



Sunday Notes

June 16, 2024



Looking Towards Sunday

According to the editors at Juneteenth.com, the recently established federal holiday "is enjoying a phenomenal growth rate within communities and organizations [across] the country. Institutions such as the Smithsonian...and others have begun sponsoring Juneteenth-centered activities...to promote and cultivate knowledge and appreciation of African American history and culture." I love that!

I love that West Hartford is one of those participating communities – the town celebrates its **4th Annual West Hartford CommUnity Celebration** on June 15th from noon until 4:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Parking lot. I love that First Church is the kind of church that is willing to let the spirit of Juneteenth shape our worship this weekend. The theme of the service is freedom. It will feature historical readings and an amazing offertory anthem entitled 'Freedom Trilogy' featuring the First Church Choir and renowned vocalist Theresa Thomason. The sermon is entitled: **Then, Thenceforward, and Forever Free.**



Come and see!

Blessings,

Rev. Fredd

Altar Flowers

Our altar flowers this week were donated by Carl, Rich, and Janice Hoff in loving memory of Richard Hoff.

Light the Steeple

Our steeple this week was lit by Lisa Carl in loving memory of her parents, Maryett and Howard Carl.

Summer Worship Services

9:00 a.m. Summer Worship time begins June 30 and continues through Labor Day. Please make a note of the early time to help us beat the heat and continue worshiping and livestreaming from the Meeting House!

Upcoming Events

New Bench for Green

Join us on the front lawn after worship this Sunday, June 16 for the dedication of a new bench for Unity Green as part of the Juneteenth Celebration weekend. This bench, and the tree we plant with it, represent First Church's commitment to honoring West Hartford's full history, and to creating spaces for friendship and reflection.

Reception of New Members

We will receive new members into the life of the church during the 10 a.m. worship service on Sunday, June 23. Please contact Rev. Fredd in person, by telephone at 860.233.9605, or via email fredd.ward@whfirstchurch.org.

Open Chapel

Tuesday, June 18 from 12 to 1 p.m.

The Spirit Team plans to offer Open Chapel one time in June and then, beginning in September, once a month. You are invited to visit the Chapel for an hour of reflection and prayer. Quiet music that begins and ends the hour helps the visitor to settle and become calm. Written prayer intentions that may be offered are directed to Rev. Fredd. Please feel welcome to attend on: Tuesday, June 18 from 12 to 1 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 15 from 4 to 5 p.m.

New QiGong Class Location

The QiGong & Meditation sessions with Cynthia Hoag will take place in the (air-conditioned) JPW Library for the remainder of the month.

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) or Jennifer deSimas (jpwebsterdir@whfirstchurch.org).

Help Needed for Summer Concert Series

The Outreach team will be providing set up and clean up support for the Summer Carillon (July 11, 18, 25 from 6 to 7 p.m.) and Sun is Shining Music Series (August 6, 13, 20, 27 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.). Any church members who would like to help out are encouraged to contact Carol Lorenzo or Yvonne Tafuto.

Monday Matinees at the JPW Library

The Transformative Power of Music -- All showings are at 2 p.m. in the JPW Library

- **July 1** [Summer of Soul \(...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised\)](#) 2021 - Running time: 1h 58m

Part music film, part historical record created around an epic event that celebrated Black history, culture, and fashion. Over the course of six weeks in the summer of 1969, just 100 miles south of Woodstock, The Harlem Cultural Festival was filmed in Mount Morris Park (now Marcus Garvey Park). The footage was never seen and largely forgotten--until now.

- **July 15** [The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma & the Silk Road Ensemble](#) 2015 - Running time: 1h 36m

Offers a thrilling and too-rare glimpse of art's power to bridge personal and cultural divides. As one musician says, "a piece of music can't stop a bullet," but this engaging film is a vote for culture, a vote against xenophobia.

- **July 29** [Young at Heart](#) 2007 - Running time: 1h 47m

Documentary about a choir of senior citizens from New England who perform, with vigor and unabashed enthusiasm, rock and pop classics along the lines of Sonic Youth's "Schizophrenia" and Talking Heads' "Life During Wartime."

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!

