



Sunday Notes

September 25, 2022



Looking Towards Sunday

Jesus talks about money a lot. And when he does, he doesn't sugarcoat it. For example, he didn't say to the rich young ruler, "if it feels right, you might consider selling all your belongings and giving the money to the poor. Of course, only if that is something you're comfortable with." Instead, Jesus implored people to think and act boldly with their money and belongings, to show radical generosity and extravagant love for their neighbors. In this week's scripture, the story of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus turns upside down cultural norms concerning wealth. The powerful are weak, and the weak are powerful. The sermon is called "The Upside-Down World of Jesus." Come to church and listen in as we hear the gospel words. See you in the pews.
Rev. Jane



"The Upside-Down World of Jesus"

Today's Altar Flower Dedication

Our altar flowers today are donated in loving memory of William H. and Patricia C. Furnivall by their family.

Blessing of the Animals next Sunday

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good (Gen. 1: 23-25).
Bring your pets to church for the Blessing of the Animals on October 2!! We will dedicate our entire service to our four-legged brothers and sisters. Through music, word, and sacrament we will celebrate the joy and beauty of being in relationship with God's natural world.
All animals welcome! (live animals, stuffed animals and photos)

Children and Family Ministries

All children are welcome to use the Children's Corner toys and books at the back of the Meetinghouse during worship and remain in the service with their families, or go with Cindy Tolin, Director of Children and Families to participate in a lesson following the Children's Sermon. This Sunday children will be leaving the Meetinghouse and going down to the second floor to the JP Webster Library for a lesson and an animal or pet related craft. Families should pick up their children at the JP Webster Library at the conclusion of the service.

The Nursery, staffed by Abby Perkins, is available for infants and toddlers at 9:45 am through the worship service where our youngest disciples can play and grow in the Nursery located in Room 405.

Parents and Guardians are asked to complete the annual **Child and Youth Family Registration** for the current program year either online accessible on the church website (<https://whfirstchurch.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/228/responses/new> <https://www.whfirstchurch.org/ministry/children-youth/church-school/>) or by completing a paper form on the blue clipboards in the Meetinghouse and in the Sunday School rooms. Contact Cindy Tolin at dirfammin@whfirstchurch.org for assistance or anyone on the Spirit Team or Faith Formation Work Group.

Sunday Worship Nursery Helpers Needed!

If you love children and are able to volunteer as a helper in the nursery located on the 4th floor and assist with our young children on Sunday mornings, please see Cindy Tolin, or contact her at dirfammin@whfirstchurch.org.

Upcoming Events

First Church Bible Study

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom; through November 2nd. We will be continuing with The Book of Acts. Let's read and discuss and discern how God is still speaking to us today. Contact Jim Warner (jwarner4fc@gmail.com) to be added to the Zoom email list and attend when you can. The readings and study guide questions will be emailed before each meeting.

Book Group News

Awakening the Spirit

Hybrid meetings resume on Mondays from 1-2:30 p.m., in the JPWL. We will discuss [Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder's Meditations on Hope and Courage](#) by Stephen Charleston. Please contact JPW Library Director Jennifer deSimas with questions: 860-232-3893.

Food for Thought book group is meeting Tuesday, October 4 at 5:30 to discuss Jodi Picoult's latest book, [Wish You Were Here](#). Already read the book? Join us for the discussion. Register [here](#) to receive the Zoom link to the meeting. Please call Jennifer deSimas with questions: 860-232-3893.

Fun Friday Family Night at First Church

It's PANCAKES for Dinner! 6:00 -7:30 p.m., September 23rd

Come one, come all to First Church auditorium for a PANCAKE SUPPER. The Inreach Team welcomes you to pancakes, syrups, fruit and church family time together. Free will offerings will be accepted. Let's gather together and have an upside down dinner day. Students from the Peacebuilders Program at Hartford International University have been invited to our pancake supper. Please welcome these guests who are coming from 11 countries to attend this program at HIU. Here is a link to info about the current students [2022-23 Peacebuilding Students | Hartford International University](#).

Lunch & Learn: EV & Hybrid Vehicles – Why, What, and How?

Sunday, September 25, 11:30 a.m. in the JPWL

Electric Vehicles (EVs) and Plug-in Hybrids provide cleaner and more efficient transportation that will be crucial to helping us overcome global warming. Join EV-driving members of First Church as they share their experiences with EVs and discuss what they have learned in their shift from gas to electric/hybrid vehicles. A light lunch will be provided. Please register [HERE](#).

