



Sunday Notes

May 16, 2021



Looking Towards Sunday

This image is on a building in downtown Kansas City, MO -- "the ascension of Jesus," is displayed publicly for everyone to see as they go about their business. The artist, Jay Norton says that the astronaut represents the glory of scientific achievement. Jesus, ascending, represents a spiritual ideal, and ultimate reward. Both are ascending to the heavens - one by rocket, the other by the divine hand of God. Both have to have a lot of faith. I am preaching on the last verses in Luke's gospel, Luke 24:44-53 where Jesus ascends, and the gospel ends its story. I know that this pandemic has required many of us to dig deep to find resilience and faith. Still, Jesus rises. Still, we rise. Join us for worship online!



On Sunday, May 23rd we will be celebrating Rev. Susan Izard's retirement. All are invited to an outdoor Jolly Beggars concert on May 23rd at 5 pm, where we will enjoy music and fellowship, celebrating her 26 years of service to First Church.

On Sunday, May 30th we will resume offering in-person worship services at 10 am, Sundays in the Meeting House. The proposal for Live Streaming equipment which the congregation approved at our March meeting has not been fully installed yet, due, they say, to "pandemic delays." In the meantime, we plan to offer a pre-recorded service available online and an in-person service with the same music and message -- until we can Livestream from the Meeting House directly. Current appropriate pandemic protocols are being carefully considered by our church leadership, we want all who gather in-person or online to feel welcome, safe, and connected with our community of faith.

Church School

The church school meets 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 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

Bible Study

Tuesdays from 6 to 7 pm via Zoom

We are continuing our study of the Psalms this week with Psalm 3. Please join us! All are welcome. For more info, contact Jennifer deSimas at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org. Click [here](#) to sign up.

The JPWL is re-opening to patrons this Wednesday, May 19th! We will allow patrons into the library to check out and/or return books inside, browse the stacks, and read a book. We also are returning to our regular operating hours, 9 am to 5 pm Monday-Thursday. Sunday hours (9 am to 12 pm) will begin on May 30th. The church building will still be locked, so we are asking that patrons call us when they arrive so we can let them in. Please note that we are using **only the Rotunda door**. Patrons will need to follow FCWH protocols upon entering the building by registering on our check-in sheet. We are looking forward to welcoming you back to our beautiful library! The chocolates are waiting!

Celebrate Susan with the Jolly Beggars

On Sunday, May 23rd, from 5 to 6:30 pm on the Labyrinth

Join us for a concert with The Jolly Beggars Celtic band. Please join in listening to great music and celebrating Rev. Susan Izard's 26-year ministry as a part of the First Church staff! There'll be music and socializing (to the extent possible per COVID-19 regulations in place at that time). All are welcome!! Bring your lawn chair and mask! If it rains, we will gather socially distanced in the Meeting House.

Food for Thought Book Group

Thursday, June 3rd, at 5:30 pm via Zoom

We will discuss [Such a Fun Age](#) by Kiley Ried. Led by JPW Library Director Jennifer deSimas. Join the discussion! Books are available at the JPW Library.

Juneteenth Update

June 19-20, 2021

First Church's Unity Green workgroup has been meeting regularly with a community team to plan West Hartford's Juneteenth celebration. A community picnic, mural unveiling, and performances by local artists and students are among the events scheduled for Saturday. **At First Church** on Sunday, June 20th, Rev. Erica's message will reflect on the words of Rev. Nathan Perkins in his 1812 sermon "The National Sins and National Punishment, in the Recently Declared War." First Church also will hold a special dedication for Unity Green Sunday at 11:30 am. All are welcome! Please save the date. Contact Barbara Lewis, Judy Schmitt, or Jennifer deSimas with questions.

Call for Juneteenth Artists

The West Hartford Public Library Foundation is organizing a free art exhibition at Noah Webster Library as part of West Hartford's Juneteenth celebration this year. Organizers are looking for artists of color to submit art to be displayed at Noah Webster Library from June 5th to 19th. Deadline for submission is June 1st. For more information on how to submit artwork, click [HERE](#).

Announcements

Update from the Search Committee

The Senior Pastor Search Committee has begun the process of reading and reviewing Ministerial Profiles of candidates who have inquired about the position here at First Church. New profiles continue to arrive, and we expect that this will continue for some time. During this period of discussion and discernment, we ask that you remember that we are bound to confidentiality on all matters relating to the candidates and where we are in our process. Please be patient; our work will take time. When we are ready, we will offer a full report to the congregation.

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. Once the system is installed, there will be training on how to use the equipment. 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.

May Reach Out: Community Partners in Action

Community Partners in Action mission focuses on behavioral change and advocates for criminal justice reform. Their employment, basic needs, reentry, and recovery services work together to reduce recidivism, enhance public safety, and inform policy – all at a fraction of the cost of prison. The programs help participants to address their personal and basic needs as they prepare to become employable, re-engage in their education and stabilize their families. They also grow by giving back to their communities. For more information or to donate: <https://cpa-ct.org/our-work>. Community Partners in Action, 110 Bartholomew Avenue, Suite 3010, Hartford, CT 06106.

Submit prayer requests [here](#).