

Exciting Church Year Begins!

RALLY SUNDAY IS SEPTEMBER 11

Traditional worship services: 8:00, 9:15 and 11:00 a.m.

Wind contemporary worship service: 11:00 a.m.

The new Church School year starts—9:15 and 11:00 a.m. (SEE PAGE 4)

Rally Sunday Picnic on our lawn—1:00 to 4:00 p.m. (SEE PAGE 4)



I KNOW I SHOULD NOT be amazed by the things of God. Yet there are times when God surprises me by His amazing work. The way God has built this church interests me. As I research the things He has done, I sense a plan. We will explore all aspects of this in a four-week sermon series, ***Building on a Foundation***, starting on Rally Sunday.

In 1634 and 1635, men and women came to Wethersfield for a purpose. They left their former homes and neighborhoods to start a new life. They came to settle this area and begin anew.

These settlers came here on a mission—a mission that sounds familiar. They wanted to deepen the relationship with the people who were already here—the native Americans. They also wanted to establish a new covenant with God and with one another. In short, they wanted to build relationships: with God, with one another, and with a new people.

Three hundred seventy-six years later, our church continues to expand. We are building on top of the original foundation that was established long ago. Jesus, our Cornerstone, is set in place. We are part of the living stones that make up this dwelling place of God.

The purpose for this church also stays the same. We are continuing to strengthen relationships with the people around us, with one another, and with God. We are living out the mission of being His disciples here in Wethersfield and beyond.

God is the master builder who knows exactly what He is doing. He built this church for a purpose. He chose the people He wanted to be part of it. And His plan will be accomplished.

Knowing that gives me a greater boldness to move onward. I am excited about what God will do as we follow His mission. —**Pastor Deryk**

Sunday Sermon Series

BUILDING ON A FOUNDATION



The foundation is laid. Our mission is discipleship.
Jesus is still calling us to follow Him.
What does the road ahead look like?

MEETING GREATNESS

SEPTEMBER 11 — All Services
Message by Deryk Richenburg
Text: Luke 5:1-11

DISCIPLES MOVING ONWARD

SEPTEMBER 18 — All Services
Message by Deryk Richenburg
Text: Mark 9:1-29

THE PATH

SEPTEMBER 25 — All Services
Message by Deryk Richenburg
Text: John 14:5-7

GRADUATING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

OCTOBER 2 — All Services
Message by Tessa Afshar
Text: Hebrews 6:1-3, 7-12

Fall 2011 Adult Classes

For more information on these classes, contact those listed or call **Arlene Eriksen** at the church at 860.529.1575, x211.

SUNDAYS

COUPLES' CLASS — A 3-week study starting September 11, open to all adults: *What Does the Bible Say About Hell?* Jesus talked a lot about hell, always as a warning. But modern Christians are often reluctant to give such a negative message. How should we believe and teach on this subject? Join us for the wisdom and perspective of three respected teachers: Timothy Keller, Bill Hybels, and Timothy Peck. We will meet in the Morgan House Drawing Room at 9:15 a.m. on Sundays. For more information, call leaders **Steve and Lisa Peery** at 860.757.3853.

THE LIFE OF MOSES — Starts September 18. Join **Greg and Ellen Gilson Voth** as they host a study of Moses, a fascinating man shaped by God and considered by many to be the greatest Jewish leader. This class will meet in the Morgan House Chestnut Room on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. For full details, call Greg or Ellen at 860.563.7340.

GENESIS — Starts September 25. Looking at the biblical patriarchs, beginning with Abraham in Genesis 12, we will examine the text of Genesis in detail and place it in its historical and archeological context. Taught by **Dr. Glenn Sunshine**, we will also look at the theological significance of the accounts as we work through the text. The class will meet in the Fireside Room on Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

DOING THE RIGHT THING — October 16 to November 20. This groundbreaking class explores the ethical and moral breakdown decimating our culture and society. The video for each session was filmed before a live studio audience with Brit Hume as moderator. Among the panel members and guests are Joni Eareckson Tada, Ben Stein, Chuck Colson, Alveda King, and our own Dr. Glenn Sunshine. Topics include: *How did we get in such a mess?*, *What does it mean to be human?*, and *Ethics in the marketplace*. We will meet in the Worship Room at 11:00 a.m., led by **Bill Lynch, Paul Marks, and Jon Vining**. A workbook will be available at nominal cost.

FIRST MONDAYS

BROWN BAGGERS BOOK CLUB — Starts September 12, meeting the rest of the season on first Mondays. Brown-bag your dinner and join our first gathering in the Morgan House Mulberry Room for a lively discussion of *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* by Eric Metaxas, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend, including those who have not yet read the book. For more information, call **Linda Papertsian** at 860.257.7566.

