



“We are made for goodness. We are made for love. We are made for friendliness. We are made for togetherness. We are made for all of the beautiful things that you and I know. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders. All are welcome: black, white, red, yellow, rich, poor, educated, not educated, male, female, gay, straight, all, all, all. We all belong to this family, this human family, God’s family.”

– Desmond Tutu
*Current Prince of Peace
Nobel Peace Prize Winner*

Sunday, December 22, 2019

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:00 am

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. Please join us in the auditorium after worship for our Community Hour.

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

Please let an usher know if you would like a Bible during the service. We are happy to provide one upon request. You may also get one from the bookshelf across from the sound booth room.



ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Puer natus est (A Babe is Born)

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organist
Everett Titcomb (1884-1968)

CALL TO COMMUNITY

(please sign and pass the red fellowship pad found at the end of your row.)

Rev. Patrick Collins

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Now is the time of watching and waiting.

People: **The time of pregnant expectation of new life.**

Leader: Now is the season of hope unfolding.

People: **The dark winter season when hope is waiting to be born.**

Leader: Let us come before God with receptive and willing spirits.

People: **May our souls magnify God's name and may our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!**

All: **Rejoice! God comes to bring the birthday of life and hope. Amen.**

CHORAL INTROIT

*HYMN

Lift Up Your Heads

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal #114

OPENING PRAYER *(in unison)*

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

O living Christ, we need your love today to shine in the dark corners of our world, where loneliness and hatred, war and suffering, greed and lust destroy. Come to us and shine in our lives, that we may more perfectly love you and reflect your love on earth. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

Jan Meyer, Ginge Liddel, Bobbie Hopkins, Harold Frost

MUSIC DURING ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

O Come, All Ye Faithful

The Palmer Handbell Choir
Arr. Lloyd Larson

All: Immanuel, God with us. In muscle and sinew, breath and bone. In vulnerability and risk, escape and refuge. In parable and healing, encounter and sign. In suffering and death, word became flesh. In resurrection, ascension, and spirit come down. In justice and grace, patience and peace. Immanuel, God with us, Creator, Son and Spirit. Glory be to God.

**All who are able, please rise.*

PRAYER OF REFLECTION *(in unison)*

We are made for goodness. We are made for love. We are made for friendliness. We are made for togetherness. We are made for all of the beautiful things that you and I know. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders. All are welcome: black, white, red, yellow, rich, poor, educated, not educated, male, female, gay, straight, all, all, all. We all belong to this family, this human family, God's family.

LORD'S PRAYER *(in unison)*

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 children will now leave for a special Church School program in the Daniels Center. Parents are welcome to accompany their children and return to the service. Baby Nursery & Toddler Room are in the Red Door classroom for children 4 and younger.

FIRST LESSON

Lynn Hawxhurst

Isaiah 7:10-16 (The Message)

GOD spoke again to Ahaz. This time he said, "Ask for a sign from your GOD. Ask anything. Be extravagant. Ask for the moon!"

But Ahaz said, "I'd never do that. I'd never make demands like that on GOD!"

So Isaiah told him, "Then listen to this, government of David! It's bad enough that you make people tired with your pious, timid hypocrisies, but now you're making God tired. So the Master is going to give you a sign anyway. Watch for this: A girl who is presently a virgin will get pregnant. She'll bear a son and name him Immanuel (God-With-Us). By the time the child is twelve years old, able to make moral decisions, the threat of war will be over. Relax, those two kings that have you so worried will be out of the picture. But also be warned: GOD will bring on you and your people and your government a judgment worse than anything since the time the kingdom split, when Ephraim left Judah. The king of Assyria is coming!"

*HYMN

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal #124

Bring a Torch

SECOND LESSON

Lynn Hawxhurst

Matthew 1:18-25 (The Message)

The birth of Jesus took place like this. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. Before they came to the marriage bed, Joseph discovered she was pregnant. (It was by the Holy Spirit, but he didn't know that.) Joseph, chagrined but noble, determined to take care of things quietly so Mary would not be disgraced.

**All who are able, please rise.*

While he was trying to figure a way out, he had a dream. God's angel spoke in the dream: "Joseph, son of David, don't hesitate to get married. Mary's pregnancy is Spirit-conceived. God's Holy Spirit has made her pregnant. She will bring a son to birth, and when she does, you, Joseph, will name him Jesus – 'God saves' – because he will save his people from their sins." This would bring the prophet's embryonic sermon to full term:

Watch for this—a virgin will get pregnant and bear a son;
They will name him Immanuel (*Hebrew for "God is with us"*).

Then Joseph woke up. He did exactly what God's angel commanded in the dream: He married Mary. But he did not consummate the marriage until she had the baby. He named the baby Jesus.

MESSAGE

God with Us?

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

ANTHEM

Christmas Day

The Chancel Choir
Gustav Holst (1874-1935)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(praise for who God is, with thanksgiving for what God does and with requests for God to heal, transform)

Rev. Patrick Collins

CALL TO OFFERING

Using a Smartphone? Text FCCOG Donate to 73256

Andrea W. Osker

ORGAN OFFERTORY

Christmas Carole

Karl Deigendesch (1839-1911)

*DOXOLOGY

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

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal #515

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

Andrea W. Osker

*HYMN

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal #117

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

**All who are able, please rise.*

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Nowell to a Ground

Colin Hand (b. 1929)

*Directly following the service, one of our pastors will remain in the Chapel
to be available to anyone who has a pastoral care concern.*

To Jesus on His Birthday

by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950)

For this your mother sweated in the cold,
For this you bled upon the bitter tree:
A yard of tinsel ribbon bought and sold;
A paper wreath; a day at home for me.

