

Exciting Church Year Begins!

RALLY SUNDAY IS SEPTEMBER 9

Traditional Worship Services: 8:45 and 10:30 a.m. • Choirs Resume

Wind Contemporary Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.

New Church School Year • New Adult Classes • Rally Sunday Picnic, 12:30 p.m.



GROWING UP ON THE FARM during this time of year was filled with a mixture of emotions. We looked out into the field and could see a lot of gourds ready to pick. We saw the fruit of our mission, our labor. The hard work we had done throughout the year was going to pay off.

At the same time, as excited as we were, we realized we had a lot of work ahead of us. Long hours were ahead whether we liked it or not.

I have the same mixture of emotions as we enter into this fall at First Church. I believe we are beginning to see the fruit of our mission. At the same time, though, we have a lot of work ahead of us.

Our **vision** is to foster a grassroots movement of Kingdom communities who love God and love others in profound ways and live to extend His Kingdom. I believe God is calling us to start something special, where we are working together with other churches and ministries to make disciples in the greater Hartford area. We need to be an example to others of what it looks like to be a community who loves God and loves others in profound ways and lives to extend His Kingdom. We need to be a church that does this and individuals who do this.

The way we are going to see this realized in our midst is by our living out our **mission** of being a community that loves God, loves one another and makes disciples. We have been focusing on this mission and we will continue to live this out.

I am now starting to see fruit from our efforts in living out our mission. We are not there yet, but we are on our way. And the fruit we are seeing will propel us further ahead so that God's vision for us can be realized.

Over the next year, you will see new tools that will help you grow personally as a disciple and that will also enable us to live out our vision. There will be a new class on Wednesday nights about discipleship ("Yoke"). "Community Cubed" will continue to be held. You will also notice a new focus in our small group ministry that blends in better with our mission. We are moving toward the Marsh Building project, which will enable us to better serve our children and help them live as disciples. There will be

other things that will help us realize our vision as well, around the areas of technology, governance, and service.

All of these tools excite me because they are also the fruit of our hard work and enable us to realize our vision.

As exciting as this is, it is going to be hard work. I believe we can do it. I know we can! It won't be easy, but I believe it will be fun. We are starting to see the fruit of our labors that we have been praying for and working toward—why wouldn't we want to get out into the fields and start picking! —**Pastor Deryk**



FAMILY WALK

Ephesians Sermon Series

We are part of God's family. As family members, we are to walk the family way. What does that look like?

SEPTEMBER 9

Walk Like Christ

Message by Deryk Richenburg • Text: Ephesians 5:1-2

SEPTEMBER 16

Be Careful How You Walk

Message by Deryk Richenburg • Text: Ephesians 5:3-14

SEPTEMBER 23

Spirit-Filled Staggering

Message by Deryk Richenburg • Text: Ephesians 5:15-21

SEPTEMBER 30 (Not part of series)

Becoming an Overcomer

Message by Tessa Afshar • Text: Nehemiah 4:6-20

FALL 2012 ADULT CLASSES

SUNDAYS

COUPLES' CLASS — A 6-session DVD-based study **starting September 9: iMarriage**, with Andy Stanley. The picture of marriage we had at the altar may become expectations that we unload on our spouse. As a spouse, you may feel you don't measure up. This study will help us transform our expectations and look to God to experience marriage as it was designed. Topics include *Keeping My "I" On You, Putting Your "I" Out, and It Takes Three*. We will meet in the Morgan House Drawing Room at 8:45 a.m. on Sundays. For more information, call leaders **Steve and Lisa Peery** at 860.757.3853.

■ Join the **COUPLES' CLASS** for a fall kick-off **barbecue and pool party!** It's **open to anyone** who may be interested in or curious about this class! Bring your kids and your friends. Our hosts, **Walt and Anne Kelly**, live in South Glastonbury. We will gather on **Sunday, September 16**, from noon to 4:00 p.m., for fun games, great food and wonderful fellowship. Let's get our new fall schedule off to a great start! For details or directions, call the Kellys at 860.633.3599 or the Peerys at 860.757.3853.

DISCIPLES IN PROCESS — **Continues September 9**. Be with us as we study one chapter of **Genesis** per week, using a commentary by Dr. J. Vernon McGee. All you need is your Bible. This class meets in the Murphy Conference Room on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. For details, call **Janice Johnson** at 860.529.5911.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK — **Starts September 16**. Join **Greg and Ellen Gilson Voth** as they host a group study and discussion of the Gospel of Mark. This class will meet in the Morgan House Chestnut Room on Sundays at 8:45 a.m. For full details, call Greg or Ellen at 860.563.7340.

