



Evening Service Views

OUR NEW SUNDAY NIGHT service (6:30), with worship leader Bryan Minerly and team, offers a younger sound along with interactive messages—and it has sparked a lot of verbal and written feedback.

What better way to give

others an idea of the excitement than to list the comments left on our Facebook page following the first service?

- *It was beyond amazing!! What a powerful night <><*
- *Wonderful service with God's presence very much felt! Will be there next week.*

- *Can't wait to attend once I get home from college!*
- *The worship was incredible — but flew by too quickly! — and the message from Pastor Deryk was powerful and convicting/inspiring.*
- *Best service I've ever been to. Seriously.*
- *This was SOooOo awesome!!*
- *Amazing worship!!*
- *Sorry I missed it but I heard it was great!!*
- *Keep coming! Another one this week!!*



ON HIS LAST NIGHT, Jesus asked His disciples to trust Him. He knew things were happening. Some were good and some were bad. But all for the best.

He was going to lead them through these changes. He knew they were anxious, yet He still asked them to trust Him. He was going to lead them to great things.

I believe God has great things in store for us. I believe Jesus wants to lead us to the place that He wants us to go. Yes, this can create anxiety in us. It's hard when we don't know all the details. Still, Jesus is still asking us to trust Him.

I believe God has great things in store for us, and I believe God has called me to be your pastor. He has called me here at this time, in these circumstances, with all of you. God has called all of us here together for a time just like this. Together we are to trust in Him and His leading.

Over the last few months, I have become increasingly aware that I have not fully gained the trust of everyone. I don't know if the reasons are our circumstances, our future, my decisions, my leadership, or my character.

I need to do more to earn your trust. Trust is earned, and I am committed to work harder to earn your trust.

I will strive to do better in the area of communication. It is an

area that needs work, and I will work harder at it.

We are facing a lot of situations that require us to make decisions. I believe in the leadership of this church. They are committed to God and they love this church. They are striving to be faithful in the responsibilities that you asked them to do. There is no secret agenda. I trust them, and I hope you can trust them as well.

I want you to know that I am excited about where God is leading us and can't wait to see how His great plan will unfold as we work together in faith and in trust.

—*Pastor Deryk*

A Note from Tom Walsh

Following the special meeting on April 28, when the Rev. Tom Walsh was approved to become our Associate Pastor of Men's Ministry and Mission, he wrote this letter:



Dear First Church Family,

We would like to thank you all for the warm welcome you extended to us on Sunday. It was such a wonderful experience to worship with you. It was truly an unforgettable day and the memory of the affirmation you demonstrated after the meeting is something we will always cherish.

Over the next several weeks we'll be completing our ministry in Vernon and making preparations to begin our work with First

Church. We appreciate your prayers as we care for our dear congregation and loved ones here and ensure that the process of finding their next pastor is moving along well. I'm so grateful for our denominational support in this, but beyond that, we are very sure that the Lord has a wonderful plan to prosper Crossroads in this next chapter.

Also please pray for us as we look for a home in Wethersfield

and make preparations to embrace the new adventure that Christ has set before us! Most of all we're just honored and grateful to have the opportunity to serve such a vibrant church with such a wonderful staff and leadership.

With warmest regards,

Pastor Tom, Lisa, Josh and Em

Caring Ministries Update

When Cathy and I first began attending First Church over five years ago, we were deeply impressed by the many ways the church demonstrates its love for one another in caring for its members. As our congregation continues to embrace the mission of the church by loving God and loving each other, *care* will continue to be one of our core values.

In meeting the needs of our congregation, Caring Ministries has been undergoing a shift away from a *centralized* ministry to a *congregational* ministry, with members caring for one another. This does not mean we will do away with Caring Ministries. It simply means that the focus of this ministry will adapt to best meet the needs.

