

Find the Differences!

Can you find 10 differences between the two pictures?
Look closely and have fun!



Church Office Hours

Monday- Friday | 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org | 860-233-9605



May 3,
2026

Sunday Notes

Issue
#18

First Church Happenings

"Wear the word like a loose garment, which touches us in a few places and there lightly" – Saint Francis of Assisi

*Wear the world like a loose garment,
which touches us in a few places and there lightly.*

Bless me, friends, for I have "sinned":

I mean to say that I've strayed from something I said last Sunday. During the sermon, I told you about the Monday things that I do- selecting scripture that speaks to me; inventing a sermon title; and developing the call to worship, opening prayer, etc.

This week, I did those Monday things on Tuesday. Can you believe it?! Also, I didn't choose a text from the lectionary schedule. I've decided to part with my usual process. Nonetheless, I trust God will restore my soul and lead me along the right path

Sunday's scripture selection (Matthew 6:25-34) contains counsel for worried Christians. Jesus asks, "And why do you worry about clothing?" That question causes me to wonder about the connection between our outfits and our outlook. I'll say more when I see you. The sermon is entitled "The Loose Garment Life".

Love you madly.

rev.fredd

ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS

This week's flowers are donated by **Will Mackey**, in loving memory of **Bianca Dell'Isola Mackey**

Interested in sponsoring altar flowers? Donations can be made online or through the church office.

LIGHT THE STEEPLE

This week the steeple is lit by **Ruthie Johnson**, in loving memory of **Thomas Henry "Tom, Dad, Poppy" Johnson**.

You are invited to celebrate or honor a loved one. Your \$25 [online donation](#) will light the steeple for one week.

PRAYER REQUESTS

If you would like to share a prayer request, we invite you to reach out so we can hold you in prayer.

Submit Request:

http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION SESSIONS

Please contact Rev. Fredd in person, by phone at 860-233-9605, or email: fredd.ward@whfirstchurc.org

May Reach Out: The Miracle League of Connecticut

Where every child gets a chance to play!

The Miracle League of Connecticut offers inclusive programs for children with physical and cognitive challenges, creating a welcoming space for play, connection, and community.

Learn more: miracleleague.org | Donate: pushpay.com/g/whfirstchurch

What's Happening?

BIBLE STUDY

Every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month.

- 📅 Sunday May 17
- 🕒 9:00 a.m.
- 📍 JPW Library
- 🔗 Joe Tobin

A GUIDED TOUR OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Continuing *Jesus Before the Gospels*, we'll explore early traditions and John's community. Join anytime – childcare available.

- 📅 Wednesday May 6
- 🕒 6:45 p.m.
- 📍 Youth Toom
- 🔗 [Sign up](#) or contact Michael Protos

BOOK GROUP: AWAKENING THE SPIRIT

Book: *Falling Upward* by Fr. Richard Rohr

- 📅 Mondays; Next meeting May 4
- 🕒 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.
- 📍 JPWL

BOOK GROUP: FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Book: *Upward Bound* by Woody Brown

- 📅 1st Tuesday of the month; Next meeting May 5
- 🕒 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
- 📍 JPWL

BOOK GROUP: Believe in YourSHELF

Middle School Book Group

- 📅 May 17
- 🕒 10:15 a.m.
- 📍 Community Room

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

A relaxed time to connect, share and enjoy good company over midmorning coffee. All are welcome!

- 📅 Every Wednesday
- 🕒 10:00 a.m.
- 📍 Hartford Baking Co. WeHa Center

FAMILY ARTS FESTIVAL

Free! Hands-on arts experiences & live performances.

- 📅 Saturday May 16
- 🕒 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- 📍 West Hartford Senior Center
- 🔗 [More info/Register](#)

OXEN HILL FARM

Connect with Lisa Griffen from OHF about fresh produce available for pickup in the coming months.

- 📅 Sunday May 17
- 🕒 Coffee Hour
- 📍 Auditorium
- 🔗 Lisa Griffen, Oxen Hill Farm

FITMIX FITNESS W/ KATHI BORATKO

Faithful Fitness: Free through the JPWL Crofut Fund.

