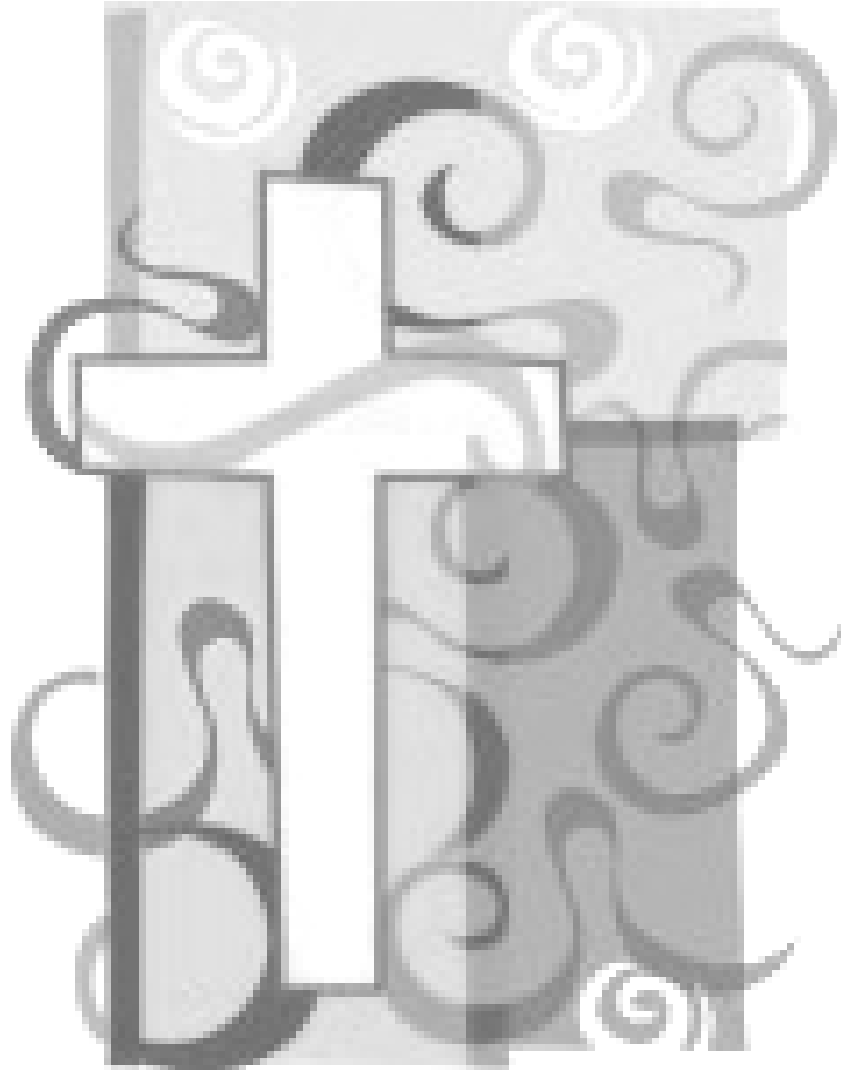



THE CORNERSTONE



April, 2011

APRIL, 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 9:00 First Church Friends, Parsons' Study 2:15 Junior Fellowship, Youth Room 7:30 John Conard-Malley Eagle Scout ceremony. Reception to follow in Palmer Hall 8:30 Malley Eagle Scout reception - Palmer Hall 2:10 Junior Fellowship—Whirlyball!	2
3 8:30 Worship, Chapel 10:00 Worship, Sanctuary (lead by PF) 10:00 Youth Sunday School 11:30 Lenten Series - Finding True Fulfillment, Parsons' Study 6:00 Uncommon Worship, Sanctuary 7:00 Sr. High Youth	4 1:00 Red Cross blood drive 2:15 PF Tutoring at Kennelly Elementary School, Hartford 4:15 Junior Choir 7:30 Executive Council Meeting, Parson's Study	5 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast, Palmer Hall	6 9:30 Hay Stack Circle, Room 28 4:00 Women's Praise Choir 7:00 Farmington Valley Chorus, Palmer Hall	7 6:00 Bell Choir, Room 29 6:30 Occasional Choir 6:30 Troop 76 Leadership Mtg., Parsons' Study 7:30 AA meeting, Room 28 7:30 Chancel Choir	8 9:00 First Church Friends, Intro to Caregiving workshop, Parsons' Study 10:30 Farmington Valley Transition Academy, Palmer Hall and kitchen 7:00 Sr. High Youth Dance for Change, Palmer Hall & lock-in overnight.	9 
10 8:30 Worship, Chapel 9:00 Gathering for Baptism Families, Parlor 10:00 Worship/ Baptism, Sanctuary 10:00 Youth Sunday School 11:15 Lenten Series - Living for Today, Parsons' Study 11:15 Committee of Deacons, Library 7:00 Sr. High Youth	11 2:15 PF Tutoring at Kennelly Elementary School, Hartford 4:00 Junior Choir 7:15 All Boards Meeting, All Rooms Booked	12 12:00 Retired Men's Luncheon 4:00 Committee on Ministry, Parlor 7:00 Pilgrim Fellowship for Parents only	13 10:30 Music Together Classes, Room 29 4:00 Women's Praise Choir 7:00 Farmington Valley Chorus	14 12:30 Confirmation cooking for South Park Inn, Kitchen 6:00 Bell Choir, Room 29 6:30 Occasional Choir 6:30 Troop 76 Boy Scouts, Palmer Hall 7:30 AA meeting, Room 28 7:30 Chancel Choir	15 2:15 Junior Fellowship 6:00 Supper Club - Hiram Peck Guest - Palmer Hall	16
17 8:30 Worship-Palm Sunday, Chapel 10:00 Worship-Palm Sunday, Sanctuary 10:00 Pentecost Rotation Unit Movie, Palmer Hall 10:00 Youth Sunday School 11:15 Lenten Series, Taking Our Life Back, Parsons' Study 4:15 PF Sml Grp Mtg #12, host homes 6:00 Uncommon Worship, Sanctuary 7:00 Sr. High Youth Group (PF)	18 1:00 Red Cross blood drive 2:15 PF Tutoring at Kennelly Elementary School, Hartford 4:00 Junior Choir	19 9:30 Prayer Shawl Ministry, Room 28 1:00 Faith Circle, Selected Host Homes 6:00 Bell Choir, Room 29 6:30 Occasional Choir 7:00 Evening Prayer Shawl Ministry, Room 28 7:30 Chancel Choir	20 10:30 Music Together Classes, Room #29 4:00 Women's Praise Choir 7:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorus	21 6:30 Troop 76 Boy Scouts, Palmer Hall 7:30 AA meeting, Room 28 7:30 Maundy Thursday service, Sanctuary	22 Holiday - Office Closed for Good Friday 	23 9:30 Pilgrim Fellowship—Pancake Breakfast set up
24 5:45 a.m. Easter Sunday Sunrise Service —Meet at the Methodist Church 6:00 walk to cemetery. 6:30 Easter Pancake Breakfast 8:30 Easter Sunday Worship, Sanctuary 10:00 Easter Sunday Worship, Sanctuary 10:00 Youth Sunday School 7:00 Sr. High Youth Group (PF)	25 2:15 PF Tutoring at Kennelly Elementary School, Hartford 4:00 Junior Choir 6:00 FMHCC Board meeting, Parsons' Study	26 10:00 Card making group, Room 28 6:00 Cub Scout meeting, Palmer Hall	27 10:30 Music Together Classes, Room #29 12:00 4th Wednesday Study Group, Room 28 4:00 Women's Praise Choir 7:00 Farmington Valley Chorus	28 8:00 Church School Tag Sale Setup - Palmer Hall 12:00 Drop off of tag sale goods at Palmer Hall 6:00 Bell Choir, Rm 29 7:30 AA meeting, Room 28 	29 8:00 Church School Tag Sale Setup - Palmer Hall 9:00 Drop off of tag sale goods at Palmer Hall 2:15 Junior Fellowship 	30 8:00 Church School Tag Sale - Palmer Hall 

