



Sunday Notes

May 23, 2021



Looking Towards Sunday

I am preaching on the story of Pentecost Acts 2:1-21 "As the Spirit Moves..." We are in a time of transition in our community and in our nation, as the pandemic restrictions ease, and the numbers of those suffering decrease. My own schedule is a hybrid of online and in-person events -- reflecting the cultural moment. As spring turns towards summer 2021, what is the spirit doing in our lives? How is God's spirit moving you? Here is a prayer from Sunday's worship:



**Spirit God,
blow into our lives,
move us to action,
break down the walls that separate us.
Where our language divides, offer us translation.
Where our fear overcomes, fill us with the fire of courage.
Where our lives are becalmed, fill our sails with wind,
moving us forward into the unknown future.
Fill us with the hope and promise of Pentecost! Amen**

This image is called "Pentecost" from a Methodist Church in Cape Town, South Africa. The lower bars represent the 12 Disciples, the upper red and yellow blocks represent the "Tongues of flame." Different sizes and colors represent the diversity of the pentecost community.

We would love your participation in worship on Memorial Day Sunday:

We will be honoring deceased veterans who are family and friends of our congregation. Three easy steps to participate!

1. Locate a photo of the veteran you would like to honor.
2. Scan or photograph it.
3. Attach it or send it in an email by midnight on May 27th to Jim.boratko@whfirstchurch.org please indicate who is in the photo and your relationship to them.

Watch the service online or in-person on May 30th, and enjoy!

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.

Celebrate Susan with the Jolly Beggars

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! Cards and notes of appreciation for Susan are welcome. If it rains, we will gather socially distanced in the Meeting House.

Upcoming Events

Bible Study

Tuesdays from 6 to 7 pm via Zoom (We will NOT meet on May 25th)

We are continuing our study of the Psalms on June 1st with Psalm 4, a "Confident Plea for Deliverance from Enemies." Please join us! All are welcome. For more info, contact Jennifer deSimas at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org. Click [here](#) to sign up.

The JPWL is open – please visit us! Come in to check out and/or return books, browse the stacks, or read. We also have returned to our regular operating hours, 9 am to 5 pm Mondays thru Thursdays. Sunday hours from 9 am to 12 pm will begin on May 30th.

- The church building is locked; call us when you arrive so that we will let you in
- Please note that we are using **only the Rotunda door**
- Upon entering, patrons will need to register according to FCWH Covid-19 protocols
- If you prefer, we still will meet patrons curbside by appointment. Contact us!

We are looking forward to welcoming you back to the beautiful library! The chocolates are waiting!

Food for Thought Book Group

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

We will discuss [Such a Fun Age](#) by Kiley Ried. The book explores the stickiness of transactional relationships, what it means to make someone "family," and the complicated reality of being a grown up. Led by JPW Library Director Jennifer deSimas. Join the discussion! Books are available at the JPW Library.

A **West Hartford Community Conversation** webinar (via Zoom) is scheduled for June 3rd at 7:30 pm to discuss the upcoming Juneteenth celebration during the June 19th to 20th weekend in West Hartford Center. Judy Schmitt and Dottie Stone have been invited to participate.

A panel of local residents will explain the exciting activities planned for the weekend. The most visible (literally!) activity on Saturday will be the painting of a mural on the south exterior wall of the Noah Webster Library. The mural provides our community's view of response to Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s message of equality and peace. Panelists include Tracey Wilson to discuss the Witness Stone Project, Adrienne Billings-Smith to discuss the Juneteenth celebration, Matt Conway to discuss the MLK mural, and Judy Schmitt to discuss the renaming of Goodman Green to Unity Green.

On Sunday, after a church service featuring Rev. Erica Wimber Avena's use of an 1812 sermon by our church's third pastor, Rev. Nathaniel Perkins, we will officially rename the center green to Unity Green with a ribbon-cutting to declare the new name of Unity Green. A reception will be held on the church lawn afterward. Details will be provided closer to the event.

Drive by Drop off Food Collection (DBDO!)

Saturday, June 12th, July 10th, and August 14th, from 10 am to 12 pm

We will continue collecting food throughout the summer on the 2nd Saturday of every month. Volunteers from the Outreach Team will be on hand to take your contributions, which will be shared with the West Hartford Food Pantry and Loaves & Fishes' Meals To-Go program. You are making a direct impact on hunger in our towns!

The most needed items are:

- canned fruit & applesauce
- soup
- tuna & other canned meats
- rice
- baked beans
- cold cereal
- canned pasta

Juneteenth Plans at First Church

During our Sunday, June 20th, worship service 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! Contact Barbara Lewis, Judy Schmitt, or Jennifer deSimas with questions. And be sure to join the Juneteenth festivities on Saturday, June 19th: A community picnic, mural unveiling, and performances by local artists and students are among the events scheduled.

Call for Juneteenth Artists

The West Hartford Public Library Foundation is organizing a free art exhibition at the 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

Flower Delivery

The Inreach Team is looking for volunteers to deliver flowers. Each Sunday the chancel flowers are divided into three bouquets and the delivery person is given a list of the names of people who will receive the flowers. The delivery can be made on Sunday or a day or so after. The people who receive the flowers are always very appreciative. If you would like to help, please let Rayda Bouma know at rbouma@comcast.net. If you have questions, call Nancy Ball or Rayda Bouma.

COVID-19 Policies for Worship at First Church West Hartford - Starting on May 30th

At this time, we ask everyone to be masked while in the church building, for the safety of unvaccinated people, especially those under 12 years of age! You will be asked to sign-in upon arrival (but no preregistration). The Hoff Rotunda entrance will be open, allowing use of the elevator. Additionally, the South Main Street entrance will be open. Socially distanced seating, by household, will be required in the Meetinghouse. Gathering and a COVID-safe fellowship time will be outdoors only, on the labyrinth. As we venture forth in this new normal, all policies are subject to change.

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](#).

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](#).