

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Founded in 1665

Christmas Eve Festival Carol Service
24 December 2017
6 o'clock in the evening



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 welcome you to this special Christmas Eve service at First
Congregational Church. We hope that the mystery and comfort of the
incarnation will be born in you this night as we tell the story of how God
came to be with us in Christ Jesus. May God bless you and your family as
we worship together.

*All who are able please stand

PRELUDE Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ
Chorale from Christmas Oratorio Camille Saint-Saëns

WELCOME Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

Leader: Tonight on Christmas Eve we kneel with families all over
the earth in the presence of the Most High.

**People: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great
light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on
them light has shined.**

Leader: As we have been invaded by light, let us enlighten.

People: As we have been found, let us seek the lost.

Leader: As we have been liberated, let us set the captives free.

**All: For unto us a child is born, one whom God sends to
bring peace and light, freedom and reconciliation.
Thanks be to God!**

***THE CHRISTMAS GREETING** Rev. Avery C. Manchester

**LIGHTING OF THE
CHRIST CANDLE** Thomas & Carol Woodman

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

People: Tonight we give thanks for every child among us.
Each new birth—regardless of circumstances—
reminds us of the preciousness of life, the potential of
tomorrow, the promise of God.

*CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God, in the highest; (Refrain)

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: (Refrain)

FIRST LESSON

JQ Norrgard

Isaiah 9: 2-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.
On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.
You have made the nation great;
you have increased its joy.
They rejoiced before you as with joy at the harvest,
as those who divide plunder rejoice.
A child is born to us, a son is given to us,
and authority will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
There will be vast authority and endless peace
for David's throne and for his kingdom,
establishing and sustaining it

with justice and righteousness.

--Common English Bible

ANTHEM
African Noel

The Chancel Choir
Andre Thomas

SECOND LESSON

Hannah Ginste

First Coming (Madeleine L'Engle)

God did not wait till the world was ready, till...the nations were at
peace.

God came when the heavens were unsteady, and prisoners cried out
for release.

God did not wait for the perfect time. God came when the need was
deep and great.

God dined with sinners in all their grime, turned water into wine.
God did not wait

Till hearts were pure. In joy God came to a tarnished world of sin
and doubt.

To a world like ours of anguished shame God came, and god's light
would not go out.

God came to a world which did not mesh, to heal its tangles, shield
its scorn.

In the mystery of Word made Flesh the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait til the world is sane to raise our songs with joyful
voice,

for to share our grief, to touch our pain, God came with Love:
Rejoice! Rejoice!

***CAROL**

What Child Is This?

What child is this, who, laid to rest,

On Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,

While shepherds watch are keeping?

Refrain:

This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading. (Refrain)

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come peasant, king, to own him;
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone him. (Refrain)

THIRD LESSON

JQ Norrgard

Luke 2:1-14

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified.

The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with

the angel praising God. They said, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors."

--Common English Bible

ANTHEM

Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

The Chancel Choir
John Gardner

FOURTH LESSON

Elsa Ginste

It Is Christmas (Unknown)

On the Eve of Christmas hatred will vanish
On the Eve of Christmas the earth will flourish
On the Eve of Christmas War will be gone
On the Eve of Christmas Love will be born
When we offer a glass of water to a thirsty person it is Christmas
When we clothe a naked person with a gown of love it is Christmas
When we wipe the tears from weeping eyes it is Christmas
When the spirit of revenge dies in me it is Christmas
When in my heart I no longer want to stay apart it is Christmas
When I am buried in the being of God it is Christmas

***CAROL**

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song

which now the angels sing.

NATIVITY PAGEANT

Once in Royal David's City

THE GIFTS OF THE MAGI

CALL TO OFFERING

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO THE CHRIST CHILD

If you have brought white-wrapped gifts today, as they are placed under the trees, they will give the illusion of snow. These gifts will be donated to Covenant to Care for Children.

CAROL SING

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell;
Jesus, our Emmanuel. (Refrain)

Hail the heaven-born Prince of peace!

Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings,
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth. (Refrain)

Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room, and
heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven,
and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills,
and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

The First Nowell

The first Nowell, the angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went. (Refrain)

Then entered in those wise men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there, in his presence,
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense. (Refrain)

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us; abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

SHARING THE CHRIST LIGHT

Please note that the sanctuary will darken at the beginning of the sharing of the Christ light. For your safety, we ask that you remain seated.

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

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.

PASSING OF THE LIGHT

Candlelight will be shared with those at the end of the pews, who are invited to pass it along. Please light your candle by tipping it over a lit one.

CAROL

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
‘round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing “Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born!”

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love’s pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

(Please extinguish your candle.)

