



# Sunday Notes



First Church Happenings for the week of March 22, 2026

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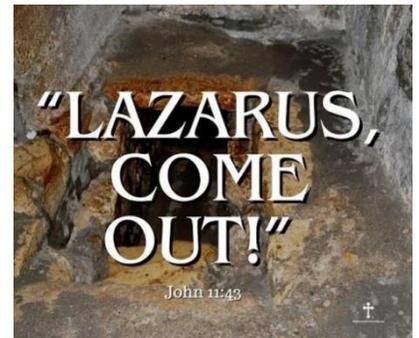
## Sunday Worship

"But what had lasting significance were not the miracles themselves but Jesus' love. Jesus raised his friend Lazarus from the dead, and a few years later, Lazarus died again. Jesus healed the sick, but they eventually [relapsed]. He fed the five thousand, and the next day they were hungry again. But we remember his love." – Shane Claiborne

Hey there:

This Sunday, the featured scripture is the gospel account of Jesus raising his beloved friend from death (John 11:1-45). It's one of my favorite stories for two reasons. First, I've been there, and Jesus did that for me. I know what it's like to be brought back from the edge of eternity. You may have had your own resurrection experience.

Secondly, I relish the challenge of trying to translate a text that defies common sense – a story that discloses its truth to the extent that the reader would stand at its door and cry with a loud voice: "*Lazarus, come out!*"



I'll say more when I see you.

Take good care meanwhile,

rev.fredd

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## Altar Flowers

This week our Altar Flowers are donated by **John and Tami Stone**, given in loving memory of **John and Betty Stone**.

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## Altar Flowers Donations

If you would like to donate, please reach out to the Office Manager in the church office or [Donate Online](#)

## Easter Lily and Organ & Carillon Donations

Donate [Easter Lily](#) and [Organ & Carillon](#) online, or if you prefer, download the [printable form](#) and return it to the church office with your payment. If you wish to have your donation listed in the Sunday Bulletin, please make your donation by Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions, please contact the Office Manager at [office.manager@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:office.manager@whfirstchurch.org) or 860-233-9605.

## Covenant to Care · Fill an Easter Basket

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!

## Outreach Mission

Let's Make Lunches! This Sunday after church, all are welcome to help in the auditorium.

### **Celtic Worship This Sunday**

March 22 at 5 p.m., First Church Chapel. Join us for a peaceful, reflective service with prayer, Communion, music, poetry, and shared silence, led by Rev. Tom Carr. A free will offering will support Interval House and its work with domestic violence survivors. Questions? Contact Julia Rosa or Jennifer deSimas.

### **Let's Go to The Mountaintop – A Theater Invitation from Rev. Fredd**

April 3, 1968. An exhausted Martin Luther King Jr. retires to his room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis after an unscheduled address to striking sanitation workers. A mysterious young maid named Camae delivers room service. They engage in humorous conversation – a chance encounter that develops into a soul-searching discussion about their mutual hopes and fears. When Camae reveals a secret, Dr. King is compelled to confront his destiny and legacy. I've reserved ten seats (\$50 per) at **The Playhouse on Park for the March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2 p.m.** closing performance of this Olivier Award-winning play written and directed by Pulitzer Prize winner Katori Hall. Join me for the show and talk back with the cast following the show! Interested? See Rev. Fredd.

### **Lent & Easter at First Church**

**Palm Sunday**, March 29, 10 a.m. – worship with us and collect your palms! **Good Friday** – April 3: *Open Chapel from 12-1 p.m.* for rest and quiet time to reflect. *Indoor Labyrinth Walk, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.*, auditorium. Contemplate your spiritual journey. Sound Healer Kristin Vece will provide sacred music. Sponsored by the JPW Library and the Spirit Team *Good Friday Service, 7 p.m.*, chapel. **Easter Sunday** – April 5, 10 a.m. *Worship Service* featuring a brass ensemble. 11 a.m. *Easter egg hunt* for all ages on the front lawn.

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

Grab your explorer's hat and dive into the world of those who walked with Jesus, talked about him, and tried to make sense of this growing community of believers. How does history from the past 2,000 years shape what we believe today? Join Michael Protos for a new book group every other Wednesday at 6:45 p.m., starting March 11, in the Youth Room (near the auditorium). Come whenever you can; there's no need to attend every session to stay part of the conversation. Childcare will be available for parents who need it! Please [Sign Up](#) or reach out to Michael.

### **March Madness Volunteer Opportunity: Levo International**

Help tackle food insecurity in Hartford, one of the nation's largest food deserts. Levo International transforms vacant land into productive hydroponic farms that grow fresh produce and create local jobs. Join us for a hands-on volunteer day helping build systems at a new growing space. Dates: Saturday, March 14, 21, 28 and Tuesday, March 10 & 31 Location: 280 Enfield St., Hartford, CT Gather friends and [Sign Up](#).

