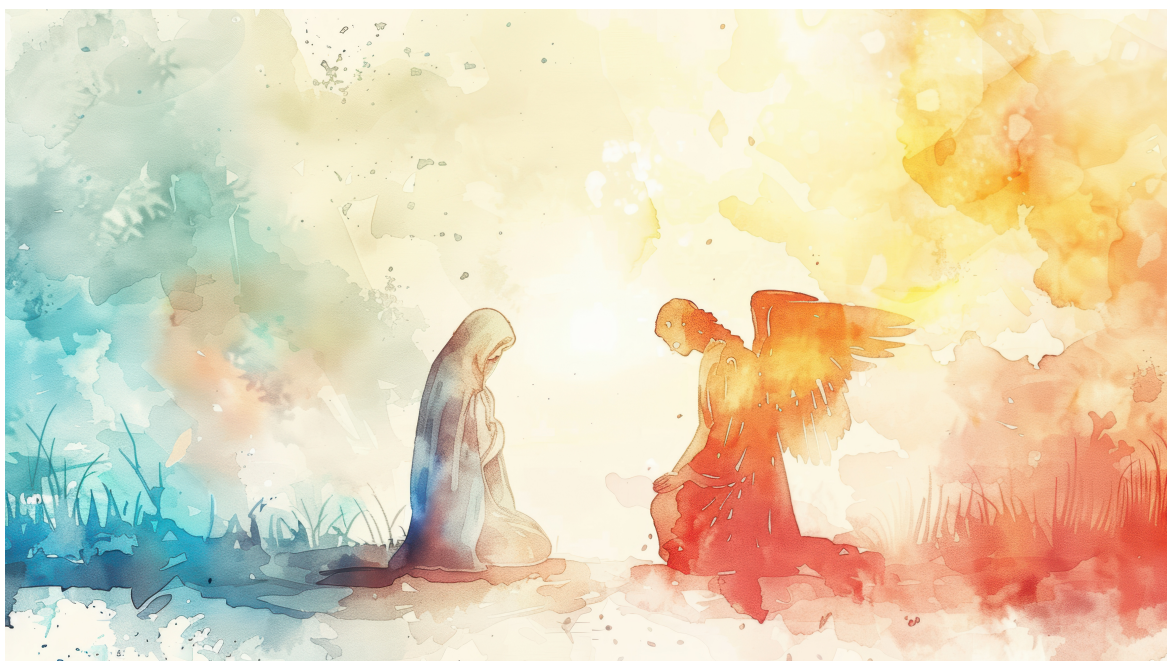


HOW DOES A WEARY WORLD REJOICE?



**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

*Ostinato On An Old English Carol*  
Thomas Kuras (1950-1997)  
Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

## 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

Katie Muir, confirmand, and family

One: How does a weary world practice peace?

All: **By listening before we speak and saying sorry when we need to.**

One: By advocating for justice and caring for our neighbor. By practicing Sabbath and forgiving seventy times seven.

All: **By choosing grace over hate and opening the door for each other.**

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

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

## MUSIC DURING THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

*Love Came Down At Christmas*  
Arr. James Kimball  
The Palmer Handbell Choir

## †CALL TO WORSHIP

*One of the greatest joys of worship is that it is not a solo act.*

*We gather together. We find joy, and God, in the act of connection.*

*So, as we begin our worship, we invite you to turn and face someone you are close to so that you can see one another.*

One: Welcome to worship.

All: **Welcome to worship.**

One: I am glad you're here.

All: **I am glad you're here.**

One: Surely God is in this space.

All: **Surely God is in this space.**

One: I see God in your face.

All: **I see God in your face.**

One: Let us worship together.

## †HYMN

*Watchmen, Tell Us Of The Night*  
97 Glory To God Hymnal (purple)

† Please rise in body or in spirit

## †PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS (in unison)

God of laughter, God of open front doors and family reunions, we confess that we often doubt good news. We move through this world waiting for the other shoe to drop, waiting for life to fall apart, waiting for our humanity to get the best of us. Instead of leaning into joy, we lean into scarcity. We lean into fear. We lean into isolation. Forgive us for forgetting that joy is amplified when shared. Heal the wounds we have from past hurts, and teach us how to throw open our doors like Elizabeth. Show us how to find joy in connection. 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

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

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

## 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

Luke 1:24-33  
New Revised Standard Version  
Lynn Robertson

After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, "This is what the Lord has done for me in this time, when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people."

