

THE HERALD



First Church Congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 2023

PLEASE JOIN US FOR
WELCOME BACK SUNDAY



SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

10:15AM WORSHIP - 11:30AM PICNIC



The Environmental
Justice Team will
meet on **Sunday**,
September 10 at 9:15
in the Dining Room.
Please join us.

Sunday, October 1

World Communion Sunday



Please join us as we again
worship with First Baptist
Church of Stratford. The
Rev. Dr. William B. Sutton
will be preaching.

Wednesday morning Bible
Study to return, in person,
September 13 at 10 a.m. in
the Eunoia Room



Blessing of the



On the Feast Day of St. Francis of
Assisi with our friends and
neighbors from St. Paul's. Bring
your pets to meet their church
family for this special event on
Wednesday, October 4th at
5:30pm! Vanessa and Curtis will
give them a blessing.



Children & Youth Programs

Disciple Road

Pre-K & Kindergarden
1st to 4th Grade

Middle Road

Middle School /
5th Grade & up

Children & Youth programs
meet Sundays during
10:15am Worship.

All are welcome!

*Nursery available with
professional babysitter on*

Sundays

9:45am - 11:45am

Contact Kim Feeney
(Director of Disciple Road)
for more info!

kfeeney@firstchurchfairfield.org

YOUTH GROUP

Dear First Church High Schoolers and
Parents,

Given that we have become small and mighty, we are going to join our energy with the thriving Youth Group at Greenfield Hill Congregational Church this year. Rev. Alida Ward has graciously welcomed us! I am looking forward to building relationships across our two churches and planning for a beautiful experience with Appalachia Service Project in June 2024. Vanessa will be joining you on the service project and at some of the weekly gatherings and is excited to "be the church" with our siblings on the hill.

To register for communications about upcoming Youth Group events please email award@greenfieldhillchurch.com and let Alida know that you are a member of First Church.

From Rev. Alida: We are delighted to be connected in ministry with our friends at First Church, whose energy and faithfulness we've always admired! We're looking forward to working more closely with Vanessa, and getting to know the youth of First Church! All welcome!

Peace,
Vanessa

Music News

The Music Ministry at First Church is planning a wonderful program year! ALL are welcome and highly encouraged to get involved. Contact Frank (fmartignetti@firstchurchfairfield.org) to learn more!

The Chancel Choir resumes rehearsals Thursday, Sept. 7, at 7:30 PM, and will sing each Sunday at the 10:15 service. All are welcome to join our welcoming group in making a variety of beautiful music this coming year, or to join the Festival Choir seasonally, for Christmas and Easter! More information about the music we will be singing this fall can be obtained via the Music webpage.

The Bell Choir eagerly seeks two new members, and will rehearse two Thursdays a month, from 5:45-7:15, beginning Sept 7. Anyone in sixth grade or older is most welcome. Please come and experience this user-friendly way of making music! Like a baseball team, a bell choir needs a certain number of players to function; with eight or more people involved, all positions will be covered, and we can play interesting music. With twelve or more people involved, a whole other world of possibilities opens up. Bells are unique in that anyone who can read words and count to four can begin making satisfying music in about five minutes, and learn a great deal! Those who read well can engage in more complex endeavors, so everyone is challenged.

Our Children's Choir, open to anyone in elementary or middle school, resumes rehearsals on Sunday, Sept. 17 at 9:15AM. Bethany is excited to build on the success of last year in this fun, limited time opportunity to learn and serve. Please contact her at bdupuis@firstchurchfairfield.org with questions.

Choir Rehearsals to begin!
Chancel Choir Thursday,
September 7
Children's Choir Sunday,
September 17
Bell Choir 2 Thursdays/month,
5:45-7:15 PM,
beginning September 7

Hello September



Adult Faith Formation Class

Ban these books! Sex, Violence, Heroism, Betrayal, Warfare, Greed, Lust, Life and Death, and Faith. It's all there in the books of 1 and 2 Samuel--the conflicts, jealousies, victories and failures which make for the most exquisitely narrated narratives in all of Scripture. It's surprising that someone hasn't tried to ban them from the public library. Not yet, anyway.

Over six weeks, we'll be introduced to a period of massive social, economic, and political change in the life of ancient Israel; however, the books of Samuel don't view these changes through a wide lens, rather, we see particular characters up close and personal as they struggle through them. In our six weeks together we will consider how they respond to, benefit from, or exploit the changes they face. Their stories may teach us something about our own complex struggles in this day as we ponder how God is present, and how we might respond to that presence in a time of bewildering change.

Led by Rev. Dean Lindsey, Sundays, 9:15am, Sept. 17, 24, Oct 1, 15, 22, and 29
in the Eunoia Room.

Please join the First Church Racial Justice Team in a visit to the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford



When: Saturday, September 9 noon to 3 (open until 5 for those who want to stay longer)

What is the cost: Second Saturday of the month is free with arrival between noon and two. Free will donation accepted.

