

Seeking Advent Photos: The Weary World Rejoices.....p. 7  
 Updates from The Search Committee.....p. 3  
 Stewardship Invitation .....p. 3  
 Church School News.....p. 7  
 Taizé & Celtic..... p.8

Living in Spirit • Committed to Service • Open to All



# first church

## WEST HARTFORD

### TIDINGS

NOV. 2020 • NEWSLETTER • WWW.WHFIRSTCHURCH.ORG • 12 SOUTH MAIN STREET, WEST HARTFORD, CT • 860-233-9605



# Attitude of Gratitude

Dear First Church:

November is the month of Thanksgiving; yet “an attitude of gratitude” in this pandemic is a spiritual stretch. Like many of you I have been thinking about the holidays ahead recognizing that many of my favorite traditions aren’t advisable in pandemic conditions. I will need to adjust my expectations and way of thinking. An attitude of gratitude is a commitment more than an inclination, a mindset more than a moment – it is a spiritual practice. As a pastor I have come to respect the fact that every household has had disappointments this year. Yet, if I am honest, my year has been full of blessings alongside of disappointments, not the least of which has been getting to know the people who are part of this wonderful congregation.



When President Abraham Lincoln established the annual day of Thanksgiving for the country, it was an opportunity for the whole population to reflect together on the blessings in their lives, because

even the most difficult lives have important moments of beauty, truth, and blessing – deserving of recognition and respect. Setting aside time to be thankful allows us each to acknowledge the gifts we may otherwise take for granted, the things that truly are important, and to recover our humanity. This year may be the year when commercialism does not overtake the season, and we remember to be thankful for what we have, to connect with loved ones in new patterns, and to support those who are suffering.

At the church we have sought throughout this pandemic to offer safe and meaningful worship experiences, educational opportunities, and yes, ways to connect with others. The talented staff has learned countless new online skills, safer protocols, and supported the congregation in making adjustments in our ministries to fit the times.

This month the church will begin the annual pledge drive, which you will be hearing much more about. Simply put: our church’s ministries happen because of your participation and your support. There

*Gratitude, page 2*

November Worship Plans: Sundays at 10 a.m. Online version available: [https://bit.ly/FC\\_Sermons](https://bit.ly/FC_Sermons)

<p><b>November 1</b>          All Soul’s Day          Mark 12:38-44          Erica Wimber Avena          “Our Work of Faith”</p>	<p><b>November 8</b>          Matthew 9:35-38          Amie Giguere          “Our Labor of Love”</p>	<p><b>November 15</b>          Dedication of pledges          2 Corinthians 8:1-7          Erica Wimber Avena          “Our Steadfastness of Hope”</p>	<p><b>November 22</b>          Thanksgiving Sunday          2 Corinthians 9:6-15          Erica Wimber Avena          “Seed for the Sower and Bread for Food”</p>	<p><b>November 29</b>          First Sunday in Advent: HOPE          Mark 13:24-37          Erica Wimber Avena          “The Weary World Rejoices in Hope”</p>
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## Church Family News

- We celebrated a baptism on Oct. 18, for **Cora Perry Kivlin**, daughter of Dana and Jeffrey Kivlin.
- Our prayers are with the family of **Evie Smith** who passed away on Oct. 20, 2020 after a long illness. A private memorial service took place.
- Our condolences are with Carolyn Joy and her family on the passing of her brother **Lawrence** on Oct. 16, 2020. Carolyn said this for her brother: "I know you are playing golf in heaven, Lawrence. We will miss you greatly."
- You may submit your prayer requests online! Please use this link: [http://bit.ly/FCprayer\\_request](http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request)

*If you have an announcement to share, please call the office at 860-233-9605, x111.*

## Gratitude from page 1

is no way we could do this without your partnership. As we look to the future, and to the future ministries of First Church, we are committed to emerging from the pandemic stronger as a faith community. We can all be thankful for the people of this congregation, for the faith that holds us together, and the good work we accomplish when we work together – even now. An attitude of gratitude begins with recognizing and valuing what we already have.

With Gratitude for your partnership,

*Erica*

The Reverend Erica Wimber Avena, Interim Senior Pastor

## REACH OUT: APK Charities

APK Charities seeks to raise awareness and support for our active, retired, and wounded veterans as well as fallen warriors and their families and to provide financial aid and material assistance to charitable organizations and causes.

