

*Old Greenwich,
Connecticut*

**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF GREENWICH**

*United Church
of Christ*

Founded in 1665

The Fourth Sunday in Lent
14 March 2010
10 o'clock in the morning



Welcome to this Service of Worship at The First Congregational Church of Greenwich. Take a look at the scripture passages for today. In what ways do you feel connected to the person of Jesus, to the spirit of the Christ, to the redemption of the Messiah?

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

*All who are able please stand

‡Seating of latecomers

PRELUDE

Scherzo (from *Ten Pieces*)

*Terence J. Flanagan, organ
Eugène Gigout*

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Please sign and pass the red book.

Rev. Mark D. Montgomery

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

CHORAL INTROIT

Long Ago

Children came their Saviour seeking, long ago, long ago,
Words of kindness He was speaking, O so long ago.
(*refrain*) Long ago, children came,
Long ago, yet the same.
Jesus would the children bless,
Jesus bids us come.

In His arms the children holding, long ago, long ago,
With His tender love enfolding, O so long ago. (*refrain*)

(text by Elsie Duncan Yale)

*The Cherub Choir;
Lisa Flanagan, director; Debbie Berner, piano
John J. Thomas*

*‡OPENING HYMN AND PROCESSION

Jesus the Christ Says

New Century (black) Hymnal 48

The opening hymn is our current Featured Hymn, chosen to complement the sermon series. Featured Hymns may be familiar ones that we want to make sure our children learn, or new ones that we all want to learn.

OPENING PRAYER

We gather to learn.

We gather to lift up those in need.
We gather to celebrate.
We gather to mourn.
We gather.
We gather our possessions and our dreams.
We gather our “stuff” and our fears.
We gather our anxieties and our joys.
We gather.
We gather as we are, as you have created us.
Gather us in. Amen.

CONFESSING TO GOD

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, we come before you with awe, for you are great in love and power. Some of us come with reluctance and some with joy; some with sadness and others full of fear, yet we know you receive us as we are. Mighty God, stay with us always, as we worship and as we share the risk and challenge of living our faith. By your powerful Spirit, turn our fear to courage and our confusion to confidence. Touch us, God, with your healing fire. Speak to us through your Word. Send us back into the world renewed and eager to do your will. We pray in the name of Jesus the Christ who taught us to pray...

(Ronald S. Beebe)

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.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

‡Congregational Response

*Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind but now I see.*

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Gwen Pfetsch

Isaiah 11:1-11

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

On that day the LORD will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that is left of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Ethiopia, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

SCRIPTURE ANTHEM

The Children's Choir

A Prayer of St. Richard of Chichester

L.J. White

O holy Jesus, most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly and follow thee more nearly.
Amen.

SECOND LESSON

Peter Schay

John 15:1-7

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”

*‡HYMN

Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers

New Century (black) Hymnal 397

As the hymn begins, the Church School children and teachers will leave for their classrooms. Children in second grade and older will leave independently. Children in kindergarten and first graders will meet their teachers at the back of the Meetinghouse (Narthex) and will go to their classrooms as a group. It is not necessary for parents to accompany their children because there are Hall Helpers to guide anyone who needs help.

SERMON

“I Am the Vine”

Rev. Mark D. Montgomery

RESPONDING TO GOD

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

We are not alone, we live in God’s world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus,

the Word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God’s presence,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus,

crucified 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.

(United Church of Canada, 1980)

***Gloria**

Pilgrim (red) 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.

CALL TO PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Daniel B. England

PASTORAL PRAYER AND QUIET MEDITATION

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Chancel Choir

Joys Are Flowing Like a River

Jay Thomas

The text, by Manie Payne Furguson, is found at New Century Hymnal 284, without the refrain.

***Doxology** *Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 514 with the following text:*
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all
creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

***CLOSING HYMN AND PROCESSION**

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian *Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 353*

***CLOSING SENTENCES**

Leader: We are one in Christ Jesus.

People: Let us go into the world as brothers and sisters.

Leader: In the redemptive power of Christ, we are made whole.

People: Brothers and Sisters, let us live fully.

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE

Toccata (from *Ten Pieces*)

Gigout

The flowers in the Meetinghouse are given in loving memory of James Anderson III by his family.

The 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.

We have **child care for babies and toddlers** every Sunday in the Preschool area. Your children are always welcome for the entire service or for a respite time if needed. Please see an usher if you need directions.

The 10:00 am Service is broadcast live each week on WGCH 1490 AM Radio. In addition, the service is available through the church's website, www.fccog.org. A bulletin can be found there as well as a link to the live broadcast. Previous sermons may also be found there.

