



# Sunday Notes



First Church Happenings for the week of March 2, 2025

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## Sunday Worship

Exodus 34 describes an important encounter between God and Moses. It was a covenant renegotiation meeting which resulted in ten specified terms etched upon two stone tablets. According to the writer: "[Moses] was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." You're familiar with the story, yes?

A lesser-known detail (same chapter) is that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, the skin of his face was beaming because he had been talking with God. The transformation was so obvious that the Israelites were afraid to come near him. So, Moses covered his face with a veil. But, he would remove it whenever he communicated with God.



Sunday's sermon is about being unveiled and reflecting the power of God and shining out loud for others to see. It's entitled **On Again Off Again**.

Be blessed. Be a blessing.

Rev. Fredd

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## Altar Flowers

Our Altar Flowers this week are donated by Pam Hastings, Linda Hastings Rosania, and family in loving memory of Richard and Lorain Hastings, Richard Hastings III, Mr. and Mrs. R. Cleveland Hastings, Marcia Hastings Peck, and Charles and Lucy Jaworski.

## 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](#).

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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, March 9, 2025**, starting at approximately 11:15 AM.

This meeting is called to transact the following items of business:

- To consider and vote on the minutes of the Annual Meeting of First Church held on March 10, 2024.
- To consider and vote on the proposed slate of Officers, Team Leaders and Team Members for First Church for the coming year.

In accordance with the By-laws of First Church, action will be taken only on matters included in the Call to Meeting.

Notice given on February 23, 2025  
Linda Bronstein, Secretary



## INREACH TEAM



**TODAY!!!!**

***Shrove Tuesday Pancake lunch on Sunday MARCH 2***

Join the Inreach Team and Faith Formation following worship in the auditorium for pancakes, sausage, fruit and beverages.

Plan on wearing your wackiest outfits, put on your beaded necklaces, eat pancakes and goof off with us as we get ready for the beginning of Lent.



## OUTREACH TEAM

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

Saturday, March 8 from 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (Snow date March 15)

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.](#)

**Try something new for Lent!** Instead of giving something up for Lent, why not try adding a spiritual element to your Lenten journey by singing with the choir through Easter or learning to play with the Handbell Choir. No experience is necessary! We will teach you everything you need to know. See Jim Boratko or Jessica Berube-Sengupta for more information.

### **March Reach Out: Mercy Housing and Shelter**

Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation provides housing assistance and supportive services to persons who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Mercy offers permanent supportive housing programs across Hartford, Tolland and Middlesex Counties. We combine rental assistance and supportive services for homeless persons with very low incomes, serious and persistent conditions including, but not limited to, substance use disorder, HIV/AIDS, mental health challenges or co-occurring disabilities. We support hundreds of people in Connecticut establish permanent housing annually. The goal of supportive housing is to help clients be successful in housing and give them a place to call "Home". Our Community Supportive Housing offers services and supports designed to assist residents in recognizing their value, nurture self-esteem and attain emotional and economic stability. Mercy works to empower its clients to become independent, so they may live and work with dignity and respect. Mercy welcomes and serves all in need in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy, who founded the organization in 1983. Mercy's Core Values: Respect, Compassion and Responsibility!

To learn more and donate please use the links provided or donate in church (**note Mercy Housing on your envelope**) or online thru the church: <https://whfirstchurch.ccbchurch.com/goto/giving>

To learn more and donate directly visit <https://mercyhousingct.org/donate/>



### Open Chapel

The Spirit Team is pleased to once again offer Open Chapel during Lent. This is an opportunity to rest and quietly reflect in the sacred space of the First Church Chapel. You are welcome to drop by for any part of the hour. We hope that you will find peace.

Wednesday, March 12, 12-1 pm

Wednesday, March 19, 5-6 pm

Wednesday, March 26, 12-1 pm

Sunday, April 6, 5-6 pm

Friday, April 18, 12-1 pm

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### Chamber Music Concert on Sunday, March 16 at 3pm in the Chapel

The Chamber Music Series is in 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 collected by the door.



