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Living in Spirit • Committed to Service • Open to All



# first church

## WEST HARTFORD

### TIDINGS

DEC. 2021 • NEWSLETTER • WWW.WHFIRSTCHURCH.ORG • 12 SOUTH MAIN STREET, WEST HARTFORD, CT • 860-233-9605



# Tidings of Great Joy!



The title of First Church's newsletter *Tidings* comes in part from the Christmas story in Luke 2 (King James Version): **"And the angel said unto them, 'Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good TIDINGS [my emphasis] of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord'"** (vv. 10-11).

So, this issue brings you "Tidings of tidings" or "tidings of great joy" because it tells you news of the good news of Christmas in this pandemic-fatigued world! (Pandemic-fatigued world it is, isn't it?) And don't we need Christmas this year? (Strike up the band!)

**"We need a little Christmas right this very minute. / We need a little Christmas now!" \***

But we can't just rush into Christmas; we must prepare for it. So first, we have Advent, the season of preparation. (Advent and Lent are the two liturgical seasons of preparation.) I don't think that I heard of Advent until I got to seminary. Advent prepares us for Christmas, and Lent for Easter. Advent, incidentally, begins the liturgical (or church) year. For those people who care about such

things, we are now in Year C. And Luke is the Gospel that Year C focuses on. As I like to say, Luke is the Gospel of the Universal "Savior, Christ the Lord." (And we're back to the "good tidings" again.)

You see below the titles of the sermons for this month. What will God say to us (both individually and corporately) this December? Perhaps you will want to keep a journal this Advent. Write on the first page, "What is God saying to me / us this Advent?" (I just did that.) Related questions include: How will this month of December AD (anno domini, "In the Year of our Lord") 2021 prepare me / us for 2022? What does God hold in store for me / us? I know that God will bless us and love us and keep us.

And love us and keep us.

And bless us.

And . . .

But now, let's get ready!

*Michael*

*The Rev. Dr. Michael Willett Newheart, Bridge Senior Pastor*

*\* Written by Jerry Herman for Broadway musical Mame*

Worship in the Meeting House with us live (or live-stream) at 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings (unless noted) . Watch on YouTube

DECEMBER 5

Get Ready!  
(Luke 3:1-6)  
Rev. Michael Newheart  
preaching  
PEACE



DECEMBER 12  
Colossal Puppets  
Pageant  
(Luke 3:7-18)  
LOVE

DECEMBER 19

Mary's Magnificent Song  
(Luke 1:39-55)  
Rev. Michael Newheart  
preaching  
JOY

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve  
4:00 p.m. Beloved Carols,  
Tender Light  
7:30 p.m. What Child Is This?

DECEMBER 26

"Amazed and Astonished"  
(Luke 2:41-52)  
Rev. Amie Giguere  
preaching

## Church Family News

■ Welcome to baby **Alexander Stremiau Tobin**. His parents are **Jonathan and Christina Tobin** and he was born on September 30, 2021. He joins his sister **Addison Grace Tobin** who is age 8, and he is the grandson of **Joe and Susan Tobin**. ■ Condolences are with **Barbara Goodwin** on the passing of her mother **Charlotte Collins**, who died on October 22, 2021 at 102. ■ Congratulations to **Dave Simpson** and **Barbara Laurain** on the wedding of their daughter **Melanie Simpson** to **Jason Roberts** on Friday, November 5, 2021 in Austin, Texas. (Melanie attended the First Church Nursery School). ■ Welcome **Noelle Marie Brock**! Noelle arrived on November 16, 2021. Best wishes to new parents **Julie Bohman Brock** and **Keith Brock** and grandparents **Diane Felske Bohman** and **Larry Bohman**, great grandfather is **Ned Felske**.

■ You may submit your prayer requests to our pastors online at any time: [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.*

## Afghan Refugees are Coming Soon

We have all seen news reports about the Taliban in Afghanistan. Their takeover has caused thousands of Afghan citizens to flee in fear of their lives, due to their past work with the U.S. military. These refugee families are arriving in Connecticut right now. Several groups in West Hartford have formed to help them make the transition a safe and successful one. Our church is co-leading one of those groups.

The need for help is urgent and immediate. IRIS, the nonprofit agency tasked with resettling these families, expects more than 300 people to come to our state before the end of the year. That is as many people as IRIS has ever settled in an entire year, and they will be here in less than two months.