One of the largest fundraisers for this group is the annual "Ruck 5K Walk/March" and food donation event which will be virtual this November. In West Hartford, Fleet Feet will be sponsoring a 5K Ruck Run on Saturday, Nov. 7, beginning at 9 a.m., and is asking that participants fill their rucks (backpacks) with non-perishable canned goods that can then be donated to The Town That Cares Fund to stock the West Hartford Food Pantry.

For more information about how to participate in the Ruck Run or to donate to please visit: <https://www.apkcharities.org>. Thank you for your support. Please see below for a note from our business manager.

*Each month First Church Outreach Team designates collections for a worthy organization of their choice.*

*Should you wish to add to our collection, please send in your check to the church and include "Reach Out" in the memo or make your donation online or through CCB.*

*If you wish to donate to a different cause, please send the payment directly to that organization. They will provide you with the proper tax documentation.*

*Lisa R. Reed, Business Manager*



## From the Moderator

Faith carries us through hard and uncertain times by being a stabilizing foundation. In good times, faith firmly supports us to accomplish what we can – and sometimes must – do. God remains steadfast in God's promise to be there for us. Similarly, we need to be there for each other, in good times and in bad. And if we cannot do so directly, how are we enabling others to do so in our name?

We have had a stress-filled year in so many ways. At the church, we knew we were in for an "interesting" year when we celebrated Geordie's retirement in January and waited to welcome Erica Wimber Avena as our Interim Senior Pastor in March. Immediately upon her arrival, the pandemic shutdown was upon us, and we, as the church, quickly adapted.

If you are like me, you are very weary from this journey. I am tired of having to adapt, and then adapt again in so many areas of our lives – education, celebrations, work, care-giving, entertainment, socializing, vacations, family gatherings, and on and on.

### ADAPTING AS A CHURCH

At the church, we have adapted how we worship, commune, hold meetings, share news, gather as book and knitting groups, donate items for our mission groups such as Covenant-to-Care and the Food Pantry (among many others), share music, and so much more. So much is happening despite the building being rarely used at this time. I believe we are adapting well, despite the continue challenge.

The next indicator of our ability to adapt to our new reality will be our response to the stewardship campaign which launches this month. Our operating budget covers much more than the church brick-and-mortar building. Our budget provides the funds for our church community to exist as a *living organization* for the world and to be responsive to the needs of others. Our pastors and church staff address our individual needs and help us explore our faith. We, in turn, can turn outward and open our eyes to the world's needs.

### FAITH INTO ACTION

We are a community of believers who continue with our own faith formation while we also reach out to address the needs of others. Our church budget reflects these desires. We are organized to worship and explore our faith. We are also organized to provide targeted donations (such as backpacks, food pantry, etc.) and to support targeted social justice actions (such as pushing important legislative agenda issues).

So, put your faith into action this month and be steadfast in our promise to support others. We are privileged to choose our depth of support – both monetarily through our pledges as well as physically through our actions. Carefully assess your pledge to support our church and each other in all of the worship, faith formation and social justice activities we do through First Church. Please increase the funding you provide and declare your intentions via your pledge. Let this November be a month in which your pledge shows where your faith resides.

Steadfastly,  
*Judy Schmitt, Moderator*

**DUE DATE for TIDINGS:** The next deadline is **NOVEMBER 14th**, for the **DECEMBER** issue. Please send items to Joy Taylor: [joy.taylor@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:joy.taylor@whfirstchurch.org)

**DUE DATES for SUNDAY NOTES & eNEWS:** Submissions are due each Tuesday by noon to Suzanne: [suzanne.nardi@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:suzanne.nardi@whfirstchurch.org).

# Updates from the Search Committee

The Search Committee spent the last month planning for a listening session with some of the staff members of our church. The meeting took place using the Zoom platform on October 13. Three members of the Search Committee and nine staff members participated. It was a wonderful opportunity to hear directly how our staff members interact with the Senior Pastor through their individual roles and responsibilities. Our focus is ultimately on finding a candidate to recommend for the Senior Pastor position, and our conversation with the staff helped us to better understand the scope of work of this important position, especially during this time

of change and pandemic. The meeting also made us realize how fortunate we are at First Church to have such thoughtful, creative, and dedicated people working among us.

We also were able to preview and comment upon the upcoming congregational survey that is being finalized by the Interim Work group. In the meantime, our work on the profile continues. We appreciate your continued prayers for our work and the future of our congregation.

