

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Founded in 1665

Homecoming Sunday

9 September 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 Homecoming celebration and picnic on the front lawn.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

(Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.)

PRELUDE

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, piano

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Reverend Carla Dietz

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

SAFETY MOMENT

Sue Asselin, Parish Nurse

PRAISING GOD

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

(prepares us for the purpose of service and sets the tone,
orienting us toward a worship mindset)

The earth is God's and the fullness thereof. The universe comes from God and everything that is, lives in God. The glory of God will cover the Earth as the waters cover the sea. Nothing that happens, happens outside of God's love. Everything is in God. Everything is one in God. Everything is one.

*** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

(Peace be with you.)

*** HYMN**

God of Change and Glory

New Century (black) Hymnal 177

INVOCATION

Reverend Patrick Collins

(Or Opening Prayer. We call on God for help & presence. We call on the living God who has made a covenant with us through Jesus the Christ)

God, we thank you for life. For the blood flowing well, for hearts pumping faithfully, for lungs breathing even when we are not paying attention. For the everyday miracle of our existence, we thank you. Today, may we be reminded that everyone we meet is like us; a living miracle. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rosemary Lamie

LITANY OF BLESSING

Rev. Carla Dietz: Today, we mark the beginning of something new. New members, new classes, new teaching opportunities, new voices, a new program year, and new possibilities. We see opportunities for a stronger faith and a stronger church. We see opportunities to be a healthier and more vibrant community. As such, we ask each of you to proclaim your part in this faith journey we share. When your groups are called, please remain standing for the entire litany. Will members of the Church Council, Diaconate, Asset Management, Buildings and Grounds, Budget, Personnel, Stewardship, and Nominating committees please stand?

Church Council, Diaconate, Asset Management, Buildings and Grounds, Budget, Personnel, Stewardship, and Nominating:

We promise to use our resources with responsibility to further the message of God. Together, we will dream a future for our congregation that is responsible, bold, and faithful.

Rosemary Lamie: Will those serving as Church School teachers, members of the Church School Task Force, Faith Formation, Education, Preschool Board, and Historical committees please stand?

Church School Teachers and Church School Task Force members and members of the Faith Formation, Education, and Historical committees: We accept the challenge, responsibility and joy of teaching our youngest members to walk in the way of Christ and provide opportunities for people from all generations to walk

their faith journeys together. We further promise to honor our past through good recordkeeping and safekeeping of our heritage.

Rev. Patrick Collins: Will all of the children and youth please stand?

Youth: We promise to faithfully walk our journey of faith with the Holy Spirit as our guide and this community as our teachers. Scripture tells us, “Your young ones will see visions.” We will do our part in helping our congregation live into the vision God has for us.

Craig Symons: Will everyone involved in the Music Ministry please stand?

Music Ministry Members: We promise to praise God in song, lifting the spirits of this congregation so that we may all go forth from this place, recognizing we do so in the fullness of God’s grace.

Rev. Avery Manchester: Will the members of our Stephen Ministry, Outreach, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Wellness committees, and Caregiver support group leaders please stand?

Caring Ministry and Outreach Committee Members: We promise to provide light to the world through the care and support we provide to those in emotional, financial, or spiritual need.

Rev. Carla Dietz: Will members of the Women’s Fellowship, Rummage Room and Allocations Committee, please stand?

Women’s Fellowship, Rummage Room and Allocations Committee: We promise to bring opportunities to build faith and fellowship among the women of this church and to support the many needy populations of women and children our community, near and far.

Ginny Breismeister: Will members of our Welcoming Committee, Ushers, Greeters, and Community Relations please stand?

Hospitality Members: We will create an environment of welcome through our words, our programs, our caring and the grace we receive and give.

Rev. Carla Dietz: Will everyone who helps make this place a vital and thriving community please stand?

All of God's Faithful People: We promise to support this congregation and its mission with our time and resources, our faithful attendance and presence, our prayers, and by the compassion we learn here and carry into the world.

Rev. Patrick Collins: As an affirmation of our commitment to each other and the teachings of Jesus Christ, let us share together the prayer we were taught 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.

PRAYER OF REFLECTION (in unison)

(When we admit that we have not always been our best. It's a chance to unburden our hearts)

God, we know only too well how it feels to be assessed and judged because of age, gender, nationality, or appearance. We admit we have too readily done the same to others. We realize that we have damaged others by grouping them based on external criteria, on our own assumptions and prejudices. We acknowledge that we have often found it easier to assign people to categories than getting to know them for who they are. Forgive us we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

(Assurance you are forgiven.)

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON—HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Carolyn Paulus

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23

A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,
and favor is better than silver or gold.

The rich and the poor have this in common:
the Lord is the maker of them all.

Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity,
and the rod of anger will fail.

Those who are generous are blessed,
for they share their bread with the poor.

Do not rob the poor because they are poor,
or crush the afflicted at the gate;

for the Lord pleads their cause
and despoils of life those who despoil them.

– New Revised Standard Bible

ANTHEM

The Children's, Youth, and Chancel Choirs

We Are the Body of Christ

Emily Lund

Vance Briceland, piano

(After the Anthem, children and teachers will head to the back of the church and then to their classrooms. There will be Church School Task Force members in the hallways to direct them. At the end of the worship service, Babies and Toddlers will be picked up in the Red Door classroom in the preschool. Children 3 years old and older will be picked up in the Daniels Center where the entire church school will be together for our own Benediction and Grace before the picnic.)