So far, we have been blessed by many volunteers from our church, from Congregation Beth Israel, and from First Baptist Church, who have signed on to help resettle one family. We have also been blessed by generous donations of the funds and material goods necessary to get a family settled in our town. But we need more, and we need it now.

**Here is what you can do to help.** Let the co-leaders know if you have any household goods — notably bed frames, lamps, and kitchen/dining room chairs — that you can donate. If you have some groceries (flour, sugar, beans, lentils, spaghetti, tomato paste) that you can spare, that would be wonderful. Finally, if you have gently used, or preferably new, clothing for winter, let us know.

There is so much that will depend upon the makeup of the family that is assigned to us, and we will not know that until the last minute. So we cannot accept anything physically yet, but we can compile a list of things we know are available.

Finally, we need to raise at least \$10,000 to 15,000. Any donation you can make will be wonderful! You may donate to this effort through our church, which is handling the finances. So you can write a check, or go online, or donate by text. Please be sure to make it clear that the money is to go to the Afghan Refugee Relief effort.

Contact the co-leaders: Terry Schmitt: [terryschmittwh@gmail.com](mailto:terryschmittwh@gmail.com) or (860) 214-1742, or [cestreim@gmail.com](mailto:cestreim@gmail.com).

### 4 Ways to Donate

- **Text to Give**  
Scan this or text "Give" to (860) 222-7870
- **In Person**
- **Online**
- **By Mail**



## From the Moderator

I would like to donate the space typically used for the "From The Moderator" message to the Senior Pastor Search Committee and will add a "WELL DONE" to the team who has worked for many hours on this process. They followed time-honored traditions and procedures to get us to this point and we look forward with gratitude. Thank you!

*Eleanor Wight, Moderator*

## Senior Pastor Search Committee Shares a Joy!

Our Senior Pastor Search Committee is ending 2021 on a happy and hopeful note. In early November, we came to consensus around a single candidate whom we enthusiastically recommended to our Moderator and the Coordinating Team to be our next Senior Pastor. On November 11, the Coordinating Team accepted our recommendation. At the same time, an HR expert and the Business Team helped us to draft a Call Agreement. Our offer was extended to the candidate and accepted!

We are currently in planning stages for a "Candidate Weekend" to take place in early January. The candidate will come to First Church to meet our congregation and participate in a worship service. Immediately following the service, we will have a congregational meeting to vote on the candidate as our next Senior Pastor. We are excited to share this news with you and hope that we will be able to engage all of you in giving a warm welcome to the pastor whom we have recommended that we call to lead our congregation.

Please watch for additional updates on a Call to Meeting from our Moderator and the final date for the Candidate Weekend. Thank you, as always, for your continued trust and prayers.

*—Amber Rottman, Amy Melvin, Glen MacLeod, Liz Oman-Wilfrid, Ryan Mannix, Robert Schunder, and Suzanne Carnes, chairperson*

## The Mini-Festival of Trees

The mini festival of trees will be held throughout the month of December. While you won't be able to win a tree this year, you'll enjoy discovering the magic of Christmas through 15 trees, decorated by members of First Church and placed throughout the building – from the church office to the choir room. There will be video of the trees available on our YouTube channel and you will have the opportunity to make a donation to our Mission Partners at the end of the video. Thank you. – The Outreach Team



# The Puppets Are Coming! The Puppets Are Coming!

The Colossal Puppets have been released from quarantine and are making their way east from St. Michael's Parish in Litchfield to tell the wondrous story of the nativity. They will join us for worship on Sunday, December 12. It's been two years since they have ventured out, and they are anxious to share the good news with us all.

They could use some help getting ready for the event. If you are available for a couple of hours on the afternoon of December 7, you can help us get them ready for the Sunday service. No prior experience is required. As long as you can follow our instructions, we can get them set up and dressed for the occasion.

We will need 11 volunteers on Sunday, December 12, to operate the puppets during the worship service. There will be one rehearsal on Saturday, December 11, at 10 a.m. in the Meeting House. The rehearsal should not last longer than 90 minutes. Again, no prior experience is required, but you will need to be able to hold a 10' high pole. The puppets are not heavy, but they are a little cumbersome and require getting used to them.

