



Sunday Notes

August 13, 2023



Looking Towards Sunday

Friends,

You're familiar with the story of Moses and the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-5). Maybe you're also familiar with the fact that burning bush (*Euonymus alatus* in Latin) is a popular shrub that shows brilliant red foliage in the fall; grows easily; and gets massive at maturity. Since we've been so steeped in the sermon series these past two weeks, I've seen that sacred story in a different light. It looks something like this:

Moses was garden tasking atop the mountain of God (rather than keeping the flock of his father-in-law). Moses had snipping shears instead of a shepherd's staff; and he was poised to start shaping the oversized shrub. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the bush. He looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

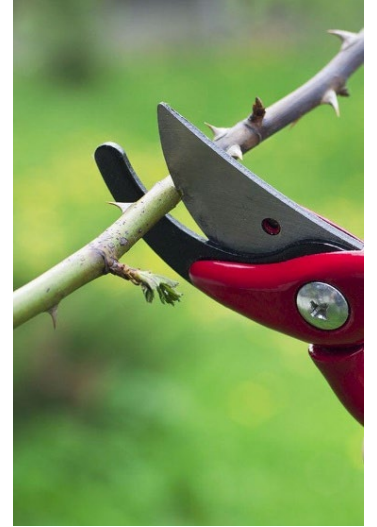
Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the shrub is not scorched." When God saw that Moses had turned aside to see, God called to him, "Moses, Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am."

*Then God said, "Come no closer because you are about to make a terrible mistake! You can't just cut off branches and buds carelessly. You have to keep a few tips in mind when you're **gardening God's way**. There are certain **pruning principles** that you have to practice."*

I'll say more when I see you Sunday!

Blessings meantime,

Rev. Fredd



Today's Altar Flower Dedication

Our altar flowers today were donated by Paul and Bev Truebig in loving memory of Rev. and Mrs. R. Emory Smith, Jr., Bev's parents.

Upcoming Events

Sun is Shining Concert Series

August 17, 22, and 29 at 5:30 p.m. (Please note 8/17th is a Thursday)

Join us on the Labyrinth on the church front lawn with your chairs, friends, blankets, and picnic! In the case of rain or severe weather the concerts will either be postponed or canceled. A decision will be posted on our website or our Facebook page after 2:00 p.m. on the day of the show. Click [HERE](#) to see the list of performers.

Summer Book Group!

August 14 from 12-1:30 p.m.

Rev. Tom Carr, facilitator of the Awakening the Spirit book group, is leading a discussion of *The Seed Keeper* by Indigenous author Diane Wilson. Please bring your lunch; beverages and dessert are provided.

Book Group News:

Both book discussion groups are on summer break. **Awakening the Spirit** will resume meeting Monday, September 11 from 12 to 1:30 p.m. *Please note the time change!* **Food for Thought** will restart at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 5. Watch for details!

Announcements

Giving Statements

Giving Statements have been sent out, if you did not receive one, please contact the church office at general.mail@whfirstchurch.org or 860-233-9605. Office hours are Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Covenant to Care

Hope everyone is enjoying their summer! It's almost back to school time and Covenant to Care is conducting the annual Backpack Drive for our sponsored children. Maryanne Barry and Diane Bohman will be distributing backpacks on 8/6 and 8/13 at the auditorium entrance of the church. We will include a sheet with the suggested items for you to purchase and place in the backpack. The filled backpacks must be returned by 8/20. If you have any questions please contact Maryanne at maryricbarry@gmail.com or Diane at dmbohman@comcast.net. Thank you for your support!

Job Posting – Assistant Director of Worship Arts

Do you enjoy making music? Have you ever considered a side career as a music director of a church? First Church is looking to fill an Assistant Director of Worship Arts for our music program. This position will work as an assistant to our Director of Worship Arts, learning the aspects of church music leadership as an apprentice. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to experience leading church music by participating in our church choir during the year. One Sunday a month, they will have the opportunity to lead a worship service by playing service music, accompanying hymns, preparing the choir, and conducting the choir during worship. The Assistant Director will also have the opportunity to learn the nuts and bolts of the behind-the-scenes aspects of being music director to include service planning, budget tracking and preparation, and maintaining the music library. This is a part time, 12-month position, amounting to approximately 20 hours/month. For more information visit: <https://www.whfirstchurch.org/job-listings>.

