

# The Cornerstone

First Church is an Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



## APRIL 2015 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Join Us!

Worship Service: 8:30 am in the Chapel, 10 am in the Sanctuary

### ~ HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES ~

**April 2 Maundy Thursday 7 pm**  
**Service of Holy Communion (The Last Supper)**  
**and the Office of the Tenebrae**  
**with the extinguishing of candles**

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19  
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

This service recalls the commandment (mandate) of Jesus to love one another, as well as the words repeated by the disciples, read by members of our Board of Worship, near the end of Jesus' life. All are welcome. Bring a friend, young or old.

**April 3 Good Friday 12 noon, Chapel of First Church**

Psalm 22  
John 18:1-19:42  
*For Now It is Finished*

Rev. Dianne Arakawa, liturgist, and Mark Mercier. This is a new service for those, who have requested it. It will be simple and meditative. Music will recall and commemorate Jesus' death on the cross. All are welcome. Bring a friend.

**April 5 Easter Sunday**  
**6:15 am Sunrise Service with Holy Communion**  
**in Simsbury Cemetery**

Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16  
John 19:38-42

Revs. Dianne Arakawa and Woody Eddins, co-celebrants  
This is an early service, which is jointly offered by First Church and the Simsbury United Methodist Church, to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection. We begin the service in the sanctuary of the SUMC then walk up the hill to the Cemetery. The service is timed so that the bright sun rises over Talcott Mountain, and the rays shed soft light on all participants amidst surrounding gravestones. All are welcome. Please park in the SUMC parking lot or on Hopmeadow Street. Afterwards everyone is invited to return to First Church for a pancake breakfast.

**8:30 am Uncommon Easter service**  
**with Holy Communion by Intinction**

Mark 16:1-8

Rev. Kevin Weikel, preaching

This is a service combining traditional and contemporary elements, which includes the Uncommon Band with voice, electric keyboard, guitar and drums.

**10:30 am Easter Festival Service with Holy Communion**  
**(Note 10:30 am time of service due to parking)**

Mark 16:1-8  
*Go, Tell!*

Rev. Dianne Arakawa, preaching

This is our traditional festival service, celebrating Jesus' Resurrection. It will include choral music with brass as well as Holy Communion distributed by members of our Board of Worship. The sanctuary will be decorated with a variety of colorful Easter flowers, which have been given in honor of loved ones and will be shared with others.

**April 12**

Second Sunday of Easter  
Rev. Kevin Weikel, preaching  
*Baptism of Gavin and Hunter Mullins,*  
*sons of Kari and Christopher Mullins*  
*Baptism of Adalyn Papa*  
*daughter of Sara and Christopher Papa*

**April 19**

Third Sunday of Easter/ Earth Sunday  
Psalm 8  
"What Is Mankind?"  
Mark Scully, guest preacher

**April 26**

Fourth Sunday of Easter  
John 10:11-18  
*Yearning for Community*  
Rev. Dianne Arakawa, preaching  
*Followed by Annual Meeting in the sanctuary*

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**Rev. Dianne  
Arakawa  
Transitional Senior  
Minister**

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Out of Office  
Fridays

## **A Message from Rev. Dianne Arakawa, Transitional Senior Minister**

Dear Friends,

We begin this month, “*coming in like a lion,*” with Holy Week and Easter services. Members and friends will have the opportunity to attend one and, hopefully, more than one of these liturgical and music filled services—Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday/Tenebrae, Good Friday, and Easter Sunrise/Uncommon/Festival services --which mark Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, his Last Supper, Crucifixion and Resurrection. Along with these services, we will look forward to spring time— the brightening of sunlight, the slow melting of the snow, the clearing of the heaps of hard ice on our roadsides, and the surprising and much anticipated appearances of the early blooming bulbs like snowdrops, crocuses and scilla. When you come to church, won’t you bring family members and friends to feel our welcome? And if you cannot attend and will be traveling, won’t you hold First Church in your prayers?

In the middle of April, we will hold meetings for potential new members – to whom I should say if you want to learn more about First Church or missed some of the earlier sessions, there is no reason for you not to make it a point to join us. Membership for adults as well as Confirmands in a congregational, covenanted (not creedal) church such as ours is formative and incremental, not once and for all. It takes years to experience the fullness of membership through worship in the church over its different seasons, participation in a variety of mission and service programs, and the making of long-term spiritual friends.

Throughout April there will be the ongoing work of the officers, chairs, Boards and committees, Search Team, Church School, Confirmation and Youth Group volunteers, who are mounting the Tag Sale, Women’s Retreat Planning Team who are preparing for their May weekend away, and office staff— as well as the needed and deepening prayers of our Bible study groups, Prayer Team, Prayer Shawl groups and Friends—all to support, enhance and extend the ministry of First Church within and beyond.

We end this month, hopefully “*going out like a lamb.*” Easter Sunday will be behind us, and we will have entered Eastertide, during which someone has said that Jesus’ spiritual seed is planted and grows. The final sermon of the month will be based on the lectionary’s passage about Jesus as the Good Shepherd and his sheep. It will be followed by our Annual Meeting in our sanctuary. To many, this might be just another meeting to be skipped in the midst of other meetings for this and that—meetings for work, with colleagues, members in the community and contacts for national and international networks. But your officers and I would like to ask *all* of our members, old and new, to please make it a point to attend and help prepare for your next chapter of Jesus’ ministry. This democratic process is what distinguishes us from many other seemingly similar denominations.