POSTLUDE

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella

Keith Chapman

Thank you to our instrumentalists for enhancing this evening's worship service:

Trumpets: Chris Doney, Joe Spitzer

Trombone: Steve Shulman

French Horn: Ray Guier

Tuba: Joe Stanko

Percussion: Eric Phinney

Please join us for our Candlelight Service with Communion and the Youth/Alumni Choir at 9:00 pm tonight.

The Church Offices will be closed Monday and Tuesday, December 25 & 26, and Monday, January 1, for the holidays.

The clergy and staff of the First Congregational Church of Greenwich wish you a very merry Christmas and a healthy, happy New Year.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

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

- Richard Vogt, by Anonymous
- Claire's Uncle Shelty, by the Wentworth family
- Our parents and Don's brother by Ginny & Don Breismeister
- Rick Woodman, Harry Woodman, Jean Paulus, & C.K. Paulus, by Carolyn Paulus and Stephanie & Gillian Woodman
- John L. Putnam, by Wendy Putnam & Jennifer Maloney
- Arthur C. & Catherine G. Weigner by their sons, Stephen A. & Ronald C. Weigner
- Our parents, Purisima & Feliciano Teria, and Louise & Richard Haviland, by Erlinda & Larry Haviland
- Mildred & Albert Isaacson, by Gerald Isaacson
- Edward J. William, by the William Family
- Marian & Fred Hout, by Susie Hout Baker & Sara, Charlie, & Liz
- Our son and brother, John C. Fountain, by Nancy, Katharine, & Sarah Fountain
- Earl S. Moore, Jr., by his family
- Richmond Benner Hopkins, by his family
- Our parents, Nadean & Elmer Hirth, and Anna & Robert MacLea, by Carolyn H. and Robert H. MacLea, Jr.
- Rafic & Adele Zaitoon, loving parents & grandparents
- Howard & Nina Flierl and Marge & Art Billings, by Shirley Billings Flierl and Peter J. Flierl
- William S. Webster, by Mary Webster
- Richard Thomas Hermance, by his wife & children
- Joan & Jim Kreuter, Charlie & Bill Robertson, by the Kreuter family and Betsy Kreuter
- John & Betty Briggs by the Kreuter family
- Our parents, Harrison & Louis Gifford, and Carleton & Margaret Gishorne, by Ruth & Gifford Reed and our family
- Michel A Scrivan, by his loving family, Mitzi, Kate & Andrew
- Joan Denne, by her family
- Anne, Bill, & Sue Denne, by their family
- Wilfrid & Marcia Hobbs, by Pamela Hobbs

- My father and sister, Eric and Susan Robertson, by Lynn Robertson
- Sherman & Beth Baldwin, by Anne Baldwin Castine
- Paul Hudson and George Finch, from the Hudson/Finch families
- Our parents, Efraim & Victoria Olson, Ryan & Margaret Rosendale, and our aunt, Erna Nelson, by Ken & Erna Olson
- Melita & John Magness and Dana Andersen, by their family
- Marian Cordner, by Gary & Judy Miller
- Our parents, Morris & Noemie Watkins and Robert & Lucile Tubbs, by Jeff & Jean Watkins
- Charles J. Veith IV, by his sister, Linda V. Glover
- Robert & Joyce Turvey and Angela Turvey Wyman, by Helen Ingraham, Kelsey, Taylor, Colin, & Trevor
- Roger A. Lepoutre, by Catherine Lepoutre & family
- Our parents, Sigrid & Hjalmar Johansen, and Agnes & Leonard A. Leonard, by Paul & Joan Johansen
- My parents, Karen Ogendahl Scrivanos & Marios Scrivanos, by Karen Scrivanos Oztemel
- Jerry & Carole Kutzen, and Joe Browne, by the Kutzen family
- Our parents, Bill Bovard and Esther & Harold Broderick, by Sue and Shawn Asselin
- Family members who brought such joy into our lives through the years, from the Hoffman-Kneen families

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

- Our parents, Dr. & Mrs. Smith, and Rev. & Mrs. Wentworth, by the Wentworth Family
- Our grandchildren, Finn, June, Gunther, & Alta by Ginny & Don Breismeister
- The Youth Choir and Youth Choir Alums, by Carolyn Paulus
- Tod, Sarah, & Isla Hedrick, by Lucy Hedrick
- My great-grandchildren, Kinley, Eloise, Harper, Calvin, & Mila, by Virginia Liddel
- Craig Symons, with thanks, for his ministry of music
- Virginia Liddel, cherished mother, grandma, and Gigi, by Joan McCaw, her loving daughter and Florida family

A donation to the decorations in the Meetinghouse this morning is given by:

- Eleanor Olsen
- The Quake family



The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

108 Sound Beach Avenue,
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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

Publications Coordinator: Vance Briceland

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

Cover Art: He Has Come by Deborah Nell