



Sunday Notes

June 13, 2021



Looking Towards Sunday

We celebrated the confirmation of five young people at First Church last Sunday. Even as we emerge from what we hope has been the worst of the pandemic, we are reminded by their witness that the Holy Spirit is available in all circumstances. Last week Amie's sermon was "Witnesses" -- an affirmation of their faith. My sermon this week is "...And more Surprise Witnesses." This season of the Spirit invites us to consider the surprising way God's Spirit moves, and surprise witnesses to that movement could be anyone -- a child, a neighbor, even you. In Acts 5:27-32 the early apostles bore witness to what they knew as eyewitnesses to the life of Jesus, inconvenient for a peaceful life, but it pushed the message forward into the world -- which made all the difference. Join us online or in person!



Photo Call for Father's Day!

We'd love to share photos of your fathers this year in a tribute during worship on Father's Day. Email a favorite photo of your father or any father you would like to honor this year to: jim.boratko@whfirstchurch.org by midnight on June 17th. Identify who is in the picture and your relationship with them. Together on Sunday, June 20th we will enjoy seeing who the fathers are that we are all remembering and honoring in a photo montage set to music.

Today's Altar Flower Dedication

The flowers adorning our altar today were donated by Dave Simpson and Barbara Laurain in loving memory of his sister, Kristine M. Simpson.

COVID-19 Policies for Worship

The COVID Advisory workgroup has outlined the following procedures for in-person worship. Everyone is to be masked while in the church building, for the safety of unvaccinated people, especially those under 12 years of age. A Check-In Greeter will ask for your name and phone number at the doors to the Meeting House for contact tracing purposes (but no pre-registration). The Hoff Rotunda entrance will be open, allowing use of the elevator in addition to the Meeting House doors. Socially distanced seating, by household, will be required in the Meeting House. Gathering for a COVID-safe fellowship time will be outdoors only, on the labyrinth. As we venture forth in this new normal, the COVID Advisory workgroup will continue to adjust and adapt policies as appropriate.

Instructions for Viewing Livestream Services

On Sunday mornings around 10 am, go to our YouTube channel (link: [First Church, West Hartford - YouTube](#)). You should see our video for this Sunday's service first in our content. If you don't see it, you may have tried a little too early. Refresh your browser and it should appear.

While the service is streaming live, you will be able to chat with others. However, you need to create your own YouTube channel to do so. If you are prompted to create a channel, follow the instructions that will appear. Once your channel is created, go back to the First Church YouTube channel, and you can enter text in the chat feature that will communicate with others.

After the service ends, the content should still be available for viewing. Go to our YouTube channel (link above), click on the heading, "Uploads." A menu will appear. Choose "Past Live Streams," and the service should appear.

Outdoor Summer Church School

All children are invited to join us on the labyrinth at 9 am on Sundays through June to play games, do crafts and learn bible stories together, in person! This will be a one-room schoolhouse, and middle and high schoolers are encouraged to join us as leaders! Play clothes are suggested. Register your children today by emailing Lauren at lauren.dube@whfirstchurch.org. This event is outside and is weather permitting.

In-Person Coffee Hour

We will be serving lemonade on the front lawn after the service today.

Upcoming Events

The JPWL is open to patrons!

- Come in, check out and/or return books inside, browse the stacks, and read a book.
- The church building is locked, please use the Rotunda entrance and call us when you arrive: 860-232-3893
- Our hours are: 9 am to 5 pm Monday thru Thursday, and Sundays from 9 am to 12 pm

Walking Group

Monday, June 14th, at 8:30 am (Please note the time change)

Join JPWL staff for a Monday Meander during June and July this summer as we walk to, around, and about West Hartford (no meeting on July 5th). Our next walk will be tomorrow at the MDC Reservoir on Farmington Ave. (Rte. 4). We will meet at the park map near the main trailhead entrance. Wear appropriate shoes and bring a water bottle. Contact Jennifer with questions at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org.

Bible Study

Tuesdays from 6 to 7 pm via Zoom

We are continuing our study of the Psalms with [Psalm 6](#): "Prayer for Recovery from Grave Illness." Please join us! All are welcome. For more info, contact Jennifer deSimas at jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org. Click [here](#) to sign up.

