

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Founded in 1665

19 August 2018

10 o'clock in the morning



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 service of worship at The First Congregational Church of Greenwich on this Sunday morning. Please join us after worship for our Community Hour in the Memory Garden.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

PRELUDE

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, piano

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Rev. Carla Dietz

(Please sign and pass the red Fellowship Pad found at the end of your pew.)

PRAISING GOD

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

Rabbi Chaya Bender

Leader: Praise God, who is to be praised.

People: Praise God, who is to be praised forever and ever.

Leader: Praised are You, God, Source of all blessing, forming light and creating darkness, bringing harmony while creating all.

People: All thank You, all praise You, and all declare: "None is as holy as God." All will praise You forever and ever.

Leader: With kindness You illumine the earth and all who dwell on it, and in Your goodness, day after day, You renew creation.

People: Eternal One, source of our strength, our protecting fortress, our saving shield, our stronghold, none can be compared to You in this world and in the world that is coming.

Leader: Praise God, who is to be praised forever and ever.

*** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*** HYMN**

If You But Trust in God
to Guide You

New Century (black) Hymnal 410

GATHERING PRAYER

Rev. Patrick Collins

Our God, You have prepared our tongue, and in Your wisdom You have placed into our mouth these prayerful songs, surpassing every worldly craft in grace. And You have given us a singer's throat, with which we call out sweetly, never hoarse; since dawn of life, You have prepared our foot toward You alone to set its course. Our every instinct You have purified like wool as white as snow, and never have You cast aside our heart to wander as sleepwalkers go. Be now our refuge, and our secret place, as yesterday, and every future day. Protect us now, in Your abundant grace, our God, do not delay!

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

Barbara Norrgard

The Holy Dimension (Excerpt)

“The account of our experiences, the record of debit and credit, is reflected in the amount of trust or distrust we display towards life and humanity. There are those who maintain that the good is within our reach everywhere; you have but to stretch out your arms and you will grasp it. But there are others who, intimidated by fraud and ugliness, sense scorn and ambushes everywhere and misgive all things to come. Those who trust develop a finer sense for the good, even at the high cost of blighted hopes. Charmed by the spell of love, faith is, as it were, imposed upon their heart.” — Abraham Joshua Heschel

SOLO

At the River

Linnea Conley, mezzo soprano

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

SECOND LESSON

Judges 13: 2-24

There was a certain man from Zorah, of the stock of Dan, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren and had borne no children. An angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, "You are barren and have borne no children; but you shall conceive and bear a son. Now be careful not to drink wine or other intoxicant, or to eat anything unclean. For you are going to conceive and bear a son; let no razor touch his head, for the boy is to be a nazirite to God from the womb on. He shall be the first to deliver Israel from the Philistines." The woman went and told her husband, "A man of God came to me; he looked like an angel of God, very frightening. I did not ask him where he was from, nor did he tell me his name. He said to me, 'You are going to conceive and bear a son. Drink no wine or other intoxicant, and eat nothing unclean, for the boy is to be a nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death!'"

Manoah pleaded with the Lord. "Oh, my Lord!" he said, "please let the man of God that You sent come to us again, and let him instruct us how to act with the child that is to be born." God heeded Manoah's plea, and the angel of God came to the woman again. She was sitting in the field and her husband Manoah was not with her. The woman ran in haste to tell her husband. She said to him, "The man who came to me before has just appeared to me." Manoah promptly followed his wife. He came to the man and asked him: "Are you the man who spoke to my wife?" "Yes," he answered. Then Manoah said, "May your words soon come true! What rules shall be observed for the boy?" The angel of the Lord said to Manoah, "The woman must abstain from all the things against which I warned her. She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, or drink wine or other intoxicant, or eat anything unclean. She must observe all that I commanded her."

Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, "Let us detain you and prepare a kid for you."

But the angel of the Lord said to Manoah, “If you detain me, I shall not eat your food; and if you present a burnt offering, offer it to Lord.”—For Manoah did not know that he was an angel of the Lord. So Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, “What is your name? We should like to honor you when your words come true.” The angel said to him, “You must not ask for my name; it is unknowable!”

Manoah took the kid and the meal offering and offered them up on the rock to the Lord; and a marvelous thing happened while Manoah and his wife looked on. As the flames leaped up from the altar toward the sky, the angel of the Lord ascended in the flames of the altar, while Manoah and his wife looked on; and they flung themselves on their faces to the ground. The angel of the Lord never appeared again to Manoah and his wife.—Manoah then realized that it had been an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said to his wife, “We shall surely die, for we have seen a divine being.” But his wife said to him, “Had the Lord meant to take our lives, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and meal offering from us, nor let us see all these things; and He would not have made such an announcement to us.”

The woman bore a son, and she named him Samson. The boy grew up, and the Lord blessed him. — Jewish Publication Society

SERMON

Trust and Compromise: The Lesson of
Manoah’s Wife, Samson’s Mother

Rabbi Chaya Bender

*** HYMN**

Not My Brother, nor My Sister New Century (black) Hymnal 519

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Carla Dietz

RESPONDING TO GOD

CALL TO OFFERING

ANTHEM
God Is a Spirit

The Summer Choir
William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875)

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

For the Father seeketh such to worship him.

*** DOXOLOGY** Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 515
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*** HYMN**
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 327

*** BENEDICTION**

*** CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE

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Directly following the service, one of our pastors will remain in the Chapel to be available to anyone who has a pastoral care concern.