My role as Director of Caring Ministries will continue, even as I take on a broader responsibility in the area of Community Development, in which my responsibility will be to help *oversee and ensure that all ministries fit together and align with our church's vision*. I see this new mix of responsibilities as an opportunity to help develop the care ministry more fully within the congregation, creating a broader caring community.

I also believe that with the existing training classes and more

under development, we will be able to equip new members of the congregation to add to our dedicated Pastoral Care, Stephen Ministry, and Visitation teams. We are also developing a new community night with Life Groups, geared toward support and offering a place of connection for those experiencing the many pressures of modern daily living.

Along with the shift in my role, there has been a shift taking place in the role of the Caring Ministries Administrative Assistant. This position has, over the years, grown from merely an administrative role to a position of a ministry partner, who is capable of taking on the role of Care Coordinator for the congregation.

It is my joy to serve God at First Church while serving with you all. I continue to believe God is doing great things in our midst and that we will continue to witness an ever-increasing impact of God's activities among us.

—Wayne Luman



Dave Luce Returns as Administrator!



I am very excited to welcome back **David Luce** as the Administrator of our church. David comes to us with a wealth of experience in this area, having served this church for several years.

When the Board asked me to hire an Administrator, back in February, David's name was the first that came to mind. With the consultation of many others, we considered David as the perfect person to serve the church in this capacity, based on his experience and skills, and his knowledge of the people, procedures, and systems of First Church. Welcome back, Dave! —**Pastor Deryk**

Annual Financial Meeting Called for June 9; Informational Meeting Set for May 29

The congregation will vote on the proposed 2013/14 budget at the annual **Financial Meeting** of First Church of Christ, called for **Sunday, June 9**, following the 10:30 a.m. services, in the Meetinghouse. All church members are urged to attend.

The agenda will include a discussion of the proposed budget and any other appropriate financial matters of the church. Printed copies will be available at the church in advance.

In addition, all are invited to an informational meeting on **Wednesday, May 29**, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m., in Conference Room 1 (behind Reception).

Enhancements in the Nursery School Wing

The Church Board is directing that security enhancements be made to the first floor of the Cadwell Building to provide safer surroundings for the children attending the Nursery School.

Already we have made some minor modifications to existing doors but will soon be adding swipe card access and an additional set of doors to keep the area secure while allowing members and guests to use the elevator during school hours. Installation of security cameras in the entries, corridor, playground and all three classrooms will provide immediate views (and a recorded history) of actions in these areas, which can be accessed by the receptionist, selected staff and the Wethersfield Police Department.

The work on structures, policies and training of personnel will be ongoing in cooperation with the Nursery School, Board representatives, the Property Division and the Safety and Security Committee, and are a direct result of the tragic event in Newtown last December. It is our hope these steps will, to the best of our ability, make the school less vulnerable to possible acts of violence and maintain a higher level of response to other issues that could occur on the campus.

—R.K.

Library Committee Seeks Chairperson!

We are blessed by the Mildred Edwards Jones Library and Resource Center, which is actively utilized by all ages. Please visit firstchurch.org/library—and the library itself!

Our several wonderful volunteers (again, of all ages!) are enthusiastic, and others have shown interest as well, but a library committee chair is needed to pull everything together.

To learn more, contact **Wayne** at 860.529.1575, x203, or waynel@firstchurch.org; or **Tessa** at x202 or tessa@firstchurch.org.

Sunday Night Childcare Workers Needed

Our new Sunday evening contemporary service is off to an amazing start. Childcare is offered, and there is a need for people who would like to care for God's children once a month, from 6:15 to 8:15 p.m. You will be compensated, but more importantly, many (including yourself) will be greatly blessed. For details,

please contact **Evelyne** at 860.529.1575, x208, or evelynec@firstchurch.org.

Summer Church School: Get Involved!

Our dedicated church school teachers, who volunteer from September through mid-June, get a well-deserved time of refreshment during the summer months.

Please consider volunteering just one Sunday a month this summer in either the Crib Room or a pre-school class.