TUESDAYS

THE ALPHA COURSE — Starts with the September 20 banquet. Quite simply, the Alpha course is an introduction to the Christian faith. Regardless of your background or religious tradition, Alpha is a way to understand what Christianity is all about. Each Tuesday night for 12 weeks, we start off with dinner, listen to a talk on the evening's subject, then form into small groups for discussion. Subjects include: *Who is Jesus?*, *Why and how do I pray?*, *Who is the Holy Spirit?*, *Does God heal today?* Please join us at the September 20 banquet, at 6:15 p.m. in Keith Jones Hall. **Come to the banquet** to see what many in your church family have already experienced. To let us know you're coming, please call **Marilyn** at 860.529.1575, x213.

TUESDAYS OR THURSDAYS

MEN'S MORNING BIBLE STUDY of 1 and 2 Timothy uses the John MacArthur study series. There are two groups; one meets **Tuesdays** in the Fireside Room and the other meets on **Thursdays** in Conference Room 1 (except the weeks of 9/6 and 11/21), both days from 6:45 to 8:00 a.m. The cost of the workbook is \$7. Come and enjoy an inspirational time of study, discussion, and fellowship. For details, call **Arlene** at 860.529.1575, x211.

WEDNESDAYS

BETTER TOGETHER — September 7 to November 30 (except 11/23). This the *new First Place 4 Health* Bible study for men and women seeking balanced living as we study the many "one anothers" of the Bible and see how they help all of our relationships. Led by **Cindy McDowell, Suzanne Edgardo and Don and Jacqueline Whitehead**, the class meets in Keith Jones Hall from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. *Even though the class has already begun, registrations will be accepted through September 14.* If interested, contact **Cindy** at cindy@encouragingwords.net or 860-257-WORD. Registration forms are available at the First Church Office; call **Arlene** at 860.529.1575, x211.

PRAYER CLASS, LEVEL 1 — September 14 to December 14 (except 11/23). Classes from our Prayer Ministry educate people about healing prayer. This 13-week "Level 1" class teaches students how to be effective prayer ministers. Topics covered include *Scriptural Foundations of Healing, Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and Introduction to Deliverance Prayer*. Led by **Tegan Willard**, participants will meet in the Morgan House Chestnut Room from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. For details, or to enroll, call **Arlene** at 860.529.1575, x211.

EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY — September 21 to November 16. Men and women, unleash a revolution in your life in Christ by exploring with others seven pathways that can deepen and enrich your life with God. Join **Pastor Mike McDowell** in the Morgan House Drawing Room from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Cost for materials (3 books): \$23. To sign up, contact **Arlene** at 860.529.1575, x211.

1 & 2 THESSALONIANS — Ten-week class will start September 21. Women, join facilitator **Christina Jagel** in a close examination of these two epistles of Paul to the church at Thessalonica. Using a study guide by Kathleen Buswell Nelson, the shape and themes of each letter emerge, as well as Paul's overriding focus on the Second Coming of Jesus as a constant lens through which to live and learn and even suffer. Paul's loving encouragement and careful teaching about holy living and working in preparation for Jesus' coming can speak powerfully to Christians today. We will meet in the Morgan House Chestnut Room at 9:30 a.m.

EVERY OTHER THURSDAY

WOMEN IN SCRIPTURE — September 22 to December 29. Women, this devotional study will meet from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Morgan House Dining Room, led by **Nancy Ryszkiewicz**, who will facilitate the discussions and prayer time. Bring a Bible, notebook, and pen. Questions? Call Nancy at 860.881.8136.

SATURDAYS

SATURDAY MORNING MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST: All men are invited to gather in the Fireside Room from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. for prayer, discussion of Scripture, fellowship, and a hearty breakfast. For more information, please call **Bud Reading** at 860.794.2733.

'Develop'—A First Church Growth Group DVD Series!



Three of the most successful TV shows of the last 20 years have been *Cheers*, *Seinfeld* and *Friends*. What made them so successful, in part, is that they spoke to one of our greatest longings as human beings—we want and

need **relationship**. We want to be with a group “where everybody knows your name.” We want a group of friends with whom we can journey through life. We want to belong.

Joining a Growth Group is one of the best ways to get to know others and to be known. It is one of those few places where you can learn about Jesus *together* and discuss how to follow Him as disciples.

This fall we will have a new Growth Group video series, entitled *Develop*, which will **use the Beatitudes as a guide to look at how we are to mature as disciples**. If you would like to join a Growth Group, sign up online at firstchurch.org/growthgroups, or call **Arlene** at 860.529.1575, x211.

Choir and Organists to Open Our New Concert Season

All are invited to attend the thrilling opening concert of our new season, on **Friday, September 9**, at 7:30 p.m. Our choir, along with world-renowned guest organists **Michael Barone, Gregory D'Agostino** and **Frederick Hohman**, will be heard.

