

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Founded in 1665

25 November 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 Carla Dietz

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

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

One: Come, let us worship the One who says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega."

All: Let us follow the One who shows us the way.

One: Come, let us worship the One who loves us deeply.

All: Let us follow the One who shows us the way.

One: Come, let us worship the One who proclaims the truth.

All: Let us follow the One who shows us the way.

One: Come, let us worship the One who acts justly.

All: Let us follow the One who shows us the way.

One: Come, let us worship the One who promises possibilities of peace.

All: Let us follow the One who shows us the way.

One: Come, let us worship!

All: Let us worship God!

* HYMN

Crown With Your Richest Crowns New Century (black) Hymnal 301

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)

God of life, thank you for leading us to your way of justice, peace, love, and truth. You have given us examples of how we can live. You have taught us about truth. You have given us a glimpse of your reign, of your possibilities, and your promise. Help us to follow your example and to follow your way. Amen.

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

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

God of grace, sometimes we can become overwhelmed by the problems in this world, and so we do nothing. We can stray from following your way. We can ignore your truths. We think that our ways are the best way. Forgive us, God. Help us and correct us. Guide us on your path of peace and justice so that we can work towards your reign here on Earth. Amen.

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

(Assurance that you have been forgiven.)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rosemary Lamie

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 and the Lord's Prayer, children and teachers will go to the Daniels Center for a one room schoolhouse program. Sixth graders and older are welcome to help. Child Care in the Preschool Red Door for 4 year olds and younger.)

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON—HEBREW BIBLE

Barbara Norrgard

2 Samuel 23: 1-7

Now these are the last words of David:

The oracle of David, son of Jesse,
the oracle of the man whom God exalted,
the anointed of the God of Jacob,
the favorite of the Strong One of Israel:

The spirit of the Lord speaks through me,
his word is upon my tongue.

The God of Israel has spoken,
the Rock of Israel has said to me:

One who rules over people justly,
ruling in the fear of God,
is like the light of morning,
like the sun rising on a cloudless morning,
gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.

Is not my house like this with God?
For he has made with me an everlasting covenant,
ordered in all things and secure.

Will he not cause to prosper
all my help and my desire?

But the godless are all like thorns that are thrown away;
for they cannot be picked up with the hand;
to touch them one uses an iron bar
or the shaft of a spear.

And they are entirely consumed in fire on the spot.

— New Revised Standard Bible

ANTHEM

Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

The Chancel Choir
Carl Mueller (1892-1982)

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence
And take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation
And uphold me, uphold me with Thy free Spirit,
Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways,
And sinners will be converted unto Thee.
Create in me a clean heart, O God.

SECOND LESSON—GOSPEL

John 18: 33–37

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” Pilate replied, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?” Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.” Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”

– New Revised Standard Bible

MESSAGE

Reign of Christ Sunday

Reverend Carla Dietz

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(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: Let us pray together. Guiding One, we pray for your wisdom as we journey along the path your way. Help us always to seek your truth, justice, and peace. Lead us on our life’s journey. And help us to remember one another: our neighbors near and far. We pray for our world. We pray for

places around the world such as...We continue to pray for our world in silence. (Silence is held.)

All: God, listen to your children praying.

One: We pray for our nation. We pray for places in our nation such as...We continue to pray for our nation in silence. (Silence is held.)

All: God, listen to your children praying.

One: We pray for our community and our congregation. We pray for these situations and these people in our community and congregation...We continue to pray for our community and our congregation in silence. (Silence is held.)

All: God, listen to your children praying.

*** HYMN**

Rain Down

F A7 Dm F7 B^b
Rain down; rain down; rain down your
(D/F[#]) (Em7) (A7) (D) (F[#]7) (Bm)
F/A Gm7 C7 F A7 Dm
love on your peo - ple. Rain down; rain
(D7) (G) (Em) (A7) (G) (D)
F7 B^b Gm C7 B^b F
down; rain down your love, God of life.

RESPONDING TO GOD

CALL TO OFFERING

Pat Larrabee

OFFERTORY

Standchen

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Mary Fike, flute

*** DOXOLOGY**

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 515

(Offering praise and thanksgiving for meeting our needs and for using us to bring God's mission to the world.)

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.

*** DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING**

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*** HYMN**

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name New Century (black) Hymnal 304

*** BENEDICTION**

*** CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE

* All who are able, please stand
* * *

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 is there as well as a link to the live broadcast. Previous sermon recordings are also available.

NEWS AND NOTICES

TODAY

Church School

Today we have one room schoolhouse program when we will focus on activities that will put gratitude into our Advent season. Regular Church School resumes on December 2.

Giving Trees 2018

Wrapped gifts for our Giving Trees should be returned by December 2. These gifts are for our friends at H.O.M.E. (Homeworkers Organized for More Employment), the non-profit organization that supports low-income and homeless families in Orland Maine, and for Pilgrim Towers, a senior residential community in Stamford. Thank you!