Arts in The Center 2022-23 Season announces its first concert! On Friday, September 30th, at 5:30 p.m. we welcome the Lollipop Opera Company to present an original operetta on the auditorium stage entitled, The "MAD LIB-retto!". It's a super interactive show where the children contribute to the creative lyrics by providing words, Mad-Lib style, to complete the libretto of the opera which is then performed live. This FREE family friendly event is a pizza and a show! Sponsored by First Church, West Hartford, First Church Academy for Young Children, and the John P. Webster Library. *Free-will donations will be accepted.* The presentation will be a fun event for all ages.

Register here: <https://whfirstchurch.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/227/responses/new>. Click this link from we-ha.com for more info: <https://we-ha.com/free-lollipop-opera-performance-of-mad-lib-retto-at-first-church-west-hartford/>.

Christians, Muslims, and Jesus: A Conversation about Jesus

Thursday, October 20, 7 p.m.

Prophet or messiah, the figure of Jesus is both a bridge and a barrier between Christianity and Islam.

How did some doctrines become the defining characteristics of one faith and not the other? Muslim scholar and popular commentator Dr. Mona Siddiqui and Professor David Grafton take an unbiased look at the relationship between Islam and Christianity, examining the ways in which the two faiths differ, and how they have entered into dialogue with each other. Join us for this thought-provoking program. Register [HERE](#).

[Dr. Mona Siddiqui](#), an internationally known scholar and sought-after speaker on religion, ethics, and public life, is Distinguished Professor of Islamic and Interreligious Studies at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace (HIU). [Dr. David Grafton](#) is Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations at HIU, and the author of numerous articles and chapters of books on Christian-Muslim relations. Both Dr. Siddiqui and Dr. Grafton will have books for sale at the event. This program is presented both in-person and via Zoom.

Sharing Our Wisdom with Rev. Joseph Tobin

Sunday, October 16, 11:30 in the JPWL

What is faith? Who is God?

Why is there pain and suffering in the world?

Will Christianity die, and if so, where will we find our moral compass?

Join Joe Tobin and other church members and friends after worship to share your opinions and thoughts about the important questions that are shaping and challenging our religious thinking, and even, our denomination. We will draw from the writings of Krista Tippett, Frederick Buechner, and Rev. Greta Vosper (United Church of Canada), among others. Topics and materials for reference will be sent out by email ahead of each meeting. Bring your coffee (or make some in the library!) and be prepared to settle back for an interesting hour. Please [register here](#) to receive the readings ahead of our meeting.

Lunch & Learn: Solar Panels – Harnessing the Power of the Sun

Sunday, October 23 at 11:30 a.m. in the JPWL

Join us as several church members share their personal experiences with solar energy. Experiences span from owning to leasing solar panels as they try to harness the sun's power – as well as save some money. This event will be recorded for those unable to attend, and the recording will be shared afterwards. A light lunch will be provided. Please register [HERE](#).

Arts in the Center: The Phantom Returns!

Saturday, October 29th from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Meetinghouse

Audience members are encouraged to come in costume for the event. Admission will be \$20 for adults, \$15 for students and seniors. Public school aged children are free. Because of the scary nature of some of the material, it might not be suitable for younger children.

Join us for the seventh Annual West Hartford Festival of Trees, Dec. 1, 2022!

Just in time to help make this holiday season festive and joyful, First Church is thrilled to announce the seventh Festival of Trees will be live again this year as part of West Hartford's annual Holiday Stroll on Thursday, December 1, 2022. Anyone welcome to donate a decorated tree! Registration will be open on Sept. 28 and close by Nov. 11, either on line or with mail in form. More details [here](#).

Announcements

It's Back: *The JPWL Crofut Café!!*

October 2, 8:30-9:45

The monthly breakfast and gabfest that you love returns next Sunday! However, from now on, we'll meet in the Auditorium so we can spread out a bit, as these post-Covid times necessitate. We offer a light breakfast – fruit, bagels, juice, breakfast casseroles, coffee & tea; gluten-free options, too. No more fussing with pre-church breakfast! Get here a little earlier and join us!

Gather Round the Table

The groups for Gather Round the Table have been formed. If you have signed up, you will be receiving lists and schedules by mail very soon. The program will consist of 3 rounds beginning this fall. If you have not signed up but have interest in participating, please call one of us and you can be added to the substitute list. Please reach out with any questions! Martha Calef (860-212-1352), Linda Moffitt (860-874-7786), and Susan Tobin (860-916-1135)

Calling All Artists!