Wishing you a happy Easter!

Yours in Christ,

Dianne

## A Message from Rev. Kevin Weikel, Youth & Young Adult Ministry

### “Practice Resurrection”

As a minister this time of year, I can always count on at least one person asking me if I believe the physical resurrection of Christ’s body happened. My answer usually goes something like this, “I don’t know and I’m not sure it is essential to me. I do, however, believe resurrection happens.”

This answer may seem a bit trite, but it is not intended to be. I understand that my response may be surprising to some, but most of the time I find that my answer gives folks a sense of relief. For me, and maybe for you, too, worrying over whether the specific events of that first Easter, as relayed to us by the Gospel writers, are factual, has a tendency to get in the way of the larger truth... that no matter the specifics, the women and disciples had a miraculous encounter with the Divine that morning. Even more, if we look for God in our midst, we can experience resurrection, too!

In his poem, “Manifesto: The Mad Farmer’s Liberation Front,” Wendell Berry closes with this two-word sentence: “Practice Resurrection.” I like this because I am not sure we are called to believe in resurrection as much as we are to practice it. As a basketball player practices by envisioning making a foul shot, for example, Christians practice resurrection by letting the Divine into their hearts and minds... and then they begin to see new life springing up around them.

We practice resurrection when we...

...allow the part of ourselves that wants to hold on to stereotypes and fears to die off, so that we might rise to open-mindedness, curiosity, and grace instead... and experience resurrection.

...allow the part of ourselves that wants to hold on to grudges and hard-heartedness to die off, so that we might rise to empathy and compassion... and experience resurrection.

...allow the parts of ourselves that wants to hold on to difficult events of the past to die off, so that we might rise to opportunities that the present moment has for us... and experience resurrection.

Where in your life must you die to an old way of being and begin to live into a new way of being? When you reflect on this and begin to live into this, you are practicing resurrection!

This Easter, may we debate less about whether or not there was a physical or bodily resurrection, and more upon God’s call on our lives to look for resurrection happening around us. May we feel God luring us, prompting us, and encouraging us – each day and in each new person we meet – to see new and wondrous things. This Easter, may we practice, and experience, resurrection.

Happy Easter!

Kevin

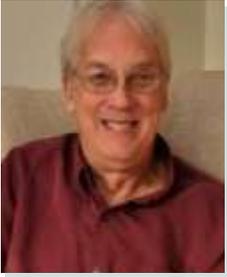


**Rev. Kevin Weikel**  
**Associate Minister**  
**for Youth and**  
**Young Adults**

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Out of Office  
Wednesdays

# Mark Mercier, Music Ministries



**Mark Mercier,  
Director  
of Music  
Ministries**

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Out of Office  
Tuesdays

There has been a lot of great music written around the Resurrection, and Chancel Choir is presenting some on Easter, the first weekend in April-

Come sing with us on Easter as we share two movements from the famous *Gloria* by Antonio Vivaldi, the uplifting *Awake the Trumpet's Lofty Sound* by Handel, as well as the annual *Hallelujah* from *Messiah*. As we proceed into the month, we will continue learning a setting of the Sanctus by J. S. Bach, a beautiful piece by Faure: *Cantique de Jean Racine*, and we will round it out by working on Bob Chilcott's *A Little Jazz Mass*.

Women's Praise Choir will continue working on a program that they intend to share with the residents of McLean, and several other pieces, including one by none other than the Grateful Dead. Imagine that.

Choral Bells are getting better and better by the week. After contributing two beautiful pieces in March. They will continue working on others, including the Handel *Allegro Maestoso*, also known as the *Hornpipe*, from his "Water Music". There's always room for more ringers (non-singers welcome!) - come and learn how!

Junior Choir has several pieces to present before the end of the year, when they will have their annual Pizza Party! Always room for newcomers - go to the choir room right after the 10 AM service. Rehearsals will reconvene the Sunday after Easter.

Men's choir is sounding great! We need to expand our numbers, though, to accomplish all the things that are out there to do. For now, they are rehearsing for a mere half hour just before the 7:30 Chancel Choir rehearsal. Time for supper, a run to the church for a brief rehearsal, and still be able to make it home for the game. Ain't no shame in being able to open your mouth to sing, and you need to be there to know how good you might sound. C'mon by!

We will hear from Cherubs before the summer as well. There is some real talent there, and they always do well, thanks to Suzanne Osborne.

Speaking of summer, this is a time when those who would like to contribute music for summer services should let me know that you would be able to do this, and when. A great, no-pressure season when you're able to contribute to the church in this way. Remember that the church needs your time, TALENT and support. Just want to emphasize the talent part.

Remember that music was listed by all of you as one of the most important things that First Church offers, but it definitely cannot happen without you. Music is by the people, for the people, so to speak. Be a part.

Happy Spring!