All materials will be provided. Stop by the sign-up board in the Wells Fellowship Area and choose the dates most convenient for you. Be a blessing to the children!

Nursery School Registration Continues

Space is filling up up fast! For a 2013-14 registration packet or to schedule a school tour, call **Pat Gilbert** at 860.529.1575, or find forms and much more at firstchurch.org/nurseryschool.

Going Deeper with HCM

IT HAS MEANT SO MUCH TO ME to share about the ministry of **Hartford City Mission (HCM)** in the last few *Spire* issues.

My own Hartford ministry journey began in 1995. That was when I, along with many of you, began traveling down to the Charter Oak Terrace housing projects on Saturday mornings to work with the LIFE program. God planted a seed during my time spent with that ministry.

I can remember—as a 15-year-old new follower of Jesus—walking door to door with Ed Kenyon and Grace Morgan. They were two of the many who taught me what it means to *love like Jesus*.

Several years later I found myself in Hartford again, this time serving as the summer intern for what was then Noah's Sidewalk Sunday School (HCM had not yet been created). I would spend my afternoons walking the neighborhoods, at times alone, visiting the families who lived there. These were some of the formative years that led me to enter into full-time ministry.

I wish I had time to tell you all the stories. In this issue I want to share a bit about the *heart* of the ministry of HCM. Words have limitations, so my challenge to you is this: *If God has been stirring your heart as you've been reading about the great work happening in Hartford, take the plunge and enter into the story yourself.*

The best word to describe the ministry of HCM is **committed**. The philosophy of HCM expresses a deep commitment to the community it is investing in. The staff, board members, and volunteers are committed to the work they are doing, and as a result, many of them have chosen to move into the neighborhood.

They've shifted from viewing ministry as an *event* to seeing ministry as a *way of life*. Those who have made this decision will tell you that they are motivated by the simple desire to become more like Jesus.

God's decision to enter into our lives through the incarnation of Jesus is the activity underlying what many refer to as *incar-*



First Church's Helen Davis is one of many who show Jesus' love at HCM.

national ministry, which means *entering into the world* of those we are seeking to reach with the Gospel. It involves caring about every part of their lives.

Jesus spent thirty years living among the people of Israel before his official ministry began. What was He doing during that time? We don't know for sure, but I think this much is true: God was deeply identifying Himself with His people. He had experienced first-hand many of the aspects of their lives. I see this same idea underlying our own vision here at First Church. We have a desire to see more people come to know Jesus, to see His Kingdom expand.

We're beginning to recognize the importance of developing deep relationships with God, with one another, and with those to whom we are imparting the message of Jesus. We're also learning that sharing the Gospel is about so much more than sharing words—it means sharing our lives as well.

This idea permeates the Apostle Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 2:8, "*Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the Gospel of God but our lives as well.*" I pray that we as a church would develop an even deeper love for the people of Hartford and the communities we live in, so that Paul's words might become our own. —**Pastor Todd**

BOOK OF LIFE

ENTERED ETERNAL LIFE

Valentine Murphy, February 12, 2013
Tilly Braren, March 11, 2013
Byron Morton, April 11, 2013
Ann Kuzmak, April 22, 2013

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

BORN

Henrik Anderson, son of Erik and Sarah (Phillips) Anderson, March 8, 2013

UNITED IN MARRIAGE

Jeremy Panella and Jessica Randall, April 13, 2013

Timothy Andrew Karpoff and Fiona Johanna Yvonne McDowell, April 27, 2013

Jon R. Beaty and Andrea Birmingham, April 27, 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.

Evening Contemporary Service
in Keith Jones Hall: 6:30 p.m.

[facebook.com/firstchurchpage](https://www.facebook.com/firstchurchpage)

Dial-A-Message: 860.529.1785

Uplifting Messages from 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.

