

Old Greenwich,
Connecticut

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF GREENWICH

United Church
of Christ

Founded in 1665

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

6 July 2014

10 o'clock in the morning



*"No, no, that's not a sin, either. My goodness, you
must have worried yourself to death."*

*Art Credit:
Charles Barsotti
The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank
www.art.com*

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 on this first Sunday of July. In the beauty of summer and, I hope, more relaxed days, we can refresh our lives with the beauty of the Earth, the inspiration of music and strength of Prayer. This morning we will share the vitality of some moving Scripture. Another great part of the morning will be time in the Memory Garden for refreshment and friendship with old and new friends after worship.

As you enter the Meetinghouse this morning, please take time to meditate with the Prelude and lift up your concerns with thought and prayer and be open to God's Holy Spirit in and for you and all you love. Rejoice and be glad in this time and place. Thank you for worshipping with us today.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

*All who are able please stand.

PRELUDE

Litany

Jon Hunt, guest organist

Charles Callahan

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Please sign and pass the red book.

Rev. Mark D. Montgomery

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Welcome to our worship.

People: Greetings to our brothers and sisters in the faith.

Leader: We come to celebrate God's presence.

People: And God's love expressed through Jesus Christ.

Leader: We come remembering Christ's life and ministry.

People: And the life we are called to live.

Leader: We come as a pilgrim people searching for ways to live out our faith.

People: We come seeking the strength to carry on our journey.

All: Let us rejoice in God's gift to us!

***HYMN**

Awake, Awake to Love and Work

New Century (black) Hymnal 89

OPENING PRAYER

Rev. John W. Collins

Eternal God, who commits us to the swift and solemn trust of life: since we know not what a day may bring forth but only that the hour for serving you is always present, may we wake to the instant claims of your holy will, not waiting for tomorrow, but yielding today. Lay to rest, by the persuasion of your Spirit, the resistance of our passion, indolence, or fear. Consecrate with your presence the way our feet may go; and the humblest work will shine, and the roughest places be made plain. Lift us above unrighteous anger and mistrust into faith and hope and charity by a simple and steadfast reliance on your sure will; and so may we be modest in our time of wealth, patient under disappointment, ready for danger, serene in death. In all things, draw us to the mind of Christ, that your lost image may be traced again, and you may own us as at one with him and you. We pray these things in Jesus' name, 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.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Pat Larrabee

Romans 7:15-25

I can anticipate the response that is coming: "I know that all God's commands are spiritual, but I'm not. Isn't this also your experience?" Yes. I'm full of myself—after all, I've spent a long time in sin's prison. What I don't understand about myself is that I decide

one way, but then I act another, doing things I absolutely despise. So if I can't be trusted to figure out what is best for myself and then do it, it becomes obvious that God's command is necessary.

But I need something *more!* For if I know the law but still can't keep it, and if the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions, I obviously need help! I realize that I don't have what it takes. I can will it, but I can't *do* it. I decide to do good, but I don't *really* do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time.

It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge.

I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question?

The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different.

From *The Message*

ANTHEM

I Vow to Thee, My Country

The Summer Choir
arr. James Kirkby

SECOND LESSON

Matthew 11:16-19; 25-30

“**H**ow can I account for this generation? The people have been like spoiled children whining to their parents, ‘We wanted to skip rope, and you were always too tired; we wanted to talk, but you were always too busy.’ John came fasting and they called him crazy.

I came feasting and they called me a lush, a friend of the riffraff. Opinion polls don't count for much, do they? The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

Abruptly Jesus broke into prayer: "Thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. You've concealed your ways from sophisticates and know-it-alls, but spelled them out clearly to ordinary people. Yes, Father, that's the way you like to work."

Jesus resumed talking to the people, but now tenderly. "The Father has given me all these things to do and say. This is a unique Father-Son operation, coming out of Father and Son intimacies and knowledge. No one knows the Son the way the Father does, nor the Father the way the Son does. But I'm not keeping it to myself; I'm ready to go over it line by line with anyone willing to listen.

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

From *The Message*

***HYMN**

Softly and Tenderly

New Century (black) Hymnal 449

SERMON

Want Help?

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

RESPONDING TO GOD

PASTORAL PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Aria

Flor Peeters

***DOXOLOGY**

New Century (black) Hymnal 776

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

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**

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 440

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE

The Rejoicing

Charles Callahan

*Please join us for Coffee Hour in the Memory Garden
(weather permitting) following the worship service.*

We have **child care for babies and toddlers** every Sunday. 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.

Calendar

TODAY

Church School

Summer Church School (Bible Stories at the Beach) is held at the 8:00 am Beach Service during June and July. At 10:00 am worship we have Child Care for infants through 4 years old. If you have questions or concerns about your child in worship, please confer with the adult in charge in the Undercroft. Ushers are able to direct you.

Parish Nurse

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

NEXT WEEK

Beach Services During the Summer

Beach Services are held each Sunday throughout the summer at 8:00 am at Greenwich Point, weather permitting (except for **August 3** due to the Greenwich Triathlon). Communion is served every Sunday. Come and join us for this casual service. Summer Church School also takes place at this time down at the beach throughout June and July, so bring the whole family!

Summer Choir is in Full Swing!

Please join us on **Sunday mornings** at 9:00 am in the Meetinghouse for a warm-up and rehearsal for the music being done that Sunday.



Everyone is welcome to come before the start of the service to learn a simple anthem. Come any Sundays that you are available to help lead the congregation in worship. It's also a chance to experience worship from

the choir loft. If you have any questions, please contact Craig Symons.

NEWS AND NOTICES

News from The Rummage Room

191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

Monday, July 7: 50% off on Manager Maria's selections of merchandise for the week.

Saturday, July 19: *Last day for donations until Tuesday, August 26.*

Your donations are very important to The Rummage Room because they are part of the reason we have been able to raise 4 million plus dollars over the years. All proceeds go to women's and children's causes locally and throughout the world.

Monday, July 28, Tuesday July 29, and Wednesday, July 30:

Everything in the shop will be 50% off.

Manager Maria's Famous Bag Sales: **Thursday, July 31** at \$12 a bag. **Friday, August 1** at \$8 a bag and **Saturday, August 2** at \$1 per bag. Mark your calendars for these three great sale days!

Wish list for July: Cashmere sweaters; jewelry; watches; good bric-a-brac; *good handbags for Reopening Day!!*

Summer Shopping Hours: Monday -Thursday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Friday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm and Saturday 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Summer Donation Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, Friday 9:30 am to 2:30 pm and Saturday 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864): *How slowly I have made my way in life! How much is still to be done!*

All New Tai Chi Classes!

Come and experience the many wonderful benefits of Tai Chi and Qi Gong exercises with our new teacher, Joe Black (pictured on the right). Classes are held on

Wednesdays at 8:00 am and **Thursdays** at 9:00 am.

Only \$10 per class. Join us! You can even just drop in.

All are welcome.



Next Week at First Congregational Church

8:00 am Worship Service at the Beach (Tod's Point)



10:00 am Worship Service – Meetinghouse

Music by:

The Summer Choir

Loving Shepherd, arr. by Philip Ledger

Hanna Golodinskii, soprano

Give Me Jesus

Rev. Mark Montgomery, preaching

Where to find us:

www.fccog.org

Facebook

Twitter

YouTube

Instagram



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 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