Mark

# Cindy Cole, Children's Ministries



**Cindy Cole,**  
**Director**  
**of Children's**  
**Ministries**

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Out of Office  
Thursdays &  
Fridays

## Growing Our Hearts by Collecting School Supplies:

**Smith Elementary School in New Britain** is a racially diverse inner city elementary school with approximately 700 students in preschool to fifth grade. Many of the families struggle with issues of poverty and there is a high percentage of families who are eligible for the free/reduced lunch program. The students here at First Church work throughout the year to assist the students/teachers/families associated with Smith School through our mission work.

### Stage 4: Smith School Teacher Appreciation Day on May 6

### Stage 3: Prepare teacher gifts

### Stage 2: Collect Resources

### Stage 1: Determine Need



One of the largest differences between Smith School and our local elementary schools is the limited resources. For example, the school budget only enables one case of paper to be ordered for each teacher for the entire school year. The classroom teachers purchase a large number of the supplies for children who cannot afford them at the start of the year. Families struggling to feed their children are often unable to replenish the school supplies that dwindle over the course of the year and the teachers run out of supplies for their classrooms in the spring.

Bring in your **church school offering envelopes**

§

Or **donations:**

- copy paper
- markers
- glue sticks
- Clear tape
- crayons
- pencils
- White board markers
- Stickers
- Incentive prizes
- Kleenex
- Hand sanitizer
- Math flash cards



**April 12:** Students will paint flower pots with blackboard paint and make the labels "Teachers plant seeds of knowledge that will grow forever!"

**April 19:** The kids will make tissue paper flowers to go with the flower theme for decoration at coffee hour.

**April 26:** Blessing of the school supplies during the children's service and planting flowers in the pots during the annual meeting.



The school supplies will be distributed to the 42 teachers at the teacher appreciation meeting.

Plants will be given to all 70 teachers, paraprofessionals, and education staff.

**Cookies or Cupcakes:** Please contact ccole@fccsimsbury.org if you are willing to bake flower themed cookies or cupcakes for the meeting. Goodies should be brought to the church by May 3. Cookies prepared ahead of time can be frozen.



**K. I. D. S. @ First**  
**Kids Investigating Divine Stories at First Church**

Visit [www.firstchurchsimsbury.com](http://www.firstchurchsimsbury.com) to see the church school schedule, videos, and information about what the kids are doing at First Church.

*Children's  
 ministry  
 news*



**Summer Camps:**

**Silver Lake Conference Center:**

Silver Lake is a UCC overnight camp for kids in the fourth through twelfth grade.

- Registration is open now: go to [www.silverlake.org](http://www.silverlake.org). Click on "Silver Lake Registration."
- Additional information is on the 3rd floor bulletin board.



**G-Force Vacation Bible School:**

Dates: Monday, June 22 through Thursday, June 25, 9am-noon

Location: Simsbury United Methodist Church (our VBS partner)

Forms: Registration is open and form can be found on the 3rd floor bulletin board

This year's theme is G-Force, God's Love In Action, and children will become 'Navigators' and explore how to serve God and others with active love!

- 'Navigators' should be at least four years old (as of May 31, 2015) up to students entering sixth grade next fall.
  - The cost is \$40 per child through Sunday, May 24 and \$50 per child from May 25 until the final registration cut-off on Sunday, May 31. Registration forms will not be accepted without checks.
- Volunteers: We have a ratio of one adult for every five kids. Please sign up to volunteer so our kids can attend.
- Adults who volunteer and have children less than four years of age will receive free childcare throughout VBS.
  - Adults, from First Church, who volunteer receive free tuition for one child.

**Upcoming events for your Calendar**

**April 5:** Easter—students attend the worship service

**April 12:** Movie and mission project—painting teacher appreciation flower pots for Smith School

**April 19:** coffee hour mission project—making tissue paper flowers

**April 23: Tag Sale Drop Off Noon-8pm**

**April 24: Tag Sale Drop Off 9am-3pm**

**April 25: Tag Sale 9am-2pm, early bird entrance fee 8:30-9am is \$10**

**April 26:** Annual Meeting after the service—students planting flowers for teacher appreciation day at Smith School

**TAG SALE : To Benefit First Church Children's Ministry Programs**

**Saturday: April 25, 9am-2pm, early bird entrance fee 8:30-9am is \$10**

**Drop off for all tag sale goods will be from Noon -8pm Thursday (April 23) and 9am-3pm Friday (April 24)**

**Volunteers are needed:**

Thursday - 12-2, 2-4, 4-6 and 6-8pm

Friday - 9-11am, 11-1 and 1-3pm

Saturday - 8-10am, 10-12, 12-2 and 2-3pm

If you would be willing to work on the tag sale to benefit the children at First Church, email: Kim Tawney ([kimtawney@gmail.com](mailto:kimtawney@gmail.com)), or Cindy Cole, ([ccole@fccsimsbury.org](mailto:ccole@fccsimsbury.org))

**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; radios and cd players that work; garden and workshop tools, adult books published within the last five years and nice baskets.

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

Computers/keyboards/monitors and computer tables, vhs players, air conditioners, televisions, clothes, broken items (all appliances must be in working condition for us to accept them), exercise equipment, old skis, drapery rods, old suitcases, bikes over 5 years old, light fixtures/fluorescent ceiling fixtures.

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.