Nobody listens. Less than the wind that blows
Are all your words to us you died to save.
O Prince of Peace! O Sharon's dewy Rose!
How mute you lie within your vaulted grave.

The merry bells ring out, the people kneel;
Up goes the man of God before the crowd;
With voice of honey and with eyes of steel
He drones your humble gospel to the proud.

The stone the angel rolled away with tears
Is back upon your mouth these thousand years.

***The decorations and flowers in the Meetinghouse today are given
in joyful and loving memory of:***

- Robert Ellinwood Alden by his family
- Dana Andersen by her family
- Gordon Andrews by Cindy and Richard DiPreta
- Beth and Sherman Baldwin and Lisa Berizzi by Anne Baldwin Castine
- John and Betty Briggs by the Kreuter family
- Joe Browne by Tom, Terri and Peter Kutzen
- Jim Callaway and Julienne Callaway by Bob Carey and Linda Callaway
- Judy Carey by Bob Carey and Linda Callaway
- John Clark Chidsey by Mary Ann Chidsey, his mother
- Joan Denne by her family
- Anne, Bill and Sue Denne by their family
- Josephine Dolce DuCharme by Robin DuCharme Pastore and family
- George W. Fisk by Dorothy L. Fisk
- Lt. Col. C. George Fryback and Nicholas G. Fryback by the Fryback family
- Margaret and Carleton Gisborne, our parents, by Ruth and Gifford Reed
- Edmund and Shirley Hawxhurst by Tom and Carol Woodman
- Bristo and Helen Hogue, my parents by Rosemary Lamie
- Richmond B. Hopkins by his family

- Marian and Fred Hout by Susie Hout Baker and Sara, Charlie and Lizzie
- Paul Hudson and George Finch by The Hudson and Finch families
- Phyllis Kimball, our loving mother and Nana by Karen Pacent and Nicole Pacent-Lindquist
- Joan and Jim Kreuter by their children and grand-children
- Carol Kutzen and Jerry Kutzen by Tom, Terri and Peter Kutzen
- Roger A. Lepoutre by the Lepoutre family
- Robert H. MacLea Jr. by Carolyn H. MacLea
- John and Melita Magness by their family
- Gerald and Mildred Mulhall by the Ghaffari family
- Erna Nelson by Ken and Erna Olson
- Efraim and Victoria Olson by Ken and Erna Olson
- Kimberly Pacent, our beautiful daughter and sister by Paul and Karen Pacent, and Nicole Pacent-Lindquist
- Joanna and Richard Pastore by Robin DuCharme Pastore and family
- Patsy and David Patterson by Tom and Carol Woodman
- Jean and Kay Paulus by Tom and Carol Woodman
- John L. Putnam by Wendy Putnam and Jennifer Maloney
- Louise and Harrison Reed, our parents, by Ruth and Gifford Reed
- Charlie and Bill Robertson by Eric and Betsy Kreuter
- Eric and Susan Robertson, my father and sister, by Lynn Robertson
- Ryan and Margaret Rosendale by Ken and Erna Olson
- Carole C. Sweger by the Sweger family
- Purisima and Feliciano Teria by Erlinda and Larry Haviland
- The beloved Reverend Jo Tolley by Diane and Paul Kretschmann
- Charles J. Veith IV by his sister, Linda V. Glover
- Richard Vogt by an anonymous donor
- Alvin Wachsman by Anne Wachsman
- William Webster by Mary Webster
- Arthur C. and Catherine G. Weigner, our parents by Stephen and Ronald
- Harry and Rick Woodman by Tom and Carol Woodman
- Rick Woodman by Carolyn Paulus and the entire Woodman family
- Rafic and Adele Zaitoon, one of the best loving parents and grandparents by Rima Zaitoon

The decorations and flowers in the Meetinghouse today are given in honor of:

- Virginia Liddel ♥ by her loving children Bob, Betsy and Joani, and all of her 7 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren
- Ringa-May and Sune Gronlund by Pam and Lee Shubert



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 at www.fccog.org. A bulletin is there as well as a link to the live broadcast. Previous sermon recordings are also available.



All services are now live-streamed on [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com). Search for First Congregational Church of Greenwich and subscribe to our channel.

NEWS & NOTICES

TODAY

Church School

Today we have some special Christmas activities in the Daniel Center for children 5 and older. Our younger children are welcome in the Preschool Red Door Classroom for their own special activities. Please let Rosemary know (rosemaryl@fccog.org) if your children would like to be in a pageant at 10 am, 3pm or 6pm on Christmas Eve. Next Sunday, December 29, there is a special church service and no Church School or Child Care. **Church School resumes on January 5.**

Choir Rehearsals Today

Cherub Choir: Rainbow Room (Lower Level) 11:15-11:45 am

Youth Choir: Choir Room (3rd Floor) 11:15 am -12:15 pm

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.

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

108 Sound Beach Avenue • Old Greenwich CT 06870 • 203-637-1791 • www.fccog.org

Ministers: The members of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

Interim Senior Pastor: Reverend Carla Dietz

Associate Pastor: Reverend Patrick Collins

Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care: Reverend Avery C. Manchester

Minister of Music: Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Director of Family Ministries: Rosemary Lamie

Director of Church Administration and Finance: Steve Summerton

Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister

Parish Nurse: Susan Asselin, RN

Director of Preschool: Darla Kohler Steiner

Administrative Assistant: Wendy Spezzano

Communications Specialist: Dalinda Rioseco

Database Administrative Assistant: Sue Wilder

Pastors Emeriti: Reverend Dr. Thomas L. Stiers and Reverend Sally Colegrove