GENESIS: LIFE OF JOSEPH — **Starts September 23**. Continuing our study of Genesis and the Patriarchs, this class will focus on the life of Joseph and his family. Taught by **Dr. Glenn Sunshine**, we will also look at the theological significance of the accounts as we work through the text. The class will meet in the Fireside Room on Sundays, 8:45 a.m.

TUESDAYS

FOR SENIORS AND OTHERS — **Starts October 2. *Why I Believe: Finding Answers to Life's Most Difficult Questions*** is a Chip Ingram DVD study that will address your honest doubts and questions about the claims of the Christian faith. Taught by **Pastor Mike McDowell** on Tuesdays in the Morgan House Drawing Room, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., thru December 18. The cost for study materials is \$10. To register, call **Michelle Adams** at 860.529.1575, x212.

TUESDAYS OR THURSDAYS

MEN'S TURNING BIBLE STUDY of ***Peter: Learning to Be Like Jesus*** examines the disciplines Peter learned along the way to becoming like Jesus and also serving as the "rock" on which the

Church has been built for the past 2000 years. Join us anytime! There are two groups; one meets **Tuesdays** in the Fireside Room and the other meets on **Thursdays** in Conference Room 1, both days from 6:45 to 8:00 a.m. The cost of the workbook is \$7. Come and enjoy an inspirational time of study, discussion, and fellowship. For details, call **Bob Papertsian** at 860.257.7566.

WEDNESDAYS

YOKE, led by Pastor Deryk — **Starts October 10**. When Jesus asks us to take His yoke upon us, He means that we are to follow His teaching and His ways. It means being a disciple. **Yoke** is a class that teaches us about discipleship, using the **Gospel of Mark** as a springboard. We will meet in the Meetinghouse on Wednesdays, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. For details, please call **Marilyn** at 860.529.1575, x213.

JOHN: That You May Believe — **Class for women starts September 19**. Through this exceptional study guide (\$13) by Kathleen Buswell Nielson, we will see that John offers a theologically deep answer and a compelling historical narrative as to the identity and purpose of God's anointed Son. We will see the beauty of His unfolding passion. The guide is easy to follow and is full of engaging application. Join us at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesdays (room location to be announced). For details, please email **Christina Jagel** at c.jagel@cox.net.

THE ALPHA COURSE, held at South Church — **Starts September 26; Terry Shook, Alpha Director**. This introductory course is a way to understand what Christianity is all about. Each Wednesday night through Dec. 12, we start off with dinner, listen to a talk on the evening's subject, then form groups for discussion. Subjects include: *Who is Jesus?, Why and how do I pray?, Who is the Holy Spirit?, Does God heal today?* This year we are joining South Church and offering our Alpha experience on their Hartford campus. For details, or to register, please call **Marilyn** at 860.529.1575, x213.

THURSDAYS

COMMUNITY³ — A new Community³ will start on **Thursday, September 27**. This group is designed to lead members into a deeper place of freedom and healing; therefore, the size of the group is limited. We will meet every Thursday evening through mid-December. To learn more, contact **Wayne** at 860.529.1575, x203, or waynel@firstchurch.org; or **Tessa** at tessa@firstchurch.org or x202.

WOMEN IN THE BIBLE — **Meets every other Thursday, September 27 to May 23** (except Thanksgiving). **Women**, this devotional study will meet from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Morgan House Dining Room, led by **Nancy Ryszkiewicz**, who will facilitate the discussions and prayer time. Take a closer look at the women of the Bible—who they were and what they mean to you today—starting with Anna in Luke 2:36-38, a woman in Christ's time! Bring a Bible, notebook, and pen. Questions? Call Nancy at 860.881.8136.

Job Seekers Boot Camp

Empower your job search with this free three-part series led by two top professionals in our midst—**John Madigan** and **John Brubaker**—on **Tuesdays** from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., in the Fireside Room: **October 2, Reconnect with Your Success** (accomplishments, resume, cover letter); **October 16, The Marketing Plan** (networking, job postings, recruiters, social media, direct mail); and **October 30, The Job Interview** (types, prep, rehearsal, how to shine).

For materials and audio files from the previous (spring) session, along with a flyer on the upcoming October session, please visit **firstchurch.org/jobseekers**. To register, or if you have questions, email or call **Eileen**

Murray at care@firstchurch.org or 860.529.1575, x210. All job seekers are welcome.