Included will be the moving *Kyrie*, by Louis Vierne, last year's exquisite performance of which was used so effectively to add audio to one of Pastor Deryk's blog posts. An offering will be received. Find full details at firstchurch.org/asof, where you will also read about the young organists' competition and other activities set for the national Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival, held here annually.

OUR DIVORCE RECOVERY SEMINAR

will be held on **Friday evening, September 23**, and all day **Saturday the 24th**. The seminar fee of \$115 includes the program, workbook, continental breakfast, lunch, snacks, and an eight-week follow-up series held on **Wednesday nights**. Info and registration forms are available in the Wells Area or online at firstchurch.org/divrec. Questions? Call 860.529.1575, x213.

GRIEFSHARE is a special weekly seminar and support group for those who are grieving the loss of someone close to them. A new 12-week cycle begins **Monday, October 3**, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., in the Morgan House. Be welcomed by facilitator **Betty Metcalf**, with **Mary Lynch**, and others like yourself. Call 860.529.1575, x210, for more information or to register. The only fee is \$15, for the workbook.

KEN BOA TO SPEAK AT FIRST CHURCH

on **October 14 and 15!** — This acclaimed author will give two lavishly illustrated talks for our Edwards Forum series. Friday evening's presentation, “**Pointers**,” will include images from the subatomic world all the way to intergalactic space; Saturday night's topic is “**Science, Faith, and Reason**.” More in the next *Spire*—or visit firstchurch.org/boa or call 860.529.1575, x213.

CAN YOU HELP FINISH A HOUSE IN THE

D.R.? Sign up soon to join a group for a week in the Dominican Republic (tentatively Nov. 16-22), to finish building a small house of masonry block that was begun in July for a family of eight who lost their father to TB. Please see details and photos at firstchurch.org/house, or call **Paul Breglio** at 860.250.0795, or **Dana Crompton** at 860.635.1530 or 860.463.8317.

Outreach Offers Prayer Schedule

The **Outreach Committee** is excited about a new program to pray for the missionaries and outreach ministries supported by First Church—a schedule of praying for each person or organization for two weeks, spread throughout the church year.

At the beginning of each two-week period, a brief listing will be included in the Sunday bulletin. Also, *FirstNotes* will highlight the missionary or ministries that are the focus of prayer during its coverage period.

Articles will be posted at firstchurch.org/outreachprayer, providing up-to-date information on each of the featured missionaries or organizations, to further explain the work being accomplished and any specific prayer needs for their times of churchwide prayer.

The committee is requesting that individuals, small groups, Bible study classes and other ministries dedicate a part of their time to pray for these missionaries and organizations. Prayer is vitally important in sustaining the work being done by them. In the past year, a few of the long-term missionaries First Church has partnered with have returned from the field due to various family concerns. Our churchwide prayer will help each to combat fatigue, discouragement and attacks by the enemy, which can so easily come against individuals in their work for Christ.

If you have any questions or would be interested in joining the Outreach Committee, please contact **Dana Crompton** at dcrompton@sbcglobal.net or 860-635-1530.

Men's Advance Nears!



September 30 to October 2 is the week-end for our 19th annual **Men's Advance**, held for the eleventh time at Pilgrim Pines in Swanzey, New Hampshire.

Our speaker, back by popular demand, is **Foad Faris**, whose theme will be ***A Blueprint for Right Living: Modern Lessons from Old Testament Saints***. Since 1999, Foad has been serving the New England region for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the largest Christian sports organization in America.

This promises to be an incredible weekend for both men and youth. And, to make it even better, *rates are being held at the 2010 levels*. Register before September 15 to save \$25.

For details, and to register, pick up a brochure at one of the information tables, or contact **Bob Papertsian** at bobpapertsian@cox.net or **Arlene Eriksen** at 860.529.1575, x211.

CONN. RIVER CLEANUP —

Practice environmental stewardship by reporting spots along the river where discarded trash is noticeable, prior to the annual cleanup day of Oct. 1. Go to ctriver.org/action/scouting.

WOMEN OF FAITH WEEKEND

is November 11 and 12, at Hartford's XL Center. Be refreshed, encouraged and inspired by such speakers as Luci Swindoll and Kim Cash Tate, along with special drama and music. **Discount deadline is extended to October 3**—contact Kathy at 860.301.6263 or k.rodriguez@comcast.net and pay by that date. Also see firstchurch.org/WOF.

FIRST CHURCH NURSERY SCHOOL

is still accepting applications for the 3s and 4s classes. Please call 860.529.1575 to request a tour or obtain details, and be sure to visit firstchurch.org/nurseryschool.

BOOK OF LIFE

ENTERED ETERNAL LIFE

Patricia (Hanson) MacGovern, July 14, 2011
Our Church unites in an expression of heartfelt sympathy to her family.

