

HOW DOES A WEARY WORLD REJOICE?



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GREENWICH

declares itself to be Open and Affirming (ONA); 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.

Welcome to Worship!

We welcome you this day and are glad you are here! May worship be a blessing to you.

First Church Welcomes *You.*

With Worship. A casual tone, stirring music, moving prayers, & a faith-invoking message. **Prayer Book requests** (in Narthex) are uplifted during the Prayers of the People.

With Inclusion. Open & Affirming (ONA). We make a point of meeting all and name tags worn.

With Communion. The first Sunday of each month, all ages share in the sacred meal together. We use juice & gluten-free bread!

With Care. We pass the Peace of Christ to one another. We are a mask-friendly, come-as-you-are, leave-as-a-friend community.



First Church Welcomes *Children.*

The PrayGround. In the Chapel space, guiding kids in worship.

Cherub Choir, Celebration Singers, & Genesis Choir. Children of all ages are welcome to offer music in worship!

Children's Message. A moment for kids & the child in each of us.

Church School. Faith learnings for the day continue in the Undercroft classrooms after the Children's Message.

Children's Take Home Library. Located by the PrayGround. Check out what interests you & bring it back next week!



First Church Welcomes *All.*

Sensory Sanctuary & Rocking Chairs. Focusing resources located in the back of the Meetinghouse.

Visual Worship Aids & Live captioning. Found on the monitors.

Audio Hearing Aids. To use, ask Greeters or Ushers.

Spaces in Meetinghouse for Wheelchair Users

Exterior Ramp. In the back of the Meetinghouse, driveway side.

Liftavators. Located inside, from Narthex to Auditorium Level & Outside in the Memory Garden.



Enjoy a cup of coffee, food, & fellowship at

Community Hour after the service!

ORDER OF WORSHIP

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

PRELUDE

Nocturne Op. 9 #2
Frederic Chopin (1810-1849)
Lucas Angerer, piano

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

CALL TO COMMUNITY

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

Please take the Fellowship Pad found at the end of your row near the center aisle, sign it, and 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.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The Wentworth family

One: How does a weary world rejoice?

All: **We sing songs of hope.**

One: We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us. We tell the stories of what could be.

All: **We listen for God's word.**

One: We resist the temptation to give up or give in. We remember Mary's song.

All: **We gather for worship.**

One: We hope.

All: **We hope.**

One: Against all odds, we hope.

All: **This is the day that the Lord is still making. Let us worship holy God.**

MUSIC DURING THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

O Come, All Ye Faithful
Catherine McMichael (b. 1954)
The Palmer Handbell Choir

†CALL TO WORSHIP

One: How does a weary world practice love?

All: **By sending cards, and picking up the phone.**

One: By practicing empathy, and assuming the best in others. By learning people's stories and finding common ground.

All: **By advocating for justice, and saving a place at the table.**

One: There are a million ways to practice love. So today we light the candle of love as a reminder and a charge.

All: **With God's help, may we bring love into a weary world. Amen.**

†HYMN

On Christmas Night, All Christians Sing
112 Glory To God Hymnal (purple)

† Please rise in body or in spirit

†PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS (in unison)

Holy God, more days than not, hope feels like the rain. We try to hold onto it with cupped hands, but eventually, it slips right on through. Forgive us for holding hope so loosely.

Forgive us for allowing the realities of today to define tomorrow. We know that this world needs people of hope, so today we pray: turn us into those people. Teach us how to sing Mary's song of hope for the world. With open hearts 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: May the peace of Christ be with all of you.

All: And also with you.

†RESPONSE (remain standing)

Lead Me, Guide Me

Refrain

Lead me, guide me, a - long the way, for if you

(A) (D) (A7) (D)
B \flat E \flat B \flat 7 E \flat

lead me, I can - not stray. Lord, let me walk each

(A7) (B7) (Em) (D) (A7) (D)
B \flat 7 C7 Fm E \flat B \flat 7 E \flat

day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me. Fine

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

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

RESPONSE

Refrain

and God will de-light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice and
joy, com - pas - sion and peace: yes,
God will de-light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice,
jus-tice and joy!

FIRST LESSON

Micah 5:2-5
New Revised Standard Version
Carol Woodman

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth,
and he shall be the one of peace.