SECOND LESSON—GOSPEL

Mark 7: 24-37

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left

your daughter.” So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

– New Revised Standard Bible

MESSAGE

Needs and Openness

Reverend Carla Dietz

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Reverend Avery C. Manchester
(Praise for who God is, with thanksgiving for what God does and with requests for God to heal, transform, renew us and help us work out the complications of our lives.)

One: “We believe that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God

All: and possesses a dignity and value which can never be taken away.”

One: “We believe that as children of the one God

All: we are one family with mutual responsibility for each other.”

One: Holding affirmations of our faith in our hearts, let us pray for those among us and those not able to be among us today. In the silence of our hearts we hold our families, our church friends, our community, our country and the world in prayer for health, unity and deliverance from suffering.

(Pause in silence)

* HYMN

Spirit of the Living God

New Century (black) Hymnal 283

RESPONDING TO GOD

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Praise His Holy Name

The Chancel Choir
Keith Hampton (b. 1957)

* DOXOLOGY

(Offering praise and thanksgiving for meeting our needs and for using us to bring God's mission to the world. Feel free to rise and sing a version familiar to you or this.)

Praise God from whom all_ bless - ings flow; Praise God all crea-tures here be - low.

9

Praise God a - bove ye_ hea - ven'ly host; Cre - a-tor, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

* DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

Source of all goodness and compassion, move us this day to be generous in our giving and care. May we not hold back in fear or self-protection but give so that others might find renewed meaning and hope in this life, in this time. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

* HYMN

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing New Century (black) Hymnal 42

* BENEDICTION & BLESSING OF FOOD

* CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

* * *

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 the back of the chapel with a rug and a few quiet play things. Chairs and rocking chairs are 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

Church School

Welcome to your Church School Opening Day! Child care for our Babies and Toddlers is in the Preschool Red Door classroom; 3 and 4 year olds are in the in the Preschool Purple door; and a brief classroom time for all other ages and grades at the time indicated in the bulletin. We will be getting to know each other and looking forward to the year ahead. If you have not yet registered your child, please do so today on our website at www.fccog.org or in the preschool office area. Visitors are welcome to register their children, too! Registration helps us to know your children and puts you on our mailing list. At the end of the worship service, Babies and Toddlers will

be picked up in the Red Door classroom. Children 3 years old and older will be picked up in the Daniels Center where the entire church school will be together for our own Benediction and Grace before the picnic. See you at the picnic!

UPCOMING

Collins Baby Shower: September 15

Please join us for a Baby Shower honoring Kate and Patrick Collins, Saturday, September 15 at 2 pm in the First Congregational Church Auditorium. RSVP to the Church Office: 203-637-1791. Kate and Patrick are registered at www.babylist.com/baby-kate-collins. Additionally, there is a collection to purchase a Dutch "Box Bike" with electric-assist for the Collins family to help safely transport their children around OG. If you are interested in contributing a gift towards the bike, kindly make your (non-tax deductible) check out to FCCOG and send to the attention of Steve Summerton at church with "Baby Shower" in the memo line.

Free Film on the Front Lawn: Saturday, September 15

Join us for a free screening of the film **Up** on the front lawn, Saturday, September 15. BYO dinner begins at 6:30 pm; the movie will start at 7 pm.

All Church Retreat: September 29-30

All ages are welcome to join us for this enlightening, engaging and refreshing weekend together at the Silver Lake Retreat and Conference center. We will spend our time together in prayer, reflection, discussion, and, of course, getting to know one another through fun outdoor activities. The cost for the retreat is \$60 per adult and \$40 for children with a maximum cost for families of \$200. This fee includes all meals, lodging and program materials. If you would like more information or would like to sign up please email or call Rev. Patrick Collins or Rosemary Lamie.

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 11:30 am in the Pastor's Office.

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

The Rummage Room celebrated its 54th Grand Re-Opening this past Tuesday, September 4, amidst the usual excitement and shopping frenzy that accompanies this annual event. Manager Leanne, her assistant managers, plus many volunteers, spent the month of August in preparation

for this event and were rewarded by a great customer turnout. Thanks to the generosity of our many loyal donors who provided 'gently used' merchandise in abundance, and to the customers who came from far and near to shop, the Rummage Room had excellent re-opening day sales.

Thanks to all for your continued support!

All proceeds from the Rummage Room go to our women's and children's missions, both at home and abroad. Thank you for your caring these many years.

Mgr. Leanne's Wish List: Children's clothing and children's shoes are needed badly.

Question of the Week: Isn't it amazing how certain events can expand our hearts as big as a Hot Air Balloon and set us sailing across the sky? Not only does a trip to the Rummage Room elevate us, but makes it possible for those less fortunate to sail across the sky with us!

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. We will not meet on September 9. Dorothy Mueller, FCCOG Stephen Minister, is the group facilitator. For more information, please call Dorothy at (203) 588-9896, or email: dorothismueller1@gmail.com.

Next Week at First Church Sunday, September 16

Reverend Patrick Collins, preaching

Music the Chancel Choir
Laudate Dominum—W. A. Mozart
Carolyn Paulus, soprano

FIRST CHURCH EMERGENCY EXIT PLAN

