

*Old Greenwich,  
Connecticut*

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH OF GREENWICH

*United Church  
of Christ*

*Founded in 1665*

# Fourth Sunday of Advent

19 December 2010  
10 o'clock in the morning



WELCOME to this Service of Worship at First Congregational Church on this fourth Sunday of Advent. As we “Celebrate the Gift” may we rejoice in the blessings God has given us and give thanks for opportunities to share our faith with each other in our community of faith. Giving and receiving are what this season is all about. It is our hope that this service will prepare us to receive God’s greatest gift – even Christ the Lord. In the words of playwright and essayist, Dorothy Sayres, we seek:

*“To celebrate that mighty eternity,  
can be born in time,  
and God’s life in yours and mine”*

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### **PREPARING FOR WORSHIP**

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

\*All who are able please stand

‡Seating of latecomers

#### **PRELUDE**

Nativity Suite

*Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ  
Wilber Held*

#### **CALL TO COMMUNITY**

*Please sign and pass the red book.*

*Rev. Daniel B. England*

### **PRAISING GOD**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

#### **\*‡OPENING HYMN AND PROCESSION**

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

*New Century (black) Hymnal 126*

#### **LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE**

*Emma Olmsted, Tommy Glover, Audrey Thalheim*

#### **Opening Sentences**

**Scripture:** Genesis 12:1-4

**Prayer:**

O God, who in this Advent Season speaks again the word of blessing which calls us to new faith journeys, help us to have ears to hear and eyes to see the unfolding of your promise in the coming of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

**Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle:**

We light the fourth Advent Candle of Promise as we remember father Abraham who heard God's voice and was not afraid to take the first step in faithful response to God's promised tomorrow.

**CONFESSING TO GOD**

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*In Unison*)

God of the new moment,  
we confess our lingering attachment  
to old and outworn modes of living.

Christ of our life's aspiring,  
we confess our continuing pattern  
of keeping you distant from our real life's pattern.

Spirit of promised inspiration,  
we confess our persistent fear  
of becoming too involved in kingdom concerns.

Forgive us this day  
in a time of Advent adventure  
for fleeing your presence,  
distancing Christ's model,  
fearing inner renewal,  
for we would be drawn once again  
to that special stable of angel's singing  
and unimaginable light,  
in the spirit of the one who taught us to pray...

## 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

(Tune: Sussex Carol)

*New Century (black) Hymnal 143*

*Then why should we on earth be sad,  
since our Redeemer made us glad;  
Then why should we on earth be sad,  
since our Redeemer made us glad,  
When from our sin Christ set us free,  
all for to gain our liberty.*

## HEARING GOD'S WORD

### FIRST LESSON

*Lucinda Allen*

Isaiah 7:10-16

**A**gain the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

### SCRIPTURE ANTHEM

Away in a Manger

*The Cherub Choir  
Traditional Carol*

## SECOND LESSON

*Joe McBride*

Matthew 1:18-25

**N**ow the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

### \*‡HYMN

Mary, Woman of the Promise

*New Century (black) Hymnal 123*

*As the song 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 grade will meet their teachers at the back of the Meetinghouse (narthex) and will go to their classrooms as a group.*

### SERMON

*Celebrate the Promise*

*Dr. David D. Young*

*(Fourth in an Advent Sermon Series: “Celebrate the Gift”)*

## RESPONDING TO GOD

### \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We celebrate our faith in the little graces of life;  
the urgency of growth, the strength of laughter,  
the vitality of friendship.

We celebrate our confidence in the dignity of all persons;  
their fortitude in despair, their strength in weakness,  
their love in hatred.

We celebrate our joy in the experience of living;  
the fragrance of nostalgia, the scattered moments of delight.  
the exhilaration of danger.

We celebrate our need for each other; the offerings of faith,  
the gifts of variety, the quality of difference.

We celebrate our hunger for God;  
the desire for fulfillment, the ache for understanding,  
the sense of peace.

Christmas is our Season of celebration and promise.

