

Outreach Mission Festival Nears!

FREE EVENING BANQUET, MARCH 9 • MISSION PREACHER AND FREE LUNCHEON, MARCH 10

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

—Matthew 28:19-20a

The Church has one mission—the Great Commission (above). In keeping with Jesus’ command, our Outreach Team has chosen **A Heart for the Harvest** as this year’s theme. **Pastor Lubin Beaucejour** (shown at right) of Bethesda Evangelical Mission will be our keynote speaker on **Mission Sunday, March 10**, including the sermon at all services. Many members of First Church are familiar with Pastor Lubin, with whom we partner for our Dominican Republic and Haiti mission trips.

All are invited to the **Saturday evening Mission Banquet** in Keith Jones Hall, at 5:30 on **March 9**, and the **Sunday Luncheon** in the Fireside Room, at 12:30 on **March 10**.

THE BANQUET NIGHT will feature the **Wibberleys**, who will be returning to their country of service the next day. The **D.R. and Haiti teams** will present their vision for this summer; we will have updates from our mission interns, **Sarah Papertsian** and **Ryan Burke**, in person or by video; the **Peru team** will share via video during their mission trip; **Hartford City Mission** and **InterVarsity Hartford** will be with us; plus a **youth trip presentation by Pastor Todd**—and much more. This is a wonderful opportunity to see and hear what God is doing internationally and locally and to become engaged in the Harvest field.

THE SUNDAY LUNCHEON will continue the momentum from Saturday night and the Sunday services, featuring a time with Pastor Lubin and First Church teams going into the Harvest field this year (spring, summer, fall, winter).

Mission participants’ booths will be in the Wells Fellowship Area all weekend, and the flags of the nations representing the Harvest we participate in will be displayed. Please pray that the Harvest of souls will be plentiful for our great God and King—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

PLEASE SIGN UP (Walk-ins also welcome) — While there is no charge for the Banquet or Luncheon, we do ask that you let us know that you plan to attend one or both. On the Sundays prior to the Festival, a missions display and sign-up sheet will be in the Wells Area. Or you may notify **Marilyn Danielson** at 860.529.1575, x213, or marilynd@firstchurch.org.



New Worship Service

The other night I was blessed to meet the new Majewski twins. God has blessed the Majewskis in an extraordinary way. The twins are healthy and beautiful and the parents couldn’t be happier.

It is exciting when God adds to a family. Of course, it also involves changes—new mouths to feed, fewer hours of sleep. It can be tense at

times—yet it is always filled with joy.

In some ways, I have felt for a while that God is birthing something new in us. More and more people are sharing with me their God encounters. They are seeing God show up not only in their own lives but also when they minister to others.

God is truly alive at First Church!

That doesn’t mean that God’s gifts don’t come with some shifts. Nor do God’s gifts always come in ways we would expect. Again, think of the Majewskis. Thankfully, God still comes. It might be challenging at times, but it is always filled with joy.

It is with expectant joy that I am looking forward to our new **Sunday evening service**, which will begin on **April 14**. This new service will strive to reach out to a younger community. This has been on our heart for a number of years. Recently it has become a real possibility with the additions of **Bryan Minerly**, our dynamic Wind worship leader, and **Patrick Sullivan**, our new **Director of College-Plus Outreach** (please see article on page 2).

God continues to be on the move here at First Church! He has birthed many new things at our beloved church and I am so excited to hear of many more God encounters.

—**Pastor Deryk**

Changing Lives through HCM

HARTFORD CITY MISSION (HCM) is a dynamic, multi-faceted ministry working in the midst of Hartford's North End neighborhood, founded by First Church in partnership with other churches. We remain deeply involved.

Over the years, HCM has gone through many changes as its staff and volunteers have sought even better ways to be an effective presence for the Kingdom of God in Hartford. **In the next few issues of *The Spire*, I'd like to share this vibrant Kingdom community with you.**

I'd like to give you one of my favorite glimpses into the ministry of HCM.

Every Thursday, a contingent of high school students accompanies me to the North End to work with HCM's **Noah After School** program, where elementary school students receive both academic and spiritual mentoring. First Church's **Shane Sullivan** (*see photo*), a sophomore at Wethersfield High School, has been one of our mentoring volunteers for over a year now.

Shane has a passion to walk alongside those with fewer resources and opportunities. I have observed that his long-term, hands-on involvement has led to some amazing benefits:



(1) Shane understands what it means to be a disciple-maker, and his relationship with Jesus has deepened.

(2) Shane has seen, first-hand, that God cares about the whole person: their studies, their spiritual formation, their emotional and physical health—and how He uses Shane and others to change the lives of those in need.

(3) Shane's personal character and his passion to help others have strengthened and grown.

Our other young mentors have shown similar growth and have seen lives changed!

I look forward to sharing more with you about this vital ministry our church is so blessed to be a part of. God spoke these words through His prophet Jeremiah:

“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” —Jeremiah 29:7

As God continues to teach us more about His charge to make disciples of all

nations, may we not turn a blind eye to our own city. Like Shane and others, may we choose to invest in the lives of our neighbors—even at the expense of our own lives and comforts.

