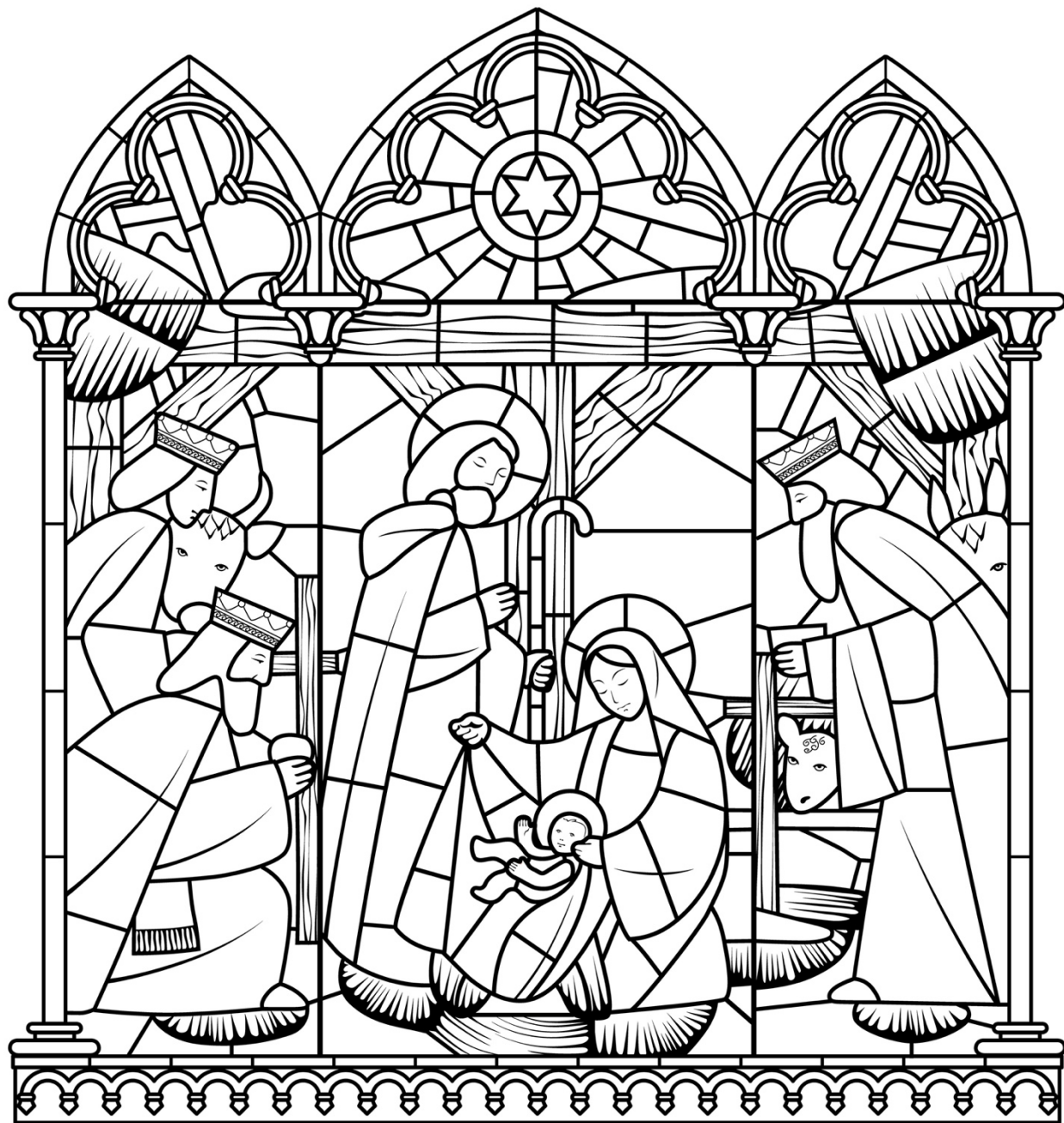




**Christmas Eve**  
**Saturday, December 24, 2022**  
**10 a.m.**



**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 to this special Christmas Eve service at First Congregational Church. We hope that the mystery and comfort of the incarnation will be born in you this night as we tell the story of how God came to be with us in Christ Jesus. May God bless you and your family as we worship together.

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.

**3 P.M. FAMILY SERVICE**

"Once In Royal David's City" pageant and music by The Celebration Singers.

