



# Sunday Notes



First Church Happenings for the week of January 26, 2025

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## Sunday Worship

"Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body." -- 1 Corinthians 12:14-15

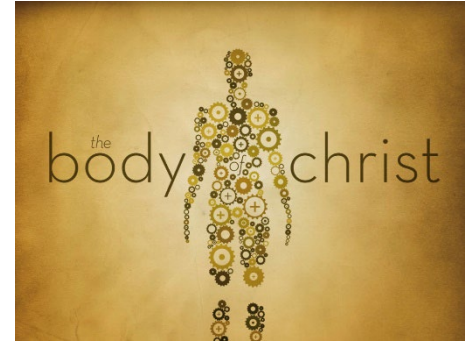
Last Sunday, we discussed spiritual gifts as described in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. The Apostle Paul encouraged us that within the life of the church spiritual gifts show forth in assorted shapes and that they're animated by the same Spirit – "...*there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.*"

During our conversation, I commented: "We're each endowed with different abilities. But different doesn't mean deficient." That was a way of paraphrasing (and previewing) what Paul says in the verses that follow verse 11. This Sunday, we'll pick up where we left off last Sunday in further consideration of this truth: Unity is not the same thing as uniformity. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? I'll say more when I see you.

The sermon (based on 1 Corinthians 12:12-26) is entitled **Different Doesn't Mean Deficient**.

Whoever you are...be the best of whatever you are. Be a blessing.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Fredd



## Altar Flowers

Our altar flowers are donated this week by the Dore family in loving memory of Linda Dore, beloved wife, mother, and grandmother.

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## Upcoming Events and Announcements

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### Call to Congregational Meeting

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, February 9 starting at approximately 11:15 a.m. to transact the following items of business:

Approve the minutes of the First Church Budget Meeting held on January 28, 2024.

Consider and vote on the First Church Annual Operating Budget for calendar year 2025.

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 January 26, 2025

Linda Bronstein  
Secretary of the Church

### Opportunity Fair

Sunday, February 2 at 11 a.m. during coffee hour

Have you ever wondered about the Inreach Team? How is it different from the Outreach Team? The Business Team seems fairly straightforward (is it?) but what does the Spirit Team do? What does GHIAA stand for?

During coffee hour on Sunday, February 2, you can ask all of your questions! Representatives from each Team and GHIAA will be happy to chat with you. If the Team's activities seem to be a good fit for your interests, perhaps you will consider joining the Team for 2025. Welcome to a vibrant First Church!



### **The Confirmands Are Coming...and Going Bowling!**

As previously announced, Rev. Fredd will lead a six-week expedition for high-schoolers who want to confirm their baptism. The group will meet Sunday afternoons (~90 minutes) starting February 23 through March 30. Confirmation Sunday is scheduled for April 6.

Meanwhile, we've organized a get-to-know-you-get-together for prospective confirmands at Spare Time Windsor Locks on Sunday, February 9 at 2 p.m. Please contact the church office at 860.233.9605 to reserve a spot!

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### **Harvest Meal Packing Event 2025**

Saturday, March 1 from 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (Snow date March 8)

Join your friends and neighbors to pack meals to be sent to those in need. It is an incredible way to generate positive energy, foster pride in working together for the benefit of others and have fun! Come by yourself or with a friend and join a team to pack meals for a few hours. We'll feed you a pizza lunch for all your hard work. Recommended donation is \$10 per family. Use Cash or Venmo for your donation! [View Flyer here.](#)

### **Volunteers Needed**

Seeking members and friends interested in supporting and/or attending this year's SOGIEcon March 21-22 Storrs, CT. We'd like to form a group who will take the lead and represent FCCC for this event. Please connect with anyone from the Outreach committee or Carol Lorenzo, [ctlorenzo@comcast.net](mailto:ctlorenzo@comcast.net).

True Colors SOGIEcon (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression) conference is the largest LGBTQIA+ youth conference in the world. This conference brings together LGBTQIA+ youth, their peers, allies, family members, educators, social workers, clinicians, clergy and community members to educate themselves, promote connection and support the next generation of LGBTQIA+ Leaders.

**For more information please go to:** <https://www.healthcollective.org/true-colors-lgbtq-conference>

**A Big Thank You** to all of you who contributed in 2024 toward First Church's commitment to support GHIAA financially. We reached our goal of \$2500 in donations (which together with \$2500 from the Outreach Team make up our \$5000 annual commitment to GHIAA). Not only that, but we surpassed our goal, giving us a few hundred dollars to carry over and use as a head start on our 2025 commitment!

The CT legislative session began on Jan. 8, which means that the next few months will be busy ones. GHIAA will be focusing on affordable housing, and on freeing up funds in the state budget to meet a wide range of human needs. There will be opportunities to express support of or opposition to specific bills, both by contacting our own legislators and by testifying or writing letters to legislative committees. If you'd like to be kept up to date as those opportunities arise, send an email to Linda Bronstein ([lindadiane275@gmail.com](mailto:lindadiane275@gmail.com)), or talk to Linda or Terry Schmitt at coffee hour.

Thank you again!

### **January Reach Out: Fern Street Food Ministry**

Fern Street Food Ministry is a program of the Universalist Church at 433 Fern Street in West Hartford. The mission of the Fern Street Food Ministry is to alleviate hunger in our community.