THE CORNERSTONE

APRIL 2011 WORSHIP SCHEDULE:

Sunday, April 3rd

SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:30 a.m.—Early worship in the Chapel

10:00 a.m.— Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary

“Lord, Help Us To Treat You Right”

Church members Rev. Leonard Clough and Pilgrim Fellowship member Tanner Gleason preaching.

11:00 a.m. – Video/Audio Skype Session in the Sanctuary with the 21 boys of the Makarere Orphanage in Kampala, Uganda

No UnCommon Worship today

Sunday, April 10th

SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:30 a.m.—Early Worship in the Chapel

10:00 a.m.—Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary

“Living for Today” ~Jonathan Morgan preaching

Sunday, April 17th

SUNDAY WORSHIP – PALM SUNDAY

8:30 a.m.—Early Worship in the Chapel

10:00 a.m. - Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary

Matthew 21: 1-11, ***“After the Parade”***

~Rev. Alison Buttrick Patton preaching on

6:00 p.m. **Uncommon Worship** in the Sanctuary

~Rev. Kevin Weikel preaching

Thursday, April 21st

Maundy Thursday ~ Office of Tenebrae

7:30 p.m. in the Meetinghouse

Sunday, April 24th

SUNDAY WORSHIP- EASTER

5:45 a.m.- Meet at the Methodist Church Sanctuary for a Joint Sunrise Service

6:00 a.m. We walk to the cemetery

6:30 a.m.—10:00 a.m. *Pancake Breakfast*

8:30 a.m.—**Easter Worship** for the Young at Heart

10:00 a.m.—**Easter Worship**

“From What are we being Saved?”

~ Rev. Jonathan Morgan preaching

From the Senior Minister's Desk



“Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Mag'dalene and the other Mary went to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.” Matthew 28

* * * * *

Dear Friends in Christ,

We frequently say that as Christians we are an “Easter People.” It is a wonderful phrase that helps capture the hope and promise of our faith. But, what does it mean to be an Easter People? How do we know that we are not any different than just being regular people? Is it just a matter of labeling or is there something that lies deeper here?

After such a long and difficult winter, we are all looking forward to the celebration of our highest Holy Day. We need to hear the uplifting music that brings us together with joy and awe. We need to feel the Spirit moving through our Meetinghouse touching hearts and transforming lives. We need to hear the Good News that death and doubt and darkness will not have the last word because we worship a great God who can do miraculous things!

Which is part of the struggle we have with Easter. What happened that “First day of the week?” We know the followers of Jesus were surprised and more than a little confused. Are we able to understand the full meaning of this event yet?

That is why we have the church. That is why we need each other. We need to come together each week to explore and engage one another in finding the meaning of our faith in a miraculous God who does amazing and surprising things. We need worship to inspire us; retreats to deepen us; outreach opportunities to challenge us; and educational experiences to open our hearts and change us. We need the Church. We need our church to help us on this amazing journey of faith.

As you make a special Easter Offering through the enclosed envelope this year, know that you are making the possibility of being God’s Easter People more real. Happy Easter everyone!

~Jonathan

Our Strategic Planning Process

I am delighted to report that our Strategic Planning process is underway. The team listed below will be dedicating a great deal of prayerful effort toward helping us define our identity as a community of faith more clearly as well as discern how God may be calling us to serve as Christ’s Church in the coming years. It is a defining moment in the life of our 314 year old church and everyone will have a chance to be a part of this important process.

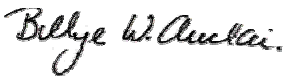
In March, the committee has been meeting with Paul Nickerson, our coach, to frame the questions and map out our strategy on how we will come together to determine our path ahead. Paul has worked with many congregations over the years in the areas of church growth & vitality and discernment. Paul is a Senior Associate with Griffith Coaching of Denver, Colorado and a gifted leader. We are very fortunate to have Paul leading us thanks to several gifts received from caring members of our congregation.

Our goal is to create a plan for review at our Annual Meeting on May 15th with many opportunities for congregational input before and after that date. We are also keeping our focus on providing the congregation with a meaningful and practical way to guide and measure our progress as a community in faith. Too many times a plan is generated only to gather dust in a drawer. We are determined to make this plan a living process that will help guide our beloved church for years to come.

In the meantime, please keep an eye on bulletin announcements and emails to keep you abreast of what is happening. Also, if you would like to speak to one of the committee members, please feel free to give them a call.

I would like to thank our dedicated and talented committee for their willingness to serve. Please be sure to thank them yourself as you lift them up in prayer.

Blessings,



Vice President

The Strategic Planning Team

Billye Auclair, Chair
Todd Bailey
Judy Bryant
Gordon Breslav
Denise Firestone

Ryan Goss
Doug Hedman
Connie Keedle
Bill Ketchabaw
Jonathan Morgan

Nancy Poole
Suzy Sabia
Dave Wadhams
John Wright

From the Associate Minister for Parish Life & Outreach

Too political? – A Lenten Reflection

How much political talk is too much? Are our words and actions at First Church too political? Or not political enough? Ask several of your First Church neighbors, and I suspect you'll hear several different responses. Whether or not politics 'belongs' in church is a question that prompts lively discussion.

