

*Old Greenwich,
Connecticut*

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF GREENWICH

*United Church
of Christ*

Founded in 1665

First Sunday of Advent 1 December 2013

10 o'clock in the morning



Artwork by Vonda Drees

<https://www.facebook.com/waytolead>

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 first Sunday of Advent at First Congregational Church of Greenwich as we prepare for the inestimable gift of the birth of Jesus. This is a season that can make people overwrought and even anxious. But approached with reverence and awe, we are able to hear, once again, the Angel's advice about Christmas: *Fear not*. If you are visiting with us, we trust that you will make yourself known to one of the pastors before you leave. O come let us adore him.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

*All who are able please stand.

‡Seating of latecomers.

PRELUDE

Savior of the Nations, Come

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Please sign and pass the red book.

Rev. Daniel B. England

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come all those who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest, says the Lord.

People: Come into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.

Leader: Come and see: there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

All: Come, taste and see that the Lord is good.

***‡HYMN**

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 110

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

Reader 1: John 1: 1-8

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

Reader 2:

We come today to light the first candle of Advent, the candle of hope. It is the same hope that stirred in people's hearts when John baptized them in the Jordan and announced that one was coming who was greater than him. It is the hope that still dawns in our own hearts when the good news is proclaimed, that God is not against us but for us and, despite every despair we may feel, loves us with an everlasting love. And, so, may the flame of hope burn in this congregation and its light go beyond this place to every home and family in this community. Praise be to God.

Lighting of the First Advent Candle

MUSIC DURING CANDLE LIGHTING

The Palmer Handbells

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Arr. Cathy Mocklebust (b. 1958)

OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

O Lord our God, whose power created all that is and sustains it by love, create in us a heart that is full of hope in your promises. Let that hope then yield to faith and faith to love for all the people on the earth, for whom Christ died. Holy Spirit, come among us today that as a congregation we might align our efforts

with your work in this world. This we pray in the name of Jesus, 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.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rosemary Lamie

(After the Children's Message, the children will go to the Daniels Center for a "Service Sunday" program. Parents should meet their children in the Daniels Center – which is on the lowest level of the building; please ask for directions if needed – after worship.)

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Carolyn Paulus

Jeremiah 31:15-17

Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more. Thus says the Lord: Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for there is a reward for your work, says the Lord: they shall come back from the land of the enemy; there is hope for your future, says the Lord: your children shall come back to their own country.

From New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

ANTHEM

The Chancel Choir

Thou Shalt Know Him When He Comes Mark Sirrett (b. 1952)

SECOND LESSON

Luke 1:39-45

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."

From *New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)*

*‡HYMN

My Hope is Built on Nothing Less

New Century (black) Hymnal 403

SERMON

A Leap of Hope

Rev. Daniel B. England

RESPONDING TO GOD

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Mark D. Montgomery

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY SOLO

But Who May Abide (from Messiah)

Thomas Woodman, bass
G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ, all creatures here below;

Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter;

One God, Triune, whom we adore.

Amen, Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Rev. John W. Collins and Rev. Daniel B. England

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

RECEIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (*in unison*)

We thank you, O God, for these moments of communion with you and each other. By these actions, we have renewed our commitment to bear your name and to follow you wherever you lead us. O Lord God, your great name be praised. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*HYMN

All My Hope on God is Founded

New Century (black) Hymnal 408

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Ostinato on *The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns*

Thomas Kuras (1950-1997)

Please join us for Coffee Hour following the worship service.

The flowers in the Meetinghouse this morning are given in loving memory of C.A. and Joan Westbrook by their family.

We have **child care for babies and toddlers** every Sunday in our Preschool classrooms. 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.

Giving Opportunities for the Season

The Giving Tree

If you haven't already, please be sure to pick up your gift tags **today** for gifts to give to our friends at Pilgrim Towers and H.O.M.E. Co-op in Orland, Maine. Please note the change in the



deadline for wrapping and delivering your gift(s) back to the church. The deadline for the gifts for **H.O.M.E.** is *Sunday, December 8*. The deadline for the **Pilgrim**

Towers gifts is *Sunday, December 15 by 10:00 am* (to be delivered to Pilgrim Towers by the Church School). Thank you for sharing your holiday blessings with these two communities.

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.)

Christmas Tree Sale

One of the ways that we increase the amount we are able to share through the Outreach Budget of FCCOG is through our Annual Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale! The sale begins this weekend and will continue each weekend from 9:00 – 4:00 pm until the trees run out! You can help by purchasing your tree (wreath, garland, kissing ball, and even tree stand!) from us and tell all your friends too! Also, we are still in need of volunteers to pull off this effort. If you are able to help out, please visit <http://www.fccog.org/christmas-tree-and-wreath-sale-form/> to sign up for a shift or call the Church Office.



Help the Typhoon Haiyan Survivors in the Philippines

If you have wondered how you might be able to help the Typhoon Haiyan survivors, **you can help by sending monetary gifts, payable to the United Church of Christ and marked in the memo portion “Typhoon Haiyan,” to United Church of Christ, Financial Services, 700 Prospect Avenue E, Cleveland, OH 44115 OR you can make a secure donation online to the International Disaster Fund at: http://www.ucc.org/disaster/philippines_typhoon_appeal.html**

Calendar

TODAY

Church School

Today is another *Service Sunday* when all our children 5 and older will meet in the Daniels Center after the *Children’s Message*. We will learn about the meaning of Advent and also write Christmas cards for our troops. There will be some cards in Coffee Hour for anyone to add to our mailing. Three and four year olds are welcome in child care if they are too young to participate in the Daniels Center program. Next Sunday is a regular Church School Sunday when we will hear about the prophecies of Jesus’ birth.

