



Sunday Notes

First Church Happenings for the week of April 13, 2025



Sunday Worship

"There are two kinds of people in this world: Those who believe there are two kinds of people in this world and those who are [wise] enough to know better." – Tom Robbins

The word of the day this coming Palm-Passion Sunday is 'dichotomous'. It means 'involving two completely opposing things...or themes.'

One of the featured readings (Luke 19:28-40) is concerned with Jesus' triumphal entry into the holy city of Jerusalem. Picture a parade and people spreading their cloaks on the road as Jesus rides on a colt: "*Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!*"

The other featured reading (Luke 22:14-23) is concerned with the Lord's Supper – the final meal that Jesus shared with his friends before his suffering. That setting is where the greatest story ever told takes a sudden turn from pageantry to treachery: "*But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table.*"

Christian faith challenges us to be the kind of people who can deal with dichotomies. I'll say more when I see you.

Be a blessing. Be the church.

Rev. Fredd



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

Our steeple is lit by Judy Schmidt in loving memory of her father, Bradley Piper.

Please join us for the following Holy Week activities at First Church:

- April 13 – Palm Sunday – 10 a.m. worship service with music and palm fronds
- April 18– Good Friday - 7 p.m. service in the Meeting House & Open Chapel from 12 to 1 p.m.
- April 20 – Easter Sunday – 10 a.m. worship service featuring a brass ensemble followed by an Easter egg hunt.

Upcoming Events and Announcements

New Member Information Session – Sunday, April 13th at 11:15 a.m. Following Worship

We expect to receive new members into the life of the church during the 10 a.m. worship service on Sunday, April 27th. Please contact Rev. Fredd in person, by telephone at 860.233.9605, or via email fredd.ward@whfirstchurch.org.

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 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.

A Celtic Service of Healing April 27 5pm First Church Chapel

Join us for an evening of gentle healing and reflection. The service features soft candlelight, the laying on of hands, and compassionate prayer, led by Rev. Tom Carr. Please reach out to Liz Oman-Wilfred or Jennifer deSimas with questions.



Easter Lily and Organ & Carillon Donations

This is a wonderful opportunity to make a donation in honor of, or in memory of, a loved one! Easter Lily and Organ & Carillon donations can be made online [HERE](#). Click [HERE](#) for a printable form and return it to the church office with your payment. If you wish to have your donation listed in the Sunday Bulletin, please make your donation by Sunday, April 13. If you have any questions, please contact Bethany at office.manager@whfirstchurch.org or 860-233-9605.

Easter Baskets

Thank you to everyone who took an Easter basket to fill for Covenant to Care. Thanks to your generosity, Easter will be a little more special for 46 children! As a reminder, please return the baskets by Sunday, April 13th. - Diane & Molly

Altar Flower Donations

Donating altar flowers is a meaningful way to honor loved ones and is part of our Inreach ministry. Each week the altar flowers are broken down into smaller arrangements and delivered to members of the congregation. We have many weeks available in the new year. If you would like to donate, please reach out to Bethany in the church office at 860-233-9605 or office.manager@whfirstchurch.org or [CLICK HERE](#)

These dates are open: May 18, July 6, 13, and 20, 2025.

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](#).

All Dates in April are open!



Let's Make Lunches! Every month as part of our Outreach mission, we make 80 sandwiches and fill lunch bags for folks in the Asylum Hill neighborhood with "very low food security."

- After Sunday worship in the Auditorium
- Half-hour activity for all ages
- Lunch bag contents includes: sandwich, chips, apple, and homemade cookies

Upcoming dates: April 27, May 25, June 22, July 27, Aug 24 <https://whfirstchurch.org/ministry/outreach/>

April Reach Out: South Park Inn

∞Established in 1982, South Park Inn provides a range of programs and services to assist people experiencing homelessness as they transition back to permanency. The agency's goal is to provide a safe, temporary place to stay as individuals identify the supports and opportunities that will yield long-term housing solutions.

∞South Park Inn's emergency shelter, opened in 1984, operates 24/7/365 and provides 55 beds to men and women. South Park Inn has 15 Transitional Housing beds for Veterans, ten of which are dedicated for high-barrier Veterans exhibiting acute and/or active substance use and mental illness.

∞South Park Inn also operates 17 respite beds to provide people recovering from recent medical or behavioral health hospitalizations with a safe place to stay that includes staffing to monitor for complications/side effects, follow-up care, treatment compliance, and/or medication errors; case management, and rehousing support.

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

To learn more and to donate directly: <https://www.southparkinn.org/donate>

GHIAA joins movement to protect CT's immigrants

In response to the federal government's increased efforts to deport immigrants -- often without any due process protections -- GHIAA is joining CT immigrant advocates in efforts to strengthen CT's 2019 Trust Act, and to raise awareness of the constitutional rights that all persons here have. GHIAA participated in a rally and press conference on March 3, and expects a public hearing to be held soon, for which we all will be invited to submit comments.