As part of my Lenten practice, I have been doing some devotional reading and journaling. This morning, as I wrote, I was struck by the root of the word, 'politics:' it is *polis*, or 'city.' At its most fundamental, the 'political' is that which concerns the *corporate life of the community*: how we live together and how we decide what practices and policies will govern our shared living. It strikes me that these are the very matters that concerned Jesus: How do we treat the poor and the sick? What does it mean for us to honor the Sabbath and still feed the hungry? What obligations do we have to one another in times of trial? What kind of community is God calling us to be?

In addressing these questions, Jesus behaved in ways that were 'politically unpopular' again and again: promising release to the captives, hanging out with outcasts, healing on the Sabbath, overturning tables in the temple... His words, actions and friendships all pointed to a different way of being community: "Not like that, but like *this*," he said, projecting a clear vision of community that honors God and neighbor – without exception.

So, this question about whether 'politics' belongs in church has always puzzled me, because I don't know how to practice faith *in general*, or in isolation. If I am to follow Jesus (something I am still learning how to do), then I need to consider what that means, *in particular*, for the ways I relate to others and to God. I need to consider how the choices I make, the food I eat, the things I consume, the investments I make, the people I befriend and the commitments I keep *are* or *are not* consistent with Christ's vision of community. In other words: What practices and policies should govern our shared living?

These are not easy questions. I wrestle with them and fall short every day. At their heart is the single question that looms large during Lent: "So what?" God loves us. "So what?" God forgives us. "So what?" Jesus calls us. "So what?" Jesus did everything he could to teach us how to live as God's beloved community, until it (we) killed him... "So what? What difference does all this make to me, to us?"

Responding to that persistent, "So what?" is the work of Lent. Our responses will vary because we all come at life and faith from different angles and with different perspectives, but on some level, all our responses will be political. And that's O.K. It's even faithful.

Dear God: Help us to turn our faith into faithful living. Amen.

~Pastor Alison

LENTEN SERIES

Second Hour Program in the Parsons' Study

FINDING MEANING IN THE RIGHT PLACES!

Sunday, April 3rd 11:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

FINDING TRUE FULFILLMENT

Why is it that often when we get what we want, we still feel empty? We work so hard to succeed, but our lives just end up becoming more about us. Can success turn on us? Can we get caught up in a smaller world where our lives are all about the things that we want? Or is there another way to live? Where life is about more than just us.

Led by: Jonathan Morgan and Nancy Crouch

Sunday, April 10th 11:15 a.m.—12:15 p.m.

LIVING FOR TODAY

How much time and energy do we spend wishing things were how they used to be? We often think about times in our past when things were different and want our lives to be like that again. Are we missing our present and future hopes in this pursuit for what is now gone?

Led by: Jonathan Morgan and Diann Bailey

Sunday, April 17th 11:15 a.m.—12:15 p.m.

TAKING OUR LIFE BACK

It's easy to get overwhelmed by the daily tasks of life. But what are we really doing with our time? We end up doing a little of everything and yet finish our days unfulfilled. We become overwhelmed by obligations. Perhaps saying no would be easier if we knew what it meant to say yes to something that really mattered.

Led by: Jonathan Morgan and Diann Bailey

**Coffee and Refreshments Served
Child care available upon request**

COULD YOU SERVE ON A CHURCH BOARD?

Most of you know that, given its very small staff, First Church relies on its many lay volunteers to operate most of its activities. However, I suspect many of you don't realize the range of contributions that First Church volunteers make, particularly via its many Boards and Committees. This spring, the terms of quite a few Board members expire and we will need replacements to be able to execute these important functions. Could you be such a volunteer? Let me describe just a few of the Boards and Committees that permit your Church to operate its many ministries:

- ✠ The Board of Elders is responsible, along with the three ministers, for the content of our various worship services, including overseeing the flowers, Holy Communion, special services and the ushers responsibilities during worship.
- ✠ The Board of Trustees oversees the church building and grounds, oversees scheduled and emergency maintenance, manages service and related contracts and the rental policy of the Church;
- ✠ The Board of Finance administers the Church's budget and other financial affairs, including the Church's endowment funds and day-to-day expenses.
- ✠ The Board of Christian Education is responsible for not only the multiple Church School programs, but also the periodic Adult Christian Education programs offered by First Church.
- ✠ The Board of Personnel oversees and updates the human resource activities of the Church including our personnel policies and procedures.
- ✠ The Board of Music Ministries is accountable for all the music programs that enhance and support the spiritual life of the Church including eight different Choirs, special concerts and inter faith musical activities.
- ✠ The Board of Stewardship manages the annual pledge campaign and fundraising activities that provide the financial lifeblood of the congregation.

The next time you read in the Bulletin or hear announcements about an activity, it was likely one of your fellow congregants who worked to make it happen. Each year, it seems like that work falls to less and less members. However, Board service doesn't have to represent a huge time commitment. Most Boards meet once a month and only during the school year, but their efforts bring so much value to our church community.

Please consider joining a Board or a Committee – even on a trial basis if necessary. If you'd like more information, contact Dane Woodberry: ddwoodberry@comcast.net. Dane will be glad to review the Board openings and responsibilities for you.

Blessings:



William J. Goss

DANCE FOR CHANGE!



WHAT? First Church PF Youth Group is hosting a dance-a-thon to raise enough funds to provide one year of education (\$6,250) for all 21 boys living in the HALO Makarere Home, an orphanage in Kampala, Uganda.

WHY? Because these 21 boys come from difficult pasts and the Makarere Home provides shelter, water, food, clothing, and education and uses art therapy and the teachings of Jesus to give them a loving foundation on which to stand. But...they need outside help to support their efforts.

YOU CAN PARTICIPATE!!!

(in one, two, or all three of the ways below)...

- 1) **DANCE!** You can attend *"Dance for Change!"* On Friday, April 8th. The PF Youth Group will be dancing from 7:00 p.m. – Midnight in Palmer Hall, and all members, friends, and family of First Church are invited to join us at any time between 7:00 p.m. –10:00 p.m. The boys of Makarere love to dance, so come and dance with us as together we celebrate the education that our fundraising has brought to their lives. Stop by and dance for as long as you would like!
- 2) **DONATE!** You can donate in one of two ways. 1) Go to the First Church Home Page, click *"Dance for Change"* under *"Current News,"* click on the name of a specific PFER, and click *"Make a Donation"* on their personal fundraising page. 2) Write a check made out to *"First Church"* with *"Dance for Change"* in the memo and drop it off at the church office. If you would like a specific member of PF to get the credit, write that name on the top of the check.
- 3) **MEET THE BOYS OF MAKARERE!** Join us for the 10:00 a.m. worship service on April 3rd and stay for a Skype session with the boys of Makarere in the sanctuary after the service (11:00 a.m.)!

