



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2023
SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT
TEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING



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.

First Church is a mask-friendly community of faith. Anyone who prefers to wear a mask at church should feel comfortable doing so.

Faith First-Love Always

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Comfort Ye, My People
G. F. Handel (1685-1759)
Daniel Young, tenor
Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her,
that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.
The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

Isaiah 40:1-3

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

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 worshipping near you so you may greet them at the end of worship.
If you are the person on the center aisle, please remove the completed sheet and place it in the plate during the offering.*

HYMN

Creator Of The Stars Of Night (verse 1 only)
84 *Glory To God* Hymnal (purple)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The O'Brien Family

One: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars.

All: By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.

One: Today we light two candles to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.

All: We name the first candle Hope and the second candle Peace.

One: We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of peace.

All: Even when violence and fear are raging and peace seems like a pipedream, we set our face steadily towards the light.

One: Let us pray:

All: Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of peace this week, help us to become the signs of peace that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven's peace. Amen.

Rev. Carol Holbrook Prickett

ANTHEM DURING ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

O Come, All Ye Faithful
Arr. James D. Kimball
The Palmer Handbell Choir

†HYMN

Watchmen, Tell Us Of The Night
109 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

†PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS (in unison)

God of tenderness and love, breathe your grace into our lives. Forgive our wandering ways, and guide us along your paths of peace. When we lose our way, and forget the reason and purpose of this season, carry us back to you. Lead us up to that high mountain of faith and hope, that we might truly proclaim: "Here is our God!" In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

**Moment of silence for personal reflection **

†ASSURANCE OF GRACE

†PASSING OF THE PEACE

God makes peace within us. Let us claim it. God makes peace between us. Let us share it.

One: God has received us, pardoned us, and loved us; let us forgive each other in love and share the peace of Christ with a hand to hand, eye to eye, and heart to heart greeting.

May the peace of Christ be with all of you.

All: And also with you.

†RESPONSE (remain standing)

He Came Down

He came down that we might have light; he came down that we might
He came down that we might have peace; he came down that we might

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have light; he came down that we might have light; Hal-le - lu - jah for-ev - er - more.
have peace; he came down that we might have peace;

ANTHEM

Jesus, Our Brother, Kind And Good
The Celebration Singers
Vance Briceland, piano

†Please rise in body or in spirit

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(During the singing of the response, children will depart for Church School or return to their seats.)

RESPONSE

Go, My Children

Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.
Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own.

FIRST LESSON

Philippians 4:1, 4-9

New Revised Standard Version

Mariann Ekernas

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you.

ANTHEM

And The Glory Of The Lord (from *Messiah*)

G.F. Handel

The Chancel Choir

SECOND LESSON

Isaiah 40:1-11

New Revised Standard Version

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All flesh is grass;
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers; the flower fades,
[[when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers; the flower fades,]]
but the word of our God will stand forever.
Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms
and carry them in his bosom
and gently lead the mother sheep.

MESSAGE

In The Wilderness
Reverend Patrick Collins

†HYMN

Hills Of The North, Rejoice
106 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

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

ORGAN OFFERTORY

Wachet Auf, Ruft Uns Die Stimme
J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

†DOXOLOGY

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow
606 Glory to God Hymnal (purple)

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.

†PRAYER OF DEDICATION

† Please rise in body or in spirit

†HYMN

"Sleepers, Wake!" A Voice Astounds Us
349 Glory To God Hymnal (purple)

BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Wachet Auf, Ruft Uns Die Stimme
Heinrich Schmidt (1861-1923)

† Please rise in body or in spirit

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COMMUNITY HOUR

Join us for Community Hour in the Auditorium following worship this morning where you can greet one another, have a cup of coffee, and a light snack. Hosts for December are members of the Church Council.

CHURCH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Dec 10 & 17: Classes as normal

Pre-K & K: Blue Door 1 & 2: Purple Door

3 & 4: Silver Door 5 & 6: Rick's Room

(Subject to change depending on teacher availability and attendance)



ANNUAL GIVING UPDATE

We are pleased with our progress so far in our quest for \$660,000. We have now exceeded \$500,000 but we are far from finished. We have many pledges which have yet to be submitted. Please contact Greg in the church office if you have any questions about prior year pledges.

