



Sunday Notes

First Church Happenings for the week of November 9, 2025



Sunday Worship

"Wondrously show your steadfast love, O savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand. Guard me as the apple of the eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings..."

[Psalm 17:7-8](#)

If you go wandering around the world wide web, it happens that you'll see some fascinating sights...pardon me...sites. It happened to me. In thinking about Sunday's subject, I searched and found orangepipin.com. If you're interested in apple varieties or orchards where apples are grown, that's the perfect place.

Most remarkably, the site founders have created an alphabetical index of 762 kinds. Seven hundred sixty-two! There are 38 that begin with the letter A...73 with the letter B...51 with the letter C...and so on..

I wonder if you have a favorite variety. I wonder, moreover, what the world would look like if we all knew – regardless of type -- that we were the apple of God's eye. I'll say more when I see you. The sermon is entitled: **Them Apples**.

Be a blessing...be salt and light!

rev.fredd



Altar Flowers

This week our Altar Flowers are donated by **Julia Rosa** in loving memory of parents, **Fern and John Pellettier**, and **Assunta and Emidio Rosa**.

Light the Steeple

This week our Steeple is lit by **Linda Moffitt and Family** in loving memory of **Richard Moffitt**.

Upcoming Events and Announcements

Help for Jamaica

The Academy and the Outreach Team of First Church West Hartford are joining together to support efforts to get much needed supplies to those in need. 3 of the Academy staff from Jamaica have family and friends impacted by the storm.

Help is needed now, so we will start our collection immediately. We will place boxes outside of each classroom and around the church. All donations will be sent through the West Indian Social Club in Hartford and will go directly to those most impacted.

Here is a list of items that are most needed:

- *Nonperishable food (canned fruit and vegetables and meat/fish, dry items, baby food and supplies.*
- *Bottled water and powdered drink mixes*
- *Baby items: diapers (all sizes), wipes, food, formula (sealed), baby clothing, blanket*
- *Toiletries: soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, feminine hygiene products, toilet paper*
- *Clothing: shirts, pants, underwear, socks, shoes*
- *Towels, bedding, and blankets*
- *Basic first-aid supplies (bandages, antiseptic wipes)*
- *Flashlights and batteries*

Arts in The Center Concerts Presents: Chamber Music Concert Sunday, 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 concert is open to the public. A Free Will Offering will be received at the door. Park for free in church lot. If handicap access is needed, please pull up to the curb on South Main Street and enter via ramp that will be placed at Chapel entrance.

Deck the Halls with boughs of holly!!

Bring your jolly and join us in decorating our church for Christmas! We'll meet in the sanctuary on Saturday morning, November 29th from 9:00 - 11:00. All are welcome!

WH Festival of Trees needs trees, gift cards and volunteers!

West Hartford Festival of Trees is Coming! The holidays are on their way, and so is a favorite tradition, the 10th Annual West Hartford Festival of Trees! The joyful event takes place on Thursday, December 4, from 5-8pm during the Holiday Stroll, and on Saturday, December 6, from 10am-1pm. Donate a decorated tree or volunteer to help with the festival.

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

Volunteering for the Events: Sign up for one or more slots during coffee hour (or click [HERE](#)) including: selling tickets, baking cookies, greeting and directing people, or helping with handing out trees to winners.

Volunteer Opportunity

Outreach is partnered with **Fern Street Food ministry** and they are seeking volunteers for a variety of different roles and levels of commitment. Opportunities include sorting food, delivering food bags, picking up food donations, unloading and sorting food from the mobile pantry, making sandwiches and more.

If you are interested in getting involved please reach out to Carla Richardson Food Ministry Coordinator (860)233-3669 ext. 109 or email carla@westhartforduu.org

[FLYER ON OUR WEBSITE](#) Email any questions to Carol Lorenzo, Outreach team leader. ctlorenzo@comcast.net

Thanksgiving Baskets:

Our food collection for Thanksgiving baskets is here! If you would like to help, please bring in a food item, using the following guide: If your last name begins with...you'll bring:

Please bring items to church and place them in a Food for Friends barrel by November 23rd. We will use these items to fill the baskets. We will also be collecting Stop and Shop gift cards, which each family will receive along with their basket of food items. We are looking for volunteers to fill and organize the baskets on Sunday, November 23rd after worship.

A-D: Bread and roll mix; stuffing mix
E-H: Gravy and Cranberry Sauce, Spanish Food (ie Goya Products)
I-L: Canned fruits and vegetables
M-P: Juice, tea and coffee
Q-T: Rice and potatoes
U-Z: Breakfast cereals and juice boxes

If you can help out or have any questions please contact Diane Bohman at dmbohman@comcast.net or Molly Bohman at jwebsterlib@whfirstchurch.org

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: Nov 23, Dec 21

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

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.

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!

