



# Sunday Notes



First Church Happenings for the week of October 5, 2025

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## Sunday Worship



"And [Jesus] did the same with the cup after supper, saying,  
'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'" – Luke 22:20

What the world needs now – and I mean in these increasingly messy moments RIGHT now -- is a new covenant! The current contract stinks. Sorry. Not sorry. I didn't sign up for constant conflict and divisiveness and defensiveness. I don't believe you did either! This climate of nastiness and name calling and cancelling isn't working. At all. It's not what Jesus had in mind. At all.

Sunday's coming. World Communion Sunday, moreover. It feels like the perfect opportunity to remember the blessed tie that binds our hearts in Christian love: the global fellowship of kindred minds. It's a fine time to rededicate ourselves to connection. I'll say more when I see you. The sermon is entitled: Kindling Close Encounters.

Be a blessing. Be the church.

rev.fredd



### Altar Flowers

This week our Altar Flowers are donated by **Paul and Bev Truebig** in loving memory of **Janet Ellen Smith**, Bev's sister.

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## Today's Events

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**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!

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## Upcoming Events and Announcements

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### Sidewalk Dedication During Coffee Hour @ the JPW Library

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!

### West Hartford Festival of Trees is Coming!

The holidays are on their way, and so is a favorite tradition—the **10<sup>th</sup> Annual West Hartford Festival of Trees!** The joyful event takes place on **Thursday, December 4, from 5 to 8 p.m.** during the Holiday Stroll — **and on Saturday, December 6, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.!**

We'd love for you to be part of the magic by donating a **decorated artificial tree** or a **gift card** (or both!). Your festive creation will help light up the event and bring joy to our community. Call a friend and start planning!

### Reserve your tree or gift card by Sunday, November 23!

You can register a tree online [HERE](#) (one tree per form) or gift card [HERE](#). Contact us at: [festivaloftreeswh@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:festivaloftreeswh@whfirstchurch.org) if you need assistance.

We also need more volunteers to help with the planning, setup, and hosting during the event. Please come to the Oct. 5 meeting, in the JPW Library after church at 11:30. If interested but can't attend please let us know at: [festivaloftreeswh@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:festivaloftreeswh@whfirstchurch.org).

### 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!

### 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.

**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.

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### 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: 10/12, 10/19, 10/26 and more!**

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## October 2025 Reach Out - Fidelco Guide Foundation, Inc.

Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, Inc. is dedicated to limitless potential — to ensuring people who are blind enjoy increased independence to improve their lives and the world around them. Our clients raise families, serve America in the military, and sacrifice on the battlefield. They advocate for those who are visually impaired, win gold medals as world-class athletes, educate, and more.

It takes 2 years, 15,000 hours, and \$65,000 to create each life-changing guide dog. All Fidelco guide dogs are provided to clients at no cost thanks to generous support from individuals, foundations, corporations, and other organizations. To learn more and donate please use the links provided or donate in church (**note Fidelco on your envelope**) or online thru the church: <https://pushpay.com/g/whfirstchurch>

Or to give directly to Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, Inc.: <https://secure.fidelco.org/site/Donation>

To learn more about Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, Inc.: <https://fidelco.org/about/>

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### GHIAA invites us to share our experiences and shape GHIAA's next steps

We are invited to come together with others in GHIAA's network of 50 congregations, to share stories of personal impact and of what we are seeing in our communities regarding the issues GHIAA has been working on. Each gathering will focus on a specific topic -- immigrant rights and protections, housing affordability, or the human impact of our state's inequitable fiscal policies.

To register to attend a gathering, go to [www.cljct.org/ghiaa/housemeetings](http://www.cljct.org/ghiaa/housemeetings). If you would like to join the conversation on more than one issue, you are welcome to register for multiple dates. You are also welcome to invite a friend or neighbor to register and attend with you. Everyone is welcome, especially those who have personal stories about the importance of these issues. These critical conversations will help to shape GHIAA's next steps in each of the issue areas.

Questions? Contact Linda Bronstein ([lindadiane275@gmail.com](mailto:lindadiane275@gmail.com)) or Terry Schmitt ([terryschmittwh@gmail.com](mailto:terryschmittwh@gmail.com)).

The topics, dates, times, and locations are as follows:

#### Immigrant Rights & Protections

Sunday, October 19, 1:00-3:00 pm, UUSE, Manchester

Monday, October 27, 7:00-8:30 pm, Church of Christ (Congregational), Newington

#### Housing Affordability

Sunday, October 26, 3:00-4:30 pm, First Church of Christ, Simsbury

Tuesday, November 4, 7:00-8:30 pm, Westminster Presbyterian Church, West Hartford

#### Fiscal Policy Reform

Sunday, October 26, 2:00-3:30 pm, Emanuel Lutheran, Hartford

Thursday, October 30, 7:00-8:30 pm, Congregation Beth Israel, West Hartford

### Visit the JPWL this Sunday!

- 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](#).

### Seed Library Needs Your 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!

## JPWL Faithful Fitness Meditation Class Resumes October 8!

We're delighted to announce that Practicing Presence returns this Wednesday, October 8! Join us for an hour of meditation and reflection. Our Tai Chi / Chi Gong and fitness classes are underway, and operate on a drop-in basis. All sessions provide an opportunity for meditation as well as movement.

- **FitMix with Kathi Boratko** – Tuesdays, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. in the Auditorium.  
[More info and registration here.](#)
- **Practicing Presence** meditation led by Janice Olson – **Resumes Wednesday, October 8** from 11-12 in the Quiet Room (#403). No registration required; just drop in!
- **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 for free through the JPWL Crofut Fund.

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

- **Awakening the Spirit meets Mondays from 12-1:30.** This month, they continue 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).

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## 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.

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## 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](mailto:Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org) or 860-233-9605.

**Submit Prayer Requests at** [http://bit.ly/FCprayer\\_request](http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request).

