

*Old Greenwich,
Connecticut*

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF GREENWICH

*United Church
of Christ*

Founded in 1665

First Sunday of Advent

30 November 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 welcome you to this first Sunday of Advent at First Congregational Church of Greenwich as we prepare for the inestimable gift of the birth of Jesus. We pray that you will find this time together to be an inspiring opportunity to refresh your spirit and to feel God's loving embrace.

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

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Leader: O come, Emmanuel

People: Bringing order to those moments which challenge us.

Leader: O come, Light of the world

People: Shine upon not only our goodness, but also our faults so that we may be reconciled to one another.

Leader: O come, Christ who redeems

People: Creating in us a new spirit of service, kindness and grace.

Leader: O come, God of all creation

People: For we come to worship you.

* HYMN

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 110

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

The Williams Family

Reader 1: John 1: 1-8

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

Reader 2:

We come today to light the first candle of Advent, the candle of hope. It is the same hope that stirred in people's hearts when John baptized them in the Jordan and announced that one was coming who was greater than him. It is the hope that still dawns in our own hearts when the good news is proclaimed, that God is not against us but for us and, despite every despair we may feel, loves us with an everlasting love. And, so, may the flame of hope burn in this congregation and its light go beyond this place to every home and family in this community. Praise be to God.

Lighting of the First Advent Candle

MUSIC DURING CANDLE LIGHTING

Quiet Praise

The Palmer Handbells

Dan Edwards

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

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Go, My Children (to the tune All Through the Night)

Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.

Waking, sleeping, I am with you; you are my own.

In my love's baptismal river I have made you mine forever.

Go, my children, with my blessing - you are my own.

Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me;

Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.

Here my Spirit's power filled you; here his tender comfort stilled you.

(During the Response, the children will go to the Daniels Center for a multi-Age gathering. Parents should meet their children in the Daniels Center – which is on the lowest level of the building; please ask for directions if needed – after worship.)

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Rick Woodman

Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

From New Revised Standard Version

ANTHEM

Adam Lay Ybounden

The Chancel Choir

John Ireland (1879-1962)

*Adam lay ybounden, bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter thought he not too long.
And all was for an apple, an apple that he took,
As clerkës finden written in their book.
Nor had one apple taken been, the apple taken been,
Then had never Our Lady a-been heaven's queen.
Blessed be the time that apple taken was.
Therefore we moun singen
Deo gratias!*

SECOND LESSON

Joe McBride

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

From New Revised Standard Version

* HYMN

Watchmen Tell Us of the Night

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 109

SERMON

A Series of Questionable Choices

Rev. Mark D. Montgomery

RESPONDING TO GOD

PASTORAL PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY SOLO

I Wonder As I Wander

Thomas Woodman, bass
John Jacob Niles (1892-1980)

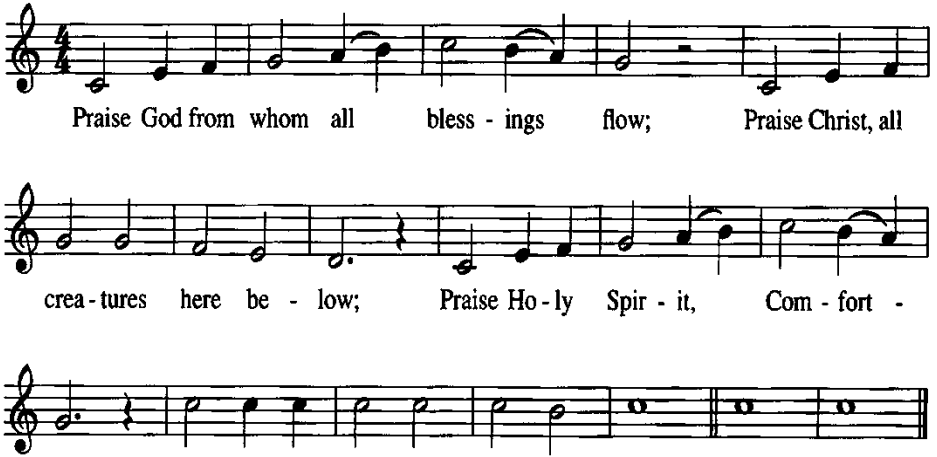
*I wonder as I wander out under the sky
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to die
For poor on 'ry people like you and like I;
I wonder as I wander out under the sky*

*When Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all
But high from God's heaven, a star's light did fall
And the promise of ages it then did recall.*

*If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing
A star in the sky or a bird on the wing
Or all of God's Angels in heaven to sing
He surely could have it, 'cause he was the King*

*I wonder as I wander out under the sky
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to die
For poor on 'ry people like you and like I;
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.*

*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

We Hail You God's Anointed

New Century (black) Hymnal 104

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Improvisation on Aberystwyth

Craig Symons

*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.

