



Sunday Notes

April 4, 2021



Looking Towards Sunday

The world has had a Good Friday year, but Easter 2021 is here! What does Easter look like to you after the year we have had? Join our online Easter service, with special music and Easter greetings from church members. My message is on Mark 16 "First Steps in Resurrection" -- what will your first steps this Easter be? Share the link and watch with a friend or family member. All are welcome. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

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.



Cyber Coffee and Conversation

Join us from 11 to 11:30 am 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.

Alfombra Happening Today!

Sunday, April 4th, at 1 pm on the Front Lawn

Decorate the front steps of the Church with painted flowers to make way for Jesus this Palm Sunday. You can pick up your palms, watch the painters and march with us as we enter into Holy Week. Work clothes are encouraged; masks are required. If you are an immunocompromised family and would like a separate time to paint, please reach out to Lauren at Lauren.dube@whfirstchurch.org.

Upcoming Events

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

Submit prayer requests [here](#).

Awakening the Spirit Book Group

Mondays at 12 pm via Zoom (not meeting on Monday, April 5th)

We will discuss [Julian of Norwich: Wisdom in a Time of Pandemic-And Beyond](#) by Matthew Fox. "Julian of Norwich lived through the dreadful bubonic plague that killed close to 50% of Europeans. Being an anchoress, she 'sheltered in place' and developed a deep wisdom that she shared in her book, *Showings*, which was the first book in English by a woman. A theologian way ahead of her time, Julian develops a feminist understanding of God as mother at the heart of nature's goodness. Fox shares her teachings in this powerful and timely and inspiring book." Led by Susan Izard, Minister of Spiritual Life. Please contact the library to borrow or purchase (\$10) a book, or to join the discussion: jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org.

Bible Study

Wednesdays from 6 to 7 pm via Zoom (not meeting on Wednesday, April 7th)

All are welcome. For more information, contact Jennifer deSimas at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org. Click [here](#) to sign up.

Food for Thought Book Group

Thursday, April 8th, at 5:30 pm via Zoom

We will discuss [The Great Alone](#) by Kristin Hannah. Led by JPW Library Director Jennifer deSimas. Please contact the library to borrow or purchase a book. [Click here to register](#).

Suitcase, Bicycle and Food Donations

Saturday, April 10th, from 10 am to 12 pm

Cleaning Out Your Attic or Garage? The Outreach Team will be collecting gently used small suitcases and bicycles for two organizations: Ct. Cycling Advancement Program and Ädelbrook. We will also be collecting food donations for Loaves & Fishes and the West Hartford Food Pantry. Thank you! See you then!

Outside Clean-up Day

Friday, April 23rd, at 9:30 am

In recognition of Earth Day 2021, we're going to spruce up the grounds at First Church. Bring your own lawn rakes, gloves, and tarps, and anything else you think will come in handy! Interested persons may contact Mark Swanson with questions or scheduling at 860-936-8255.

Online Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, April 18th

We would like to offer a special blessing of pets during our online worship. We will include a montage of your photos during the service with a special prayer.

Here's what we need you to do:

Step 1: Take a photo of your pet(s) using your phone in the horizontal position, with or without their humans.

Step 2: Send it to jim.boratko@whfirstchurch.org with "Blessing of the Animals" as the subject line by midnight on Thursday, April 15. Identify your pet and anyone else in the photo with them in your email.

Step 3: Watch the service on Sunday, April 18 and lay a hand on your pet (or hold a hand over your pet if it is a fish or bird et al.) during the blessing.

This is a great opportunity to give thanks for the creatures who have been our companions during this pandemic, and to share them with your church family. If you have more than one pet, you can submit more than one photo!

Sure-footed Spirits: The Fidelco Guide Dog

Sunday, April 18th, at 11:30 am via Zoom

Over the past year, many people found or rediscovered the importance of animal friends, and adopted a four-footed friend into their lives and homes. But some animals go beyond warming the bed and taking us for walks. Join Mark McGrath, Fidelco Philanthropic Relationship Director, and a few of his friends from the Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation via Zoom for a special presentation on how companion dogs enhance the lives of the seeing-impaired. Register for the Zoom link [HERE](#).

Witness Stones April Session

The West Hartford Witness Stones Project is offering a free, four-week, town-wide class for adults (18+) to study the lives of specific enslaved individuals in colonial West Hartford. The project has placed 21 stones in the Old Center Cemetery - and there are at least 40 more people to commemorate. The class is taught by Witness Stones Project Directors Dr. Tracey Wilson, Town Historian, and Liz Devine. April sessions will meet Tuesday evenings, April 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th, from 4:30 to 5:30 pm. [Click here](#) for more information. [Click here](#) to join the class.

The Unity Green Group Would Like to Hear from You!

The First Church Unity Green work group is working with a community team to plan a West Hartford Juneteenth celebration June 19-20, 2021. Among other events, a mural organized by [CT Murals](#) will be dedicated that weekend as well. The Unity Green work group seeks your input as to which persons, quotations, or images from West Hartford history should be considered for inclusion on the mural. The mural will depict the "messages, images, and symbols that Martin Luther King, Jr. stood for," and will also highlight local Civil Rights leaders. It will be located along the south side of the Noah Webster Library. For information, to contribute ideas, or to donate, [explore their web page](#). Please contact Barbara Lewis, Judy Schmitt, or Jennifer deSimas with questions.

Announcements

Seed Library Opens!

