



Sunday Notes



First Church Happenings for the week of September 22, 2024

Sunday Worship

"Who is wise and understandable among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom." – James 3:13

On Homecoming Sunday, the writer of the Letter of James posed this powerful question: "*What good is it, my [spiritual siblings], if you say you have faith but do not have works?*" Which sounds like a question but operates like an exhortation: "*Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.*" In other words, our convictions and actions are indivisible. The vitality of each depends upon the other.



This Sunday, the same writer encourages further reflection regarding Christian conduct. We're encouraged to consider how Wisdom influences our works. Spoiler alert: Her effect is not easy to detect because there are "*earthly, unspiritual, devilish*" imposters. I'll say more when I see you. The second installment of the two-part series (based on James 3:13-17) is entitled **Wisdom (Part 2 of 2): From Above**.

Be blessed and be a blessing!

Rev. Fredd

Altar Flowers

Our altar flowers are donated this week by Paul and Bev Truebig in loving memory of Janet Ellen Smith, Bev's sister.

Light the Steeple

Our steeple is lit this week in honor of Jimmy Quinn by his mom, Eleanor.

Call to a Congregational Meeting

Sunday, October 6, 2024

Notice is hereby given that a Congregational Meeting of the First Church of Christ Congregational of West Hartford, Connecticut, UCC, will be held in the Meetinghouse on Sunday, October 6, 2024 at 11:15 a.m. following morning worship to address the following items of business:

1. To consider and vote on the proposed budget for the First Church Academy for Young Children, for the budget year 2024-2025.
2. In accordance with the By-laws of First Church, action will be taken only on matters included in this Call to Meeting.

Notice given on September 16, 2024

Linda Bronstein, Secretary of the Church

Upcoming Events and Announcements



MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in joining First Church, please plan to attend an information session for prospective new members following worship on **Sunday, September 22 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, September 29**. Please contact Rev. Fredd in person, by telephone at 860.233.9605, or via email fredd.ward@whfirstchurch.org.



FAITH FORMATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Sunday School Registration

Sunday School is underway at First Church and all children are welcome to attend! Parents of children (infants through 8th grade) can register online for childcare or Sunday School by clicking [HERE](#). If you have any questions, please reach out to Amanda Bethune at faith.formation@whfirstchurch.org.



WORSHIP ARTS

Arts in the Center Presents: *Magic by George*

Friday, September 27 in the Auditorium - 5:30 p.m. Pizza & Salad Dinner - 6:30 p.m. Show Time!

Free! Donations accepted.

Get ready for amazing magic and lots of laughs and audience participation for all ages! George is an award-winning magician who has been voted "Boston's Favorite Family Entertainer" two years in a row by The Boston Parents' Paper. Join us for a fun-filled show that will keep you on the edge of your seat! Gluten-free options provided.

Information & registration [HERE](#) by September 26.



INREACH

Potluck Dinner

Friday, October 18 at 6 p.m. in the Auditorium

The Inreach team invites you to join your First Church friends for a potluck dinner! Make your favorite dish and join us for an evening of good food and fellowship! There will be games for the kids and for the young at heart! We look forward to seeing you! Click [HERE](#) to sign up!

Let's "Gather Round the Table"!

Gather Round the Table is gearing up for the 2024-2025 season. Join your friends at First Church for conversation, conviviality, and community for our combination potluck and "guess who's coming to dinner". GRTT is held 3 times during the year, with the first round of dinners beginning in October. If you are interested in participating, please register [HERE](#). If you have any questions, please contact Susan Tobin at 860-916-1135, Linda Moffitt at 860-874-7786, or Martha Calef at 860-212-1352.



OUTREACH

September Reach Out: The House of Bread

The House of Bread in Hartford, Connecticut, has been helping the most needy in the Hartford community since 1980. The House of Bread serves nearly 2,000 people every day. The House of Bread offers food, shelter, housing and education with compassion, dignity and respect. The ministry sponsored by The House of Bread has touched the lives of tens of thousands of men, women, and children.

To donate online: <https://bit.ly/houseofbreadlink> or you can donate online through the church.

