

The Third Sunday of Easter

April 22, 2007

10 o'clock in the morning



WELCOME to this Service of Worship as part of the First Congregational Church family of faith. We come to this focusing hour from so many diverse backgrounds and perspectives – united by the spirit of Jesus Christ who informs our life journey and illuminates the darkened corners. May you rediscover through the experience of our worship together what Paul knew, that in Jesus Christ,

“All things hold together.”

*Colossians 1: 17*

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.

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### PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

\*All who are able, please stand

‡Seating of latecomers

PRELUDE

*Terence J. Flanagan, organ*

Prélude, Fugue, Variation; Op. 18 *César Franck*

CALL TO COMMUNITY

*Rev. Susan M. Craig*

## PRAISING GOD

### CALL TO WORSHIP

#### ‡\*OPENING HYMN AND PROCESSION

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty     *Pilgrim Hymnal # 251*

#### OPENING PRAYER (In Unison)

O God, in mystery and silence you are present in our lives, bringing new life out of destruction, hope out of despair, growth out of difficulty. We thank you that you do not leave us alone but labor to make us whole. Help us to perceive your unseen hand in the unfolding of our lives, and to attend to the gentle guidance of your Spirit, that we may know the joy you give your people. Amen.

## CONFESSING TO GOD

### CALL TO CONFESSION

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

Our God, we come knowing that we have failed in many ways  
this week,  
...sometimes trying to hide from you, from one another, and  
even from ourselves,  
...sometimes involving ourselves in a meaningless frenzy of  
activities that lead nowhere,  
...sometimes treating persons as things and things as god,  
...sometimes straying far from the fullness of life that you make  
possible for us.

Forgive us for our weaknesses, and give us the courage to accept the challenge of our complete commitment which brings new birth and healing to our lives. In the name of Jesus who shows us the way. Amen.

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

### ‡ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

### BAPTISMAL SONG (*sung by the congregation*)

Come, my children, with my blessing, never alone;  
Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own;  
In my love's baptismal river, I will make you mine forever,  
Come, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.

### SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Matthew Callahan Jacobs, son of  
Katherine Paige and Matthew Garson Jacobs  
Ellen Bell Romano, daughter of Lori E. and Joseph L. Romano

### BAPTISMAL SONG (*sung by the congregation*)

Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me;  
Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.  
Here my Spirit's power filled you, here with tender comfort stilled you;  
Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free.

## HEARING GOD'S WORD

### FIRST LESSON

*Pat Larrabee*

Isaiah 55: 6-13

**S**EEK the LORD while he may be found,  
call upon him while he is near;  
let the wicked forsake their way,  
and the unrighteous their thoughts;  
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,

nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,  
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,  
making it bring forth and sprout,  
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,  
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,  
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy,  
and be led back in peace;  
the mountains and the hills before you  
shall burst into song,  
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.  
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;  
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;  
and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial,  
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

## SCRIPTURE ANTHEM

*The Chancel Choir*

Two Songs for Eastertide *arr. by Robert Shaw & Alice Parker*

O Sons and Daughters – This Joyful Eastertide

## SECOND LESSON

John 20: 19-29

**W**hen it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them

and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

‡\*SERMON HYMN

Be Still, My Soul

*Pilgrim Hymnal # 77*

SERMON “Flipping the Coin of Doubt” *Rev. Ronald E. Halvorsen*

### RESPONDING TO GOD

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (In Unison)

We believe that we are never alone. God is with us. We believe that the world is kept in God’s hands. God has sent God’s only son, Jesus Christ, into the world. We believe that we are not alone among people. Around us is the large fellowship of the Church – the people whom God loves. They live everywhere, in all countries of the world, on all continents and among all races. We are part of them.

We believe that God wants life for us and not death, joy and not sadness, and that God is with us today and always! Amen.

\*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

## 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*

Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know *D. Duane Blakly*

Ask ye what great thing I know  
That delights and stirs me so?  
What the high reward I win?  
Whose the name I glory in?  
Jesus Christ, the crucified. Hallelujah!

What is faith's foundation strong?  
What awakes my lips to song?  
He who bore my sinful load,  
Purchased for me peace with God,  
Jesus Christ, the crucified. Hallelujah!  
Who is life in life to me?

Who the death of death will be?  
Who will place me on his right  
With the countless hosts of light?  
Jesus Christ, the crucified. Hallelujah!

This is that great thing I know;  
This delights and stirs me so;  
Faith in him who died to save,  
Him who triumphed o'er the grave,  
Jesus Christ, the crucified. Hallelujah!

