



Sunday Notes



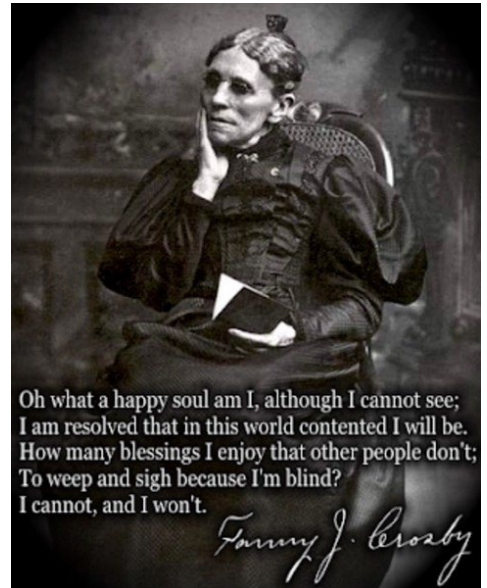
First Church Happenings for the week of September 28, 2025

Sunday Worship

"O what a happy soul am I!
Although I cannot see,
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be;
How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don't!
To weep and sigh because I'm blind,
I cannot, and I won't."

What if I told you that those words were composed by an 8-year-old?
Would you want me to say more? Perhaps, Sunday morning? It would be my honor!

Meanwhile, I'd want you to know that Fanny J. Crosby (1820-1915) is the aforementioned 8-year-old. She said, "It has been the motto of my life." Crosby lost her eyesight as an infant – the result of medical negligence during a stretch of sickness. Nonetheless, she pursued education; became a teacher of English grammar, rhetoric, and Roman and American history. She was also a prolific writer of sacred music, including this week's offertory anthem (*Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior*) and all three hymns (*Blessed Assurance* most notably).



Sorry. I said I'd say more when we're together. The sermon is entitled: **This Is Her Story. These Are Her Songs.**

Be blessed! Be a blessing!

rev.fredd

Altar Flowers

This week our Altar Flowers are donated by **Courtland Lewis** in loving memory of **Barbara Amols Lewis**.

Light the Steeple

This week our Steeple is lit by **Courtland Lewis** in loving memory of **Barbara Amols Lewis**,
by **The Friends of Ed Lennig** who honor **Ed** and his many trips around the sun,
AND in Celebration of **Bob and Nancy Ball's** 60th Wedding Anniversary!

Monthly Celtic Worship Services in the Chapel

This Sunday, September 28, at 5 p.m.

Celtic Christian Worship is a contemplative liturgical tradition that invites us 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, Communion, poetry, music, and shared silence. Our September service will be led by Rev. Susan Izard. The free will offering will be donated to the [Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools](#). Please contact Julia Rosa or Liz Oman-Wilfred with questions.

Family News! We need your family news and photos! [Click here](#) to submit yours and we'll share as soon as we can. Please include captions for your photos, keeping in mind that we may edit to fit, and that this is a public page.

Upcoming Events and Announcements

Arts in The Center Concerts Presents: Chamber Music Concerts Sunday, October 5, and November 16 at 3:00 p.m. in the Chapel. The Chamber Music Series, is in its third season at First Church designed to bring great music performances to an audience in an intimate setting. The concerts are open to the public. A Free Will Offering will be received at the door. Park for free in church lot. If handicap access needed please pull up to the curb on South Main Street and enter via ramp that will be placed at Chapel entrance.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

SUNDAY, October 5 at 12:30 p.m. on the front lawn - Officiated by Rev. Fredd.

Join us for a simple service of worship to honor God's gift of creation, especially our furry companions! This event is open to people of all faiths and creatures of all kinds. Bring your pets (on a leash or crated, please!); or, if worshipping in person is not a comfortable option, bring a picture!

Sidewalk Dedication During Coffee Hour

Sunday, October 19 following worship

Outside: South Sidewalk, JPW Library

Join the JPW Library work group and the Outreach team for Hospitality Hour in the JPW Library as we celebrate our new sidewalk on the south side of the church. Fresh paint, improved lighting, and a brand-new door now welcome visitors from South Main and Blue Back Square to First Church and the JPW Library. Perhaps you saw the article about it on weha.com – if not, read it [here](#)! And come celebrate with us!

Covenant to Care

Now through December 31st we will be collecting new or gently worn mittens, hats, scarves, and other winter clothing for Covenant to Care! Please bring items to church and look for designated boxes for collection. Thank you!

Let's "Gather Round the Table"!

Join your friends at First Church for conversation, conviviality, and community for our combination potluck and guess who's coming to dinner, which is held 3 times during the year. We call it "Gather Round the Table". See Matha Calef, Linda Moffitt, or Susan Tobin at coffee hour through the end of September to ask questions and sign up. All ages are welcome and encouraged to stop by and talk with us. The first round of dinners will begin in October. [SIGN UP FORM](#)

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 2025 dates: Oct 26, Nov 23, Dec 21

Questions: Contact Outreach member Dottie Stone, dottie@stone-stonect.com, 203-856-7403

Please donate food: West Hartford Food Pantry, Loaves and Fishes and Fern Street Food Ministry

Donations for all 3 divisions may be dropped off in the marked blue bins outside the auditorium and around the building. Paper bags with a list attached are by the auditorium making it easy to gather Fern Street essentials. Non-perishables of all kinds will be sorted for the others and be delivered by the Outreach Team.

