

*Old Greenwich,
Connecticut*

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF GREENWICH

*United Church
of Christ*

Founded in 1665

The Third Sunday of Easter

4 May 2014

10 o'clock in the morning



Jesus Christ and Nicodemus

By Henry Ossawa Tanner (1898-1899)

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.



You are welcome here this morning at The First Congregational Church of Greenwich. There are no exceptions, no qualifications, no fine print. So relax. Familiar or strange to you, this is a place where you can fit right in. The music will make you happy, the prayers will comfort you, the communion will make you part of Christ's body, who we are. So welcome and enjoy.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

*All who are able please stand.

‡Seating of latecomers.

PRELUDE

Andante Con Moto
Alla Minuetto

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ
Eric Thiman (1900-1975)

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Please sign and pass the red book.

Rev. Daniel B. England

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Ours is not a community of righteous people

People: But of those seeking the goodness and love of God.

Leader: Come, enter in. God is here.

People: We are looking forward to God.

***‡HYMN**

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

New Century (black) Hymnal 1

OPENING PRAYER

Rev. John W. Collins

There are many reasons why we are here. There may be no good reason at all. But we are here to seek God, to know Jesus, to find friendship and a better way of life. So Lord, we call upon you to be with us this morning and to help us to leave here a little more sure of you in our lives and your presence when we leave. We

pray in the name of the one who loved us and gave himself for us, even Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray...

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.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Roll Call of Candidates

Ginny Breismeister

(Candidates will come forward as their names are called)

Commitment of Candidates

Clergy: We are called of God to be disciples through Christ Jesus. Today we welcome each of you to join us in the joy of God's service through the work of First Congregational Church of Greenwich.

Senior Deacon: Friends in Christ, we bid you welcome. We greet you as fellow disciples of Christ. Our purpose is to promote the increase of the love of God and neighbor. Will you now unite yourself with The First Congregational Church of Greenwich, accepting its responsibilities, praying and working for its usefulness, sustaining its worship, supporting its wider mission, and living with us in the joys of Christian fellowship?

Candidates: I will.

Clergy: We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul and the right of private judgment. We join in fellowship with other congregations of the United Church of Christ in declaring our steadfast allegiance to the faith which our forebears confessed, which from age to age has found its expression in the historic creeds of the Church Universal and of our Communion, and

in affirming our loyalty to the basic principles of our representative democracy. We hereby set forth the things we most surely believe.

The Covenant (*Congregation: All who are able please stand*):

We believe in God, infinite in wisdom and love, in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, who renews, comforts and inspires us. We are united in seeking to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and to walk in the ways of Christ. As Jesus accepted, welcomed and embraced all people without exception, so do we accept all who join with us in our journey to be a people of faith. We accept the mission of this church to proclaim the gospel, to worship God and to work for the dream of a compassionate world. Trusting in God's Spirit, we promise to support each other in love, that through our faith, the world might be made new.

Right Hand of Fellowship

SONG OF RESPONSE

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

*Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.*

(During the hymn, 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

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Carolyn Paulus

John 3:1-21

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus

answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

From New Revised Standard Version

ANTHEM

I Am the Rose of Sharon

The Chancel Choir

William Billings (1746-1800)

***‡HYMN**

God Loved the World

New Century (black) Hymnal 208

SERMON

On Being Sure

Rev. Daniel B. England

RESPONDING TO GOD

PASTORAL PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Chancel Choir

Kyrie (from Lord Nelson Mass) Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Linnea Conley, mezzo soprano

*DOXOLOGY To the tune of *All Creatures of Our God and King*
Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

RECEIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

In the tradition of our church, let us partake of the bread as it is served, remembering our individual uniqueness in the eyes of God and our diversity within the Body of Christ. Let us hold the cup until all have been served, remembering our oneness with God and our unity in the Body of Christ.

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**

Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day

New Century (black) Hymnal 241

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Postlude on Jesus Christ is Risen Today

Calvin Hampton (1938-1984)

Please join us for Coffee Hour following the worship service.

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. 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

Today most of our children will hear the story of Peter in prison. Our third graders will learn about Saul who was changed, literally, to Paul. Our middle school class will continue preparing for worship on June 1. There will be no Church School next Sunday because it is Music and Friendship Sunday, a time of music for all ages and a perfect time to invite a friend.

Bible Study

Bible Study will be held today in the lounge at 11:20 am. This will be one of the final reflections on the Psalms, starting with the story of Absalom, David's beloved son who betrays him.