Ateesa M. Afshar Associate Minister
J. Jay Deifell Jr. Minister Emeritus
David A. Luce Church Administrator
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
Patrick Sullivan Dir. of College-Plus Outreach
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 June issue of *The Spire*, which will be mailed and emailed on May 29, must be submitted to Dave Gilbert by noon on Friday, May 17, at daveg@firstchurch.org or 860.529.1575, x225.

DATED MATERIAL
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SUNDAY MORNING MESSAGES



THE FAMILY STRUGGLE

EPHESIANS SERMON SERIES

MAY 12 • *The Enemy's Scheme*

Pastor Deryk — Ephesians 6:12 and parts of Nehemiah

MAY 19 • *Standing Power*

Pastor Tessa — Ephesians 6:10-14

MAY 26 • *Belt and Breastplate*

Pastor Mike — Ephesians 6:14

SUNDAY EVENING SERVICE

6:30 PM • Contemporary worship • Interactive messages • Prayer

ASOF Winners' Concert

The winners of last September's national **Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival** competition will present a rich and varied program on our Austin pipe organ on **Sunday, June 9, at 7:00 p.m.**

Joseph Russell, who took first place in the High School Division, is from Grayslake, Illinois and just completed his senior year at the Interlochen Arts Academy. In 2012, Joe was awarded the Fine Arts award, one of the most prestigious awards given to students at Interlochen. He plans to pursue a degree in organ performance and sacred music.

Michael Gebhart, first-place winner in the Young Professional Division, has completed his second year as an undergraduate organ performance major at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he studies with Dr. Janette Fishell. He is Organ Scholar at Christ Church (Episcopal) Cathedral, Indianapolis. From 2008 to 2009, he worked full-time as music director at Blessed Sacrament Church in Providence, Rhode Island.

These young virtuosi will offer works by



Alain, Bach, Buxtehude, Duruflé, Dupré, Mendelssohn, and Widor.

The concert will be enhanced by closed-circuit projection, allowing all present to view the organists as they play. Attendees will also have a chance to meet these two brilliant artists at a reception.

An offering will be received, and childcare will be available (up to age 8). This promises to be an exhilarating evening for all!

MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND PLANT SALE TO SUPPORT YOUTH WORKCAMP MISSION

This summer's youth Workcamp mission will take place in New Jersey to help Hurricane Sandy victims. **Please help them** by purchasing **beautiful plants** for Mom or anyone—**Saturday, May 11**, from 8:00 to 2:00; and **Sunday, May 12**, following the 8:45 and 10:30 a.m. worship services, until 2:00 p.m. The tables will be set up on the front lawn of the church—stop by and support the Workcamp team! Contact **Ted Willard**, or **Pastor Todd** at toddw@firstchurch.org, for details.

"RENT A CREW" FOR CHORES AND TO SUPPORT YOUTH WORKCAMP MISSION

\$80 for a 2-hour minimum and \$40 for each additional hour "rents" you a crew of one adult and two teen workers **and** helps the Workcamp team mentioned above. Chores may include yard cleanup, raking, weeding, minor painting, gutter cleaning, attic/cellar/garage cleaning, window cleaning, or hedge clipping. Crews are available for **June dates**. For an appointment, contact **Pat** at 860.529.1575 or patg@firstchurch.org.

SPRING WORK DAY SET FOR MAY 18

[Originally scheduled for May 4.] Can you help us on our church grounds on **Saturday, May 18**? Projects will include weeding, mulching, window washing, power washing (foundation walls), and others. We start at 8:30 a.m., followed by a provided BBQ lunch at noon. Anyone able to bring a wheelbarrow for working on mulch will be twice blessed! There is a sign-up sheet in the Wells Area, or call **Bob Keleher** at 860.529.1575, x299.

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOC. WORKSHOP ON MAY 18

Stephen Ministry and **Seniors' Ministry** are sponsoring a workshop presented by the Alzheimer's Association: **The Basics: Memory Loss, Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease** on **Saturday, May 18**, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. in Keith Jones Hall. Reservations can be made by calling **Caring Ministries** at 860.529.1575, x210, or by email at care@firstchurch.org. Walk-ins are also welcome.

