

Order of Worship
February 4, 2007
10 o'clock in the morning

Winter Sermon Series:
Struggling With Tough Questions

“What About Women?”



Welcome to this Service of Worship at First Congregational Church.

Today we continue on a Winter Sermon Series, "Struggling with Tough Questions." As we explore the subject of women, we would offer the following for your thoughts and meditation:

Tables are so much a part of our lives, all these tables vary in size and use. Everything from our beloved dinner table to the corporate board table; picnic table to library table; game table to massage table; operating/examining table to communion table. All are different, all are important in the lives of women and the people with whom they share these tables. Let us consider the many tables in our lives and give thanks for our roles at those tables.

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

John Stansell, organ

Sonata V in D Major *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy*

Andante – Andante con moto

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Rev. Susan M. Craig

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Barbara Norrgard

*OPENING HYMN AND PROCESSION

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise *New Century Hymnal #1*
to the tune ST. DENIO

OPENING PRAYER (in unison)

Creator God, most distant space shows traces of your touch. Sculptor God, you give galaxies their form, shape granite mountains, and design butterfly wings. You choreograph the paths of stars and the flight of snow geese. Your divine song is sung by sparrows, mountain streams, and the rushing winds. We human beings wonder at all you create and rejoice to be a part of the living world which you love and sustain. Amen.

CONFESSING TO GOD

CALL TO CONFESSION (in unison)

Rev. Ronald E. Halvorsen

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O Life that surges through all living things and is their Source, we confess that we have often closed ourselves off and prevented the river flow of life through us. We have lost touch with the unique worth of the life each of us has to live. Our eyes fail to perceive beauty in people and in the world. Open our eyes, that we may walk in newness of life through One who is the Resurrection and the Life. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Stuart McCalley

Genesis 1: 26-27

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures

that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

SCRIPTURE ANTHEM

The Chancel Choir

You Are One In Christ Jesus *Gerre Hancock*

(text is Galatians 3:27-28)

SECOND LESSON

Galatians 3: 25-28

Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 15: 21-28

Devon Simpson

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

‡*SERMON HYMN

Mary, Woman of the Promise
to the tune QUEM PASTORES

New Century Hymnal # 123

SERMON "What About Women?"

*Rev. Susan M. Craig
Lynn O'Gorman
Angela Stevens
Deborah LaCivita*

RESPONDING TO GOD

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (in unison)

We believe in the God of life,
who creates and loves people,
who acts in history
and who promises never to leave us alone.

We believe in Jesus of Nazareth
who is our brother,
Who wants not to be idolized but to be followed.

We believe that we dwell in the presence of the Holy Spirit;
without her we are nothing;
filled with her we are able to become creative,
lively and free.

We believe in the Church of Jesus Christ,
a community where we find companions and
courage for the struggles of life,
where we grow in our understanding of the faith,
through worship, prayer, nurture, and service.

We believe that God has a use for us in every time and
place, and that we are called to be
instruments of God's peace.

We believe in living, hoping, laughing, and enjoying
the good of the earth;

We believe that no matter how dark the valleys of our lives, God keeps
pulling us to life and to a world of joy
and peace.

*Gloria (*New Century Hymnal # 754*)

*Glory to God the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy
Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen . Amen.*

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Draw Us In the Spirit's Tether *Harold Friedell*
(text & tune at *New Century Hymnal # 337*)

The Youth Choir

**Doxology (New Century Hymnal # 776)*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all creatures here below; Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter; One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Rev. Dale Greene

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SERVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

In the tradition of our church, let us partake of the bread as it is served, remembering our individual uniqueness in the eyes of God and our diversity within the Body of Christ. Let us hold the cup until all have been served, remembering our oneness with God and our unity in the Body of Christ.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (in unison)

We give you thanks, O God, for blessing us around this table with the presence of Christ. Send us forth, rejoicing, with our sisters and brothers in faith, to share your abundant love and grace with all we meet.

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

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*CLOSING HYMN AND PROCESSION

Called as Partners in Christ's Service *New Century Hymnal # 495*
to the tune BEECHER

*CLOSING SENTENCES

Leader: "Here I am Lord, send me," the prophet cried, and men and women have been making that commitment ever since.

People: Because in some mysterious way the work of God, already done, also takes the help of God's children to do.

Leader: The work of reconciliation was completed on the cross. All of the world has been restored to God in peace and harmony.

People: Little by little God affords us glimpses of what it will be like to live in community where we are all ONE in Christ Jesus.

*BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Sonata V in D Major *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy*
Allegro maestoso

Ushers: Marcia Livingston, Jerry White, Margaret and William Phyfe, Robert Alden, Darren Beurer, Joyce Nye

Deacons serving Communion: Clem Lepoutre, Peter Schay, Peter Garlid, Jan Thalheim, Mary Ranta, Beth Beam, Paul Kretschmann, Carolyn Paulus

Greeters and Coffee Hour Hosts: Beth Beam, Persis Alden, Angela Stevens

Flower Delivery: Judy and Gary Miller

The flowers in the Meetinghouse are given in loving memory of past members of First Church.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Church School There will be no Children's Worship in the Daniels Center today. The fifth graders are cooking for the Soup Kitchen during class time. All other classes will be making healthy valentines packets for the children in Honduras. Child Care for babies and toddlers is available as always.

