

†HYMN 565 [If You Will Trust in God to Guide to Guide You](#) WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE *Amen* Richard Smallwood
The First Church Choir

POSTLUDE *Allegro, from the Concerto in F, No. 13* G. F. Handel
"The Cuckoo and the Nightingale"

The organ selections today are in celebration of the anniversary of George Fredric Handel, who was born on February 23, 1685.

To attach your hearing aids to our assisted listening system, download the Sennheiser Mobileconnect App and scan this code:



First Church of Christ Congregational
12 South Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107
(860) 233-9605
www.whfirstchurch.org

To Give Online: <http://www.whfirstchurch.org/giving/give>

First Church's worship services are live streamed every Sunday downstairs in our church library, the John P. Webster Library. Watch church while your toddler plays in our children's area or if you need a separate place to worship for any other reason.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026
10 o'clock

Rev. Fredd Ward, Senior Pastor
Jim Boratko, Director of Worship Arts
Amanda Bethune, Director of Faith Formation

PRELUDES *Two Movements from "The Water Music"* G. F. Handel
III. Air
IV. Bouree

WELCOME

†CALL TO WORSHIP

Bob Calef

One: Trust in God with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

Many: Steadfast love surrounds those who live by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

One: When we humbly admit our shortcomings, we are embraced by the grace and forgiveness of God.

Many: Steadfast love surrounds those who do not put God to the test.

One: Open yourselves to the guidance and wisdom of the Spirit.

Many: Steadfast love surrounds those who worship God and serve only God.

†HYMN 180

[Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days](#)

ST. FLAVIAN

†OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we seek the freedom that may be found in the grace we receive through Christ Jesus. Keep us from temptation, especially the temptation to prove ourselves to others. Kindle within us the willingness to walk in the way of Christ. May your Divine Spirit tend us as angels attended Jesus in the wilderness. Amen.

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

Amanda Bethune

ANTHEM

Elijah Rock
 The Adult Choir

arr. Jester Hairston

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

SCRIPTURE READINGS

[Matthew 4:1-11 \(N T p.3-4\)](#)

† Please stand in body or spirit as you are able.

†RESPONSE ([HYMN 264](#))

Where the Spirit of the Lord Is

ADAMS

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is peace.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is love.

There is comfort in life's darkest hour, there is light and life, there is help and power in the Spirit, in the Spirit of the Lord.

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SERMON

Who Are You Fooling? What Are You Trying to Prove?

Rev. Fredd Ward

HYMN 540

[O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go](#)

ST. MARGARET

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

God has blessed us abundantly. In response, we get to bless others by extending extravagant love through our weekly offering and annual stewardship campaign.

OFFERTORY

Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel

arr. Moses Hogan

The First Church Choir, Michelle Kayser, Shannon Connolly, Tsehai Marson, soloists

†DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

†OFFERTORY PRAYER

We offer ourselves to you, Savior Jesus, emptying ourselves to become vessels of love and hope to all whom we encounter. May the gift of our lives and our loving service create God's kingdom on earth. Amen.

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments following the service!