—**Pastor Todd**

Please Welcome Patrick Sullivan!



We are excited to announce that **Patrick Sullivan** is joining us in the **new part-time position of Director of College-Plus Outreach**. Patrick's focus will be twofold as he will not only minister to our own college student population but will also reach out and make disciples of college students at some of our local college campuses, such as CCSU.

Back in October, the church received a generous bequest from the estate of **Val Mackas**. The Board voted in subsequent meetings to use the money toward hiring, and later voted specifically to use it to invest in the college ministry of the church. Patrick went through a number of interviews with both staff and lay people; all of those involved were excited about his joining us.

Patrick brings with him years of experience in College Minis-

try, not only working for InterVarsity but ministering at various churches as well. He and his family have been worshipping with us for over a year. Patrick is enthusiastic about sharing the Gospel, especially with those who are in this age range.

Please pray with him and the rest of us that God might bless this ministry, so that many new college students will become disciples of Jesus Christ.

Got Talent? Something to Auction?

Our annual **Missions Talent Show & Silent Auction** will be held on **Saturday, March 23** (auction starts at 5:00 p.m., show at 7:00, pizza and drinks sold from 5:00 to 7:00). *Tickets are being sold in the Wells Area, or you may obtain them at the door.*

All proceeds will support this summer's Dominican Republic mission trip. Also, donations may be made directly—checks payable to First Church of Christ, with “D.R. Mission Team” on the memo line, and given to **Dana or Penny Crompton**, or to **Marilyn Danielson** at the church.

Get your “act” together and/or plan items to donate for the auction! We need new and like-new items, gift cards from local businesses, golf clubs, crafts, furniture, “homemade dinner” or babysitting coupons, yard services, baskets, jewelry, art, week-ends at the vacation cottage, golf outings, etc. Be creative!

Would you like to perform in the Talent Show? Just sign up on the poster in the Wells Fellowship Area or contact **Penny Crompton** at 860.635.1530 or dcrompton@sbcglobal.net.

Exciting Children's Performance!

In the Meetinghouse on **Saturday, March 16**, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., see our children answer the question ***Who Was That Man on the Cross?*** by portraying Jesus' many roles—through readings, characterizations, Scripture and song.

After this awesome program (created by the Contemporary Drama Service in Colorado Springs), join our talented and inspiring children for a reception in the Wells Area.

Midweek Lenten Service Continues

OUR MIDWEEK SERVICE is the heart of Lent at First Church. This special service of prayer and Communion is offered in the Meetinghouse **Wednesday evenings** from 6:30 to 7:10, **through March 20**.

The theme for this year's Lenten services is ***God's Word: Life-Giving and Life-Changing!***

Be with us each Wednesday evening at 6:30 for Holy Communion, prayer, and a brief testimony by one (or two) of our members. Speaking on **February 27** will be **Howard and Charlene Page**; on **March 6**, **Frank McKee**; on **March 13**, **Al Phillips**; and on **March 20**, **Alan and Connie Johnson**. For details and speakers' photos, visit firstchurch.org/Lent.

Register for Women's Retreat by March 3!

Please remember to **register by Sunday, March 3**, to guarantee that you will get a room for our April 5-7 retreat—the hotel cannot save us rooms beyond that date. If you register later, you may not be able to stay at the hotel, although you are certainly welcome to attend as a commuter in that case.

In any event, don't miss this amazing time at the Heritage Hotel, Southbury, with **Pamela Palagyi** speaking on ***Balance and Boundaries***. See much more at firstchurch.org/retreat.

30-Hour Famine Set for April 12-13

On **Friday and Saturday, April 12 and 13**, high school and eighth-grade students will be participating in this year's **30-**

Hour Famine, an international youth movement to fight hunger, which has become an annual Youth Ministries event.

As part of the experience, students seek out sponsors who make financial contributions to World Vision (worldvision.org). During the famine, students will study, play, and serve the community through a wide range of service projects.

If you are in grades 8 through 12 and are interested in being a participant in this year's **Famine**, or to learn how you can sponsor one of our participants, call **Pat** at 860.529.1575.

Seniors' Luncheon: *Who's In Your Wallet?*

Seniors! Join us on **Wednesday, March 20**, at 11:30 a.m. for a time of praise and prayer, fellowship, a valuable program, and a tasty luncheon. The meal, catered by John's Cafe and Catering of Middletown, at a cost of \$10/person, includes baked stuffed shells, meatballs, sausage & peppers, a house salad, Italian bread and a delicious dessert.

Speaker **Anton Hertle** will give an important presentation on the many kinds of **identity theft** and how you can protect yourself from becoming a victim. His talk will clear up common misconceptions, reveal the facts, and provide solutions—punctuated by real-life stories.

