

*Old Greenwich,  
Connecticut*

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH OF GREENWICH

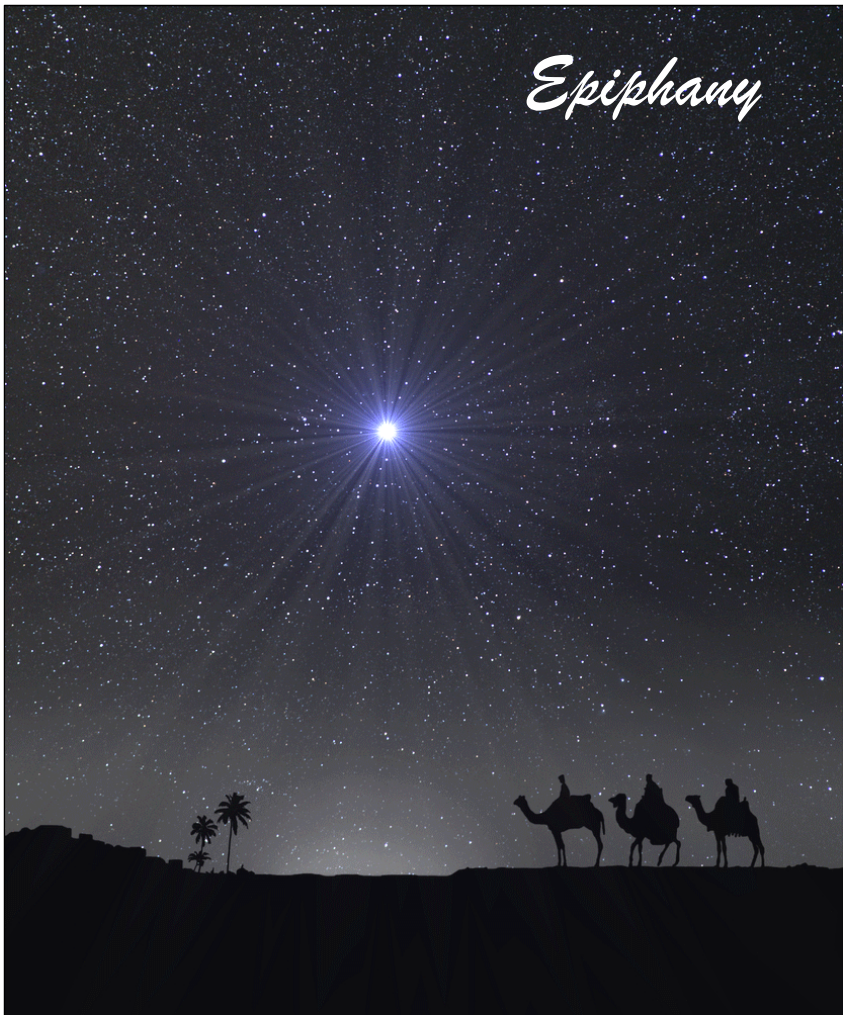
*United Church  
of Christ*

*Founded in 1665*

## The Second Sunday after Christmas

5 January 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.*



Welcome to worship here at First Congregational Church of Greenwich this morning as we begin a new year - may we have an Epiphany - when the light comes to light our path and guide our way into a new year. Challenges are many but in Christ's fellowship we find strength, understanding, wisdom, peace and joy. Let's walk together in and with the light and love of Christ.

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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**

*Greensleeves*

*Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ*  
Richard Purvis (1913-1994)

#### **CALL TO COMMUNITY**

*Please sign and pass the red book.*

*Rev. John W. Collins*

### **PRAISING GOD**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

*Leader: As when Moses went up on the mountain and met you, O Mighty One -*

*People: We would make a covenant with you.*

*Leader: As when you sent the dove to light on Jesus' shoulder -*

*People: We would also carry your flame.*

*Leader: As when our Pilgrim forebears made their simple compact to live and walk with you -*

*People: So do we, in our own time, covenant, promise, to bear the burden of being your people.*

*Leader: Come, O God, and be among us!*

*People: Come, let us come close to God!*

#### **\*‡HYMN**

*We Three Kings of Orient Are*

*Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 143*

## OPENING PRAYER

God of all people and all places, like the magi we would journey into the presence of Jesus the Christ. There we would offer our gifts; before Christ, we would lay the realities of our lives, good and bad. We offer our joy and love and laughter, that they might be made holy; we relinquish our bitterness and hatred and worry, that we might be made whole once more; through the living Spirit of Christ. This 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.

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

*Rosemary Lamie*

*(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

*Pat Mendelsohn*

### Ephesians 3:1-12

This is why I, Paul, am in jail for Christ, having taken up the cause of you outsiders, so-called. I take it that you're familiar with the part I was given in God's plan for including everybody. I got the inside story on this from God himself, as I just wrote you in brief.

As you read over what I have written to you, you'll be able to see for yourselves into the mystery of Christ. None of our ancestors

understood this. Only in our time has it been made clear by God's Spirit through his holy apostles and prophets of this new order. The mystery is that people who have never heard of God and those who have heard of him all their lives (what I've been calling outsiders and insiders) stand on the same ground before God. They get the same offer, same help, same promises in Christ Jesus. The Message is accessible and welcoming to everyone, across the board.

This is my life work: helping people understand and respond to this Message. It came as a sheer gift to me, a real surprise, God handling all the details. When it came to presenting the Message to people who had no background in God's way, I was the least qualified of any of the available Christians. God saw to it that I was equipped, but you can be sure that it had nothing to do with my natural abilities.

