



**LIFE IS HARD,
BUT SO VERY BEAUTIFUL.**

— ABRAHAM LINCOLN



“CHOOSE LIFE”

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2020

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

Prière

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organist
Leon Böellmann (1862-1897)

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Rev. Patrick Collins

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

CALL TO WORSHIP*

Leader: The Christ said, "This is my commandment: Love one another."

People: **We come to worship the God who is love, that we may learn to love one another.**

Leader: The Christ said, "No longer do I call you servants; but now I call you my friends."

People: **We come to worship the God whose friends we are through Christ.**

All: **Let us sing praise to God, and live in love and friendship toward the human family, through Jesus our Christ. Amen.**

HYMN*

Lift Every Voice and Sing

New Century (black) Hymnal #593

GATHERING PRAYER *(in unison)*

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Almighty and eternal God, we thank you that you have not left us alone in our sin and despair. Loving us, you have brought us good news and set before us the way of Life. Yet we confess that we have failed to see the way. In stubborn pride we have spurned your mercy and your help. In selfishness we have turned away from those who need us. We have allowed ourselves to be crushed by troubles, as though Christ had not been raised at all. Forgive our faithlessness, and grant that we may know new life and hope, in the spirit of resurrection. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

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.

FIRST LESSON

Barbara Norrgard

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 (The Message)

Look at what I've done for you today: I've placed in front of you
Life and Good
Death and Evil.

And I command you today: Love God, your God. Walk in his ways. Keep his commandments, regulations, and rules so that you will live, really live, live exuberantly, blessed by God, your God, in the land you are about to enter and possess.

But I warn you: If you have a change of heart, refuse to listen obediently, and willfully go off to serve and worship other gods, you will most certainly die. You won't last long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

I call Heaven and Earth to witness against you today: I place before you, Life and Death, Blessing and Curse. Choose life so that you and your children will live. And love GOD, your God, listening obediently to him, firmly embracing him. Oh yes, he is life itself, a long life settled on the soil that God, your God, promised to give your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

**All who are able, please rise.*

SOLO

For the Mountains Shall Depart

Thomas Woodman, bass
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

SECOND LESSON

Matthew 5: 21-26; 33-37 (The Message)

Barbara Norrgard

"You're familiar with the command to the ancients, 'Do not murder.' I'm telling you that anyone who is so much as angry with a brother or sister is guilty of murder. Carelessly call a brother 'idiot!' and you just might find yourself hauled into court. Thoughtlessly yell 'stupid!' at a sister and you are on the brink of hellfire. The simple moral fact is that words kill.

"This is how I want you to conduct yourself in these matters. If you enter your place of worship and, about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then, come back and work things out with God.

"Or say you're out on the street and an old enemy accosts you. Don't lose a minute. Make the first move; make things right with him. After all, if you leave the first move to him, knowing his track record, you're likely to end up in court, maybe even jail. If that happens, you won't get out without a stiff fine.

"And don't say anything you don't mean. This counsel is embedded deep in our traditions. You only make things worse when you lay down a smoke screen of pious talk, saying, 'I'll pray for you,' and never doing it, or saying, 'God be with you,' and not meaning it. You don't make your words true by embellishing them with religious lace. In making your speech sound more religious, it becomes less true. Just say 'yes' and 'no.' When you manipulate words to get your own way, you go wrong.

MESSAGE

"Choose Life"

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

HYMN*

Jesus, Still Lead On

New Century (black) Hymnal #446

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Patrick Collins

CALL TO OFFERING

Pat Larrabee

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Bless the Lord, O my Soul

The Chancel Choir
Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859-1935)

DOXOLOGY*

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

Pat Larrabee

HYMN*

My Country 'tis of Thee

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal #437

BENEDICTION

Rev. Avery C. Manchester

**All who are able, please rise.*

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Toccata in E minor

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)



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

The flowers in the Meetinghouse this morning are given in loving memory of Catherine G. Weigner and Arthur C. Weigner by their sons Stephen A. and Ronald C. Weigner.



Our PrayGround Rocks!

We've created a space where children and others can move a bit during worship. Our "Prayground" is located in the back of the Chapel (right side of the Meeting House).

There's a rug, a few quiet play things, and pillows for propping. There are rocking chairs for anyone who finds the movement soothing. Additional children's books are on the bookshelves near the back of the chapel.

A Note about Welcoming Children

To our parents and caregivers: God put the wiggle in children... do not feel you have to suppress it during worship. The presence of all God's 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, we have a "PrayGround" located in the back of the Chapel (right side of the Meeting House).

The 10:00 am service is broadcast live each week on **105.5FM** (please note the transmission is weak on the west side of Greenwich) or you can stream it **online at WGCH.com**. In addition, the service is available through a link on 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**. Search for First Congregational Church of Greenwich and subscribe to our channel.

NEWS & NOTICES

TODAY

COLLECTION ENVELOPES ARE NOW AVAILABLE

Please pick up your offering envelopes in the Auditorium today.

