

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Founded in 1665

16 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 Community Hour in the Auditorium.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

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

PRELUDE

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, piano

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Reverend Patrick Collins

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

PRAISING GOD

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

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

Leader: God, You are a Creator who walks beside your people.

People: So we pray for people who walk for justice.

Leader: You are the God who raises up those who are bent low.

People: So we pray for those held down by the circumstances of life.

Leader: You are the God who feeds the hungry

People: So we pray for all who long for bread.

Leader: You are the God who celebrates the small and the insignificant.

People: So we pray for the children and for those who are never noticed.

Leader: You are the One who says 'Follow me'.

People: So we pray for courage and faith in our hearts that we may take up the cross and find it leads to life.

*** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

(Peace be with you.)

*** HYMN**

Ask Me What Great Thing I Know New Century (black) Hymnal 49

INVOCATION

Reverend Avery C. Manchester

(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)

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

Reverend Carla Dietz

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

Merciful God, You call us to follow. To turn away from our own selfish interests, and to take up our cross and follow after You, even if the path is difficult to see, or is heading in a direction we would never have chosen for ourselves. Forgive us for being so quick to question and so hesitant to follow. Help us to see with the eyes of faith, rather than from our own human point of view. Teach us to follow without fear, knowing that You are always with us, leading the way. Amen.

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

(Assurance you are forgiven.)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

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.

(All sing, as children exit)

**Jesus loves me! This I know, For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong; They are weak, but He is strong.**

**(Refrain) Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.**

**Jesus loves me still today, Walking with me on my way,
Wanting as a friend to give Light and love to all who live.
(Refrain)**

(After the Children's Message, children and teachers will head to the back of the church and help children find their classrooms in the Preschool. The 6th graders will be in Rick's Room, just past the Lounge.)

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Helen Ingraham

Empty Sky—Bruce Springsteen

I woke up this morning
I could barely breathe
Just an empty impression
In the bed where you used to be
I want a kiss from your lips
I want an eye for an eye
I woke up this morning to the empty sky
Blood on the streets
Blood flowing down
I hear the blood of my blood
Crying from the ground

Empty sky,
I woke up this morning to an empty sky

On the plains of Jordan
I cut my bow from the wood
Of this tree of evil
Of this tree of good
I want a kiss from your lips
I want an eye for an eye

Empty sky,
I woke up this morning to an empty sky

ANTHEM

Laudate Dominum

The Chancel Choir
W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)
Carolyn Paulus, soprano

(sung in Latin)

Praise the Lord, all nations; Praise Him, all people.

For He has bestowed His mercy upon us,

And the truth of the Lord endures forever.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

As it was in the beginning, is now, and forever,

And for generations of generations. Amen.

SECOND LESSON—GOSPEL

Mark 8: 27-35

Jesus and his disciples went into the villages near Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?”

They told him, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and still others one of the prophets.”

He asked them, “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?”

Peter answered, “You are the Christ.” Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: “The Human One must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the legal experts, and be killed, and then, after three days, rise from the dead.” He said this plainly. But Peter took hold of Jesus and, scolding him, began to correct him. Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, then sternly corrected Peter: “Get behind me, Satan. You are not thinking God’s thoughts but human thoughts.”

After calling the crowd together with his disciples, Jesus said to them, “All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross, and follow me. All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me and because of the good news will save them.”

– Common English Bible

MESSAGE

The Sign of the Cross

Reverend Patrick Collins

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: God our Friend and resourceful Helper, as we call to mind other people in their numerous needs, we pray that you will encompass them with your loving Spirit, and enable your churches to find practical ways of ministering to them. Somewhere at this moment there are thoughtful, kindly men and women who are staring at prison walls because they dared speak out for truth and justice. Loving God, give your people the faith to counterbalance despair

All: and the love to outweigh self-interest and neglect.

One: Somewhere today children are whimpering after days of hunger, and their parents can only look on with the pain of a love that feels impotent. Loving God, give us the faith to counterbalance despair

All: and the love to outweigh self-interest and neglect.

One: Somewhere this morning people are facing major surgery, while others are being told that they have a disease for which there is no remedy. Loving God, give us the faith to counterbalance despair

All: and the love to outweigh self-interest and neglect.

One: Somewhere this day people are suffering from the devastating effects of another major hurricane, homes are destroyed, memories lost, and lives shattered. Loving God, give us the faith to counterbalance despair

All: and the love to outweigh self-interest and neglect.

One: Somewhere at this hour of prayer, some silent members of this congregation, and of other churches in our community, may be secretly facing crises which threaten to overwhelm them. Loving God, give us the faith to counterbalance despair

All: and the love to outweigh self-interest and neglect.

