

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Harvest Sunday
19 November 2006
10 o'clock in the morning



Welcome to the Service of Worship at First Congregational Church where today we are celebrating Harvest Sunday. This service is our opportunity to gather to offer praise and thanksgiving to God for the many blessings that have come our way, while at the same time seeking to be mindful of our neighbors.

First Congregational Church of Greenwich declares itself to be open and affirming; open to all for participation, membership, leadership and employment, and affirming of all who wish to join us as children of God. We continue to give thanks for God's guidance in our journey of faith.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

*All who are able please stand

‡Seating of latecomers

PRELUDE

Mark Swicegood, organ

Sonata I: Introduction and Allegro *Alexandre Guilmant*

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Rev. Susan M. Craig

Please sign and pass the red book.

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Dr. David D. Young

Anna L. Paskauskay

*OPENING HYMN AND PROCESSION

Pilgrim Hymnal 461, to the tune ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

OPENING PRAYER (in unison)

Eternal One, source of all life and all bounty, be with us this Harvest Sunday as we open ourselves to your love and your wholeness. Fill us with your compassionate spirit so that we can serve your world into which we have been born, and to which you call us. Help us to recall that it is your breath that

flows through us, your breath of creative love. Help us to affirm that love, a love which your Son came to help us know and understand, amid the everyday places that you lead us. At home, in town, with family and friends, along the way, at work and at play, let us show forth your love. And as we do so, help us to remember that love and justice are not words just found in our Bibles, but to be found in our lives as we share your love and show forth our praise.

CONFESSING TO GOD

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

O God of watchful care,

you have offered us, and our ancestors before us,
your life-giving presence, yet we do not always respond.

Your abundance overwhelms us; your faithfulness confounds us, and we draw back.

You have shown us in Jesus of Nazareth the humanity you have long hoped could be ours. It sounds so good — freedom, justice, and peace — but it asks so much of us!

And forgetting to rely on the help of your Spirit, we grow discouraged and indifferent too easily.

And yet, we do want what you want — a new creation where we shall live, one and all, as your children.

So let this newness now be in us! Forgive what lies behind us and turn our hearts and hands to what is ahead.

Free us from the chains of guilt and self-pity, which hinder our energy to love and our ability to be loved,

Refresh our hope and vision as your church and renew our commitment to many ministries in which we serve.

May we nurture one another as we share the mystery of life and the proclamation of the gospel!

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

‡CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Beth Beam

Leviticus 19: 9-18

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God.

You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the Lord.

You shall not defraud your neighbour; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a labourer until morning. You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling-block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.

You shall not render an unjust judgement; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbour: I am the Lord.

You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord.

SCRIPTURE ANTHEM

The Cherub Choir

Stephanie Hanbury-Brown, directing, Debbie Berner, accompanist

A New Commandment

A new commandment I give unto you,
That you love one another as I have loved you.

By this shall people know that you are my disciples
If you have love one for another.

John 13:34, 35

SECOND LESSON

Matthew 6: 25-33

‘**T**herefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

‡* ANTHEM *The Children’s Choir, The Youth Choir, The Chancel Choir, The Palmer Handbells, Carolyn Paulus, directing*

I Was Glad *K. Lee Scott*

I was glad when they said unto me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built as a city enclosed together. To her the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, as it is decreed, to give thanks to the name of the Lord. There are set thrones of judgment of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. May they prosper who love you. Peace be within your walls and prosperity within your palaces. I was glad...

Psalm 122:1-7

SERMON

“Justice and Joy”

Rev. Susan M. Craig

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus to reconcile and to make all things new. We trust God, who calls us to be the Church; to love and serve others, to seek justice and to resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified, dead and risen; our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us: we are not alone. Thanks be to God.

*Gloria Patri (*Pilgrim Hymnal 513*)

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world
without end. Amen. Amen.*

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Roll call of Candidates

Candidates will come forward as their names are called.

Commitment of Candidates

Leader: We are called of God to be disciples through Christ Jesus. Do you here affirm your consecration in God through Jesus Christ?