If the Assyrians come into our land
and tread upon our soil,
we will raise against them seven shepherds
and eight rulers.

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

MESSAGE

From Weariness To Love
Reverend Patrick Collins

ANTHEM

Fantasia On Christmas Carols
Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
The Chancel Choir
Thomas Woodman, bass

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

Pat Mendelsohn

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.



OFFERTORY SOLO

Sweet Little Jesus Boy
Robert MacGimsey (1898–1979)
Carol Woodman, soprano

†DOXOLOGY

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow
515 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

†PRAYER OF DEDICATION

†HYMN

Angels We Have Heard On High
113 Glory To God Hymnal (purple)

†BENEDICTION

†CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Light Dawns On A Weary World (refrain only)
79 Glory To God Hymnal (purple)

The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;
the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,
as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.

†POSTLUDE

German Dance
Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
Amadeus Angerer, piano

† Please rise in body or in spirit

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COMMUNITY HOUR

Join us for Community Hour in the Auditorium 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

Church School: Dec 22

Pageant Rehearsal: Dec 22 after worship

All Ages Worship - Cozy Carol Sing: Dec 29

All Ages Worship: Jan 5

Church School: Jan 12



RUMMAGE ROOM

Happy 60th anniversary to the rummage room!



Wow - over \$5,600,000 in dollars given to charities in 60 years! (In today's dollars it is way more than that!)

Many thanks to members and non-members of our church who devote many volunteer hours to the Rummage Room! Many thanks also to all who donate goods to make the shop a success. We couldn't survive without donations. The Rummage Room is closed for the Christmas Holidays, and will reopen on January 6. Regular hours are Monday - Thursday 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS



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



THE 2025 ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

As of Dec 18, we have received 140 pledges (63% of potential giving units) for over \$536,633 (82%) toward our goal of \$650,000 for 2025. Click on the QR code on the right for instructions on how to pledge online.



You can schedule your giving for 2025 in weekly, monthly, or other ways, because First Church has the capability of auto-payments from your bank account or credit card! Please use the QR code on the right to access the church's ACS system and enter the necessary information. If you set up, changed, or plan to continue your automatic monthly online through MyFirstChurch.com for 2025, please know that **you still need to submit a pledge form**. Pledges can be submitted through the digital pledge form at www.fccog.org or by returning a paper pledge card to the office. If you have any questions, please contact Greg Giralamo at the church office or Philip Wentworth at 203-992-9500.



YEAR-END PLEDGE REMINDER

As the year-end quickly approaches, please consider your 2024 pledge fulfillment during this busy season. 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.

Christmas Eve at First Church

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.



COZY CAROL SING – DECEMBER 29

On December 29, our 10 a.m. worship service will be very casual and informal. Come in your pajamas, lounge pants, holiday attire (ugly sweaters or festive ones!) and join in a service full of Christmas Carols and holiday music. We will have a “shout your favorite carol” request time at several points in the service. Bring your family and friends and continue the spirit of the holidays as we worship the newborn Christ child!

FCCOG CHRISTMAS TREE

Collection

BOOK
NOW

ONLY
\$40



SIGN UP
LINK ON
WEBSITE

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

SATURDAYS: JAN 4 & JAN 11, CURB BY 10 AM

SUNDAYS: JAN 5 & JAN 12, CURB BY 10 AM

**A REGIONAL YOUTH
MINISTRY FUNDRAISER!**

SCAN THE QR CODE TO SCHEDULE PICK UP





JESUS GIFT DRIVE

DECEMBER 22-24

Join us in collecting gifts for the
Connecticut Alliance of Fostering Families.
Gifts for all ages will be used year-round.

Unwrapped gifts will be collected during the 10 am
worship service December 22 and at the 10 am, 3, 6
and 9 pm Christmas Eve worship services

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
Livestream Director
Audio Technician
Database Administrative Assistant
PrayGround Supervisor
Facility Manager
Senior Sexton
Junior Sexton
Junior Sexton
First Church Preschool Director
First Church 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
Daniel Lepoutre
Bob Small
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Amalia Samuel
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Curtis Gay
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Jose Jolon
Beth Genovese
Melanie Garnett
Reverend Sally Colegrove



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a just world for all