



Sunday Notes

September 13, 2020



Looking Towards Sunday

Is it Homecoming Sunday or Safe at Home Sunday? It's both! We're hybrid this Sunday. For those of you who would like to worship in the Meeting House, we are pleased that the Covid19 metrics in Hartford county support our being able to gather using the protocols recommended by our Advisory Team. For those of you who are not inclined to gather in person at this time (which is most of our congregation) there will continue to be a recorded service, followed by a zoom cyber coffee hour. I will be preaching at both services on Psalm 121 "I lift up my eyes to the hills -- from where will my help come?" and we will reflect together on what it means to be at home in the world. Are we at home in the Meeting House? In our houses? In nature? With friends or family? My sermon title is "Where do you find the Spirit?" which will be our theme this fall in worship. Today I'm wondering how many right answers there could be to this question...



BYOE Homecoming Picnic Following Worship, Weather Permitting

The Spirit team is hosting a "Bring-Your-Own-Everything" Picnic on the front lawn, an opportunity for socially distanced fellowship. Bring your own chair, mask, food and drink, and the Spirit team will provide sanitized ice cream cups to celebrate the start of the program year! Rain cancels this event, so please be mindful of the forecast on Sunday morning.

Or, Join us for Cyber Coffee and Conversation at 11 am!

Hosted by Lauren Dube and Jennifer deSimas, we'll discuss the themes of worship, including "Where do you find the spirit?" and "where are you at home?" All are welcome! Join by computer [here](#), Meeting ID: 924 416 446, Password: 899935; One tap mobile +16465588656,924416446#; by phone +1 646 558 8656.

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](#).

Bible Study

Sundays at 10 am via Zoom meeting

Today we begin our new program year! If you would like to join the group, please contact Jim Warner at jwarneriv@gmail.com.

Church School

The church school will continue meeting on Sundays at 10 am throughout the fall. Starting September 13th there will be equal asynchronous lessons available for our families as well. Because the schools are reopening, the Tuesday and Thursday check in times will stop. Keep an eye out for exciting new opportunities to connect with the church school this fall, including faith at home kits!

In-Person Worship Next Week

Sunday, September 20th, at 10 am in the Meeting House

At this time, we are planning for an in-person worship experience in our Meeting House. Everyone will enter through the front doors of the Meeting House on South Main Street, temperatures will be checked, and masks will be worn at all times when in the building. Preregistration is required as the number of seats are limited. [Click here to register](#). We will also offer an online service posted on our website [here](#).

Submit prayer requests [here](#).

Awakening the Spirit Book Group

Monday, September 14th, at 12 pm via Zoom

Our first read of the year is [Christ in Crisis?: Why We Need to Reclaim Jesus](#) by Jim Wallis. "‘Christians have become disconnected from Jesus and need to revisit their spiritual foundations,’ writes Wallis. By pointing to eight questions Jesus asked or is asked, he provides a means to measure whether we are truly aligned with the moral and spiritual foundations of our Christian faith. ‘Christians have often remembered, re-discovered, and returned to their obedient discipleship of Jesus Christ - both personal and public - in times of trouble. It’s called coming home,’ Wallis reminds us. While he addresses the dividing lines and dangers facing our nation, the religious and cultural commentator’s focus isn’t politics; it’s faith. Wallis offers comfort, empathy, and a practical roadmap for all those involved in resistance and renewal initiatives in faith communities in the post-2016 political context." Led by Minister of Spiritual Life Susan Izard. Books are available at the JPWL via curbside service on Mondays from 4 to 5 pm. Please contact Assistant Librarian Karla Grafton to arrange an alternate time if you need one. To join this discussion, contact Jennifer deSimas, Library Director.

September Reach Out - 37th Foodshare Virtual Walk Against Hunger September 13th - 19th

The Foodshare Virtual Walk Against Hunger support Foodshare's efforts to raise awareness of and resources for the issue of food insecurity in Hartford and Tolland counties. Funds raised from the Walk help support not only Foodshare, but the partner programs that help them serve the growing number of people in Greater Hartford who struggle with hunger. Our Team *First Church Striders* hope you will be able to join the Virtual Walk Against Hunger which will be a weeklong event this year. We encourage you to walk or run a 1.5-mile route of your choice. If you cannot make the walk, please support our walkers by going to the Foodshare website to make your donation or you may send a check to the church marked as a donation for Foodshare. To join our team and support Foodshare, please go to the Foodshare website at <https://bit.ly/FCStriders>. Thank you for your support.

