

First Church Faith Formation for Children

Sunday School

2026-27 Registration is Open

Scan here



or use this link: <https://bit.ly/SundaySch2026>

If you're interested in joining us or would like to learn more, please contact
Amanda Bethune, faith.formation@whfirstchurch.org.

We would love to hear from you!

Visit our web page for details and for alternative way to register
www.whfirstchurch.org/ministry/faith-formation-children/

Sept. 13,
2026

Sunday Notes

First Church Happenings

Issue
#37

Me: Hey, Siri...what's a simple way to explain "play on words"?

Siri: A play on words is a clever and amusing use of language that exploits different meanings of a word or uses words that sound alike to create humor, irony, or a double meaning.

Me: Got it. Thanks.

Dear friends:

This Sunday is 'First Sunday' (f.k.a. 'Homecoming Sunday'). That subtle shift is something I casually suggested in this same space back in 2023 – our first September together. I thought it was a "clever and amusing use of language" – thought the double meaning might be a good fit for us. Three years later, the Spirit Team decided that the time was right to try it on. I love that.



The featured scripture reading (Exodus 14:19-31) describes the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. We've studied the story previously. It's the one about the protective pillar of cloud and Moses parting the waters. Recognizing that the NFL season has begun and thinking about the multiple components of the miraculous escape, I've tagged the text with three words that routinely ring out from the football field. I'll play more when I see you. The sermon is entitled: First and Ten.

Breathe. Be blessed.

rev.fredd

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION SESSION

Interested in joining First Church? Contact Rev. Fredd to attend an information session for prospective new members. We will expect to receive new members into the life of the church during worship service on Sunday September 27.

 Sunday September 20

 After Worship  Chapel

 fredd.ward@whfirstchurch.org  860-233-9605

SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

This week's flowers are provided by

Ellen Meinke

*"In loving memory of
Kenneth, Jean, John & Debbie Meinke"*

Sponsor flowers:

 <https://bit.ly/26-27FCaltarflowers>

LIGHT THE STEEPLE

Celebrate or honor your loved ones by
lighting the steeple in their name

 <https://bit.ly/FCLightSteeple>

P-R-A-Y

Let us hold you in prayer

Submit a prayer request:

 http://bit.ly/FCprayer_request



What's Happening?

EXPLORING SCRIPTURE BIBLE STUDY

Every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month
📅 September 6 & 20
🕒 9 a.m.
📍 JPWL
✉ Joe Tobin: jmtobin@gmail.com ☎ 860-916-1923

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Join us for coffee, conversation, and community.
📅 Wednesdays
🕒 10 a.m.
📍 Hartford Baking Co. WeHa Center

OXEN HILL FARM & DISTINCTIVE IDEAS

Choose your customizable share size and schedule your pickup to enjoy a fresh produce! Distinctive Ideas will be on site weekly with samples. Ask about pre-ordered meals or purchase freshly prepared meals on site!
📅 Thursdays; through October 22
🕒 3 - 6:30 p.m.
📍 Rotunda entrance
🔗 <https://oxenhillfarm.com/>
🔗 <https://www.distinctive-ideas.com/weekly-table>

FITMIX FITNESS W KATHI BORATKO [FREE]

📅 Tuesdays, Starting September 15
🕒 5:45- 6:45p.m.
📍 Auditorium
🔗 <https://bit.ly/FitMixKathy>

TAI CHI & QI GONG W/ CYNTHIA HOAG [FREE]

📅 Thursdays, Starting September 10
🕒 10:30- 11:30 a.m.
📍 Chapel
🔗 <https://bit.ly/TC-QGCynthia>

FILL OUR FOOD BUCKETS!

Blue buckets are located throughout the church and are waiting to be filled! Every item donated helps to support local families

MOUNTAIN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Join us for a presentation with guest speaker Jonathan Manley, President of Friends of Bosque del Apache. Jon will share his knowledge of the wildlife, birds, wildfowl, flowers, and natural beauty of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, a renowned destination for migrating waterfowl and other wildlife. RSVP to Nancy Ball by Oct.4 to reserve your spot!
📅 Monday October 5
🕒 1 p.m.
📍 Auditorium
✉ Nancy Ball shoedog1961@gmail.com

SISTERS IN SPIRIT [FREE]

A new community for women seeking connection, conversation, and spiritual exploration. Come meet other women, share in meaningful conversation, and explore what this new group might offer—from guest speakers and discussions to spiritual practices, retreats, and opportunities to simply be together. Light bites provided.
📅 Sunday November 1
🕒 11:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.
📍 JPWL

LET’S MAKE LUNCHES!