One of our Covenant to Care families is in need of a bookcase. If you have one that you are willing to donate, please contact [Diane](#) or [Molly Bohman](#).

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.

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!

Monthly Celtic Worship Services in the Chapel

Sunday, November 23, 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 October service will be led by Janice Olson. The free will offering will be donated to [APK Charities](#), providing support for veterans. Please contact Julia Rosa or Liz Oman-Wilfred with questions.

***Veterans Day November 11th commemorates the service of all U.S. Veterans!
Let us honor and support those who served by supporting CT veterans!***

November 2025 Reach Out: APK charities

APK charities was established in loving memory of Captain Andrew Michael Pedersen-Keel (PK), Special Forces ODA 3126 Commander, a highly decorated and exceptional leader who gave his life in Afghanistan in March 2013. APK provides direct financial assistance to Connecticut Veterans, active duty service members, their families, and Gold Star families of all branches and eras of service, who are in need of emergency and hardship assistance. The Direct Assistance Program seeks to alleviate immediate and critical medical, housing, transportation, and other needs. APK partners with CT Army National Guard, CT Veteran's Legal Center, Columbus House, VA Social Services and others. APK has distributed more than \$660,000 in funds to:

- Cover the cost of medical expenses
- Pay rent, rent arrears, security deposits and utilities
- Defray critical home repairs and maintenance costs
- Purchase and repair automobiles
- Furnish and outfit apartments for unhoused Veterans, and much more ...

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

Or to give directly to APK Charities: <https://www.apkcharities.org/donate/>

To learn more about APK Charities: <https://www.apkcharities.org/about-apk-charities/>

FREE Fitness Classes -- Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy Spirit!

The JPWL invites you to attend a free *Faithful Fitness* class. Each class provides an opportunity for meditation as well as movement. More information is available on each class's registration page:

- **FitMix with Kathi Boratko** – Tuesdays, 5:45 – 6:45 p.m. in the Auditorium. [More info and registration here.](#)
- **Tai Chi & Qi Gong** with Cynthia Hoag – Thursdays, 10:30-11:30am in the Chapel. [More info and registration here.](#)

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

Practicing Presence - Weekly Drop-In Meditation Gathering, Wednesday's from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm, **Has moved from Room 407 to the Community Room down the hallway and across from the library!** Learn techniques to quiet the mind and nurture the spirit during Practicing Presence, the weekly meditation session at First Church. Led by Janice Olson, certified yoga instructor and spiritual director, the session consists of a 20 minute meditation followed by a brief time for journaling and we finish with a discussion of our experience. No meditation experience required; just show up and be curious. Sponsored by the JPW library, there is no cost and no obligation to attend. Drop in and check it out...all are welcome. For more information, contact Janice at (860) 985-1883.

Yoga with Cynthia Wolcott, Wednesdays, 9:30-10:45 am in the chapel, enter via the North Door. Cynthia Wolcott has been leading yoga and healing movement classes for nearly two decades.



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.

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 Mondays from 12-1:30.** November's discussion is based on [*Stress Less: 9 Habits from the Bible and Brain Science*](#) by Dr. Charles Stone. In late August, Rev. Fredd used parts of the book as the basis for his sermon about building up resilience. This month-long conversation (guided by Rev. Fredd) consists of deeper exploration of Dr. Stone's nine practical insights for combatting our common worries and fears. According to a poll from the American Psychological Association more than a quarter of American adults say they're so stressed they can't function. Young people too. *Stress Less* provides hope and healing.
- **Food for Thought** meets Tuesday, December 2nd, 5-6:30 p.m. We'll discuss [*The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife*](#) by Anna Johnston. "Frederick Fife was born with an extra helping of kindness in his heart. The problem is, at age eighty-two...he's broke and on the brink of eviction. But Fred's luck changes when he's mistaken for Bernard Greer, a missing resident at the local nursing home, and takes his place. Now Fred has warm meals in his belly and a roof over his head—as long as his look-alike Bernard never turns up. Denise Simms is stuck breathing the same disappointing air again and again. A middle-aged mom and caregiver at Bernard's facility, her crumbling marriage and daughter's health concerns are suffocating her joy for life. As Fred walks in Bernard's shoes and learns about his past, Denise uncovers clues that threaten to reveal his identity. Will she expose the truth before Fred can return a broken life to mint condition?" (HarperCollins)
- **Believe in YourSHELF Tween Book Group** meets Sunday, November 16th at 10:15am (when Sunday School starts) in the Community Room. We will discuss [*Whale Eyes*](#), a memoir by James Robinson. "Told through an experimental mix of intimate anecdotes and interactive visuals, this book immerses readers in James's experiences growing up with strabismus, allowing them to see the world through one eye at a time. Readers will get lost as they chase words. They'll stare into this book while taking a vision test. They'll hold it upside down as they practice "pretend-reading" and they'll follow an unlikely trail toward discovering the power of words. (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.

