

*Old Greenwich,
Connecticut*

**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF GREENWICH**

*United Church
of Christ*

Founded in 1665

Second Sunday of Advent



5 December 2010
10 o'clock in the morning

We welcome you to The First Congregational Church and we are pleased to worship together in this Advent season as we prepare for the birth of Christ. “All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain through the world are simply birth pangs. But it's not only around us; it's within us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. That is why waiting does not diminish us any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged by waiting and become more joyful in our expectancy.” (*Romans 8, translated by Eugene Petersen*)

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

*All who are able please stand

‡Seating of latecomers

PRELUDE

Wachet auf, ruft uns die stimme

*Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ
J. S. Bach*

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Please sign and pass the red book.

Dr. David D. Young

PRAISING GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

***‡OPENING HYMN AND PROCESSION**

Of the Parent's Heart Begotten

New Century (black) Hymnal 118

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

Winnie, John, Johnny, William and Thomas Simmons

Opening Sentences

Scripture: Luke 1:26-31

Prayer: *(In Unison)*

O God, as we sense anew the wondrous vision that Christ is coming, help us to see and hear with joy and respond with simple acts of faith. Amen.

Lighting of the Second Advent Candle:

We light the second Advent Candle, catching a vision and anticipating something so great it's hard to believe it has already come and is coming still.

CONFESSING TO GOD

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(In Unison)*

Blessed Lord, in this season of your coming, the darkness in us hovers awaiting your Light, the wrong in us trembles expecting your Mercy, the knowledge in us falters hearing your Truth. We have sinned against innocence, forgotten human sorrow, denied pity, excused ourselves from love and shunned holiness. Assail us by the bright blows of your Grace and make us teachable, that we may learn again the peace that comes on earth to all of goodwill; through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray, *(adapted, Arnold Kenseth)*

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.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

‡**Congregational Response**

(Tune: Sussex Carol)

New Century (black) Hymnal 143

*Then why should we on earth be sad,
since our Redeemer made us glad;*

*Then why should we on earth be sad,
since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin Christ set us free,
all for to gain our liberty.*

HEARING GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON

Peter Schay

Matthew 3:1-6

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

SCRIPTURE ANTHEM

O Come, Divine Messiah

*The Children's Choir
arr. James Biery*

SECOND LESSON

Peter Schay

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the
nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

***‡HYMN**

Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old

New Century (black) Hymnal 108

As the song begins, the Church School children and teachers will leave for their classrooms. Children in second grade and older will leave independently. Children in kindergarten and first grade will meet their teachers at the back of the Meetinghouse (narthex) and will go to their classrooms as a group.

SERMON

Dream On

Rev. Susan Murtha

(Second in an Advent Sermon Series: "Celebrate the Gift")

RESPONDING TO GOD

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

I believe in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the
Gospel that began in Bethlehem.

I believe in Him whom the kings of the earth ignored
and the proud could never understand,
whose paths were among the common people,
whose welcome came from people of hungry hearts.

I acknowledge the glory of all that is like Christ.
The steadfastness of friends,
the blessedness of homes,
the beauty of compassion,
the miracle of many hearts made kind at Advent,
the courage of those who dare to resist all
passion, war and hate.

I believe that only by love expressed shall the
earth at length be purified, and I acknowledge in Christ
a faith that sees beyond the partial face,
a trust in life redeemed that looks beyond
our present evil;
and I pray that this redemption may begin in us who
make this declaration of faith at Advent. Amen.

***Advent Gloria**

(refrain from Angels We Have Heard on High)

New Century (black) Hymnal 125

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

CALL TO OFFERING

Rev. Daniel B. England

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come

The Chancel Choir

Paul Manz

***Advent Response**

(verse 3 of As With Gladness Men of Old)

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 119

*As they offered gifts most rare,
At the manger rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy,
Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ to thee, our heavenly King.*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

COMMUNION (*seated*)

Words of Invitation

Prayer of Consecration

Serving of the Bread and Cup

In the tradition of our church, let us partake of the bread 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 until all have been served, remembering our oneness with God and our unity in the Body of Christ.

When receiving the juice tray, pass it along to your neighbor who will hold and “serve” you as you then take your cup.

