



A Letter from the Pastor

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

“Now the queen of seasons, bright with the day of splendor...” is the opening line of the third verse of “Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain.” It’s one of my favorite lines in all of our Easter hymns.

Easter is a *season*, not a day. Easter is the “queen of seasons” stretching for fifty days from the Day of Resurrection to the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

During these seven weeks we have the opportunity to ask questions, reflect on, meditate upon, explore deeply, and immerse ourselves more fully in the glory and mystery that is Easter. If you have the Resurrection all “figured out” let me suggest that you take a step back. Let the “queen of seasons” open your heart, soul, and mind to something deeper.

In my letter to you at the beginning of Lent I wrote,

The Good News is that you are the object of God’s desire; God wants nothing more than to be in a loving, reciprocal relationship with you. God is love and is reaching out to you in love all the time.

In that same love, God reached out to raise Jesus from the dead. God is reaching out to you in love right now, to lift you up out of the shadows of grief and loneliness, the pain and suffering of physical, emotional, and societal ills, the ravages of injustice and hatred, relationships that have broken down, the places of death in your own life. When all seems lost and hopeless, God is reaching out to you in love, with **life**.

The winter still held sway in March, but in these warming days, the natural order is giving way to color and beauty, overcoming the cold and gray of a New England winter. This is our “queen of seasons.”

Just as God’s love is shown in the beauty of springtime, so God is reaching out to you in **your need**. God reached out to Jesus, dead and in his tomb, with Resurrection Love on “the day of splendor.” God is reaching out with the same Resurrection Love to you today.

I pray that you will experience that love **for you** in this “queen of seasons.”

Grace and peace,
David

P.S. I am here for you. Call or text 203-414-0496. I would love to chat.



Work for Racial Justice

God created the church to serve the world. We are called to serve the needs of those left behind or crushed by systems of injustice.

We are also called to dismantle those systems of injustice and to overcome the systemic racism that lies at the heart of our society.

Join us in multi-faceted action to build an antiracist church and society
Members of WRJ: Amy-Alison Ward, Amy Watson, Anna Marotti, Casey Mulqueen, Charlotte Dyslin, Clara Harmon, David McKinnis, Eric Treschuk, Neil Hauck, John Harmon, Jacque Paige, Kathy Lea, Pertrinea Cash, Rick Esper, Rita Skog, David Spollett, and Wendy Muschett.

Me and White Supremacy – Using the ground breaking work of Layla Saad, Anna Marotti just finished leading a group of 6 folk through the hard work of self examination and consciousness raising about white supremacy. Forty people have now done this!

May 5th – Affordable Housing Forum please see on **page 3** the details of this forum sponsored by the Work for Racial Justice Team (WRJ), coordinated Jacque Paige.

May 6th – FaithActs for Education Clergy from First Church and around the State will “Wrap the State Capitol in Prayer” in support of S.B. 948 for Equity in Education Funding.- This is a clergy only live event, but all are invited to pray where you are in solidarity. <https://faithacts.org/>

May 11th – CONECT Healthcare and Mental Health Team Meeting 7:00 PM via Zoom. Contact Beth Stenger at beth.stenger@comcast.net for the Zoom sign in. Currently advocating for S.B. 1 which includes language for data collection by health care providers.

May 18th – CONECT Criminal Justice Team Meeting 7:00 PM via Zoom. Contact Asti Jackson at astijackson91@gmail.com for the Zoom sign in. Currently advocating for Clean Slate S. B. 1019. Members of the WRJ lobbied for Clean Slate at the Capitol on April 21st.

May 20th – Raising the Bar 7:30 to 8:45 Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport (CCGB) Antiracist Program. See the CCGB web site for details <https://www.ccggb.org>.

May 25th – CCGB Virtual Spring Fling 7:00 via Zoom. Enjoy a Broadway performance from the comfort of your own home. Ticket details at: <https://www.ccggb.org>.



April 21 Clean Slate at the Capitol

OUTREACH

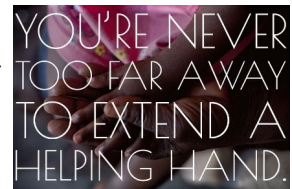


Helping Hands Near and Far



"Coins for Care" fundraiser to help support the on-going construction efforts of Simply Smiles and their Children's Village on the Cheyenne River Reservation. As founder Bryan Nurnberger shares, "the Simply Smiles children's village is a community of foster families offering a child placement option that fulfills the spirit of the Indian child welfare act by ensuring that native children who have been removed from their homes can remain with kin and community." One foster home is already built, the second one is underway now, and the hope is for more to come!

Please drop off your donations on THURSDAYS between 9-2 when Maria is in the office. The collection will continue through the end of May.



Affordable Housing in Fairfield: Past, Present and Future An Informational Meeting Hosted by First Church

May 5, 2021, 7:30 pm via Zoom

Register at: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_QIJ-0InbTm-vF4SwVCpA8w

People Say -

- Affordable housing will lower your property value and wreck neighborhood character
- Affordable housing can improve the economy
- Being against affordable housing is racist
- Developers take advantage of affordable housing to ignore the wishes of town residents



Wouldn't you like to know the facts?

400 Years of Zoning in Fairfield, Sonya Huber, Fairfield University Professor

Creating Housing Opportunities: What Fairfield Has Done, and Is Doing to Address Housing Needs, Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development, Town of Fairfield.

OUTREACH



OPERATION
HOPE

2 Ways to Help

Weekly Meals Needed

Sign up to make a meal and help feed our brothers and sisters in the community.
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080e4da5a62eaafd0-operation1>
If you have any questions contact Lauren Winston at winston.lauren@gmail.com

SEEKING LUNCH VOLUNTEERS



Community Kitchen



We have been able to lift the moratorium on in-person volunteering for our Community Kitchen and are in need of regular volunteers to serve lunch

Monday through Friday, 11:30am-1:00pm.
The Community Kitchen is located at 50 Nichols Street, Fairfield.