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."<sup>[a]</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

## ANTHEM

*Gabriel's Voice*  
Ian Higginson (b. 1959)  
The Chancel Choir

## SECOND LESSON

Luke 1:34-45  
New Revised Standard Version

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

## MESSAGE

*From Weariness To Peace*  
Reverend Patrick Collins

## †HYMN

*Prepare The Way, O Zion*  
106 Glory To God Hymnal (purple)

† Please rise in body or in spirit

## 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

Julianna Laicher

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.



### ANTHEM

*O Splendor Of God's Glory Bright*  
David Ashley White (b. 1944)  
The Chancel Choir

### †DOXOLOGY

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

### †PRAYER OF DEDICATION

### †HYMN

*Savior Of The Nations, Come*  
102 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

*Trumpet Tune On "Wachet Auf"*  
Martha Sobaje (b. 1948)

† Please rise in body or in spirit

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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 8, 15, 22

Pageant Rehearsal: Dec 22 after worship

All Ages Worship - Cozy Carol Sing: Dec 29

All Ages Worship: Jan 5

Church School: Jan 12



## THANK YOU TO LAST WEEKEND'S DREAM TEAM OF TREE SALE VOLUNTEERS

Thanks to all your hard work, we had a record-breaking weekend of tree and wreath sales! Not only did we sell over 450 trees and 275 wreaths, but we also provided a festive community atmosphere where friends could visit and those new to us could get a taste of First Church's hospitality and welcoming nature. We could not have done it without you!

## RUMMAGE ROOM SPECIAL HOLIDAY HOURS

The Rummage Room will be having special **SATURDAY** hours on **Saturday December 7th and Saturday December 14th** from 11-3.

Come shop with us!

The Rummage Room closes on December 19th for the Christmas Holidays. Shop before we close. Regular hours are Monday - Thursday 11 a.m.-3 p.m.



## THE 2025 ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

As of Dec 4, we have received 113 pledges (51% of potential giving units) for over \$476,176 (73%) toward our goal of \$650,000 for 2025. Click on the QR code on the right for instructions on how to pledge online.



If you wish to schedule your giving for 2025 in weekly, monthly, or other ways, 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 have any questions, please contact Greg Giralamo at the church office or Philip Wentworth at 203-992-9500.



## 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.



TODAY!



FREE CHURCH WIDE EVENT:



# Advent Craft Fair



Hosted by FCCOG Church School in Auditorium

## December 8th, 11 am

Cocoa and crafts for ALL, kids and adults alike!

### Photos with Santa!



REGISTER TO ENSURE SUPPLIES



[fccog.org/events](http://fccog.org/events)



First Church Festival Chorus

## MESSIAH CHORUS REHEARSALS

**Monday, December 9, 7:30-9:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday, December 11, 7:30-9:00 p.m.**

**Score deposit \$20 (high school & college students free!)**

*The First Congregational Church of Greenwich  
presents the 59th annual*

# Messiah

**Saturday, December 14 - 4 p.m.**

**Ellen Sisson, soprano**

**Eliana Barwinski, mezzo soprano**

**Luke Rosenberg, tenor**

**Thomas Woodman, bass**

**First Church Festival Chorus and Orchestra**

**Dr. Craig Scott Symons, conductor**

108 Sound Beach Avenue Old Greenwich, CT  
[www.fccog.org](http://www.fccog.org)





# Good to Give: A Pilgrim Towers Party

Share the meaning of the season with:

HOLIDAY MUSIC | GIVING OF GIFTS | CRAFTS FOR ALL

**FOR KIDS & FAMILIES: HELP US MAKE THE HOLIDAYS HOLY!**

 25 Washington Ct, Stamford, CT  
**DEC 15 @ 11:30 AM-1:30 PM** 

**PILGRIM TOWERS**

**NEW FRIENDS**

**GIVING TREE GIFTS**



Faith Formation  
for the Whole Family:

# HOLY COOKIES

Explore how we can use food to check-in with those we love!

**DEC 19TH**  
Dinner - 5:80  
Event - 6 pm



**MAKE COOKIE MIX TO SHARE!**



108 SOUND BEACH AVE | [KHALEIGHL@FCCOG.ORG](mailto:KHALEIGHL@FCCOG.ORG)

# 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







## 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.

### 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 16, 2024. 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](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

Livestream Director

Audio Technician

Database Administrative Assistant

PrayGround Supervisor

Facility Manager

Senior 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

Sue Wilder

Amalia Samuel

Julio Yika

Curtis Gay

Joseph Cicchelli

Beth Genovese

Melanie Garnett

Reverend Sally Colegrove



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OF CHRIST  
a just world for all