**6 P.M. FESTIVAL CAROL SERVICE WITH CANDLELIGHT**

Music by a brass quintet and The Chancel Choir

**9 P.M. CANDLELIGHT SERVICE WITH COMMUNION**

Music by The Genesis/Alumni Choir and harp

**CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 10 A.M.**

**Breakfast Church in the Auditorium**

We will share food, stories and music together in this informal worship setting. The deacons will provide some hot food items and we encourage all to bring a food item to share.



# WELCOMING GOD AND ONE ANOTHER

## PRELUDE

Jon Hunt, piano

## WELCOME

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come to the stable!

**All: Come quickly, come!**

One: Bring your songs and praise,

**All: Bring your gifts and wonder.**

One: See the miraculous thing God has done,

**All: See the marvelous baby, wrapped in cloth.**

One: He is Immanuel,

**All: He is God with us.**

One: Christ Jesus is born!

## \*CAROL

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,

O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.

Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,

O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation,

Sing all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,

O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

*\*All who are able, please rise.*



## LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Kelly Family

*Today we light the Christ Candle to celebrate the birth of the Baby Jesus.*

One: For weeks we have wandered in darkness. At first, there was no light, and we were scared. Slowly, our eyes adjusted, and we started to see again. A faint but always-there light began guiding us. (the first candle is lit)

All: **Hope was kindled. We relight the beacon of hope, for the waiting of a better world.**

One: This light grew stronger as we followed it. It showed us a better way was possible. It showed us that we each help things to be how they are meant to be. We began to not be so afraid, and to be strengthened by the light. (the second candle is lit)

All: **Courage was sparked. We relight the beacon of peace, for the healing of the nations and the courage to do so.**

One: Then the light did something new. It shimmered, and jumped, and danced all around. It bounced off everyone and lit up their smiling faces. We could see one another, and we could see the light was guiding them, too. We were all in this together. (the third candle is lit)

All: **Joy was radiant. We relight the beacon of joy, for the rejoicing of fellowship and community.**

One: We followed the light further. It beckoned us to keep going. We knew we could trust it and it would not lead us astray. We weren't scared anymore. Our hearts were made ready for the best thing yet. (the fourth candle is lit)

All: **Love was found. We relight the beacon of love, for the promises always kept.**

One: And now the light has grown strong. And it is here. And it is the best and brightest thing we have ever seen. It lights up everything. It dazzles and wows. The light has come to us and is with us forever. (the Christ candle is lit)

All: **Jesus is born! We give thanks for the light of Christ, shining in the lives of all God's people.**

## ANTHEM

Feliz Navidad

The Cherub Choir

Carol Woodman, director – Lynn Hawxhurst, Andrea Woodman, assistants

# THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS AND THE NATIVITY

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## *Readings from the Common English Bible*



### *The Angel Gabriel Comes to Mary Luke 1:26-38*

#### ***Angels We have Heard on High***

Angels we have heard on high,  
Singing sweetly o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be,  
Which inspire your heavenly song.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo.



## ***The Birth of Jesus***

**Luke 2:1-7**

### ***Away in a Manger***

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes;  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky  
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray;  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
And fit us for Heaven to live with Thee there.



## ***The Shepherds and Angels***

**Luke 2:8-16**

### ***The First Noel***

The first Noel the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds  
in fields as they lay;  
In fields as they lay, keeping their sheep,  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the east beyond them far,  
And to the earth it gave great light,  
And so it continued both day and night.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
Born is the King of Israel.



## ***The Wisemen from the East*** **Matthew 2:1-12**

### ***We Three Kings***

We three kings of Orient are  
Bearing gifts, we traverse afar.  
Field and fountain,  
moor and mountain,  
Following yonder star.

O star of wonder, star of night,  
Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect Light.

## **RESPONDING TO THE GIFT OF JESUS**

### **CALL TO OFFERING**

Reverend Patrick Collins



*During our offering time, the ushers will receive your offerings while you remain seated.*

*If you brought a “white gift” to the service today and have not placed it under the Christmas tree at the back of the church, please do so as you depart. All collected gifts will be donated to Covenant to Care for Children.*

### **PASSING THE LIGHT**

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke



## **\*CLOSING CAROL**

*Joy to the World!*

Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room, And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing, And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of His love.

*\*All who are able, please rise.*

## **\*CHRISTMAS BLESSING**

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

**The Church Offices will be closed  
Monday, December 26 & Tuesday, December 27, 2022 & Monday, January 2, 2023  
for the holidays.**

**The clergy and staff of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich  
wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.**

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### **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.