*(text by Johann C. Schwedler, translated by Benjamin H. Kennedy)*

\*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

\*CLOSING HYMN

God of Grace and God of Glory      *New Century Hymnal # 436*

\*CLOSING SENTENCES

*Leader: Most precious to me is the assurance of the grace of God –and its  
availability! To me this means that God loves me.*

People: That God accepts me as I am.

*Leader: That God forgives me, again and again.*

People: That every new day I have a chance to hope for healing and  
new beginnings.

*Leader: It is this grace which gives me courage to attempt to do more than  
I am able to do, and to become more than I can ever become.*

People: God's grace frees all of us to dare, to risk, and to hope.

*Margaret L. Sonnenday*

\*BENEDICTION

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Tocatta on "O Sons and Daughters" *Lynnwood Farnam*

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*The last few pews in the Meetinghouse are reserved for latecomers.*

*Ushers:* Suzie Baker, Paul Pacent, Jacky Schofield, Peter Schay

*Greeters:* Membership Committee

*Coffee Hour:* Membership Committee

*Flower Delivery:* Lucille Baldwin

The flowers in the Meetinghouse today are given in joyful celebration of the baptism of Ellen Belle Romano, daughter of Joseph and Lori Romano, and Matthew Callahan Jacobs, son of Matthew and Katherine Jacobs.

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TODAY, APRIL 22

Church School resumes today.

Child Care for babies and toddlers is available in the Undercroft.

The Women's Fellowship Allocations Committee has completed their deliberations and is ready to present the list of allocations for approval. Allocations are possible as the result of the successful sales from the Rummage Room. Thank you to all contributors and purchasers! All women of the congregation are asked to meet in the chapel immediately following the worship service today to discuss and vote on the Committee's recommendations.

A Church School Teachers Meeting will be held in Room 103 at 11:30am for those who did not attend the earlier one. We are meeting at 11:30 to allow women who wish to attend and vote at the Women's Fellowship Allocations to do so right after today's Worship Service and then attend this teachers meeting..

Blood Pressure Screening -- A member of the Wellness Committee is available to check blood pressures in room 203 following the Worship Service.

The Junior Pilgrim Fellowship (JPF -- Middle School) will meet today at 5:30pm in the Youth Room

The Senior Pilgrim Fellowship (SPF -- High School) will meet at 6:30pm in the Youth Room.

### SUNDAY, APRIL 29

Stained Glass Window Project: Following the Worship Service next week there will be a special presentation in the Meetinghouse to take a look at our stained glass windows and the plans for their restoration. We hope all can attend.

New Members Class: Also following the Worship Service we will be offering Part I of our two part New Members classes for this spring. Plan to meet in the lounge at 11:15am. Childcare will be provided. Please contact the office if you would like to attend, and if you plan to use childcare. The class will run for about an hour.

### NEWS AND NOTICES

We welcome Terence J. Flanagan as our new Associate Organist and Director of the Palmer Handbells. Terry studied with John Weaver at The Curtis Institute in Philadelphia and at The Juilliard School, and was the Organist and Assistant Choirmaster at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City from 1988 until 2007. Be sure to greet him.

Our children need you! Many of you have taught Church School classes over the years and we thank you for that. For those of you who may have been thinking about it, your time has come. We already have a full team for the Kindergarten Class and others teams are developing. Please prayerfully consider spending some Sunday mornings with our children who so need our example and support while they form their faith and beliefs. No experience is necessary. Rewards are "priceless". Rosemary Lamie or Susie Craig would be happy to answer any questions you may have. There are sign-up boards in the Auditorium and the Undercroft. Our goal is to be fully "staffed" by May 6, Recognition Sunday!

RUMMAGE ROOM WISH LIST: Double stroller, weights, double jogging stroller, fishing rods, baby gate, bassinette, navy blazers.



*First Congregational Church of Greenwich* [www.fccog.org](http://www.fccog.org)

108 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich, Connecticut, 203.637.1791

Ministers: The Members of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

Senior Pastor: David D. Young

Senior Associate Pastor: Susan M. Craig

Minister of Pastoral Care and Adult Ed: Ronald E. Halvorsen

Director of Music/Senior Organist: John Stansell

Associate Organist/Director: Terence Flanagan

Director of Middle School Ministry: Debbie Bocchino

Director of High School Ministry: Josh Ziac

Church School Director: Rosemary Lamie

Parish Nurse: Susan Asselin

Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister

Pastors Emeriti: Thomas L. Stiers and Sally Colegrove