



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2025
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
TEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING



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 are 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.

Please know our worshipping community gathers in-person and online via livestream

with multiple camera angles of the Meetinghouse and congregation.

Audio Hearing Aids are available for your use during the service. See an usher to request a device.

PRELUDE

Greensleeves

Richard Purvis (1913-1994)

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

Reverend Patrick Collins

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

†CAROL

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

118 Glory To God Hymnal (purple)

READING

Making The House Ready For The Lord

Mary Oliver

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
still nothing is as shining as it should be
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
uproar of mice — it is the season of their
many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves
and through the walls the squirrels
have gnawed their ragged entrances — but it is the season
when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And
the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard
while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;
what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will
come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox,
the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know
that really I am speaking to you whenever I say,
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.

CAROL SING (remain seated)

†Please rise in body or in spirit

READING

For The Time Being
W.H. Auden

Well, so that is that. Now we must dismantle the tree,
Putting the decorations back into their cardboard boxes —
Some have got broken — and carrying them up to the attic.
The holly and the mistletoe must be taken down and burnt,
And the children got ready for school. There are enough
Left-overs to do, warmed-up, for the rest of the week —
Not that we have much appetite, having drunk such a lot,
Stayed up so late, attempted — quite unsuccessfully —
To love all of our relatives, and in general
Grossly overestimated our powers. Once again
As in previous years we have seen the actual Vision and failed
To do more than entertain it as an agreeable
Possibility, once again we have sent Him away,
Begging though to remain His disobedient servant,
The promising child who cannot keep His word for long.
The Christmas Feast is already a fading memory,
And already the mind begins to be vaguely aware
Of an unpleasant whiff of apprehension at the thought
Of Lent and Good Friday which cannot, after all, now
Be very far off. But, for the time being, here we all are,

ANTHEM

Gloria
Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)
The Chancel Choir

READING

On The Mystery Of The Incarnation
Denise Levertov

It's when we face for a moment
the worst our kind can do, and shudder to know
the taint in our own selves, that awe
cracks the mind's shell and enters the heart:
not to a flower, not to a dolphin,
to no innocent form
but to this creature vainly sure
it and no other is god-like, God
(out of compassion for our ugly
failure to evolve) entrusts,
as guest, as brother,
the Word.

CAROL SING (remain seated)

READING

Christmas Poem
E.E. Cummings

from spiralling ecstatically this

proud nowhere of earth's most prodigious night
blossoms a newborn babe:around him,eyes
— gifted with ever keener appetite
than mere unmiracle can quite appease —
humbly in their imagined bodies kneel
(over time space doom dream while floats the whole

perhapsless mystery of paradise)

mind without soul may blast some universe
to might have been,and stop ten thousand stars
but not one heartbeat of this child;nor shall
even prevail a million questionings
against the silence of his mother's smile

— whose only secret all creation sings

CAROL SING (remain seated)

THE 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

Karen Yancey

Using your smartphone messaging app, text FCCOG Donate to 73256
or scan this QR code to donate.



ANTHEM

In Dulci Jubilo
Ian Higginson (b. 1959)
The Chancel Choir

†DOXOLOGY

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

†PRAYER OF DEDICATION

†CAROL

Go Tell It On The Mountain
136 Glory To God Hymnal (purple)

†BENEDICTION

†CHORAL RESPONSE

†POSTLUDE

†Please rise in body or in spirit

All music used with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-726454. All rights reserved.

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.

**COMMUNITY
HOUR**

HELP OUT AT COMMUNITY HOUR ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

Each Sunday morning, committees of First Church are responsible for working and providing treats during Community Hour following worship. But, even if you aren't on a committee, you can offer to help! Bring some treats, clean up, restocking coffee mugs or treats. There is something for everyone to do. Head to SignUp Genius or scan the QR code and participate in this important ministry when you are available.



CONTINUE HARVEST SUNDAY WITH DONATIONS THROUGHOUT DECEMBER

Thank you for the abundance of donations for Harvest Sunday! Through December 31, you can donate online to shop for fresh food donations from the comfort of your home. The fresh selections will be delivered to Neighbor to Neighbor as they need so nothing spoils.



GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL - FOLSOM CARE CLOSET

Students in our community, who receive free/reduced price meals at school during the week, are going without food and basic essentials each weekend. GHS teachers are addressing this need through creation of the Folsom House Care Closet, open on Friday afternoons at dismissal, where they're working to provide provisions weekly for around 45 students. Please consider donating non-perishable food and hygiene items in the bin at the back of the Meetinghouse. **This will be an ongoing drive.** Suggested items include dried 1lb bags of white rice, dried 1lb bags of red or black beans, canned tuna, pasta, tomato sauce, granola bars, shampoo, and soap/body wash.



Larger orders can be shipped directly to Folsom House Care Closet at Greenwich High School at 10 Hillside Rd, Greenwich, CT 06830. Financial donations can also be made to the GHS PTA - Folsom Care Closet Donations by clicking on the QR code with your smartphone. Questions or if you would like to help with drop-off, please reach out to Pam Speer pspeer22@gmail.com or Kristin Toretta ktoretta@gmail.com. Thank you!



First Church 2026 Annual Giving Stats

From The Heart



■ Pledged To Date (549503)



■ Annual Giving Goal (750000)

ANNUAL GIVING UPDATE

We're well on our way for this year with 131 pledging units and over 73% of our goal! Thanks to all who have pledged. This figure is as of Dec 22.

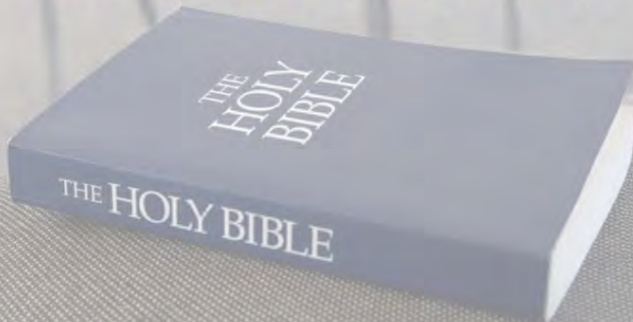
It's not too late to make your pledge to First Church for the 2026 calendar year. You can scan the QR code below which will take you to the website and make your pledge online, or you can use the pledge card in the rack in front of your seat and place it in the offering plate as you come forward to present your food donations during the offering.

We are grateful for your generosity during this giving season to continue the ministry that First Church has in the greater Greenwich community and throughout the world.



ADULT FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

First Look Bible Study



Just Drop-In: A First Look at Sunday's Scripture
9:00-9:45 a.m. in The Lounge

Each Sunday morning, join Pastor Cydney on Sunday mornings for a drop-in time of conversation around the day's scripture. Together we'll explore the passage, gain context, and notice fresh insights before entering worship.

No need to prepare—just bring yourself. Come for the whole time, or even 15 minutes, and trust that God will give you something good to carry into worship and beyond.

NARRATIVE LECTIONARY BIBLE STUDY

Each Thursday at 12 noon in the First Church Lounge, Pastor Patrick leads a group in a new adult education opportunity.

We'll dive into the Narrative Lectionary daily readings, opening space for honest conversation, fresh insights, and shared discovery.

For the past 2-3 years, First Church has been using the Narrative Lectionary as our primary scripture focus in Sunday worship.

Whether you are brand new to Bible study or a seasoned reader, you'll find a welcoming circle to explore how God's story connects with our own.

Come as you are, bring your questions, curiosity, an open heart, and your lunch (optional).



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 Church School/ Regional Youth Ministry
Parish Nurse
Director of Operations
Director of Finance & Administration
Livestream Director
Audio Technician
Database Administrative Assistant
Facility Manager
Sexton
Sexton
First Church Preschool Director
First Church Preschool Assistant Director
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
Julio Yika
Joe Vartuli
Curtis Gay
Beth Genovese
Melanie Garnett
Reverend Sally Colegrove



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

See more about the stories of our
Stained Glass Windows



See the Tour of our Main Cemetery -
People of Note

