



# Sunday Notes



First Church Happenings for the week of April 20, 2025

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## Sunday Worship

"Then, behold, they found no stone;  
but a man was standing there instead,  
Dazzling bright in raiment white, saying,  
'He is not here! He is risen!  
See, the tomb is empty where He lay.  
He is not here! He is risen!'  
Jesus rose on Easter Day."

Those lyrics belong to the anthem that the choir will sing Sunday morning. The song mirrors Luke's version of the Easter story which teaches us that the perplexed disciples who found the stone rolled away from Jesus' tomb encountered two men in dazzling clothes who said to them: "*Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen.*"

There are different descriptions of the miracle that happened long ago "early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark". Details notwithstanding, Resurrection is not purely "historical". It's happening now.

I'll say more when I see you.

Be a blessing. Be the church.

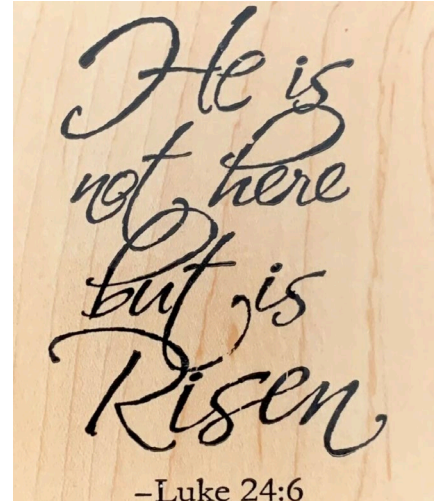
Rev. Fredd

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## Light The Steeple

Our steeple is lit by **Nancy Hudson** in loving memory of her parents, **Paul and Carolyn Hudson**, by **First Church Creative Crafters** in loving memory of **Linda Dore**, dear friend and fellow crafter, by the **Schmitt Family** in loving memory of **Jean and Bradley Piper**, Judy's parents, and by **Lorey Cavanaugh** in loving memory of her brother, **Brian Cavanaugh**.

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## Upcoming Events and Announcements

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Please join us after worship on the front lawn for our annual Easter Egg Hunt.  
Please bring your own Easter baskets!

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It is with great sadness that we share the passing of one of our beloved Academy teachers, Miss Merlene Moore. Miss Merlene was the wife of our former First Church custodian, Elijah Moore, and a full-time Associate Toddler Teacher at First Church Academy. Over the last five years, Merlene shared her positive spirit and loving kindness with the children of FCAYC and her co-workers. She will be greatly missed by us all. Service information is in the link below.

<https://www.hkhfuneralservices.com/obituaries/Merlene-A-Moore?obId=41967873>

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**Saturday, May 3rd is World Labyrinth Day!** Let's "Walk as One at 1:00" for Peace! Join us for a Global Labyrinth Walk on the labyrinth and connect with others around the world who are doing the same. Learn about labyrinths and enjoy refreshing lemonade and fellowship. Finger labyrinths will be available for those with limited mobility. Saturday, May 3, 1:00 PM – 2:00 p.m. outside on the First Church Labyrinth.



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#### **Jubilee Recognition - Sunday, May 4th**

With Rev. Fredd's support and guidance, Inreach is planning a Jubilee Recognition during morning worship on Sunday, May 4th. We will be acknowledging those among us who have served and supported First Church for 50 or more years! All are invited to participate in the service, and to stay afterwards for a light lunch in the auditorium.

#### **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](mailto: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!**



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**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>

### **What would we do in the unlikely event that ICE agents came to our door and asked to search First Church?**

GHIAA has urged each of its member congregations to have plans in place, just in case. The First Church Coordinating Team adopted a policy statement at its April meeting which lays the groundwork for such plans. If you'd like to read a copy of that statement, you can pick one up at the church office, or call the office and have one mailed to you. More specific instructions will soon be provided to church staff, ushers, etc. Our policy is to comply with any lawful request for access to our premises or our records, but to verify the lawfulness of any such request before complying. In this way, we can make sure that our rights -- and the rights of any visitors -- to free exercise of religion and to freedom from unreasonable search and seizure are respected.



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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-Thursday 9-5!

### **West Hartford 250 Committee Forming**

The United States of America turns 250 in 2026! States and towns across the nation are planning to celebrate.

A *West Hartford 250 Committee* is being established to guide how our town can participate in the festivities.

The *West Hartford 250 Committee* is inviting individuals from the First Church community to join in the planning, specifically to represent First Church's role in town history. If you would like to find out more about the effort, please contact Carol Lorenzo or Jennifer deSimas.

### **A Celtic Service of Healing**

**April 27 at 5 p.m.**

**First Church Chapel**

Join us for an evening of gentle healing and reflection. Whether you're facing emotional, physical, relational, or spiritual challenges—or if painful memories continue to trouble you—this service will help to help restore your spirit. We also hold in prayer those in our lives who need healing, particularly when they cannot or do not ask for help themselves. Prayer cards will be available for you as you enter. The service features soft candlelight, the laying on of hands, and compassionate prayer, all led by Rev. Tom Carr.

For any questions, please reach out to Liz Oman-Wilfred or Jennifer deSimas.

### **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.

### **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](mailto:bonnerco@comcast.net). He is also on both FaceBook and Instagram.

### **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** 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.

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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!
- **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](http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request). •

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**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.

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### **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.