And so here I am, preaching and writing about things that are way over my head, the inexhaustible riches and generosity of Christ. My task is to bring out in the open and make plain what God, who created all this in the first place, has been doing in secret and behind the scenes all along. Through followers of Jesus like yourselves gathered in churches, this extraordinary plan of God is becoming known and talked about even among the angels!

All this is proceeding along lines planned all along by God and then executed in Christ Jesus. When we trust in him, we're free to say whatever needs to be said, bold to go wherever we need to go.

*From The Message*

**ANTHEM**

*Now Great the Swiftly Changing Year*

*The Chancel Choir*

Alfred Fedak (b. 1953)

**SECOND LESSON**

*Jean Watkins*

**Matthew 2:1-12**

**A**fter Jesus was born in Bethlehem village, Judah territory— this was during Herod's kingship—a band of scholars arrived in Jerusalem from the East. They asked around, "Where can we find and pay homage to the newborn King of the Jews? We observed a

star in the eastern sky that signaled his birth. We're on pilgrimage to worship him."

When word of their inquiry got to Herod, he was terrified—and not Herod alone, but most of Jerusalem as well. Herod lost no time. He gathered all the high priests and religion scholars in the city together and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

They told him, "Bethlehem, Judah territory. The prophet Micah wrote it plainly:

It's you, Bethlehem, in Judah's land,  
no longer bringing up the rear.  
From you will come the leader  
who will shepherd-rule my people, my Israel."

Herod then arranged a secret meeting with the scholars from the East. Pretending to be as devout as they were, he got them to tell him exactly when the birth-announcement star appeared. Then he told them the prophecy about Bethlehem, and said, "Go find this child. Leave no stone unturned. As soon as you find him, send word and I'll join you at once in your worship."

Instructed by the king, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time!

They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they kneeled and worshiped him. Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh.

In a dream, they were warned not to report back to Herod. So they worked out another route, left the territory without being seen, and returned to their own country.

From *The Message*

\*‡HYMN

*The First Nowell*

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 141

SERMON

*Is the Secret Out?*

*Rev. Avery C. Manchester*

**RESPONDING TO GOD**

PASTORAL PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*Welcome to the King  
New Joy Appears  
Carol of the Bells*

*Hanna Golodinskii, soprano  
Vasil Golodinskii, bass  
Ukrainian Folk Carol  
M. Stezenko  
M. Leontovich*

\*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

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

RECEIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

*The People That Walked in Darkness (from Messiah)*

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

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

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 116

### \*BENEDICTION

### \*CHORAL RESPONSE

### POSTLUDE

*God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*

Arr. William Lloyd Webber (1914-1982)

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

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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

Regular classes resume today and all classes will be talking about the Wise Men and Epiphany. Hopefully when you ask your children if they learned something new today, they will say "Yes!" and be able to tell you what that was.



The January schedule is as follows: Regular Church School on January 12 and 26. January 19 will be a "Service Sunday" when we will hear about, and take action in, the spirit of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Finally, watch for details about the Family Fun Night on January, 24.

### Choir Rehearsals

Choir rehearsals today are: Cherub Choir from 11:15 am to 12 Noon in Room 104, Children's Choir from 11:15 am to 12 Noon in Room 303 (Craig's office) and Youth Choir from 11:15 am to 12:15 pm in the Choir Room.

### Bible Study

Starting **today**, we will delve into the Old Testament book of Daniel, with lions, furnaces, intrigue, plots and dreams of the kind Freud could only dream of. So, join us at 11:20 am in the Lounge for a look at this amazing book that in some ways has the key that unlocks the identity of Jesus. Led by Dan England.

### JPF & SPF Youth Groups

Youth Groups will meet at 6:00 pm tonight.

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## THIS WEEK

### *Hats Off* Book Study Group

*Hats Off* will begin 2014 with *My Beloved World* by Sonia Sotomayor. Our justice of the Supreme Court "recounts her life from a Bronx housing project to the federal bench, a journey that offers an inspiring testament to her own extraordinary determination and the power of believing in oneself." Please join us this *Thursday, January 9* from 10:00 to 11:30 am. This new book will be available then. If you have any questions, please call Debbie Berner at 203-629-1110.



### Kettle Quilters

The Kettle Quilters resume their regular schedule of Mondays 9:00 am-12:00 noon and Tuesdays 7:30 pm-9:00 pm this week in Room 203. Please join us.

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## NEWS AND NOTICES

### Happy 2014 from The Rummage Room 191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

**Monday, January: 6:** The Rummage Room is open for business in the New Year with a great selection of winter clothing; ski wear; home goods; bric-a-brac; and more. Donations have been steady since the shop reopened on January 2.

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

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

**Manager Maria's Wish List:** JEWELRY NEEDED; items for Valentine's Day; ski wear; ski poles, sleds (sorry, we cannot accept ski boots or skis); large shopping bags; hats, mittens, gloves, winter scarves.

There is a something that gives radiance to everything in a New Year!! It is the idea of something just around the corner. The Rummage Room is right around the corner, so when you shop, donate and volunteer, you are giving radiance to the many Rummage Room mission programs that help women's and children's organizations locally and around the world.

### 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  
*January 12, 2014*

Music by:

*The Chancel Choir*

*Jesus Calls Us* by Joy Patterson

*Malcolm Dickinson, clarinet*

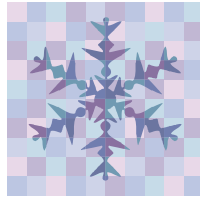
**Rev. Mark Montgomery, preaching**

Find us on Facebook and LIKE the page!

We're now on Twitter @FCCOGCT

Check out our new YouTube page, too!

We're on Instagram too!



## *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