NO CHURCH SCHOOL

Baby Nursery & Toddler Room are in the Red Door classroom for children 4 and younger.

NO CHOIR REHEARSALS

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 ext. 821.

UPCOMING



MOVIE NIGHT: *HARRIET*: Friday, February 21 at 7:00 pm in the Meetinghouse
Celebrate African American History Month with us by learning about the fascinating life of slave-turned-abolitionist Harriet Tubman. Free Popcorn! *Rated PG-13*

REV. PATRICK COLLINS' INSTALLATION: Sunday, February 23 during the 10:00 am Service
Special Music by the Children's, Youth, and Chancel Choirs, with bass and drums.



ASHES TO GO: Ash Wednesday, February 26th, 7:00 am to 9:00 am in the church parking lot

A new approach to a centuries-old Christian tradition, clergy and lay people visit transit stops, street corners, coffee shops, and college campuses to mark the foreheads of interested passers-by with ashes and invite them to experience the power of God's eternal love and grace in an informal way.

LENTEN COMMUNITY DINNER #1: February 26th at 6:00 pm in the Auditorium

Topic: *For the Beauty of the Earth* with Rev. Patrick Collins and hosted by FCCOG Staff. Sign up at www.fccog.org/event/lenten-community-dinner-1



LENTEN ORGAN RECITAL SERIES

Thursday, February 27th – Thursday, April 2nd in the Meetinghouse

To showcase the recent renovation and upgrades completed on our 1978 Austin pipe organ, we will present a free, 30-minute recital from 12:15-12:45, followed by a simple soup and sandwich lunch in the Auditorium. Free will donations happily accepted to defray the cost of the meals.

Scheduled recitalists are:

2/27: Dr. Craig Scott Symons, Minister of Music, FCCOG

3/5: Jonathan Vaughn, Associate Director of Music, Christ Church Greenwich

3/12: Leslie Smith, Director of Music, Round Hill Community Church, Greenwich

3/19: David Johnson, Director of Music, St. Paul's, Riverside

3/26: Dr. Liya Petrides, Director of Music, St. Catherine Church, Riverside

4/2: Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Join us for these special recitals and make your Lenten journey more reflective during the hectic pace of a busy week.

FREE DOCUMENTARY SCREENING: "RESILIENCE: THE BIOLOGY OF STRESS & THE SCIENCE OF HOPE"

Monday, March 9 at 6:30 - 8:30 pm in the FCCOG Lounge

Timely documentary about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Toxic Stress. Experts and practitioners are proving what's predictable is preventable. Special presentation by Dr. Alice Forrester, Executive Director of Clifford Beers Clinic in New Haven, CT. Co-sponsored by the First Church Preschool and First Church. RSVP at darlak@fccog.org.



CPR CERTIFICATION CLASS

Saturday, March 14 or Saturday March 21, 9:00 to 11:30 am

Greenwich EMS instructors will teach American Heart Association CPR, including the use of an AED (defibrillator). Free of charge to church members and others who frequent our church. Class is appropriate for first-time students as well as those seeking re-certification. Participants need only attend one class. To register or ask questions, contact your parish nurse: Sue Asselin, at extension 821 or email Susana@fccog.org.

BY REQUEST!: A FUNDRAISING CONCERT FOR BAREFOOT THEATER

Saturday, March 21, 7:30 pm

The professional musicians of First Church will be performing in the Meetinghouse in a fundraiser for Barefoot Theater's special show in April. Hanna Golodinskii, Linnea Conley, Daniel Young, Thomas Woodman, and Carol Woodman, will be singing your favorite tunes in a program that will entertain everyone! Admission for this program is \$20 per person. Youth in high school and under are always free!

A twist for this program is that you can request a particular song! For a donation of \$50, you can request the song and singer, and we will do our best to accommodate that request. You can sign up two ways: stop by the table in Community Hour after worship for the next 3 Sundays, or email Craig at craigs@fccog.org.



SERVICE SUNDAY PROJECT: Sunday, April 19, 2020

Join your friends and family for this great event! More details to come.



NEWS FROM THE RUMMAGE ROOM

191 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich • 203-637-1875

www.fccog.org/about-us/the-rummage-room

Did you know that all of the proceeds of your donations help provide much needed assistance to many non-profits? Please consider going through your stuff and set aside gently worn clothes, home decor, books, accessories and anything you find that you don't want anymore and bring them in.

Manager Leanne's Wish List:

Anything!

Shop Hours:

Monday-Friday 10 am - 5 pm

Saturdays 10 am - 1 pm

Donations accepted:

Monday-Thursday 9:30 am - 4:30 pm

Friday & Saturday 9:30 am - 12:30 pm



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

Ministers: The members of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

Senior 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

Preschool Administrative Assistant: Melanie Garnett

Administrative Assistant: Wendy Spezzano

Communications Specialist: Dalinda Rioseco

Database Administrative Assistant: Sue Wilder

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