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

## Steadfast in Promise: in Sickness and in Health

In sickness and in health. That ageless vow deeply resonates. It articulates a promise of steadfast relationship. Without doubt, 2020 has presented unfathomable challenges to each of us and to our beloved Church. Throughout the year, the Church has exemplified that promise of steadfast relationship. We are grateful to all who gave so generously of their time and talents. Now we need to focus on the third word of that alliterative triad: "treasure." Given these times of great economic upheaval, the Church will be challenged to meet its fiscal needs. The Stewardship Workgroup asks you to generously pledge. This year, we are encouraging you to pledge online at:

[www.whfirstchurch.org/donate/pledge/](http://www.whfirstchurch.org/donate/pledge/)

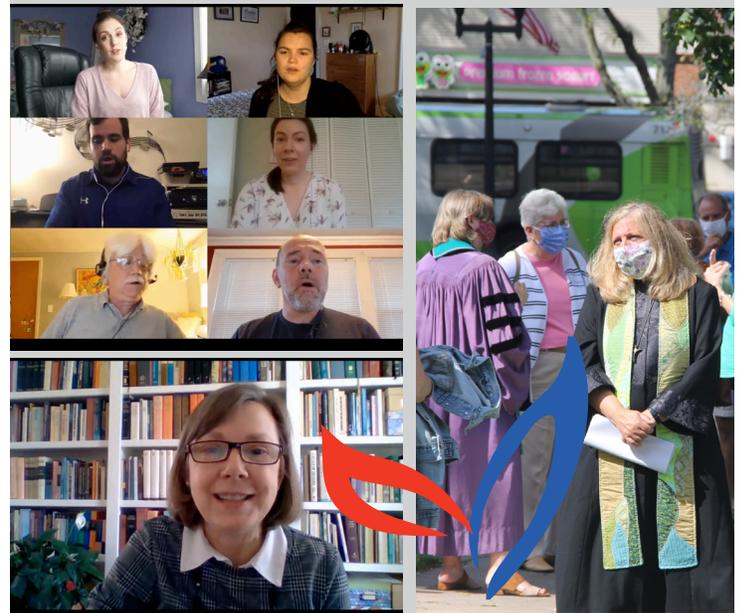
To jumpstart the campaign, many members of each Team have already submitted their pledges online. This tool has become especially helpful during a period of limited physical access.

In sickness and in health. We pray for the health of our families and the fiscal health of the Church. Thank you for fulfilling our promise to one another to remain steadfast in support of the Church.

*Don Clark, Jeff Mitchell, Julia Rosa, Judy Schmitt, Eleanor Wight, Erica Avena*

**"Our work of faith, our labor of love,  
our steadfastness of hope..."**

1 Thessalonians 1:3



## Join us for In-Person Worship!

Until plans change again, at this time, we are offering an in-person worship experience in our Meeting House two Sundays a month at 10 am. Pre-registration is required as the number of seats are limited.

To register, visit [www.whfirstchurch.org/worship/sunday/](http://www.whfirstchurch.org/worship/sunday/) or please call 860-233-9605 x111 and leave a message with your name and the number of people in your party. Also indicate if you would like to arrive at 9:30, 9:40 or 9:50 am. Everyone will enter through the front doors of the Meeting House on South Main Street (all other doors will be locked). Parking cones will be reserving spaces in front of the Meeting House for our service. Or, feel free to drop family members off in front of the building and park in our parking lot. Masks will be worn at all times when in the building.

A check-in greeter will sign you in and your temperature will be taken. An usher will bring you to your seat and online bulletins will be used. See dates and more details on our Worship page at [whfirstchurch.org](http://whfirstchurch.org).

Living in Spirit • Committed to Service • Open to All



Rev. Erica Wimber Avena, Interim Senior Pastor  
Rev. Amie Stuart Giguere, Acting Associate Pastor  
Rev. Susan Izard, Minister of Spiritual Life  
James Boratko, Music Director  
Lauren Dube, Director of Children & Family Ministries  
Dawne Quinn, FCAFYC Director  
Suzanne Nardi, Office Manager  
Lisa Reed, Business Manager