Volunteers must be 18+ and follow COVID protocols.

Send us an email to info@operationhopect.org to let us know which days of the week you can regularly help. Thank you!



At the February Business Meeting, the congregation asked to receive quarterly updates on our pledge progress. Year-to-date through March, pledges received are in-line with pledges promised. Thank you!

However, we have received 10% less (approximately \$13,000) in pledges when compared to the pledges received through the same time period last year. If you are behind in meeting your pledge commitment, try to catch up in the next quarter. If you haven't yet pledged or are having trouble meeting your pledge commitment, please contact our business manager, Maria Ferrante at mferrante@firstchurchfairfield.org.

As our former Treasurer, Howard Slagter, always said, "With the help of God, we will achieve what we must with the gifts we are given."



Raising the BAR - Becoming Anti-Racist

An ongoing, monthly conversation and call to action.

Join us from 7:30 - 8:45 pm on the third Thursday of each month through May 2021

Register to receive the Zoom link and monthly reminders.

<https://ccgb.salsalabs.org/barmonthlyseries/index.html>

Children & Youth Ministry



Contact Wendy at wendymuschett@optonline.net for more information

Hello Middle Roaders,

Melissa and I are hopeful that the April showers are over, and we can again enjoy meeting in person with beautiful Spring weather! We will plan to meet outside on the Beach Road side at 10:30 but include our Zoom link below just in case.

We look forward to continuing with our Simply Smiles service project, more faith building, Faces of Peace exploration, and starting our culminating art project. And yes, we are still going to have our Earth Day beach clean-up—everyday is Earth Day!

We will meet on the following Sundays in May: 5/2, 5/9, and 5/16, and 5/23. Feel free to bring a friend! (We will NOT meet on Memorial Day Weekend, 5/30)

Take care and we look forward to seeing you!

Wendy and Melissa

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86396877744?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86396877744?pwd=VFNpY2dnWEhTSFFWNEd2Z3p4YTd4UT09)

[pwd=VFNpY2dnWEhTSFFWNEd2Z3p4YTd4UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86396877744?pwd=VFNpY2dnWEhTSFFWNEd2Z3p4YTd4UT09)

Meeting ID: 863 9687 7744

Passcode: 905648



NEW

HIGH ROAD
(9th-12th Grade Youth Group)

Meets Sunday Evenings
6:30 PM

Outside on the lawn
(weather permitting)

Contact Vanessa for more information
vrose@firstchurchfairfield.org



A Safe space and loving community for LGBTQIA+ teens and friends. Fridays at 4:00 p.m. on ZOOM. Please contact the Rev. Vanessa Rose for more information.



FORMATION



Women's Spirituality Group - will meet on May 26th at 6:30 via Zoom. This month we will read, ponder and discuss meditations from section two - The Binding Ties in Howard Thurman's Meditations of the Heart. The readings are from # 17 to # 26 on pages 84 through 100.

All women welcome to this time of spiritual sharing and bonding.

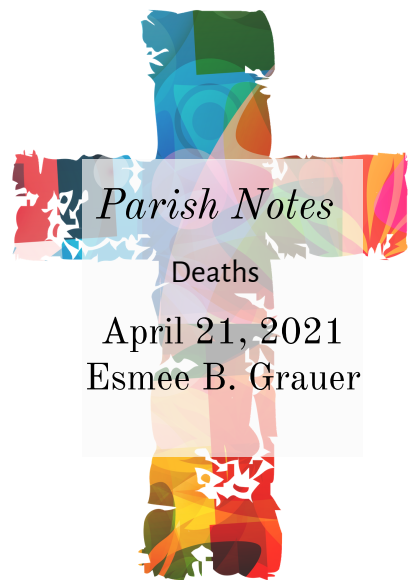


Dear First Church Friends,

Thank you, thank you for the outpouring of love and support we felt after the death of our father/grandfather. Words cannot adequately convey our appreciation. We truly felt wrapped in the loving prayers and thoughts of so many, and it buoyed our spirits at a time of great sadness for our family. We have always felt a foundation of support at First Church, but at time like this, we experienced it in a deeply personal way. As our Dad's love will always be with us, so too will the kindness of our congregation. God's love in action.

With gratitude,

Wendy, Jim, Christopher and Grace Muschett



CONNECT



FELLOWSHIP HOUR

Online on ZOOM
Following Worship

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81609129456?pwd=RUplZE5POHk3VmMvd0svQUx0dm9GZz0>
Meeting ID: 816 0912 9456
Passcode: 975108

WOMEN'S YOGA AND SPIRIT RETREAT



Saturday, May 15, 10 am-4pm

\$80/PERSON
REGISTER AT
WWW.SILVERLAKECT.ORG

*Lunch, yoga, and instruction included.
Masks and social distancing required.*



2021 Spring Fling Fundraiser

SAVE THE DATE

BE OUR Guest



FOR A VIRTUAL SPRING FLING
TUESDAY, MAY 25TH @ 7:00 P.M.

ENJOY A BROADWAY INSPIRED MUSICAL PERFORMANCE
FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME

WITH OUR SPECIAL MUSICAL GUESTS, CHRIS COOGAN & MICHELE GRACE



*Leveraging hope,
changing lives.*

WORSHIP ON THE LAWN

Pending lower average COVID-19 infection rates.

Watch for starting date!



In front of the Sanctuary

At 12 noon

Bring your own chair

Masks and social distancing required



First Church Congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
148 Beach Road • Fairfield CT • 06824