



# Sunday Notes



First Church Happenings for the week of September 29, 2024

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## Sunday Worship

I have a feeling that you're familiar with the two-hands-pressed-together emoji. Perhaps, you've seen it and/or sent it. There's an ongoing "debate" in various online forums about what people intend when they text it.

The various answers seem to depend on context and culture. It might mean *gratitude*. Some folks intend a respectful greeting – *namaste*. In a worldly way, the emoji could convey *hope* or *goodwill*. A believer might use it with a religious request in mind. Also...some people think it means "high five". I pray that's not true!



This week, worship offers an opportunity to think about what you have in mind when you pray about something; when you ask someone to pray for you; when you pray on another's behalf. I'll say more Sunday morning. The sermon (based on the Letter of James 5:13-20) is entitled: **People's Prayers and Their Prepositions**.

Be blessed and be a blessing!

Rev. Fredd

## Altar Flowers

Our altar flowers are donated this week by Courtland Lewis and family in loving memory of Barbara Amols Lewis.

## Light the Steeple

Our steeple is lit this week by Courtland Lewis and family in loving memory of Barbara Amols Lewis.

## 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

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## Upcoming Events and Announcements

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## Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 6 at 12:30 p.m. on the front lawn

Officiated by Rev. Fredd.

Join us for a simple service of worship to honor God's gift of creation, especially our furry companions! This event is open to people of all faiths and creatures of all kinds. Bring your pets (on a leash or crated, please!); or, if worshipping in person is not a comfortable option, bring a picture!



## FAITH FORMATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

### Join our Sunday School Team!

We are looking for Sunday School volunteers for the Infant to 5-year-old classroom. The children will listen to a story, listen to music, color, and play. There is no lesson planning involved for this age group. If you're interested in joining us or would like to learn more, please contact Amanda Bethune, [faith.formation@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:faith.formation@whfirstchurch.org). We would love to hear from you!

### Sunday School Registration

Sunday School is underway at First Church and all children are welcome to attend! Parents of children (infants through 8<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:faith.formation@whfirstchurch.org).

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## WORSHIP ARTS

### Chamber Music Concert

Sunday, October 6 at 3 p.m. in the Chapel

The Chamber Music Series is starting its second season at First Church, designed to bring great music performances to an audience in an intimate setting. The concert is free to the public. A Free Will Offering will be received at the door.

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## INREACH

### First Sunday Breakfast

Sunday, October 6 from 8:30-9:30 a.m. in the Auditorium

Come to the Auditorium next Sunday for a breakfast smorgasbord of fruit, breakfast casseroles, bagels, bacon or sausage, pastries, and more – plus coffee, juice & tea. Tasty gluten-free options, too! Sponsored by the JPW Church Library, and a core of merry cooks! All are welcome!

### 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.

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## 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!

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

Today! 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. *A light lunch will be served.*

### FaithNet Program: Suicide Awareness & Prevention

Sunday, October 6 at 4 p.m. (3:30 sign in; program starts promptly at 4) at Westminster Presbyterian Church  
Free event, with dinner catered by Bricco's Italian Restaurant

The JPWL is partnering with Westminster Presbyterian Church to develop a FaithNet\* with other faith communities in West Hartford to address mental health issues among teens in particular. The goal is to promote mental health awareness and provide resources for people and families living with and recovering from mental illness. Our first event is a Community Conversation on Suicide Awareness and Prevention, with speakers from the Institute for Living. And watch for more FaithNet\* news in the coming months! Please see Jennifer with questions.

### 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 cites his time spent as a chef and cook among his influences, along with Henri Matisse, Archie Comics, Talking Heads, Seinfeld, and 1960s Disney movies. His fans are young and old alike – a great display to inspire young artists. 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 *Faithful Fitness* class. Each class provides an opportunity for meditation/silence as well as movement. Perfect attendance is not required! – it's ok to miss a couple of classes! More information is available on each class's registration page:

- **FitMix with** Kathi Boratko -- Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m. through Nov. 5. [Register here.](#)
- **ChiGong** with Cynthia Hoag -- Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. through Nov. 7. [Register here.](#)
- **Chair Yoga** with Janice Olson -- Thursdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. through Nov. 7. [Register here.](#)

### Book Group News:

The 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 [jpwlibrary@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwlibrary@whfirstchurch.org).

- **Awakening the Spirit** - *Meets Mondays from 12-1:30 p.m.*  
We're currently discussing [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

### 6th-8th Graders — This One's for You!

The JPW Library has created a new book group for students in Grades 6-8. We will meet on the third Sunday of each month 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! Questions? See Molly or Jennifer.

### Women's Pre-Holiday Retreat

Ladies, you are invited to join Janice Olson of Conscious Contact for a rejuvenating pre-holiday weekend retreat on the serene Connecticut shoreline, a weekend designed to nourish your spirit and help you create a personalized self-care plan for the coming holiday season and beyond. Through a blend of group gatherings, creative activities, solitude for reflection, and one-on-one spiritual guidance, you'll find the space to recharge and refocus. The retreat will equip you with strategies for making self-care a priority, tools for implementing these practices with accountability, and a personalized self-care kit to take home—plus tidings of comfort and joy to carry into the holidays and new year! For more information and to register, visit [Conscious Contact](#). Scholarship funds are available through the JPW Library; see Jennifer with questions.

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## Ongoing Announcements

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### 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 November 17, 2024.

Submit Prayer Requests at [http://bit.ly/FCprayer\\_request](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](mailto: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](mailto:Communications@whfirstchurch.org), Joy Taylor: [Communications2@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Communications2@whfirstchurch.org)

**Office Hours:** Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. - Noon.

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