Music During Communion:

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

arr. Emily Maxon

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE GOD

*CLOSING HYMN AND PROCESSION

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 107

*CLOSING SENTENCES

*Leader: This child through David's city
Shall ride in triumph by;*

*People: The palm shall strew its branches,
And every stone shall cry.*

*Leader: And every stone shall cry,
Though happy, dull, and dumb.*

*People: And lie within the roadway,
To pave his kingdom come.*

Richard Wilbur, "A Christmas Hymn"

*BENEDICTION

*CLOSING CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne *Pilgrim (red) Hymnal 326*
Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown
When thou camest to earth for me,
But in Bethlehem's home there was found no room
For Thy Holy nativity.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus;
There is room in my heart for Thee!

POSTLUDE

Trumpet Tune on "Sleeper's Awake!" *Martha Sobaje*

The 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.

We have **child care for babies and toddlers** every Sunday. Your children are always welcome for the entire service or for a respite time if needed. Please see an usher if you need directions.

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 can be found there as well as a link to the live broadcast. Previous sermons may also be found there.

Giving Opportunities for the Season

Sharing Christmas Blessings – Giving Tree

This is the last Sunday to pick up your gift tags for gifts to give to our friends at Pilgrim Towers and H.O.M.E. Co-op in Maine. There are still several available. Deadline for wrapping and delivering your gift(s) back to the church is next Sunday, December 12.

Christmas Tree Sale

One of the ways that we increase the amount we are able to share through the Outreach Budget of FCCOG is through our Annual Christmas Tree Sale! The trees (and wreaths, garlands and kissing balls) arrived last weekend and we began selling as soon as the truck was unloaded. Here's where you come in....**BUY TREES AND OTHER ITEMS FROM US!!**

Mitten Tree

Throughout Advent the Mitten Tree is available in the Auditorium to accept gifts of mittens, hats, gloves and socks that will be delivered to St. Luke's Lifeworks to help warm the hands and hearts of those St. Luke's serves.

White Gifts

White Gifts are offerings of new clothing, toys, books or other useful items wrapped in white paper that are offered during our 10 am and 4 pm services on Christmas Eve. The white paper gives the illusion of snow under the trees in the Meetinghouse. The gifts will be sent to Covenant to Care for Children, which provides advocacy, mentoring, and direct assistance to children and youth who are neglected, abused or at risk. Warm clothes, coats, educational toys, family board games, and gift cards (for Target or Walmart for teens) are particularly appreciated. Ribbon and bows are not necessary but **please attach a tag listing the contents including age, gender & size.** (Hint: If you find yourself without white paper, some patterned papers reverse to white, or use white tissue paper.)

Calendar

TODAY

Church School

Church School resumes today after a two week hiatus. We will be focusing on Advent, the discipline of waiting, the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus' birth and other aspects of anticipating the Christmas miracle. We will have regular classes for the next three Sundays. If you will be here for the 4 pm Christmas Eve service and your child(ren) would like to participate in the nativity pageant,

please email RosemaryL@fccog.org and we will accommodate as many children as realistically possible.

Parish Nurse

Sue Asselin, RN is available in Room 203 after Worship Service. Stop in to have your blood pressure checked or discuss any health concerns.

Flu Vaccine Clinic 11:00-11:45 am in Room 203

The Wellness Committee continues to offer season flu vaccines (this year's formula includes H1N1). Vaccines are administered on a first-come, first-served basis to people 18 years of age or older who bring payment of \$30 cash or check (made out to FCCOG). We are unable to bill insurances, but will happily provide a receipt. Individuals under 18 should see their primary physician for the vaccine.

Youth Ministry

Join us tonight for our Y! programs. Fellowship for those in grades 6-8 (JPF) is from 5:00-6:00 pm and grades 9-12 (SPF) meets from 7:00-8:00 pm.

Youth Choir

Youth Choir will rehearse today from 11:15 am – 12:15 pm in the Choir Room.

NEWS AND NOTICES

“Messiah” is coming!

Rehearsals for our annual performance of *Messiah* under the direction of Director of Music, Dr. Craig Scott Symons, start this Tuesday, December 7 and continue on Wednesday, December 8, Tuesday, December 14, and Wednesday, December 15 in the Meetinghouse from 8:00-9:30 pm. Singers should be prepared to attend all rehearsals and performances. Performances will be Saturday and Sunday, December 18 and 19 at 4 pm. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join us in this exciting choral opportunity!