The pandemic gave us ample time for creativity – when we weren't sleuthing out our next toilet paper source! Now we'd like to see some of the fruits of your labor – from the past two years or from the past 50! The JPWL Library invites you to share your art, crafts, woodwork, quilts, needlework, sculpture, etc. with us for our upcoming First Church members and friends Arts and Crafts Exhibit. All levels of skill are welcome – we want to fill the JPWL Gallery with vibrant color and texture! Please bring your work to the JPWL by Monday, September 26. We are open Monday – Thursday, 9-5 or on Sunday mornings – or by appointment. Contact Jennifer with questions 860-232-3893

Volunteers – Come and Lend a Hand!

Sundays after Worship on 11/20th, 12/18th

Once a month, for 1 hour after the Sunday service, the Outreach Team needs a few folks to assemble Brown Bag Lunches in support of the Hartford Loaves and Fishes Hunger Ministry. Bag Lunch assembly dates coming up are **Oct 16th, Nov 20th, and Dec 18th at 11:00a.m. in the auditorium.** Families, teens, seniors – whatever your age you can lend a helping hand. Contact Dottie Stone to volunteer for any or all of these dates: dottie@stone-stonect.com or 203-856-7403.

Unity Green Bench

Our town green has a new name...how about a new bench? The Unity Green work group, in coordination with the West Hartford Concerned Parents of Color (WHCPC) and the West Hartford Historical Society, are purchasing a bench for Unity Green. Our goal is \$3500, including installation. We are more than halfway there, thanks to a grant provided by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's West Hartford Greater Together Fund. You can help us reach our goal via Text 2 Give or by sending a check to First Church (be sure to note "Unity Green Bench" in the memo line). Thank you very much for your generosity!

West Hartford Food Pantry Needs Donations!

The West Hartford Food Pantry is especially low on the following items. Please consider picking up a few items the next time you shop. -- Rice (1 lb. packages), Macaroni and Cheese, Canned pasta (ex: Spaghetti's), Canned vegetables, Canned beans (black, garbanzo, kidney, etc.), Canned soup, Canned tuna and chicken. -- Please note: They cannot accept open and/or expired items. Please bring your donations to the church and Outreach Team members will take to Town Hall. Thank you!

September Reach Out: Adlebrook

"Meeting the developmental and behavioral challenges of children, young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Intellectual Disabilities; trauma and/or psychiatrically based behavioral health concerns, Adlebrook works with families through a range of professional, educational, residential and therapeutic options, Adlebrook aims to continue its growth in order to provide a continuum of care and meet the ever-changing needs of those we serve." Adlebrook operates specialized education, community, and residential programs for youth with autism. They provide emergency and transitional respite programs, short term residential assessment, treat children who suffer from trauma, operate a full venue of residential treatment programs, offer in-home behavioral services, and are a qualified provider of several services for persons with Intellectual Disabilities. For more information, <https://adelbrook.org>.

To donate online thru the church: <https://www.whfirstchurch.org/ministry/outreach/> or you can donate directly at <https://adelbrook.org>. Thank you for your support!

Altar Flower Donations Needed!

Sponsoring altar flowers is a meaningful way to honor or remember loved ones, and is also part of our inreach ministry. Following each Sunday service, a volunteer takes the altar flower arrangement and makes smaller arrangements from it to deliver to church members celebrating birthdays, recuperating from illness or surgery, or for other occasions. Please consider donating. We have the following fall dates available: 10/30th, 11/6th, 11/13th, 11/20th, 11/27th, and 12/4th. Thank you!

Family News!

The "Family News" section of the now retired TIDINGS was one of everyone's favorite parts. Well, guess what? We now have a family news page on our website. Family news will be shared when it is submitted to [Amy Melvin](#) or [Joy Taylor](#). Common topics include: Weddings, Births, Graduations, Baptisms, Deaths, Reunions, Moves, other milestones, or just people together! Send your photo(s) with caption(s) any time! We may edit content to fit. Check it out under the Inreach Menu! (Please note, this is a public page. In other words, it is not password protected).

Spreading Your News

The Communications Team is made up of members of our Outreach Ministry, and the church Office Administrators. When you have photos, event notices, and information to be shared publicly, please send it to the email addresses below by Tuesday at noon to be included in the appropriate places.

Sarah Kopp, Office Manager, sarah.kopp@whfirstchurch.org

Linda Clark, Office Manager, FCWHAdmin2@whfirstchurch.org

Amy Melvin, Communications, Communications@whfirstchurch.org

Joy Taylor, Communications, Communications2@whfirstchurch.org

Submit Prayer Requests at http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request.

First Church Office Hours are Monday thru Thursday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

4 Ways to Give

1. **Give by Text:** Text GIVE to (860) 222-7870. **You can now donate using ACH!** If you have already used Txt2Give, text update to change payment type from credit card to ACH.
2. **Give Online:** Visit our website at <http://www.whfirstchurch.org/giving/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.