Freedom from Debt Class

Many of us struggle with the burden of financial debt. A practical and compelling two-part video series from Willow Creek—***Freed-Up from Debt: How to Get Out and Stay Out***—will be offered in Conference Room 1 on the **Wednesdays of October 10 and 17**, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., facilitated by **Anton Hertle** and **Steve Soderberg**.

You will receive a biblical perspective and a practical, seven-step strategy for getting out of debt and staying out, or for helping a friend or relative achieve those goals. There is a \$10 fee for materials (\$15 for two).

Seating is limited! Free childcare is available. Please register as soon as possible, through **Marilyn** at 860.529.1575, x213.

New Growth Group Leadership Development

If you are a Growth Group leader or someone who is interested in starting a new Growth Group or other type of gathering, please join us on **Monday, September 10**, at 6:30 p.m. in the Wells Fellowship Area.

This training is designed to connect leaders and their groups with God's vision and to offer ongoing development and support. Questions? Please contact **Wayne** at 860.529.1575, x203, or waynel@firstchurch.org; or **Tessa** at tessa@firstchurch.org or x202.

New Concert Season Begins

All are invited to attend the thrilling opening concert of our new season, **this Friday, September 7**, at 7:30 p.m. Our choir, along with world-renowned concert organists **Faythe Freese, Cherry Rhodes** and **Gordon Turk**, will be heard. Included will be the moving, exquisite *Kyrie*, by Louis Vierne. An offering will be received. Find full details at firstchurch.org/asof, where you will also read about the young organists' competition and other activities set for the national Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival, held here annually.



New Worship Leader Is Announced

Please give a warm welcome to our new worship leader for the Wind service, **Bryan Minerly**!

Bryan comes to us from Wellspring Church in Berlin, where he led one of the worship teams. Bryan has a deep love for God and is dynamic in his leading others in worship.

Deryk and Glenn: On Air and Online

Have you been listening to WSDK, the Christian radio station at 1550 AM (and online at wsdk1550.com)?

WSDK's morning show, "Rise and Shine" (weekdays, 6:00 to 8:00 a.m.), is hosted by **Al Kim** and always includes a brief daily segment by **Pastor Deryk** called "First Thing" (around 7:10 a.m.). In just two minutes, Deryk offers a unique and uplifting message to help start your day. At any time, you can hear his current or previous messages online at mixcloud.com/wsdk_1550. Al, by the way, has been a frequent guest bassist for our Wind service.

Our own **Glenn Sunshine** co-hosts, with **John Rankin**, a call-in show titled "The Power to Love Hard Questions" (weekdays, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., on WSDK). The program "pursues the biblical vision for religious, political and economic liberty in all matters, and thus seeks to serve an open-ended conversation with the widest range of guests and callers." Podcasts can be found at mixcloud.com/wsdk_1550; look for TEI Radio. John Rankin, president of the Theological Education Institute (TEI), is well-known to many of us at First Church. Glenn—professor, author, speaker—has served First Church in extraordinarily valuable ways for many years.

Edwards Forum: Robert A. Sirico

Rev. Robert Sirico will speak at First Church on **October 12 and 13!** Father Sirico, a founder of the Acton Institute, will give two talks for our **Edwards Forum** series, each at 7:00 p.m. The first will be on the foundations of political and economic freedom, and the second on dealing with poverty. He is widely respected and published, as well as prominent in national media. Mark your calendar, and watch for details in the next *Spire!*

Men's Advance Nears!

The weekend of **September 28-30** marks the 20th year of First Church's conference for men, and the 12th year at Pilgrim Pines in New Hampshire. Our guest speaker will be **Bill Paige**.

This promises to be an incredible weekend for both men and youth. Those who register **by this Sunday, September 9**, will receive a discount—but either way, **don't miss out!**

Simply go to firstchurch.org/advance, where you'll find a link to the brochure, and bring your registration/payment to our receptionist; or call **Bob Papertian**, at 860.257.7566.

Special Guest Offers Personal Story

Hear and meet an engaging young lady from Romania whose life was changed by a shoebox when she was a little girl!

First Church is hosting this heartwarming **Operation Christmas Child** event and inviting others from 35 regional churches, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. on **Saturday, September 15**, in the Meeting-house. A reception (with dessert!) will follow, in the Wells Area.