Questions? Contact Rev. Kevin Weikel at 860-651-3593!

K.I.D.S. @ First

Kids Investigating Divine Stories at First Church

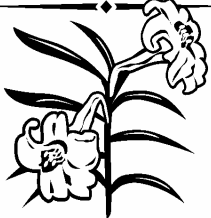
**Church
School
News**



Upcoming events:

April 17: Communion Workshop, Grades K-6 in Palmer Hall during church school

Easter



April 24: Easter Sunday, 8:30 Inter generational service : students will learn about the events of Holy Week & have the opportunity to participate in Communion during this interactive service.

Nursery (ages 3 & under)

The nursery (Rm. 20) is available during the service for children ages 3 and under. In April, the children will be learning the Easter story.

Pre-K Class (ages 3-4)

The Pre-K class (Rm. 38) will be learning the Easter story through activity centers. Students begin in church and are dismissed to class after the children's message. Parents need to sign up on the schedule to teach class. Student will attend music in room 37 from 11-11:15.

Kindergarten Class

Kindergarten class (rm. 37) will be learning the Easter story through stories, crafts, and games. Students begin in church and are dismissed to the chapel after the children's message. They will participate in music from 11-11:16.

Rotation Program, Grades 1-6: Pentecost

The Pentecost unit uses the Bible story included in Acts 2:1-42. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to the disciples and to the believers in Jesus. The disciples and many believers were gathered in a house when the Holy Spirit came to them in the form of wind and flames. People outside the house who heard the noise commented and laughed derisively. Peter then spoke to the crowd and told them about Jesus. Three thousand people became believers and were baptized.

Scripture: Acts 2:1-42

The students will: 1) hear the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; 2) identify how the Holy Spirit empowered the disciples; 3) understand that we are empowered by the Holy Spirit; 4) define the Holy Spirit as "God with us now"; 5) learn that the Holy Spirit can be present in our lives too; 6) explore the meaning of "believe"; 7) understand why we celebrate Pentecost as the birthday of the church.

Rotation schedule	B.L.A.S.T. Rm.35-Art	Mouse Pad Rm.32- Computers	Creation Station Rm.34-Cooking	Coliseum Rm.29- Games
Wk. 1 (4/3) Pre-K – 6 Begin in Church; K-6 dismissed to	Gr. 1 Gr. 3	Gr. 2	Gr. 4	Gr. 5 Gr. 6
Wk. 2 (4/10) Pre-K – 6 Begin in Church	Gr. 2	Gr. 4	Gr. 5 Gr. 6	Gr. 1 Gr. 3
Wk. 3 (4/17) Pre-K – 6 Begin in Church	Communion Workshop, Palmer Hall			
(4/24)	Easter: students attend Church			
Wk. 4 (5/1) Pre-K – 6 Begin in Church	Gr. 4	Gr. 5 Gr. 6	Gr. 1 Gr. 3	Gr. 2



**Church School
Mission Projects**

The spring offering envelopes will go towards supporting Operation Kid-to-Kid by purchasing backpacks



& Spanish Bibles to kids in Latin America. The students participating in VBS this summer will be coloring the backpacks



**VACATION BIBLE
SCHOOL**

June 20-23 (Mon-Thurs),
9:00 a.m.– Noon

Come and have fun this summer at PandaMania! Each day the students gather in the Sanctuary (ages 4 to entering the 6th grade) to learn the Bible point and new songs. Then they rotate to the games, movie, art, and Bible story rooms to learn about the day's Bible story. This VBS is held in conjunction with the Simsbury United Methodist church and St Alban's church at SMUC.

Sign up is on the 3rd floor bulletin board. Registration forms will be available in March.

We need 1 adult volunteer for every 5 kids. To date we have 20 students and 4 adult volunteers signed up. We will need additional adult volunteers before any additional students can sign up.

- Day 1 God Made you. God creates the world.
- Day 2 God Listens to you> Elijah confronts the prophets of Baal.
- Day 3 God watches over you. Jonah tries to escape from God.
- Day 4 God gives good gifts. God gives Hannah a baby.

Cost: \$35/student; includes craft, t-shirt, snacks, music cd, etc.

**Silver Lake Summer
Camp Conferences**

Online Registration is now open and filling up! Sign up today! Send your kids (4th grade & up) to Silver Lake for a week (still an economically smart alternative to other camps, vacations, child-care options and a spiritually-sane choice!). You can register and find further information on the camps online at Silverlake.ctucc.org. The informational flyer is posted on the 3rd floor bulletin board.

**Silver Lake's Open House –
May 8**

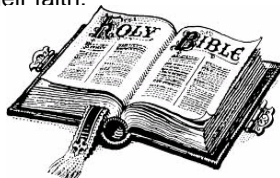
For all prospective parents and would-be conferees (campers)!! Come out and take a hayride tour of camp, meet the staff, and check out your child's new "home away from home," "in "God's Backyard." Event link: <http://www.ctucc.org/events.php?event=2538>

Bible Program:

- Eleanor Lynne Alfeld
- Amanda Treat Buckman
- Gregory Damon
- Callahan
- Maisie Ventres Filler
- Sophia Elizabeth Capobianco
- Graham Garrison
- Michael Peter Gundersen
- Kate Anne Gundersen
- Teagan Leigh Hedman
- Andy Hitt

- Jessica King
- Bailey Kopper
- Jack Lamkin
- Alec Laubscher
- Dalton Lemoine
- Colby Morkan
- Kieran H. Murthy
- Gregory Peach
- Jonathan Prell
- Whitney Schwitter
- Caroline M. Strapp
- Alayna Tawney

These students have participated in 8 hours of study about the Bible. They have learned: 1) about the format of the Bible and pronunciation of Bible book names through games and projects, 2) how the Bible came to be through scavenger hunt for scrolls and archeological dig, 3) the lands of the Bible by watching a movie and making a 3-D relief map of Israel out of play dough, and making posters about their faith.



Pentecost Word Search

T R Y L G I F T G J L B S R L
 I O A O C B V O C T I Q E I A
 R T C R O W D T E M F T D Z N
 I D N A S U O H T E E R H T G
 P N O E E G P S B P E Z S A U
 S F A R M O A A E P E O Q M A
 Y J I T R R P L E U C W E A G
 L F E P I T E N I E G I S Z E
 O D W S I O T D T L C N U E S
 H N N Z U R N N L K E G O D S
 X M E I U S E U M I A A H T E
 D D E H W P L B A B W E N R N
 J E R U S A L E M J N E P S T
 D E R U O P G N I W O L B S I
 N P R O M I S E T R A E H L W

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| AMAZED | HEART | POURED |
| BAPTIZED | HOLY SPIRIT | PROMISE |
| BEWILDERMENT | HOUSE | PROPHET |
| BLOWING | JERUSALEM | REPENT |
| CROWD | JESUS | SPEAK |
| FIRE | LANGUAGE | THREETHOUSAND |
| GALILEANS | LIFE | TONGUES |
| GIFT | NATION | WIND |
| GOD | PENTECOST | WITNESS |
| | PETER | |

REV. KEVIN WEIKEL—YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

PLAY, DISCUSS, WORSHIP, GROW, SERVE, LOVE...

