

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich
Founded in 1665

Epiphany

6 January 2019

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

Prelude sur L'Introit de Epiphany

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

CALL TO COMMUNITY

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

Reverend Carla Dietz

PRAISING GOD

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

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

One: According to the story, Mary and Joseph listened to all the prophecies about their child. They let lowly shepherds draw near, they received blessings and praise from pious Simeon and faithful Anna, they accepted gifts of the foreign magi. They didn't judge those who came near to worship or appreciate this child who had interrupted their lives.

All: **We come into to worship the one true God who brings together all who have need of the divine presence.**

CHORAL INTROIT

*** HYMN**

We Three Kings

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 143

OPENING PRAYER

Reverend Patrick Collins

(Or Invocation. 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 who guides our journey, as Mary opened her heart to the child in her arms and the magi opened their hearts to a journey of unknown proportions, may we throw open the doors of our hearts to welcome the joy and pain of life lived in the mysteries of a faith. May our worship guide us, like the brightest star, closer to God, ourselves and one another. Amen.

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 Lord's Prayer, children and teachers will all go to their classrooms in the Preschool, except the 6th graders who are in Rick's Room. Child Care is in the Red Door.)

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

Reverend Carla Dietz

One: If we're honest, none of us got what we wanted this year.

All: **Wars continue to rage; starvation threatens refugees;
entire ecosystems are still under threat. We rarely stop
to consider our part in the cycle.**

One: We confess we did not really give the gifts that would bring peace to Earth.

All: We speak aloud that we still struggle to find peace even in our town or homes this year. Amen.

PRAYER OF AFFIRMATION

One: Be still your hearts and listen! The magi followed nothing more than a question. Just like us, they had doubts and questions. Even though they didn't study our scriptures, they studied Creation. And Creation testified to God's presence. They noticed that Creation was changing, calling out to them to come and worship a God they hadn't intended to worship!

All: Even though we may not be clear about what we seek, where we are headed or who we will encounter along the way, we serve a God who speaks peace, acceptance, and grace into and all around each one of us. Amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Joe McBride

Isaiah 60: 1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;

but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

– New Revised Standard Version

ANTHEM

Do You Hear What I Hear?

The Chancel Choir

Gloria Shayne Baker (1923-2008)

SECOND LESSON—GOSPEL

Matthew 2: 1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

– New Revised Standard Version

MESSAGE

Epiphany

Reverend Carla Dietz

On this 12th day after Christmas the church remembers the visit of the magi to the Christ child. According to the gospel of Matthew, sages from the East came to Jerusalem seeking the child. They had observed a new star rising and followed it to find the newborn king of the Jews. The word epiphany means “manifestation” or “sudden appearing.” During the Season after the Epiphany, which lasts from January 6 until the beginning of Lent, the church focuses on making Christ known to the world, reading stories of call, prophecy, and discipleship.

* HYMN

As with Gladness Men of Old

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 119

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Reverend Patrick Collins

(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

Marilyn Derr

OFFERTORY SOLO

Thomas Woodman, bass

I Wonder as I Wander

John Jacob Niles (1892-1980)

* 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.

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

We practice open Communion – all who wish to know the presence of Christ and to participate in the community of God’s people are welcome to receive Communion, including children of all ages, and regardless of church membership or denominational affiliation. All are welcome to the table of God.

INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

In the tradition of our church, let us partake of the bread (note, gluten-free bread is available) as it is served, remembering our individual uniqueness in the eyes of God and our diversity within the Body of Christ. Let us hold the cup (grape juice) until all have been served, remembering our oneness with God and our unity in the
Body of Christ.

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who have shared this heavenly food. All honor and glory be yours now and forever. Amen

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*** HYMN**

Arise, Your Light Is Come

New Century (black) Hymnal 164

*** BENEDICTION**

*** CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE

The Maple Leaf Rag

Alex Mair, piano

Scott Joplin

* * *

The flowers in the Meetinghouse this morning are given in loving memory of Norman Wylie by Maesie.