For more information, see firstchurch.org/occ or call **Marcia McCann** at 860.529.1575, x206—who will also be happy to hear from you if you'd like to donate "**finger desserts**" for this event!

Just a Minute! (OK, Maybe Three)

Remember the "**Opportunities to Serve**" form you received in the July *Spire*? We hope **everyone** will complete one—even those who don't plan to change how they already serve First Church. We want to make sure our information is up-to-date.

These simple forms (in brochure format) are available at the church and can be dropped into the "Opportunities to Serve" box in the Wells Area or mailed to **Kathy Rodriguez** c/o First Church. Or, **even easier**, fill out and submit the online version at firstchurch.org/serve. Thank you so much!

SELL YOUR STUFF at our **Community Tag Sale — Sat., Sept. 15** — on the church lawn, to help buy mattresses for the South Park Inn homeless shelter! Organized by the Deacons, led by **Brian Mace**, this is both a benefit event and a great outreach, not to mention **fun!** Please see rules, times and details at firstchurch.org/tagsale.

PRAY FOR and SUPPORT the **Cromptons'** Sept. 18-22 follow-up trip to the Dominican Republic to help with a conference for pastors who are discipling those our team led to Christ in July. Just \$33 provides one of the pastors a Creole Bible & 3 meals. See firstchurch.org/DR or contact **Dana** at 860.463.8317 or dcrompton@sbcglobal.net.

GRIEFSHARE — A new cycle begins on **Sept. 17**. This video seminar series features some of the nation's foremost Christian experts on grief and recovery. Participants have said that being with others who understand and feel what they are feeling is enormously helpful. Facilitated by **Betty**

Metcalf and **Jim Marquardt**, we meet for 13 Mondays in the Morgan House, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (Workbook: \$15; scholarships available.) Go to firstchurch.org/support, or to register, call 860.529.1575, x210.

WOMEN OF FAITH in Hartford, Nov. 2-3: **Discount deadline** is extended to **Sunday, Sept. 9**—contact **Kathy** at 860.301.6263 or k.rodriguez@comcast.net and pay by that date. Also see firstchurch.org/WOF.

IRON SHARPENS IRON Women's Conference, with **Cindy McDowell** in Worcester, Sept. 29: Book and pay **by Sunday, Sept. 9**, for \$44 rate; firstchurch.org/ISlwomen.

AUTUMN SANCTUARY retreat, **Oct. 19-21** in New Hampshire, offered by **Pastor Mike and Cindy McDowell**. See firstchurch.org/sanctuary; brochures are in the Wells Area.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE seeks early nominations for Deacons for 2013-14; other positions later. Prayerfully consider which

FCC member(s) to nominate, with your description of their pertinent qualities, by email—nominating@firstchurch.org—or by a note in the marked Wells Area submission box.

SENIORS' LUNCHEON — Mark your calendar now for the luncheon on **Oct. 24** featuring **Cindy McDowell** as our speaker! Watch for details in the next *Spire*.

JOB OPENING — Administrative Assistant, working in part with Children's Min.: event planning, publicity, Microsoft Office, editing/proofreading; organized, will learn website software. See firstchurch.org/jobopening.

NAME TAGS — Warm fellowship is made even friendlier when everyone is wearing a name tag! We are replacing existing tags with a new design; if yours is not on the rack, just leave it there and it will be updated. If you don't have a tag, fill out a request form (near the rack). Prayer Team, Board members and Deacons are identified with blue lettering. *Let's all get connected!*

BOOK OF LIFE

ENTERED ETERNAL LIFE

Kenneth Adams, July 24, 2012
Beatrice D. Avery, July 25, 2012
David F. Samson, Jr., August 10, 2012
David Johnston, Jr., August 12, 2012
Vladimir Mackas, August 15, 2012

Our Church unites in an expression of heartfelt sympathy to their families.

BORN

Linnea Grace Chilberg, daughter of Adam and Melissa Chilberg, July 8, 2012

UNITED IN MARRIAGE

Gregory Malloy and Sarah Figura,
July 20, 2012
Christopher David Hookie and
Donna Patricia Lewis, July 28, 2012

Love never ends.

1 Corinthians 13:8a (ESV)

First Church

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN WETHERSFIELD
CONGREGATIONAL

860.529.1575 • Fax: 860.721.7861
250 Main Street, Wethersfield, CT 06109
Website: www.firstchurch.org
Email: info@firstchurch.org

Sunday Worship Summer Times

Traditional Services in the Meetinghouse:
8:45 and 10:30 a.m.