**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.

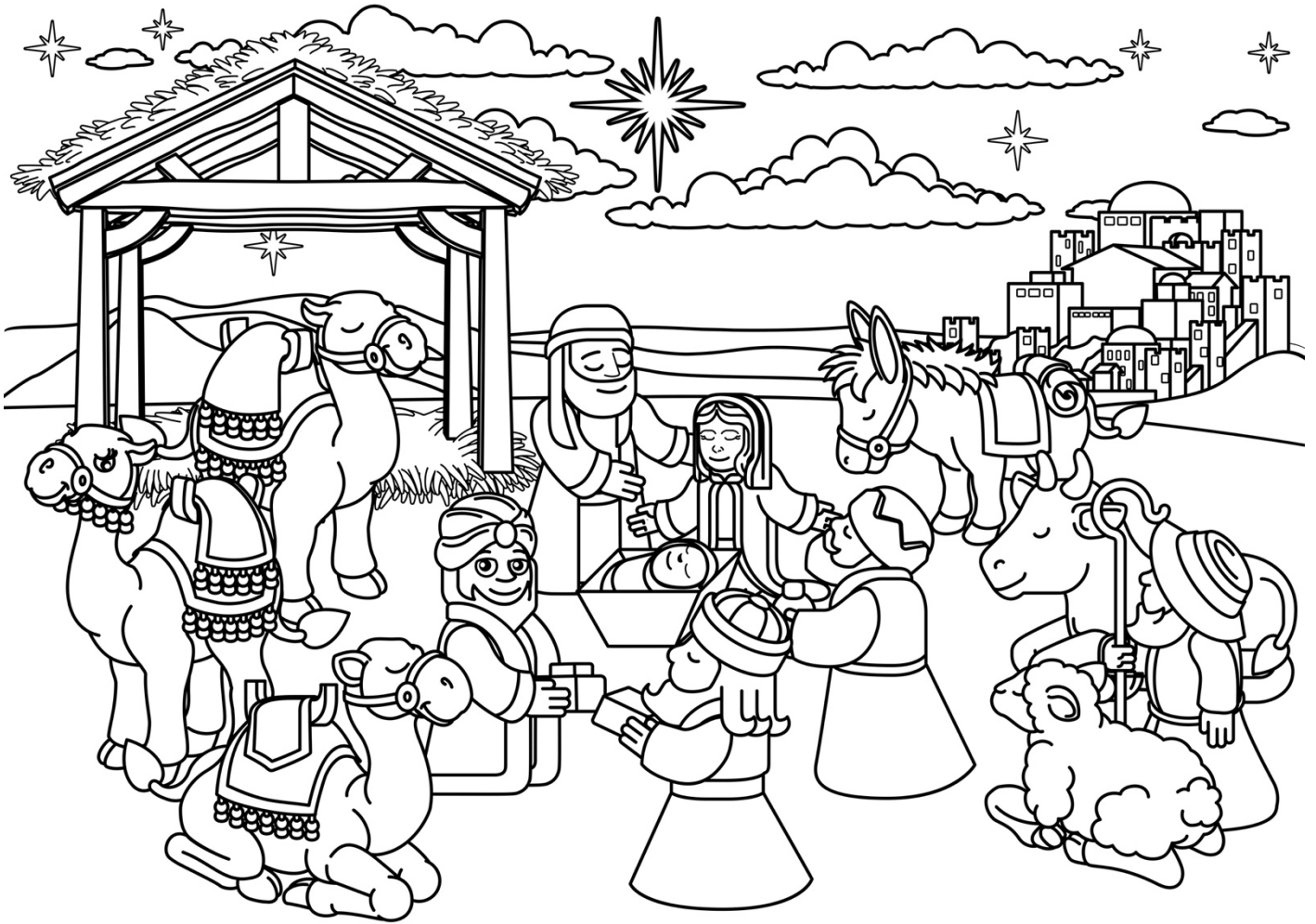
All funds raised from recycling pick up will go to support the 2023 mission trip to the Yakima Reservation in Washington state. You may leave your donation with the tree, send a check to FCCOG ("recycling" in the memo line) or we can call you for a credit card number.



**YEAR-END PLEDGE REMINDER**

We are grateful for your presence at this Christmas Eve service. As the year-end quickly approaches, please consider your 2022 pledge fulfillment during this busy season.

The church offices are closed for the staff holiday on Monday, Dec 26 and Tuesday, Dec 27, but will be open Dec 28-30 from 9-4 pm if you wish to drop off your pledge. Or you can complete it online by clicking on the "My First Church" secure link on the upper right corner of the church website. Thank you for supporting the important work at First Congregational Church of Greenwich.



# THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GREENWICH

108 Sound Beach Avenue Old Greenwich CT 06870

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



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

a just world for all