Candidates: I do.

Leader: Brothers and sisters in Christ, we bid you welcome. We greet you as fellow disciples of one Master in the Church Universal. Our purpose is to promote the increase of the love of God and neighbor. Will you now unite yourself with The First Congregational Church of Greenwich, accepting its responsibilities, praying and working for its usefulness, sustaining its worship, supporting its wider mission, and living with us in the bonds of Christian fellowship?

Candidates: I will.

Clergy: We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul and the right of private judgment. We join in fellowship with other congregations of the United Church of Christ in declaring our steadfast allegiance to the faith which our forebears confessed, which from age to age has found its expression in the historic creeds of the Church Universal and of our communion, and in affirming our loyalty to the basic principles of our representative democracy. We hereby set forth the things most surely believed among us concerning faith, polity and fellowship.

*Owning of the Covenant (*in unison*)

We believe in God, infinite in wisdom, goodness and love; and in Jesus Christ His Son, our Lord and Savior, who for us and our salvation lived and died and rose again, and liveth evermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who renews, comforts and inspires us. We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us. As Jesus accepted, welcomed, included and embraced all people without exception, so do we accept all who join with us in our search to walk in the ways of the Lord. We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Christ to proclaim the gospel to all people, exalting the worship of God and laboring for the promotion of justice, the reign of peace and the realization of human understanding. Depending upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the Kingdom of God, and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

CALL TO PASTORAL PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER AND QUIET MEDITATION

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

RESPONDING TO GOD

CALL TO OFFERING

HARVEST OFFERING

Pilgrim Hymnal 21

Pilgrim Hymnal 29

Pilgrim Hymnal 15

Pilgrim Hymnal 440

We Gather Together

Now Thank We All Our God

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies

*Doxology (*Pilgrim Hymnal 515*)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*CLOSING HYMN AND PROCESSION

New Century Hymn 425, to the tune AR HYD Y NOS

For the Fruit of All Creation

*CLOSING SENTENCES (read responsively)

Leader: God alone is maker of all things near and far;

People: God paints the wayside flower and lights the evening star.

Leader: The winds and waves obey God, by God the birds are fed;

People: Much more, to us as children, God gives our daily bread.

Leader: We thank Thee, then creator, for all things bright and good;

People: The seed-time and the harvest, our life, our health, our food.

Leader: Accept the gifts we offer, for all thy love imparts,

People: And, what Thou most desires, our humble, thankful hearts.

Leader: All good gifts around us,

People: Are sent from heaven above; Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all God's love,

*BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Sonata I: Final *Alexandre Guilmant*

Ushers: Peter Flierl, Sue Baker, John Davidson, Shirley Flierl, Bobbi Hopkins, Rich Hopkins, Carole Lang, Franklin Lang, and Giff Reed

Greeters and Coffee Hour Hosts: Beth Beam, Sheila Bennett, Larry Haviland, Mary Ranta, and Peter Schay

Calendar

TODAY

Child Care for babies and toddlers is available today in the Undercroft. No Church School. All children will worship with their families in the Meetinghouse.

Our Food Offering this Sunday will be shared with Neighbor-to-Neighbor here in Greenwich and with the H.O.M.E. community in Orland, Maine.

Blood Pressure Screening A member of the Wellness Committee is available to check blood pressures in room 203 following Church School (11:15).

No Cherub or Youth Choir rehearsal today

The Christmas Gift Project sponsored by the Church School and the Christian Outreach Committee invite you to take one of the few remaining nametags off the tree and purchase a gift for a member of the H.O.M.E. community. Gifts should be brought to church no later than Dec 3rd so they can be delivered in time for Christmas.

H.O.M.E. Craft Show Join us during coffee hour for our annual craft show from H.O.M.E. Coop in Maine. Start your holiday shopping now for handmade quilts, decorations, woolens, pottery, toys, jams and much more. All proceeds benefit H.O.M.E.