Go to www.1styouthmin.org for more detailed information

JUNIOR FELLOWSHIP (for 7th and 8th graders)

Friday, April 1st 2:10-5:15 p.m. Hop a ride on the church bus from Henry James and we'll travel to South Windsor to play Whirlyball! Cost is \$20 and includes transportation, two hours of Whirlyball and pizza. No need to sign up in advance as long as we have your Waiver/Health form on file for you already. If we don't, click on "downloads" in the left tab and fill out the form and drop it off to the church office.

Friday, April 15th 2:10-4:00 p.m. Hop a ride on the church bus from Henry James and we'll head back to the church for fun, snacks, engaging conversation and a meaningful candle prayer.

CONFIRMATION (for 8th graders)

Sunday, April 3rd 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (NOTE TIME CHANGE). We have a very special morning planned at First Church and we want the confirmands to experience it. PF Youth Group is hosting a dance-a-thon fundraiser on April 8th to raise enough funds to provide one year of education for all 21 boys living in the Makarere Orphanage in Kampala, Uganda. The 10:00 a.m. worship service on April 3rd will focus on this. Directly after the service, the congregation will stay together as we Skype with the boys of the Makarere Orphanage from the Sanctuary! **After the Skype session, small groups will meet around the church for Session #11 (Life in the Church) until 12:30 p.m.**

7:00-9:00 p.m. Dance for Change prep.

Friday, April 8th 7:00 –9:00 p.m. PF Youth Group will be hosting a dance-a-thon from 7:00 p.m. - Midnight in Palmer Hall. All members, friends and families of First Church are invited to join PF for the dance. Stop by and dance for as long as you would like!

Thursday, April 14th 2:30-8:00 p.m. Soup Kitchen with Gordon's group. We will meet at 2:30 in the Church kitchen to prepare the meal, then we will eat our subs in the Youth Room while discussing South Park Inn and then depart for the shelter. Serving is finished about 7:00 p.m. and we'll stop at Dunkin Donuts on the way home to discuss our experience.

Sunday, April 17th 4:15-7:00 p.m. Small Group meetings #12 (The Faith Journey Continues) at host homes followed by Uncommon Worship in the Sanctuary.

Thursday, April 21st 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service in the Sanctuary

Sunday, May 1st 5:00-7:00 p.m. Large Group closing Picnic and Decision to be

Pizza w/ the Pastor: Dates and times being organized by Small Group leaders and Communicators.

REV. KEVIN WEIKEL—YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

PLAY, DISCUSS, WORSHIP, GROW, SERVE, LOVE...
 Go to www.1styouthmin.org for more detailed information

(CONT.)

PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP YOUTH GROUP (for 9th-12th graders)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Sunday, April 3rd | <p>10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. PF Youth Group will be leading the 10:00 a.m. Worship service, focusing on the Dance for Change fundraiser and the boys of the Makarere Orphanage as the theme. Directly after the service, the congregation will stick around as we Skype with the boys of Makarere from the Sanctuary!</p> <p>7:00-9:00 p.m. Dance for Change prep.</p> |
| Mondays - April 4th, | <p>2:15-5:30 p.m. Tutoring at Kennelly Elementary School in Hartford Hop on April 11th, April 18th, the church bus after school in the SHS parking lot (next to the tennis courts) & April 25th and we'll head off to Mr. Jose's 3rd grade class.</p> |
| Friday, April 8th | <p>7:00 p.m. - Midnight. Dance for Change fundraiser (followed by a lock-in!) The boys of Makarere love to dance and so we will dance from 7:00 p.m. — Midnight to celebrate the education that our fundraising will bring to the boys of the Makarere Orphanage. Stay all night for the lock-in!</p> |
| Sunday, April 10 th | <p>No PF Youth Group</p> |
| Tuesday, April 12th | <p>7:00-8:30 p.m. PF for Parents only. The purpose of this is to give parents a feel of what their children do at PF. We will begin with "highs and lows," do an icebreaker, and have a discussion with the fishbowl" format. We will close with a candle prayer.</p> |
| Sunday, April 17th | <p>7:00-9:00 p.m. Meet at the church and then go bowling at Blue Fox Rock n' Bowl! Cost is \$12 and includes bowling, bowling shoes and pizza.</p> |
| Saturday, April 23rd | <p>9:30-11:30 a.m. Once again, PF will be hosting an Easter Pancake Breakfast! Come and help setup today!</p> |
| Sunday, April 24th | <p>5:30-11:00 a.m. We will be hosting an Easter Pancake Breakfast with proceeds going towards the youth programs! Contact Rev. Kevin at Kevin.weikel@1stchurchsimsbury.org to sign up for a time slot to work.</p> |

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL (for 7th-12th graders) -Youth Sunday School attends the beginning of the 10:00 a.m. worship service before heading down to the Youth Room after the Children's Time for conversation.

CRAIG WHITE (A.K.A. "SAINT")

And So Are You!

The confirmation curriculum for our 8th graders includes a chapter on saints. The objective is for our young people to understand that everyone can be a saint, even them! As part of this process, each of our six Confirmation small groups is asked to think about someone from First Church who "the light shines through." This person is to be someone who personifies the love of Jesus and is dedicated to the work of the church. During their meeting, small groups ask their saint how their beliefs inform their lives, why the church is important to them, and other questions that they might have.

This year's Confirmation small group that is led by Diann Bailey (adult leader) and Tanner Gleason (teen leader) chose Craig White as their Saint. Craig has been a member of First Church for many years, and since 2007, has served as a PF Youth Group Advisor. I asked Craig to share his "Saint" experience with the PF Advisor Team via email, and after I read it, I thought it would be meaningful for him to share with the congregation at large as well. From what he shares about his conversation the Confirmands, his involvement with PF Youth Group, and his overall faith journey, I hope that you come to understand that you are a saint, too! ~Kevin

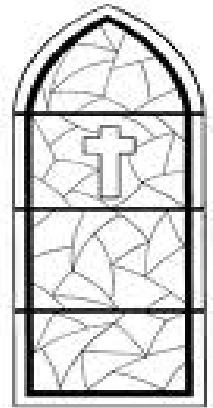
"A little boy was sitting in church with his grandmother. As the church service progressed, the grandmother noticed the boy staring at the stained glass windows depicting the various saints.

