



Sunday Notes

October 15, 2023



Looking Towards Sunday

This Sunday is Laity Sunday. Which celebrates the ministry and witness of laypersons. Ordained clergy are not the only ones whom God calls and equips to proclaim the good news. Truly, the Holy Spirit can speak to and through each and every member of the congregation – *“there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord”*.

Our lay preacher is Dawne Quinn, the Director of the First Church Academy for Young Children. Previously, she served as Director of Faith Formation at First Church from 2001 until 2018. Fun fact: In 2014, an ecclesiastical council of the UCC’s Hartford Association approved Dawne as a Commissioned Minister of Christian Education. Perhaps she’ll say more about that when you see her! Dawne’s message is entitled: “...he restores my soul...” based on Psalm 23.



PSALM 23:3

Additionally, the 2023 giving season starts Sunday. This is not your father’s stewardship campaign...unless, of course, your father is a current member of First Church. If so, I beg your pardon! What I’m trying to say is that the stewardship team (Terry Schmitt, Lisa Abel, and Bob Van Der Wende) has devised an inventive, imaginative approach. I believe you’re going to be impressed and inspired by the upcoming series of weekly reflections!

Be blessed and be a blessing,

Rev. Fredd

Today’s Altar Flower Dedication

Our altar flowers today were donated by Carl, Rich, and Janice Hoff in loving memory of Dottie Hoff.

With Sorrow

Ken Weeks, a longtime active member, passed away on September 29. A memorial service will be held at First Church on Saturday, October 28 at 11 a.m. in the Meeting House.

Steeple Celebration

The Steeple Celebration has been rescheduled for Sunday, October 29.

Please Note

Unfortunately, we are waiting for a part to repair the boiler, so there will not be heat in the Meeting House on Sunday morning, October 15th. Bring a sweater!

Upcoming Events

CT Celtic Worship Contemplative Walk

Sunday, October 15 at 12:45 p.m. (walk from 1 to 2 p.m.)

Tanager Hill Preserve, Simsbury Land Trust, East Weatogue Street (park on east side of road, next to 130 East Weatogue Street). Join the CT Celtic Worship for this month’s walk: *The Wisdom of Trees*. We walk mostly in silence, with pauses for readings, reflections, or songs to connect with God, each other, and nature.

Youths Lily Nguyen and Joey Carbone are heading up a Food Drive as a Youth Service project.

Saturday, October 21 from 1 to 3 p.m. - PLEASE NOTE THE TIME CHANGE!

Support the youth group food drive for West Hartford’s Food Pantry & Loaves & Fishes in Hartford. 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! There is great need for: spaghetti, pasta sauce, peanut butter, fruit, applesauce, tuna, shelf stable milk, and rice.

Lollipop Opera - Friday, October 27 at 5:30 p.m. - Dinner and a Show for the Whole Family!

Join us for pizza at 5:30 p.m., then afterwards enjoy a performance of the Lollipop Opera – The Fairy Tale Kitchen. Meet Esmerelda, a "reformed" witch who is full of surprises! Favorite fairy tale friends drop in on her cooking show -- with hilarious results! Plenty of opportunity for audience participation, and spooky fun for everyone! Click [HERE](#) for more information and to sign up to attend.

Qi gong/Mindful Movement

Tuesdays from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m.- October 17, 24, 31.

We will meet in the chapel. Please use the chapel entrance in front of the building. No Charge – Sponsored by the JPW Library. Qi gong consists of gentle movements to loosen the joints, tendons, and ligaments. It improves balance, relaxes the mind, and lowers blood pressure, to name a few benefits. More information [HERE](#).

Coffee and Conversation - Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.

Join Rev. Fredd at the Hartford Baking Company in West Hartford Center for coffee and conversation!

Book Group News:

The church's John P. Webster Library coordinates and sponsors two regular book groups that meet in the library. Copies of the books are provided for participants. New members are always welcome! For more information, please contact Jennifer or Molly at 860-232-3893 or jpwlibrary@whfirstchurch.org.

Awakening the Spirit, led by Rev. Tom Carr, meets Mondays from 12 to 1:30 p.m. Bring a bag lunch; beverages and desserts are provided. The group is currently discussing [If God is Love, Don't Be a Jerk](#) by John Pavlovitz.

Food for Thought, led by JPW Library staff, meets on the first Tuesdays of each month from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the JPW Library. Their next meeting is Tuesday, November 7 to discuss [Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood](#) by Trevor Noah. "His stories weave together to form a moving and searingly funny portrait of a boy making his way through a damaged world in a dangerous time, armed only with a keen sense of humor and a mother's unconventional, unconditional love" (Amazon). Bring a snack or dinner; refreshments and desserts will be provided.

Faith Formation Notes and News

Welcome, Children!

Start your Sundays at First Church in the Meeting House/Sanctuary in the pew with your family, or in the Prayground. After the Message for All Ages, follow Ms. Jennifer to church school.

- PreK – First Grade -- Community Room (#232), downstairs from the sanctuary.
- Second – Sixth Grade -- Room #406.
- Children also may remain in the sanctuary during worship.
- Infants and toddlers -- Nursery, Room 216 (parents, please inform Jennifer by the Friday before worship if you will require Nursery care).
- New Option! – watch the livestream of the service on the large screen in the church library (beneath the sanctuary).

[Register Here for Sunday School](#) All children are welcome to attend! Hard copies of this form are available at the JPW Library. **Questions?** Contact Jennifer at 860-233-9605 or jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org.