## Junior Fellowship (JF) (for 7th & 8th graders)

JF gathers once per month from 2:10-4:30 pm during the school year (see the current month's schedule below). At JF, we eat together, play games together, and participate in engaging activities and faith-based discussions together. The upcoming JF meetings are:

**Friday, April 24th: Regular Gathering!** 2:10pm pickup at Henry James (as always, if you attend a school other than Henry James, please meet us at the church as you are able). Once at the church, we'll enjoy pizza, play games, and head out for the ever popular "Random Acts of Kindness" activity! What is "Random Acts of Kindness?" It's when we take the bus around town and do random nice things for people. When we're finished, we'll head back to the Youth Room to talk about the experience. We'll end the afternoon with our traditional closing candle prayer in the Youth Room.

## Confirmation (8th graders)

**The Confirmation Year is a Concentrated Time of Exploring...**

... what it means to be Christian. We do this through large and small group gatherings, mission/service work, experiencing and reflecting on worship, going on retreat, participating in the events and activities of Junior Fellowship (JF), and much more. The goal is for our Confirmands to build positive and grace-filled relationships with one another, develop a deeper understanding of God's love for all people, and explore what it means to follow Jesus. Upcoming Confirmation meetings are:

**April** (specifics TBD) Pizza with the Pastor in small groups at host homes

**Thursday, April 2**, 6:30-8:30pm Large Group Meeting (Holy Week & Easter) in the Youth Room from 6:30-7:30pm for students followed by the Maundy Thursday Service in the Sanctuary from 7:30-8:30pm for students and parents.

**Monday, April 6**, 5-7pm Large Group Meeting (Christian Living) in Palmer Hall for students followed by Worship in the Sanctuary for students and parents.

**Sunday, April 19**, 5-7pm Small Group Meeting (The Faith Journey Continues) at host homes for students.

**Sunday, May 3**, 5-7pm Large Group Closing Pot Luck and Decision to be Confirmed Time in Palmer Hall for students and parents.



## Fellowship (PF) (for 9th thru 12th graders)

**For more information on any of the above groups and activities, or to add your email address to our communication list(s), contact Rev. Kevin at 860-651-3593 or [kweikel@fccsimsbury.org](mailto:kweikel@fccsimsbury.org)**

**Easter Sunday, April 5th, 5:30am to 11am:** PF and JF Youth Groups are hosting the Annual All Church Easter Pancake Breakfast! Sign up now for a time slot to help set up, prepare, serve and clean up by emailing Steve Novy at [bsnovy@aol.com](mailto:bsnovy@aol.com).

**Sunday, April 12, 7-9pm: Regular Gathering in the Youth Room...** Topic: Similarities and Differences: We will participate in activity that will help us understand how our uniqueness is a wonderful thing.

**Sunday, April 19, 7-9pm: Regular Gathering in the Youth Room...** Topic: How to Pray. In the fall, we talked about prayer generally. Tonight, we'll talk about prayer more specifically... as in, how do you go about it and what are some good prayer practices and techniques.

**Sunday, April 26, 7-9pm: Regular Gathering in the Youth Room...** Topic TBD.



## 20&30 Somethings Group



A combined ministry of West Avon Congregational Church and First Church Simsbury—The new 20&30 Somethings Group is a great place for young adults in their late teens, 20's, or 30's to connect with other people in their same stage in life. If you are single, married, with or without kids, you will find commonality with those in this group. Babysitting is always provided for those with

kids. Having started on January 27th from 6:30-8:30pm and continuing on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month for seven sessions, we will take a faith journey with amazing theologians like Brian McLaren, Lillian Daniel, and Nadia Bolz-Weber to explore the following topics. We will begin with dinner, so bring your appetites. We hope to see you there!

**Where God Is, April 14**

Kevin Weikel  
Associate for Youth/Young Adults, First Simsbury

**A Book Like No Other, April 28**

Miranda Moeller,  
Associate for Youth/Young Adults, West Avon

# Supper Club

Friday, April 17, 2015 at 6:00 PM

Stop hibernating! Spring is here . . . or at least it should be! So why not come to Palmer Hall and enjoy a delicious meal with your First Church friends? It'll be prepared by Kim at Harvest Café. Then, stay for an intriguing presentation, **Secrets from the Soil: Connecticut Archaeology Tales** by Nicholas F. Bellantoni, PhD. Nicholas Bellantoni has recently retired, after serving more than 28 years as the Connecticut State Archaeologist. He is a military veteran, a dynamic presenter, and much beloved teacher. He continues to teach highly popular classes at UCONN, and participate in local archaeology digs. He is currently writing books about his experiences and discoveries. You won't want to miss this dinner and program, so please remember to make your reservation(s) by Sunday, April 12. If you are not already on our Callers' Lists, please reserve your spot by calling our chairwomen directly: Fran Gauthier (860-658-2071) or Cynthia Yoczik (860-658-7460). We're looking forward to seeing you there!

*The Supper Club Committee*



## Easter Sunday Pancake Breakfast

Sunday April 5th anytime 6:30 am - 10:30 am, Palmer Hall

All You Can Eat Pancakes served all morning, prepared and served by our First Church Youth, starting after the Sunrise Service. Grab them after the Sunrise Service and/or before the 8:30 & 10:30 am Services. Breakfast will feature Buttermilk, Blueberry, Chocolate Chip and Gluten Free Pancakes, Sausage Links, Orange Juice, Fair Trade Coffee and Tea. A free will offering is appreciated.

