

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Sunday, November 27, 2022



Faith First. Love Always.

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 welcome you this day and are glad you made the choice to join us for this worship service. May it be a blessing to you.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP



*God puts the wiggle in children
and calls it good... and so do we!*

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 welcome children as they are in worship, we've created the **PrayGround**, located in the front of the chapel (right side of the Meetinghouse) where children and others can engage in worship through movement and prayerful play.

The **PrayGround** offers space for movement and sensory materials for all ages to worship with and through. The presence of all God's children is a gift to the church, which offers hope for all.



SUPPORTING FIRST CHURCH

Using your smartphone messaging app, text **FCCOG Donate** to **73256** or click [HERE](#) to access the online giving webpage, or scan this QR code to donate.



FAITH FIRST. LOVE ALWAYS.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Reverend Patrick Collins

Please sign and pass the red Fellowship Pad found at the end of your row near the center aisle, then pass it back to the center aisle, noting the names of those worshipping near you so you may greet them at the end of worship.

PRELUDE

Andante

G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

Edita Orlintye, violin

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

†CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We stand on the watch post,

All: **Waiting for God's vision.**

One: The time has been appointed.

All: **The vision is sure.**

One: No matter what happens,

All: **We will rejoice in God.**

CHORAL INTROIT

†HYMN

116 (New Century Hymnal) Verses 1, 2, 5, 7

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Tune: Veni Emmanuel

† Please rise in body or in spirit

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Marilyn and Rick Derr

One: Just as the prophet Habakkuk stood at the watch post to see what you would say, O God,

All: **So we, too, see the brokenness of the world and long for your message to be made plain.**

One: We light this first candle as a sign of hope that you have heard your people and will answer us in our distress.

All: **Let this light be a beacon to all who wait, a sure sign that our redemption is coming to us.**

MUSIC DURING CANDLE LIGHTING

O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Arr. James Kimball
The Palmer Handbell Choir

PRAYER (in unison)

God of grace and mercy, with Habakkuk we cry out to you in despair at the evil in the world. You proved your faithfulness to your people when they cried out to you in distress. Be present in our distress and show us how to be faithful to you in the midst of suffering. As we begin our waiting for your promised savior, give us hope that all will be made right in you. Let us stand watch, waiting for your vision, for the time has been appointed and your vision is sure. No matter what happens, let us rejoice in you. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(During the response, the children will go to Church School.)

RESPONSE

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong. They are weak, but he is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

FIRST LESSON

Matthew 26:36-38
New International Version
Lynn Robertson

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

ANTHEM

Advent Message
Martin How (1931-2022)
The Chancel Choir

SECOND LESSON

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4; 3:3-6, 17-19
The Message

Justice Is a Joke

The problem as God gave Habakkuk to see it:

God, how long do I have to cry out for help
before you listen?
How many times do I have to yell, “Help! Murder! Police!”
before you come to the rescue?
Why do you force me to look at evil,
stare trouble in the face day after day?
Anarchy and violence break out,
quarrels and fights all over the place.
Law and order fall to pieces.
Justice is a joke.
The wicked have the righteous hamstrung
and stand justice on its head.

What’s God going to say to my questions? I’m braced for the worst.
I’ll climb to the lookout tower and scan the horizon.
I’ll wait to see what God says,
how he’ll answer my complaint.

Full of Self, but Soul-Empty

And then God answered: “Write this.
Write what you see.
Write it out in big block letters
so that it can be read on the run.
This vision-message is a witness
pointing to what’s coming.
It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait!
And it doesn’t lie.
If it seems slow in coming, wait.
It’s on its way. It will come right on time.

“Look at that man, bloated by self-importance—
full of himself but soul-empty.
But the person in right standing before God
through loyal and steady believing
is fully alive, really alive.”

God's on his way again,
retracing the old salvation route,
Coming up from the south through Teman,
the Holy One from Mount Paran.
Skies are blazing with his splendor,
his praises sounding through the earth,
His cloud-brightness like dawn, exploding, spreading,
forked-lightning shooting from his hand—
what power hidden in that fist!
Plague marches before him,
pestilence at his heels!
He stops. He shakes Earth.
He looks around. Nations tremble.
The age-old mountains fall to pieces;
ancient hills collapse like a spent balloon.
The paths God takes are older
than the oldest mountains and hills.
I saw everyone worried, in a panic:
Old wilderness adversaries,
Cushan and Midian, were terrified,
hoping he wouldn't notice them.

Though the cherry trees don't blossom
and the strawberries don't ripen,
Though the apples are worm-eaten
and the wheat fields stunted,
Though the sheep pens are sheepless
and the cattle barns empty,
I'm singing joyful praise to God.
I'm turning cartwheels of joy to my Savior God.
Counting on God's Rule to prevail,
I take heart and gain strength.
I run like a deer.
I feel like I'm king of the mountain!

MESSAGE

Keep Watch
Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

†HYMN

103 (New Century Hymnal)
Watcher, Tell Us Of The Night
Tune: Aberystwyth

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE 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.

CALL TO OFFERING

Henry Hull

OFFERTORY SOLO

Still, Still, Still

Arr. Paul Thompson

Hanna Golodinskii, soprano

Edita Orlintye, violin

†DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures
here be-low; praise him a-bove, ye heaven-ly host; praise
Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost. A-men.