WeHa Grows, located at the JPW Library, is open and offering seeds through the library's curbside services. We need to restock our seed supply, so when you are out purchasing for your garden, please consider picking up an extra packet for WeHa Grows. We also need a volunteer to help with seed sorting, repacking, labeling, and storing. A great project for middle or high school students! If you can help, please contact Jennifer at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org if you are interested. Thank you!

Coming Soon'ish – In-Person and Live Streaming Worship from the Meetinghouse!

Funding was approved at the March 7th Annual Meeting for live streaming audio/visual equipment for the FC sanctuary. We hope the work is completed by mid-May at which time we plan to open the doors of First Church for in-person worship (subject to CT COVID-19 guidelines in place at that time). Addition of the new live streaming capability will allow us to continue the on-line worship services that have become a mainstay of our community throughout the past year. Stay tuned for updates...

Calling all Geeks

First Church recently approved the installation of a state-of-the-art video system capable of livestreaming our worship services, as well as recording events such as weddings and performances. The operators of this system will be similar to producers in a master control room in a television studio. You will have the opportunity to manage 6 different cameras from a single console via a joystick controller. Several of the cameras have the ability to pan, tilt, and zoom in for the right shot.

Get in on the ground floor as we put this system together. The vendor installing the system, DNR Laboratories, will be installing the equipment over the next month. Once it is installed, they will be providing training on how to use the equipment. If this sounds like something that is exciting and interesting, let us know so you can be one of the first to learn how to operate this system.

Individuals 18 and older can sign up for this opportunity by emailing jim.boratko@whfirstchurch.org. Individuals between 14 and 17 can sign up with permission from their parents.

Update from the Search Committee

Good news! The Southern New England Conference (SNEC) has validated our church profile and placed our listing for a Senior Pastor on the national Ministerial Opportunities website. [Click here to see report](#). Interested candidates will be able to contact the SNEC, who will then forward their ministerial profiles to our Search Committee. We will then send our full church profile to the candidates who present the experience, qualifications and qualities that we seek. We are excited to share this news with you, as we enter the next phase of our search process! Please remember that once we begin to interview candidates, we will maintain our commitment to confidentiality for all potential candidates.

With thanks for your continued support and prayers,

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

4 Ways to Give

1. Give by Text: Text *GIVE* to (860) 222-7870. Click [here](#) to watch a demo video
2. Give Online: Visit our website at <http://www.whfirstchurch.org/donate/give>
3. Give by Mail: Mail checks to First Church, 12 S. Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107
4. Give Gifts of Securities: Contact local Financial Advisor Sue Banville at Edward Jones in West Hartford at 860-521-2119.

Pledge 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.

April Reach Out: Foodshare/Connecticut Food Bank Virtual 5k Run & Walk Against Hunger

April 5th to April 11th, at the time and place of your choosing!

The walk will support efforts to raise awareness of and resources for the issue of food insecurity. Since 1982, when both Connecticut Food Bank and Foodshare were incorporated, nearly 600 million meals and nearly 720 million pounds of food have been distributed. Connecticut Food Bank/Foodshare has distributed food for the benefit of an estimated 545,000 people, including 164,000 children who face hunger today. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our lives, thousands of families throughout Connecticut are still in need of food assistance. The Race Against Hunger benefits Connecticut Food Bank/Foodshare to raise funds as they work around the clock to feed those in need throughout the state.

To sign up or to donate: Race Against Hunger! Online Donations

<https://runsignup.com/Race/Donate/CT/Wallingford/ConnecticutRunsTogether>. Thank you for your support.



Easter Sunday

April 4, 2021



Easter Lilies were given by . . .

Grandchildren of Bob and Nancy Ball, in loving memory of **their great-grandparents, John and Dorothy McClelland**

Rayda Bouma and Eleanor Wight in loving memory of **Rev. Louis and Hermina Bouma**

The Day Family in loving memory of **Joanne Day**

The deSimas Family in honor of **their loved ones**

Suzanne Gates in loving memory of **Richard and Joanne Gates** and **Cynthia Grosch**

Pam Hastings and Linda Hastings Rosania in loving memory of **Mr. & Mrs. R. Cleveland Hastings, Richard & Lorain Hastings, Richard C. Hastings, III, Marcia Hastings Peck, Charles & Lucy Jaworski**

Nancy Passmore in loving memory of **her family, Ethel Woodworth, John Woodworth and Beatrice, Elizabeth and D.A. Ferguson**; and in memory of **The Reverend Jim Blanning**

Julia Rosa and Family in loving memory of **Domenico Rosa**

David Simpson and Barbara Laurain in memory of **Mr. and Mrs. Edward H. Simpson**

Joy and Andy Taylor in honor of **Lindsay & Jean Luc Matécat's New Colchester VT Restaurant!**

Contributions were made to the Organ & Carillon Reserve Fund by . . .

Bob and Nancy Ball in loving memory of **George and Helen Ball**, and **John and Dorothy McClelland**

The Day Family in loving memory of **Joanne Day**

The deSimas Family in honor of **their loved ones**

Suzanne Gates in loving memory of **Richard and Joanne Gates** and **Cynthia Grosch**

Pam Hastings and Linda Hastings Rosania in loving memory of **Richard & Lorain Hastings** and **Rick Hastings**

David Simpson and Barbara Laurain in memory of **Kristine M. Simpson**

Eleanor Wight and Rayda Bouma in loving memory of **Helen and Myron Wight**