



Sunday Notes

June 11, 2023



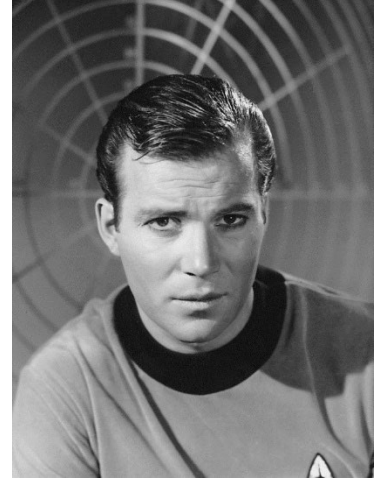
Looking Towards Sunday

Remember the old Star Trek opening: "To boldly go where no man has gone before?" Well, in our Gospel story this week, two people from very different walks of life, boldly go where they had never gone before. They enter into the presence of Jesus and ask for help. They didn't ask his permission to speak or apologize for interrupting or make excuses to themselves to hang back. They went boldly.

My wish for First Church is that we are a community marked by boldness. May we shed any hesitation and embrace the assurance of Holy welcome, trusting in God's sovereign power, seeking Christ's transformative touch, and stepping into the fullness of Kingdom living.

Come to church this Sunday and make bold your approach to Christ.

Rev. Jane



Today's Altar Flower Dedication

Our altar flowers today are donated by the Whitney Family in loving memory of Sophia Berger.

Building Security Update

Exciting news, members and friends of First Church!

Our church now has a fully functional security system! Thank you to everyone who made it happen.

Here's what you need to know:

- If you have a code, it grants access to any door until midnight.
- Church leadership and Chairs for all meetings have codes for entry.
- When leaving, the doors will automatically lock behind you—no need to "lock up" after a meeting.
- During office hours, ring the doorbell at the rotunda for entry.
- As you can see, not everyone needs a code. But if you feel you do, send an email to the church office.

Celebrate this milestone as we prioritize the security of our beloved First Church community!

If you have keys to the church, please return them to the church office. Please place keys in an envelope with your name on it and return them to the church office at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

Upcoming Events

Bible Study: The Book of Ruth, a story in four chapters

It's about faith and obedience, finding your way in the dark, trusting God to lead you where you are supposed to be. We can learn so much from it! Join in the discussions on Saturdays at 10 a.m. in the First Church Youth Room on May 27, June 3, 10 and 17. Please call the Church office during office hours or email jwarner4fc@gmail.com to sign up for this Bible Study.

Coffee with Clergy - Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.

Join Revs. Jane and Fredd at the Hartford Baking Company in West Hartford Center for coffee and conversation.

Second Annual Gertrude Blanks Storytelling Event!

June 13 at 6:30 p.m. This event is Free!

Join the West Hartford Public and the John P. Webster Libraries in the First Church Auditorium as we celebrate the art of storytelling, and Hartford's beloved storyteller, Gertrude Blanks. Neighbors will share stories of life-changing experiences – come hear storytellers Andre Keitt, Mike Keo, and Keren Prescott. Parking is available behind the church or in the Isham Road parking garage.

The Third Annual West Hartford CommUNITY Juneteenth Celebration will be on Saturday, June 17 from 11 to 4 in Blue Back Square. Want to help out? **To Donate, go to** <https://www.gofundme.com/f/west-hartford-juneteenth>. You can also **Volunteer** to set-up or clean-up, work in the main tent, or help with childcare [here](#).

Juneteenth Guest Preacher & Author Visit We are delighted to welcome the Hon. Darryl Brackeen Jr. to First Church on Sunday, June 18 for a special sermon commemorating Juneteenth. Brackeen is an eighth-grade social studies teacher at Betsy Ross Arts Magnet School in New Haven, as well as an historian, theologian, and a New Haven city councilman. At 11:15 following worship, Brackeen will hold an author talk in the JPW Library to discuss his recently published book, [The Almost Forgotten: America's First Black-American Congressmen](#). In it, Brackeen examines the lives and legacy of nineteen Black American congressmen, shining a light on these formerly enslaved men or free Black Americans who overcame one of the worst periods in American history and worked for the good of the nation. Join us for Brackeen's inspiring sermon and informative book talk!

West Hartford Pride Festival – June 24

First Church will be sponsoring a booth at this year's WH Pride Festival, on Saturday, June 24, from noon to 6:00 p.m. in the parking lot of Town Hall. We will be handing out information about the church as well as some "freebies" (FCWH pens, rainbow candies, Pride stickers) and a few Pride items for sale: pins, pendants, etc. Volunteers are needed to staff the booth for one- or two-hour shifts. Please contact Eleanor Wight or Glen MacLeod. Come support this important event and participate in a fun outreach effort!