## New Members Update

### Overview of Orientation and New Member Sunday

For incoming new members, First Church will be hosting three orientation days, all at 8:30am before the 10:00 am church service. The first will be **April 19th**, the second **April 26th** and the third **May 3rd**. Sunday **May 31st** will be New Member Sunday where you will officially be made members of the church at the 10:00 am service.

### Orientation Days

We would like for you and your families to attend all three orientation days. These will be held in the Parson's study, which is located on the 2nd floor of the church near the church offices by the exit door. Your whole family is welcome and we will also provide child care for those with small children.

During the first orientation day you will meet Reverend Dianne Arakawa who is our transitional senior minister. At this session we hope to get to know you and your families better and answer questions you have about First Church.

At the second orientation we will plan to have several people talk with you about different programs the church offers to help develop your spiritual life, such as adult and youth groups and outreach missions. Reverend Kevin Weikel, our Associate Minister for Youth and Young Adults will be participating in this session.

The third session will speak to opportunities for service, including board memberships, as well as various social activities and other ways to get involved, with individuals who help serve participating in our session.

### New Member Sunday

On the day of the service we ask that you gather in the Parlor (just outside the sanctuary and across from the chapel) at 9:30. We will have flowers for all the members of your family. There will be a small part of the 10:00 am service where you will be recognized by the church and you will be asked to commit to membership. After the service there will be a reception downstairs in Palmer Hall.

### RSVP

Please let us know if you are, or are not, available for the orientations and the new member Sunday. Carol can be reached at home at 860-658-7643 or by cell at 860-573-4369. Stephen can be reached at home at 860-413-2060 or by cell at 860-967-9098.

We look forward to taking this journey with you!

Carol Pollack and Stephen Cassell

Board of Worship

# *Selma Reflections*

Dianne suggested that I write up my reflections on my recent trip to Selma, Alabama with some of my Berea College classmates to join the 50th anniversary commemorations of the events surrounding Bloody Sunday, March 7th, 1965. That was when a group of 600 civil rights activists made their first attempt to cross the Edmund Pettus bridge and begin a 54 mile march to the capitol in Montgomery, demanding the actual realization of the right to vote. It was good to see some old friends, meet some current students and faculty and to be reminded of the things that happened during those times. My memory is not so sharp these days, so for some of the details from 50 years ago I'm relying heavily on "Ohio Valley History", volume 5, number 3, which contains an article called "Ain't Gonna let Nobody Turn Me Around" about Berea College's participation.

Initially, there were 4 students and a staff member from Berea who, responding to a call for support, had squeezed into a VW beetle and traveled overnight to Selma in time to join the second attempt to cross the bridge on March 9th, that time led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr..

Their way was again blocked, and then suddenly unblocked when Dr. King, after stopping the marchers to pray and to sing, decided to discontinue the march and return to Brown Chapel, the AME church. One thing weighing on Dr. King's mind may have been a pending decision by a federal court which would provide some legal protection. The Berea contingent returned to Berea without incident, planning to organize a larger group for the next attempt. As a result of their efforts, about 60 of us in a bus and four cars joined the marchers at St. Jude's Catholic Hospital and school complex just outside of Montgomery in the early morning of March 26th. By the time we made our way towards the capitol, there were something like 50,000 of us!

After hearing on the news about the beatings on March 7th and the murder of the Rev. James Reeb, a Unitarian minister from Boston, I wasn't prepared to experience what seemed to be such a joyful occasion when we arrived in Montgomery 50 years ago. There must also have been elements of struggle and determination, especially among those who had been enduring oppression and those who had made the sacrifices that brought us to that point on that day. At the same time, there was singing and dancing. We sang songs like "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around", "Kumbaya", "Oh, Freedom", "This Little Light of Mine" "We Shall Not Be Moved" and "We Shall Overcome". The song, "If you miss me at the back of the bus, You can't find me nowhere. Come on over to the front of the bus, I'll be riding up there," sounded especially cheerful and positive, with all of its subsequent verses replacing "back of the bus" and "front of the bus" with other relevant phrases. One thing that especially stands out in my memory is a bus load of elementary age African American school children singing and dancing to "Come by Here", which was obviously a version of "Kumbaya", but a much livelier one. I later learned that it was probably an early version of the song, before it travelled overseas and came back to us as "Kumbaya".

What good things might be possible, with all of this positive energy? It seemed to me then, and still seems to me now, that those early civil rights soldiers, Dr. Martin Luther King, Mohandas Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, the Czechs of 1968 and 1989, Jesus, and, yes, Mohammed, at times, were all trying to suggest that if we are patient, determined, resourceful, willing to make sacrifices, and especially, open to seeing ourselves in others, there may be an alternative path to healing which avoids the endless cycle of violence justifying more violence.