ICE has already begun to increase enforcement activity in CT, causing many immigrant families to fear going to work, going to school, obtaining health care, or participating in their faith communities. It is important for every person or organization who may have contact with ICE to know that they have the right to (a) remain silent when questioned, (b) have an attorney present during any questioning, and (c) be free of unreasonable search and seizure.

If you have questions about this, or if you want to participate in either or both parts of this new initiative, please email Linda Bronstein (lindadiane275@gmail.com) or Terry Schmitt (terryschmittwh@gmail.com). Thank you!



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!

JPWL Seed Library Opens!

WeHa Grows is back with a variety of flower, herb, and veggie seeds for your garden. Stop by the JPW Library during the week, or visit the Bookmobile during Coffee Hour and "seed" for yourself! Four seed packets per family, please. Thank you for your support!

A Great Green Gift!

Here's an opportunity for a local, "green" gift – cute clutches and lunch bags sewn from upcycled church banners! These one-of-a-kind First Church-branded totes and clutches will be available during the Hospitality Hour. Suggested Donation: Totes \$15 each, clutches \$10 each, or 3 for \$15. All proceeds will be used by the Outreach Team to support nearby environmental charities.

Do Good Friday Community Event Friday, April 18, 10am to 12pm First Church Auditorium

All are welcome! **Please bring:** A package of men's underwear (L-XXL) or a bag of laundry detergent pods.

Good Friday is an ideal time to engage in acts of service and charity. This year, the Outreach Team invites you to do just that at our "Do Good" Friday community compassion event. By giving time and resources, you embody the spirit of Christ's selflessness and make a tangible difference in the lives of others. Join us to make brown-bag lunches and no-sew blankets for Mercy House in Hartford. We'll also bake brownies and create Easter cards to add to the lunch bags. AND we're stuffing plastic eggs for First Church's Easter morning Egg Hunt! Please see Carol Lorenzo or Jennifer with questions. Following this event, the Spirit Team is hosting a time of Open Chapel from 12 – 1 p.m. for those who would like a bit of respite and reflection.

In the JPWL Gallery Art Exhibit: *Don Bonner, American Artist Through April 29*

Don Bonner grew up inspired by the picturesque surroundings of Western MA; he now has a studio in Avon, CT. He is passionate about telling a story on canvas, and creating it with color, lighting, and emotion. GICLEE prints of his work are available in a variety of sizes and prices. To see more artwork and for information, purchase, etc. contact Don at bonnerco@comcast.net. He is also on both FaceBook and Instagram.

Lenten Wednesday Together – Last Session! Wednesday, April 16, 6-7 p.m. (in-person)

Fellowship Room (Rm. 303); light refreshments served • Rev. Dr. Laurie Andersen, curator and facilitator

A time for centering the soul, by way of a Bible story and reflection, meditation, silence, prayer. Rev. Anderson, along with her husband Mark Goodwin, is soon to be a new associate member of First Church. Laurie is a graduate of Union Theological Seminary and holds a Doctorate in Counseling from Hebrew Union College. She is currently a Board-Certified Chaplain for Trinity Health Care. In this series Laurie ties themes of Scripture together with deep psychological insights and wisdom gained through her years of counseling and hospice ministry. Please see Jennifer with questions.

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.

Awakening the Spirit Mondays from 12-1:30 p.m.

- [*The Choice: Embrace the Possible* by Dr. Edith Eva Eger](#) *We have the capacity to hate and the capacity to love. Which one we reach for is up to us.* – Edith Eger
A “mind-blowing memoir of surviving Auschwitz” (*New York Times*).

• **Food for Thought**

[*The Choice: Embrace the Possible* by Dr. Edith Eva Eger](#) First Tuesday of the month from 5-6:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: May 6 • Food for Thought also is reading *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* by Dr. Edith Eva Eger (description above). This incredible story of hope, courage, and grace is a must-read, and we are sharing it with both of our discussion groups!

• **Believe in YourSHELF Tween Book Group** Meets on the Third Sunday of the month at 10:15 a.m.

Next Meeting May 18 [*Uprooted: A Memoir About What Happens When Your Family Moves Back*](#) by Ruth Chan. 1993: When Ruth’s parents decide to move back to Hong Kong from Toronto, she can’t help but focus on the negatives. Not only will she leave her school and friends behind, but she has unpleasant memories of Hong Kong, and she barely speaks Cantonese. A great story about how courage, perseverance, and time help ease big changes.

Ongoing Announcements

• **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!

• **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.

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

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.

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 or 860-233-9605.