Volunteer "puppeteers" have had a great time being a part of the pageant in previous years, and we look forward to giving new folks a chance to participate!

Finally, on Monday morning, December 13, we will again need some assistance for a couple of hours to disassemble the puppets and pack them for their return trip to Litchfield.

Please sign up to help using the CCB link provided.  
<https://bit.ly/PuppetVol>



FILE PHOTO

## "You Can Do Well and Do Good!"

**First Church to Integrate Environmental, Social, and Governance Factors When Making Investment Decisions for its Endowment**

First Church is a mission-driven church committed to "Living in Spirit, Committed to Service and Open to All."

As such, our investment philosophy now seeks to align the objectives of the endowment with the mission of the church without sacrificing returns when appropriate. Some investors have chosen to exclude companies in specific sectors, such as tobacco, from their portfolio for many years. **Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)** investing, however, doesn't simply exclude companies. Instead, it takes a fuller portrait of the risk and reward of potential investments. Beyond the usual profitability metrics, ESG investing also looks at **Environmental** (how much carbon a company is emitting?), **Social** (how does the company treat its workforce?) and **Governance** (how transparent is the company?) factors.

In October, the Business Team was supportive of proposed ESG changes to the endowment as recommended by Morgan Stanley and moved that the Investment Committee had the authority to go forward with the proposal as they saw fit. After our last Business Team meeting in November, the Investment Committee voted unanimously to implement approximately 17.5% of the General Fund and the Library Fund into 3 separate ESG funds as recommended by Morgan Stanley. This action is projected to increase annual dividend and interest income by approximately \$10,000 in the General Fund and \$4,000 in the Library Fund.

In terms of making a return on its investment, the endowment at First Church has already proven successful. In the past eleven years, the Church's portfolio has grown from \$9.5 million to \$16.2 million or by over 70% net of withdrawals and fees. ESG investing has grown significantly over the last several years and now represents one-third of all US assets. Embedded into ESG is the notion that you can do well and do good. It's not just profit maximizing. It's not just risk and return. It's risk, return, and impact.

*Respectfully submitted by Investment Committee: Court Lewis, Jeff Mitchell, Dave Simpson, Deb Schunder, Don Clark and Al Nweeia*

**DUE DATE for TIDINGS:** The next deadline is **DECEMBER 14th**, for the **JANUARY** issue. Please send items to Joy Taylor:

joy.taylor@whfirstchurch.org  
**DUE DATES for SUNDAY NOTES & eNEWS:** Submissions are due each Tuesday by noon to Suzanne: suzanne.nardi@whfirstchurch.org.

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**first church**  
WEST HARTFORD

Rev. Dr. Michael W. Newheart, Bridge Pastor  
Rev. Amie Stuart Giguere, Acting Associate Pastor  
James Boratko, Director of Music Arts  
Dawne Quinn, FCAFYC Director  
Suzanne Nardi, Office Manager  
Lisa Reed, Business Manager  
Jennifer deSimas, JPWL Director

  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)



# We Bring You Good Tidings of Great Joy



- Dec. 5: Second Sunday of Advent: **PEACE**, 10 a.m.
- Dec. 12: Third Sunday of Advent: **JOY** featuring Colossal Puppet Pageant, 10 a.m.
- Dec. 19: Fourth Sunday of Advent: **LOVE** featuring Quiet City Brass, 10 a.m.
- Dec. 24: **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES:**



4:00 p.m. *Beloved Carols, Tender Light*  
A Christmas service for children and families of all ages, filled with song and the beloved story

7:30 p.m. *What Child Is This?*  
We welcome the Christ child with carols, prayer, and readings from the Gospel of Luke

*The services will be livestreamed concurrently with the times notes. The videos will be available on our YouTube channel following the services, so they can be viewed and shared again!*



**Wreaths** will be donated in honor of, or in memory of, a loved one. The wreaths cost \$25.00 and will be hung on the doors of First Church during the season of Advent. The deadline is **Thursday,**

**December 16th.**

**Please Place Order Online at**  
<https://bit.ly/ChristmasDonations2021>

If paying by check, please fill out this form and make checks payable to First Church with "Wreath" on the memo line.