The Outreach Team prepares 80 sandwiches and lunch bags for neighbors in the Aylum Hill community. Join us!
📅 September 27
🕒 During coffee hour
📍 Auditorium

PRE-K FOR THE LITTLE PEANUTS FUNDRAISER

Pre-K for the Little Peanuts was started by Jeanne Warner to provide scholarships to preschoolers to continue their educational journey. Shop early for birthday, holiday, teacher gifts and more! All profits will be donated to Pre-K for the Little Peanuts. Venmo is accepted.
📅 Saturday September 26
🕒 10 a.m.- 1 p.m.
📍 Auditorium
✉ Jeanne Warner: jcwarneriv@gmail.com

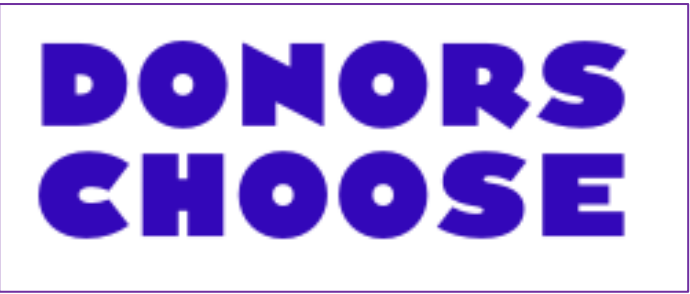
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday- Friday 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

☎ 860-233-9605

✉ Office.Manager@whfirstchurch.org | 🔗 <https://whfirstchurch.org/>

September Reachout: Donors Choose



This month, our Reachout offering will support Donors Choose, a nonprofit created by teachers, for teachers. Donors Choose helps public school teachers get the classroom supplies and resources they need. Teachers create projects requesting specific materials for their students, and donors can choose which projects they would like to support.

As donors, we are choosing to support Hartford Public Schools, helping Hartford teachers fund classroom projects and provide their students with the tools they need to learn and succeed. Hartford Public Schools is the largest public school district in Connecticut. There are currently over 100 requests from HPS teachers for classroom resources that include: paper, markers, locks for student lockers, art supplies and more!

HOW TO DONATE

To see projects, teacher requests or to donate directly to Hartford Public Schools via Donors Choose visit:
🔗 <https://bit.ly/DonorsChooseHPS>

Through First Church:

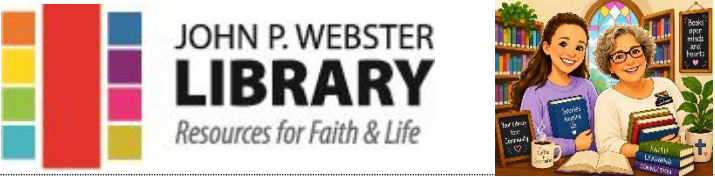
Write 'Donors Choose HPS' on your giving envelope

Online through First Church:

Select " Reach Out Monthly Collection under "Fund"
🔗 <https://pushpay.com/g/whfirstchurch>

For more info:

🔗 <https://www.donorschoose.org/about>



Programs & Events

MEMORY CAFÉ: *Reflections Growing Up*

JPWL SUMMER READING CHALLENGE!

RESTORING THE SPIRIT: *Maintaining purpose & Hope as Social Justice Activists*

RECONNECT: *Free JPWL Lunch & Learn*

GUIDED WALKING TOUR: *"The Odyssey of the Amistad: A Trail to Freedom*

"Not THAT Kind of Christian" [2 Free events]

- [1] Book discussion w/ Rev. Dr. David Grafton
- [2]"Bad Faith" Documentary Screening [TV-MA]

BOOK GROUPS

September – June. Copies of books are provided for participants; new members are always welcome!

📍 JPWL – Hybrid option available for adult book groups*

AWAKENING THE SPIRIT

📖 *How the Qur'an Interprets the Bible*, by John Kaltner and Christopher Frechette.
📅 Mondays; Next meeting September 14 (No class 10/02)
🕒 12-1 :30 p.m.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

📖 *Becoming Madam Secretary*, by Stephanie Dray.
📅 First Tuesday of the month; Starting October 6
🕒 5-6:40 p.m.

BELIEVE IN YourSHELF [6-8 GRADERS]

📖 *The Other Side of Tomorrow*, by Tina Cho
📅 Third Sunday of the month; Starting October 18
🕒 10:15 a.m.

Visit the JPWL online or in person for information & registration details!

🔗 <https://whfirstchurch.org/jpw-library/>
🔗 Newsletter: <https://bit.ly/JPWLNewsletter>

Monday-Thursday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. & Sundays 9a.m.- 12p.m.
☎ 860-232-3893 ✉ jwebster@whfirstchurch.org