

*Old Greenwich,  
Connecticut*

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH OF GREENWICH

*United Church  
of Christ*

*Founded in 1665*

## Second Sunday of Advent 8 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.*



Welcome to this Second Sunday of Advent at The First Congregational Church of Greenwich. It is the time we lift up John the Baptist, one of the more colorful figures in the Bible story. He prepares us to see and embrace his cousin, Jesus, and better grasp his role in our journey of faith. There are always facets we forget or do not get, but we are inspired by his continuing revelation. In these frenzied days of shopping let us share Peace and Joy as we worship. Let us also be inspired in worship by our choir, and observe Grace and good will as we experience these special days of spiritual preparation and new trust in His Birth and ours.

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### **PREPARING FOR WORSHIP**

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

\*All who are able please stand.

‡Seating of latecomers.

#### **PRELUDE**

*Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ*

*Prelude on Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

Emily Maxson Porter (b. 1942)

#### **CALL TO COMMUNITY**

*Rev. John W. Collins*

*Please sign and pass the red book.*

### **PRAISING GOD**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

*Leader: Tell the timid to take heart.*

*People: "The Lord Our God will come."*

#### **\*‡HYMN**

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 103

#### **LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE**

**Reader 1: Mark 1:4**

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

**Reader 2:**

We light this candle as a symbol of Christ the Way.

May the Word sent from God through the prophets lead us to  
the way of salvation.

O come, O come, Emmanuel.

**Candle Lighting**

*The Schneider Family*

**MUSIC DURING CANDLE LIGHTING**

*The Palmer Handbells*

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

Arr. Mark Schweizer (b. 1956)

**OPENING PRAYER**

In the advent seasons, when the past has fled, unasked, away and there is nothing left to do but wait, God, shelter us. Be our surrounding darkness; be the fertile soil out of which hope springs in due time. In uncertain times, help us to greet the dawn and labor on, love on, in faith awaiting your purpose hid in you waiting to be born, in due time. 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.

**ANTHEM**

*Let Us Light a Candle*

*The Children's Choir*

Richard Shephard (b. 1949)

*Vance Briceland, pianist*

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

*(After the Children's Message, the Church School children and teachers will leave for their classrooms. Children in second grade and older will leave independently. Children in kindergarten and first grade will meet their teachers at the back of the Meetinghouse (narthex) and will go to their classrooms as a group.)*

## HEARING GOD'S WORD

### FIRST LESSON

*Jean Watkins*

#### Isaiah 11:1-5

**A** green Shoot will sprout from Jesse's stump,  
from his roots a budding Branch.  
The life-giving Spirit of God will hover over him,  
the Spirit that brings wisdom and understanding,  
The Spirit that gives direction and builds strength,  
the Spirit that instills knowledge and Fear-of-God.  
Fear-of-God will be all his joy and delight.  
He won't judge by appearances,  
won't decide on the basis of hearsay.  
He'll judge the needy by what is right,  
render decisions on earth's poor with justice.  
His words will bring everyone to awed attention.  
A mere breath from his lips will topple the wicked.  
Each morning he'll pull on sturdy work clothes and boots,  
and build righteousness and faithfulness in the land.

*From The Message*

### ANTHEM

*E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come*

*The Chancel Choir*

Paul Manz (1919-2009)

### SECOND LESSON

*Helen Ingraham*

#### Romans 15:1-13

**T**hose of us who are strong and able in the faith need to step in and lend a hand to those who falter, and not just do what is most convenient for us. Strength is for service, not status. Each one of us needs to look after the good of the people around us, asking ourselves, "How can I help?"

That's exactly what Jesus did. He didn't make it easy for himself by avoiding people's troubles, but waded right in and helped out. "I took on the troubles of the troubled," is the way Scripture puts it. Even if it was written in Scripture long ago, you can be sure it's written for *us*. God wants the combination of his steady, constant

calling and warm, personal counsel in Scripture to come to characterize *us*, keeping us alert for whatever he will do next. May our dependably steady and warmly personal God develop maturity in you so that you get along with each other as well as Jesus gets along with us all.

Oh! May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!

### Matthew 3:1-12

While Jesus was living in the Galilean hills, John, called “the Baptizer,” was preaching in the desert country of Judea. His message was simple and austere, like his desert surroundings: “Change your life. God’s kingdom is here.”

John and his message were authorized by Isaiah’s prophecy:

Thunder in the desert!  
Prepare for God’s arrival!  
Make the road smooth and straight!

John dressed in a camel-hair habit tied at the waist by a leather strap. He lived on a diet of locusts and wild field honey. People poured out of Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jordanian countryside to hear and see him in action. There at the Jordan River those who came to confess their sins were baptized into a changed life.