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dedication ("in honor/loving memory of..."):

Daytime telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Poinsettias**

Poinsettias are available for \$18.00 per plant. The deadline for placing orders is **Thursday, December 16th.**

**Please Place Order Online at**  
<https://bit.ly/ChristmasDonations2021>

\_\_\_\_ This poinsettia will be used to brighten the holiday for another.

\_\_\_\_ I/we will take this poinsettia after the 10:00 am service on Dec. 19th

\_\_\_\_ Delivery available if needed.

If paying by check, please fill out this form and make checks payable to First Church with "Poinsettia" on the memo line.

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dedication ("in honor/loving memory of..."):

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_



## Church School Join Anytime!

Church school is in full swing, and we've been meeting on the 4th floor. There are five classrooms, including a new 6th and 7th grade class, and the nursery and pre-schoolers! Don't worry if you've missed the start of the academic year, you may join any time.

Please register your children for church school at the link (scan the QR code). The church school is always looking for new volunteers who are excited to teach our children - please inquire upon check-in.



# News from the First Church Academy for Young Children

We've showcased the Academy garden in past articles and are very proud of our yield this past growing season, but something you may not know is that our garden compost bin is home to worms! We purchased 150 red wigglers this summer and while it is hard to tell for sure, we think that we may have nearly 300 now!

Our children have learned that the worms are able to use our food scraps and garden clippings to make rich soil for our garden. Each preschool child has their own "worm food" collection container for home and are encouraged to return that container full. Our worms eat well!

They have learned that the worm castings are nutrient rich and nourish the garden soil. Children who are interested can feed the worms, turn the compost, add hay and sprinkle peat moss in the bin. They also make sure that our bin stays closed when we are not working in it.

This month, our garden time is all about getting the worms ready to survive the winter. We've placed hay for insulation inside our compost bin and built an enclosure out of re-purposed materials filled with leaves surrounding the bin. We are hopeful that come spring, our wigglers will become active again and once again turn out some fabulous soil for our spring planting. You are always wel-



come to come take a peek!

Dawne Quinn  
Education Director  
First Church Academy for Young Children  
860-232-2106  
www.firstchurchacademy.org

## Cell Tower Company Shows Interest in Our Steeple

Several years ago church members explored ideas of new ways to produce income for the church beyond member contributions and endowment income. Some of those ideas involved renting the church facilities to outside groups. Recently, a company approached the church with a request that fits in to that concept.

Crown Castle Corporation is seeking a new location for a cell phone antenna system. They are looking at several locations in West Hartford, and one they like a lot is our steeple. Chuck Brutomesso, a representative of this company, has worked with the Business Team on this issue. While the company was initially proposing building a "false" chimney over the church school side of the church, recent discussion has focused on putting the antenna in the steeple.

The Business Team asked Bob Sitkowski, Terry Schmitt, and Dave Simpson to manage conversations with the cell tower company. We have asked the company to provide some representatives for an after church meeting so that members can learn specifics about the company, their needs, and what such an installation would entail. No date has been set yet, but we will let you know.

Meanwhile, Bob, Dave, and Terry are available to answer any questions you might have about the progress to date.



Anyone wishing to donate to the *Organ & Carillon Reserve Fund* may do so by **ordering online at <https://bit.ly/ChristmasDonations2021>**, or by filling out and returning this form to the Church office with your donation. If you wish to have your donation listed in the Sunday bulletin, please make your contribution by **Thursday, December 16th**.

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dedication ("in honor/loving memory of..."): \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_



**Please make checks payable to First Church with "Carillon" on the memo line.**



NEWS FROM THE COVENANT TO CARE TEAM:

## It's Mitten Time!

The Annual Hat and Mitten Drive began October 1st and will continue through the end of the year. Marked boxes will be available in the Narthex and outside the auditorium 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.

## Share-A-Gift Tree is Here!

Please look for the Share-A-Gift Christmas Tree in the Auditorium! Please take a tag on Sundays, buy a gift for the child designated, and bring the *unwrapped gift* to the office or the auditorium (during coffee hour) by December 19th. Gifts will be given to our two Covenant to Care social workers for the children they work with. If you are still worshipping from home and would like to participate, please call Janice Carter Hall at 860-305-0940 or Carole Carter at 860-690-1338 and we will drop a tag off to you..



