



Sunday Notes

February 7, 2021



Looking Towards Sunday

This drop of water frozen into a sphere appears to be a tiny world -- likely present for a moment, and then melting into other forms -- nourishment for this plant, a drop in a stream, on its way to being a raindrop or snowflake once again. Isaiah affirms that although his people have worshipped idols, still God is creating, God has created, God will continue to create -- because that is who God is: creativity itself. God continues to create anew, which gives our lives possibilities we may not imagine for ourselves. My text is Isaiah 40:21-31. Let's continue the creativity also! Join us online!

Communion Service

We have recorded communion services which you are invited to use this Sunday or at any time. Prepare your elements at home and join Pastor Erica and Pastor Amie online [here](#).

Cyber Coffee Hour this Week

We will address the following items of business during our Cyber Coffee Hour and Congregational Meeting at 11:15 am on Sunday:

1. Approve the minutes of the First Church Budget Meeting held on February 9, 2020.
2. Approve the minutes of the First Church Congregational Meeting held on November 29, 2020 to consider and vote on renaming Goodman Green to Unity Green.
3. Consider and vote on [The First Church Annual Operating Budget](#) for calendar year 2021.
4. In accordance with the By-laws of First Church, action will be taken only on matters included in this Call to Meeting.

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](#).

Church School

The church school will continue meeting on Sundays at 10 am. Our Church School lessons will continue with special "worship-at-home" opportunities for our families! Please reach out to Lauren Dube at lauren.dube@whfirstchurch.org to receive a link to our virtual classroom.

JPW Library Programs

Curbside Service for the John P. Webster Library: Mondays from 2 to 3 pm, or by appointment. Contact us with questions or requests! By Phone: 860-232-3893. By Email: jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org. [Search our catalog.](#)

Awakening the Spirit Book Group

Mondays at 12 pm via Zoom

We will discuss [Thomas Berry: A Biography](#) by Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim, and Andrew Angyal. Led by Minister of Spiritual Life Susan Izard. To join this discussion, contact Jennifer deSimas, JPW Library Director at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org.

Bible Study

Tuesdays from 6 to 7 pm via Zoom

This week we will be exploring Luke 18:31-19:44: *A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death*. All are welcome. For more information, contact Jennifer deSimas at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org. Click [here](#) to sign up.

The Drive-By Drop-Off Food Drive

Saturday, February 13th, from 10 am to 12 pm at the Rotunda Entrance

First Church Bakers may bring cookies for Loaves & Fishes Valentine's Day Meals to go on this day, too. Donations can be left on Mondays during the JPWL curbside pick-up from 2 to 3 pm. Most needed items are canned fruit & applesauce, soup, tuna & canned meats, rice, baked beans, cold cereal, canned pasta, and other items as well. **662 Food bags were distributed by West Hartford Food Pantry in December 2020, a 96% increase from 2019.** Thank you. The need is great.

FUN FEBRUARY FAMILY PROGRAMS AT THE JPWL:

Tell Me a Story featuring Storyteller Valerie Tutson, Saturday, February 13th, at 4 pm via Zoom

The JPWL has created a new program for fans of story-telling: *Tell Me a Story* makes its debut in February with Valerie Tutson, a storyteller for all ages. Her tales take listeners on dynamic voyages of dance and adventure, leaving them wondering or laughing -- or both! Valerie's repertoire includes stories and songs she learned in her travels to South Africa, her experiences in West Africa, and stories from African American history. Join us as Valerie shares some of her favorite stories with us. [Register Here.](#)

Storyteller Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo, February 20th, at 4 pm via Zoom

Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo is a high-energy storyteller based in San Francisco. Robert layers ancient Asian mythologies, folktales, and Asian urban legends with Asian American sensibilities, precision choreography, and lyrical word-weaving, taking his listeners on a mesmerizing ramble through new places and times.

[Register Here!](#)

Food Explorers, February 27th, at 4:30 pm via Zoom

Join Carla Sauza, Registered Dietitian from [Food Explorers](#), to make Cinnamon Sugar Knots! This yeast-free dough uses Greek yogurt to make a fluffy texture! Note: You'll need the following ingredients ahead of class: butter, sugar, baking powder, brown sugar, cinnamon, vanilla Greek yogurt, flour, salt, and optional vanilla extract. The suggested age for this program is 7+, but younger chefs can do this with an older sibling or parent. Limit: 20. [Register Here!](#)

JPWL OFFERS TWO LENTEN STUDIES IN FEBRUARY:

The Challenge of Easter: A Lenten Series with John Dominic Crossan

The JPW Library is delighted to host Irish-American theologian and former Roman Catholic priest John Dominic Crossan for two special evenings during Lent. Crossan, best known for his association with the [Jesus Seminar](#), will explore with us the historical and metaphorical meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Crossan's focus is on the historical Jesus as the benchmark for the entire Christian Bible. "The challenge is this," says Crossan. "If we get the history of the first century right, we will get the theology of the 21st century right (and if not, not). I am never interested in the past as merely ancient history but rather as a contemporary model and challenge." Please join us for this exciting seminar!