  Church Office: 860-233-9605 • Fax: 860-232-8183   

J.P. Webster Library: 860-232-3893

First Church Academy for Young Children: 860-232-2106

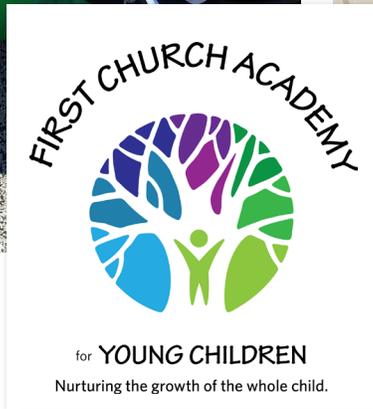
12 South Main St., West Hartford, CT 06107 • [www.whfirstchurch.org](http://www.whfirstchurch.org)



# First Church Academy Registration

Registration for the 2021-2022 program year begins on November 16th for currently enrolled families and church members. Full and part time programs are available for infants (6 weeks and up), toddlers, twos, and pre K 3-5. The Academy is a fully licensed and NAEYC accredited program open to all. We provide an encouraging and loving environment dedicated to nurturing the growth of the whole child. If you are interested in learning more, or coming in for a tour, please contact Dawne Quinn at 860-232-2106. Applications are available online at [www.firstchurchacademy.org](http://www.firstchurchacademy.org)

Dawne Quinn  
Education Director  
First Church Academy for Young Children



## Academy News

Fun, fall activities are in full swing at the Academy. Teachers have found creative ways to encourage children's natural curiosity even with some of our new protocols in place!

Sensory tables are a staple of early childhood education but in a pandemic, teachers needed to think outside of the box (pun intended) to avoid too many little hands in one bin! Small bins filled with intriguing fall items gave our pre K 3s a chance to explore individually. (Check out the "apple hedgehogs" in the background).

No trees on the playground – no problem! Our infant teacher collected leaves and gave the infants a chance to play in a leaf pile.

Of course, washing hands many times during the day is a must. We were so excited to receive our new portable sink for our pre K 3 room. This classroom did not have a sink and frequent handwashing required trips through the 4s room to the bathroom. Problem solved with this perfectly sized, portable sink. We just fill the tank, flip the switch, and have a day's worth of handwashing conveniently located in the classroom. So grateful!

*Photos from top: Infants enjoy fall leaves. Pre K 3-year-olds enjoy sensory bins. New portable sink in our pre K 3 room! Courtesy of Dawne Quinn*



## Call me, Maybe?

If you have a change of address or phone number, please remember to let the church office know, or make the changes directly in our Church Community Builder (CCB) database.

We have had many pieces of mail returned and have discovered many disconnected phone numbers recently. Please keep us in loop so that we can continue to be in touch with you. Thank you!

## Pandemic Voices!

During October, our featured Pandemic Voices included:

Oct. 4, Pastor in the United Church of Christ Zimbabwe **The Rev. Dr. Edward Matuvhunya**



Oct. 11, Retired Attorney Volunteering with Statewide Legal Services **Ed Lennig**



Oct. 18, Organist and Director of Music First Church West Hartford, Band musician, Choir director, **James Boratko**

Oct. 25, Bryant University College Student, **Robert Schunder**

These short, pre-recorded segments during worship were so well received, and you can find them all on our YouTube channel on the dates indicated.

## Best Wishes Elijah!

Longtime church staff member and lead custodian Elijah Moore completed 8+ years of employment with First Church on October 16. We thank him for his years of service, and pray that God's blessing attends him in his next setting.

Going forward First Church will be using a professional cleaning service. We ask that members of the congregation be particularly mindful of set up and lock up procedures when using the building.

## News From Your Covenant to Care Team: Hats & Mittens Drive!

The Annual Hat and Mitten Drive begins October 1st and will continue through the end of the year. Marked boxes will be available in the Narthex to collect your donations. If you continue to worship from home, we will be happy to pick up your donations from you. Any new or used winter outerwear or clothing in good condition is welcome.

ONLINE VIA ZOOM

## Greater Hartford Multifaith Prayer Breakfast

*The Role of Faith Communities in Social Justice*

Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020, 7 - 8:30 a.m.

This annual breakfast gathering is sponsored by the Hartford Seminary. This year we will gather separately but together in spirit. Bring your coffee and join us online to greet neighbors of many faiths. Our program will feature speakers from the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance, who will speak about the important work they do for Greater Hartford.

