

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Founded in 1665

Third Sunday of Advent
11 December 2016
10 o'clock in the morning



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.



Welcome to this service of worship at The First Congregational Church of Greenwich on this Sunday morning. Please join us after worship for our Fellowship Hour in the Auditorium.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

*All who are able please stand.

PRELUDE

Noel

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ
Louis-Claude Daquin (1694-1772)

CALL TO COMMUNITY

(Please sign and pass the red Fellowship Pad found at the end of your pew.)

Rev. Patrick Collins

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Our souls magnify the Lord,
Our spirits rejoice in God.

**People: Our hearts leap for joy,
For God has done great things for us.**

Leader: God has brought down the powerful,
And lifted the lowly.

**People: Let us shout with joy because
God has filled the hungry with good things.**

Leader: For a promise fulfilled;

People: Our hearts sing out with joyful praise to God.

CHORAL INTROIT

*** HYMN**

My Soul Gives Glory to My God New Century (black) Hymnal 119

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

Confirmation Class

MUSIC DURING

CANDLE LIGHTING

The Palmer Handbell Choir

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Arr. Douglas Wagner (b. 1952)

All: Loving God, we thank you for the joy you bring us. Help us prepare our hearts for this gift. Bless our worship. Help us to hear and to do your word. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, and who taught us to pray, saying,

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.

(Following the Lord's Prayer, the K & 1st, 2nd and 4th & 5th grades will leave for a storytelling time in the Auditorium. The 3rd grade and "678" will go directly to their classes as usual.)

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Daniel Lepoutre

Genesis 18: 1-2, 9-15

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he said, "There, in the tent." Then one said, "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent

entrance behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?" The Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son." But Sarah denied, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. He said, "Oh yes, you did laugh." --New Revised Standard Version

ANTHEM

To Abraham the Promise Came

The Youth Choir
Allen Orton Gibbs (1910-1996)
Carolyn Paulus, director

To Abraham the promise came,
And to his seed forever,
A light to shine in Isaac's line,
By scripture we discover;
Hail, promised morn! The Saviour born,
The glorious Mediator,
God's blessed Word made flesh and blood,
Assumed the human nature.

No royal things, as used by kings,
were seen by those that found him,
But in the hay the stranger lay,
with swaddling bands around him.
The city's name is Bethlehem,
in which God hath appointed,
This glorious morn a Saviour's born,
for him God hath anointed.

On this same night a glorious light
to shepherds there appeared,
Bright angels came in shining flame,
they saw and greatly feared;
The angels said, "Be not afraid,
although we much alarm you,
We do appear good news to bear,
as now we will inform you."

When this was said, straightway was made
a glorious sound from heaven!
Each flaming tongue an anthem sung,
“To you a Saviour’s given!”
In Jesus’ name, the glorious theme,
we elevate our voices,
At Jesus’ birth be peace on earth,
meanwhile all heav’n rejoices!

SECOND LESSON

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Luke 1: 39-56

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.” And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned
to her home.

--New Revised Standard Version

SERMON

Advent Joy

Rev. Patrick Collins

*** HYMN**

My Heart Sings Out with
Joyful Praise

New Century
(black) Hymnal 106

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl

RESPONDING TO GOD

CALL TO OFFERING

Pam Grunow

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

O Thou, That Tellest Good Tidings
to Zion (from Messiah)

The Chancel Choir
G. F. Handel (1685-1759)
Carol Woodman, mezzo-soprano

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up on a high
mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up
thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities
of Judah, behold, your God!

*** DOXOLOGY**

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 515

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all
creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*** HYMN**

Angels, from the Realms of Glory New Century (black) Hymnal 126

* BENEDICTION

* CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Lord Christ, the Son of God

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

* * *

Directly following the service, one of our pastors will remain in the Chapel to be available to anyone who has a pastoral care concern.

We have **child care for babies and toddlers** every Sunday in the Preschool classrooms. Your children are always welcome in child care for the entire worship service or for a respite time if needed. We also now have two rows in the back of the chapel reserved for parents with infants or little ones who are not ready for the Nursery where the parents can be comfortable and still be part of worship. Please see an usher if you need help finding either of these locations.

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.

NEWS AND NOTICES

TODAY

Church School

Today is the third Sunday in Advent and we begin our advent lessons in Church School. At the appropriate time in the service, the K & 1st, 2nd and 4th & 5th grades will leave for a storytelling time in the Auditorium. The 3rd grade and "678" will go directly to their classes as usual.