### **Invitation to Hear about Levo International's Neighborhood Farms**

Curious about hydroponic gardening and Levo International in Hartford? Join us Monday, April 6, at 1 p.m. in the auditorium for a presentation by a Levo staff member about their work turning vacant land into neighborhood farms that grow fresh produce and create local jobs.

The Mountain Valley Garden Club is hosting and warmly welcomes First Church members to attend. Please RSVP by Monday, March 23, to Nancy Ball: 860-966-9337 or [shoedog1961@gmail.com](mailto:shoedog1961@gmail.com)

### **JPWL Author Visit: Teri Leonard Michaud**

Tuesday, March 31, 5–6:30 p.m., JPW Library Join local author Teri Leonard Michaud as she shares her memoir, *Where Are All the Kids? A Mother's Journey of Determination*, based on 1960s West Hartford. All are welcome! Questions? See Jennifer or Molly.

### **Blessing Bags**

Join the Outreach Team on Sunday, March 29, after worship in the auditorium to assemble blessing bags for our Outreach Mission Partners. Support those in need in a simple and meaningful way. View the [complete list of items](#) needed by March 28<sup>th</sup>.

### March Reach Out: Interval House

Founded in 1977, Interval House is Connecticut's largest agency dedicated to ending domestic violence. The organization provides a lifeline for those seeking safety through its 24-hour hotline, emergency safe house, counseling, court advocacy, children's programs, and support groups. Interval House also partners with community organizations to help clients pursue education, careers, and safe, independent lives. To donate in church (note Interval House on your envelope). [Learn More](#) or [Donate Online](#)

### FREE Wellness Classes – Drop Ins Welcome

Try a new spiritual practice through movement and meditation with aerobics or Tai Chi. Both classes support overall health and well-being and run through the last week of June. Registration is ongoing, join anytime. These programs are free through the JPWL Crofut Fund.

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

### Days for Girls, Simsbury Chapter

Join the [Days for Girls workshop](#) at Simsbury United Methodist Church (799 Hopmeadow St.) on the second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m.–Noon. Contact Doey Barnett at doeybarnett115@gmail.com for [more info](#).

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### 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

[Sign up](#) for the JPW Library Newsletter or check out the [website](#) to Learn About More Events!

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### Wednesday Board Games

Every Wednesday from 2:30-4 p.m. through April 15

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

Join Stephanie Simpson, MA, MFA, PCC, next Sunday, March 22, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. in the JPW Library. This free 2-hour workshop offers a supportive space to reflect on life transitions—the “Goo Stage”—when old ways no longer fit and new ones haven't formed yet. Through discussion and small-group activities, you'll explore what's shifting in your life and learn simple tools to stay grounded. A light lunch will be served. [Learn More](#) and [Register Here](#).

### Art Sale in the JPWL Gallery

Surrealist prints by Hungarian artist *Ádám WÜRTZ* (1927–1994) are available February 22–April 12. Suggested donation: \$35, with all proceeds supporting the care and preservation of the Archives. View the prints in the JPWL Gallery, and thank you for your support.

### JPWL Author Visit: Teri Leonard Michaud

Join local author Teri Leonard Michaud as she shares her memoir, *Where Are All the Kids? A Mother's Journey of Determination*, based on 1960s West Hartford. All are welcome! Questions? See Jennifer or Molly.

### Book Group Info

The John P. Webster Library sponsors three book groups that meet regularly from September through June. Copies of the books are provided for participants, and new members are always welcome! For more information, please contact Jennifer or Molly at 860-232-3893 or at [jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org).

**Awakening the Spirit:** Mondays  
from 12-1:30 pm in the JPWL  
Next Meeting: March 23 in the  
JPW Library  
Book: *How We Learn to Be Brave*  
by Mariann Edgar Budde.

**Food for Thought:** First Tuesdays  
of each month, 5:00-6:30  
Next meeting: April 7 in the JPW  
Library  
Book: *The Other Americans* by  
Laila Lalami.

**Believe in YourSHELF Middle  
School Book Group – *this Sunday!***  
Next Meeting: April 19 at 10:15  
a.m. in the Community Room  
Book: *Very Bad at Math* by Hope  
Larson

### Spreading Your News

The Communications Team is made up of members of our Outreach Ministry, and the church Office Manager.

- **Sunday Notes/Happenings submissions** are *due by noon* on Tuesdays to [office.manager@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:office.manager@whfirstchurch.org)
- **Website, printed pieces, and Social Media additions or changes** can be sent to Amy and Joy anytime.  
Amy Melvin: [Communications@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Communications@whfirstchurch.org), Joy Taylor: [Communications2@whfirstchurch.org](mailto:Communications2@whfirstchurch.org)

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

