

GREENWICH POINT BEACH SERVICE

Sunday, July 16, 2023

8:00 a.m.



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.



Faith First. Love Always.

GREETING AND GATHERING PRAYER

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Psalm 122

One: I was glad when they said to me:

All: "Let us go into the house of the Lord!"

One: Our feet are standing within your walls, O God

All: Within the peace and safety of your sanctuary.

One: Therefore we will sing

All: And we will pray,

One: We will listen

All: And we will wait,

One: That God's seed may take root in us,

All: That God's abundance may flourish in us,

One: That we may awaken to this day

All: And all the generosity that God has to offer us.

HYMN

I've Got Peace Like A River

1 I've got peace like a riv - er; I've got peace like a
2 I've got joy like a foun-tain; I've got joy like a
3 I've got love like an o - cean; I've got love like an

riv - er; I've got peace like a riv - er, in my
foun-tain; I've got joy like a foun-tain, in my
o - cean; I've got love like an o - cean, in my

soul. I've got riv - er, in my soul.
soul. I've got foun-tain, in my soul.
soul. I've got o - cean, in my soul.

FIRST LESSON

Psalm 119: 105-112
Common English Bible

Your word is a lamp before my feet
and a light for my journey.
I have sworn, and I fully mean it:
I will keep your righteous rules.
I have been suffering so much—
Lord, make me live again according to your promise.
Please, Lord, accept my spontaneous gifts of praise.
Teach me your rules!
Though my life is constantly in danger,
I won't forget your Instruction.
Though the wicked have set a trap for me,
I won't stray from your precepts.
Your laws are my possession forever
because they are my heart's joy.
I have decided to keep your statutes forever, every last one.

SECOND LESSON

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23
The Message

At about that same time Jesus left the house and sat on the beach. In no time at all a crowd gathered along the shoreline, forcing him to get into a boat. Using the boat as a pulpit, he addressed his congregation, telling stories.

“What do you make of this? A farmer planted seed. As he scattered the seed, some of it fell on the road, and birds ate it. Some fell in the gravel; it sprouted quickly but didn't put down roots, so when the sun came up it withered just as quickly. Some fell in the weeds; as it came up, it was strangled by the weeds. Some fell on good earth, and produced a harvest beyond his wildest dreams.

“Are you listening to this? Really listening?”

“Study this story of the farmer planting seed. When anyone hears news of the kingdom and doesn't take it in, it just remains on the surface, and so the evil one comes along and plucks it right out of that person's heart. This is the seed the farmer scatters on the road.

“The seed cast in the gravel—this is the person who hears and instantly responds with enthusiasm. But there is no soil of character, and so when the emotions wear off and some difficulty arrives, there is nothing to show for it.

“The seed cast in the weeds is the person who hears the kingdom news, but weeds of worry and illusions about getting more and wanting everything under the sun strangle what was heard, and nothing comes of it.

“The seed cast on good earth is the person who hears and takes in the News, and then produces a harvest beyond his wildest dreams.”

MESSAGE

Simple Curiosity

COMMUNION

We practice open Communion – all who wish to know the presence of Christ and to participate in the community of God's people are welcome to receive Communion, including children of all ages, and regardless of church membership or denominational affiliation. All are welcome to the table of God.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

THE 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.

HYMN

O God, You Are My God
(Sing twice)

O God, you are my God, and I will ev-er praise
you. O God, you are my God, and I will ev-er praise
you. I will seek you in the morn - ing, and I will
learn to walk in your ways. And step by step you'll lead
me, and I will fol-low you all of my days.

BENEDICTION