Christmas Tree & Wreath Sale—November 24-December 8, While Supplies Last!

Be part of our more than fifty-year tradition! Volunteers are key to the success of the sale, which raised \$32,000 for local charities last year. Join the fun and volunteer! Sign up is easy using Sign-Up Genius on the fccog.org website. You can also sign up today on the posters in the Auditorium or contact Pat Mendelsohn (203-637-5773). The Christmas Tree & Wreath Sale begins on Saturday, November 24 with the delivery of 450 fresh cut Fraser and Balsam Fir trees from New Hampshire and over 200 balsam wreaths. Come find your perfect tree—wreaths make wonderful gifts! Most importantly, all proceeds of the sale go to charity.

UPCOMING

Tree Sale Fundraising Concert Featuring Ornament: Friday, November 30

Ornament is an Award winning 11-piece Rock Orchestra specializing as a tribute to the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. On Friday, November 30 at 8 pm in the Meetinghouse, the band will perform traditional holiday carols and songs set to rock, blues, and gospel music in the historic Meetinghouse. The concert will raise funds in support of the annual Christmas Tree Sale at First Congregational Church and all proceeds from the concert and sale will support local charity partners. Tickets may be purchased on the church website or in the church office.

Free Annual Reports

Last chance before the surplus is recycled Nov. 30! See copies on the Auditorium stage or email your request to patlarrabee@hotmail.com.

Advent Craft Workshop and Dinner

Next Sunday, December 2, from 4 to 6:30, come to the Daniels Center for one of the best Christmas time traditions of the Church School. There will be special handmade crafts for gift giving and decorating including the ever popular photo ornaments, evergreen centerpieces, pet gifts and much more. Dinner will include soup, mac & cheese, chicken nuggets, salad and more. Sign up at fccog.org.

Zahra Sewn

At Community Hour on December 2nd, Zahra will be selling beautiful towels, pillows, etc. that she has made. Stop by to say "Hello" to our refugee from Afghanistan and pick up a gift for someone on your Christmas list.

52nd Annual Messiah Performance

The 52nd annual Messiah performance will take place on Saturday, December 8, 2018 at 4:00 pm. Admission is free will offering with a suggested donation of \$20 per person. High school age youth and younger are free! Since 1966, First Church has presented Part I of Handel's Messiah, the Christmas portion. The First Church Festival Chorus, 75 singers strong, is accompanied by the First Church Chamber Orchestra, with professional soloists soprano Miran

Robarts, mezzo soprano Helena Brown, tenor Charlie Baird, and bass Hernan Berisso.

Join the First Church Festival Chorus: If you have choral experience, you are invited to join the chorus. There is only one choir rehearsal on Monday, December 3 from 7:30 – 10:00 pm in the sanctuary, plus a dress rehearsal with orchestra on Wednesday, December 5 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! Contact Dr. Craig Scott Symons, craigs@fccog.org, for more information.

Sign Up Now for the First Church Christmas Party

Come celebrate the holidays with your First Church family! Please join us for fun and generous hors d'oeuvres on Saturday, December 15 from 5 to 7:30 pm in the church auditorium. There will be a full bar. Please RSVP by Monday, December 10. For reservations contact Ginny Breismeister at ginnyb@fccog.org, register online at fccog.org or call the church office 203 637-1791. Babysitter recommendations available. Join us for this festive complementary Christmas celebration!

First Church Cookie Walk

The third annual First Church Cookie Walk is fast approaching! On Sunday, December 16 we will all have the opportunity to participate in a festive sale of delectable Christmas cookies and treats provided by all you wonderful bakers. Bakers will receive “priority” stickers to fill your box first and then non bakers may go through the line. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Boxes will be \$5 each. Proceeds will go to the Pastor’s discretionary fund for emergency relief. Fire up your ovens, get out the flour and sugar, and bake for a fun time and help those in need! Please sign up in coffee hour indicating that you will bring cookies.

Now Casting for the Christmas Eve Nativity Pageants

Do you know that on Christmas Eve we have THREE nativity pageants? We need Marys and Josephs, shepherds and angels, kings, little drummer boys, and even some farm animals.

At the 10 am service, any children who arrive by 9:20 am can be in the pageant. For both the 3 pm and 6 pm services, we also need an

angel who is willing to climb the ladder and spread your wings. For the 3 and 6 pm services, you will need to choose costumes and rehearse on Saturday, December 22, from 10 am to Noon. There are no speaking parts! How easy can this be! All you need to do is act the part of the character you are portraying and smile. So as soon as your family knows which service you will be attending and if you want to be part of the fun, just let Rosemary know. (RosemaryL@fccog.org). She will be so happy to hear from you.

News from the Rummage Room

191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich

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. Please do not leave donations when the Rummage Room is closed. Thank you.

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 Youth 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.



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. 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

Database Administrative Assistant: Sue Wilder

Interim Administrative Assistant/Cemetery: Pat Larrabee

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

Cover Photo: Pat Larrabee