—Frank Gould

## ***It's Spring and Opportunity is knocking at YOUR door...***

The opportunity for you to further participate in and contribute to your Church as well as to enhance your faith journey awaits you. The Nominating Committee is preparing for our Annual Meeting in May by seeking and offering opportunities for you to serve on one of our Church's Boards or Committees. Perhaps you began your exploration of such opportunities at our Volunteer Fair on March 22nd. There are a wide variety of church Boards and Committees that invite your participation and contribution - Music, Finance, Worship, Christian Education, Mission and Outreach, Deacons, Trustees, and Personnel are the larger boards/committees, but there are other groups that exist and provide an expression of your faith such as First Church Friends, Memorial Garden Committee, Care Bags Ministry, Called to Care, Women's Ministry to name a few. To learn more and/or to join in the rewards of service to First Church and our community, please contact Dane Woodberry of the Nominating Committee at (860) 658-7996.

# **March Executive Council Meeting Highlights**

President Jim Trimble called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm, and Rev. Dianne Arakawa offered a devotional focused on Helping Hands, followed by a prayer.

Dianne noted the rapid approach of Easter Sunday, which will include services at 6:15 am (Sunrise at the cemetery), 8:30 am (Uncommon Worship), and 10:30 am (note time change to facilitate parking) and announced a new Good Friday service to be held at noon. She also pointed to the 10 am Sunday service on March 9 which will recognize Rev. Leonard Clough, a member of our congregation, as he celebrates the 70th anniversary of his call to ministry in the United Church of Christ. Len's son Tom Clough, area minister for the Connecticut Conference, will be guest preacher.

Kevin Weikel reported that the PF fundraiser for the Masooli Clinic, which had a goal of \$7,500, actually reached \$12,688. The online opportunity for contributions was clearly very successful, and a celebration dance was held on February 28. A concert featuring "Lost and Found" will be offered in the Sanctuary on March 22 as part of the group's farewell tour, with \$10 tickets available on the church website. A pre-show Eat-in-Jam gathering featuring several local musicians and meal (including pizza, salad, drink, dessert, and music) begins at 5 pm for an additional \$3. Kevin also reported on his ongoing participation in the Next Generation Leadership Initiative and the January gathering focused on "Natural Church Development".

Jim Trimble applauded the February Volunteer Fair, which attracted a good crowd despite the difficult weather. He also described a successful Annual Financial Meeting (also weather-challenged) and a plan to recruit a full Stewardship Committee with a single year commitment for the 2015 campaign. There was a reminder that "All Boards" meets in September, December, March, and June at 7:15 pm.

Ron Patterson reviewed the Financial Meeting results and reported that final payment for the work on the church roof will be deferred until improving weather permits completion of remaining items. Financial results for January and February are not yet available.

Ken Warner reported that scouts from Troop 76 will paint the trash receptacle enclosure and the "porch" (north exit shelter) when weather permits.

Mario Chiappetti led a detailed discussion of the proposed Church Profile compiled by the Search Committee. The following motion was moved, seconded and unanimously approved: "The Executive Council endorses the draft Church Profile, as amended, and its publication for use in the Senior Minister search."

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Steve Osborn  
Clerk of the Congregation

## **Save the Date—Ecclesiastical Council**

Erica Nierendorf, our member-in-discernment and former Licensed Associate Minister, will be having her **UCC/Farmington Valley Association Ecclesiastical Council on Wednesday evening, May 6th, at 7 pm**, in our sanctuary. Everyone is invited. At this time, a vote will be taken by delegates as to whether to approve Erica for Ordination pending a Call to a religious setting.

## ***Message from the President***

What a great time of year! We endured record-breaking cold and snow just one month ago. In fact, I heard that temperatures in our area were below freezing for about 95% of February! Now, as we move from the dark, cold winter we celebrate Easter, the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of life eternal, the high point of the Christian year! Signs of new life are all around us, as we see new flowers growing, chirping birds in our yards, and we hear the sounds of children playing outside.

You'll find exciting happenings within First Church as well. The Search Team has worked very hard, gathering input via meetings and a survey, which they used in completing the Church Profile. That profile has been sent to the Connecticut Conference, which means the team will start reviewing profiles of candidates soon.

Our Annual Meeting is quickly approaching on Sunday, April 26th. This is the time when we elect new Board members. There is much to be done, and opportunities await. If you are interested in serving please contact Dane Woodberry, who heads our nominations committee, or a member of the Board in which you are interested in serving. One area where we certainly need help is Stewardship, as we currently actually have no Stewardship Board. This is a vital committee for the ongoing financial health of First Church. If you are interested in helping out please step forward.

I wish you all the best as we enter this beautiful time of year. Happy Easter!

Faithfully yours,  
Jim Trimble

## ***Hands on Hartford Award***



First Church was this year's recipient of Hands On Hartford Volunteer Appreciation Award on March 19<sup>th</sup> at South Church in Hartford. Congratulations to Dave and Nancy Wadhams, the Board of Mission and Outreach, and all volunteers, who have helped with the Christmas Toy Shoppe and other Hands on Hartford programs to benefit needy families in our state capitol! Thank you also to Bill and Karyn Cordner, who represented First Church and received our award with delight and spirit! Our church is fortunate to have so many dedicated and caring volunteers, not only during Advent and Christmas but throughout the entire year.

