



Sunday Notes

April 18, 2021



Looking Towards Sunday

Many of us have been grateful in this pandemic for our household pets -- those we have quarantined with, whose antics have brightened our days. This Sunday as part of our worship service we will have an online blessing of animals -- dogs, cats, and all other pets. These have been a means of God's grace and blessing over this difficult year. I'm preaching on Jesus' appearance to his disciples when they shared a meal and they recognized him. What manner of creature is showing up in your life? We will pray together over them -- grateful for these creatures and their abiding presence in our lives.



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 at 11 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.

Sure-footed Spirits: The Fidelco Guide Dog

Today at 11:30 am via Zoom

If you've ever thought about raising a puppy to prepare it for life as a Fidelco Guide Dog, tune in this Sunday when Mark McGrath, Fidelco Philanthropic Relationship Director, discusses Fidelco's history and mission, and the steps they take to partner men and women who are blind with a Fidelco Guide Dog. Mark will be joined by local puppy raisers to discuss their experiences raising the special canines and how the dogs improve individual lives -- as well as whole communities -- with their intelligence and loyalty. Join us during Coffee Hour or register for the Zoom link [HERE](#).

Upcoming Events

Awakening the Spirit Book Group

Mondays at 12 pm via Zoom

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." 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

We will study Romans 16:1-16:27 NRSV - Personal Greetings - I commend to you. All are welcome. For more info, contact Jennifer deSimas at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org. Click [here](#) to sign up.

Outdoor Clean-up Day

Friday, April 23rd, at 9:30 am

In recognition of Earth Day 2021, the Buildings and Grounds team is organizing a cleanup day 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.

Announcements

Lauren Dube and friends are included in this NYT article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/14/realestate/west-hartford-conn-a-suburb-with-an-urban-aesthetic.html>

Bikes & Bags a Great Success!

Thanks to the generosity of members of our church community and West Hartford, 180 duffle bags, carry-ons, back-packs and totes were donated on April 10th, to be distributed and divided between Adelbrook and The Bridge Family Center. 55 bikes were donated for the Hartford Rolling Anvils Bike Team of the Ct. Cycling Advancement Program. And while all that was happening on that beautiful day, two carloads of food were received for Loaves and Fishes and the West Hartford Food Pantry. Thanks everyone! The Outreach Team

Next date for Drive-By Drop-Off Food Program: Saturday, May 15th, 10 am to 2pm in the Church Parking Lot

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.

Seed Library Needs Your Help!

WeHa Grows, the Seed Library located at the JPW Library, is open and offering seeds through the library's curbside services. We also need to restock our seed supply, so when you are out purchasing seeds for your garden, please consider picking up an extra packet for WeHa Grows. And if you'd like to help with seed sorting, repacking, labeling, and storing – a great project for middle or high school students – let us know! We need your help. Please contact Jennifer at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org to find out more.

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.

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.

Submit prayer requests [here](#).

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 final version of 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

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.

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](#).