



# Sunday Notes

May 26, 2024



## Looking Towards Sunday

"He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God. Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.'" – John 3:2-3

This Sunday is Trinity Sunday -- the first Sunday after Pentecost -- when we celebrate the three-fold persons/presence of God: the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Rev. Susan Izard will offer the message based on John 3:1-17. Which describes a secret, nighttime visit between Jesus and a Pharisee named Nicodemus. Jesus explains that no one can see the kingdom of God without being spiritually reborn -- a slow or sudden awakening. The sermon is entitled: **A Trinity of Presence.**



## Altar Flowers

Our altar flowers this week were donated by Yvonne and Lou Tafuto in honor of America, and all who served our country.

## Light the Steeple

May is Nurses Month. The steeple is lit this week in honor of the nurses of First Church.

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## Upcoming Events

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### Please Note

Rev. Fredd will be having hip replacement surgery and will be out of the office beginning Friday, May 17 returning on Sunday, June 2. Please call the church office at 860-233-9605 with any concerns. Thank you!

### Memorial Day Parade

Monday, May 27 at 10 a.m.

Join your First Church friends on Memorial Day to watch the annual West Hartford parade. Bring a chair for the 10 a.m. start and get a good spot in front of the labyrinth. All ages are welcome!

### First Sunday Breakfast

June 2 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!

### QiGong & Meditation

Thursdays at 3 p.m. in the First Church Chapel - June 6, 13, 20, 27

Join instructor [Cynthia Hoag](#) of Dragon Rising Wellness for this month-long QiGong class. QiGong is a Chinese exercise that promotes the flow of qi, or energy, in the body. It can reduce stress, depression, or fatigue while improving immune function and providing a sense of balance and clarity. In this weekly class, you will gain mindfulness through movement as you connect with your mind, body, and spirit. Each session will conclude with a short heartfelt meditation (may be seated or standing) intuitively curated for those in attendance. [Register here.](#)

### Potluck Dinner

Friday, June 7 at 6 p.m.

The Inreach team, along with Faith Formation, invites you to come join us for an end of the school year potluck dinner! There will be games for the kids and for the young at heart! Sign up [HERE](#) and let us know how many will be joining us and whether you'd like to bring an appetizer, side dish, main course, or dessert. We look forward to seeing everyone!

**If you are interested in joining First Church**, please plan to attend an information session for prospective new members following worship on **Sunday, June 9 at 11:15 a.m.** We expect to receive new members into the life of the church during the 9 a.m. worship service on **Sunday, June 30.** Please contact Rev. Fredd in person, by telephone at 860.233.9605, or via email [fredd.ward@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:fredd.ward@whfirstchurch.org).

### **Gertrude Blanks Storytelling Event: Your Journey, Your Story**

Tuesday, June 11 at 6:30 p.m. - Free!

Listen as Adeebah Aldabaan, Tiec Lê, and Rebeca Michelena share their journeys—from their country of origin to how they came to be a part of our community, including their challenges, triumphs, and ongoing struggles. Followed by Q&A, light refreshments, and conversation. Parking is available behind the church or in the Isham Road parking garage.

### **Juneteenth Celebration!**

Saturday, June 15 from 12 to 4 p.m.

The JPW Library is pleased to partner once again with the Concerned Parents of Color of West Hartford (CPCWH) and the Town of West Hartford for the 2024 Annual CommUNITY Juneteenth Celebration. We'll mark the day with music, historic reenactments, art exhibits, dancers, and more, such as Friendz World Music and the CT Double Dutch Group! To help make the celebration happen, donate [here](#) (thanks to Sustainable CT, all donations will be matched dollar for dollar)! Please see Jennifer if you're interested in volunteering.

**First Church will mark Juneteenth on Sunday, June 16 at 10 a.m.** with a worship service led by Rev. Fredd and featuring the reading of sections of the Emancipation Proclamation as well as special music.

### **West Hartford Pride Festival**

First Church will sponsor a booth at the West Hartford Pride Festival on Saturday, June 22, from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. We need volunteers to man the booth in one- or two-hour shifts.

If you are interested, please contact Eleanor Wight ([ejwight@comcast.net](mailto:ejwight@comcast.net)) or Jennifer deSimas ([jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org)).