FILE PHOTO

## Yoga for All Levels

Yoga classes have been continuing on Zoom on Tuesday evenings at 7 and Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 9:15. In addition, we are excited to announce that in person yoga has returned to the church on Tuesdays and Wednesdays! Please contact Nancy Murray at [nancy@deepeacect.com](mailto:nancy@deepeacect.com) for more information.

## Virtual Bible Study

Pastor Michael Newheart is leading a virtual Bible study class Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Please register to receive the Zoom link. Participants will reflect on each week's sermon and engage in deeper understanding of the Scripture. Register: <https://bit.ly/FCBibleStudy>

## Worship Technology Workgroup Short-Term Visual Solution



Many of you have provided feedback that we need to come up with a different solution for projecting slides for worship on Sunday



morning, especially now that we have holiday decorations in our Meeting House for Advent. While the use of slides has been particularly helpful for adding visuals to sermons, and providing real-time responses, the idea of having the large screen blocking the view of the cross and decorations was not a long term solution.

The Worship Technology Workgroup came up with a new short term solution that enables us to continue to use slides during worship and allows us to remove the large screen from in front of the cross. Starting on Nov. 14, we configured a large TV screen to the left of the pulpit for showing the PowerPoint slides. Now people in the front two-thirds of the Meeting House will be able to see the slides. In fact, the clarity and brightness of the slides on the TV screen is a vast improvement over projecting them on the screen. We may even be able to configure a second screen on the piano side of the Meeting House without too many complications.

The current set up is only a short term, low cost solution until the workgroup can propose a more permanent solution. We have met with DNR Laboratories and provided our requirements, and they will be drafting several different proposals. We are also planning to visit a number of churches and other venues that use screens in their space to get an idea of what is available and how it is used. We will be working on a proposal that will be a long term solution that people will feel comfortable about and adds to our worship experience.

A number of you have provided feedback and suggestions about what you've seen in other churches. We encourage you to continue doing that. You can do that by talking with any one of the workgroup members (Court Lewis, Kelly Shea, Jessica Berube, Beverli Christensen, Paul Truebig, Ryan Mannix, Terry Schmitt, or Jim Boratko). You can email comments to: [jim.boratko@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jim.boratko@whfirstchurch.org).

### Brief Instructions for Viewing Livestream Services

On Sunday mornings, a few minutes before 10 a.m., go to our YouTube channel on your computer's usual web browser, or on your smart TV, just find the YouTube app and look for First Church, West Hartford. You should see our video for the current Sunday service first in our content. After the service ends, the video will be available to view again and again!





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

Contact us!

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! [www.jpwebster.biblio.org/eg/opac/home](http://www.jpwebster.biblio.org/eg/opac/home)

**We are open!**

Stop in and see us

We have plenty of new books  
fiction, biographies, children's, and  
more!

Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

## HOLIDAY SHOPPING LIST!

Books make wonderful gifts that can be enjoyed time and again. To lend you a hand with your holiday shopping (and entice you to check out these books for yourself!) we present the following ideas:

### NONFICTION

■ **Finding the Mother Tree** by Suzanne Simard

*"From the world's leading forest ecologist who forever changed how people view trees and their connections to one another and to other living things in the forest—a moving, deeply personal journey of discovery."*

■ **Life in West Hartford** by Tracey M. Wilson

*"A compilation of 140 essays written by the author for the monthly magazine West Hartford Life. These chapters help tell the story of the West Hartford, CT community from first settlement to the present day."*

■ **Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul** by John Philip Newell

*"At a time in which our world so desperately needs healing and hope, Sacred Earth Sacred Soul offers us a way forward. Newell inspires us towards the sacred in ourselves, in each other and in the earth."*

■ **Wholehearted Faith** by Rachel Held Evans

*"This book is for the doubter and the dreamer, the seeker and the sojourner, who long for a sense of spiritual wholeness."*

### FICTION

■ **Cloud Cuckoo Land** by Anthony Doerr

*"Cloud Cuckoo Land is ultimately a celebration of books, the power and possibilities of reading."*

■ **Harlem Shuffle** by Colson Whitehead

*"A heist with a cast of zany characters, tongue-in-cheek dialogue, questionable criminal skills, and of course, a bumbling, incompetent thief or two. But also a powerful tale of a man's love for his family and the neighborhood where he lives."*

### CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

■ **Walking in a Winter Wonderland** based on song by Bernard and Smith; illustrated by Tim Hopgood

*"Joyful and colorful illustrations show all the wonders of winter—snowmen and sleigh rides, sweaters and smiles. A beautiful and festive celebration of the season—perfect for sharing!"*

■ **Silent Night** by Lara Hawthorne

*"Using only the familiar carol's lyrics as the text, the story of the Nativity is gorgeously brought to life."*

■ **The Christmas Story: the Brick Bible for Kids** by Brendan Powell Smith. The Christmas story told with Lego bricks – and a seek and find activity too! How fun is that!