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

Regular Church School resumes today. A big thank you to all our children and their families who made our Nativity pageants so special and meaningful. Great gratitude to Hilary Lawrence for all the time and help she gives to the costuming, organization and direction of the 50 plus actors over 3 different pageants on Christmas Eve!

Choir Rehearsals

The following choirs will meet today:

- Cherub Choir: Rainbow Room (Lower Level) 11:15-11:45
- Youth Choir: Choir Room (3rd floor) 11:15-12:15

Quarterly Meeting

First Church's Quarterly Meeting of Members will take place today in the Auditorium, directly following the service. Grab a cup of coffee

and come hear about the final phase of the Capital Campaign, a recap of our Stewardship progress, and highlights of our Outreach projects during the fall.

Parish Nurse

Sue Asselin, RN, is available for blood pressure screenings and health consultations following today's worship service, in her office to the right of the Auditorium stage. During the week, she is available by appointment, which can be made by calling extension 821.

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

Announcing the 2019 “Souper Bowl” Sunday Soup Sale

Calling all cooks! It's time to show-off your soup-making skills once again by volunteering to make and donate a quart (or quarts) of soup or chili to benefit the FCCOG Women's Fellowship! The sale will take place in the auditorium on Sunday, February 3, 2019 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Quarts of homemade soup and chili will be sold for \$10 each. Please sign up to donate after church in the auditorium beginning Sunday, January 6th and continuing for the next several Sundays. Restaurant-style food containers will be available when you sign up. You may also sign up in the church office. This annual event has proven to be easy, inexpensive and popular for both those who love to cook and those who love to eat! This is the only Women's Fellowship fundraiser for the year. Please contact Sue Wilder at swilder102@gmail.com or Jenny Gartner at jenniferhgartner@gmail.com for more information.

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 Rummage Room is open for business with a good selection of clothing for the Winter of 2019.

Manager Leanne's Wish List: Heavy coats; winter jackets, sweaters, winter shoes, children's apparel, ski wear, ice skates, sleds, jewelry, bric-a-brac and more. Please do not donate skis. We cannot take them at the Rummage Room. Thank you!

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.

Mission Objective: All proceeds go to organizations dedicated to helping women, children and families in need both near and around the world. We give thanks to our customers; the Rummage Room Committee; the Rummage Room volunteers, and the Rummage Room staff whose collective efforts have resulted in providing so much help to the needy over the years.

Thought for January: Life isn't about waiting around for the Winter to pass. It's about learning to dance in the snow!

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.

Women's Fellowship Allocation Committee

Have you wanted to participate in Church outreach, but do not have the time to sign up for a year-long commitment? The Women's Fellowship Allocation Committee has the perfect solution for you.

What is the purpose of the Allocation Committee? The Allocation committee is charged with reviewing, researching and recommending awards in response to funding applications received for the allocation year.

Where do the funds come from? The funds come from the profits of The Rummage Room and are allocated annually to charitable organizations which serve women, children and families locally, nationally and internationally. Since inception, over \$4.6 million has been donated. Last year we allocated \$160,824 in awards to 45 organizations. Applications were sent to all 2018 recipients on October 30th and we are looking forward to receiving their applications by December 31st.

Why are we recruiting Committee members? With gratitude to Anne Pfetsch, Kara Donahue and Collette Rogers who are rolling off of the Committee, we are looking for a few women to join our Committee.

Why is this a good committee to test the waters? The Committee meets on a bi-weekly basis from January 16 through the end of March. We meet on Wednesdays from 7 - 8:30 pm in the Binney Conference Room to share our findings and recommendations. Members take applications home to review between meetings. Members gain insight into the many charitable organizations we support. If you are interested in joining our Committee, please contact Sheila Bennett at allocations@fccog.org.



The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

108 Sound Beach Avenue,
Old Greenwich, Connecticut, 06870
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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