Parish Nurse

Sue Asselin, R.N. 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 Noon in Room 104, Children's, Youth, and Chancel Choirs from 11:15 to 12:15 in the Meetinghouse.

Annual Quilt Raffle Tickets on Sale Today!

Tickets for the 44th Annual Quilt Raffle are available for purchase for **\$5 each**. Tickets are being sold at Coffee Hour **today**, and next Sunday leading up to the *Women's Fellowship Spring Luncheon* being held on Wednesday, May 14. The drawing for the quilt will take place at Noon. You do not need to be present to win. Tickets are also available in the Church Office and an order form is included in the April and May Meetinghouse Monthlies. The Kettle Quilters have created a beautiful quilt this year in a version of the classic *Log Cabin* pattern and all proceeds of the raffle are donated to support charitable organizations that benefit women, children and families.



Today with JPF & SPF: A Day At Adopt-A-Dog

Meet in church parking lot for carpools at 12:15

Estimated return time is 3:30

Maximum Capacity: 15

This month's youth outreach project involves some of God's most loyal and noble creations! We'll be helping our friends at the Adopt-A-Dog in Armonk by cleaning the grounds and then playing with as many of the dogs as we can. Help us to give these pups some extra love!

THIS WEEK

For Moms of Very Young Children

Join our Moms' Group in May. If you have a baby, toddler and/or 2 year old, join us for an opportunity to meet and relax with other moms and their young children. The group meets the second and fourth Friday of every month (next meeting is *Friday, May 9*) from 9:30-10:30 am in Room 104. For more information, contact Kristen Jacks at kmj33z@yahoo.com or 203-344-1961.



NEXT WEEK

Women's Fellowship Annual Meeting and Luncheon

Notice of the Women's Fellowship Annual Meeting/Luncheon - *Wednesday, May 14*, 11:30 am in the Auditorium. Quilt Raffle will take place at Noon followed by lunch. Our program will commemorate the 50th anniversary of The Rummage Room and will feature Stefanie Kies, musical entertainer (pictured here). Wear your favorite Rummage Room outfit or accessory!



Reservations by check for **\$10.00/person** are a MUST. Please make checks payable to Women's Fellowship, Att: Annual Meeting, and send or leave at the Church Office by *Sunday, May 11*. We regret that we cannot accommodate reservations by phone, walk-ins, or reservations without payment.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Nights Off Women's Group

The gathering of the *Nights Off* women's group has been **cancelled for May**. Instead, please plan to attend the *Women's Fellowship Annual Meeting and Luncheon* on *May 14*. In June, weather-permitting, *Nights Off* will meet down at the beach (Tod's Point) on *June 16*. More info will be announced in the Sunday bulletins two weeks before and the Friday email blast just before the date. Any questions or to be added to the *Nights Off* email list, contact Shirley Flierl at FBTworld@aol.com or 203-629-4939.

News from The Rummage Room

191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich, 203-637-1875

Monday, May 5: Manager Maria has two or three *surprise items* 50% off today to celebrate Cinco de Mayo.

Monday, May 5 through Saturday, May 10: *Mother's Day* is *May 11th* and there is no better place to shop than The Rummage Room.

If you can't decide what to purchase, try a gift certificate for whatever amount you wish to spend. The gift certificate can be used *any time*.

Wednesday, May 14: *The Women's Fellowship Annual Spring Luncheon* will begin at 11:30 am in the auditorium, and the 44th Annual Quilt Drawing will take place at 12:00 noon. Bring a guest and come for the fun and fellowship. The delightful Stefanie Keys will be entertaining the audience with her wonderful music.

Monday, May 26: *Memorial Day - The Rummage Room will be closed.*

Tuesday, May 27: The shop will be open from 10:00 am - 5:00 pm.

Manager's Wish List: Father's Day suits, blazers, shoes, ties, dress shirts, golfing shirts ... anything and everything for Fathers. Jewelry; handbags; DVDs; bikes; strollers; small furniture.

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

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

Next Week at First Congregational Church

10:00 am Worship Service – Meetinghouse

May 11, 2014

Music & Friendship Sunday

Mother's Day

Featuring:

A Festival of Hymns: The Writers Tell Their Stories

by Hal Hopson

Palmer Handbells, Children's Choir, Youth Choir,

Chancel Choir, Soloists.

Stories from the composers about their lives and how the hymns were written.

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