

*Old Greenwich,
Connecticut*

**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF GREENWICH**

*United Church
of Christ*

Founded in 1665

The First Sunday after Christmas

28 December 2014

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.



We warmly welcome you to The First Congregational Church of Greenwich on this Sunday after Christmas. May the fresh spirit of this beautiful season make our worship time together a blessing of God's grace.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

*All who are able please stand.

PRELUDE

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

Please sign and pass the red book.

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: On the threshold of a new year, we sing a song of praise to God.

People: May our lives reflect God's love.

Leader: On the threshold of a new year, we sing a song of hope to God.

People: May our lives be refreshed by God's Spirit.

Leader: On the threshold of a new year, we sing a song of peace to God.

People: May our lives be made peaceful by God's grace.

Leader: On the threshold of a new year, we worship God together.

People: May our lives be a reflection of God's compassion.

*** HYMN**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 132

OPENING PRAYER

Our loving God, we bask in the glow of the Christmas miracle with hopeful spirits and renewed commitment for creating a peaceful world. We ask for your strength in seeing more clearly your plan for our lives. We pray that the inspiration of the child in the manger will be a true power that will help us look up from the distractions of our lives, that we might see the beauty of

life and the gifts of this world. May our prayer be a prayer of thanksgiving, that as the carols fade and the gifts are put away, your love might continue to shine in our souls. We ask in Jesus' name, whose prayer we 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

Car Westbrook

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

From New Revised Standard Version

ANTHEM

The Chancel Choir

Here is the Little Door

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

*Here is the little door, lift up the latch, oh lift!
We need not wander more but enter with our gift;*

*Our gift of finest gold,
Gold that was never bought nor sold;
Myrrh to be strewn about his bed;
Incense in clouds about his head;
All for the Child who stirs not in his sleep.
But holy slumber holds with ass and sheep.*

*Bend low about his bed, for each he has a gift;
See how his eyes awake, lift up your hands, O lift!
For gold, he gives a keen-edged sword
(Defend with it Thy little Lord!),
For incense, smoke of battle red.
Myrrh for the honoured happy dead;
Gifts for his children terrible and sweet,
Touched by such tiny hands and oh such tiny feet.*

Text by Gilbert Keith Chesterton

SECOND LESSON

Jean Watkins

Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was

being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

* HYMN

Bring a Torch

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 124

SERMON

The Christmas Sigh

Rev. Richard S. DenUyl, Jr.

RESPONDING TO GOD

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

I Sing the Birth

The Chancel Choir
C. Hubert H. Parry (1848-1918)

*I sing the birth was born to-night,
The author both of life and light;
The angels so did sound it,
And like the ravish'd shepherds said,
Who saw the light, and were afraid,
Yet search'd, and true they found it.*

*The Son of God, th' eternal king,
That did us all salvation bring,*

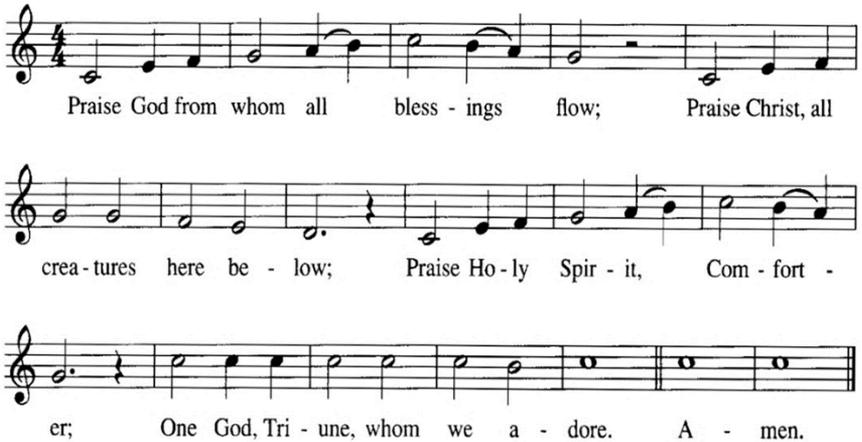
*And freed the soul from danger;
He whom the whole world could not take,
The Word, which heaven and earth did make,
Was now laid in a manger*

*The Father's wisdom will'd it so,
The Son's obedience knew no No,
Both wills were in one stature;
And as that wisdom had decreed,
The Word was now made flesh indeed,
And took on him our nature.*

*What comfort by him do we win,
Who made himself the price of sin,
To make us heirs of glory!
To see this babe, all innocence;
A martyr born in our defence:
Can man forget the story?*

Text by Ben Jonson (1573-1637)

***DOXOLOGY**



Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Christ, all
crea - tures here be - low; Praise Ho - ly Spir - it, Com - fort -
er; One God, Tri - une, whom we a - dore. A - men.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

* HYMN

Unto Us a Boy is Born

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 142

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

In Thee Is Gladness

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Please join us for Fellowship Hour in the Auditorium following the worship service.

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. On Church School Sundays, we also have a class for 3 and 4 year olds during the entire 10:00 am service. Please see an usher if you need directions to child care or Church School.

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.

Calendar

TODAY

Church School

There is no Church School today, but there is Child Care for those who would like it. Please see an usher if you need directions.

Choir Rehearsals

There are no choir rehearsals today.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Happy New Year from The Rummage Room 191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

Monday, December 29: The Rummage Room is CLOSED for the holidays.

Friday, January 2: The Rummage Room REOPENS at 10:00 am with a 50% off winter clothing sale, and 75% off all Christmas items.

***Please do not leave donations while The Rummage Room is closed.** There will be no one there to receive them. Donations will be accepted again on **Friday, January 2** between 9:30 am and 4:30 pm.

Manager Maria's Wish List: Outdoor winter sporting goods - ski pants, ski jackets, snow boots. *We do not accept skies or ski boots.* We also are in need of shopping bags.

Note: As you make your New Year's resolutions, please don't forget The Rummage Room. Whether you shop, donate or volunteer, remember that *all* proceeds are distributed to many worthy organizations around the world. And what The Rummage Room doesn't use goes to the Veterans and other worthwhile organizations around the area.

Thought for the New Year: *And in despair I bowed my head; "There is no peace on earth," I said; for hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, good-will 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, good-will to all!"*

~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Next Week at First Congregational Church

10:00 am Worship Service – Meetinghouse

January 4, 2015

Music by:

The Chancel Choir:

The Shepherd's Farewell by Hector Berlioz

The Golodinskii Family:

Traditional Ukrainian Music

Rev. Mark Montgomery, preaching

Where to find us:

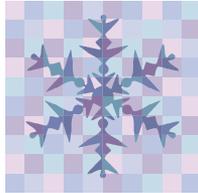
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The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

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 for Youth Ministry: Rev. Mark D. Montgomery

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

Director of Music: Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Director of Family Ministries: 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