



SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2026  
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER  
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.*

*Please silence all electronic devices.*

## PRELUDE

*Festival Fanfare*

Jason W. Krug (b. 1978)

The Palmer Handbell Choir

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, director

## CALL TO COMMUNITY

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

## †CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In places of captivity, seen and unseen,

**All: God moves to set us free.**

One: Where dignity has been lost or denied,

**All: God restores what has always been sacred.**

One: Among strangers, in unexpected moments,

**All: God draws us together in grace.**

## †CHORAL INTROIT

## †HYMN

*Jesus Christ Is Risen Today*

187 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

## †PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS (in unison)

God of freedom and new life, you meet us in the places we feel bound and remind us of who we are, beloved and whole. Give us the courage to live from that identity, to honor the dignity in one another, and to stay open to the connections you place before us. Free us for love and for one another, as we follow the way of Jesus. 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.**

†Please rise in body or in spirit

†RESPONSE (remain standing)

Halle, Hallelujah

Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - jah! Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - jah!  
Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - jah! Hal-le - lu-jah! Hal-le - lu - jah!

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

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

### RESPONSE

*Jesus Loves Me*

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to him belong. They are weak, but he is strong.  
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

### FIRST LESSON

*Psalm 146*  
New Revised Standard Version  
Bill DeHaven

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!  
I will praise the Lord as long as I live;  
I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

Do not put your trust in princes,  
in mortals, in whom there is no help.  
When their breath departs, they return to the earth;  
on that very day their plans perish.

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God,  
who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;  
who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free;  
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.  
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.  
The Lord watches over the strangers;  
he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

The Lord will reign forever,  
your God, O Zion, for all generations.  
Praise the Lord!

†Please rise in body or in spirit

## SOLO

*He Touched Me*  
Bill Gaither (b. 1936)  
Carol Woodman, soprano

## SECOND LESSON

*Acts 16:16-34*  
New Revised Standard Version

One day as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a female slave who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men, these Jews, are disturbing our city and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us, being Romans, to adopt or observe." The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

## MESSAGE

*Not Just Free*  
Reverend Patrick Collins

## †HYMN

*Come, Ye Faithful, Raise The Strain*  
185 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

## BLESSING OF THE PRAYER SHAWLS

†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

Jennifer Gartner

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*True Light*  
Keith Hampton (b.1957)  
The Chancel Choir  
Daniel Young, tenor

### †DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below: Alleluia, alleluia!  
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

### †PRAYER OF DEDICATION

### †HYMN

*Great God, We Sing That Mighty Hand*  
454 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

### †BENEDICTION

### †CHORAL RESPONSE

### †POSTLUDE

*Chimings Of Great Joy*  
Dan R. Edwards (b. 1951)

### †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 April are members of the Faith Formation & Education Committees.

**COMMUNITY**  
*000000*  
**HOUR**

### BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING – TODAY



High blood pressure is one major risk factor for stroke, which can lead to a multitude of disabilities, and affects nearly 800,000 people in the U.S. each year. Other common stroke risk factors are smoking, uncontrolled diabetes, and lack of regular physical exercise. Your Parish Nurse, Sue Asselin, will be available for blood pressure screenings and health consultations in her office to the right of the Auditorium stage. During the week, Sue is available by appointment. Email [susana@fccog.org](mailto:susana@fccog.org) or call 203-637-1791 extension 821.

## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP QUILT RAFFLE & ANNUAL MEETING/LUNCHEON

It's April and that means the annual quilt raffle to benefit The Women's Fellowship is just around the corner. Tickets will be sold at community hour, the church front office, and The Rummage Room. Tickets are \$5 and the drawing will be held on Saturday, May 16 at noon.



Sponsored by Women's Fellowship

Open to everyone!



Sunday, April 26 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - First Church Auditorium

# All Ages Bingo

**TODAY** - If folks would like to carpool to save gas and mitigate overcrowded parking, please meet at the FCCOG church parking lot at 1:15pm. The carpools will leave at 1:30pm.

## INTERRELIGIOUS COMMUNITY PROJECT: GREENWICH SACRED SPACES SITE VISITS

① **Sunday, April 26th | 2-4:30 PM**  
**First Church of Round Hill (Methodist)**  
**464 Round Hill Road, Greenwich**  
Learn about their history & denomination, tour the church, and connect with other people of faith through stories & lite fare.  
RSVP by April 19th.



② **Tuesday, May 5th | 6-8:30 PM**  
**FCCOG's Soup Supper & Tour of Meetinghouse & Auditorium**  
Our turn to share history of FCCOG & the UCC, showcase our building, and share stories of faith. Help us welcome the interfaith community!  
RSVP by May 1st.



The Knollwood Garden Club of Greenwich

*invites you to attend*

## *Let Freedom Ring!*

*Celebrating America at 250*



photograph by Joanne Bouknight

### **A Festival of Handbell Choirs**

**Benefit to Support Restoring the Seaside Garden**

Commissioned work "Let Freedom Ring" by Jonathan Vaughn

**Saturday, May 9 – 4 p.m.**

Seaside Garden, Greenwich Point, Old Greenwich

*Rain Date Saturday, May 16 – 4 p.m.*

*reception following the concert*

Featuring the Handbell choirs from Christ Church,  
First Congregational, First Presbyterian

*Ticket price: \$50 – donations welcome*

For reservations email Marie Williams at [apalladio@mac.com](mailto:apalladio@mac.com)  
or visit [knollwoodgardenclub.org](http://knollwoodgardenclub.org) and click on Events

Sponsors – Bucknall Family Foundation and Eda Peterson and Family

### **RISE AGAINST HUNGER UPDATE**

Thank you to all 180 volunteers who set-up, welcomed volunteers, packaged, sealed and boxed meals, and cleaned up for the Rise Against Hunger event on Sunday! It was a joyful, hands-on worship service providing 20,088 meals for those facing food insecurity. Once we learn where the meals have shipped, we will pass that information along.

