



Sunday Notes

February 14, 2021



Looking Towards Sunday

You are looking at a photo of my daughter, Lora, hiking in the Swiss Alps in 2019. The joyful expression on her face is a good indication that this was indeed a mountain top experience in her life. This Sunday we'll hear Mark's gospel account of the mountain top experience of Peter, James and John who witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus. What are we to make of this mysterious story? What does it have to do with our lives today during a pandemic? For answers to these questions, and to experience the wonderful, soulful music of the Hot Cat Jazz Band, be sure to join us virtually for worship on this final Sunday before the start of Lent.

May we be transformed by the presence of God,
Amie



Cyber Coffee Hour

Sundays at 11 am via Zoom

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.

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.

Ashes to Go!

Stop by the church parking lot on Ash Wednesday, February 17th, anytime between 1 and 2pm to receive your ashes and a blessing with Pastors Erica and Amie. Please wear your mask and stay in your car, we will come to you and will be changing our rubber gloves between each administration of ashes. We will have printed Lenten devotionals available to take with you if you would like one.

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.](#)

Lent Devotional and Calendar

The First Church and JPWL staff are providing two materials for you to choose from (or use both!) this year to augment your Lenten practices. The first is a wonderful devotional created by the [Presbyterian Mission Agency](#) "The Way to Shalom: A Lenten Journey to Peace and Wholeness" reminds us that "Lent is not a time to wallow in worry about God's wrath...Lent is a time of reflection on how we can live a whole and full life as a child of God." Download [here](#).

The second resource is a 40-day "calendar" of practices and reflections to add or "give up" throughout your Lenten journey. You may download the Lenten Practices calendar [here](#) or on our website [here](#). You may also pick up a printed version of either resource at the JPW Library Curbside Service on Mondays between 2 and 3 pm, or by appointment.

Submit prayer requests [here](#).

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 jwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org.

Bible Study

Tuesdays from 6 to 7 pm via Zoom

This week we will be discussing Luke 19:44-23:49. All are welcome. For more information, contact Jennifer deSimas at jwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org. Click [here](#) to sign up.

FUN FEBRUARY FAMILY PROGRAMS AT THE JPWL:

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. "Easter is about a physical event and a theological interpretation, that is, about a fact—the Execution of Jesus; and a metaphor—the Resurrection of Jesus" (Crossan).

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! Please note that you must register for each evening separately.

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. According to Levine, "Jesus' final days were full of risk. Every move he made was filled with danger and the potential for great loss or great reward, risking reputation, rejection, and his very life. The disciples took risks of their own when they left behind their homes and families, or when they anointed him with costly perfume." 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 on Mondays from 2 to 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](#).

Food for Thought Book Group

Thursday, March 4th, at 5:30 pm via Zoom

We will discuss [The Island of the Sea Women](#) by Lisa See. "1938. On an island off the South Korean coast, an ancient guild of women divers reckons with the depredations of modernity. Known as *haenyeo*, they don't display the usual female subservience of their culture. Empowered by the income they derive from their diving, *haenyeo* are heads of households; their husbands mind the children and do menial chores. Young-sook, the book's narrator, tells of her family and her ill-fated friendship with Mi-ja, her life-long friend, as they take up their positions as 'baby divers.'" (Kirkus) "A wonderful ode to a truly singular group of women" (*Publishers Weekly*). Books are available now for pick-up. Please contact the library to join the discussion.

"Day of Tears"

Sunday, March 7th, at 4 pm

In early March, 1859 Georgia plantation owner Pierce Butler sold over 450 people to cover his gambling debts, an action that would affect hundreds of lives for generations to come. The day was thereafter known as the "Day of Tears." Join Director Laurie Maria Cabral and the "Day of Tears" cast for a public, one-time performance of "Day of Tears." Sponsored by the JPW Library. This is a free community event, open to all. Please be advised that strong language and allusions to violence are present in the performance and may not be suitable for certain audiences, including young children. [Please register 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 Robert Schunder

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

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.

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.

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. It's not too late to pledge!

With thanks,

The Stewardship Workgroup

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!

Suitcase and Bicycle Donations

Cleaning Out Your Attic or Garage? We Can Help! Remember the Outreach Team this winter if you decide to tackle the clutter in your attic or garage. We will be collecting gently used small suitcases and bicycles on April 10th for two organizations: Ct. Cycling Advancement Program and Ädelbrook. Thank you!