



# Sunday Notes

First Church Happenings for the week of March 1, 2026



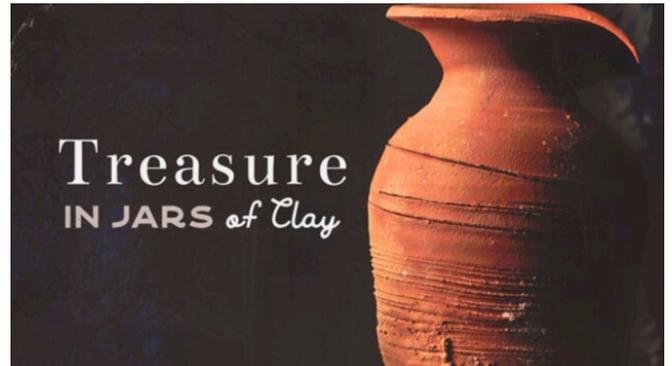
## Sunday Worship

This week I hope to challenge a couple of myths about our faith. The first myth has to do with the people we read about in the bible that we call saints. The second myth has to do with Lent being a sad and somber time when we are supposed to be filled with remorse and guilt.

I think both of those myths rob us of the Godly power we have been given to do good and share love in our families and beyond. So, let's talk about the power of truth in Lent.

See you in church!

Yours,  
Terry



## CALL TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

Notice is hereby given that a Congregational Meeting of the First Church of Christ Congregational of West Hartford, Connecticut, UCC, will be held in the Meetinghouse on Sunday, March 8, 2026, starting at approximately 11:15 AM. This meeting is called to transact the following items of business:

1. To consider and vote on the minutes of the congregational meetings held on 03-09-2025, 09-21-2025, and 02-01-2026.
2. To consider and vote on the proposed slate of Officers, Team Leaders and Team Members for First Church for the 2026 year.
3. In accordance with the By-laws of First Church, action will be taken only on matters included in the Call to Meeting.

Notice given on February 22, 2026  
Linda Bronstein, Secretary

## Announcements

### Updating the Church Directory · LAST DAY TO EDIT!

An up-to-date picture directory is in the works. We will be using any names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and pictures that are in "CCB". If you wish for your information to be included or excluded, please complete this form <https://whfirstchurch.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/367/responses/new> by March 1, 2026. Once the directory is complete, it will be made available only to church members and not to anyone outside of the church. Any questions? Please reach out to [Diane Bohman](#) or [Susan Tobin](#).

### Jeffrey Carbone's Eagle Scout Project

Please consider donating to help fund the renovation of the Festival of Trees storage closet. The space will need some new shelves, storage bins and fresh paint. Donate by Venmo until March 14.



### Lee Ellenwood Transition

It is with heavy hearts that we share the news that Rev. Lee Ellenwood, the John P. Webster Library's first director, has died (February 2026) Lee's warm and open heart, his charm and curiosity, and his wonderful sense of humor established an atmosphere of welcome and acceptance for all who visited the JPWL.

Thank you, Lee, for sharing your imagination, recipes, laughter, music, and knowledge with us for 25 years!

## Covenant to Care - Fill an Easter Basket

Starting Sunday, **March 8th**, see Diane or Molly in the Auditorium to sign-out an Easter Basket to fill and return by March 29th (Palm Sunday)! Age-appropriate suggestions will be included with each basket. Thank you!

## New Book Club: A guided tour of early Christianity

Grab your explorer's hat and get ready to adventure into the world of those who walked with Jesus, talked about him and wondered what was going on with this new group of devoted Jesus people. How does history written over the course of 2,000 years inform our beliefs today? Join Michael Protos for this new book group on every other Wednesday at 6:45 p.m. in the Youth Room, **starting on March 11**. We'll embark on a path that allows you to jump in and jump out based on your availability without feeling out of touch with the discussion. Childcare will be available for parents who would like to attend and need a hand! Kindly sign up at this [GOOGLE FORM](#) or reach out to Michael.