Christmas Tree Set-up, Unloading, and Sale volunteers needed sign-up today at coffee hour.

Advent Craft Fair Dec 3rd Sign-up today at coffee hour

JPF 5 - 6 PM Room 103

SPF 6:30 - 8 PM Room 103

THIS WEEK

“Getting Oriented to Enlighten the Christian Faith” Tues Nov 21st 7:15-8:30 PM in the Church Lounge. A repeat of same material covered on Sun Nov 19th. This is the last Tuesday session.

No Children’s Choir rehearsal this week

The Church Offices will be closed Nov 23rd & 24th for Thanksgiving.

NEXT SUNDAY

Church School resumes its regular schedule.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Hold the Date! Parish Life is planning another wonderful "Sing for Your Supper" on December 10th beginning at 5 PM. Join us for an evening of carols and great food. Sign-up begins next week.

MESSIAH 2006 – Plan now to come, December 16 & 17 at 4 PM. No tickets required.

100-voice chorus and professional orchestra with soloists Victoria Baker, Holly Sorensen, Terry Beaurline & Edward Pleasant. Or even consider singing with us. Rehearsals December 5, 6, 12 & 13 at 8 PM. Hallelujah!

To all women of our church family: The survey that will help mold our future is now available on the Church Website Homepage. Just click on the link in the messages box. We are looking forward to your input!

A note from Lilliam Mora:

I wish to thank the Women's Fellowship, staff and all who attended the beautiful brunch for me and Mau and the many others who gave us gifts. It was a very magical day for me. I really love this church and look forward to having my family here with me soon.

New Members Joining Today:

Mary and Robert Beck, 78 Nathan Hale Drive, Stamford, CT 06902, 325-0192. Mary and Robert come to First Congregational Church by Reaffirmation of Faith. Mary is a Director of Advertising & Marketing for Major League Baseball and Robert is a VP of Real Estate Finance at Countrywide Commercial. They have two children, Madeline (1) and Andrew (2 months).

Melissa and David Bennett, 10 Knoll Street, Riverside, CT 06878, 637-6712. Melissa and David come to First Congregational Church by Reaffirmation of Faith.. David is an Executive Director in Investment Banking at Morgan Stanley. They have three children, Grayson (4), Caroline (2), and William (4 months).

Christopher Cantwell, 29 Dawn Harbor Lane, Riverside, CT 06878, 637-5587. Chris comes to First Congregational Church by Reaffirmation of Faith. Chris is a Senior V.P. at GE Commercial Aviation Services. He has two children, Brooke (13) and Austin (10).

Gordon A. Jamieson, 2 Putnam Hill, Greenwich, CT 06830, 629-2721. Gordon comes to First Congregational Church by Letter of Transfer from Christ Church of Greenwich. Gordon is retired from the Banking industry. He has a daughter (Nancy), son-in-law (James) and granddaughter (Kristen).

Lilian and Mario Lotufo, 33 Mead Avenue, Cos Cob, CT 06807, 861-2120. Lilian and Mario come to First Congregational Church by Reaffirmation of Faith. Mario is Managing Director at Robeco-Sage. Lilian is a Commodity Analyst and Trader at Louis Dreyfus Corporation. They have a son, Marcus (1).

Lilliam Mora, 8 Highview Avenue, Old Greenwich, CT 06870, 979-4733. Lilliam comes to First Congregation Church by Confession of Faith. Lilliam is a Sexton at First Congregation Church of Greenwich. She has two children, Aldo (8) and Barbara (7).

Christina Godoy and Sergio Roque, 80 County Street, Unit 2, Norwalk, CT 06851, (203) 299-1883. Sergio and Christina come to First Congregational Church by Confession of Faith.

Elaine Teeters, 243 Willowbrook Ave., Stamford, CT 06902, 324-4099. Elaine comes to First Congregational Church by Letter of Transfer from First Congregational Church of Stamford. Elaine is a Senior Underwriter at Darien Financial Services. She is married to John and has three children, Charlie (14), Drake (13) and Margo (11).