**First Church of Christ**

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**FELLOWSHIP HOUR SCHEDULE**

**April 2015**

**4/5**  
Easter Sunday  
PF Pancake Breakfast

**4/12**  
First Church Friends

**4/19**  
Pastoral Relations Committees

**4/26**  
Annual Meeting  
No Fellowship Hour

*~ Please notify the Church of any address changes. ~*

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April 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>29 Palm Sunday Sixth Sunday in Lent 8:30 AM Adult Study Grp, ClassRm 29 8:30 AM Early Worship, Chapel 10:00 AM Church School Passport to Holy Week, Palmer Hall 10:00 AM Worship Service, Sanctuary Palm Sunday 11:00 AM Junior Choir, Music Rm 7:00 PM PF Youth Grp (for 9th thru 12th graders), Palmer Hall &amp; Youth Rm</p>	<p>30 10:00 AM CCC 12:00 PM Hopmeadow Nursery School Dance, Rm 29 1:00 PM Food Share Truck, parking lot 5:00 PM Annual Pajama Party, Hopmeadow Nursery School, Palmer Hall</p>	<p>31 12:00 PM Confirmation Cooking, Kitchen 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen, South Park Inn Shelter 6:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal, Rm 29 7:00 PM Mens' Choir Rehearsal, Music Rm 7:30 PM Chancel Choir/ Music Rm</p>	<p>1 Maundy Thursday Rehearsal, Sanctuary 4:00 PM Women's Praise Choir, Music Rm 7:00 PM BS Troop 76 Merit Badge class, Rm 29 7:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorus, Palmer Hall</p>	<p>2 Maundy Thursday 12:00 PM Hopmeadow Nursery School Dance, Rm 29 6:00 PM Boy Scout First Aide Merit Badge Class, Rm 28 6:30 PM Confirmation Large Grp, Youth Rm 6:30 PM Troop 76 Boy Scouts Leadership Mtg., Palmer Hall 7:00 PM AA-Alcoholics Anonymous Mtg, Rm 28 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday-Sanctuary 7:30 PM Troop 76 Boy Scouts Adult Committee Mtg., Palmer Hall 7:30 PM Troop 76 Boy Scouts Venture Mtg., Youth Rm</p>	<p>3 Church Office Closed (Good Friday) 12:00 PM Good Friday Worship Service, Chapel</p>	<p>4 Holy Saturday Sanctuary</p>
<p>5 Easter 6:15 AM Sunrise Service, Simsbury Cemetery 8:30 AM Adult Study Grp, ClassRm 29 8:30 AM Uncommon Early Worship with Holy Communion by Intinction, Chapel 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sanctuary Easter Sunday, Sanctuary 11:00 AM Junior Choir, Music Rm 7:00 PM PF Youth Grp (for 9th thru 12th graders), Palmer Hall &amp; Youth Rm</p>	<p>6 10:00 AM CCC 10:00 AM Office Staff Bi-Weekly Mtg., Parsons' Study 12:00 PM Hopmeadow Nursery School Dance, Rm 29 4:15 PM Book Club, Parlor 5:00 PM Confirmation Lrg Grp Mtg, Palmer Hall 7:30 PM Executive Council Mtg., Parsons' Study</p>	<p>7 7:00 PM Cub Scout Pack 276 Leadership Mtg, Parsons' Study 7:00 PM PF Youth Advisor Meeting, Kevin's Office</p>	<p>8 4:00 PM Women's Praise Choir, Music Rm 7:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorus, Palmer Hall</p>	<p>9 12:00 PM Hopmeadow Nursery School Dance, Rm 29 1:00 PM American Red Cross Blood Drive 6:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal, Rm 29 6:00 PM Boy Scout First Aide Merit Badge Class, Parsons' Study 6:30 PM Troop 76 Boy Scouts Mtg., Palmer Hall/Kitchen 7:00 PM AA-Alcoholics Anonymous Mtg, Rm 28 7:00 PM Mens' Choir Rehearsal, Music Rm 7:30 PM Chancel Choir/ Music Rm</p>	<p>10 10:00 AM Farmington Valley Transition Academy, Palmer Hall/Kitchen 7:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorus, Palmer Hall</p>	<p>11 9:00 AM Farmington Valley Chorus, Palmer Hall</p>
<p>12 Orthodox Easter (Second Sunday of Easter) 8:30 AM Adult Study Grp, ClassRm 29 8:30 AM Early Worship, Chapel 10:00 AM Worship Service &amp; Mullins and Papa Baptisms, Sanctuary 11:00 AM Junior Choir, Music Rm 11:00 AM Just Faith, Parsons' Study 7:00 PM PF Youth Grp (for 9th thru 12th graders), Palmer Hall &amp; Youth Rm</p>	<p>13 9:00 AM Art Class, Palmer Hall/Kitchen 10:00 AM CCC 1:00 PM Food Share Truck, parking lot 7:00 PM Board of Worship (formerly Elders) Mtg., Parsons' Study 7:30 PM All Boards Meeting - All Rms 7:30 PM Board of Mission &amp; Outreach, Parlor</p>	<p>14 9:00 AM Retired Men's Luncheon Prep &amp; Setup, Kitchen 12:00 PM Retired Men's Luncheon 6:30 PM 20 &amp; 