## March Madness Volunteer Opportunity: Levo International

Food insecurity is a major issue for Connecticut families, particularly in urban settings. A food desert is an area that lacks access to healthy food, particularly fresh produce. The city of Hartford ranks as the 8th worst food desert in the country based on USDA data. Levo's hydroponics model turns vacant land into highly productive agricultural space. Hydroponics is an affordable and practical way of growing fresh produce in almost any setting. These neighborhood farms produce food that employs local community members as well as increasing food access. Levo's goal is to reach one million pounds of vegetables grown in Hartford by 2028. Join us for a hands-on volunteer event dedicated to revitalizing a space for sustainable food production! Help us start building systems at our new Enfield lot. We need your help to make it happen! Located at 280 Enfield St, Hartford, CT **Dates: Saturday March 7, 14, 21, 28 & Tuesday March 10 & 31** Gather friends & sign up here: <https://levointernational.org/volunteer>

## Arts in The Center Concerts Presents: Chamber Music Concert Sunday, March 15 at 3:00pm in the Chapel.

Great music performed to an audience in an intimate setting. The Foundry Quartet will perform. Find out more about them on their website: <https://www.foundryquartet.com>. 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.

## Dialogue Circles, Sunday, March 15 at 11:15am in the Fellowship Room

You're invited to participate in Dialogue Circles with Master of Arts in International Peacebuilding (MAP) students from HIU (Hartford International University for Religion and Peace). The conversations are conducted as part of the MAP curriculum. Students are training to become community change agents by developing proficiency in conflict transformation and fluency in the religious traditions of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. The ability to facilitate productive conversation is a critical skill for MAP students and all peace builders. Which is why your participation matters. We'll form break-out groups to consider this question: "What does it mean to live out our faith in the world?" The goal is to get 20-25 participants. The hope is that all who join the circles will gain insights and be inspired! Please register here: <https://whfirstchurch.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/370/responses/new>

**\* Postponed until March 16\*** **Yoga with Cynthia Wolcott**, Wednesdays, 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. Cynthia Wolcott has been leading yoga and healing movement classes for nearly two decades.

## Blessing Bags

Creating blessing bags is a heartfelt way to offer support to those in need, and can be a fun and meaningful project for the whole congregation. Please join the Outreach team on **Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup>** in the auditorium to assemble blessing bags for our Outreach Mission Partners. To fill the bags we are collecting the following items (please place in blue bins labeled for Blessing Bag collections by March 28<sup>th</sup>)

- Underwear (women and men's, size large)
- Individual snacks
- Socks
- Lip Balm
- Lotion
- Shampoo
- Q-tips
- Body Wipes
- Body wash
- Washcloth
- Deodorant
- Shaving Cream
- Bar Soaps
- Disposable Razors
- Travel Size Lotion
- Travel Size Body Wash
- Tampons/Pads
- Dish Soap
- Surface cleaner
- Bathroom cleaner

## March Reach Out: Interval House

Founded in 1977, Interval House is the largest agency in the state of Connecticut dedicated to ending domestic violence. Interval House has long been committed to empowering its clients, providing a nurturing and encouraging environment for victims to heal and acquire the tools to move on. The hotline and Safe House provide a lifeline to those in urgent need of safety, and Interval House's advocates provide guidance for clients facing legal and financial obstacles as a result of leaving a violent home. Interval House's robust network of partnerships connects clients with community resources aimed at helping them pursue higher education, start careers and live productive, self-sufficient lives in safety.

Services provided:

- 24-Hour Hotline
- Emergency Safe House
- Safety Planning and Counseling
- Court Advocacy
- Children's Programs
- Law Enforcement Partnership
- Lethality Assessment Program
- Support Groups
- Breaking The Cycle

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

To learn more visit: <https://intervalhousect.org/> or to donate directly: <https://intervalhousect.app.neoncrm.com/forms/donate>

---

## 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:** [http://bit.ly/FCprayer\\_request](http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request).