NEW! Summertime Poetry & Sunny Fellowship for All Ages

Monday evenings: July 10, 17, 24, and 31 from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Writing instructor David Pontrelli will be offering intergenerational summer writing sessions to First Church members and friends 4-6th grade and up. These workshops will focus on writing poetry with the chance to write in other forms. We'll do a warmup together, then write alone - in the group, and there will be an option to share our writing with positive feedback. The workshops emphasize community and are geared toward being a lot of fun. After we write we'll enjoy dinner together! Bring a friend! No experience is necessary, and you don't have to attend every meeting, but it's great if you do. Come be part of a warm :) summer community. Please register [here](#).

Book Group News:

Awakening the Spirit is on hiatus until after Labor Day. We will resume regular weekly meetings on Monday, September 11 from 12 to 1:20 p.m. *Please note the time change!*

We will gather for a potluck lunch tomorrow (Monday, June 12) at 1 p.m. Please bring a side dish to share. Contact the JPW Library with questions.

Food for Thought is on summer break. We will resume regular meetings at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 5. Watch for details this summer!

Announcements

Save First Church Steeple – In the News and at Celebrate West Hartford!

Michael Walsh, editor with the CT Insider and The West Hartford News interviewed several of us involved with the Steeple project. Link is [HERE](#) and if that doesn't work [click here](#) for the downloaded version. Saturday and Sunday June 10th and 11th visit our "Save the Steeple" table in front of the church during Celebrate West Hartford. Donate to the Steeple and for \$5 take a chance at the raffle to win 1) A pair of grounds tickets to the Travelers Championship golf tournament at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell on Saturday, June 24 OR 2) Household Membership to the New Britain Museum of American Art in New Britain, CT. One prize per ticket.

Save First Church Steeple – Donate to GoFundme to help it grow.

We are full steam ahead with our fund-raising efforts. Most of you got a letter from us by now so thank you in advance for contributing. We are asking folks to put part (or all) of your donation on our GoFundMe to make that page look robust! Keep in mind that the GoFundMe doesn't reflect our actual intake in the overall campaign. Also, you have an option to remain anonymous on the page. Find the page here: [GoFundMe](#) or search "Save First Church Steeple" on [gofundme.com](https://www.gofundme.com). All other donations are gratefully accepted too!

Gather Round the Table

A quick note to remind everyone involved with GRTT that time for the third round is here and to reach out to your guests if you haven't yet and get a date scheduled! If you have already met or planned your time together-enjoy!!! Everyone have a great summer and look for us in September as we plan for Gather Round for '23-'24.

Join the Hospitality Team!

Looking for a way to make a meaningful contribution to First Church? Do you enjoy socializing at coffee hour? Then why not join the Hospitality Team and host hospitality a few times a year! (Or once or twice a year.). During the summer we serve lemonade & goodies. September through mid-May we serve coffee, lemonade, and goodies. You don't even have to be a good baker - some of us buy our goodies! Interested? Contact Al Day - 860-305-8714 or awday@snet.net

Celebration of Life for Nan Streeter

Nan Streeter, an amazing servant of church and community, died on May 22nd. **A memorial service celebration of her life will be held on Saturday, July 8 at 10:00 a.m. in the Meeting House.** Click [HERE](#) for the obituary.

Cards to the family can be sent to:

Jean Streeter
616 Edinburgh Lane, Unit A
Prospect Heights, IL 60070

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 cereal, peanut butter, jelly, pasta, and sauce. Donations will be taken to the West Hartford Food Pantry by the Outreach Team.

First Church is using a new, more efficient check writing system.

Members requesting expense reimbursements or other check requests should send an email with receipts to: ap@whfirstchurch.org. This will ensure your request will be handled in the most efficient way possible. If email is not an option, hard copies may be left with Linda Clark in the main office. Thank you.

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 still have a few summer dates available. 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.

Check Out These Books at the JPWL

- [The Seven Circles: Indigenous Teachings for Living Well](#) by Chelsey Luger and Thosh Collins.
- [The Librarian of Burned Books](#) by Brianna Labuskes.
- [Eleanor: A Spiritual Biography: The Faith of the 20th Century's Most Influential Woman](#) by Harold Ivan Smith.
- [Penguins Don't Wear Sweaters!](#) by Marikka Tamura.

Visit www.whfirstchurch.org/jpw-library/catalog/ for more info.

June Reach Out: PFLAG: Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

PFLAG is the United States' first and largest organization uniting parents, families, and allies with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+). PFLAG's network of hundreds of chapters and more than 325,000 members and supporters are helping create an equitable and inclusive world where every LGBTQ+ person is safe, celebrated, empowered, and loved. PFLAG is a place where everyone belongs. They listen actively, engage with cultural humility, and ensure that the power of diverse people, cultures, and stories are respected and woven through all areas of their work. For more information: <https://www.pflag.org/> To donate on line thru the church [HERE](#) or you can donate directly to: <https://www.pflag.org/>. Thank you for your support.

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).

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

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, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

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