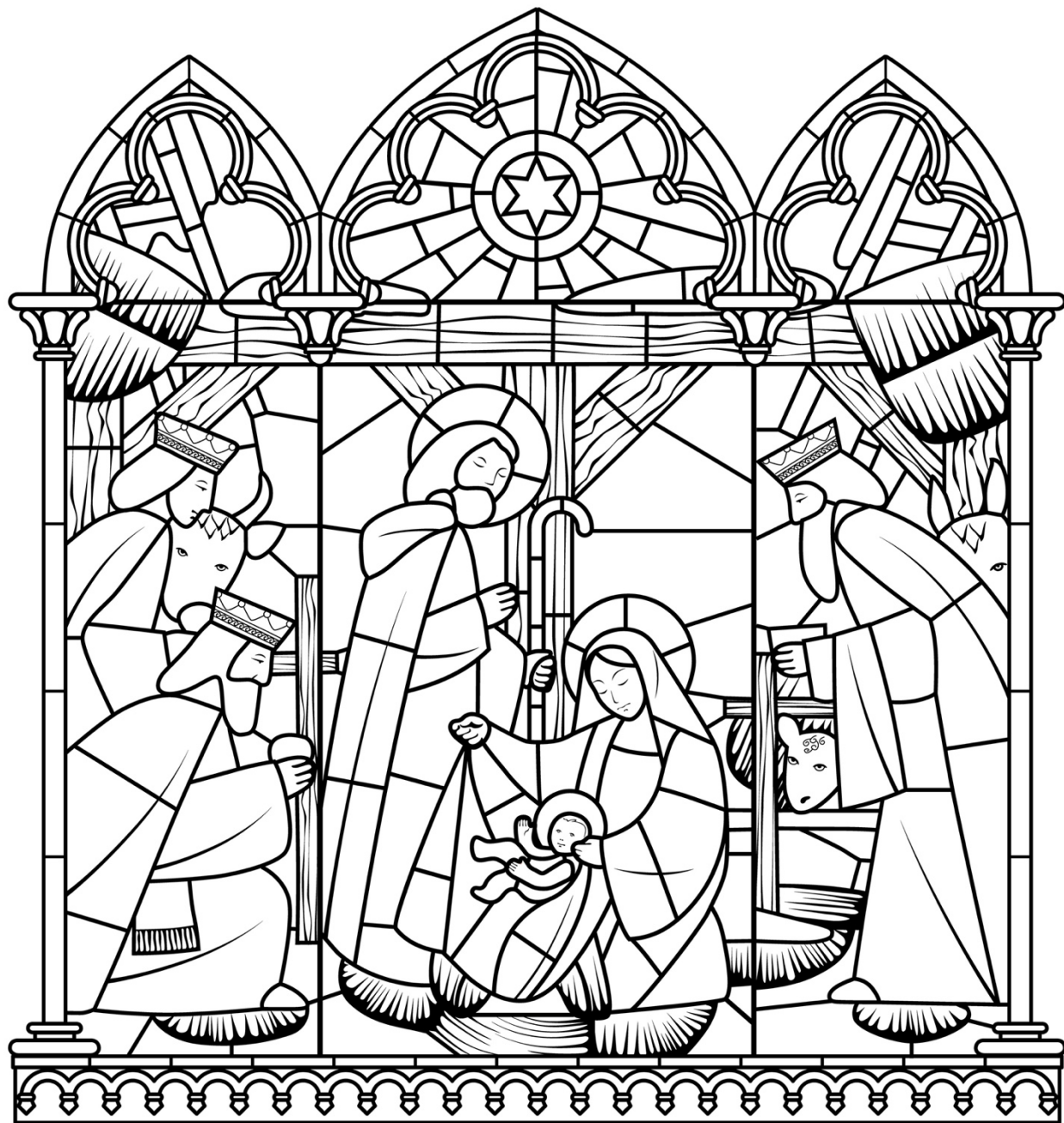




**Christmas Eve**  
**Sunday, December 24, 2023**  
**10 a.m.**



**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  
Music by The Celebration Singers and  
Helena Brown, soprano from The Metropolitan Opera

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

Music by brass quintet, timpani,  
and The Chancel Choir

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

Music by The Genesis/Alumni Choir, and harp

# WELCOMING GOD AND ONE ANOTHER

## PRELUDE

Matt Stolfi, 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!