“I’m baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. The real action comes next: The main character in this drama—compared to him I’m a mere stagehand—will ignite the kingdom life within you, a fire within you, the Holy Spirit within you, changing you from the inside out. He’s going to clean house—make a clean sweep of your lives. He’ll place everything true in its proper place before God; everything false he’ll put out with the trash to be burned.

From *The Message*

\*‡HYMN

*Hill of the North, Rejoice*

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 106

SERMON

*How Can I Help?*

*Rev. Avery C. Manchester*

**RESPONDING TO GOD**

PASTORAL PRAYER

*Rev. Daniel B. England*

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*Linnea Conley, mezzo soprano*

*Christopher Pfund, tenor*

*Mary Fike & Julia Wang, flutes*

*Et Misericordia from Magnificat*

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

(translation: *And his mercy endures from generation to generation*)

\*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

**GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD**

\*HYMN

*Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 114

\*BENEDICTION

\*CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Prelude on *Corde Natus*

Philip Moore (b. 1943)

*Please join us for Coffee Hour following the worship service.*

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The flowers in the Meetinghouse this morning have been given with grateful memories of their parents by Barbara and John Norrgard.

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](http://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*

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### **TODAY**

#### **Church School**

Today our children continue living into Advent hearing the Old Testament prophecies of the New Testament Good News! We hope our families will attend the Christmas Carol Sing and Dinner tonight at 6:00 pm. The children will love signing *Rudolph*, *Jingle Bells* and other familiar songs! Also, let Rosemary know if your family would like to participate in the December 22 Live Nativity (20 minute time slots between Noon and 4 pm) or if your children would like to be in one of the Christmas Eve Nativity pageants at 10:00 am or 4:00 pm.

#### **Church Hall Meeting**

Join us for another Church Hall Meeting **today** in the Meetinghouse following the Worship Service.

#### **Parish Nurse**

Sue Asselin, RN, is available for blood pressure screenings and health consultations in Room 203 following today's Worship Service.

#### **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.

### Christmas Carol Sing and Dinner

Join us *tonight* in the Auditorium 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!



### JPF & SPF Youth Groups

JPF and SPF Youth Groups will meet at 6:00 pm for the Christmas Carol Sing and Dinner. We will have a Youth table(s). Come and join us.

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## NEXT WEEK

### Pre-Daniel Bible Study

In order to prepare for the Bible Study on Daniel during the winter, we will be looking at the book I Maccabees. This is the fascinating story of the Jews' experience during the period after the Old Testament and before the New Testament. You'll not only learn about their struggles, but also their significant triumph in the story of Chanukah. Sunday, December 15 and 22 at 11:20 am in the Lounge. Led by Dan England.

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## 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 join us.

### *Messiah is Here!*

We will be starting rehearsals for our 47<sup>th</sup> annual performance of *Messiah*, under the direction of Director of Music, Dr. Craig Scott Symons, tomorrow, *Monday, December 9* from 7:30-9:30 pm.

There will also be a dress rehearsal with orchestra on *Wednesday, December 11* from 7:30 – 9:30 pm. If you have choral skills, you are encouraged to join the chorus for this wonderful tradition. 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](mailto:craigs@fccog.org), for more information.



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## 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 9:** 'THE BEST LITTLE CHRISTMAS SHOPPE IN TOWN' is open and full of wonderful things! All Christmas merchandise will be 25% off for the week.

**Friday, December 20:** Holiday Party from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. LAST DAY THE RUMMAGE ROOM WILL BE OPEN UNTIL JANUARY 2, 2014.

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

**Donation Hours:** Monday through Thursday 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, and on Friday and Saturday 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. **Note:** Please *NO MORE DONATIONS UNTIL THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 2014.*

**Christmas Windows:** Be sure to bring the family and enjoy during the Holiday season.

*Life should not be about having and getting more. Life should be about sharing and giving more.*

## 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.**

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## *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 **today, 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 continues each weekend in December 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](http://www.ucc.org/disaster/philippines_typhoon_appeal.html)**

### **Next Week at First Congregational Church**

**10:00 am Worship Service – Meetinghouse**  
***3rd Sunday of Advent***

**Music by:**

***The Cherub Choir***

***Ringin’, Ringin’*** by Mildred Stagg

***The Chancel Choir***

***While by My Sheep*** by Hugo Jungst

***Vasil Golodinskii, bass***

***Quia Fecit Mihi Magna*** by J. S. Bach

***The Palmer Handbells***

***We Three Kings*** Arr. Dan Edwards

**Rev. John Collins, 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!





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## 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

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By

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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](http://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