Join Jennifer deSimas for a six-week Zoom book study of Ijeoma Oluo's [So You Want to Talk About Race](#). Oluo "offers straightforward clarity that readers of all races need to contribute to the dismantling of the racial divide" so they can move beyond talk and into action. Pick up your book - they are free to use (or purchase one for \$10) at the JPW Library pick-up Monday afternoons or by appointment. To join this group, please [register here](#).

## (G)race Speaks

Wednesdays, July 15th and 29th at 3:30 pm via Zoom

Let's do some safe travelling together this summer - virtually! The pandemic has created a new opportunity for us to visit other churches and hear other voices. We're able to get a glimpse of what is happening in communities beyond West Hartford and hear how people of faith are thinking about their circumstances. In "(G)race Speaks," we are pausing in this moment to visit and listen in to voices we would otherwise not be hearing. Erica Avena and Jennifer deSimas will put together a guided trip and invite you to join the journey.

Our next stop is this Wednesday: the Riverside Church in New York City. Watch Rev. Dr. Jacqueline J. Lewis's sermon, "[In the Matter of Black Lives](#)" prior to the meeting. Join the Zoom gathering Wednesday, July 15 at 3:30. Sign up for the discussion [HERE](#). Rev. Lewis is Senior Minister at Middle Collegiate Church in Manhattan. She is also President and Co-Founder of The Middle Project, which trains ethical leaders for a more just society.

## Men's Fellowship

Tuesday, July 21st, at 9 am, via Zoom

Join the men of First Church for a time of sharing, lively discussion, and supporting one another and our church. We usually meet each month in the JP Webster Library for coffee and an occasional guest speaker, but because of the pandemic, we will meet via Zoom. For more information or the Zoom link to the July meeting, contact Joseph Tobin at 860-916-1923 or [jmtobin@gmail.com](mailto:jmtobin@gmail.com).

## Sun Is Shining Series

Coming to a Screen Near You in August!

The Sun Is Shining Series in August on Tuesday nights has become a tradition in the last few years. We are happy to announce that it will continue this year, although it will not be held outdoors on the labyrinth. Instead, we will be livestreaming the event from our Facebook page on Tuesday nights at 5 pm. Tentative line up: 8/4 - Ed Fast and Congabop, 8/11 - 1974, 8/18 - Dan Liparini Jazz Group, 8/25 - Still Kicking and the Big City Horns. Please watch for precise details, updates and changes on our website and Facebook pages in August.

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## Announcements

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### Drive-By, Drop off Food Collection this Summer at First Church

July 28th, August 1st, 25th and 29th, September 22nd and 26th, 10 am to 12 pm

On the 4th Tuesday and Saturday of the summer months & including September, volunteers will be at the Rotunda Entrance parking lot to collect your donations for the West Hartford Food Pantry and Loaves and Fishes Meals to Go. The need is still great; the West Hartford Food Pantry has been distributing twice as many food bags as the previous year. With the cancellation of its soup kitchen, Loaves and Fishes distributes Meals to Go to its clients on a weekly basis. [The list of items needed is on the flyer - download flyer to post at home](#). You are encouraged to stop by the church any of the times listed this summer when volunteers will be at the church to receive the items. If you are unable to come to the church, but want to contribute, please call Jenny Clark at 860-402-4851 or Dottie Stone at 860-521-0554. Thank you.

## Curbside Service at the JPWL! It's "a thing" – and lots of folks are using it!

- [Search the JPWL Catalog](#)
- Contact us via phone or email (below) and let us know what you would like to borrow
- We will provide book recommendations or reference help, if needed
- We will contact you to set a date and time for curbside pick-up
- Books may be borrowed for three weeks. Renew or return your book (at the curb) at that time.
- To renew books online, click on "my account" in the upper right corner on the [JPWL Catalog](#) page and follow the prompts.
- No library card? No problem! We will issue you one - give us a call.

**JPWL staff** is here to answer your Library needs. Contact us with questions or requests:

by Phone: 860-232-3893 (although the building is closed, JPWL staff are at the library every weekday)

by Email: [jwebster@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jwebster@whfirstchurch.org)

## July Reach Out - Hands On Hartford

Hands On Hartford is a social service nonprofit organization that serves Hartford's neediest residents in the areas of food, housing, and health. Founded in 1969 as Center City Churches, the agency has had a longstanding commitment to providing respectful, comprehensive services with help from volunteers and community partnerships.

Hands on Hartford MANNA Food and Neighborhood Services program provides direct relief to thousands of Hartford neighbors each month. Through Community Meals, Community Pantry and the Backpack Nutrition Program for children, they provide meals and groceries to individuals and families facing food insecurity. MANNA also provides vital support through community connections, referrals, security deposit & utility assistance, basic health screening, nutrition education and employment & education expense assistance. For more information or to donate: [info@handsonhartford.org](mailto:info@handsonhartford.org) or call 860-728-3201. Thank you for your support.

**GHIAA Updates:** On June 12, 2020, GHIAA's Clergy Caucus supported Hartford residents in their demand of Hartford's Mayor, Deputy Chief of Police, and the President of the Hartford Police Union to reinstate the Civilian Police Review Board and to make the process of filing complaints against police transparent and responsive. You can find [a full reporting](#) of this action in the June 12, 2020 *Hartford Courant*.

Over the summer, we encourage you to participate in our J.P. Webster Library's **First Church READS** [book discussion group](#), and [\(G\)race Speaks](#), a traveling sermon series led by Interim Senior Pastor Erica Avena. We are also exploring racial justice training opportunities for the fall.

## Hello Members & Friends of First Church,

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.