To donate online through the church, click [HERE](#).



Visit the Church Library -- consider yourself invited!

First Church's worship services are live streamed every Sunday in our bright, welcoming John P. Webster Library. Come watch while your toddler plays in our children's area or if you need a separate place to worship for health reasons. The JPWL holds a diverse collection of over 13,000 resources for families, scholars, teachers, social justice advocates, and more. We also have a well-curated section of fiction for all ages. The JPW Library is open to the public -- church membership is not required. Come in, meet the staff, browse the shelves, and find your next read!

5th-8th Graders — This One's for You!

The JPW Library has created a **new** book group for students in Grades 5-8. We will meet on the third Sunday of each month at 10 a.m. in the Library. With snacks! Our first meeting is October 20 for an encore discussion of [Mexikid](#), by Pedro Martin. Some of you read this one over the summer but couldn't make the discussion; others weren't able to pick up the book in time. So, let's get started! We have extra copies of the book -- pick up yours today! See Molly or Jennifer with questions.

Book Group News

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 at jpwllibrary@whfirstchurch.org.

~ **Awakening the Spirit** -- Meets every Monday from 12-1:30 p.m.

- September 16 – we begin our discussion of [Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants](#) by Robin Wall Kimmerer

~ **Food for Thought** -- Meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 5-6:30 p.m.

- October 1 – [Into the Thin: A Pilgrimage Walk Across Northern Spain](#) by Stephen Drew

New JPWL Gallery Exhibit

Visual Whimsy: The Art of Thomas McCabe - through October 6, 2024

The JPWL is delighted to present the work of local artist Thomas McCabe. McCabe has exhibited extensively in area cafes, libraries, and galleries. He cites his time spent as a chef and cook among his influences, along with Henri Matisse, Archie Comics, Talking Heads, Seinfeld, and 1960's Disney movies. McCabe says his "prime objective is to bring a smile to the faces of those who view his whimsical images of animals, people, and food." Stop by during library hours to see this lively collection!

FREE Fitness Classes -- Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy Spirit!

Mark your calendars to attend a free JPWL 8-week *Faithful Fitness* class. Each class provides an opportunity for meditation/silence as well as movement. More information is available on each class's registration page:

- *FitMix* with Kathi Boratko -- Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m. - Sept. 17-Oct. 29 - [Register here](#).
- *QiGong* with Cynthia Hoag -- Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. - Sept. 19-Oct. 31 - [Register here](#).
- *Chair Yoga* with Janice Olson -- Thursdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. - Sept. 19-Oct. 31 - [Register here](#).

Lunch & Learn: *The Story of Frania Sobkowa, Righteous Gentile*

Sunday, September 29 at 11:30 a.m. in the JPW Library

Sharone Kornman of Voices of Hope shares the story of Frania Sobkowa, a nanny who saved Kornman's mother during WWII in Poland. Frania has been named a "Righteous Gentile," an honorific bestowed by the State of Israel non-Jews who risked his/her life to save a Jew during the Holocaust. Voices of Hope's mission is to "promote a culture of courage to stand up against hatred through Holocaust and genocide education and remembrance" by offering speaking events, workshops, and webinars. *A light lunch will be served.*

Of Interest ...Creative Writing Workshop Mondays, Oct. 7 – Nov. 11 from 7 - 8:30 p.m., Westminster Presbyterian Church

Calling all genres and skill levels -- join Instructor David Pontrelli at his signature creative writing workshop series! David has been teaching creative writing for over twenty years, and his workshops stress participant safety to create an enhanced sense of community. Payment for the series is \$210.00, but a sliding scale of \$180.00, or \$150.00 is also available. For more information, email David at: writingworks3@gmail.com or call 860-231-1712 (landline).

Ongoing Announcements

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!

West Hartford Food Pantry

The West Hartford Food Pantry is very low on stock. 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, from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Altar Flowers

If you would like to donate altar flowers, we have weeks available for 2024-2025, including these fall dates: 11/10 and 11/17.

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

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.

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, 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 - Thursday 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. - Noon.

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