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. The deadline for the gifts is next ***Sunday, December 7***. 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 3 pm and 6 pm services on Christmas Eve. The white paper gives the illusion of snow under the trees in the Meetinghouse. 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.) All gifts will be donated to local agencies who will then distribute them throughout the year to someone who has a special need. Thank you for your participation.

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 began this weekend and

will continue each **Saturday (8 am-4 pm) and Sunday (11 am-4 pm)** through December 21 (or as long as trees last). This year's sale will benefit the following agencies: Shelter for the Homeless, Inspirica, Den for Grieving Kids, Sexual Assault Crisis Center, Young Mariner's Foundation and Meals on Wheels. You can help by purchasing your tree (wreath, garland, kissing ball) from us and tell all your friends too! We also still need more volunteers to pull off this effort, so please consider signing up for a shift (or 2!) by visiting the church website at www.fccog.org and clicking on the link under "News You Can Use" or contact Clem Lepoutre at clem@lepoutre.us.



Calendar

TODAY

Church School

Today is a Multi-Age gathering when children 5 and older will meet in the Daniels Center after the *Children's Message*. We will learn about the meaning of Advent and create a take-home to be used while "waiting." Three and four year olds are welcome in child care if they are too young to participate in the Daniels Center program. Next Sunday is a regular Church School Sunday.

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

Cherub Choir (grades K-2): Room 104 (basement near the Daniels Center), Donald Haviland, director.

Children's Choir (grades 3-6): Room 303 (Craig's office, 3rd floor)
11:15 am - 12:00 pm - Craig Symons, director.

Youth Choir (grades 7-12): Choir Room (3rd floor), 11:15 am - 12:15 pm - Carolyn Paulus, director.

Bible Study

Join us at 11:30 am in the Lounge today and each Sunday through *Sunday, December 7* as Rev. Avery Manchester leads our NEW Bible Study! Come and be a part of it.

Annual Advent Craft Workshop TODAY

Everyone is invited to prepare for Christmas with family, friends and fun at the Advent Craft Workshop *today* from 2:00-4:00 pm in the Daniels Center. Make your own gifts and ornaments, hear music of the season, and make new friends! Sponsored by the Church School Task Force. Don't miss this annual family "kick off" to the Advent Season.

NEXT WEEK

Christmas Carol Sing and Dinner

Don't miss this wonderful intergenerational tradition in the Auditorium next *Sunday, December 7* at 6:00 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, desserts and beverages. Sign up *today* during Fellowship Hour, call the Church Office during the week or email barbaraw@fccog.org (with the # of adults and children attending). See you there!



Join the *Messiah* Chorus

Rehearsals for the 48th annual performance of *Messiah*, under the direction of Director of Music, Dr. Craig Scott Symons, will take place on *Monday, December 8* from 7:30-9:30 pm in the Meetinghouse. If you have choral skills, you are encouraged to join the chorus for this wonderful tradition. There will also be a dress rehearsal with orchestra on *Wednesday, December 10* from 7:30-9:30 pm. 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! Note, this year there is only one performance and it is a ticketed event. Tickets are going fast. Any questions, please contact Dr. Craig Scott Symons at craigs@fccog.org.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Messiah is Coming!

Our 48th annual *Messiah* will be performed at *one concert only* on **Saturday, December 13**, at 4:00 pm. Tickets for Preferred seating (front 8 rows in Meetinghouse) are \$40 each; general seating tickets (rows 9 to the back of Meetinghouse and Chapel seating) are \$20 each. Tickets are on sale in the Church Office 9:00 am to 4:00 pm daily. Tickets are also available during Fellowship Hour today and next Sunday. Correct change is always helpful!



Come to the Christmas Soiree!

“The weather outside may be frightful, but our soiree will be delightful!”
Don't miss the fun. Join us on **Saturday, December 13** (following *Messiah*) from 6:00-9:00 pm at Zody's 19th Hole in Stamford. Beer, wine, soft drinks and substantial hor d'oeuvres are included. Cash bar for liquor. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the season and a little Christmas 'cheer' with your church family. Get your tickets **today** during Fellowship Hour. You can also get more information in the December Meetinghouse Monthly or on the church website at www.fccog.org.

