

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sunday, December 18, 2022



**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.

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## 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

*The altar flowers are in memory of our special Mom, Virginia Liddel, our first Christmas without you. Our forever love, Bob, Betsy, Joan, and your entire family.*

### ENTRANCE MUSIC

Silverthorn Handchime Ensemble  
Debbie Silverthorn, Colette Rogers, Pat Geismar, Bob Small

### CALL TO COMMUNITY

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

*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 worshiping near you so you may greet them at the end of worship.*

### PRELUDE

*Prelude On "Forest Green"*  
Craig Phillips (b. 1961)  
Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

### †CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Alleluia the Christ child comes,  
And we await his birth.  
**All: Let us throw off our distractions,  
And allow the chaos to settle.**  
One: Let us watch for the signs,  
And listen to the messengers.  
**All: Let us stand on tiptoe,  
And shout aloud and sing.**  
One: Something new is emerging,  
**All: Something new is being birthed.**

### CHORAL INTROIT

### †HYMN

143 (The New Century Hymnal)  
*On Christmas Night All Christians Sing*  
Tune: Sussex Carol

† Please rise in body or in spirit

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Elmer Segura & Angelica Castro

- One: With the prophet Habakkuk, we light the first candle as a beacon of hope for those who wait.
- All: **With Esther, we light the second candle as the fire of courage that we might bear witness to your justice.**
- One: With the prophet Isaiah, we light the third candle as a light to the nations, a promise of redemption for the whole human family.
- All: **Now with Joseph, we light the fourth candle as a declaration of trust that your promise is sure, O God, and that your son's birth among us is imminent.**

## MUSIC DURING CANDLE LIGHTING

*Go, Tell It On The Mountain*  
Arr. James Kimball  
The Palmer Handbell Choir

## PRAYER (in unison)

God of grace and mercy, with Joseph, we live in fear of being humiliated or cast out. As we wait for your promised savior, give us hope that all will be made right in you. Amen.

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

*(During the response, the children will depart for 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

*Isaiah 7: 10-16*  
New International Version  
Betsy Kreuter

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, "Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights."

But Ahaz said, "I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test."

Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? Therefore, the Lord himself will give



you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

## SOLO

*I Wonder As I Wander*  
John Jacob Niles (1892-1980)  
Thomas Woodman, bass

## SECOND LESSON

*Matthew 1: 18-25*  
New Revised Standard Version

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

“Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

## MESSAGE

*As If In A Dream*  
Reverend Patrick Collins

## †HYMN

131 (The Pilgrim Hymnal)  
*Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming*  
Tune: Es ist ein ros

† Please rise in body or in spirit

## 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

Carol Woodman

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*Emmanuel, God With Us*

Mary McDonald (b. 1956)

The Chancel Choir

### †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

125 (The New Century Hymnal)

*Angels We Have Heard On High*

Tune: Gloria

† Please rise in body or in spirit

## BENEDICTION

## CHORAL RESPONSE

## POSTLUDE

*March Of The Wise Men*  
Elmer Samuel Hosmer (1862 – 1945)

† 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 in the Auditorium following worship this morning where you can greet each other and have a cup of coffee and some light snacks.

**COMMUNITY**  
*oooooooo*  
**HOUR**



## THIS SUNDAY - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**Today: Regular Church School**

It's time to sign up to be in the traditional "Once in Royal David's City" Christmas pageant at 3 p.m. on Christmas Eve. Email [CydneyV@fccog.org](mailto:CydneyV@fccog.org) or [Donna.hascher@gmail.com](mailto:Donna.hascher@gmail.com) and let us know if you want to be part of the cast. Children can be an angel, shepherd, king, an animal in the stable, or the little drummer boy.

**December 25 and January 1: No Church School**

## ANNUAL GIVING UPDATE

We are at 161 pledges to date - \$497,884 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](http://www.iamfirstchurch.com)





## WHAT IS ADVENT? LIKE, REALLY.

### Advent Faith Formation Series

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.



### CHRISTMAS EVE GIFTS FOR *COVENANT TO CARE FOR CHILDREN OF CT* (formerly known as white gifts)

White Gifts are clothing, toys, books, or other useful items that, for many years, have been offered on Christmas Eve. Typically wrapped in white paper, they would give the illusion of snow under the trees in the Meetinghouse.

This year we will be collecting the gifts, however, they do not need to be wrapped. All gifts will be donated to Covenant To Care for Children in Hartford, CT, who distributes them throughout the year to children who are in the statewide foster care system.

