

Order of Worship  
February 11, 2007  
10 o'clock in the morning

Winter Sermon Series:  
Struggling With Tough Questions

“What About Sexual Orientation?”



*Welcome to this Service of Worship at First Congregational Church*  
as we continue on a Winter Sermon Series, “Struggling with Tough Questions.” As we explore sexual orientation, may we seek to discern our way as a part of God’s way. And may the light of Christ which we now celebrate guide and direct us in all our choices and journeys.

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

Morning Mist *Esther Higgins*

*Cheryll Hadley, organ*

*Palmer Handbells*

El Shaddai *Michael Card & John Thompson, arr. Bruce Greer*  
(a praise song from the early 80’s using a Hebrew name for God,  
in an elaborate arrangement for handbells)

CALL TO COMMUNITY

*Rev. Ronald E. Halvorsen*

### PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

\*‡ OPENING HYMN AND PROCESSION

Come, O Spirit, Dwell Among Us *New Century Hymnal # 267*  
*to the tune EBENEZER (TON-Y-BOTEL)*

OPENING PRAYER (In Unison)

Lord of love, who cares for all as though all were but one, show us your love, teach us your love.

During all that life brings, fill us with your love, guide us in your love, and hold us in your ever-loving arms. Amen

## CONFESSING TO GOD

### CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Separated from one another, Lord, we have spent our hours rationalizing the limits of love, arguing clearly all around the spread of the cross.

Those arms outstretched reach too far for us; love must be more antiseptic, we tell ourselves, clean and neat, polite, comfortable and reserved.

Yet you, O Lord, love without reservation, a spendthrift of heart, giving yourself to us. Love stands in mud with one in need, but we stand aside.

Love weeps with one in grief, but we plot relief. Love embraces the lonely with lonely arms, but we stand sufficient. Love gives fully to the companion in hope, but we make sure of our safety.

Love embraces the cross, but we nod in admiration. O God, forgive us our sufficiency, our pride, that we might stand together and grow together in humble faithfulness and love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

### CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

## HEARING GOD'S WORD

### FIRST LESSON

*Dick Peebles*

Luke 6: 17-26

**H**e came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and

those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

‘Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

‘Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

‘But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

‘Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

‘Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

‘Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

## SCRIPTURE ANTHEM

*The Children’s Choir*

I’m Goin’ Up a Yonder

*Walter Hawkins, arranged by Martin Sirvatka*

*(The children have learned that Spirituals such as this, which refer to going up to heaven soon, were an expression of hope for an oppressed people.)*

## SECOND LESSON

Leviticus 11: 9-12

**T**hese you may eat, of all that are in the waters. Everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the streams—such you may eat. But anything in the seas or the streams that does not have fins and scales, of the swarming creatures in the waters and among all the other living creatures that are in the

waters—they are detestable to you and detestable they shall remain. Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall regard as detestable. Everything in the waters that does not have fins and scales is detestable to you.

Leviticus 18: 22

You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.

Exodus 35: 2

Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a holy Sabbath of solemn rest to the Lord; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.

‡\*SERMON HYMN

When Love Is Found

*New Century Hymnal # 362*

*to the tune O WALY WALY*

*At this time our children will leave for their church classes.*

SERMON “What About Sexual Orientation?” *Dr. David D. Young*

RESPONDING TO GOD

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (In Unison)

We believe that God created and is still creating and that we are called to join in this creation.

We believe that God does not love us because Christ died for us, but that Christ died for us because God loved us.

We believe that God’s Holy Spirit of love still sets people free and that God calls us to help in this task of liberation.

We believe that the church is a chosen people, not chosen for its own sake, but to be a servant of God for the sake of the world.

We believe that God’s love is unfailing, and we so approach the future with confidence. Amen

*First United Presbyterian Church – Plymouth, Michigan*

\*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 PASTORAL PRAYER

*Rev. Susan M. Craig*

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.

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*The Chancel Choir*

As Truly as God Is Our Father *William Mathias*  
*Text by Julian of Norwich*

As truly as God is our father, so just as truly is he our mother. In our father, God Almighty, we have our being. In our merciful mother, we are remade and restored. Our fragmented lives are knit together. And by giving and yielding ourselves through grace to the Holy Spirit we are made whole. It is I, the strength and goodness of fatherhood. It is I, the wisdom of Motherhood. It is I, the light and grace of holy love. It is I, the Trinity, the unity. I am the sovereign goodness in all things. It is I who teach you to love. It is I who teach you to desire. It is I who am the reward of all true desiring. All shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well. Amen.