■ **Refuge** by Anne Booth and Sam Usher

*"The story of Mary, Joseph and their Child, made fresh again by a donkey narrator, a focus on the 'kindness of strangers' and Usher's evocative watercolors."*

## Abraham & Hagar Program Prompts "God Moment" for Speaker

The following is an example of how God uses our words and actions to enrich the faith journeys of others. And we don't even know it, mere mortals that we are.

On November 4, the JPWL sponsored an event in conjunction with the exhibit "Abraham: Out of One, Many." We hosted three faith leaders to present the story of Abraham and Hagar from their own sacred texts. Our guests were Rev. Dr. Barbara Headley, Senior Pastor of Zion Community Baptist Church in Springfield, MA; Rabbi Andi Fleigel of Congregation Beth Israel; and Aida Mansoor, Director of Field Education at Hartford International University.

We had a lively and engaging conversation, moderated by JPWL Assistant Librarian Karla Grafton. Those who attended said they learned parts of the Abraham story they had never heard before, or had never even considered. Hearing the Islamic and Hebrew versions in parallel to the familiar Christian Scripture was nothing short of fascinating. (If you didn't have a chance to join us, you can watch a video of the event on the First Church YouTube channel). A few days after the program, I received this note from Rev. Headley:

*Let me share with you the impact and blessing [the program] was to others...I had to travel to Boston with a team of my church leaders to participate in a Lilly Foundation program for churches being run by Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. While there I was asked to be interviewed for the program. As I was sitting there waiting a young African-American female seminarian kept staring at me. Afterwards she came up to me and said, "I can't believe I'm meeting you. You were on the webinar about Abraham, Sarah and Hagar -- I was watching!" I looked at her with disbelief and joy that I would meet someone two days later in Boston who was on with us. She then said to me with tears in her eyes, "I want my doctoral work to deal with the faith of Hagar and I didn't know how to approach it. Thank you for what you said!" My heart was full with gratitude to God for how our conversation on the faith of Hagar and the complex relationships between Abram, Sarai and Hagar is already bearing fruit in the lives of others. It truly was a "God moment!"*

Thanks to God for the blessings of this church, this library, this ministry!

In Peace, Jennifer

## The Nativity Narratives: A Deeper Look with Amy-Jill Levine and John Dominic Crossan Sundays, December 5 and 12, 5 p.m. Virtual events

There is still time to register: <https://whfirstchurch.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/195/responses/new>



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12 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107

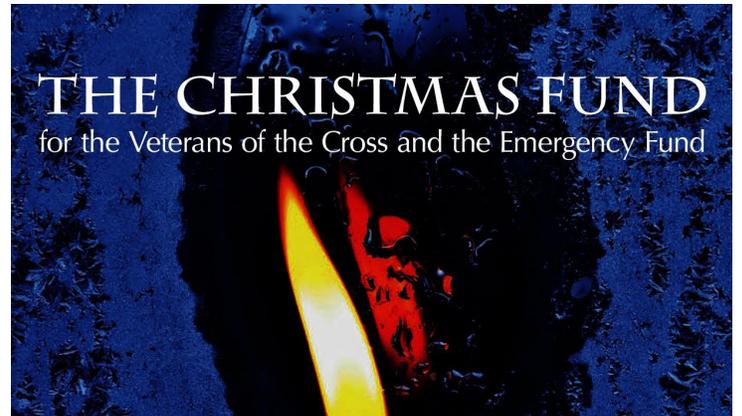


## DECEMBER REACH OUT:

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to their lower-income retirees.

Your generous support will be a blessing to servants of the church old and young, retired and active, lay and authorized."

Thank you for your support.



For more information or to donate: <https://www.pbucc.org/index.php/christmas-fund-home>



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