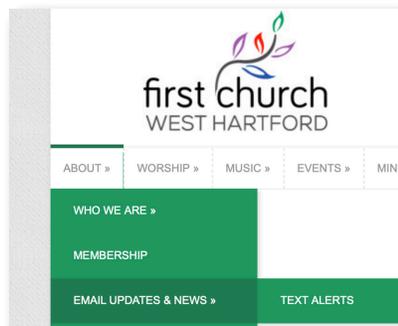
Admission is free, but donations are gratefully accepted via the registration link for the Greater Hartford Multifaith Prayer Breakfast and for the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance. Find the information on EventBrite.com by searching for Greater Hartford Multifaith Prayer Breakfast.

The Breakfast is an annual opportunity to acknowledge that our diverse communities need the prayerful support of all of our religious faiths if we are to realize a healthy urban center. It is, then, a gathering of people of faith. The focus is on what brings us together, not on what divides us, something we need now more than ever.

Zoom information will be provided via Eventbrite before the event.

## TEXT ALERTS AVAILABLE:

Sign up today to receive text alerts for quick dissemination of church information, updates and reminders!



Go to [whfirstchurch.org](http://whfirstchurch.org) to sign up!



Thanksgiving baskets 2019. File photo.

## Thanksgiving Baskets

Our food collection for Thanksgiving baskets is here! Beginning November 1st, there will be marked buckets in the Narthex for your food donations. If you continue to worship from home, we will be happy to pick up your food donations from you. If you would like to help, please use the following guide: Find the first letter of your last name to see the suggested donation:

A-D: Juice, tea and coffee

E-H: Gravy and Cranberry Sauce, Spanish Food (ie Goya Products)

I-L: Rice and potatoes

M-P: Breakfast cereals and juice boxes

Q-T: Canned fruits and vegetables

U-Z: Bread and roll mix; stuffing mix

Please contact Janice Carter Hall at 860-305-0940 or Carole Carter at 860-690-1338 if you have any questions or need us to pick up your contributions.



**JOHN P. WEBSTER  
LIBRARY**  
Resources for Faith & Life

Jennifer deSimas, Library Director: [jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org)  
Karla Grafton, Assistant Librarian: [jpwebsterlib@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwebsterlib@whfirstchurch.org)  
General Inquiries: [jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org)  
Phone: 860-232-3893  
Explore our catalog online! <https://jpwebster.biblio.org/eg/opac/home>

**Staff Hours:**  
Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**Curbside Services**  
4 to 5 p.m. on Mondays or  
by appointment.

## Ongoing Services

The JPWL continues to offer the following services throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic:

- Reference and reader's advisory services by phone and email
- Curbside pickup of requested materials by appointment
- Device advice to talk you through your gadget's cyber issues
- Church Archives access for researchers
- Patrons may call to place a hold during library hours or can place the holds themselves through the JPWL online catalog

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### Faith on Film: *Dawnland*

Followed by Q&A with Senior Film Advisor Christopher Newell (Passamaquoddy Tribe). **November 10, 5 – 6:30 p.m. via Zoom**

For decades, child welfare authorities have been removing Native American children from their homes to "save them from being Indian." In Maine, the first official Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in the United States began a historic investigation into the practice. *Dawnland* goes behind-the-scenes as this historic body grapples with difficult truths, redefines reconciliation, and charts a new course for state and tribal relations. *Dawnland* won an Emmy® Award for Outstanding Research in 2019. Register here to receive a link to stream the event.



Presented in collaboration with the University of Hartford's UIS program and Office of Diversity and Community Engagement.

### Register Online or Call Us!

Registration links for all book groups and presentations may be accessed online via [whfirstchurch.org](http://whfirstchurch.org), at the "MyFirstChurch Login" page. You are always welcome to call us to register.

## New Titles!

### FOR KIDS

- *My First Signs: American Sign Language (Baby Signing)* by Annie Kubler
- *Kamala and Maya's Big Idea* by Meena Harris; illustrated by Ana Ramirez Gonzalez
- *Recycle and Remake: Creative Projects for Eco Kids* by DK Publishing
- *We Are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom; illustrated by Michaela Goade

- *Snakes on the Job* by Kathryn Dennis
- *What If a Fish* by Anika Fajardo
- *Trowbridge Road* by Marcella Pixley
- *Dear Justyce* by Nic Stone
- FOR ADULTS, Fiction**
- *The Mirror & the Light* (Wolf Hall Trilogy, 3) by Hilary Mantel
- *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue* by V. E. Schwab
- FOR ADULTS, Nonfiction**