*Adapted from Howard Thurman*

**\*Advent Gloria**

(refrain from Angels We Have Heard on High)

*New Century (black) Hymnal 125*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

CALL TO PASTORAL PRAYER

*Rev. Susan Murtha*

PASTORAL PRAYER AND QUIET MEDITATION

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree

*The Chancel Choir  
Elizabeth Posten*

**\*Advent Response**

(verse 3 of As With Gladness Men of Old)

*Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 119*

*As they offered gifts most rare,  
At the manger rude and bare,  
So may we with holy joy,  
Pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ to thee, our heavenly King.*

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD**

**\*CLOSING HYMN AND PROCESSION**

The First Nowell (*verse 1-5 hymnal*)      *Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 141*

*Verse 6:*

*Then let us all with one accord*

*Sing praises to our heavn'ly Lord*

*That hath made heaven and earth of naught*

*And with his blood our life hath bought. (Refrain)*

**\*CLOSING SENTENCES**

*Leader: But now, as at the ending, the low is lifted high;*

*People: The stars shall bend their voices, and every stone  
shall cry.*

*Leader: And every stone shall cry, in praises of the child.*

*People: By whose descent among us, the worlds are  
Reconciled.*

*Richard Wilbur, "A Christmas Hymn"*

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*CLOSING CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne      *Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 326*

*Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown*

*When thou camest to earth for me,*

*But in Bethlehem's home there was found no room*

*For Thy Holy nativity.*

*O come to my heart, Lord Jesus;*

*There is room in my heart for Thee!*

**POSTLUDE**

Postlude on "Sussex Carol"

*Noel Rawsthorne*

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The memorial fund honoring Elizabeth and Warren Dennison has provided for the radio broadcast of this morning's service.

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. 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](http://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.

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## **Christmas Memory/Honor Flowers and Decorations**

**The decorations in the Meetinghouse this morning are given in joyful and loving memory of:**

Roger A. Lepoutre by the Lepoutre Family

Our parents, Harold R. and Ruth Browning Hopkins, and Raymond L. and Mildred McConnell Hamilton by Rich and Bobbie Hopkins

John L. Putnam by Jennifer Maloney and Wendy Putnam

Carol and Gary Farn by Charles and Alison Farn Leigh

My husband, Allan W. Colegrove and my parents, Edward and Eva Grant, by Carolyn Colegrove

My cousin, Tom, by B. Littlefield

Our parents and sisters by Harriet and Bob Starr

Anne, Bill and Sue Denne by their family

Jim and Thelma Young and Leonard Larson by Kirk and Karen Young

Richard Vogt, anonymously

James Anderson III, Barbara Michelsen Tufts, and Florence Fasoli by Ty, Cyndy, Jay and Katie Anderson

Parents, Efraim and Victoria Olson, and Ryan and Margaret Rosendale, and aunt, Erna Nelson, by Ken and Erna Olson

Joan and Jim Kreuter by their children and grandchildren

Charlie and Bill Robertson by their brother and sister, Eric and Betsy Kreuter

Albert Christian Gregg Primo by Rosina, Al, and Juliet Primo, Valerie Primo Lack, and Livia, Eden and Jeremy Lack

Our parents, Betty and Fred Breismeister and Alma and Steve Karch, and loved ones by Ginny and Don Breismeister

My family by Thelma Colegrove

Cornelia and Fred Veith by Craig, Sally Jones, Hedy and Anne Craig Veith

Our parents, Elmer and Lile Rasmuson and Jack and Marian Gibbons by Lile and John Gibbons

Eva S. Fossum by Bill, Michaela, Nicole, Andrea Nicholas, Laurel, Finn and Heidi, Mike and Lee

William J. Provoost, Jr., by Suzanne, Patti and Jack Provoost

Dorothy and John Green, Willa and Bill Provoost, Sr. and John Provoost by Suzanne Provoost

John Provoost by Jack, Judy, Michael, Jennifer and David Provoost

Karen and Marios Scrivanos by Karen Scrivanos Oztemel

Our son, Kim, by Harlan and Wendy Reynolds

Charles J. Veith IV by his sister, Linda Veith Glover

Our parents, Betty and DJ Rozmus and Irene and Jack McCue with love by Sandra and John McCue