Our dynamic and engaging speaker will be **Patty O'Brian** (*right*), the North Central Regional Director of the association's Connecticut chapter. Attendees will learn about detection, causes and risk factors, stages of the disease, treatment, and more. A Q&A session will follow. Plan to join us for this valuable workshop!



TAG SALE TO BENEFIT HOMELESS SHELTER

On **Saturday, June 1** (rain date, June 8), we will hold a churchwide/community tag sale to benefit **South Park Inn** in Hartford. We will join together as a family of faith, sell some of our possessions, and give all that we receive from the sale to purchase greatly-needed new mattresses for the shelter. This event is organized by our deacons.

The tag sale will run from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., **held on the First Church lawn**. Please see the details and "rules" at firstchurch.org/tag-sale, where you can also find photos of last year's wonderful event.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST TO BENEFIT D.R. MISSION

On **Sunday, June 2**, the Saturday Men's Prayer Breakfasters will host a **Pancakes with a Purpose** breakfast in the Fireside Room, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m., as a fundraiser for our July 12-20 mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Enjoy pancakes, sausages, orange juice, milk, coffee and tea, along with some quality time with your First Church family in Christian community and purpose.

TICKETS — Look for the breakfast sign-up sheet and tickets in the Wells Fellowship Area throughout May, or contact **Marilyn Danielson** at 860.529.1575, x213, or marilynd@firstchurch.org. The donation is \$4 for one person, \$7 for a couple, and \$10 maximum for a family. Those coming early or staying late for the breakfast are encouraged to park in the Keeney Memorial Center parking lot that Sunday.

Questions? Please contact **Penny** at 860.635.1530 or dcrompton@sbcglobal.net.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL MEETING CALLED FOR JUNE 9

Please see page 2 of the *May Spire*.

ASOF WINNERS' ORGAN CONCERT, JUNE 9

Please see page 4 of the *May Spire*.

GOLF TOURNAMENT TO BENEFIT D.R. MISSION

Our 7th annual **Dominican Republic Mission Golf Tournament** will be held at Quarry Ridge Golf Course in Portland on **Saturday, June 15**. This scramble tournament begins with registration at noon and a shotgun start at 1:00. Proceeds will support the First Church summer mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Register early for this great event—we anticipate that it will sell out. A box lunch is included, as well as a sit-down buffet after the round. You can register your team, or we will match individual golfers to form foursomes.

Besides **golfers**, we welcome those who do not wish to golf but would like to be **sponsors** of the event. Please go to firstchurch.org/golf for details as well as links to separate brochures for golfers and sponsors. Info is also available in the Wells Area or by contacting **Dana Crompton** at 860.635.1530 or dcrompton@sbcglobal.net.

REGISTER NOW FOR VACATION BIBLE CAMP

A great VBC is set for **July 22-26**—start planning now! Our theme is **Kingdom Rock: Where Kids Stand Strong for God**.

- All from age 4 through completed grade 5 are invited to laugh, play, pray, celebrate, imagine, give, explore, and **rock!**
- All from completed grade 6 through adults are invited to join our team! Either way, pick up a 2-sided registration form at church or print both pages from firstchurch.org/VBC. If you have questions, call **Marcia McCann** at 860.529.1575, x206.

REGISTER NOW FOR A WEEK AT CAMP HOPE

Camp Hope on scenic Bantam Lake in the Litchfield hills is the place for one of the **best** weeks in the life of each who attends, **July 28 to Aug. 3**, for those entering grades 6-12. Water activities, new friendships, God's love, so much more. Register now! For links to the application and brochure, go to firstchurch.org/camp-hope, or call **Pat** at 860.529.1575.

Connect with **Pastor Todd** to get a clue about just how exciting this is!