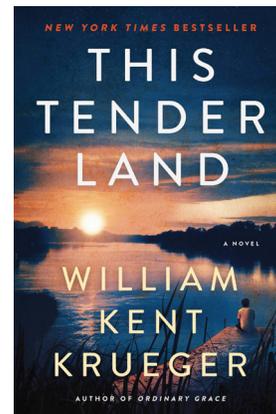
- *Before the Mayflower: A History of the Negro in America, 1619-1962* by Lerone Bennett
- *Anchored in the Current: Discovering Howard Thurman as Educator, Activist, Guide, and Prophet* by Gregory C. Ellison II
- *Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own* by Eddie S. Glaude Jr.
- *Preaching about Racism: A Guide for*

- Faith Leaders* by Carolyn B. Helsel
- *The Talk: Conversations about Race, Love & Truth* edited by Wade Hudson & Cheryl Willis Hudson
- *The Bible With and Without Jesus: How Jews and Christians Read the Same Stories Differently* by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler
- *Always a Guest: Speaking of Faith Far from Home* by Barbara Brown Taylor

## First Church READS:

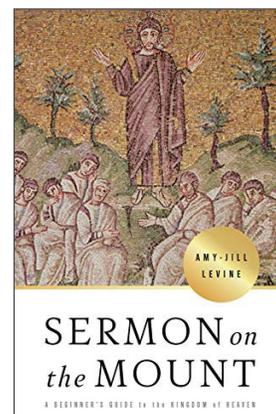
### FOOD FOR THOUGHT BOOK GROUP:

Our next meeting is Thursday, November 5 at 5:30p.m. via Zoom to discuss *This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger. In anticipation of needing a good laugh, in November we will read a "deadpan, hilarious modern fairy tale" (Newsweek): *Nothing to See Here* by Kevin Wilson. It's the story of a woman named Lillian, who gets a letter from her boarding school roommate, Madison, pleading for her help. Madison, now married to a US senator, asks Lillian to become a caretaker for her twin stepkids, who are moving in with her family. There's a catch, however: the twins spontaneously combust when they get agitated, flames igniting from their skin in a startling but beautiful way. Lillian is convinced Madison is pulling her leg, but it's the truth. "A pleasing blend of tartness and tenderness" (Boston Globe), Wilson's book serves up warmhearted emotional truth about life with a difficult or neurodivergent kid. Books are available through the JPW Library.



**AWAKENING THE SPIRIT** weekly book group includes a bonus **BOOK DISCUSSION & AUTHOR Q&A** on November 19, 6 – 7 p.m., via Zoom

Featured book: *The Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven* is by Biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School. In this latest book, Levine introduces the major topics in the Sermon on the Mount, explains historical and theological contexts, and shows how Jesus' words echo his Jewish tradition and speak forward to reach hearts and minds today. Levine maintains that the passage contains some of Jesus' most profound and most memorable teachings.



Weekly book group discussions will take place each Monday at 12:00 p.m. at the Awakening the Spirit book group Zoom meetings with Rev. Susan IZARD starting November 2. Books are available through the JPW Library.

# Church School News

Welcome to November! We look forward to your participation!

- Nov. 1st: Blessed are the Pure in Heart
- Nov. 8th: Blessed are the Peacemakers
- Nov. 15th: Blessed are Those who are Persecuted
- Nov. 22nd: Blessed are You When...
- Nov. 29th: Advent lesson TBA

The church school will continue to meet at 10 a.m. Sunday Mornings online. Our lessons will be based on the Beatitudes, and will use the Illustrated Children's Ministry curriculum. We will also have asynchronous lessons and other online learning opportunities available starting at 8 a.m. Sunday Mornings. Faith-at-home kits, with all of the supplies for our lessons, are available. For more information on how to get involved or to get a kit, contact Director of Children & Family Ministries Lauren Dube at [Lauren.dube@wh-firstchurch.org](mailto:Lauren.dube@wh-firstchurch.org).

## Introducing: Confirmation Class of 2021 *Ask the questions of your heart*

This year's confirmation class is underway with a group of curious confirmands. We are meeting bi-weekly – sometimes in person and sometimes on line – to explore our faith journeys.