First Church provides so many services to the various organizations in our community, and around the country. Organizations like Abilis, Kids in Crisis, HOME in Maine, Alanon, and many more benefit from the support we can provide. In the Bible, we read about the parable of the Good Samaritan. This story was in response when Jesus was asked "And who is my neighbor?" Samaritans and Jews were not known to be friendly toward each other. But the Samaritan stopped to help the Jew who was beaten and laid along the side of the road. We are the Samaritan. The people who need help are our neighbors. Our Annual Giving presents us with an opportunity to spread the gift of God's love to the members of First Church and the wider community through the giving of our time, our talent, and our treasures.

CHOIR REHEARSALS TODAY Cherub Choir, Celebration Singers, Genesis Choir.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING TODAY

Your Parish Nurse, Sue Asselin, will be available for blood pressure screenings and health consultations following today's worship service during community hour - her office just to the right of the auditorium stage. During the week, Sue is available by appointment by calling 203-637-1791 ext. 821.

TREE AND WREATH SALE

Thank you to all the volunteers that worked on the 57th Annual Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale! Thank you to everyone for all your efforts in planning, creating, setting up, advertising, selling, decorating, loading, and promoting! This event would not have come together without all your efforts, talents, and generosity. You are the **BEST** volunteers! **Merry Christmas!**

THE RUMMAGE ROOM

Shopping hours are Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m., with the same hours for donation drop off. The Rummage Room will close on the December 14 for the holiday season. We will reopen Tuesday January 2, 2024.



FIRST CHURCH MESSIAH CONCERT

The 57th annual Messiah performance will be presented on Saturday, December 16 at 4 p.m.

The performance is free with a suggested \$20 per person donation. Since 1966, First Church has presented Part I of Handel's Messiah, the Christmas portion, concluding with the Hallelujah chorus.

The First Church Festival Chorus, 75 singers strong, is accompanied by the First Church Chamber Orchestra.

The performance will also be livestreamed on our YouTube page <https://www.youtube.com/@firstchurchgreenwich>

Soloists this year are:

Hanna Golodinskii, soprano
Blake Friedman, tenor

Elizabeth Russo, mezzo soprano
Kevin Douglas Jasaitis, bass

JOIN THE FIRST CHURCH FESTIVAL CHORUS FOR MESSIAH!

- **Choir rehearsal** Mon., Dec. 11 at 7:30
- **Dress rehearsal with orchestra** Wed., Dec. 13 at 7:30

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.





6th - 12th Grade Regional Youth Ministry

SUPERMARKET
 **SWEEP**

This Sunday, Dec 10th @ 4 pm!

How much food can our teams buy & donate?

📍 **Riverside ACME 1261 E. Putnam Avenue | ? : KhaleighL@fccog.org**



CHRISTMAS EVE AT FIRST CHURCH SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

10 a.m. Children's Service

especially designed for younger children and families
Music by The Cherub Choir.

3 p.m. Family Service

"Once in Royal David's City" pageant
Music by The Celebration Singers and
Helena Brown, soprano from The Metropolitan Opera

5 p.m. Community Candlelight Carol Sing
on the front lawn of the church.

6 p.m. Festival Candlelight Carol Service
Music by a brass quintet, timpani,
and The Chancel Choir.

9 p.m. Candlelight Service with Communion
Music by The Genesis/Alumni Choir, and harp.



CUT HERE

Christmas Meetinghouse Decorations & Brass

The Deacons invite contributions for decorations and brass music 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 18, 2023. Thank you!

Please check one of these choices:

☐ Flowers

☐ Brass

☐ 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.

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

Director of FCCOG Church School/Regional Youth Ministry

Parish Nurse

Church Office Coordinator

Financial Administrator

Administrative and Communications Colleague

Livestream Director

Audio Technician

Database Administrative Assistant

Facility Manager

Sexton

Director of First Church Preschool

Assistant Director of First Church Preschool

Pastor Emerita

Reverend Patrick Collins

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

Dr. Craig Scott Symons

Khaleigh Laicher

Susan Asselin, RN

Wendy Spezzano

Greg Girolamo

Carolyn Samuel

Daniel Lepoutre

Bob Small

Sue Wilder

Julio Yika

Curtis Gay

Beth Genovese

Kayla Vozzella

Reverend Sally Colegrove



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all