When the service concluded, the little boy asked her grandmother, 'What is a saint?' His grandmother replied, 'A saint, my dear, is someone the light shines through.'"

~Anonymous

Before meeting with Diann & Tanner's confirmation group this past Sunday, I did a bit of reading on the definition of a saint. According to Wikipedia, "In many Protestant churches, the word "saint" is used more generally to refer to anyone who is a Christian" (Wikipedia). Well, that certainly took some of the wind out of my sails :). It also puts a bit of perspective on PF Youth Group and how all of us as advisors, and every teen, have within us the capacity to be a saint.

The experience was an intersection of minds. They were young teens, all boys, having an open discussion about faith with me, questioning and exploring, wanting to know what adults think and believe. We started by sharing highs and lows and progressed to a question about who had the greatest influence on our faith. Perhaps the best question I was asked was, "What do you think of the Bible?" These were all thoughtful inquiries that allowed honest and straight forward responses. After our discussion we shared a meal together before departing for Uncommon Worship.



Allow me to share and expand on one of my responses for it explains the importance of PF Youth Group in my life. When asked who has guided my faith, I immediately looked back in life and saw my youth minister. He was part of my life for three years, before he moved onto other pastures. I participated in youth fellowship from grades 7-10 (that's when he left and it changed some of my focus). For years afterward church was not a priority for me until after marriage. As you might know, I have struggled mightily during my faith journey but in June of 2007, that road took a turn with the Atlanta mission trip with PF Youth Group. Today, PF Youth Group, Kevin, and all of you are the angels that propel my faith. This I believe – that angels are constantly stepping into our lives and pushing us if we listen. Angels (such as Clarence) are the many people who have set me straight. Recently it was a member of the PF Youth Group Advisor Team that did this for me. Most of them whisper in my ear what I have done well or what I could have done better. Angels use us at any moment and we never know it.

This email has evolved into more than just the confirmation meeting, but that's ok. That was a great two hours that I feel honored to have had the opportunity to participate in.

~Craig

p.s. Clarence is the angel from It's a Wonderful Life. If you knew that, then you are getting older like me.

Easter Sunday **PANCAKE**



BREAKFAST!!!

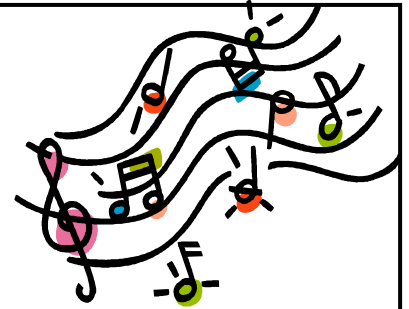
Prepared and served by our First Church Youth

All you can eat
6:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. in Palmer Hall

Hot off the grill:
***Buttermilk, Blueberry,
and Chocolate Chip Pancakes
Sausage Links...Orange Juice...Fair Trade Coffee***

\$5 per person (or \$20 per family):
*Proceeds to benefit
First Church Youth & Young Adult Ministries*

Music Notes



As we progress through the year, the snow is finally melting, the days are getting warmer, and we see spring and the Easter season fast approaching.

Musically, this is one of the biggest seasons of the year: the introspection of Lent, the thrill of the procession of Palm Sunday, turning to the grief of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, then on to the joyous celebration of Easter Sunday.

We have a lot going on. All choirs are presently rehearsing for these events and we would love for you to be a part of this. Please consider joining one of our groups – even just for Easter. We have some great music in store, and there is definitely something there for everyone.

There are many other things in the works: Women's Praise is planning a spring program for early May, the Choral Bells are preparing for their annual bell festival to be held on May 1st, our very active Junior Choir, in addition to singing at several Sunday services, is hard at work learning songs for a combined choir exchange with the Simsbury Methodist Church Junior Choir, to take place on June 5th at both our morning worship services. Chancel Choir will be combining with the Methodists as well, and we are rehearsing the Mozart C Minor Mass for this event. Occasional Choir is working on anthems for our terrific 8:30 a.m. Easter Sunday inter-generational (i.e. – family) worship service. Additionally, our adult choirs are all working to find a date in response to an active invitation from First Parish Church in Gorham, Maine, to come for a weekend choir exchange in the fall. Life is not boring in the First Church music program, to say the least!

Below is a schedule of our rehearsal times. Please come join us. We need your voices and your bell-ringing expertise. Remember, the music program here depends on you and your participation.

Thanks-
Mark

Junior Choir – 4:15 p.m. Mondays
Women's Praise Choir – 4:00 p.m. Wednesdays
Choral Bells – 6:00 p.m. Thursdays
Occasional Choir – 6:30 p.m. Thursdays
Chancel Choir – 7:30 p.m. Thursdays.

Historically Speaking:

What was Life Like?

The Rev. Mr. Allen McLean, who came after Samuel Stebbins, deserves more than a one page summary of his life and contribution to this church and community, so I will not try to extol his whole life here. but try to pass on some of the important things that his life and service gave us. He had strong feelings toward alcohol and slavery; education and obeying the Sabbath that were carried throughout his ministry. He was born to Scottish immigrants in 1781 and grew up in Vernon, CT. He later decided not to pursue life as a farmer as his father had done, but to go to Yale and study for the ministry. He also studied under the Rev. Mr. Dwight of Yale and the Rev. Mr. Asahel Hooker in Goshen, CT.

He was invited in November 1808 to settle in the gospel ministry at Old Simsbury. He was ordained in August 1809 and began his pastorate of 61 years, ending with his death in 1861, the longest in our church's history. During this time the church and society in general saw a great deal of change. He proposed changes in the way church members were accepted, and changed the agreed upon confession of faith, the church covenant, and was a proponent of the Great Awakening that was spreading at that time.

He married Sally Pratt in 1809 and bought land in Simsbury to build his family's home and to establish a beginning to a large holding that eventually had a profound effect on all of Simsbury, lasting to this day. His grandson, George P. McLean, State Senator and also Governor of Connecticut, gave land to Simsbury that became the site of the McLean Game Preserve, the McLean Home and the Governor's House.. Allen and Sally had five children, two of whom left legacies to this church and town. His daughter, Sarah Olmsted Abernathy (1817 - 1873), gave the church the communion table in memory of her father which is still in the parlor. His son, Dudley Bestor McLean (1821 - 1894), became the Schoolmaster of Simsbury Seminary and the town clerk. His wife Sally died in 1831 and he married Nancy Morgan in 1833. She was fourteen years younger than he but did her best to become mother to the children aged 12 to 22. She died in 1860 and he died in 1861 and he is buried with both his wives in Center Cemetery.