One of the core components is a program called **Confirm not Conform (CnC)**. CnC is more than just a catchy name: It is a philosophy that emphasizes finding one's own voice. We celebrate questions and choices. We provide a safe place to explore the breadth of the Christian tradition, to ask questions, express our doubts and to discover what we truly believe.

We are guided, in part, by the following ideas:

- Believe that the Christian faith will stand up to honest examination
- Focus more on formation than information, on the questions than on the answers
- Connect youth with adults in the congregation in a meaningful way
- Respect youths' faithful choices about whether or not to be confirmed
- Celebrate and honor their faithful choices

We hope you will join us with your prayers of support and as companions on our journey. The confirmation leadership team is: Jimmy Quinn, Lauren Dube, Ryan Mannix and Amie Giguere.

## GHIAA Update

As of September 30, we had \$4,890 toward the \$5,000 fund needed to fulfill our 2020 pledge to the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA). We are just \$110 short! If you are at all able to help us out, please contribute, making sure to mark your check or online donation "GHIAA Pledge." With grateful thanks from your GHIAA Core Team (Rev. Erica Avena, Linda Bronstein, Lindsay Day, Jennifer deSimas, Lauren Dube, Rev. Amie Giguere, Ryan Mannix, Terry Schmidt, and Bob Sitkowski).



## The Weary World Rejoices! You are Invited

Our Advent theme is taken from the lyrics to *Oh Holy Night*: THE WEARY WORLD REJOICES. While we are certainly weary, it is important for our well being to remember to rejoice – even if only in small ways. For the four weeks of Advent 2020, as we approach the holiest night of the year, we invite you to share your Christmas season memories and current traditions in the form of photographs as they relate to the four Advent themes.

Please share photos with us and we will share these images on social media and in the online worship services.

You may send photos and scans (as JPG or PDF files. Smart phone photos are fine as well) to [Joy.Taylor@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Joy.Taylor@whfirstchurch.org), with subject: Advent Photos. Photos received after the due dates listed may not appear in the Sunday worship but may still appear on the Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages.

Our four themes are listed and we have listed some suggestions to inspire you – we are open to all seasonally appropriate images! Please send photos from your own collection and include your name, and the name(s) of the people in the photo when appropriate.:

HOPE, due November 26 at noon

PEACE, due December 3 at noon

JOY, due December 10 at noon

LOVE, due December 17 at noon

BONUS THEME: NATIVITY, send anytime after December 1 (Photos of your favorite nativity scene or crèche)

Photo Ideas: Baby's first Christmas, family gatherings, Christmas trees, snow angels, fireside chats, meditation, Christmas cookies, pageant photos, children at Christmas, puppies, cats, sledding, skiing, we would love some "pass the candle flame" videos or still photos, Christmas Eve worship services, colossal puppets, family time, and more!

We look forward to seeing your photos and we hope you have fun with this as we approach an unusual Advent season together.

-Joy Taylor and Amy Melvin

## A Library with a Rich Menu for Disciples

JPW Library Director Jennifer deSimas recently spoke with Debby Kirk (Southern New England United Church of Christ Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries) about how her path to the JPW Library started in a school parking lot. You may read the full blog on the Southern New England Conference UCC web page: <https://www.sneucc.org>, and search "A Library With A Rich Menu for Disciples."



first church  
WEST HARTFORD

12 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107



# Taizé

Worship Services

NOVEMBER 8

# Celtic

Evening Worship

NOVEMBER 22



Taizé and Celtic worship services, led by Susan Izard, will continue to be recorded live in the Chapel and aired via our YouTube channel. Watch for notices via email, Facebook, and our website.

first church WEST HARTFORD **Congregational Survey** We Need Everyone to Participate!!

All responses are anonymous...thank you for your cooperation

## The Survey is Coming!

Please make sure you don't overlook the congregational survey coming your way! It should be in your email inbox by the time you read this, so please take a few minutes to fill out the anonymous survey! Blessings.

## Yoga classes are open to all

As the winter season approaches and you are moving back inside, remember that our yoga classes are still going on every week! Nancy Murray has continued to hold yoga classes live, via Zoom. We have kept our meeting times of Tues. at 7 p.m. and Wed. and Thurs. 9:15 a.m. This has been a nice way to connect with our yoga community. The Zoom room has no space limitation, so all of the classes have "room!" Nancy is also holding a daily meditation class at 12:15 p.m. Email: [nancy@deeppeacect.com](mailto:nancy@deeppeacect.com) for links and fees.