†HYMN

106 (Pilgrim Hymnal)

Hills Of The North, Rejoice

Tune: Little Cornard

BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Prelude on "Veni Emmanuel"
John Leavitt (b.1956)

† Please rise in body or in spirit

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

Join us for Community Hour following worship this morning, hosted by the Stewardship Committee, where you can greet our new members and have a cup of coffee with some light snacks.

**COMMUNITY
HOUR**

THIS SUNDAY

One-Room Schoolhouse for Advent Wreaths - in the Lounge

Dec 4 ~ 2nd Sunday of Advent

All-Ages Worship, Annual Advent Craft Fair

Save the Date ~ Dec. 11 11:30 a.m.

Pilgrim Towers trip to deliver Christmas Gifts and make a craft with the residents - all FCCOG members and families welcome.



ANNUAL GIVING UPDATE



We are at 114 pledges to date - \$354,507 in pledged amounts.

If you haven't made your pledge, please consider supporting the wonderful programs at First Church and go to www.iamfirstchurch.com

PLEASE JOIN US TODAY!

The 2022 Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale is underway and runs until December 4. Shop Early for the best selection. We have more trees and many taller trees this year. We also have a new wreath vendor for balsam and mixed greens wreaths. Decorated wreaths and handmade artisan bows will also be available along with stands and roping.

CONTINUE TO CELEBRATE THANKSGIVING.....

Scan the code to shop at #GiveHealthy for fresh food donations requested by Neighbor to Neighbor. It is an easy way to donate needed vegetables, eggs, milk and more. So far, First Church has donated 561 lbs. of fresh food!



THANK YOU FOR HARVEST SUNDAY DONATIONS

Thank you for the wonderful donations for Harvest Sunday delivered to the Meetinghouse and to the drive-by drop off! We collected 250 bags of much needed food for H.O.M.E. and Neighbor to Neighbor. Thank you for making the shelves of both food pantries a little bit fuller for the holidays!



WHAT IS ADVENT? LIKE, REALLY?

Advent Faith Formation Series

Wednesday, November 30

Tuesday, December 6

Wednesday, December 14

Wednesday, December 21

6:00 - 7:00 p.m. First Church
Lounge

Each week we will watch a brief video on advent featuring some of the preeminent voices in progressive Christianity like Father Richard Rohr, Nadia Bolz-Weber, Brene Brown,

and Parker Palmer. Come as you are and join us as we discuss what advent really means for our lives today.

FIRST CHURCH ADVENT CRAFT FAIR

Sunday, December 4, 12 p.m. - 2 p.m.
Daniels Center

~ A Light Lunch Will Be Served At 11:30 ~

All ages welcome - bring a friend
Please sign up [HERE](#) so we know
how many crafts and food to prepare.



THE RUMMAGE ROOM

Needs for this week are –

- Christmas Decorations
- Girl's clothing
- Children's shoes

Shopping hours are Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m., with the same hours for donation drop off.

56TH ANNUAL MESSIAH

We're just about a month away from our
Messiah performance on
**Saturday, December 10 at
4 p.m.**

Join The First Church Festival Chorus!

- Choir rehearsal on Monday, December 5 from 7:30 – 9:00 pm
- Dress rehearsal with orchestra on Wednesday, December 7 from 7:30 – 9:00 pm.

Attire is solid color tops and dark bottoms for ladies, and men in dark suits, white shirts, and long solid-color ties.

There is a refundable score deposit of \$20. There are no auditions; everyone is welcome. The singers always have a great time - just ask one! Contact Dr. Craig Scott Symons, craigs@fccog.org, for more information.



*Sunday, December 11
5 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.
Annual Christmas Party*

Celebrate the holidays with your
First Church family!

Join us Join us for fun, generous
hors d' oeuvres, and a full bar



Annual Christmas Party

Celebrate with your First Church Family

Sunday, December 11
5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

First Church Meetinghouse

Generous Hors D'oeuvres
Wine, Beer, Full Bar

UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF FIRST CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24

- **10 a.m. Children's Service** especially designed for younger children and their families, with a live nativity pageant and music by The Cherub Choir.
- **3 p.m. Family Service** with "Once in Royal David's City" pageant and music by The Celebration Singers.
- **5 p.m. Community Candlelight Carol Sing** on the front lawn of the church.
- **6 p.m. Festival Carol Service** with candlelight and music by a brass quintet and The Chancel Choir.
- **9 p.m. Candlelight Service with Communion** and music by The Genesis/Alumni Choir and harp.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 10 A.M.

Breakfast Church in the Auditorium

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GREENWICH

108 Sound Beach Avenue Old Greenwich CT 06870

203-637-1791 • www.fccog.org

Ministers - All Members Of The First Congregational Church Of Greenwich

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Minister of Music

Parish Nurse

Church Office Coordinator

Financial Administrator

Livestream Director

Audio Technician

Database Administrative Assistant

Interim Facility Manager

Sextons

Director of Preschool

Assistant Director of Preschool

Pastors Emeriti

Reverend Patrick Collins

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Susan Asselin, RN

Wendy Spezzano

Greg Girolamo

Daniel Lepoutre

Bob Small

Sue Wilder

Julio Yika

Curtis Gay, Qasim Hussaini

Jennifer DiCarlo

Kayla Vozzella

Reverend Dr. Thomas L. Stiers - Reverend Sally Colegrove



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

a just world for all