High School Students, are you looking for volunteer opportunities? Do you need work experience for your resume? Come volunteer in the Sunday school from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Be that Big Kid the little ones admire. Help with crafts, play games, read the Bible, and have fun! Contact Jennifer for more information. *Thank you!*

Confirmation: Rev. Fredd Ward will be offering a Confirmation class for students in Ninth Grade and up this year. If you are interested in enrolling, please contact him in person or give him a call at 860-233-9605.

Sunday Bible Study

Please Note: The Bible Study group will not meet on Sunday, October 22.

Announcements

New Members

Last Sunday, October 8, we were pleased to welcome the following into membership at First Church: Michelle Kayser, Jill and Peter Jelley, Aldona Siuta, and Brenda LaFazia. To read our new member bios, click [HERE](#).

Festival of Trees - Planning for the Eighth West Hartford Festival of Trees is underway!

Please consider donating a decorated tree or if you have an affiliation with a business/organization, please ask if they might consider donating a tree or gift card. The Festival of Trees event takes place during West Hartford's annual Holiday Stroll, on November 30. Register your tree on the church website [HERE](#). You will get a chance to volunteer that week with Festival set-up, to work during the event, and to assist with clean up and tree distribution afterwards.

Thank you! The F.O.T. Committee.

Steeple Fundraising Group

We are overjoyed to announce that thanks to all your donations we have surpassed our goal of \$40,000! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! The "Save the Steeple" [option will remain as one of the drop-down choices when you donate online](#) and keep an eye out for the "Light The Steeple" campaign (link coming soon). Similar to making a flower donation we will ask that you pick your date at least one week in advance of desired week, and all donors will be acknowledged in our weekly Happenings. Keep looking up as the scaffolding is coming down, and we will celebrate with a ceremony on Oct. 29th.

Covenant to Care Hat & Mitten Drive

The Annual Hat and Mitten Drive is underway and will continue through the end of the year. Please bring new or gently worn mittens, hats, scarves, and other winter clothing for children through our Covenant to Care partners. Marked boxes will be available in the Narthex and outside the auditorium to collect your donations. Any new or used winter outerwear or clothing in good condition is welcome.

Donated diapers make a difference! Please consider donating to our October Diaper Drive!

Diapers can take a big chunk out of a family's budget costing on average \$70-\$80 a month and the costs are not covered by WIC or SNAP benefits. All size diapers and wipes are needed but particularly Pull-Ups and diapers in sizes 4,5,6. From October 1 through October 29, Outreach is collecting diapers, baby wipes and Pull-Ups to be distributed through the Bridge Family Resource Center at Charter Oak International Academy and their Mosaic Family Center in Hartford. Please drop in the marked boxes at church entrances.

Altar Flower Donations Needed

Donating altar flowers is a meaningful way to honor or remember loved ones. Each week, the altar flowers are broken down into smaller arrangements and delivered as part of our Inreach Ministry.

We are in need of a donor for November 12 and some dates in the new year. Please call Sarah in the church office at 860-233-9605 if you would like to donate.

Do you enjoy working with children? First Church Academy for Young Children has 2 open positions.

The 1st is a part-time PreK 4 Associate Teacher position (hours 8:00 am-2:00 pm) and the 2nd is for a Substitute Teacher. Associate Teachers work collaboratively with Lead Teachers in the classroom to create a safe, playful learning environment for children. Click [HERE](#) to view the job posting.

Substitute teachers provide coverage for a variety of classrooms for a variety of shifts. This position is flexible, and we can work with your schedule! Click [HERE](#) to view the job posting.

If you are interested in learning more, contact Dawne Quinn, Education Director at dquinn@firstchurchacademy.org.

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>.

Check Out these Awesome Books at the JPW Library!

[The Love of My Life](#) by Rosie Walsh.

[We Are Water Protectors](#) by Carole Lindstrom; illustrated by Michaela Goade.

Have You Heard?

The John P. Webster Library is now open on **Fridays** from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.! Stop in and see us!

October Reach Out: IRIS - Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services

"Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS) is a non-profit agency whose mission is to help refugees and other displaced people establish new lives, strengthen hope, and contribute to the vitality of Connecticut's communities. Welcoming persecuted people from other countries is America's most noble tradition. IRIS helps newcomers on the road to self-sufficiency by providing lifesaving support during their transition to life in the United States."

"Refugee families who arrive from overseas come to the U.S. with virtually no material possessions. They have lost homes, friends, family, country, culture, and jobs. Most do not speak any English. They have no income, and many are victims of trauma, with physical or mental health needs. As great as their initial needs are, their potential to enrich our community is even greater." IRIS offers refugees and immigrants help with the following services: housing, employment, health, legal and education.

For more information: [IRIS-Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services \(irisct.org\)](http://irisct.org).

To donate online through the church, click [HERE](#) or you can donate directly at: <https://irisct.org/donate>. 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).

Taking Photos in Church and Sharing Policy

Taking photos and documenting life events is commonplace now and more and more common in church settings. Lots of members are asking about taking photos at church events and wondering how to share them and to avoid confusion, we came up with some guidelines. Most important: be sure phone is in silent mode and skip solo selfies when tagging church events! Laminated copies of guidelines are at each entrance to the Sanctuary and at auditorium entrance, or [view policy here](#) or go to website>Photo Gallery page. Thank you, Amy and Joy.

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