Announcements

HANOC Snack Donations

The Outreach Team will be collecting non-perishable snacks for the Hillcrest Area Neighborhood Outreach Center (HANOC) during June, July and August. Needed snacks include but are not limited to, juice boxes, small packages of fishy crackers and cheese its, granola bars, dried fruit, popcorn, etc. One of the blue food pantry bins outside the auditorium will be marked and designated for these snacks.

HANOC is a collaborative effort of the Town of West Hartford, The West Hartford Housing Authority, West Hartford Public Schools and other community agencies. HANOC helps families with limited economic means to become more financially independent and integrated into the schools and community by coordinating resources to help meet their needs.

Programs include: After school homework program, Camp Hillcrest, Family Self-Sufficiency, Adult Education and Computer Basics, Play Groups, Middle School Groups, and Field Trips to name a few. More information can be found on the Town of West Hartford website under Social Services.

West Hartford Food Pantry is Very Low

The West Hartford Food Pantry is very low on 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 through Friday, from 8:30 to 4:30 p.m.

My Sisters' Place

Every year, the For the Love of Children program at My Sisters' Place holds a Back-to-School picnic, which includes providing more than 70 school aged children served by My Sisters' Place with the necessities for school. Items they receive include backpacks, pens and pencils, notebooks, sneakers, school uniforms and more. This effort is only possible with the help of our corporate partners and community members. Best way to help is to go to our wish list: [Click here for Amazon wish list](#). We are asking for purchases to be made by Friday, July 26. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Annette Scheidecker, Director of Development, at (860)808-2044.

A pair of reading glasses was found in the Meeting House. They can be picked up in the church office.

JPWL Suggestions for Summer Reading (All titles available at the JPWL)

Fiction:

- [The Authenticity Project](#) by Clare Pooley. "A group of strangers who live near each other in London become fast friends after writing their deepest secrets in a shared notebook" (Kirkus Reviews).
- [Homegoing](#) by Yaa Gyasi. "Ghana, 18th century: two half-sisters are born into different villages, each unaware of the other. One will marry an Englishman and lead a life of comfort in the palatial Cape Coast Castle. The other will be captured in a raid on her village, imprisoned in the very same castle, and sold into slavery" (Amazon).
- [James](#) by Percival Everett. "Everett flips the perspective on the events in 'Huckleberry Finn.' He gives us the story as a coolly electric first-person narrative in the voice of Jim, the novel's enslaved runaway" (NY Times)

Nonfiction:

- [Becoming](#) by Michelle Obama. "A serious work of candid reflection ... refined and forthright, gracefully written and at times laugh-out-loud funny" (NY Times).
- [Through the Door of Life: A Jewish Journey between Genders](#) by Joy Ladin. "Not only a memoir of transgender experience, this is also a story of family heartbreak and family love; of growth as a teacher and writer; and, not least, of a self deeply connected to God and Judaism throughout a life lived across genders" (Amazon review).
- [The Wives](#) by Simone Gorrindo. This profoundly intimate memoir about marriage, friendship, and the power of human connection tells the story of one woman's experience of joining a community of army wives after leaving her New York City job.

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 date available: 7/28. 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.

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

June Reach Out: Chrysalis Center

Chrysalis Center, Inc. is a private, non-profit, socially innovative multiservice organization that serves individuals and families living in Connecticut. Chrysalis Center helps those living in poverty, veterans, women and children, young adults and individuals who are struggling with mental health, addiction, HIV/AIDS, homelessness, and those returning from incarceration. Through job training, housing, and other community healthcare services, Chrysalis Center helps individuals transform their lives by "Getting help... Getting better... and Giving Back." Chrysalis Center offers a continuum of services in five core areas: Housing, Food, Recovery, Community Support, and Employment. At Chrysalis Center, our values are Human Potential, Choice, Integrity, Diversity, Change, Communication, Equity, Inclusion, and Collaboration. For more information: Chrysalis Center, Inc 255 Homestead Ave Hartford, CT 06112. Email: info@chrysaliscenterct.org. Phone:(860) 263-4400.

To donate online thru the church, click [HERE](#) or you can donate directly at [Make a Gift - Chrysalis Center](#).

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](#).

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 and 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, **Joy Taylor:** Communications2@whfirstchurch.org

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Friday, 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Contact: Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org or 860-233-9605.