



Sunday Notes

March 31, 2024



Looking Towards Sunday

"Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb."

– John 20:1

Loved ones:

A few weeks ago – at the start of our conversation concerning the Sabbath day -- I posed this question: "What is the first day of the week in your world?" I encouraged you to Google it and go to God with it because your answer will tell you something about how you're predisposed workwise and worship-wise.



My sermon "research" revealed that Sunday is the first day of the week for roughly half *the* world. Monday is the first day of the week for the other half. 67 countries and over 4 billion people start the week on Sunday. 160 countries and roughly 3.3 billion people start on Monday.

I mention these things only to implore you that this particular Sunday is most decidedly the first day of the week – the day the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it! In fact, let's revisit the ingredients of gladness that Chef Rev. Fredd shared last Easter during the confetti-infused children's message. The homily for all ages is entitled: **Easter Joy: The Revised Recipe**. I'll say more when I see you.

Holy Week blessings,

Rev. Fredd

Light the Steeple

Our steeple this week was lit by:

The Moffitt Family in loving memory of Richard Moffitt.

Nicole Jackman and Family in loving memory of Dudley Jackman.

Happy Easter!

Children are invited to remain in the pews with their families during this morning's worship service– no Sunday School! Be sure to pick up an Easter activity booklet and crayons to use during the worship service! Have a blessed day!

Upcoming Events

Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Sunday, 11 a.m. on the Labyrinth (church front lawn)

Seek and you shall find! The annual First Church Easter Egg Hunt takes place after the worship service on Easter morning. In case of rain, the hunt will be on the 4th Floor of the Christian Education wing. Bring your own baskets or bags (plastic bags will be available on site). Please note that there is a staggered start, so the youngest children (under 5 years old) can get a head start on finding the eggs. We'll wait for our friend Ralph Worth to begin the fun! Please return your empty plastic eggs; they will be recycled for future use. Have fun!

First Sunday Breakfast

April 7 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in the Auditorium

The JPW Library and the Outreach team cordially invite you to join us for a pre-worship breakfast next Sunday! Enjoy a smorgasbord of fruit, hot breakfast casseroles, bacon or sausage, bagels, pastries, and more – plus coffee, juice & tea. Delicious gluten-free options, too. All are welcome!

Coffee and Conversation - Wednesdays at 10 a.m.

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

Sunday Bible Study Exploring Truth in the Great Biblical Myths: Exploring Genesis 1-11

Sunday mornings, April 7 – June 2 from 9 to 9:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Room (#303)

Do you wonder what's behind the stories we find in the first 11 chapters of the book of Genesis? What were – and are! - the truths the storytellers wanted us to understand? Did God really create the Earth in seven days? From the two Creation stories, to Adam and Eve, to Cain and Abel, to Noah and his ark, to the Tower of Babel, these ancient myths compel us to ask questions and reflect on their meanings for our individual and collective lives. Join us to explore these eternally relevant stories on nine Sunday mornings before worship. Our conversations will be led by Rev. Tom Carr. See Jennifer with questions.

If you are interested in joining First Church, please plan to attend an information session for prospective new members following worship on **Sunday, April 14 at 11:15 a.m.** We expect to receive new members into the life of the church during the 10 a.m. worship service on **Sunday, April 28**. Please contact Rev. Fredd in person, by telephone at 860.233.9605, or via email fredd.ward@whfirstchurch.org.

What should GHIAA work on next? The answer will come out of small-group meetings where people are invited to share a story about an experience that happened to them or someone close to them -- something that made them think, "That's not right!" or "There ought to be a law against that!" The more people who share stories, the better chance we have of zeroing in on the most important issues that need our attention. [Click here to register](#) for one of the upcoming meetings. First Church is hosting several small-group meetings at First Church on **April 14**, 4:00-5:30pm, along with our partners Congregation Beth Israel and Westminster Presbyterian Church. If you can't make it on April 14, choose a session on another date, at another local GHIAA congregation. Any questions? Contact Linda Bronstein or Terry Schmitt.

Book Group News:

Awakening the Spirit, led by Rev. Tom Carr, meets Mondays from 12-1:30 p.m. **Please note: this group will not meet on Monday, April 1.** Bring a bag lunch; beverages and desserts are provided. They are reading [On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity, and Growing Old](#) by Parker Palmer. Tap [here](#) to join the group.