In 1839 the Rev. Mr. McLean was instrumental in closing the 1830 Meetinghouse to town meetings. The State had passed a law in 1818 separating church and state and the Rev. Mr. McLean believed that the church should no longer be the location for town governmental meetings as well as religious worship. The town built the Town Hall, now known as the Boy Scout Hall, in 1839. When the Rev. Mr. McLean became 67 in 1848, he developed great pain in his eyes and suffered complete blindness two years later. The church hired an assistant minister, the Rev. Mr. Samuel Richards, around 1850 and he served the Rev. Mr. McLean by being his eyes, writing hand and helped his preparation of sermons. In 1859 there was a great celebration held to mark the 50th anniversary of the Rev. Mr. Allen McLean's ordination. The church was filled to capacity and town members came to honor the man who had lead the church and society for so long. There is a copy of the celebration kept in the safe in the archives storage room.

Donna Hopkins, Historian—

150 years after the death of the Rev. Mr. Allen McLean

Walk. **FOODSHARE** 28th annual **against hunger**

Sunday, May 1st, 2011
Hartford, CT
Step-Off at 2:00 pm

JOIN our team: raise contributions **and WALK** with First Church on **May 1st**

INVITE others to join our team and walk with you

SPONSOR a walker with your donation

HONOR the memory of Sally and Dick Smith by meeting our goal of \$3,000 to reduce hunger

Once again, First Church is enthusiastically supporting the Walk against Hunger on Sunday afternoon, May 1st.

This year we will dedicate our support of the Walk **to the memory of Sally and Dick Smith**. Sally served as a previous Walk Chair for First Church, lending her legendary energy and joy to this effort.

The economic downturn has produced even more hungry people in the Greater Hartford area: over 128,000 people, 50,000 of whom are children. Beyond not having their basic nutritional needs met, these hungry kids find it hard to concentrate at school. The need to alleviate hunger is very real and very close to us.

The funds we raise will go directly to our mission partner **Hands on Hartford**, a benefiting agency of the Walk. Hands on Hartford will use all donations to purchase food for its soup kitchens, food pantry and meal programs. In one year, they have provided over 50,000 meals and distributes 110,000 pounds of groceries to low income or homeless folks in Hartford.

We are asking for your support. Please join our First Church Team as a walker on May 1st and have your friends and relatives sponsor you with their donations. This is an easy, three-mile walk in Hartford's historic West End – a great activity for the whole family. If you can't walk in May 1st, you can "walk in spirit" with your own and sponsor donations.

More information will be available at fellowship hour from Dave Wadhams and Jennifer Parmelee-Witt, co-chairs for this year's Walk. Also, you can contact Dave at 860.321.7160 or at wadhams.nd@comcast.net and Jennifer at 860.651.8827 or at jennifer.parmelee@comcast.net.

Instructions for making donations, including on-line pledging, will be available shortly. Watch the Bulletin and Weekly Email for this information.

First Church of Christ, Simsbury

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

**Breakfast
Menu**

Buttermilk Pancakes
Bacon
REAL Maple Syrup
Plenty o' Coffee
Fruit
OJ

***Come...
and bring
a friend!***



WAYS to SIGN UP

During Coffee Hour

**Calling Church Office
at 651-3593**

or by emailing

**jonathan.morgan@
1stchurchsimsbury.org**

RSVP by April 3

COST: \$ 5.00

Men's Breakfast@First

Tuesday, April 5

7:00 a.m. ~ 8:00 a.m.

Palmer Hall

Discussion Topic ~ Dealing with Our Anger

Anger is often looked at as a bad thing, but are there things actually worth getting angry about? Maybe if we had a better understanding of our anger and where it comes from, we could learn how to channel it toward something constructive--something that's bigger than ourselves.

18th ALL CHURCH TAG SALE To Benefit First Church School Programs

**Saturday, April 30, 2011 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Early Bird Entrance Fee - \$10 from 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.**

**Drop off of all tag sale goods at Palmer Hall on:
Thursday, April 28th from 12:00 Noon—8:00 p.m.
Friday, April 29th from 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.**



An All Church Tag Sale will once again be coming your way April 30th. As spring arrives and we think about cleaning out our closets, garages, attics and basements, we can also plan to select our "best" stuff for the tag sale.

We do very well with:

Costume jewelry and accessories; furniture pieces; holiday decorations; china, cutlery, pottery and glassware; children's games, books and toys; small appliances that are clean and working; small TVs, radios and cd players that work; garden and workshop tools; adult books published 2005 or after.

There are, however, a few categories of items we do not need:

Computer tables, clothes, linens, broken items (all appliances must be in working condition for us to accept them). Please clean up furniture (especially children's) and make sure everything you bring in is ready for sale. Imagine us trying to clean and make presentable for sale thousands of items brought in by many people.

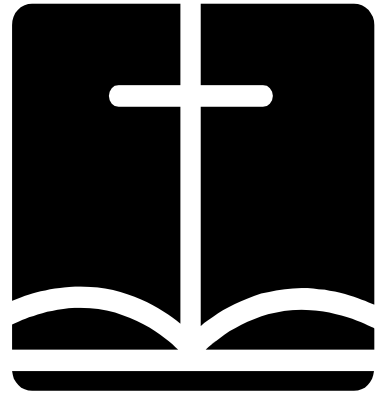
A few more things we would rather not have:

Exercise bikes or other exercise equipment, typewriters or word processors, air conditioners, computers, old skis, drapery rods, old suitcases, baskets (unless they are special), bikes over 5 years old, and light fixtures such as fluorescent ceiling fixtures.

If you would be willing to work on the tag sale to benefit the children at First Church, call or email:

Kim Tawney, 408-5329, Ktawney@westminster-school.org
Cindy Cole, 651-3593, cindy.cole@1stchurchsimsbury.org

There is a *PLACE* for you at First Church



Wondering just how and where you fit in at First Church?

There is a *PLACE* just for you.

And you get to select just where that *PLACE* is.

There are countless *PLACES* at First Church where you can apply your skills, enhance your talents, test out new opportunities, discover new abilities, help grow in your faith, and contribute to your faith community.

The range of *PLACES* at First Church where you can fit span the continuum from First Church Ambassador (proactive greeter), Finance Board member, Usher Team, Stewardship Committee, Elder, Church School Teacher, and the list goes on.

To help you find your *PLACE* at First Church and where you might best fit in, please contact Dane Woodberry (860) 658-7996 and/or Jeff Osborn (860) 651-8907 - members of First Church of Christ Nominating Committee.