**All: Glory to God in the highest!**

## \*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 Segura/Castro Family

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

One: Come to the manger with joy and with wonder,

**All: Jesus is born; this tiny, fragile baby.**

One: We have waited a long time for this moment.

**All: We have marked each week with a reminder of what we wait for.**

One: First, was hope. Even in the face of all that is wrong, we see the face of hope tonight.

**All: We light the candle of hope, and it illuminates God's promise that light is greater than darkness.**

One: Next, was peace. Even in the face of violence and fear, we see the face of peace tonight.

**All: We light the candle of peace, and it proclaims God's justice when we will make war no more.**

One: Then, was joy. Even in the face of despair and sorrow, we see the face of joy tonight.

**All: We light the candle of joy, and it shows us God's healing and wholeness.**

One: Today we celebrate that love has come down to us, to be with us, always.

**All: This love has a face. We call him Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.**

One: We light the candle of love, and its light leads us in God's ways. We see the face of love tonight.

**All: And, finally, we light the Christ Candle, and it declares that God is here among us now. We see the baby's face.**

One: Come to the manger with joy and with wonder!

**All: Jesus is born! Glory to God in the highest!**

## ANTHEM

*Away In A Manger*

The Cherub Choir

Carol Woodman, director – Lynn Hawxhurst, ukulele, Carolyn Paulus, piano



# 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**

Rex R.

### *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.

## **ANTHEM**

*Mary Had A Baby*

The Cherub Choir

Carol Woodman, director – Lynn Hawxhurst, ukulele, Carolyn Paulus, piano



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

**Luke 2:1-7**

Michael M.

### ***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**

Rex R.

### ***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**

Michael M.

### ***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**

Khaleigh Laicher



*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 local non-profits for children and youth.*

### **CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

### **PASSING THE LIGHT**



## \*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.

*\* Please rise in body or in spirit*

## \*CHRISTMAS BLESSING

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

*Please extinguish your candle after the benediction*

## POSTLUDE

*The Church Offices will be closed  
Monday, December 25, Tuesday, December 26, 2023  
& Monday, January 1, 2024 for the holidays.*

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GREENWICH

# Annual Christmas Gift Drive

Formerly known as “White Gifts”, these gifts are often clothing, books, and toys for children and youth. Historically wrapped in white paper, today we recognize and bless these gifts by the lighting the white Christ Candle on Christmas Eve. Gifts will be donated to local non-profit organizations, however, they **do not need to be wrapped**. Bring you donations to any of the Christmas Eve services, and place your gifts under the tree in the Narthex.

*Thank you*  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## YEAR-END PLEDGE REMINDER

We are grateful for your presence at this Christmas Eve service. As the year-end quickly approaches, please consider your 2023 pledge fulfillment during this busy season. The church offices are closed for the staff holiday on Tuesday, Dec 26, but will be open December 27-29 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 Church.

*Happy Advent & Merry Christmas*



WISHING MANY BLESSINGS TO YOU AND YOURS,  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GREENWICH STAFF



**FCCOG CHRISTMAS TREE**  
*Collection*

**ONLY \$35**

**BOOK NOW**

**SIGN UP LINK IN EBLAST**

**STAY AT HOME!**  
**JUST LEAVE THE TREE OUTSIDE- WE RECYCLE FOR YOU!**

**SATURDAYS: DEC 30 & JAN 6, 10AM-3PM**  
**SUNDAYS: DEC 31 & JAN 7, 12-4PM**

**A REGIONAL YOUTH MINISTRY FUNDRAISER!**

Use this link to sign up: <https://shorturl.at/ftL47>

# 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  
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  
Preschool Administrative Assistant  
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  
Karina Germosen  
Reverend Sally Colegrove



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST  
a just world for all