



Sunday Notes

February 21, 2021



Looking Towards Sunday

A rainbow is light and water and perspective. It reveals color which is always there --around us -- but hidden from our view. This Lenten season we will be reflecting on perspective, point of view, angle, and bias. Scripture is full of spiritual reversals. They speak to something elemental about what it is to be alive. Noah's flood is a story of a massive reversal -- from devastation to restoration -- the rainbow is the symbol of God's covenant with Noah, and an enduring symbol of serendipity and hope. Join us for worship and may you find a perspective of blessing even in these challenging days.



Cyber Coffee Hour

Sunday at 11 am via Zoom

At cyber coffee and conversation this week we will be joined by some of the members of our church's Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) core team to hear some reflections on their work. We will also have time for sharing our own reflections on perspective and serendipity in our lives. 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.

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 JPW Library 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 our family friendly version [here](#). They are available on our website [here](#), or 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.

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

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!](#)

The Challenge of Easter: A Lenten Series with John Dominic Crossan Continues this Thursday Evening!

The JPW Library is delighted to host Irish-American theologian and former Roman Catholic priest John Dominic Crossan for a special evening during Lent. Crossan, best known for his association with the [Jesus Seminar](#), will explore 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." Join us for this exciting seminar! **Register Here:** [February 25th, at 7 pm: The Resurrection of Jesus](#)

Lenten Book Study Featuring Amy-Jill Levine – Starts this Tuesday!

Tuesday evenings in February and March (2/23, 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23, 3/30) at 7 pm via Zoom

Using readings and short videos from Dr. Amy-Jill Levine's [Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week](#), Rev. Amie Giguere, First Church's Acting Associate Pastor, will lead a Lenten book study. Levine's wry and inviting style of storytelling, 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 join us! Books are 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.](#)

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) Books are available now for pick-up. Please contact the library to join the discussion.

Call to the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Congregation via Zoom

Notice is hereby given that a Congregational Meeting of the First Church of Christ Congregational of West Hartford, Connecticut, UCC, will be held via Zoom on Sunday, March 7, 2021 starting at about 11:15 AM to transact the following items of business:

1. To consider and vote on the minutes of the Annual Meeting of First Church held on March 8, 2020.
2. To consider and vote on the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Congregation held via Zoom on May 3, 2020 regarding several areas of church life being impacted by the newly emerging COVID-19 outbreak.
4. To consider and vote on a proposal approved by the Business Team and the Coordinating Team for expenditures of up to \$30,000 for video technology to enable live-streaming and up to \$15,000 for audio upgrades.
5. To consider and vote on the proposed slate of Officers, Team Leaders and Team Members for First Church for the coming year,
6. In accordance with the By-laws of First Church, action will be taken only on matters included in this Call to Meeting.

Notice given on February 14, 2021

Charlie Goodwin, Secretary of First Church

"Day of Tears"

Sunday, March 7th, at 4 pm via Zoom

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

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- **In Person**
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whfirstchurch.org
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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

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!

Submit prayer requests [here](#).