



Sunday Notes

First Church Happenings for the week of July 20, 2025



Sunday Worship

"Well, in our country," said Alice, still panting a little, "you'd generally get to somewhere else — if you run very fast for a long time, as we've been doing."

"A slow sort of country!" said the Queen. "Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

That episode appears in Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking Glass. Regardless of your familiarity with Alice, or the Red Queen, most of us can readily relate to that chronic feeling of running and running but remaining in the same spot.



It's an old, old story – one that appears in Luke 10:38-42. In that episode, Martha and her sister Mary shared space with the Savior. Mary sat at Jesus' feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha. Martha was distracted by her many tasks. Most of us can readily relate to that habit. It's correctable. I'll say more when I see you. Sunday's sermon is entitled "**Martha-mania.**"

Be a blessing. Be the church.

Rev. Fredd

July 2025 Reach Out Silver Lake Scholarship Fund

Silver Lake was founded in 1957 as a place for everyone to experience nature, make new friends, and explore their faith. With more than 60 acres of wooded land, they seek to provide a safe environment of acceptance regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, reflecting our unity in Christ and respecting the faith journeys of all of God's children.

The scholarships provided to young people to come to camp are funded completely by donations, with a goal to never turn away a potential camper due to lack of funds. Donating to the Scholarship Fund adds the gift to the larger pool of money that is distributed to campers through a scholarship application process.

To learn more and donate please use the links provided or donate in church (note Silver Lake on your envelope) or online thru the church: <https://pushpay.com/g/whfirstchurch>

Or to give directly to the Scholarship Fund click here: <https://www.silverlakeect.org/donate-now>

To learn more about Silver Lake camp: <https://www.silverlakeect.org/about>

Altar Flower Donations

Donating altar flowers is a meaningful way to honor loved ones and is part of our Inreach ministry. If you would like to donate, please reach out to Bethany in the church office or [CLICK HERE](#)

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. Donations will be added to the Save the Steeple fund. [click HERE](#).

Upcoming Events and Announcements

Thursday Night Carillon Concerts

You are invited to enjoy our carillon bells from your "front row" seats! Featuring carillonneurs from across Connecticut on July 24, and 31, from 5:30-6:30 pm. Please bring your family and friends, your own chairs or blanket, and your own refreshments and join us on the lawn.

Inreach Team Invitation

The Inreach team invites you to lace up those walking shoes and meet us at Reservoir 6 (off Avon Mountain) for a leisurely walk in the woods on Monday, July 28th at 8:30 am. All ages welcome! In case of inclement weather we'll walk on Tuesday, the 29th. No need to register or sign up. Just meet us for some casual conversation and exercise! Questions? Contact Diane Bohman at dmbohman@comcast.net. Hope to see you there!

West Hartford Food Pantry and Fern Street Food Ministry

Donations for the WHFood Pantry and Backpack program of Fern Street may be dropped off 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 oz peanut butter or Sunbutter, soup, macaroni and cheese, canned soup (no beef or pork), dried beans, canned vegetables and beans. Donations will be delivered by the Outreach Team.

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." A Half-hour activity for all ages following Sunday Worship in the Auditorium. Lunch bag contents includes: sandwich, chips, apple, and homemade cookies

Upcoming dates:, July 27, Aug 24 <https://whfirstchurch.org/ministry/outreach/>

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.

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.



Greetings From the Spirit Team

September will be here before we know it! The Spirit Team looks forward to hosting a luncheon after worship on Sunday, Sept. 7 to celebrate Homecoming! Sunday School will begin on Sunday, September 21. Amanda will be providing enrollment information as the time draws nearer. Finally, the first Celtic Service of the year will be Sunday, September 28 from 5-6pm in the Chapel.

The Spirit Team wishes everyone a summer filled with fun and relaxation. Don't forget your sunscreen, hats, bug spray, and water. Enjoy!



Coffee Hour Helpers

Are you looking for a commitment-free way to be involved with First Church? If so the Inreach Team has just the opportunity for you!! You probably have noticed that coffee hour is thriving. It's such a joy to see the fellowship of our church community. The coffee hour hosts do a fabulous job of providing treats and cleaning up afterwards, but a little help is always appreciated. As they say, many hands make light work!

The Inreach Team is compiling a lists of bakers and clean up helpers. These lists will be provided to the hosts, so that they may reach out for some assistance if they wish. These lists may also be utilized for other events for which we are asked to provide treats!

If you would like to help out as needed, please reach out to Diane Bohman at dmbohman@comcast.net.



Come one, come all! GHIAA is gathering **Wed., July 23, 6:30-8:30pm** at Asylum Hill Congregational Church (814 Asylum Ave., Hartford) to look back at what we have (and have not) accomplished together so far this year, and share a vision for how we'll move forward in the coming months. Great company and delicious snacks guaranteed!

Upcoming GHIAA Workshops on Combating Racial and Religious Hate

We are all invited to register for any or all of these free workshops. Each one is limited to 20 participants, so don't delay.