One: Somewhere, near or far away, there are people caught up in the raw grief of a recent death, distressed and grieving, wondering about what the future may hold. Loving God, give us the faith to counterbalance despair

All: and the love to outweigh self-interest and neglect.

One: We thank you loving God, that your mercies are never confined to the range of our prayers, nor your servants limited to the ranks of the churches. Please bless the all those who are endeavouring to serve others without thought for their own comfort, profit or safety. Through Christ Jesus our reconciler and healer.

*** HYMN**

Nearer My God to Thee

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 351

RESPONDING TO GOD

CALL TO OFFERING

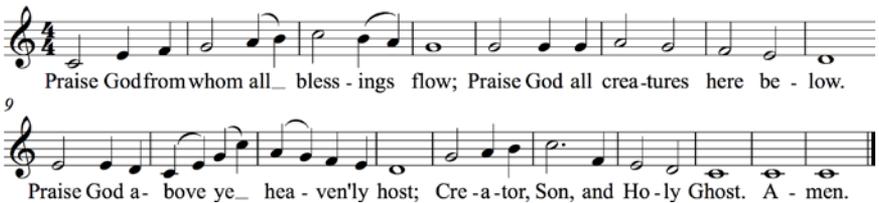
OFFERTORY

Andante in C

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

*** 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**

O gentle and humble Jesus, full of compassion and maker of peace, you lived in poverty and suffered persecution for the cause of justice. You chose the Cross as the path to reconciliation and salvation. May the offering we provide help guide us to joyfully live by your example and live a life inspired by your Gospel.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*** HYMN**

Take Up Your Cross,

FAREWELL FOR JEFF & JEAN WATKINS

*** BENEDICTION**

*** CHORAL RESPONSE**

The Lord Bless You and Keep You

Peter Lutkin

POSTLUDE

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Flowers for this Sunday are being given by Cindy and Ty Anderson, in loving memory of Lydia Anderson.

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

We expect to see more faces in the Church School today so “Welcome” to those whose first day is today. Babies, toddlers, 3 and 4 year olds begin in their classrooms in the Preschool at 10 am or before. Our older children will go to their classrooms after the Children’s Message. Teachers will help all children find their classrooms in the Preschool except 6th Grade which is in Rick’s Room. 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.

Choir Rehearsals

The following choirs will meet today:

- Cherub Choir: Rainbow Room (Lower Level) 11:15-11:45
- Children’s Choir: Music Room (3rd floor) 11:15-12:00
- Youth Choir: Choir Room (3rd floor) 11:15-12:15

UPCOMING

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.

First Intergenerational Breakfast of the Fall

Sunday, October 7, at 9 am in the Auditorium co-hosted by the Faith Formation and Education Committee and the Church School Task Force. Our traditional pancake breakfast with sausage, fruit, yogurt, juices, chocolate milk and more. Let us break bread together on this World Communion Sunday for the love of God, in remembrance of Jesus and being in community.

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

Monday, September 17: The 54th Grand Re-opening of the Rummage Room took place Tuesday, September 4th, and was successful as always and set the stage for a terrific week. If you were out of town or not able to make it to the Re-opening, rest assured the Rummage Room has many wonderful items still available. There were too many attractive items donated to display all at once so the shop is covered-up with "new" items brought into the shop during the week. If you need Fall Clothing for you and your family, you will be delighted with the choices. There are many lovely handbags, shoes, bric-a-brac, artwork, glassware, women's, men's, and children's clothing and more. If you are thinking of beginning your Christmas shopping, now is a great time to begin.

Both the Women's Fellowship and the Rummage Room thank you for your abiding loyalty in what you donate and what you purchase. If you are new to the Rummage Room, we welcome you. The money raised by sales of your donations goes to the many organizations that help women and children locally and worldwide. We welcome all who wish to be a part of this amazing mission.

Shopping Hours: 10 am to 5 pm daily and Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm.

Donation Hours: 9:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Thursday, & Friday and Saturday, 9:30 am to 1 pm.

Manager Leanne's Wish List: Children's and babies clothing and shoes.

Thought for the Times: Until we accept and interact on the premise that we are not just white or black, Democrat or Republican, or in some way “different”, we will not heal ourselves or our nation of superficial biases! We are all God’s children.

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, September 23**

Reverend Carla Dietz, preaching
Proverbs 31: 10-31 and Mark 9: 30-37
“Kids Today”

Music by the Chancel Choir
Toccata of Praise—Joseph Martin

Music by Hanna Golodinskii, soprano
Sheep May Safely Graze—J. S. Bach



The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

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Ministers: The Members of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

Interim Senior 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

Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister

Parish Nurse: Susan Asselin, RN

Director of Preschool: Darla Kohler Steiner

Publications Coordinator: Vance Briceland

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Interim Administrative Assistant/Cemetery: Pat Larrabee

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