William and Emily Henry by their children

F. Warren, Marion and Peter White by Thomas A. and Lori A. White and Amy and Michael Morgan

Virginia Wilson Keller by The Keller Family

Melita and John Magness and Dana Andersen by their family

Joe Browne and Carol Tedoff Kutzen by Tom, Peter and Terri  
Browne Kutzen

Richard L. Geismar by his family

Our parents, Purisima Teria and Richard and Louise Haviland by  
Erlinda and Larry Haviland

Our parents, Louise and Harrison Reed, and Margaret and Carleton  
Gisborne by Ruth and Gifford Reed and family

Parents, Peg and Carroll Belknap by Anne Wachsman

Alvin Wachsman and grandson, Jason Arnold by Anne Wachsman  
and the Arnold family

Harry Woodman and Marsha Shearer Woodman, Corlyle, Jean and  
Kent Paulus by the Woodman/Paulus Family

Patricia DeHaven by the Mendelsohn Family

Timmy Mahoney by Mom, Dad, Catie and Megan

Marian and Fred Hout by Sue Hout Baker, Sara, Charlie and Liz

All the Hoffman and Kneen relatives who brought such love and  
laughter into our lives by Mrs. Walter F. Hoffman and Mrs.  
Harold P. Kneen, Jr.

My husband, Robert Liddel and my son-in-law, Kim David McCaw  
by Virginia Liddel

Rusty Lewis and Jim Perry by their families

Daniel F. Jankovich, Scott A. Jankovich, David W. Allan, son, and  
Estella Allan by Jean L. Jankovich

**The decorations in the Meetinghouse this morning are given in  
honor of:**

Barbara and Maurice Lorthioir by Schoen/Lorthioir Family

Our grandchildren, Finn McCalley Breismeister and June McCalley  
Breismeister by Ginny and Don Breismeister and Sue and Stu  
McCalley

Carolyn Paulus and the Youth Choir

The decorations in the Meetinghouse this morning are given in celebration of:

Friends and family by Kate, Diane and Paul Kretschmann

The decorations in the Meetinghouse this morning are given by:

Colleen Alfano

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### *Giving Opportunities for the Season*

#### **Mitten Tree**

Throughout Advent the Mitten Tree is available in the Auditorium to accept gifts of mittens, hats, gloves and socks that will be delivered to St. Luke's Lifeworks to help warm the hands and hearts of those St. Luke's serves.

#### **White Gifts**

White Gifts are offerings of new clothing, toys, books or other useful items wrapped in white paper that are offered during our 10 am and 4 pm services on Christmas Eve. The white paper gives the illusion of snow under the trees in the Meetinghouse. The gifts will be sent to Covenant to Care for Children, which provides advocacy, mentoring, and direct assistance to children and youth who are neglected, abused or at risk. Warm clothes, coats, educational toys, family board games, and gift cards (for Target or Walmart for teens) are particularly appreciated. Ribbon and bows are not necessary but **please attach a tag listing the contents including age, gender & size.** (Hint: If you find yourself without white paper, some patterned papers reverse to white, or use white tissue paper.)

#### *Calendar*

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**TODAY**

#### **Church School**

Today is the last Church School until January 2, 2011. Our children will continue to prepare for the gift of Christmas as they learn about God's love sent to us in Jesus and how gifts at Christmas remind us

of that as we share our love with others. The Church School Task Force wishes all of our teachers, children and their families and the entire congregation, a Blessed and Beautiful Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**“Messiah” is here!**

Please join us for the final performance of “Messiah” today at 4 pm. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to this exciting choral event!

**Flu Shots and Blood Pressure Screenings**

Sue Asselin, RN, will be available in Room 203 after the service today for flu shots and blood pressure screenings. It’s not too late to get vaccinated before the holidays. This year’s flu shot includes H1N1, and is available for people 18 years of age or older who bring payment of \$30 cash or check (made out to FCCOG).

**Youth Ministry**

Today, the JPF will leave immediately following church and travel to the AMF Bowling Lanes in White Plains, New York. We will return to the church by 3:30.