30 Somethings Grp, Youth Rm 6:30 PM Cub Scout Pack 276 Den Meeting, ClassRms 26, 27, 28, 29 and Library 7:00 PM Deacon's Committee Mtg., Library</p>	<p>15 Holocaust Remembrance Day 4:00 PM Women's Praise Choir, Music Rm 7:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorus, Palmer Hall</p>	<p>16 6:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal, Rm 29 7:00 PM AA-Alcoholics Anonymous Mtg, Rm 28 7:00 PM Mens' Choir Rehearsal, Music Rm 7:30 PM Chancel Choir/ Music Rm</p>	<p>17 9:30 AM Supper Club, Palmer Hall &amp; Kitchen</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19 Third Sunday of Easter 8:15 AM New Members Class, Parsons' Study 8:30 AM Adult Study Grp, ClassRm 29 8:30 AM Early Worship, Chapel 10:00 AM Worship Service, Sanctuary 11:00 AM Junior Choir, Music Rm 5:00 PM Confirmation Small Grp, Host Homes for students 7:00 PM PF Youth Grp (for 9th thru 12th graders), Palmer Hall &amp; Youth Rm</p>	<p>20 10:00 AM CCC 10:00 AM Office Staff Bi-Weekly Mtg., Parsons' Study 12:00 PM Hopmeadow Nursery School Dance, Rm 29 1:00 PM American Red Cross Blood Drive 7:00 PM Simsbury Trojans Football, Parson's Study 7:30 PM Officers Mtg., Sr. Minister's Office</p>	<p>21 9:30 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry Morning Gathering, Rm 28 7:00 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry Evening Gathering, Rm 28</p>	<p>22 Earth Day 12:00 PM 4th Wednesday Grp Rm 28 4:00 PM Women's Praise Choir, Music Rm 7:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorus, Palmer Hall</p>	<p>23 12:00 PM Hopmeadow Nursery School Dance, Rm 29 12:00 PM Tag Sale (Drop-Off), Palmer Hall 6:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal, Rm 29 6:00 PM Troop 76 Merit Badge Class, Youth Rm 6:30 PM Troop 76 Boy Scouts Mtg., Boy Scout Hall 7:00 PM AA-Alcoholics Anonymous Mtg, Rm 28 7:00 PM Mens' Choir Rehearsal, Music Rm 7:30 PM Chancel Choir/ Music Rm</p>	<p>24 9:00 AM Tag Sale (Drop-Off), Palmer Hall 2:10 PM JF Monthly Grp Meeting, Palmer Hall &amp; Youth Rm</p>	<p>25 Rebuilding Together 8:00 AM Tag Sale, Palmer Hall</p>
<p>26 Executive Council Fourth Sunday of Easter 8:15 AM New Members Class, Parsons' Study 8:30 AM Adult Study Grp, ClassRm 29 10:00 AM 10 am Worship Service only, Sanctuary 11:00 AM Annual Meeting after worship 11:00 AM Junior Choir, Music Rm 11:15 AM Care Bag Committee Assembly, Rm 29 11:30 AM Lunch Bunch Gathering 5:30 PM Farmington Valley Chorale Rehearsal, Sanctuary 7:00 PM PF Youth Grp (for 9th thru 12th graders), Palmer Hall &amp; Youth Rm</p>	<p>27 10:00 AM CCC 12:00 PM All Staff Mtg., Parsons' Study 12:00 PM Confirmation Cooking, Kitchen 12:00 PM Hopmeadow Nursery School Dance, Rm 29 1:00 PM Food Share Truck, parking lot 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen, South Park Inn Shelter 6:00 PM FMHCC, Parson's Study</p>	<p>28 10:00 AM Card Making Grp, Rm 28 6:00 PM Masooli FMHCC Board Meeting, Parsons' Study 6:30 PM 20/30 Somethings Grp, Youth Rm 6:30 PM Cub Scout Pack 276 Monthly Meeting, Palmer Hall/kitchen</p>	<p>29 9:30 AM Cornerstone Collators, Parsons' Study 12:00 PM Confirmation on Cooking, Kitchen 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen, South Park Inn Shelter 4:00 PM Women's Praise Choir, Music Rm 5:30 PM Farmington Valley Chorale Rehearsal, Sanctuary 7:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorus, Palmer Hall</p>	<p>30 12:00 PM Confirmation Cooking, Kitchen 12:00 PM Hopmeadow Nursery School Dance, Rm 29 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen, South Park Inn Shelter 6:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal, Rm 29 6:00 PM Boy Scout First Aide Merit Badge Class, Parsons' Study 6:30 PM Troop 76 Boy Scouts Mtg., Palmer Hall/Kitchen 7:00 PM AA-Alcoholics Anonymous Mtg, Rm 28 7:00 PM Mens' Choir Rehearsal, Music Rm 7:30 PM Chancel Choir/ Music Rm</p>	<p>1 Women's Retreat, Silver Lake UCC Conference Ctr., Sharon CT 6:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorale Concert, Sanctuary/Palmer Hall/Kitchen 7:00 PM Farmington Valley Chorale, Parlor and Chapel</p>	<p>2 Women's Retreat, Silver Lake UCC Conference Ctr., Sharon CT</p>