Bring them to any of the Christmas Eve services and place them under the tree in the narthex before entering the sanctuary.

## THE RUMMAGE ROOM

The Rummage will close for a holiday break starting Tuesday December 20th and reopen on Monday January 2nd. Please do not leave any donations during this time. Thank you!



----- ✂ cut here ✂ -----

## Christmas Meetinghouse Flowers

The Deacons invite contributions for decorations for the Meetinghouse this Christmas. Any amount is welcome. Please deliver the completed form with your check to the church office on or before Monday, December 19, 2022. Thank you!

Please check one of these choices: ☐ In Memory of      ☐ In Honor of

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ made out to First Congregational Church of Greenwich ("Flowers" in the memo)

*Please print legibly to minimize spelling errors.*



### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24

- **10 a.m. Children's Service** especially designed for younger children and their families 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





## **MAKE THAT LAST HOLIDAY TASK EASIER..... SCHEDULE TREE RECYCLING PICK UP NOW!**

Scan the QR code and select your pick up date (January 7th/8th, 14th/15th)

Your tree will be collected from your driveway (no tinsel or wreaths please) and recycled at Greenwich Point. Donation amount is \$35.

All funds raised from recycling pick up will go to support the 2023 mission trip to the Yakima Reservation in Washington state. You may leave your donation with the tree, send a check to FCCOG ("recycling" in the memo line) or we can call you for a credit card number.



## **CHRISTMAS DAY BREAKFAST CHURCH**

**Join us Christmas morning, Sunday, December 25, in the auditorium at 10 a.m.** as we share food, stories and music together in this informal worship setting. The deacons will provide some food items and we encourage all who attend to bring a food item to share.

## **APRIL SERVICE-LEARNING TRIP**

Everyone ages 12 and up is welcome to join us on a special cultural immersion trip to the Yakima Reservation in Washington state. We will spend a week working with S.L.A.M. Trips, which is a native run organization.

More information is available [here](#) on their website. [Click here](#) to sign up, or contact the church office to reserve a spot as space is limited. Cost, schedule, and details will be available soon.





## NEW! OUR STAINED GLASS WINDOWS ARE NOW IN A SELF-GUIDED AUDIO TOUR!

You can now read about or listen to an audio description of our Stained Glass Windows on your own time, either at home on your computer or on your cell phone in the Meetinghouse\* looking at our wonderful windows in their full size and vibrant color. (\*Not during a service, of course!)

Our windows are quite unique in that they are filled with history. They show many influences of the Reformation, Missionary works, the Protestant church and the formation of the UCC. They also show some of the movers and shakers who influenced First Church in the Chapel windows. Our windows totally reflect Rev. Dr. Vincent Daniels' love of our church and passion for teaching history.

To take this tour or learn about just one window at a time, point your cell phone camera's QR code app at the webpage below, or click the **TOUR** link on <https://fccog.org/first-church-self-guided-tours>. **Next week:** a self-guided audio tour of our cemetery!

### WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Unscramble the words from the story on the first page. Then unscramble the letters in the orange circles to solve the puzzle! (Answer on back page)

A MAN NAMED \_\_\_\_○\_\_\_\_ [HPOJES] WAS GOING  
TO MARRY A WOMAN NAMED ○\_\_\_\_ [ARYM] AND  
HAVE A \_\_\_\_\_○ [UNRFWOELD] LIFE. BUT  
ONE DAY, MARY SAID SHE WAS GOING TO HAVE A  
\_\_\_\_○\_\_\_\_ [CIDLH]. JOSEPH WAS UPSET. BUT THAT  
NIGHT, AN \_\_\_\_○\_\_\_\_ [GNAEL] VISITED HIM IN A  
\_\_\_\_○ [AMRED] AND SAID, "DO NOT BE  
○\_\_\_\_ [IDFARA] TO MARRY MARY. THE BABY  
IS A GIFT FROM GOD. NAME HIM \_\_\_\_○ [USSJE]."  
JOSEPH WOKE UP EXCITED BECAUSE HE KNEW THAT  
JESUS WOULD BE "GOD WITH US" OR:

\_\_\_\_\_.

#### Did You Know?

God talks to people in dreams a lot in the Bible. Some of the Bible's dreamers were Joseph, Solomon, and Daniel. Have you ever had a dream where you thought God might be talking to you? What did God say?



#### TRY IT AT HOME!

Keep a notebook next to your bed. Write down your dreams when you wake up.



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# THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GREENWICH

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203-637-1791 • [www.fccog.org](http://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



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a just world for all