

*The First Congregational Church of Greenwich*  
*Founded in 1665*

**30 December 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 in the auditorium after worship for our Community Hour.

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.  
\*All who are able please stand.

---

### **PREPARING FOR WORSHIP**

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

**PRELUDE** Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ  
Puer Natus Est (Today a Boy is Born) Everett Titcomb (1884-1968)

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

Leader: We are here because we have heard a promise of peace,

**People: And we have faith its day will come.**

Leader: We have heard a rumor of justice,

**People: And we have faith its day will come.**

Leader: We have heard a whisper of hope,

**People: And we have faith its day will come.**

Leader: We have heard a hint of love,

**People: And we have faith its day will come.**

Leader: We have heard of the birth of the Christ-child,

**People: And we have faith his day is here.**

Leader: Let us worship together now with faith and hope for the dawning of a new age.

### **CHORAL INTROIT**

**\* HYMN**

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice      New Century (black) Hymnal 129

**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)

O Christmas God, the tinsel falls, the year turns, and the carols fade.  
The blessing of Bethlehem that touched all the gray in our lives with  
star silver is past. As the holy child grew and became strong with  
God's favor we too long such steady becoming. In this string on  
nameless days we long for renewal amid the routine, for courage in  
current events, for the assurance of God's presence beyond our  
holidays and into the wintering times of our lives. We pray all of this  
in Jesus' name who taught us to pray saying...

**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**

Car Westbrook

**Roots and Wings (Author Unknown)**

If I could give you many things,  
I'd give you gold and silver rings  
Of knowledge that I've gained with years  
The gift of smiling through the tears  
Confidence, courage, determination,  
Laughter and spirit and love of creation,  
Wrapped up in a box with a bow, I'd give  
To you these gifts to keep for as long as you live.

“If I could give you just two things,  
One would be Roots, the other, Wings.”  
Roots, not to tie you to the ground,  
But to guide you to where your fulfillment is found

The nourishing start, the firm foundation,  
The source of your inner determination.  
Wings to soar over obstacles, wings to fly free,  
Wings to glide to the heights of the best you can be.

And when obstacles loom, from your Roots grows a hand  
Providing a strong, sturdy, safe place to land.  
I'd choose these two things for the gifts that are best,  
For with Roots and with Wings, you'll find all the rest.

## **ANTHEM**

In the Bleak Midwinter

The Chancel Choir  
Harold Darke (1888-1976)

## **SECOND LESSON—GOSPEL**

### **Luke 2: 41-52**

Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. When he was 12 years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to their custom. After the festival was over, they were returning home, but the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't know it. Supposing that he was among their band of travelers, they journeyed on for a full day while looking for him among their family and friends. When they didn't find Jesus, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple. He was sitting among the teachers, listening to them and putting questions to them. Everyone who heard him was amazed by his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were shocked.

His mother said, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Listen! Your father and I have been worried. We've been looking for you!"

Jesus replied, "Why were you looking for me? Didn't you know that it was necessary for me to be in my Father's house?" But they didn't understand what he said to them.

Jesus went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. His mother cherished every word in her heart. Jesus matured in wisdom and years, and in favor with God and with people.

– Common English Bible

## **MESSAGE**

Free to Soar

Reverend Patrick Collins

## **\* HYMN**

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

New Century (black) hymnal 154

## **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.)

## **RESPONDING TO GOD**

### **CALL TO OFFERING**

Ben Quick

### **ORGAN OFFERTORY**

Minuet on “The Holly and the Ivy”

Alec Rowley (1892-1958)

### **\* 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**

What Child Is This?

New Century (black) Hymnal 148

### **\* BENEDICTION**

### **\* CHORAL RESPONSE**

### **POSTLUDE**

Bourrée on “On Christmas Night”

Alec Rowley

\* \* \*

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](http://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**

There is no Church School on Sunday, December 30 but there will be child care. Regular Church School resumes on January 6.

### **UPCOMING**

#### **Notice of a Special Meeting**

A Special Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Greenwich, Old Greenwich, CT is hereby called for Sunday, January 13, 2019,

immediately following the church service, to vote on the motions brought forward by the Building & Grounds Committee and approved by the Church Council. Note: Childcare will be available in the Church School for children during the meeting. —Car Westbrook

### **Donations for Pacific House**

First Church and the First Church Pre-School are coordinating a donation drive for Pacific House in Stamford. The cold weather has increased the number of occupants at the emergency men's shelter, and, because of the increase, they are in desperate need of clean, new, or gently used towels all sizes. Donations may be dropped off in the Church Office or outside of the Pre-School from December 16 thru January 31.

### **News from the Rummage Room**

#### **191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich**

The Best Little Shop In Town reopens at 10 am Thursday, January 2. Your donations of winter clothing would be very appreciated.

**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.

**Thought for 2019:** Let us now leave 2018 in the silence of the past but continue to give thanks to those who helped so much! May we have the same great support from our shoppers, donors, and volunteers in 2019 so the Allocations Committees will again be able to give help to those in need both near and far.



## **The First Congregational Church of Greenwich**

108 Sound Beach Avenue,  
Old Greenwich, Connecticut, 06870  
203-637-1791  
*[www.fccog.org](http://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

Administrative Assistant: Wendy Spezzano

Publications Coordinator: Vance Briceland

Database Administrative Assistant: Sue Wilder

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