BAPTIZED

Benjamin David Henderson, son of David and Linda Henderson, July 24, 2011

Nayalis Margarita Rodriguez, daughter of Jenna Wollschlager, July 24, 2011

Garrett Joseph and Gavin Russell Scalercio, sons of Joseph and Kelly (Willard) Scalercio, August 27, 2011

UNITED IN MARRIAGE

Roger Allen Dunn and Heather Anne Begina, July 22, 2011

Walter Gerard Gantley and Sarah Grace Morin, August 13, 2011

RENEWAL OF VOWS

Mark Patrick Charette and Colette Suzette Charette, August 20, 2011

First Church

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN WETHERSFIELD

CONGREGATIONAL

860.529.1575 • Fax: 860.721.7861

250 Main Street, Wethersfield, CT 06109

Website: www.firstchurch.org

Email: info@firstchurch.org

Sunday Worship

Traditional Services in the Meetinghouse:
8:00, 9:15 and 11:00 a.m.

Wind Contemporary Service
in Keith Jones Hall: 11:00 a.m.

First Church on Facebook

www.facebook.com/FirstChurchPage

Dial-A-Message: 860.529.1785

Uplifting Messages
Provided by Caring Ministries

What will you leave behind?

Please remember First Church in your will.

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

Ateesa M. Afshar Associate Minister
Linda T. Jackson Church Administrator
Wayne E. Luman Director of Caring Ministries
Marcia McCann Interim Dir. of Children's & Family Min.
T. Michael McDowell Associate Minister
Donald W. Morgan Minister Emeritus
Deryk P. Richenburg Senior Minister
David C. Spicer Minister of Music & the Arts
Todd E. Willard Associate Minister

OUR MISSION

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

SPIRE DEADLINE

Material for the October issue of *The Spire*, which will be mailed/emailed on Sept. 28, must be submitted to Dave Gilbert by noon on Friday, Sept. 16, at daveg@firstchurch.org or 860-529-1575, ext. 225.

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Picnic for All; Children's & Youth Programs

The new **CHURCH SCHOOL** year starts on **Sunday, September 11**, at 9:15 and 11:00 a.m. The **Crib Room** is staffed during both services with loving caregivers for infants up to 18-24 months. The **Toddler Room** is where two-year-olds enjoy playing and learning simple Bible truths. **Church School** classes are held for preschoolers (age 3-5) as well as elementary-age children.

To keep our Children's Ministries records up to date, Church School **information forms** have been mailed to families. Additional copies may be picked up at the Reception Desk or downloaded from the church website, then completed and returned to Children's Ministries. Go to firstchurch.org/churchschool.

Our **YOUTH MINISTRIES** leaders are also geared up to begin an exciting new season. To see all the opportunities, take a look at firstchurch.org/middleschool or [highschool](http://firstchurch.org/highschool).

RALLY SUNDAY PICNIC — The entire church family is invited to join us on **Sunday, September 11**, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. right here at First Church. Hamburgers, hot dogs, and beverages will be provided. If you see this in time, sign up on the poster in the Wells Area, or call the receptionist at 860.529.1575.

Bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to share (we will eat at 1:30) and a picnic blanket or chairs. Games are provided for all ages! **New** this year is a **bounce house**—for the young and the young-at-heart! (*No rain date.*)

Join One of Our Choirs

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

Wind Worship Team — Gathers on Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Rehearsals — Thursdays, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Brass Ensemble information will be published soon.

VOCAL CHOIRS

Cherub Choir — Age 5 – Grade 2

Rehearsals: Tuesdays or Wednesdays
4:00 to 4:40 p.m.

Starts September 13 and 14

Carol Choir — Grades 3–6

Rehearsals: Tuesdays or Wednesdays
4:40 to 5:40 p.m.

Starts September 13 and 14

Pilgrim Youth Choir — Grades 7–12

Sings every Sunday at 9:15 a.m. service
Rehearsals: Sundays, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Starts September 11

First Church Choir — Adults; age 18+

Sing every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. service
Rehearsals: Thursdays, 7:30 to 9:50 p.m.

Started September 1

Cantata Singers — Adults; age 18+

Sing at concerts only
Rehearsals: Thursdays, 8:30 to 9:50 p.m.

Started September 1

HANDBELL CHOIRS

Carol Handbell Choir* — Grades 4–6

Marti Bernardi, Director
Rehearsals: Wednesdays

4:00 to 4:40 p.m., Church Parlor
Starts Wednesday, September 28

Laudate Handbell Choir* — Grades 7–12

Rehearsals: Sundays
5:15 to 6:00 p.m.

Starts September 18

Campanella Handbell Choir

Adults; age 18+

Rehearsals: Sundays, after the 11:00 service.
Starts September 25

Belles & Beaux Handbell Choir

Retired Adults
Rehearsals: Tuesdays

11:00 a.m. to noon
Starts October 4

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