Tonight, the SPF and CPF will meet at the Fraser home for our annual dinner. Please contact Mark via voice or text for the address or directions.

**Youth Choir**

There is no Youth Choir rehearsal today due to the Messiah performance.

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**NEXT WEEK**

**Youth Choir**

There will be a Youth Choir rehearsal (with alums) on Wednesday, December 22 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. Pizza will be served following the rehearsal. Looking ahead, there will be a warm up rehearsal at 7:00 pm on Christmas Eve prior to the 8:00 pm service, and there will be no rehearsal on Sunday, December 26.

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## NEWS AND NOTICES

### Tai Chi Classes with Luis Duarte

**All are welcome!** Improve your balance, health and well-being. Come and experience the many wonderful benefits of Tai Chi and Qi Gong. Classes are held on Wednesdays at 8 am and Thursdays at 9 am. Only \$7/class if paid by the month and \$8/class for “drop ins.” Join us! You’ll love it!

### Book Discussion Group

Hats Off!, the popular women’s book discussion group, will be reading *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt* starting after

Christmas. The group meets every Thursday from 9:45 to 11:30 am in the church lounge. All are welcome. For details, call Marcia Livingston at 203-625-0772.

### Rummage Room News

- **Closed for the Holidays:** The Rummage Room closed for the Holidays on Saturday, December 18, 2010 at 1:00 pm and will reopen on Monday, January 3, 2011 at 10:00 am.
- **Donations:** The Rummage Room is closed for donations until Monday, January 3, 2011. Regular donation hours are 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Thursday, and 9:30 am to 1:00 pm Friday and Saturday. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE DONATIONS IN THE BACK OR THE FRONT OF THE SHOP WHILE THE RUMMAGE ROOM IS CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS! THANK YOU!
- All proceeds from The Rummage Room go to help Women’s and Children’s organizations locally, nationally and internationally. Your support throughout the year makes it possible to bring a bit of Christmas cheer into the lives of many. We thank all of you who shop, donate and volunteer for you are the life and the light of The Rummage Room. Kathryn Graham once said,

*To love what you do and feel that it matters –  
how could anything be more fun?*

- Happy Holidays from Judy Miller and Judy Chapman, co-chairs of The Rummage Room; The Rummage Room committee; Maria Drieghe, manager; the assistant managers; and The Rummage Room volunteers. You make our efforts meaningful, fruitful and FUN!

### Food Collection

A reminder that the Food Collection Barrel will remain in the back of the Meetinghouse, so please contribute food each week. Adding a few items to your weekly grocery store visit will make a significant difference at Neighbor to Neighbor. Items currently in need at Neighbor to Neighbor:

Cereal  
Oatmeal  
Pasta Sauce  
Dried Beans (Kidney and Black)  
100% Juice  
Canned Tomatoes  
Peanut Butter (No larger than 28 oz., please)  
Jelly



## Celebrate Advent and Christmas at FCCOG

### *Part I of Handel's Messiah and Hallelujah Chorus*

The final candlelight performance of this masterpiece  
will be held today in the Meetinghouse *at 4:00 pm.*

This year we have two FCCOG family members as soloists:

Carolyn Paulus and her brother-in-law, Tom Woodman.

Two new faces also grace the stage: mezzo soprano Erika Hennings  
and tenor Neal Harrelson-Keyes.

### *Christmas Eve Services*

10:00 am – Lessons and Carols

4:00 pm - Family Service:

*Once in Royal David's City*

5:00 pm – Carol Sing around the tree

8:00 pm - Carols and Communion

11:00 pm - Candlelight Service –

Special Music begins at 10:30



# *The First Congregational Church of Greenwich*

108 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich, Connecticut, 06870

203-637-1791

[www.fccog.org](http://www.fccog.org)

Ministers: The Members of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. David D. Young

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

Associate Pastor for Christian Education: Rev. Susan Murtha

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

Minister of Pastoral Care: Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Director of Music: Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Director of Church School: Rosemary Lamie

Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister

Director of Publications: Barbara Wilkov

Parish Nurse: Susan Asselin, RN

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

Director of Music Emeritus: Dr. John Stansell