How: Carpooling from the Church parking lot departing at 11 a.m. Contact Jacque Paige to help arrange a ride: jpaige@smithhanley.com or 203-763-9624

Why: To view and discuss: "I Am Seen...Therefore I Am: Isaac Julien and Frederick Douglas"

Here is more about the exhibit:

<https://www.fox61.com/article/entertainment/arts/wadsworth-exhibit-power-images-frederick-douglass-henry-louis-gates-isaac-julien/520-9e91b6cf-b6d5-4025-bd4f-ffa7a05f0bfd>



The leadership of the **First Church Racial Justice Team**, Rita Skog, Marilyn Lord and Jacque Paige, are starting to put together the monthly first Sunday of the month at 11:30 meeting plan for the Church Year 2023-2024. We need your input!

September: Saturday 9/9

Visit Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford for the Frederick Douglas Exhibit. See details on page 4. Good time for feedback on plans for the First Church Racial Justice Team for 2023-2024, too!

(Another good lecture to attend at The Fairfield Museum: **Sunday, September 17: Early Black Life In & Around Fairfield County: Education and Community** Markeysha D. Davis, PhD - 1 to 2:30 pm)

October: Sunday 10/1

First Baptist coming to First Church for Sunday Service and Brunch. Racial Justice Team lead a Gospel Sing? Jeopardy Game?

November: Sunday 11/5 11:30 a.m.

Racial Justice Team Meeting in Spollett Chapel to choose projects for remainder of year. Possible projects include:

1. Response/Support of Town of Fairfield Racial Justice and Equity Task Force Report
2. Witness Stone's Project
3. Speaker from Board of Ed regarding School Redistricting
4. MLK Day Speaker and/or Service Project
5. Land Appropriation Speaker
6. Project with/through Council of Churches
7. Juneteenth on 6/19
8. A coordinated effort with St. Paul's on some of these projects?

February: Saturday 2/3

9:00 a.m. Stratford African American Museum tour with owner, Mr. Fletcher. Hopefully with members of First Baptist Church of Stratford with potluck brunch and discussion after.



Allying Community of Friendship Across Traditions: B'nai Israel Bridgeport and First Church Fairfield

B'nai Israel of Bridgeport and First Church Fairfield have partnered with ADL to offer a first-of-its-kind Adult Learning and Friendship Cohort to build greater understanding and trust between our two congregations. Those selected for this small group will commit to attending 8 meetings over the course of the year from October through May, to engage in deep conversations and study about Jewish-Christian relations, allyship, and friendship. We hope that this can help start a new model of community connection. If interested, please contact Susan Walden at B'nai Israel (swalden@adl.org), Rev. Jake Joseph (jake.joseph@yale.edu) or Rev. Vanessa Rose at First Church (vrose@firstchurchfairfield.org).

Women's Spirituality

The First Church Women's Spirituality Group meets the last Wednesday of each month from 6:30 til 8 PM. We meet in-person in the Eunoia room at the back of the sanctuary at First Church, with an option for those afar or homebound to join us via Zoom. We gather to explore life, spirituality and faith through various readings and prayers, chosen by the group's members. We hope to inspire thoughtful & warm connections with one another and with Spirit. Newcomers are always welcome.



Welcome Kate!

Over the summer, Kate Croarkin joined the staff of First Church as the new Bookkeeper. Many of us know Kate already through her 20 years employment with Great Beginnings Montessori School as Assistant Director of Business Affairs. Kate taught religious education in her own church for 9 years and is currently a Pastoral Care Chaplain there. After the many years working alongside the FCC staff, Kate is excited to be working together as a member of the FCC team.



LEXAN WINDOW UPDATE

We did it! 30 First Church members pledged or gifted \$20,000 to the replacement of the Lexan on the Tiffany Windows! This will be matched by \$20,000 in Rowland Road parsonage sale monies to meet the contract of \$39,324 as approved by the Church membership at our last annual meeting.

It will take 5-6 months for Willet Hauser to begin work. Can't wait to show off our windows by lighting them for the outside world. Thank you for supporting this project so enthusiastically. Here is a beautiful note from Don Grauer as to why he

gave:

My wife, "Esmee was married with the light shining through these wonderful windows, all her children were baptized and confirmed, as well as many of her grandkids in this light, and her final service was illuminated by the same. May this help so others can feel the warmth she so did...."



Catching up: Recent Changes in our Church Family

Baptisms

July 16: Theo Henry Avallon

Deceased

June 14: Suzanne Wooldredge

July 31: Richard Anderson, Sr.

Ariana Hones

350 Canner Street

Curtis Hall #423

New Haven, CT 06511

Office Hours at First Church

Monday - Friday, 9am - 1pm



Black Rock Sunrise Group

Closed Meetings Daily at 7am

Please call Matt D. for more information

203-394-2229

Daily Reprieve AA Group

Tuesday 8pm - Closed Big Book Meeting

Thursday 7pm - Open Step Meeting

Friday 8pm - Open Speaker Meeting

Sunday 8pm - Online Beginners Topic Meeting

Please call Len with any questions or for more information 203-333-4771

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