Yoga with Cynthia Wolcott begins Wednesday, October 8th 9:30-10:45 am in the chapel. \$20 per session (if this causes a hardship please speak to Cynthia), enter via the North Door.

Coffee and Conversation Join First Church friends at Nero Kitchen at 13 South Main Street in West Hartford Center on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. for coffee and conversation.

Donations are needed for the new Hall High School Sewing Club. Accepted are any working sewing machines, fabric of any kind, patterns. Questions or donations, please text 860-324-5279.

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](#)

These 2025 dates are available: Nov. 16, 30, Dec. 21, and 28!

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](#). **These dates are open: 10/5, 10/12, 10/19, 10/26 and more!**

It's back to school time...

Let's support our dedicated teachers and enrich the classroom experiences of WHPS students by donating to The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools!

September 2025 Reach Out - The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools

The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing educational experiences by providing financial support for unique and inspiring programs in West Hartford public schools. Twice a year, certified WHPS teachers apply for grants that showcase creativity, innovation and align with the school curriculum. Application are evaluated on educational merit and potential impact on student learning.

The Foundation for WHPS relies on community support to fund these exceptional educational programs. Individuals, families, businesses, civic groups and alumni across the country help to bring these wonderful learning experiences to West Hartford public school students.

Since its founding in 1997, the Foundation has awarded over \$2,100,000 in grants to hundreds of classrooms across all 16 WHPS schools.

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

Or to give directly to FWHPS: <https://fwhps.org/page/donate-now>

To learn more about The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools: <https://fwhps.org/page/about-us>

Worship Accessibility Improvements

Closed captioning has been added to our TV monitor in the Meeting House.

Large print versions of the hymns are available.

We have upgraded our Assisted Listening System.

We hope this improves your worship experience. If there is something else that is a struggle for you during the service, please let Jim Boratko know.



Visit the JPWL to:

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

The JPW Library is open Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday at 9-12.

Sound Healing & Meditation Event First Church Chapel, Sunday, October 19, 4-5:30

Free Program*

An immersive journey using sound therapy, meditation, and various energy healing modalities to promote wellness. Participants report blissful relaxation, transformative re-patterning of thoughts, personal insights, and a spiritual connection for those seeking alignment of mind, body, and Spirit. You are welcome to bring yoga mats, pillows, blankets, or journals. Please dress comfortably. *This is a free program, thanks to the generosity of Miss Florence Crofut. A freewill donation will be collected at the door and donated to the Fidelco Guide Dog foundation. Please [register here](#).

JPWL Faithful Fitness Meditation Class Resumes October 8

The JPW Library invites you to attend a free* fitness or Taichi/qigong class – and we're delighted to announce that Practicing Presence returns Wednesday, October 8! All sessions provide an opportunity for meditation as well as movement, and perfect attendance is *not* required.

- **Practicing Presence** meditation led by Janice Olson – Resumes Wednesday, October 8 from 11-12 in the Quiet Room on the 4th Floor. Room # 407. No registration required; just drop in!
- **FitMix with Kathi Boratko** – Tuesdays, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. in the Auditorium. [More info and registration here.](#)
- **Tai Chi & Qi Gong** with Cynthia Hoag – Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the Chapel. [More info and registration here.](#)

*These programs are provided free of charge through the JPWL Crofut Fund.

Seed Library Now Taking Donations

Please keep *WeHa Grows!* in mind as you put your gardens to bed this fall. Your donation of locally harvested seeds is what sustains our seed library.

How to collect seeds: After allowing a portion of a plant to go to seed, remove seeds and place them in a sealed paper envelope (available through the JPW Library and Book Mobile). On the outside of the envelope, note your name and the plant's name, variety, and year of harvest. Drop off your seeds during JPW Library hours or at the Book Mobile. Thank you for donating to and supporting this important ministry!

Join a Book Group!

The John P. Webster Library sponsors three book groups that meet regularly in the library September-June. Copies of the books are provided for participants, and 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** meets on Mondays from noon to 1:30 p.m. This month, they are discussing [The Tears of Things: Prophetic Wisdom for an Age of Outrage](#). Fr. Richard Rohr turns to the writings of the Jewish prophets, revealing how some of the lesser-read books of the Bible offer us a crucial path forward today as we cope with private disappointments and the anger we may feel in these unpredictable times. Drawing on a century of biblical scholarship, breathing new life into ancient wisdom, Rohr paves a path forward for anyone seeking a way of compassionate living in a hurting world.
- **Food for Thought** resumes meeting Tuesday, October 7 at 5 p.m. We're discussing [How Lucky](#) by Will Leitch, "the unforgettable story of Daniel, a fiercely resilient young man living with a physical disability, as he works to solve a kidnapping incident he has witnessed. Unforgettable. Brilliant." (online reader reviews).
- **Believe in YourSHELF Tween Book Group** meets Sunday, October 19 at 10 a.m. in the Community Room. We're starting the year with [The Puzzling Fate of Millicent Graves](#) by Dora M. Mitchell. "If life were a bookshelf, Millicent Graves would have it organized to perfection. Instead, her life is filled with chaos. When mysterious jigsaw puzzles offer Millie a chance to change her destiny, she rearranges the pieces she doesn't like, replacing some parts with ones that better suit her vision of an organized life" (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.