Also, thank you to everyone who contributed a Lenten Gift to underwrite the ingredients for the meal packing event. We could not hold this event without you!

With great appreciation,  
The Outreach Committee

Scan the QR code  
to purchase tickets for the  
Festival of Handbell Choirs



The First Congregational Church of Greenwich

## **INFORMATIONAL MEETING**

**SUNDAY MAY 3 - FOLLOWING WORSHIP AT 11:15 A.M.**

*At this meeting, we will introduce a proposed set of changes to our bylaws that will shape how we organize our leadership and structure our governance in the years ahead. These updates are intended to create a model that is more flexible, sustainable, and better aligned with who we are and who we are becoming. These changes will then be brought forward for a congregational vote at our Annual Meeting in June.*

## ROYALTIES FOR SPIRITUALS



First Church is proud to launch Royalties for Spirituals, an initiative to honor the legacy of Black spirituals and invest in the future of Black musicians. Rooted in our commitment to racial justice and the power of sacred music, this effort will provide ongoing financial support to organizations that educate and empower Black students in music.



The initiative was unanimously approved by our Church Council and emerges from thoughtful conversations held earlier this year. As a congregation that regularly sings and celebrates music from the Black church tradition, we recognize that these songs—many born from the suffering and resilience of enslaved people—were never compensated. It's time to pay that debt forward.

To donate to Royalties for Spirituals, click on the QR code and donate online, or go to [www.fccog.org](http://www.fccog.org) and scroll to the bottom of the website and click the blue button.



We have secured an organization which matches our goals and dreams for partnering with our initiative. **The Adam J. Lewis Academy (AJLA)** in Bridgeport, CT is the perfect school that educates underserved children in the eastern end of Fairfield County.

Our Royalties for Spirituals initiative is highlighted each time a gospel or spiritual is offered in worship during the year. The Chancel Choir's anthem "True Light" is based on the song "This little light of mine" which is an American gospel song that originated in the 1920s, when it was first sung in Christian churches and penitentiaries. The hymn is often attributed to evangelist Harry Dixon Loes who is said to have written it for children, using the biblical passage about the lamp under a bushel as inspiration. (Wikipedia)



Please consider giving generously to this effort which supports the music program at Adam J. Lewis Academy in Bridgeport. Scan the QR code in the graphic to learn more about this initiative. Scan the QR code on the left to donate to the initiative.

## ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

### JUST DROP-IN: A FIRST LOOK AT SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE Sundays 9:00 a.m. in the First Church Lounge

Join Pastor Cydney for a drop-in time of conversation around Sunday'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 Thursdays 12 p.m. 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).

## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY GATHERING

All are Welcome to Join the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Come knit, affix fringe or tags, and visit with friends.

Next Meeting: Wednesday April 29, 7-8:30 pm, in Rick's Room.



There will be a special dedication of Prayer Shawls this Sunday April 26 during Worship service.

Contact Angela Stevens [angelamessinastevens@gmail.com](mailto:angelamessinastevens@gmail.com) or Sue Asselin [susana@fccog.org](mailto:susana@fccog.org) for information.

## CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP

### New this May – Caregivers Support Group

This group is designed for those who find themselves the primary caregivers to aging parents, ailing spouses, or have otherwise had their lives impacted by the care needs of others.

Weekly meetings will begin on Wednesday May 6, 1:30-2:30 pm, in the Lounge at First Church.

The group is facilitated by Dedee Rigg, an experienced pastoral counselor and long-time caregiver to her husband Jerry.

Dedee Rigg graduated from Union Theological Seminary and was ordained to pastoral counseling ministry at the First Congregational Church of Greenwich in 1981. After clinical training, she practiced psychotherapy/pastoral counseling in Greenwich both at Mead Counseling Center and in private practice for 40 years. Dedee initially worked with adults and couples suffering from both individual and marital issues and later, after the death of one of her sons at age 23, she specialized in grief counseling. For 19 years she was the primary caretaker for her husband Jerry who died of Alzheimer's disease. She offers her experience as a therapist and a caretaker in this support group.



# EVENT CALENDAR

## SPRING 2026

4/26	→	First Church Round Hill Sharing Sacred Spaces Tour 2- 4:30 p.m.
5/5	→	First Church Greenwich Sharing Sacred Spaces Tour 6-8:30 p.m.
5/17	→	Music Sunday Celebrate the conclusion of another season of our music ensembles - fruit, croissants, and whipped cream after worship
5/29-31	→	RYM Service Learning Trip Youth travel to New Haven to work with Incredible Days and their ministry in the community
6/7	→	Confirmation Sunday Join us as our youth are welcomed into full membership of the church
6/14	→	Celebration Sunday A joy-filled morning recognizing the conclusion of another year of Church School



## 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  
Buildings and Grounds Supervisor  
Facility Supervisor and Sunday Sexton  
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  
Johnny Ramos  
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