MARCH 2011 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SUMMARY

Following are the highlights of the March 2011 Executive Council meeting:

1. Reverend Morgan reported that he recently attended a seminar in Florida on management
2. Reverend Weikel reported that an excellent Uncommon Worship service was held when Day McAllister preached and was followed by an interactive session with the PF group. He noted that he plans to conduct a PF parent meeting on April 12th. Kevin reminded the meeting of the forthcoming "Dance for Change" on April 8, a PF fundraising effort in support of an orphanage in Kampala, Uganda. He noted that the youth groups, from a mission and outreach perspective, considering their goal for the dance and prior fundraising for Heifer International, will have raised in excess of \$11,000. The confirmation program is in the stage of preparing and serving meals to the residents of South Park Inn. Kevin further commented that this past week he had made several enjoyable parish visits.
3. Reverend Patton highlighted in her report the forthcoming March 27th OGHS annual giving program. The Welcome Church team plans to meet with All Boards in April, seeking feedback on their welcoming efforts. An introductory seminar on Care Giving is planned for April 8th. Proactive greeters are being considered and orientation sessions have been held for interested members. A Women's Retreat is scheduled for March 18th and 19th.
4. Treasurer Jim Trimble commented that prior year pledges fell short of budget expectations at \$2,000 versus a budget of \$5,000. However, income through February remains on budget.
5. Chris Morkan, Chair of Elders, overviewed actions underway by Elders related to an assessment of Open and Affirming as it relates to First Church. A subcommittee has been formed and is in the beginning stages of conversation of their assessment of the need. Their assessment will result in a statement of direction for consideration by the Executive Council at a future meeting.
6. The Executive Council returned comments to the Board of Trustees for incorporation into the proposed Church Rental Policy. It is expected that the policy will be submitted back to the Executive Council for approval at a future meeting.
7. The Executive Committee accepted a recommendation from the Board of Music Ministries to consider an increase in their Board membership. The recommendation was referred to the By-laws Revision Committee for action.
8. Vice President Billye Auclair, serving as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, informed the meeting that membership on the committee is complete and that several meetings have been held. It has been concluded that Paul Nickerson will be "coaching" the group as a consultant of choice. Funding for his service will be supported by both the Church budget and private donations.
9. Vice President Billye Auclair announced that she has accepted a new position as VP of Academic Affairs at Anna Marie College in Paxton, Mass. Both Billye and Roger Auclair, Chair of Mission and Outreach, will be leaving the Church at the end of June. The Executive Council expressed their best wishes for her new career and extended appreciation to both Billy and Roger for their years of service to First Church.

Bill Ketchabaw, Clerk



Easter

LILIES FOR EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 24, 2011

The beautiful display of flowers for Easter Sunday is provided by your donations or memorial gifts.

To reserve or donate lilies for the Meetinghouse on Easter Sunday, April 24th, please complete the form below and send to the church office by Wednesday, April 20th.

Please indicate whether you wish to pick up the plants AFTER the 10:00 a.m. worship service and/or donate to one of our homebound members.

**Cost per lily is \$9.00. Please make checks payable to:
FIRST CHURCH FLOWER FUND**

I would like to order lilies to be used in the Meetinghouse on Easter Sunday.

My name.....

In loving memory of.....

OR

In honor of.....

Please deliverplant (s) to a shut in.

Will pickplant (s) up after the 10:00 a.m. service.

Total lilies ordered.....

Check enclosed..... Telephone number.....



Care-Giving Seminar
Friday, April 8th,
9:30 am - 12 noon

Does offering company or encouragement bring you joy?
Do you wish you knew how best to comfort a grieving friend?
Have you felt a “holy tug” to serve others in some way?

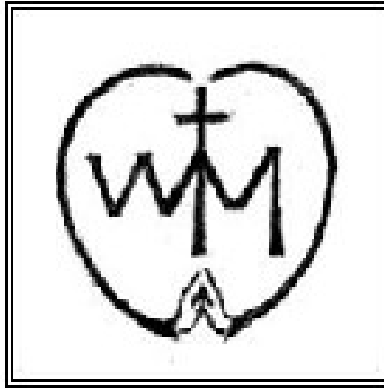
Join us!

This seminar is designed to help you develop – or strengthen! – skills for care-giving:
including how to visit, listen, and pray.

Look for the sign-up sheet after worship or contact Pastor Alison for information.

Hosted by the First Church Friends.

Coffee, tea and refreshments will be served.
Child care available on request.



Women's Ministry Meeting

Saturday, May 7th

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Palmer Hall

From Despair to Hope

PATHWAYS THROUGH THE GRIEVING TIME

The grieving time is a time we all wish we could avoid, and yet when we find ourselves thrust into it, we may discover that amidst the sorrow there are moments of exquisite beauty in the simple gestures, memories, and moments shared with other human beings. How can we, by enhancing our relationships with our loved ones and our loving God, find the wide margins of comfort necessary to explore this sacred darkness of grief and make pathways to the light of joy in living.

Please, join us on Saturday, May 7th. We will discuss ways to fortify our souls for the grieving times in order to better care for ourselves and be present for others.

Refreshments will be served. Watch for sign-up sheets and additional information in April.

First Church of Christ
689 Hopmeadow St
Simsbury CT 06070

860-651-3593
Fax 408-9229
Kitchen 658-9043

STAFF

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Senior Minister
jonathan.morgan@
1stchurchsimsbury.org

Rev. Kevin Weikel
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Rev. Alison Buttrick Pat-
ton
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Miss Catherine Behrens
Assistant Church Admin.
cathie.behrens@
1stchurchsimsbury.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

"First Church Annual Meeting - May 15, 2011. The Annual Meeting of First Church of Christ is scheduled to be held on Sunday, May 15th, following the 10am worship service. The agenda will include board, committee and program reports, election of officers and board/committee members, and any other business to come before the meeting. All board, committee and program reports should be submitted to Anne Nelson, Church Administrator, no later than April 21, 2011 at anne.nelson@1stchurchsimsbury.org.

SUNDAY FLOWERS—IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY



It is not too early to reserve a Sunday during our next church year to commemorate, honor or memorialize with flowers for the Communion table in the sanctuary.

If there is a Sunday that you would like to reserve, please contact *Bill Lawry* at 860-651-0281 or wlawry@aol.com.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR SCHEDULE FOR APRIL, 2011

- 4/3/11 Family
- 4/10/11 Committee of Deacons
- 4/17/11 **PALM SUNDAY**—Board of Stewardship
- 4/24/11 **EASTER SUNDAY**—No Fellowship Hour
Sr. High PF Pancake Breakfast