### **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!

### **Wisdom from the Belly of a Fish: Exploring *Jonah***

#### **Exploring Truth in the Great Biblical Myths, Part 2**

8:45 to 9:30 a.m. Sunday May 26 and June 2 in the World Friendship Room (#305)

Pastor Tom Carr and the JPWL invite you to "Wisdom from the Belly of a Fish: Exploring *Jonah*." More than just another fish tale, the story of Jonah has been called subversive, brilliant, and comical. This strange adventure is a message of good news about the wideness of God's love, which challenges us to the core. All are welcome. Read it [HERE](#) before we meet.

### **The church's John P. Webster Library coordinates and sponsors two book groups that meet regularly in the library.**

Copies of the books are provided for participants. New members are always welcome to either group! For more information, please contact Jennifer or Molly at 860-232-3893 or [jpwllibrary@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwllibrary@whfirstchurch.org).

- **Awakening the Spirit**, led by Rev. Tom Carr, meets once this summer – July 22 at noon – to discuss [Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us into the Sacred](#) by Victoria Looz. "Whether disillusioned by the dominant church or unfulfilled by traditional expressions of faith, many of us long for a deeper spirituality. Through mystical encounters with nature, *Church of the Wild* uncovers the wild roots of faith to help us connect to the Love that literally holds the world together."
- **Food for Thought Thought's** next meeting is Tuesday, June 4 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. [Tap here](#) to join them. They're reading Marie Benedict's [The Only Woman in the Room](#), an account of glamour icon Hedy Lamarr and her groundbreaking ideas to end WWII. The group will then go on summer break until Tuesday, September 3.

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## **Announcements**

### **West Hartford Food Pantry is Very Low**

**The West Hartford Food Pantry** is very low in stock and has put out an urgent call for food donations. Please drop off donations in the marked blue bins outside the auditorium and around the building. Specific needs include: baked beans, canned fruit/applesauce, pasta and sauce, cold cereal, canned chicken and tuna, 1 lb. packages of rice, 16-18 oz sized peanut butter, soup, macaroni and cheese. Food donations can also be dropped off at the town hall lobby, Monday-Friday, 8:30 to 4:30 pm. Thank you, Yvonne and Carol with Outreach

## 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 the following dates available:** 7/28 and 8/18. Please contact the church office for details at 860-233-9605.

## 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](mailto: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](http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request).

## May Reach Out: Interval House CT

Interval House has made a positive difference in the lives of more than 225,000 women, children (and a small percentile of men) that have experienced psychological and physical abuse at the hands of a domestic or intimate partner. Interval House provides 24-hour hotline(s), safety planning, crisis counseling, emergency safe housing, support groups, criminal and civil court advocacy, information and referrals, community education and outreach as well as programs for the children of clients. The nonprofit organization strives to prevent and break the cycle of abuse. On site, their crisis counselors are available to meet with the women upon arrival. Comprehensive domestic violence services are offered to clients free of charge. For more information: Interval House P.O. Box 340207, Hartford, CT 06134-0207. E-mail:

<https://intervalhousect.org/>. 24 Hour Hotline 860-838-8467

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

Thank you for your support!

## Four Ways to Give (besides Sunday Morning Offertory)

1. **Give by Text:** Text "GIVE" to (860) 222-7870. Choose the fund you would like to donate to and follow the text prompts to enter your credit or debit card and follow all instructions. It's amazingly fast and simple!
2. **Give Online:** To make an online donation with your credit or debit card, click DONATE in menu, type amount and choose the designation from drop-down. To set up recurring payments, or to use ACH, login to "My First Church Login" and select GIVE and follow prompts.
3. **Give by Mail:** Checks can be mailed to First Church West Hartford: 12 South Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107. Please indicate the fund, of your choice, in the memo line of your check.
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 keep in mind that this is a public page.

## 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 Kopp** and **Janice Olson** - [sarah.kopp@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:sarah.kopp@whfirstchurch.org) and [Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org)
- **Website, printed pieces, and Social Media additions or changes** can be sent to Amy and Joy anytime.  
Amy Melvin: [Communications@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Communications@whfirstchurch.org), Joy Taylor: [Communications2@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Communications2@whfirstchurch.org)

**Office Hours:** Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Friday, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Contact:** [Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org) or 860-233-9605.