Choir Rehearsals

Choir rehearsals today are: Cherub Choir from 11:30 am to 12:00 pm in Room 104; Children’s Choir from 11:15 am to 12:00 pm in Room 303 (Craig’s office); and Youth Choir from 11:15 am to 12:15 pm in the Choir Room.

Annual Advent Craft Workshop TODAY

Everyone is invited to prepare for Christmas with family, friends and fun ... at the Advent Craft Workshop **today** from **2:00 to 4:00 pm** in the Daniels Center. Make your own gifts and ornaments, listen to music of the season and even make new friends! This event is sponsored by the Church School Task Force.

JPF & SPF Youth Groups

JPF and SPF Youth Groups are not meeting tonight.

THIS WEEK

Kettle Quilters are Needed

The Kettle Quilters meet each week on Mondays 9:00 am-12:00 noon and Tuesdays 7:30 pm-9:00 pm in Room 203. Please make some time this week to come quilt with us.

NEXT WEEK

Church Hall Meeting

Join us for another Church Hall Meeting next *Sunday, December 8*, in the Auditorium following the Worship Service.

Christmas Carol Sing and Dinner

Sign up **today** during Coffee Hour or call the Church Office during the week for this favorite Christmas event! It is being held in the Auditorium next *Sunday, December 8* from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Everyone is invited! The more the merrier and the more ages the better, too! Suggested donation for the meal is \$5 per person with a \$20 maximum per family. **Please also bring a side dish along with you for the buffet table** (enough to serve 8-10 people). The Parish Life Committee will provide entrees, dessert and beverages. See you there!



Messiah is Coming!

We will be starting rehearsals for our 47th annual performance of *Messiah*, under the direction of Director of Music, Dr. Craig Scott

Symons. If you have choral skills, you are encouraged to join the chorus for this wonderful tradition. This year there is only one choir rehearsal on *Monday, December 9* from 7:30 – 10:00 pm in the Meetinghouse. There will also be a dress rehearsal with orchestra on *Wednesday, December 11* from 7:30 – 9:30 pm. There is a refundable score deposit of \$20. There are no auditions; everyone is welcome. The singers always have a great time.



Just ask one! And then invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join us in this exciting choral opportunity as well! Contact Dr. Craig Scott Symons, craigs@fccog.org, for more information.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Lost Coat

A black pea-coat and gloves were taken by mistake on Wonderful Wednesday, November 13, from the rack outside the kitchen on the main level. A black Calvin Kline jacket was left in its place. Please check your closet to see if you have this missing coat. If you do, please contact the Church Office and the exchange can be made.

News from The Rummage Room

191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

Monday, December 2: The Christmas Shoppe is filled with wondrous things. Come and check it out. If you need ornaments and other wonderful decorations, you will love what's there.

Saturday, December 7: *LAST DAY FOR DONATIONS* until Thursday, January 2, 2014.

Saturday, December 7: *First Light* in downtown Old Greenwich from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. This event denotes the beginning of the celebration of the Holiday season. Bring your family, friends and neighbors to enjoy the events of the evening. Come in and shop at The Rummage Room. Because we care, all proceeds for the year go to help support women and children's organizations at home and around the world.

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, and on Saturday 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Donation Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:30 am to 4:30 pm and Friday and Saturday, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Santa Maria's Wish List: A small dresser; *CHRISTMAS JEWELRY*.
Every one of us has something to give to others ... even if it's just a smile to a stranger on the street. The world needs more givers. Let's begin a campaign!!



Tai Chi Fitness with Luis Duarte

Improve your balance, health and well being. Come and experience the many wonderful benefits of Tai Chi and Qi Gong exercises. Classes are held on **Wednesdays** at 8:00 am and **Thursdays** at 9:00 am. Only \$10 per class, \$8 for seniors. Join us! You'll love it! **All are welcome.**

Next Week at First Congregational Church

10:00 am Worship Service – Meetinghouse
2nd Sunday of Advent

Music by:

The Chancel Choir

E'en So Lord Jesus, Quickly Come by Paul Manz

The Children's Choir

Let Us Light a Candle by Richard Shephard

Solo: Vasil Golodinskii, bass

Quia Fecit Mihi Magna (from *Bach Magnificat*)

Rev. Avery Manchester, preaching

Find us on Facebook and LIKE the page!
We're now on Twitter @FCCOGCT
Check out our YouTube page!
We're on Instagram too!





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) on or before *Saturday, December 14*. Thank you.

In Memory/Honor of

By

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____

Please print names legibly to minimize spelling errors.



Celebrate Advent and Christmas at FCCOG

The Services of Advent

Sunday Worship at 10:00 am

December 1, 8, 15 and 22

Christmas Carol Sing & Dinner

Sign up today for this favorite
Christmas event!

Join us for a night of food,
fellowship and a rousing
Christmas Carol sing-along.

Sunday, December 8, 6 pm

Part I of Handel's Messiah and Hallelujah Chorus

Our annual candlelight
performances of this masterpiece
will be held in the Meetinghouse
December 14 and 15 at 4 pm.

This year the soloists will be:
Hanna Golodinskii, soprano;
Sarah Bleasdale, mezzo soprano;
Blake Friedman, tenor; and
Samuel Hepler, bass.

Christmas Eve Services

10:00 am - Children's Service

4:00 pm - Family Service: *Once in Royal David's City*

5:00 pm - Community Carol Sing

8:00 pm - Carols and Communion

11:00 pm - Candlelight Service



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

Interim Senior Pastor: Rev. John W. Collins

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

Associate Pastor for Communication/Adult Education: Rev. Daniel B. England

Associate Pastor for 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 Communications: 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