Church Directories and Collection Envelopes are available at Coffee Hour after the service today and in the church office during the week.

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

The Wellness Committee will have heart healthy cookbooks available at coffee hour for anyone who signs up to cook a dish for *Cooking for the Heart* potluck dinner on February 27. See *News and Notices* for more information.

SECOND HOUR: FIRST CHURCH GROWERS FOR THE HUNGRY in the Lounge at 11:20am. Everyone is invited to view a brief video documenting the Growers' 2006 season, and to help plan for the 2007 season. See many of your fellow members getting their hands dirty for a good cause, and learn how you might do the same! The Growers need ideas and suggestions from as many gardeners as possible to help maximize the production of nutritious, organic vegetables for hungry people in our community. We especially need the involvement of members who have gardening experience or equipment that could be put to use by the Growers.

HONDURAS: Following the Worship Service, the Honduras Travel Group will meet in Room 103. Contributions of medicine continue to be received until February 11.

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS LIVE: in the Auditorium: American pianist Jeni Slotchiver has been called "a revelation...bold and brazen." Don't miss her Sunday Afternoons Live performance this afternoon at 4. Tea and hot chocolate are served from 3:30. A donation is requested.

JUNIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP (JPF Middle School) Last week's "Would You Rather" was a great hit! We also played night time dodgeball! Don't miss this week and our **SUPER SUNDAE SUNDAY!!!!** A fun time will be had by all!!! JPF is from 5-6 tonight.

Don't forget!!! Also, all bowling trip permission slips and money are due tonight.

THE SENIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP (SPF – High School) will not meet today.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6: “LIVING THE QUESTIONS” BIBLE STUDY SERIES begins. At Edgehill and open to all. Four consecutive Tuesdays: February 6, 13, 20, and 27, from 4:00 - 5:15pm. DVD Biblical presentation and discussion facilitated by Marty Berlin.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8: HATS OFF book group meets from 10:00-11:30am in the Lounge.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8: THE HEALING PATH OF PRAYER AND MEDITATION. Thursdays, February 8 & 15, are the last two of our four-session series facilitated by Rev. Doug Abbott, retired UCC minister who currently leads prayer and meditation groups at the Center for Hope in Darien. Newcomers are welcome. 5:45 – 6:45pm in the Lounge.

FEBRUARY 10, Saturday, at 5:00pm there will be a Family Communion Service in the Meetinghouse for our second graders and their families who have been considering the subject of communion. Everyone is invited to attend. Contact Susie Craig (extension 25) or Rosemary Lamie (extension 20) for more information.

FEBRUARY 11: NEW MEMBER CLASS invites you to consider joining a small group of us to explore becoming a member of our congregation. The New Member Class meets in the Lounge at 11:15am following the Worship Service, and on Wednesday, February 28 at 7:30pm in the Lounge.

FEBRUARY 11: JUNIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP BOWL-A-RAMA!!! The price for bowling has changed from \$15 to \$10!!! Sign up quickly!!!

FEBRUARY 11: SUNDAY AFTERNOONS LIVE. Mary Costanza, cellist, and Ray Pierpont, pianist. Tea and hot chocolate from 3:30. Performance at 4:00.

FEBRUARY 18: SUNDAY AFTERNOONS LIVE. Holly Sorensen, mezzo-soprano, with Mark Swicegood on the piano. Tea and hot chocolate from 3:30. Performance at 4:00.

FEBRUARY 18: CHURCH SCHOOL BIG EVENT will teach many ways to pray as we Pray for Peace - using art, words, music, making paper cranes and designing a Peace Tree. This event is appropriate for four year olds through elementary grades. Middle School and High School students are most welcome to help!

FEBRUARY 27: "COOKING FOR THE HEART" lecture and potluck dinner. See News and Notices below.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Cooking for the Heart – Tuesday, February 27, 6:30-8:30 PM

Dine on heart-healthy cuisine while listening to Dr. Robert Stark, Medical Director of Greenwich Hospital's Cardiovascular Prevention Program, who will discuss behaviors that prevent heart disease, as well as the latest procedures available for diagnosis and treatment of heart conditions. Dr. Stark is dedicated to promoting awareness, prevention and early detection of cardiac disease. Participants are encouraged to bring a prepared heart-healthy dish to share, recipes provided. Speak to Sue Asselin, Parish Nurse, at ext. 21, to RSVP and be assigned a recipe.

Hospital Admissions

Are you or a loved one going into the hospital? If so, would you please contact the church office at 637-1791. Or upon admission, please list First Congregational Church of Greenwich as your church affiliation. Similarly, if you know someone who is homebound and would benefit from a Clergy or Parish Nurse visit, please let the church know.