- 📅 Tuesdays
- 🕒 5:45 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.
- 📍 Auditorium
- 🔗 [More info/Register](#)

TAI CHI & QI GONG W/ CYNTHIA HOAG

Faithful Fitness: Free through the JPWL Crofut Fund.

- 📅 Thursdays
- 🕒 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
- 📍 First Church Chapel
- 🔗 [More info/Register](#)

DAYS FOR GIRLS, SIMSBURY CHAPTER

Every 2nd Saturday of the month

- 🕒 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- 📍 Simsbury United Methodist Church
- 🔗 [More Info](#) or contact Doey: doeybarnett115@gmail.com

WALK AGAINST HUNGER

First Church Striders Kevin Stratton and Dave Simpson participated in the walk on Saturday April 25. We are almost at our \$1500 goal, it's not too late to contribute. Search for our team "First Church Striders". All donations will go to Loaves and Fishes.

- 🔗 www.ctfoodshare.org/walk



Sundays and Monday-Thursday | 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
P:860-232-3893 | jpwebster@whfirstchurch.org

Watch the live-streamed worship service while your children enjoy the children's area, take advantage of a quiet space for worship when needed, and [sign up](#) for the JPW Library newsletter or visit the [website](#) to stay up to date on upcoming events.

A TIME TO SOW: "Seed for yourself"

WeHa Grows, the JPWL Seed library is back with a variety of flower, herb and vegetable seeds for your garden. Stop by or visit us next to the Book Mobile at Coffee Hour.

JPWL Lunch & Learn: Stories of Connecticut's Black Patriots

Presented by John Mills, Historian & Genealogist

Join us for stories of the African American men who served during the Revolutionary War, and the lineage of service within their families that continued into the Civil War. A light lunch will be served.

- 📅 Sunday May 3
- 🕒 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- 📍 JPW Library
- 🔗 [More info/Register](#)

NOAH: A FUTURE HOPE

The HIU (Hartford International University for Religion and Peace) and JPWL present a timely art exhibit featuring Jewish, Christian, and Muslim artists blending faith and culture.

- 📅 Through May 15
- 🕒 M-Th 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Fri – Sat 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- 📍 77 Sherman St, Hartford CT
- 🔗 [More info](#)

A RESILIENT FAITH: JAPANESE AMERICAN BAPTISTS DURING WORLD WAR II

A traveling exhibit from the American Baptist Historical Society, honoring Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

- 📅 April 28- May 30
- 🕒 During library hours: Please call first
- 📍 First Church Chapel
- 🔗 [More info](#)

"OF PLANTS AND LAND FORMATIONS (An Ode to Maine)" WORKS ON PAPER BY LINDA ISHAM

- 📅 April 28- May 30
- 🕒 During library hours: Please call first
- 📍 First Church Chapel
- 🔗 [More info](#)

Get Involved!

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS WEB PAGE

Click here to request a featured spotlight for weddings, births, baptisms, new members and other celebrations.

FILL OUR FOOD BUCKETS

If you're able, consider adding a few extra items to your grocery trip to help support neighbors facing food insecurity.

GHIAA ACTION ALERT

As the legislative session nears its May 6 deadline, GHIAA is encouraging calls and emails in support of key housing affordability bills. If you're able, consider reaching out to your state representatives to support SB 257 and HB 5396. Contact information and a sample message are available.

Four Ways to Give

- Sunday morning offertory:** Please note the designation of your donation on the envelope.
- Give Online:** Click DONATE in menu, enter amount and select the designation from the drop-down menu. To set up recurring payments or to use ACH, login to "My First Church Login", select GIVE and follow the proceeding prompts.
- Give Gifts of Securities:** Contact Financial Advisor Sue Banville at 860-521-2119.
- Give by Mail:** Checks should include designation in the memo and be addressed to:

First Church West Hartford
12 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107

Spread Your News

Submissions for Sunday Notes/Happenings are due by noon on Tuesdays to office.manager@whfirstchurch.org.

Send requests for website updates, printed materials and social media changes to [Amy Melvin](#) & [Joy Taylor](#).

With Gratitude



The Outreach Team and church members packed 200 blessing bags to be delivered to Loaves & Fishes and The House of Bread for distribution. Your donations and time made this possible – Thank you.