Register Here:

[February 18th, at 7 pm: *The Execution of Jesus*](#)

[February 25th, at 7 pm: *The Resurrection of Jesus*](#)

Lenten Book Study

Join **Rev. Amie Giguere** for a 7 pm book study Tuesday evenings in February and March (2/23, 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23, 3/30). Using short videos and readings from Dr. Amy-Jill Levine's 2018 book, [Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week](#), we will explore the events of Holy Week and uncover fresh insights into the familiar stories -- specifically addressing the notion of risk-taking as a necessary act in the service of certain ethical and spiritual values. Levine's wry and inviting style of storytelling and analysis, coupled with her deep understanding of Jewish history and culture, provides a coherent narrative of Holy Week for seekers of all backgrounds. We hope you will be able to join us! Books will be available to check out or purchase (\$10) through the JPW Library's curbside service (Mondays, 2-3 pm) or by appointment. [Click here to register.](#)

Witness Stones for Post-Grads! The West Hartford Witness Stones Project is offering a four-week, town-wide class for adults to study the lives of specific enslaved individuals in colonial West Hartford. "Remember the people who lived in the West Division of Hartford and whose names have been lost to history. The Witness Stones West Hartford Project honors and commemorates their lives. The project has placed 21 stones in the Old Center Cemetery - and there are at least 40 more people to commemorate." For more information, or to join the class, [click here](#). See flyer [here](#).

Announcements

Update from the Search Committee

After many months of work, the Senior Pastor Search Committee is happy to announce that the church profile is now available for review. The profile is the document that will represent First Church, West Hartford to candidates who are interested in applying for the position of Senior Pastor. In many ways, it is the "Story of Us" over the past 30 years.

The completion of the profile marks the beginning of a new phase of the Search Committee's work. Once posted, we expect to begin receiving inquiries from candidates. It also marks a time to pause and reflect with candor on our highs and lows, our challenges and our strengths, and the amazing ways we are all invited to participate in this continuing story.

[Click here to see report.](#)

Suzanne Carnes, Doug Evarts, Seth Holmes, Glen MacLeod, Ryan Mannix, Amy Melvin, Liz Oman-Wilfrid, Amber Rottman, and Rob

The Stewardship Workgroup Update

At the time of this writing, we have gratefully received 119 pledges. Our goal is to reach the same level of contribution as last year. Overall, in 2019, 130 pledges were received. We ask our community of faith to support the mission of the Church by giving as generously as possible. With thanks, The Stewardship Workgroup



4 Ways to Donate

- **Text to Give**
Scan this or text "Give" to
(860) 222-7870
- **In Person**
- **Online**
whfirstchurch.org
- **By Mail**
12 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107

Pledge Online!

So far, half of the pledges have been made online! It's quick and easy, just follow this [link](#). If you would prefer to mail your pledge card and haven't received one, please contact Suzanne at suzanne.nardi@whfirstchurch.org.

Giving is Easy!

You may have started to see notices and e-mails about our "4 ways to give" campaign. We're spreading the word that among other ways, it's very easy to give gifts of stocks and securities to First Church. For more information on how to give gifts of securities, simply reach out to our appointed, local Financial Advisor Sue Banville at Edward Jones in West Hartford at: 860-521-2119.

Linda Runs (well, really walks) for Refugees

If you saw Gladys thanking First Church for supporting refugees over the years, you know that she encouraged us to support the Run for Refugees (Jan. 30 - Feb. 14), which not only shows our refugee friends that thousands of people are cheering for them, but raises the funds to enable IRIS to keep on serving them. To chip in whatever you can, go to Linda Bronstein's fundraising page at <https://runsignup.com/irislinda>. Thank you!

February Reach Out: My Sisters' Place

Every day, throughout the Greater Hartford area, there are hundreds of people who have found themselves homeless due to domestic violence, eviction, unemployment, or mental illness – the overwhelming majority often women and children. My Sisters' Place mission is committed to ending homelessness by empowering women, families, and others in Greater Hartford to achieve independence and stability in their community by providing housing and supportive services. My Sisters' Place provides a comprehensive array of outreach and services that is unmatched by any other organization in the Hartford, Connecticut region. From safe housing and education to employment and empowerment, My Sister Place provides real, life-changing benefits to clients. For more information or to donate: My Sisters' Place, Inc. at sistersplacect.org or call 860-895-6629. Thank you for your support!

Submit prayer requests [here](#).