Food for Thought's next meeting is Tuesday, April 2 from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. (**Please note the time change!**) to discuss [The Measure](#) by Nikki Erlick. [Tap here](#) to join this group.

The group's next read is [The Guncle](#) by Steven Rowley. "To the outside world, Patrick O'Hara is a former sitcom star. But to Maisie and Grant, his brother's kids, he's Gay Uncle Patrick (GUP, for short). He *adores* Maisie and Grant! But in terms of caretaking and relating to two children, no matter how adorable, Patrick is overwhelmed. When tragedy strikes and Patrick finds himself taking on the role of primary guardian, he has no idea what to expect, despite having a set of 'Guncle Rules' ready to go. Quickly realizing that parenting--even if temporary--isn't solved with treats and jokes, Patrick's eyes are opened to a new sense of responsibility, and the realization that, sometimes, even being larger than life means you're unfailingly human. *The Guncle* is a moving tribute to the power of love, patience, and family in even the most trying of times" (Amazon.com).

Announcements

WeHa Grows, the JPWL Seed Library, is ready for spring! Thanks to generous seed donations from the UConn Master Gardener Program and Ocean State Job Lot, we are pleased to offer a variety of flower, fruit, and vegetable seeds for your gardens. Stop by the JPW Library or the Sunday Bookmobile and "seed" for yourself!

Oxen Hill Farm is partnering again with First Church to offer their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares to the WH community, with pick up on Thursday afternoons at the church. Oxen Hill is a family-run, USDA Certified Organic vegetable farm with land in both Suffield and East Granby, CT, and First Church has been a pick-up point for shareholders for many years. Vegetable shares are available in three different sizes/fees. Flower shares are also available. [Tap here](#) for more information or to purchase a share.

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. **We have dates available for 2024**, including these spring dates: 4/14 and 5/26. Please contact the church office for details at 860-233-9605. Please note, the price of a seasonal altar flower arrangement has increased to \$90.

Coffee Cans Needed

Please donate empty coffee cans for the Parish Care Ministry. Each Sunday, the altar flowers are broken down into smaller flower arrangements and delivered to church members.

A Request from the Inreach Team

If you have taken any tablecloths or dish towels home to be laundered, please return them to the church at your earliest convenience. We will be using them for upcoming events. Thank you!

Acolytes

Church acolytes play an important role in our Sunday services. Children will be lighting the candles before worship as well as putting the candles out to conclude the service. This can be a meaningful way for our children to serve their faith community. If your child is interested in helping out, please see or email Amanda Bethune at amander14@gmail.com.

Light The Steeple in Honor of a Loved One

For a \$25 donation, you are invited to "Light the Steeple" for one week in honor of a loved one. We ask that you pick a date at least one week in advance of the desired week, and all donors will be acknowledged in our weekly *Happenings*. Please note more than one donor can fall on any given week. Donations will be added to the Save the Steeple fund. Click "Light The Steeple for a loved one" found on the "Save the First Church Steeple" web page or [click HERE](#).

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

March Reach Out: My Sisters' Place

Every day, throughout the Greater Hartford area, there are hundreds of people who have found themselves homeless due to domestic violence, eviction, unemployment, or mental illness – the overwhelming majority often women and children. My Sisters' Place mission is committed to ending homelessness by empowering women, families, and others in Greater Hartford to achieve independence and stability in their community by providing housing and supportive services. My Sisters' Place provides a comprehensive array of outreach and services that is unmatched by any other organization in the Hartford, Connecticut region. From safe housing and education to employment and empowerment, My Sister Place provides real, life-changing benefits to clients.

For more information please visit: [My Sisters' Place, Inc. \(sistersplacect.org\)](http://www.sistersplacect.org) or call 860-895-6629.

To donate on line thru the church, click [HERE](#) or you can donate directly at: [My Sisters' Place, Inc. \(sistersplacect.org\)](http://www.sistersplacect.org). Thank you for your support.

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.

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, so we came up with some guidelines. Most important: be sure the 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 the 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 - sarah.kopp@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

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

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