

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Founded in 1665

31 December 2017
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 Community Hour in the auditorium.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

*All who are able please stand.

PRELUDE Steven Russell, guest organist/director
What Is this Lovely Fragrance? Paul Manz

CALL TO COMMUNITY Rev. Patrick Collins
(Please sign and pass the red Fellowship Pad found at the end of your pew.)

PRAISING GOD

* **CALL TO WORSHIP** Rev. Patrick Collins

Leader: At the dawn of a new year, we come to welcome hope for our world.

People: Let the darkness lift, to welcome a dawn of plenty, with enough for everyone and people ready to share.

Leader: Let the day begin with new energy for the struggle, to protect our children and to care for the vulnerable.

People: Let the light shine, to open a path to safety for all who are seeking a home and longing for life.

Leader: Let the sun rise on new talks and new resolve to end war and terror and let peace reign over the earth.

All: At the dawn of a new year we come to declare our hope and to welcome a new world.

* **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*** HYMN**

Good Christian Friends Rejoice New Century (black) hymnal 129

UNISON PRAYER

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Gracious God, as this new year dawns, let us be a welcoming people, welcoming you into our world and our lives. Sow light in our hearts. Let it germinate and grow, bring forth fruit and birth in us something new. Let your peace take root. Nurture it and encourage it to flourish. Let your love blossom with the fragrance of patience and compassion. Let your life emerge in us, through us and around us bringing newness to all it touches. We ask all of this through Christ Jesus, who himself 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.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Mark Mohn

Galatians 4:4-7

But when the fulfillment of the time came, God sent his Son, born through a woman, and born under the Law. This was so he could redeem those under the Law so that we could be adopted. Because you are sons and daughters, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son or daughter, and if you are his child, then you are also an heir through God.

—Common English Bible

DUET

Hanna & Vasil Golodinskii

Traditional Ukrainian Carols

SECOND LESSON

Luke 2: 22-40

When the time came for their ritual cleansing, in accordance with the Law from Moses, they brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. They offered a sacrifice in keeping with what's stated in the Law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

A man named Simeon was in Jerusalem. He was righteous and devout. He eagerly anticipated the restoration of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he wouldn't die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Led by the Spirit, he went into the temple area. Meanwhile, Jesus' parents brought the child to the temple so that they could do what was customary under the Law. Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. He said,

“Now, master, let your servant go in peace according to your word, because my eyes have seen your salvation.

You prepared this salvation in the presence of all peoples.

It's a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and a glory for your people Israel.”

His father and mother were amazed by what was said about him. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “This boy is assigned to be the cause of the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that generates opposition so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your innermost being too.”

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, who belonged to the tribe of Asher. She was very old. After she married, she lived with her husband for seven years. She was now an 84-year-old widow. She never left the temple area but worshipped God with fasting and prayer night and day. She approached at that very moment and began to praise God and to speak about Jesus to everyone who was looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. When Mary and Joseph had completed everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to their hometown, Nazareth in Galilee. The child grew up and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him. — Common English Bible

SERMON

Lofty Expectations

Rev. Patrick Collins

*** HYMN**

What Child Is This?

New Century (black) hymnal 148

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

RESPONDING TO GOD

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Do You Hear What I Hear?

The Chancel Choir

G. S. Baker

*** 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**

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

New Century (black) hymnal 154

*** BENEDICTION**

Rev. Patrick Collins

*** CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE

Angels We Have Heard on High

Christopher Uehlein

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

A Note to Parents

Relax! God put the wiggle in children, do not feel you have to suppress it during worship. The presence of children is a gift to the church, which offers hope for all. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me." At First Church we believe that the way we welcome children in worship directly affects the way they respond to God, the church, and to one another. To the members of our congregation, please know that a smile of encouragement is always welcome to parents with small, active children.

For those who are interested, we do have child care available for babies and toddlers every Sunday, for the entirety of the church service, in the preschool classrooms.

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 we will all worship together. There is Child Care for babies and toddlers including 3 year olds.

UPCOMING

New Members Wanted: Come Learn About First Church!

Our next New Member class will be held on Sunday, January 21, 2018 at 11:15 AM in the Senior Pastor's office. It will last approximately two hours and will include lunch. During the class, prospective new members will have the opportunity to hear about the history and faith of our denomination, the United Church of Christ, and to learn more about our church and meet the clergy as well as staff. Attending does not obligate you to join but we hope that this time together will strengthen you on the journey of faith. New members will be received on Sunday, January 28th. Child care will be provided at both times. Please feel welcome to join us. If you are planning to attend or you have questions please contact Ginny Breismeister at ginnyb@fccog.org or 637-1791 ex.26.

News from the Rummage Room
191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

Tuesday, January 2, 2018: The Rummage Room will ring in the New Year at 10:00 am with a good selection of winter clothing, ski wear, ski boots, snow boots, scarves, mittens, hats, coats and jackets for you and your family. (Please note: The Rummage Room does not accept skis.)

Mgr. Leanne's Wish List: Winter and spring clothing and coats.

Shopping Hours: Monday through Friday, 10 to 5 and 10 to 1 Saturday.

Donation Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:30 to 4:30 & Saturday 10 to 12:30.

Thought for 2018: “And in despair we bowed our heads. There is no peace on earth, we said. For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, goodwill to all. Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: God is not dead, nor doth he sleep! The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, goodwill to all”—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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 of 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 meets on the second Sunday of the month from 11:15 am - 12:15 pm in the Binney Conference Room. Dorothy Mueller, FCCOG Stephen Minister, is the group facilitator. For more information, please call Dorothy at (203) 588-9896, or email: dorothymueller1@gmail.com .

Next Week at First Church
Sunday, January 7

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr., preaching

Music by the Chancel Choir
The Shepherd's Farewell—Hector Berlioz

Music by Vasil Golodinskii, tuba



The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

108 Sound Beach Avenue,
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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

Publications Coordinator: Vance Briceland

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

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