NEXT SUNDAY! Lunch & Learn: COVID-19 and Global Climate Change: An Untold and Evolving Story

Sunday, September 20th, at 12:30 pm via Zoom (please note time change)

For decades, we have seen a steady stream of viruses and other microorganisms transferred from vertebrate animals to humans, most recently in the COVID-19 pandemic. But the coronavirus is simply one manifestation of what will be a long string of adverse health and economic consequences of global warming, population pressures, and loss of species diversity. How can we mitigate current trends in climate deterioration and together save this planet -- and our species?

[Register here](#).

Sten H. Vermund is Dean of the Yale School of Public Health and holds the Anna M.R. Lauder chair in Public Health. A pediatrician and infectious disease epidemiologist, Sten's research focuses on diseases of low- and middle-income countries and on U.S. health disparities. He served as principal investigator of the HIV Prevention Trials Network from 2006-2012 and is a member of the National Academy of Medicine. As with many others at Yale, his recent work has focused on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Drive-By, Drop off Food Collection

September 22nd and 26th, 10 am to 12 pm

The Drive-By, Drop off Food Collection this Summer has been a success but contributions are still needed.

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 list of items needed is on the flyer - download flyer to post at home](#) or take it to the grocery store with you. Loaves and Fishes welcome baked goods, too. 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.

The Work of GHIAA

Wednesday, September 23rd, at 7 pm via Zoom

First Church's GHIAA (Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance) team is pleased to present Cesar Aleman and Derrick Everett. They are community organizers who recently joined GHIAA at the Center for Leadership and Justice. They will discuss how GHIAA differs from the vital work being done by the many charities in the Hartford region. While food and clothing drives are necessities in our current societal structure, GHIAA's goal is to build relational power among local residents and leaders so they can address the social justice issues in their own communities, thus forging broader positive changes. [Register here](#) to join us.

Text Alerts

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

A Special Workshop for All Educators and Caregivers

The ABCs of Racism: Starting and Sustaining Anti-Racist Conversation and Action with Kids

Saturday, September 26th, from 10 am to 12 pm via Zoom

Mama, why is that lady brown? How come the Asian kids are so good at math? Why did the police kill Mr. Phil? What will happen if immigration comes to take my family away?

Kids notice a lot about the world – including race, inequity, and injustice. They sense that these things matter, and they have questions many of the adults in their lives are not prepared to answer. The JPWL invites all caregivers and educators to a special interactive Zoom workshop with Wee The People, Boston-based racial justice educators, to explore the barriers that prevent adults from talking about race and racism with kids. Participants will examine the social science of race awareness in children, and identify strategies to start and sustain antiracist conversations and action with kids. [Please register here.](#)

Wee The People was co-founded by racial justice educators Tanya Nixon-Silberg and Francie Latour. Wee The People is grounded in the belief that if kids can understand fairness, they can understand justice - and that adults play a huge role in connecting kids' sense of fairness in their own lives to larger issues of injustice in the world.

Food for Thought Book Group

Thursday, October 1st, at 5:30 pm via Zoom

We begin the year with our first mystery novel: [Still Life](#) by Louise Penny. Winner of numerous crime writers' awards, the book "introduces series hero Chief Inspector Armand Gamache of the Surêté du Québec and his team as they probe the death of Jane Neal, a local fixture in the tiny hamlet of Three Pines. The locals are certain it's a tragic hunting accident and nothing more, but Gamache smells something foul in these remote woods, and is soon certain that Jane Neal died at the hands of someone much more sinister than a careless bow hunter." Written with skill and integrity, and strong on character and atmosphere (Amazon), the book offers a compelling peek at the inner moral lives of the citizens in a small Canadian town. Led by JPW Library Director Jennifer deSimas. All are welcome! Books are available at the JPWL via curbside service on Mondays from 4 to 5 pm - please contact Jennifer to join the group.

Announcements

Covenant to Care

One of our Covenant to Care families is looking for used size 6 and 8 boy's clothing for their children. If you have anything in good condition that you would like to donate, please let us know. We are happy to pick up from you. Please contact Janice Carter Hall at 860-305-0940 or Carole Carter at 860-690-1338.

Give Online!

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.

Photos Needed

We are updating our website and we're in the need of photos. If you got married in our sanctuary and you'd be willing to share a wedding photo or two we'd appreciate it. Or if you had any other special event at the church please send those too...i.e. baptism, reception, other event. Please email them to Suzanne at suzanne.nardi@whfirstchurch.org.

JPWL staff is here to answer your Library needs. Contact us with questions or requests by phone at 860-232-3893 (although the building is closed, JPWL staff are at the library every weekday) or by email at jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org.

Curbside Service at the JPWL

- [Search the JPWL Catalog](#)
- Contact us via phone or email to set up a date for curbside pick-up
- NO LIBRARY CARD? No problem! We will issue you one - give us a call.