Programs include:

- Every other Monday morning they welcome the local community inside for a free hot and hearty breakfast.
- Once a week, volunteers make and deliver sandwiches to the House of Bread in Hartford.
- Each week during the school year, they provide backpacks filled with nutritious food to West Hartford Public School students who need weekend food support.
- On the third Saturday of every month, they provide non-perishables, fresh produce, frozen meats, poultry, dairy and eggs to qualified recipients.

To donate online through the church: [click HERE](#). Or to learn more and donate directly: [click HERE](#).



## Celtic Worship Service

This Sunday, January 26 at 5 p.m. in the Chapel

Celtic Christian Worship is a contemplative liturgical tradition that invites everyone to experience the sacredness of all creation. It's a sensory journey that combines ancient rituals with the enduring message of Christianity, creating a space for deep connection and reflection. In this tradition, you'll find a path to encounter the divine in the beauty of the everyday through prayer, poetry, live music, and shared silence.

**Please Note: First Sunday Breakfasts** will pause for February and for March so that our volunteers may also pause during this busy time. We'll get back to breakfasting together on April 6!

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## Watch Live-Streamed Worship in the Church Library!

First Church's worship services are live streamed every Sunday in our bright, comfortable 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 any other reason. The JPW Library is also open Monday through Thursday from 9-5. Everyone is welcome -- church membership is not required! Come in and find your next read!

## Book Group News

The John P. Webster Library coordinates and sponsors three 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 every Monday from 12-1:30 p.m. - Rev. Tom Carr, facilitator

Join us as we discuss Brian D. McLaren's [\*Do I Stay Christian? A Guide for the Doubters, the Disappointed, and the Disillusioned\*](#). McLaren publicly addresses the powerful question that many people—including pastors, priests, and other religious leaders—are asking in private.

- **Food for Thought - Next Meeting: February 4**

Meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 5-6:30 p.m. - JPW Library Staff, facilitators

We will be discussing [\*Samba of Survival: My Light Within\*](#) by Maria Leda Souza Hogan. A vivid account of life on the margins of Brazilian society, chronicling the author's childhood in the "favelas (slums) of Brazil, where hunger, abuse, lack of opportunity, poor sanitation, and food scarcity compel the poor into a desperate, unpredictable dance in order to survive: *A samba of survival.*"

- **Believe in YourSHELF Tween Book Group - Next Meeting: February 16**

Meets on the third Sunday of the month at 10:15 a.m. - Facilitated by Molly Bohman, JPWL Assistant Librarian

For students in Grades 6-8: We meet (with snacks!) on the third Sunday of the month in the Library. Join us to discuss *The Moth Keeper* by K. O'Neill. Anya has taken on the responsibility of Moth Keeper for the night village, shepherding the lunar moths her people rely on to sustain the annual blooming of a flower necessary to their night-dwelling ways. However, she grows weary from her strenuous duties and, feeling a pull to experience life in the daylight, decides to visit the sunlit day world. When she glimpses the one thing that could destroy what she's meant to protect, her village and the lunar moths are left to deal with the consequences. K. O'Neill brings to life a beautifully illustrated fantasy with lush, gorgeous art and intricate world-building (Amazon.com).

## Faithful Fitness Classes Continue

The JPW Library invites you to attend free Faithful Fitness classes! Both classes provide an opportunity for meditation as well as movement. Perfect attendance is not required! More information is available on each class's registration page:

- **Qi Gong with Cynthia Hoag** - Thursdays from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the Chapel. Register [here](#).
- **FitMix with Kathi Boratko** - Tuesdays from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. in the Auditorium. [Click here](#) for registration.

## Memoir Workshop

Wednesdays from 1:30-3 p.m. -- January 29, February 5, 12, 19, 26, and March 5 in the Community Room (Rm. 232)  
Join Jennifer Wednesday afternoons for 90 minutes of writing, reading, and friendly feedback. Writing enhances memory, helps process trying times, and clarifies thinking. It even improves your dreams! Space limited; please [register here](#).

## Yoga Classes - Wednesdays from 9:30-10:45 a.m. in the First Church Chapel

Join Cynthia Wolcott for drop-in, in-person Yoga. Bring a mat and a blanket (Cynthia has extras you may borrow). Attend as you wish; payment is accepted at the start of each class: \$20 per class - cash, Venmo, or check to Cynthia Wolcott. Contact Cynthia at [cjwolcott@gmail.com](mailto:cjwolcott@gmail.com).

## In Case You're Interested ...

For the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, the **Congregational Library & Archives** presents *Religion of Revolution: Congregational Voices on Liberty*. This new digital exhibition highlights the stories of New England Congregationalists through important and rarely seen print works of the period as well as church records, letters, and sermon literature from the CLA's collections and the New England's *Hidden Histories* project. The exhibit can be accessed only through their [website](#). Fascinating reading for fans of early American history!

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## Ongoing Announcements

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**Coffee and Conversation** - Join Rev. Fredd and friends at Nero Kitchen on 13 South Main Street in West Hartford Center on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. for coffee and conversation!

**Our 2024 Stewardship Campaign** is underway. You can bring your completed pledge card to worship or mail it to the office. You can also make your pledge online by filling out the online pledge card [HERE](#). Thank 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).

## West Hartford Food Pantry

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

## 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](#).

## 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. Please keep in mind that this is a public page.

**Submit Prayer Requests at** [http://bit.ly/FCprayer\\_request](http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request).

## 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.

**Office Hours:** Mon. – Thurs. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and Fri. 9 a.m. - Noon. **Contact:** [Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org) or 860-233-9605.