A Note about Welcoming Children

To our parents: relax! God put the wiggle in children, do not feel you have to suppress it during worship. The presence of children is a gift to the church, which offers hope for all. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me." At First Church we believe that the way we welcome children in worship directly affects the way they respond to God, the church, and to one another. To the members of our congregation, please know that a smile of encouragement is always welcome to parents with small, active children.

For those who are interested, we do have child care available for babies and toddlers every Sunday, for the entirety of the church service, in the preschool classrooms. For toddlers and preschoolers who stay in church, there is a PrayGround in front of the chapel with a rug and a few quiet play things. The first pew of the chapel is reserved for parents to supervise their children if you do not need to be on the rug with them. There are also additional children's books on the bookshelves near the back of the chapel.

Radio Ministry

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.

NEWS AND NOTICES

TODAY

Child Care

Child Care will be provided in the Blue Door classroom in the preschool.

UPCOMING

Beach Services Schedule

Our final beach services by the Innis Arden Cottage will be September 2, at 8 am. Remember, you don't have to be a Greenwich resident to attend the service; simply tell the attendant at the entry point you're there for the church service. Don't forget to bring your beach chairs!

Bible Study Class with Rev. Carla Dietz

Come join in on a rousing weekly conversation on the Bible readings of the week. This is a 'no holds barred' kind of group where everyone's voice matters. Classes take place on Thursdays at 11 am in the Pastor's Office.

Summer Sings

Our 8th season of Summer Sings concludes on Thursday, August 30 when First Church's Director of Music, Craig Symons will lead the singers in Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms, honoring what would have been the composer's 100th birthday on August 25. Non-singers are welcome, free of charge, to enjoy this evening of community singing. Music will be provided. Hospitality, refreshments, and fun are all included! No sign-up necessary, just come ready to sing. Donation is \$10 per singer.

Save the Date for Homecoming Sunday: September 9, 2018

Please join us for our traditional welcome back picnic and festivities. We'll have our ever popular bouncy houses and more! Mark your calendars. Signups will begin in August on line and at coffee hour. We look forward to seeing you all!

Photos for New Online Directory

In these busy times, taking your own selfie is the best way to get your family together for this photo. Please upload your own selfie photo into the MyFirstChurch directory. You can find the instructions on the upper right-hand side of the FCCOG home page. The quicker pictures are taken and uploaded, the quicker the directory will be more useful to folks, especially as we transition to an interim senior pastor. These pictures are invaluable to new staff and church members as they learn names and faces, and are able to greet everyone at church events. If such technology is not your thing, you can contact Pat Larrabee at patlarrabee@hotmail.com to arrange for an appointment to have your photo taken. Please contact Sue Wilder at swilder102@gmail.com with any questions.

Summer Choir – All Are Welcome!

Please join us on Sunday mornings throughout the summer, at 9 am in the Meetinghouse for a warm-up and rehearsal of the music being sung that morning. Head to the third floor, outside the choir room, to pick up the hymns, anthem, and bulletin, and a folder, then meet downstairs in the choir loft. Come any Sunday that you are available to help lead the congregation in worship, and it also gives you a chance to experience worship from the choir loft. Everyone is welcome! If you have any questions, please contact Craig Symons (ext. 822).

News from the Rummage Room
191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

Who: The Rummage Room

What: The 54th Grand Reopening of the Rummage Room

When: Tuesday, September 4 at 10 am

Where: 191 Sound Beach Avenue, near the Old Greenwich train station

Why: The Rummage Room was established in 1964 by The Women's Fellowship at First Congregational Church with the mission of raising funds for supporting women and children in need.

Over the years The Rummage Room has raised and contributed several million dollars toward its mission of helping women and children in need throughout the world. We thank all who have donated and purchased through the past years. If you have never been to the Rummage Room, we are quite certain you will like the gently-used fall clothing for women, men and children. And there is so much more to see and buy.

Please do not bring donations to the Rummage Room in August as they will end up in the dumpster since the shop is closed.

Caregivers Support Group

Please join us for the Caregivers Support Group for those who currently are, recently have been, or no longer are, a caregiver for a family member or friend. The group offers a confidential place where participants can share experiences, learn new information, and receive emotional support and comfort from others in similar situations. The group meets on the second Sunday of the month from 11:15 am - 12:15 pm in the Binney Conference Room. Dorothy Mueller, FCCOG Stephen Minister, is the group facilitator. For more information, please call Dorothy at (203) 588-9896, or email: dorothymueller1@gmail.com.

**Next Week at First Church
Sunday, August 26**

Rev. Carla Dietz, preaching
Psalms 84 & Ephesians 6:10-20
What's Love Got to Do with It?

Music by the Summer Choir
Though You Have Not Seen Him—Craig Scott Symons

Lord God of Abraham—Felix Mendelssohn
Thomas Woodman, baritone



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 Pastor: Rev. Carla Dietz

Associate Pastor: Rev. Patrick Collins

Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care: Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Minister of Music: Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Director of Family Ministries: Rosemary Lamie

Director of Church Administration & Finance: Steve Summerton

Administrative Assistant - Operations: Donna White

Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister

Parish Nurse: Susan Asselin, RN

Director of Preschool: Darla Kohler Steiner

Publications Coordinator: Vance Briceland

Pastors Emeriti: Rev. Dr. Thomas L. Stiers & Rev. Sally Colegrove