GHIAA Assembly

Tuesday, June 15th, from 7 to 8:30 pm via Zoom

At the next Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) assembly we will be joined by our leaders, politicians, local superintendents, and others as we examine and celebrate GHIAA's campaign wins over the last year, discuss ongoing action needed on a couple of our issues (still being ironed out as the legislative session winds down), and discuss GHIAA-wide next steps for core teams as we approach summer. Please join the First Church GHIAA core team at this virtual event. Kindly let Amie Giguere (amie.giguere@whfirstchurch.org) know once you've registered so we know how many will be representing our congregation! Please [register here](#) to receive the zoom link. Registration is required.

Juneteenth Plans at First Church

Join us for worship on Sunday, June 20th, when Rev. Erica's message will reflect on the words from Rev. Nathan Perkins' 1812 sermon, "The National Sins and National Punishment, in the Recently Declared War." Refreshments will be served on the Labyrinth following worship. First Church also will hold a special dedication for Unity Green on Sunday at 11:30 am. All are welcome for celebration and more refreshments. Be sure to join the Juneteenth festivities on Saturday, June 19th: A community picnic, mural unveiling, and performances by local artists and students!

You Are Invited to Intergenerational Camp!

Wednesdays, June 16th to July 21st, from 5:30 to 7 pm

This year's theme for Vacation Bible School is "Be Loved. Be Kind. Be You." Compassion Camp will take place on six evenings this summer. I hope you can join us as we explore what it means to have compassion for ourselves, others, and the world through engaging crafts, catchy music, and intergenerational worship experiences! Contact Lauren Dube at lauren.dube@whfirstchurch.org for more information. [Register Here](#) for this family-friendly opportunity for ALL ages!

Drive by Drop off Food Collection

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

Support the First Church Outreach Team's monthly Drive-By, Drop-Off Food Drive for West Hartford's Food Pantry and Loaves & Fishes in Hartford takes place this Saturday. Drive into the parking lot from Farmington Avenue, and volunteers will gratefully unload your donation. Exit onto Memorial Drive without even getting out of your car! Officials for the West Hartford Food Pantry this week issued a plea for some specific items. **There is a great need for:**

- Spaghetti
- Pasta sauce
- Peanut butter
- Fruit/applesauce
- Tuna
- Rice

Announcements

Office Staff Summer Hours

The church office staff will be holding in-person office hours on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10 am to 2 pm during the summer. Call the office at 860-233-9605 to be let into the building. Suzanne, Lisa, and Sarah look forward to helping you!

Calling all Cookie Bakers

First Church will be holding a special dedication for Unity Green at 11:30 am on June 20th. We will be serving lemonade and cookies on the Labyrinth. Please let me know if you'd be willing to bake 3 dozen cookies for the event. Drop off will be Sat. morning June 19th, between 10 am and 12 pm at the church rotunda. Do not bag the cookies as we will be putting them in special bags to serve. If you need them picked up, please call or email me at 860-232-5036 or shoedog1961@gmail.com. Thank you so much. Nancy Ball, Inreach Team.

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.

Altar Flowers Dedications

Sponsoring altar flowers is a meaningful way to honor or remember loved ones. Still available are these summer dates: **July 4th, 11th, and 25th; August 22nd and 29th.** To place your order, please contact Suzanne in the church office at 860-233-9605 x111, at suzanne.nardi@whfirstchurch.org, or [order online here](#).

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.

June Reach Out: Silver Lake Conference Center

Silver Lake is a year-round outdoor ministry of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ. They host close to 1,000 young people each summer and more than 3,000 retreat participants in the off-season. In addition to groups from Southern New England UCC churches, they consistently offer retreat space to other Christian denominations, Jewish groups, school groups, and hobbyists. Our summer program is open to all, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identification, or sexual orientation.

Silver Lake is a place where young people experience nature, make new friends, and explore their faith. With more than 60 acres of wooded land on lakeside shores, Silver Lake offers many opportunities for young people to take risks and try new things with the support of an intentional Christian community. For more information or to donate:

<https://www.silverlakeect.org>. Thank you.

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](#).

Submit prayer requests [here](#).