Prayer Shawls are Needed!

Our supply of prayer shawls has dwindled. We need knitters to start knitting again to increase our supply. If you have made some before, please start up again. Nancy McConnell has directions for you and can help you get materials. Please contact Nancy at 203-637-4423 or nhm48@aol.com.

Medicare Part D Counseling

The Medicare Part D prescription drug insurance open enrollment period ends **December 7**. The plan you had last year may not be the most cost effective plan this year. Call your Parish Nurse, Sue Asselin, at ext. 21 if you would like to receive counseling, including navigating the Medicare website, to determine your options.

News from The Rummage Room

191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

Monday, December 1: *‘The Best Little Christmas Shoppe in Town’* is open with twinkling lights and everything Christmas. Every day

'new' merchandise is brought out for your shopping pleasure. Everything you buy and donate will help brighten the lives of those less fortunate.

Saturday, December 6: Last day to leave donations, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, until Friday, January 1, 2015.

Saturday, December 6: The Annual First Light Celebration will be held in Old Greenwich from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Come join the fun at The Rummage Room and other shops in Old Greenwich for shopping, treats and caroling.

Monday, December 8: All Christmas merchandise will be 25% off for the week.

Monday, December 15: All merchandise, including Christmas items, will be 50% off for the week.

Friday, December 19: The Rummage Room's annual Christmas Party will take place between 10:00 am and 5:00 pm. Please come join the party!!!

Friday, December 19: DOORS WILL CLOSE AT 5:00 PM FOR THE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAYS AND REOPEN ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, AT 10:00 AM.

Maria's Wish List: Christmas clothing and decorations; a wooden baby gate for toddlers; good handbags and jewelry!!!

Shop Hours: 10 am-5 pm Mon-Fri & 10 am to 1 pm Sat.

Donation Hours: 9:30 am-4:30 pm Mon-Thurs & 9:30 am-12:30 pm Fri-Sat.

Thought for the Week: *The purpose of life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others. Only then have we ourselves become true human beings.* -Albert Schweitzer

Tai Chi Classes

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. Drop ins welcome.

Neighbor to Neighbor – Food Collection

Please remember those in need and donate food items to Neighbor to Neighbor. Items especially needed at this time include: Cereal, canned fruit, pasta, peanut butter (regular sized jars please) and jelly. Also, sheets and towels are always needed.



Next Week at First Congregational Church

10:00 am Worship Service – Meetinghouse
2nd Sunday of Advent

Music by:

The Palmer Handbell Choir:

The Coventry Carol, Arr. Noel Percy

The Chancel Choir:

When Jordan Hushed His Waters Still

by George Oldroyd

The Children's Choir:

People of the Night by David Haas

Rev. Richard DenUyl, preaching

Where to find us:

www.fccog.org, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#),

[YouTube](#), [Instagram](#)



December

Christmas Tree Sale through Dec. 21 -
Saturdays 8 am-4 pm, Sundays 11 am-4 pm

- 7: Giving Tree 2014 deadline; Christmas Carol
Dinner and Sing, 6 pm
13: 48th Annual *Messiah* Performance, 4 pm; AND
Christmas Soiree at Zody's, Stamford, 6-9 pm
21: Live Nativity on the front lawn by the crèche
24: **Christmas Eve Celebrations – Note new times**

- **10 am: Lessons and Carols for our youngest families;** Nativity Pageant; Cherub Choir sings; White Gift Offerings*
- **3 pm: Family Service;** *Once in Royal David's City* Nativity Pageant; Children's Choir sings; White Gift Offerings*
- **4 pm:** Community Carol Sing around the crèche on the front lawn
- **6 pm: Festival Carol Service with Brass Ensemble;** *Once in Royal David's City* Nativity Pageant; Chancel Choir sings; White Gift Offerings*
- **9 pm: Candlelight Service with Communion;** Youth/Alumni Choir sings

**White Gifts are clothing, toys, books or other useful items wrapped in white paper to be offered during our 10 am, 3 pm and 6 pm services on Christmas Eve. The white paper gives the illusion of snow under the trees in the Meetinghouse. Ribbon and bows are not necessary but gifts should be labeled, indicating an appropriate age and gender.*





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 *Sunday, December 14*. Thank you.

In Memory/Honor of

By

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____

Please print names legibly to minimize spelling errors.



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