Calendar

TODAY

Church School

Today Church School classes will be held as usual. Don't miss out on our Church School family Lenten projects. Go to our website, www.fccog.org, for the details. The projects are designed to help families share a meaningful and spiritual Lenten season. Our offerings are due on or before April 3. Next Sunday, March 28, is our last before a three week "hiatus" due to Palm Sunday, Easter and the public school vacation. Church School will resume on April 18.

Bible Study

The Bible Study on the book of Romans will resume this morning at 11:15 in the Lounge. All those who have been wondering what the practical applications are of the theological points we've been studying will be rewarded with detailed exhortations on Christian living and, especially, Christian thinking. It should raise some issues for discussion and your voice needs to be heard; so please join us.

Parish Nurse

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

Youth Choir rehearses today in the Choir Room from 11:20 am to 12:20 pm.

JPF / Junior Pilgrim Fellowship, 6-8 grades, meets in Room 103 from 5:00 to 6:00 pm.

SPF / Senior Pilgrim Fellowship, 9-12 grades, meets in Room 103 from 7:00 to 8:00 pm.

THIS WEEK

Tai Chi

March classes will be held each Wednesday at 8:00 am and each Thursday at 9:00 am in the Auditorium. The fifth Wednesday in March will be counted in April for fee purposes. March fees are once again \$28.00 for the month. These classes are wonderful for stretching and balance. Questions, call Prill Meyer at 203-637-4214.

The **Children's Choir** rehearses on Wednesday from 5:00 to 6:00 pm in the Choir Room followed by pizza in Room 303.

Hats Off, the women's book discussion group is continuing its journey reading *Btava Valentine* by Adrianna Trigiani. We meet every Thursday morning in the Lounge from 10:00 am to 11:30 am. Come join us.

The **Palmer Handbells** rehearse on Thursday evening from 6:15 to 7:15 pm in the Meetinghouse.

Chancel Choir rehearses on Thursday evening from 7:30 to 9:00 pm in the Choir Room.

CPR Training including Defibrillator Use

Saturday, March 20, 9:00 am -12:00 Noon; Saturday, March 20, 1:00 - 4:00 pm; OR Saturday, March 27, 9:00 am - 12:00 Noon. This class is appropriate for first-time participants as well as those in need of recertification. Because of the generosity of GEMS and the church covering the balance of the reduced fees, there is no cost to the participants. The Wellness Committee thanks you for the gift of your time and willingness to help others. To register or get more information, speak to Sue Asselin, Parish Nurse at extension 21.

Career Transition Planning Seminar

The church is going to host a Career Transition Planning Seminar led by Chuck McConnell, of our congregation, who counsels executives in transition professionally. This seminar, however, is completely free. It will be held on Saturday, March 20 at 10:00 am in Room 104. If you or anyone you know is making a career move or is trying to get back in the workforce and could benefit from sound, professional advice on how to do that effectively, this seminar is for them. Once we determine the level of interest and the career transition needs of the participants, we will schedule follow-up sessions targeted at various participant needs. Things are tough out there but this can help. The seminar is open to anyone in the church and anyone in the community. For further information, contact Chuck at 203-637-4423.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Women's Ministries goes Green in honor of St. Patrick on March 22

Celebrate the fun - and a green menu - with a potluck supper on Monday, March 22 at 6:00 pm to be held at the home of Irene Savage in Old

Greenwich. All are welcome for this fellowship. Phone Joyce Nye at 203-637-3994 for details.

Hold the Date! Our traditional **Egg Saturday** event will be held this year on the day before Easter, April 3, from 10:00 am until 12 Noon. Your family is invited to join the Church School Task Force for egg coloring, planting signs of new life and learning about the joy of Easter! Sign up during Coffee Hour!

A HUGE THANK YOU to our congregation for their donation of educational and clinical supplies which accompanied our Mission Team to Guatemala! We know they will be well-received and we look forward to sharing all aspects of the trip with you after our team returns.

Easter Memorial/Honor Flowers

The Chancel Committee invites contributions for flowers in the Meetinghouse this Easter. Any amount is welcome. Please deliver the completed form with your check to the Church Office (payable to the First Church Flower Fund) on or before Sunday, March 28. Thank you.

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

By:

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____

Please print names legibly to minimize spelling errors.

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The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

108 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich, Connecticut, 06870

203-637-1791

www.fccog.org

Ministers: Members of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. David D. Young

Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry: Rev. Mark D. Montgomery

Minister of Communication and Adult Education: Rev. Daniel B. England

Minister of Pastoral Care: Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Director of Music/Senior Organist: Dr. John Stansell

Associate Organist/Director: Terence J. Flanagan

Director of Church School: Rosemary Lamie

Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister

Parish Nurse: Susan Asselin, RN

Pastors Emeriti: Rev. Dr. Thomas L. Stiers and Rev. Sally Colegrove