Tai Chi Classes with Luis Duarte

All are welcome! Improve your balance, health and well-being.

Come and experience the many wonderful benefits of Tai Chi and Qi Gong. Classes are held on Wednesdays at 8 am and Thursdays at 9 am. Only \$7/class if paid by the month and \$8/class for “drop ins.” Join us! You’ll love it!

Book Discussion Group

Hats Off!, the popular women’s book discussion group, will be reading *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt* starting after Christmas. The group meets every Thursday from 9:45 to 11:30 am in the church lounge. All are welcome. For details, call Marcia Livingston at 203-625-0772.

Rummage Room News

- **Christmas Open House:** You are invited to the Rummage Room’s annual Christmas Open House Party to be held on December 17 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Cookies and lemonade will be served for your enjoyment and as a “Thank You!” for your support during 2010.
- **Closing for the Holidays:** The Rummage Room will close for the Holidays on Saturday, December 18, 2010 at 1:00 pm and reopen on Monday, January 3, 2011 at 10:00 am.
- **Donations:** The Rummage Room is now closed for donations until Monday, January 3, 2011. Regular donation hours are 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Thursday, and 9:30 am to 1:00 pm Friday and Saturday. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE DONATIONS IN THE BACK OR THE FRONT OF THE SHOP WHILE THE RUMMAGE ROOM IS CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS! THANK YOU!
- All proceeds from The Rummage Room go to help Women’s and Children’s organizations locally, nationally and internationally. Your support throughout the year makes it possible to bring a bit of Christmas cheer into the lives of many. We thank all of you who shop, donate and volunteer for you are the life and the light of The Rummage Room. Kathryn Graham once said,

*To love what you do and feel that it matters –
how could anything be more fun?*

- Happy Holidays from Judy Miller and Judy Chapman, co-chairs of The Rummage Room, The Rummage Room committee, Maria Drieghe, manager, the assistant managers, and The Rummage Room volunteers. You make our efforts meaningful, fruitful and FUN!

Food Collection

A reminder that the Food Collection Barrel will remain in the back of the Meetinghouse, so please contribute food each week. Adding a few items to your weekly grocery store visit will make a significant difference at Neighbor to Neighbor. Items currently in need at Neighbor to Neighbor:

Cereal
Oatmeal
Pasta Sauce
Dried Beans (Kidney and Black)
100% Juice
Canned Tomatoes
Peanut Butter (No larger than 28 oz., please)
Jelly





Christmas Memorial/Honor Flowers and Decorations

The Chancel Committee invites contributions for decorations for the Meetinghouse this Christmas. Any amount is welcome. Please deliver the completed form with your check to the Church Office (payable to the First Congregational Church Flower Fund) on or before Sunday, December 12. Thank you.

In Memory/Honor of

By

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____

Please print names legibly to minimize spelling errors.



Celebrate Advent and Christmas at FCCOG

The Services of Advent

Sunday Worship at 10:00 am
November 28,
December 5, 12 and 19

Christmas Eve Services

10:00 am – Lessons and Carols
4:00 pm - Family Service:
Once in Royal David's City
5:00 pm – Carol Sing
Around the Tree
8:00 pm - Carols and
Communion
11:00 pm - Candlelight Service

Part I of Handel's Messiah and Hallelujah Chorus

Our annual candlelight performances of this masterpiece will be held in the Meetinghouse
December 18 and 19 at 4:00 pm.

This year we will have two FCCOG family members as soloists: Carolyn Paulus and her brother-in-law, Tom Woodman.

Two new faces will grace the stage this year: mezzo soprano Erika Hennings and tenor Neal Harrelson-Keyes.

Christmas Dinner and Carol Sing

Make your reservations early for this favorite Christmas event!
Join us for a night of food, fellowship and a rousing
Christmas Carol sing-along.
Sunday, December 12 at 6:00



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

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. David D. Young

Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry: Rev. Mark D. Montgomery

Associate Pastor for Christian Education: Rev. Susan Murtha

Minister of Communication and Adult Education: Rev. Daniel B. England

Minister of Pastoral Care: Rev. Avery C. Manchester

Director of Music: Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Director of Church School: Rosemary Lamie

Director of Membership: Ginny Breismeister

Director of Publications: Barbara Wilkov

Parish Nurse: Susan Asselin, RN

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

Director of Music Emeritus: Dr. John Stansell