Parish Nurse

Sue Asselin, RN will be available for blood pressure screenings and health consultations during Community Hour, following today's

worship service. During the week she is available on Tuesdays and Wednesdays by appointment, which can be made by calling extension 21.

Today's Choir Schedule

All choirs will meet today in their normal places/times:

Cherub Choir: Rainbow Room (basement) 11:15-11:45

Children's Choir: 3rd floor 11:15-12:00

Youth Choir: Meetinghouse 11:15-12:15

Quarterly Informational Meeting of Members: Today, Sunday, December 11

Please join the Church Council for the Quarterly Informational Meeting of Members in the Auditorium following worship this morning. We'll give everyone an opportunity to get refreshments and greet friends before beginning our informal meeting at 11:15. This is your chance to hear the latest church news, ask questions and give your input to church officers, so don't miss it!

UPCOMING

First Church Cookie Swap

First Church invites you to bake 2 to 3 dozen (or more!) homemade cookies and drop them off in the auditorium before church on Sunday, December 18 for a fun and charitable Cookie Swap. What better way to stock your holiday treat table than exchanging cookies with your church family? During community hour in the auditorium after church, you may select which cookies you wish to take home. Containers will be available for you to bring home a stash of holiday treats; each container will be \$5. All proceeds will go to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, which assists people in emergency situations. If you have questions, call Craig Symons at the church office.
READY, SET, BAKE!

Casting Call for Christmas Eve Pageants

On Christmas Eve, there are three opportunities to be in a Nativity Pageant: 10 am, 3 pm, and 6 pm. There are no speaking parts. If you know which service you plan to attend and if you or your child(ren) would like to give it a try, please email RosemaryL@fccog.org. There

is a rehearsal at 3 pm on December 23 for the 3 and 6 pm pageants. And 9:15 am Christmas Eve for the 10 am service.

Caregivers Support Group

Please join us for the Caregivers Support Group, for those who currently are, recently have been, or no longer are, a caregiver for a family member or friend. The group offers a confidential place where participants can share experiences, learn new information, and receive emotional support and comfort from others in similar situations. The group will meet today in the Senior Pastor's Office from 11:15 am - 12:15 pm. Dorothy Mueller, FCCOG Stephen Minister, is the group facilitator. For more information, please call Dorothy at (203)588-9596, or email: dorotheymueller1@gmail.com

Stewardship 2017

I Am First Church can't come true without you. We're planning, hoping and working toward 100% participation in this year's Stewardship drive. No annual pledge is too small or too large, and every pledge made is so meaningful for our church. Please join us and pledge now, online or via mailed envelope! Thank you! --The Stewardship Committee.

News from The Rummage Room

191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

Monday, December 12 to Saturday 17: This is the last week The Rummage Room will be open in 2016!

See Manager Leanne's 50% off sales for the week at www.fccog.org/about-us/the-rummage-room/ .

Friday, December 16: Come in and join us for cookies and cider - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Saturday, December 17: The Rummage Room closes for the Holiday Season at 1:00 pm and will reopen Monday, January 2, 2017 at 10:00 am.

Please do not leave donations while the shop is closed.

Thought for the holidays: Here's to a joyful present and a well-remembered past. Everyone at The Rummage Room wishes you a Merry, Merry Christmas and a magnificent 2017. May your Holiday happiness equal the appreciation we feel for your amazing support!

Next Week at First Church
Sunday, December 18: Fourth Sunday in Advent

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr., preaching

Music by

The Palmer Handbell Choir

Christ Is Born - Arr. Douglas Wagner

The Chancel Choir

I Saw Three Ships - Arr. James Kirkby

He Shall Feed His Flock - G. F. Handel

Hanna Golodinskii, soprano

Linnea Conley, mezzo soprano



Christmas Memorial/Honor Flowers and Decorations

The Chancel Committee invites contributions for decorations for the Meetinghouse this Christmas. Any amount is welcome. Please deliver the completed form with your check to the Church Office (payable to the First Congregational Church Flower Fund) no later than **today, Sunday, December 11**. Thank you.

In Memory/Honor of

By

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____

Please print names legibly to minimize spelling errors.



The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

108 Sound Beach Avenue,
Old Greenwich, Connecticut, 06870
203-637-1791
www.fccog.org

Ministers: The Members of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

Senior Pastor: Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

Associate Pastor: Rev. Patrick Collins

Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care: Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Director of Music: Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Director of Family Ministries: Rosemary Lamie

Director of Church Administration & Finance: Steve Summerton

Administrative Assistant - Operations: Donna White

Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister

Parish Nurse: Susan Asselin, RN

Director of Preschool: Darla Kohler Steiner