

Christmas Eve Family Service
December 24, 2015
3:00 pm



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The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

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.



*Family Service with Pageant
"Once in Royal David's City"*

Christmas Eve

24 December 2015

3 o'clock in the afternoon

Welcome to this special Service of Worship at The First Congregational Church on this most holy of days. May the mystery and magnitude of these moments shared together renew your heart with the light and love which came into the world in the Christ Child. A blessed and Merry Christmas to you and our entire church family!

*All who are able please stand

PRELUDE

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

WELCOME

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Meghan D. Young

Isaiah 9

*(You are invited and encouraged to respond to each sentence or phrase with the words or instructions in **bold print**.)*

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light
those who lived in a land of deep darkness
on them has the light shined.

(polite applause)

Oh no!

Oh good! *(loud applause)*

You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy
they rejoice before you as with joy at the
harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

Yes!

Yes!

Rejoice! Right on! Yeah!

For the yoke of the burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

Oh! *(As if in pain)*

Oh! *(As if in pain)*

Oh! *(As if in pain)*

Oh good! *(loud applause)*

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.

Yes!

Yes!

Relief!

Wonderful Counselor

Mighty God

Everlasting Father

Prince of Peace

His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace.

Higher and higher

God's peace!

He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Yes!

Yes!

Thank you, God!

(loud applause)

A child has been born for us.

Amen!

THE CHRISTMAS GREETING

Rev. Meghan D. Young

*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, all glory in the highest; *refrain*

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Quake Family

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord

Leader 1: Through this season of Advent, we have been watching, waiting, and praying for the coming of light into the world. We have longed for the day when the things of darkness – selfishness and greed, suffering and oppression – shall be no more. Our journey has been lit with hope, peace, joy, and love, as we recognized our God who travels with us every step of the way.

All: A light has dawned, and it fills the earth. We go to Bethlehem to see the embodiment of God's grace. Today we light the Christ candle, as we celebrate the God coming to us in human form, bringing light to all the world. The light of the world beckons to us.

Leader 2: May the light of Christ light up the past that we might learn from it with thankfulness. Light up the present that we might live in it with love. Light up the future that we might prepare for it in hope.

All: Rejoice and be glad for the possibilities of this good news! Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among all whom God favors! May God's light overwhelm the world and be born anew within us once more. Amen.

The Christ candle is lit.

ANTHEM
The Star Carol

The Children's Choir
Richard Shephard
Dr. Craig Scott Symons, director
Vance Briceland, piano

CAROL

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.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Emma Olmsted, George Weiksner, Mariel Laffan

Luke 2:1-20

ANTHEM
O Come, Little Children

The Children's Choir
J. A. P. Schulz

CAROL

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

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Rev. Meghan D. Young

NATIVITY PAGEANT

Once in Royal David's City
(Choir sings verses 1-5; All sing verse 6)

Henry John Gauntlett

6. Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
Where like stars his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

CALL TO OFFERING

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO THE CHRIST CHILD

If you have brought "White 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.

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

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

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

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

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come peasant, king, to own him;
The king of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary.

Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be,
Which inspire your heavenly song.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him
whose birth the angels sing;
Come adore on bended knee,
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Silent Night, Holy 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.

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS

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.

*CAROL

Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come

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 men 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.

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Meghan D. Young

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo

J. S. Bach

Please join us for our Community Carol Sing in Binney Park at
4:00 pm.

Additional services this evening are:

6:00 pm: Festival Carol Service with the Chancel Choir and Brass Ensemble with *Once in Royal David's City* Nativity pageant.

9:00 pm Candlelight Service with Communion and the Youth/Alumni Choir.

The Church Offices will be closed:

Friday, December 25

Monday, December 28

Friday, January 1, 2016

The office will open again on Monday, January 4, 2016.

Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year to all from the clergy and staff of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich.



Where to find us:

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The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

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Ministers: The Members of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Senior Pastor: Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.
Transitional Associate Pastor: Rev. Meghan D. Young
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care: Rev. Avery C. Manchester
Director of Music: Dr. Craig Scott Symons
Director of Family Ministries: Rosemary Lamie
Youth Coordinator: Donald Haviland
Director of Church Administration & Finance: Steve Summerton
Office Manager/Sr. Administrative Assistant: Donna White
Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister
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