### 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-Thursday 9-5. Everyone is welcome -- church membership is not required! Come in and find your next read!

\*For more detailed information on programs read the First Church Happenings Newsletter on our website. \*

<https://whfirstchurch.org/welcome/first-church-newsletters/>

### Lenten Devotionals are here!

"Into the Deep," the Still Speaking Writers' 2025 Lent Devotional, invites reflection on God's mysterious depths.

"God inhabits the depths of life, love, loss, ecstasy, and pain, God dwells in the profundities of prayer, in sighs too deep for words. God loves the deep" (Mary Luti). What courage, what faith, what reckoning, what wonder might find us as we go deep into God's depths this Lent?

Lent starts this Wednesday...Pick up your copy of "Into the Deep" at both meeting house entrances.

### The Spiritual Practice of Self-Care

a retreat for women

Led by Janice Olson, Yogi and Spiritual Guide

[The Guest House Retreat Center](#), Chester CT

3 p.m. Friday, May 2 – 3 p.m. Saturday, May 3

\$100 per person

Register here by April 13: [The Spiritual Practice of Self Care](#)

### Lenten Book Study

Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. (hybrid)

March 11, 18, 25

April 1, 8, 15

Free program; please [register here](#).

## 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 [jpwllibrary@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwllibrary@whfirstchurch.org).

### **Awakening the Spirit**

Meets Mondays from 12-1:30 p.m.

### **Food for Thought**

Meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 5-6:30 p.m.

### **Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 4**

**Believe in YourSHELF** Tween Book Group

Next meeting: Sunday 3/16

## **New Art Exhibit: Don Bonner, American Artist**

### **JPWL Gallery**

### **March 2 – April**

Don Bonner grew up inspired by the picturesque surroundings in Western Massachusetts and he now lives in central Connecticut. He attended the Paier School of Art outside New Haven. Don is passionate about telling a story on canvas, and creating it with color, lighting, and emotion. His studio is in Avon, Connecticut. GICLEE prints available in a variety of sizes and prices. To see more artwork and for information, purchase, etc. contact Don at [bonnerco@comcast.net](mailto:bonnerco@comcast.net). He is also on FaceBook and Instagram.

## **Lenten Wednesdays Together**

**Wednesdays at 6 p.m. beginning March 12<sup>th</sup> through March 9<sup>th</sup>**

### **Fellowship Room (Rm. 303)**

With Rev. Laurie Andersen, curator and facilitator

During the sacred season of Lent, we'll gather midweek to set aside our worldly worries and let the liturgical rhythms guide us in the Way of the Cross. Rev. Laurie Andersen invites you into a quiet prayerful space where you can share or just listen and receive (light refreshments served). Come and see where the Spirit takes us.

This week's offertory is the well-known choral anthem, "Ave Verum", by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

Ave verum corpus ("Hail, True Body"), K. 618, is a motet in D major composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in 1791. It is a setting of the Latin hymn of the same name. Mozart wrote it for Anton Stoll, a friend who was the church musician of St. Stephan in Baden bei Wien. The motet was composed for the feast of Corpus Christi; the autograph is dated 17 June 1791. It is scored for SATB choir, string instruments and organ.

The piece is often sung at Communion services, since it evokes the image of the body and blood of Christ, the elements of Communion. The Latin text with an English translation is as follows:

Ave verum corpus,  
natum ex Maria Virgine,  
Vere passum, immolatum  
In cruce pro homine,  
Cujus latus perforatum,  
Unda fluxit cum sanguine,  
Esto nobis prægustatum  
Mortis in exanmine.

Hail, true body,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
who, having truly suffered,  
was on the cross for mankind.  
Whose pierced side  
flowed with water and blood:  
may it be for us a foretaste (of the Heavenly banquet)  
in the trial of death.

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## **Ongoing Announcements**

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### **Coffee and Conversation**

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

### **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.formatio@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:faith.formatio@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.

### **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**

1. Sunday Morning Offertory
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. – Fri. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. **Contact:** [Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org) or 860-233-9605.