Save First Church Steeple Going Strong with Publicity & Give Aways!

Donations continue to come in and we are very grateful for the support. We have August prize packages to benefit the fundraiser! For every five dollars donated, you can take a chance at winning a gift package. You pick the package you want to bid on!

GIFT PACKAGE "A"

Arugula Bistro (\$25)
bartaco (dinner for 2)
Cinépolis (4 passes/ 4 popcorns)
Elbow Room (\$30)
Kilwin's (\$25)
Mecha Noodle Bar (\$50)
Relax the Back (\$75)
The Next Chapter (\$50)
Zohara Mediterranean Kitchen (\$50)

GIFT PACKAGE "B"

Cafe Sofia (\$25)
Crate & Barrel (\$50)
Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar (\$50)
Larsen Ace Hardware (2 water bottles and a tea towel \$57)
Mecha Noodle Bar (\$50)
Place 2 Be (\$20)
Sparrow Pizza (dinner for 2)

Participate during the Sun is Shining concerts, or during fellowship on Sundays. Winners will be drawn after the last concert and will be contacted by phone, so no need to be present to win. Thank you to all of our local neighbors who donated to our prize packages!

First Church Operations Plan for Emergencies

First Church is in the process of developing an Emergency Operations Plan. Training has begun for staff and will continue through the fall. A Safety Response Team will be formed and there will be opportunities for the congregation to be involved. More information will be coming soon!

Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation

When schools close for the summer, food insecurity among families with children rises. Please continue to make donations throughout the summer and include items such as juice boxes and granola bars. Also needed are: canned fruit/applesauce, pasta & sauce, soup, shelf stable milk (32 oz. containers), tuna & chicken, baked beans, rice (1 lb. packages), and peanut butter (16-18 oz. jars).

Altar Flower Donations Needed!

Sponsoring altar flowers is a meaningful way to honor or remember loved ones and is also part of our In-reach ministry. **We have dates available for 2023-2024**, including these 2023 dates: 11/26 & 12/3. Please contact the church office for details at general.mail@whfirstchurch.org or 860-233-9605. Please note, the price of a seasonal altar flower arrangement has increased to \$90.

August Reach Out: Knox Hartford

Knox uses horticulture as a catalyst for community engagement. They forge partnerships between residents, businesses, and government, providing leadership to build greener, stronger, healthier and more beautiful neighborhoods in Hartford. Programs include community gardens, environmental education, urban gardening, and green job apprenticeships. "The vision of KNOX is a capital city revitalized by horticulture and urban reforestation through the individual and collective efforts of its residents, businesses and government; a city where every neighborhood has an active community garden and where all residents feel the impact of these gardens on their own individual lives; a city where residents share a strong sense of pride, place, and connection to each other."

For more information: Knox Hartford Inc. 75 Laurel Street, Hartford, CT 06106 Tel:860-951-7694.

Donate online thru the church [HERE](#) , or you can donate directly to: [About Us – KNOX \(knoxhartford.org\)](http://www.knoxhartford.org).

Thank you for your support!

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

Family News!

We now have a family news page on our website: [click here](#). Family news will be shared when it is submitted to [Amy Melvin](#) or [Joy Taylor](#). 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.

Sunday Notes/Happenings submissions are due by noon on Tuesdays to Sarah and Linda.

- Sarah Kopp, Office Manager, sarah.kopp@whfirstchurch.org
- Linda Clark, Office Manager, FCWHAdmin2@whfirstchurch.org

Website, flyer, and Social Media additions or changes can be sent to Amy and Joy anytime.

- Amy Melvin, Communications, Communications@whfirstchurch.org
- Joy Taylor, Communications, Communications2@whfirstchurch.org

Four 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.

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Contact: general.mail@whfirstchurch.org or 860-233-9605