Registration/payment deadline is Thursday, March 7. Sign up with **Christine** at 860.529.1575, ext. 223, or by email at christinet@firstchurch.org, and send your \$10 check to her at the church. See also firstchurch.org/seniorsluncheon.

'Good Sam' Fund Benefits Many

You have been a blessing to so many!

Our **Good Samaritan Fund**, supported by you (especially through the special offering on first Sundays), has provided vital help with utilities and other living expenses—and food—for members and non-members alike.

We have received many thank-you cards, and really, they are for **you**. If you know of someone who needs help, please refer them to Caring Ministries for an application.

Easter Joy!

First Church is beautifully decorated with flowers on Easter Sunday, due to the generosity of the congregation. You may add to the joy of the Easter celebration by making a memorial contribution to the floral decorations. Suggested donation is \$35.

This completed form and check (payable to "First Church of Christ") should reach the Church Finance Office **no later than Wednesday, March 20**.

The following *italicized* items will appear in the bulletin:

In loving memory of: _____

Given by: _____

Your phone number: _____

PLEASE PRINT • USE ADDITIONAL PAPER IF NECESSARY



PERU, TAKE TWO — Our second annual team visit to our partner church in Barranca, Peru, is set for **March 6-13** (see February *Spire* for details). Info can also be found at firstchurch.org/perutrip, where, in addition, updates on the mission's progress will be posted, along with photos. Team members are (left to right, above) **Jean Koenig, Andrea Henderson, Drew Shattuck, Pastor Deryk, Barb Plante, and Judy Franzen**. The team will be commissioned on **Sunday, March 3**.

BOOK OF LIFE

ENTERED ETERNAL LIFE

Richard Hathaway, November 28, 2012
Alex Jezowski, January 20, 2013
Wesley Marshall, January 21, 2013
Constance Lasher, January 25, 2013
Roger Beck, January 31, 2013

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

BORN

Bailey Rose Golas, daughter of Tim and Tiffany Golas, January 26, 2013
Wyatt Lewis New, son of Jean and Melissa (Burns) New, January 26, 2013
Otis Charles Gilbert, son of Eric and Joelle (Berry) Gilbert, February 9, 2013
Jonathan and Joanna Majewski, twin children of Ed and Lisa Majewski, February 11, 2013

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 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
J. Jay Deifell Jr. Minister Emeritus
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 April issue of *The Spire*, which will be mailed/emailed on March 20, must be submitted to Dave Gilbert by noon on Friday, March 8, at daveg@firstchurch.org or 860.529.1575, x225.

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MARCH 3 — FAMILY LIFE SERIES • Message by Tessa Afshar

MARCH 10 — MISSIONS SERMON *A Heart for the Harvest*

Message by Pastor Lubin Beaucejour
Text: Matthew 28:19-20

MARCH 17 — FAMILY LIFE SERIES *Raising Children Confident in God*

Message by Michael McDowell
Text: Ephesians 6:1-4 and Psalm 78:1-8

LOOKING AHEAD (Details in next *Spire*)

PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 24 — Normal Sunday schedule
Devotion — Message by Deryk Richenburg • Text: Mark 14:1-11

MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 28

Holy Communion and Tenebrae (dimming of lights), 7:00 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 29

Worship in the Meetinghouse, at the foot of the Cross, 2:00 p.m.
Memorial Concert, 7:00 p.m. (see article below)

EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 31

Easter Sunrise Service on Cemetery Hill, 6:00 a.m. • Easter Breakfast, 6:30 a.m.
Easter Services in the Meetinghouse — 7:30 a.m., 9:00, 10:30, 12:00 noon
Wind Contemporary Easter Service in Keith Jones Hall, 11:00 a.m.

The Passion According to Saint Mark

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

GOOD FRIDAY MEMORIAL CONCERT • MARCH 29 • 7:00 PM

CHOIRS • ORCHESTRA • SOLOISTS • ACTOR FRANK RUNYEON



We are eagerly anticipating all the beautiful music for this Lenten and Eastertide season at the First Church of Christ.

I am especially excited to tell you about the music for our 27th Annual **Good Friday Memorial Concert**, which will be presented on **March 29** at 7:00 p.m.

The musical offering will be *The Passion According to Saint Mark*, by Johann Se-

bastian Bach, with text from chapters 14 and 15 of the Gospel of Saint Mark. Bach, and other composers, would assign the actual Scripture narratives to a tenor voice. This particular work is unique in that the tenor recitatives have been lost!

We presented this work in 2004 with well-known actor **Frank Runyeon** (photo at left), who has memorized the Gospel of Mark. I am pleased to announce that Mr. Runyeon will again be with us to portray Saint Mark.

Please plan now to be in attendance, and bring guests. This is sure to be a blessing. Our choirs and the orchestra will join with soloists **Nancy Andersen, David Baker, Stewart Battle, Anne Graczyk-Druce, and Linda Henderson**, to present this awe-inspiring work. We look forward to seeing you—and your friends—at this truly extraordinary event.
—David Spicer