\*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

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

COMMISSIONING OF HONDURAS MISSION GROUP

\*CLOSING HYMN AND PROCESSION

Help Us Accept Each Other                      *New Century Hymnal # 388*  
*to the tune AURELIA*

\*CLOSING SENTENCES

*Leader: Love is the responsibility of an I for a Thou. In this lies the likeness – impossible in any feeling whatsoever of all who love.*

*People: Let us go on loving one another for love comes from God. Everyone who truly loves is God's child and has some knowledge of God*

*Leader: But be of love, a little more careful than of everything. The peace of God be with you.*

*People: Amen!*

*Martin Buber, ee cummings, John the Disciple*

\*BENEDICTION

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Variations on "Built on the Rock"

*Ludwig Lindemann arr. Roger Wilson*

(find this tune at Pilgrim Hymnal # 270)

---

*Ushers: Deborah LaCivita, Bobbie Hopkins, Marcia Livingston, Claire Henry, Julia Johnson, Tamara Ng-Yow, Joyce Nye*

*Greeters and Coffee Hour Hosts: Phil Alexandre, Persis Alden, Enid Norris, Mary Ranta*

*Flower Delivery: Judy Gordon*

The flowers in the Meetinghouse are given in loving memory of Peter McLennan and Tim Nesvig on their shared anniversary, with love

from family and friends.

---

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Church School continues today including worship in the Daniels Center. Middle school students begin in the Meetinghouse. Child care is available in the Undercroft for babies and toddlers.

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

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

Parish Nurse Sue Asselin, RN is available today in Room 203, after the Worship Service. Stop in to have your blood pressure checked or discuss any health problems.

HONDURAS – Luggage straps are needed. Speak to Susie today in you can help.

NEW MEMBER CLASS – 11:15am, following the Worship Service today -- Please consider this class to explore becoming a member of our congregation. In the Lounge today and for an additional class on Wednesday, February 28 at 7:30pm.

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS LIVE – 4:00 – Mary Costanza, cellist, and Ray Pierpont, pianist, perform sonatas by Beethoven and Brahms. Tea and hot chocolate from 3:30. A donation is requested.

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

THE SENIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP (SPF – High School) – 6:30pm -- in the Youth Room.

---

FEBRUARY 13, 20, 27 -- 4:00-5:15 -- "LIVING THE QUESTIONS" Bible Study at Edgehill. A DVD/discussion format facilitated by Marty Berlin. All are welcome.

FEBRUARY 15 -- 5:45-6:45 -- THE HEALING PATH OF PRAYER AND MEDITATION concludes its four-part series facilitated by Rev. Doug Abbott, retired UCC minister, who leads prayer and meditation groups at the Center for Hope in Darien. Newcomers are welcome.

FEBRUARY 18 -- 10:00am -- 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! Children will begin in the Meetinghouse.

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

FEBRUARY 25 -- 4:00 -- SUNDAY AFTERNOONS LIVE. Yale Russian Chorus performs. Tea and hot chocolate at 3:30.

FEBRUARY 27 -- 6:30- 8:30 -- COOKING FOR THE HEART: Tuesday, February 27, 6:30-8:30pm 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.

---

NEWS AND NOTICES

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.

---

First Church Honduras Group 2007

Taylor Adams Bell  
Rodney Sherwood Brown  
Casey Michelle Collins  
Susan McNeily Craig  
Steven Ronald Crawford  
Peter Thomas DeRiemer  
David Worthington Fraser  
Sarah Jean Gordon  
Phoebe Jane Griffith  
Donald Richard Haviland  
Lucy Hoffman  
Devon Elizabeth Kennedy  
Emma Lee Kramer  
Sarah Frances Kramer  
Jennifer Lepoutre  
Timothy Jean Lepoitre  
Catie Mahoney  
Carolyn Kay Paulus  
Alexander Colburn Pugliese  
Debra Lynn Shaw  
Hans Christian Thalheim  
Sarah VanDermeer