Wind Contemporary Service
in Keith Jones Hall: 10:30 a.m.

First Church on Facebook

www.facebook.com/FirstChurchPage

Dial-A-Message: 860.529.1785

Uplifting Messages
Provided by Caring Ministries

What will you leave behind?

Please remember First Church in your will.

e-GIVING reduces paperwork and helps keep track of your yearly pledge. For info about contributing electronically via a monthly automatic withdrawal from your bank account, call the Finance Office, 860.529.1575, x218.

Atessa M. Afshar Associate Minister
Wayne E. Luman Director of Caring Ministries
Marcia J. McCann Dir. of Children's Ministries
T. Michael McDowell Associate Minister
Donald W. Morgan Minister Emeritus
Deryk P. Richenburg Senior Minister
David C. Spicer Minister of Music & the Arts
Todd E. Willard Associate Minister

OUR MISSION

We are a community of Jesus followers who love God, love one another, and make disciples.

SPIRE DEADLINE

Material for the October issue of *The Spire*, which will be mailed/emailed on 9/26/12, must be submitted to Dave Gilbert by noon on Fri., September 14, at daveg@firstchurch.org or 860.529.1575, x225.

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Picnic for All; Children's & Youth Programs

The new **CHURCH SCHOOL** year starts on **Sunday, September 9**, at 8:45 and 10:30 a.m. The **Crib Room** is staffed during both services with loving caregivers for infants up to 24 months. The **Toddler Room** is where two-year-olds enjoy playing and learning simple Bible truths.

Church School classes are held for pre-schoolers (age 3-5) as well as elementary-age children. Registration forms will be available in the classrooms for newcomers and for anyone having changes from last year, i.e. new address or phone number or email address. Go to firstchurch.org/churchschool.

Would you like to **teach** or **assist** in **pre-school** or **grades 1&2**? Help in this vital ministry by calling **Marcia**, at 860.529.1575, x206.

Our **YOUTH MINISTRIES** leaders are also geared up to begin an exciting new season. To see all the opportunities, take a look at firstchurch.org/middleschool or firstchurch.org/highschool. College age? Go to firstchurch.org/college.

RALLY SUNDAY PICNIC — The entire church family is invited to join us on **Sunday, September 9**, from 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. right here at First Church. Hamburgers, hot dogs, and beverages will be provided. If you see this in time, sign up on the poster in the Wells Area, or call the receptionist at 860.529.1575.

Bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to share (we will eat at 1:00) and a picnic blanket or chairs. Games are provided for all ages! We will have a **new bounce house**—for the young and the young-at-heart! (*No rain date.*)

Join One of Our Choirs

Experience a glorious way to worship God! Share your musical gifts in our Sunday morning worship and our Concert Series. For details or to sign up, call 860.529.1575, x209.

Wind Worship Team — Gathers on Sundays at 8:30 a.m.
Rehearsals — Thursdays, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Brass Ensemble information will be published soon.

VOCAL CHOIRS

Cherub Choir — Age 5 – Grade 2
Rehearsals: Tuesdays or Wednesdays
4:00 to 4:40 p.m.
Starts September 11 and 12

Carol Choir — Grades 3–6
Rehearsals: Tuesdays or Wednesdays
4:40 to 5:40 p.m.
Starts September 11 and 12

Pilgrim Youth Choir — Grades 7–12
Sings every Sunday at 8:45 a.m. service
Rehearsals: Sundays, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Starts September 9

First Church Choir — Adults; age 18+
Sing every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. service
Rehearsals: Thursdays, 7:15 to 8:15 p.m. and
8:15 to 9:30 for concert music • Started August 30

Cantata Singers — Adults; age 18+
Sing at concerts only
Rehearsals: Thursdays, 8:15 to 9:30 p.m.
Started August 30

HANDBELL CHOIRS

Carol Handbell Choir* — Grades 4–6
Marti Bernardi, Director
Rehearsals: Wednesdays
4:00 to 4:40 p.m., Church Parlor
Starts Wednesday, September 26

Laudate Handbell Choir* — Grades 7–12
Rehearsals: Sundays
5:15 to 6:00 p.m.
Starts September 16

Campanella Handbell Choir
Adults; age 18+
Rehearsals: Sundays, 12:00 noon
Starts September 30

Belles & Beaux Handbell Choir
Retired Adults
Rehearsals: Tuesdays
11:00 a.m. to noon
Starts October 2

**Membership in these handbell choirs is drawn from our vocal choirs.*