Combating Anti-Muslim Bigotry training with Chaplain Aida Mansoor of Muslim Coalition of CT, Wed., Aug. 13, 2025, 12:30-3:00pm (in person, at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace, 55 Sherman St., Hartford). Learn about the various ways anti-Muslim bigotry and Islamophobia present themselves, and what we can do as a community to address them. For additional information and to register, click [HERE](#).

Combating Racism: (Up)Rooting Racial (In)Justice training with consultants Shae Washington and Jason Fredlund, Thursdays, Oct. 23 & 30, Nov. 6 & 13, 6:30-9:00pm (mostly via Zoom). Learn and practice skills to uproot racial injustice and root ourselves more deeply in a lifelong commitment to racial justice and collective liberation. For additional information and to register, click [HERE](#).

Visit the Church Library

At the John P. Webster Library, you can:

- Watch the live-streamed worship services in air-conditioned comfort!
- Find a separate place to worship when you need one
- Set your toddler free in the children's area
- Have a cup of tea or coffee (or hot chocolate!) at our Coffee Bar



The JPW Library is also open Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.!

Practicing Presence: Finding Purpose through Meditation

Mondays at 12 Noon July 28, and August 4 and 11

Please note – this class will not meet on July 21, and we have added August 4 and 11

Join Janice Olson in the Community Room (down the hall from the JPWL) for **Practicing Presence** each Monday! Learn a different method of meditation each week. The benefits of meditation are myriad and include lowered stress, improved memory, increased focus, and better sleep. Sponsored by the John P. Webster Library through the generosity Florence S.M. Crofut. [Tap here](#) to register, and for dates and types of meditation to be demonstrated.

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 any group! For more information, please contact Jennifer or Molly at 860-232-3893 or at jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org.

- **Awakening the Spirit** will gather for a one-time meeting at noon on Monday, July 21 to discuss [Help Thanks Wow: The Three Essential Prayers](#) by Anne Lamott. "Combining her personal insight with an exploration of spirituality, Lamott addresses what it means to pray, and the life-opening power of prayer, independent of your faith or lack thereof...Discover how these three essential prayers – Help, Thanks, and Wow -- help us endure difficult times and continue to move ahead."
- **Food for Thought** is on hiatus until October 6. Happy reading – have a wonderful summer!
- **Believe in YourSHELF Tween Book Group** will resume meeting Sunday, October 19.

Bring Out Your Books ...

It's time to return your overdue JPW Library books! Check under beds and behind couches, or from the way-back of the minivan. Bring them back to the church and release them into the light of the library shelves, where they long to be. This goes for the book group books, too! Remember, the JPW Library charges fines – BUT DOES NOT COLLECT THEM. Return our books, and you're off the hook!

Back by Popular Demand – The JPW Library Summer Faith in Film Series!

2 pm Wednesdays July 16, 23, 30 In the JPW Library

July 23: *The Motorcycle Diaries* "An inspiring and thrilling adventure that traces the youthful origins of a revolutionary spirit. The film follows two daring friends, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara and Alberto Granado, who hop on the back of a beat-up motorcycle for an eye-opening, life-changing road trip across Latin America" (*Rolling Stone*). Rated R, running time 2h 7m.

July 30: *The Way* Martin Sheen is Tom, who "arrives in St. Jean Pied de Port, France to collect the body of his adult son (Emilio Estavez), who was killed in the Pyrenees in a storm while walking the Camino de Santiago. Rather than return home, Tom decides to embark on the historical pilgrimage to honor his son's desire to finish the journey" (Amazon). Rated PG-13, running time 2h 3m.

Summer Reading from the JPWL

We have lots of new books for summer reading – and plenty of oldies too!

The Complete Book of Wills, Estates & Trusts (4th Edition): Advice That Can Save You Thousands of Dollars in Legal Fees and Taxes by Alexander A. Bove Jr. Esq. and Melissa Langa Esq.

In their straightforward and humorous style, Bove and Langa share easy-to-understand legal definitions and savvy advice on everything from taxes to choosing the right attorney, all illustrated with entertaining examples and actual cases. Topics include how to create a will and living trust; how to use a trust to avoid probate and legal complications; how trusts work and how to use trusts to save taxes; how to settle an estate; how to choose an attorney; how to establish a durable power of attorney, and more" (St. Martin's Griffin Press).

The River Is Waiting by Wally Lamb

"An imprisoned young father struggles to survive life on the inside, where he bears witness to frightful acts of brutality but also experiences small acts of kindness and elemental kinship. As he begins to transcend the boundaries of his confinement, sustained by his hope that mercy and reconciliation might still be possible, he wonders: Can his crimes ever be forgiven by those he loves?" (Goodreads).

The Book of Belonging: Bible Stories for Kind and Contemplative Kids

by Mariko Clark; illustrated by Rachel Eleanor

"Through narratives, mindful practices, and guided wonder moments, children and grown-ups alike will learn who God is and be reminded over and over that God tells each of us, 'You are Beloved, you Belong, and you are Delightful.' Because when it comes to the love of God, everyone belongs!" (Amazon).

Four Ways to Give

1. **Sunday Morning Offertory** Please note the designation of your donation on the envelope. (Pledge, Reach-Out, General Fund)
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. 9:30am-3pm. **Contact:** Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org or 860-233-9605.

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