## Storm Closings

Just a reminder that storm closings will be posted on [WORSHIP](#) and [SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP](#) pages or go directly to [NBC](#) or [CBS](#).

**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

## Member Photos Needed

Is your profile lacking a photo? If so please share a pic to add to your CCB, by taking a selfie or see Amy Melvin and she can photograph you. Share via text or email; 860-798-5829, [communications@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:communications@whfirstchurch.org). Thank you.

## Fill our Food buckets!

This is a gentle reminder that the day-to-day needs for food aren't going away. Please see [suggestions here](#) for ideas and add a few items to your grocery cart.

## First Church's John P. Webster Library is open Sundays for you!



- 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 also open Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm

---

For More Detailed Information Read the NEW JPWL E-Newsletter! "*Shelf Reflections*" <https://conta.cc/3O6gmZx>

### Lunch & Learn: *Navigating the "Goo Stage"* with Stephanie Simpson, MA, MFA, PCC

Free 2-hour interactive workshop

Sunday, March 22 from 11:30-1:30 in the JPW Library

Feeling overwhelmed? You're not alone. Ongoing life changes—at work, in relationships, with health, or in daily routines—can add up quickly. During times of transition and uncertainty, many of us find ourselves in the "Goo Stage": the in-between space where old ways no longer fit, new ones haven't formed yet, and things can feel messy, unclear, or unstable. [Register here](#)

### New in the JPWL Gallery! February 22 – April 12

Surrealist Art Prints Available · *ÁDÁM WÜRTZ (1927-1994): Hungarian Painter, Illustrator, and Printmaker*

Ádám Würtz drew his inspiration from the rural Hungarian region where his family had lived for centuries. Little villages nestled within gentle hills, and steeped in wild and fantastic legends, became the foundation for his amusing, sometimes grotesque, drawings. Several years ago, during a routine inventory, JPWL staff uncovered this group of Würtz prints in the Archives. After careful evaluation, we concluded that the prints did not align with our collection policy and should be deaccessioned. Over the following months, staff worked diligently to identify appropriate institutions or buyers for donation or sale. The remaining prints are now on display. The JPWL is offering the remaining prints to First Church members and friends in exchange for a suggested donation of \$35. All donations will directly support the continued care and preservation of the Archives. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership in this work. Please see Jennifer with questions.

### Let the (Board)Games Begin! Wednesdays, 2:30-4 p.m. · JPW Library

#### FREE Wellness Classes – Drop Ins Welcome

Start a new spiritual practice -- attend an aerobics or Taichi class. Both classes provide opportunities for meditation and movement; both can improve overall health and wellbeing. Register is ongoing (join anytime!) at the link below. More information is available on each class's registration page. Both classes run through the last week of June. These programs are provided for free through the JPWL Crofut Fund.

- **FitMix Fitness with Kathi Boratko** – Tuesdays, 5:45 – 6:45 p.m. [More info and registration here.](#)
- **Tai Chi & Qi Gong**– Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. [More info and registration here.](#)

#### Book Group Info:

##### **Awakening the Spirit:** Mondays from 12-1:30 pm in the JPWL

Next Meeting: March 2 in the JPW Library

Book: *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* by Amy Jill Levine

##### **Food for Thought:** First Tuesdays of each month, 5:00-6:30

Next meeting: March 3 in the JPW Library

Book: *Where are All the Kids? A Mother's Journey of Determination (Based on a True Story)* by Teri Leonard Michaud.

West Hartford resident Michaud shares the story of how her mother overcame 1960s religious and social norms to escape an abusive marriage and protect her six children. UPDATE: Teri will chat about and read from her book Tuesday, March 31 in the JPWL. Join us if you have read her book or are interested in her story!

##### **Believe in YourSHELF Middle School Book Group**

Next Meeting: March 15 at 10:15 a.m. in the Community Room

Book: *Very Bad at Math* by Hope Larson