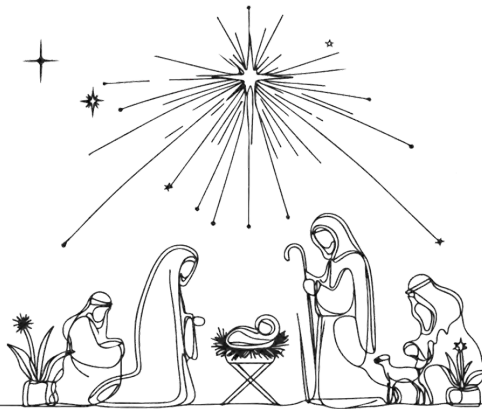




WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2025
CHRISTMAS EVE
SIX O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING



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

Christmas Fantasy

Arr. Joel Raney (b. 1956)

Brass, Timpani, Organ

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, director

CHRISTMAS GREETING

Reverend Patrick Collins

†CALL TO WORSHIP

One: On this holy night, when the world is loud and full, we gather to listen for God's quiet coming.

All: **We bring our joy and our weariness, our noise and our longing.**

One: Into an unready world, God comes, quietly, tenderly, changing everything.

All: **Let us worship the One who meets us in the silence and the song.**

†CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

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;

Refrain:

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! (Refrain)

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning, Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: (Refrain)

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Dempsey Family

One: Good news of great joy for all people—

All: **For unto us a Savior is born.**

One: Tonight heaven draws close, and God's love takes on flesh.

All: **We light the Christ Candle, for Christ is our light.**

One: Come, Lord Jesus, dwell in us this holy night.

All: **Let this flame shine through us as your everlasting light.**

†Please rise in body or in spirit

ANTHEM

Hodie Christus Natus Est (Today Christ Is Born)
Healey Willan (1880-1968)
The Chancel Choir

LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7
New Revised Standard Version
Duke Perrucci

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied exultation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders,
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Great will be his authority,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.



CAROL

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen
Arr. Stuart Forster (b. 1971)

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day,
to save us all from Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray;

Refrain: (ALL EACH TIME)

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.

From God our heav'nly Father, a blessed angel came;
and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same:
how that in Bethlehem was born the son of God by name, (Refrain)

(LOWER VOICES) The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind,
and left their flocks afeeding, in tempest, storm, and wind,
and went to Bethlehem straightway, this blessed Babe to find. (Refrain)

(UPPER VOICES) But when to Bethlehem they came, where-at this infant lay,
they found him in a manger where oxen feed on hay;
his mother Mary, kneeling, unto the Lord did pray: (Refrain)

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,
and with true love and charity each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas all others doth efface. (Refrain)

LESSON

First Coming
Madeline L'Engle
Claire Wentworth

He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace.
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,
and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.
He came when the need was deep and great.
He dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine.

He did not wait till hearts were pure.
In joy he came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame
he came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!
Waiting to count to infinity for eternity,
To be with our Peace who holds our when and how forevermore.

ANTHEM

Gloria
Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)
The Chancel Choir
Hanna Golodinskii, soprano
Thomas Woodman, baritone

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 2:1-20
New Revised Standard Version
Carol Woodman

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, 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. (Refrain)

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. (Refrain)

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought. (Refrain)

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Reverend Patrick Collins

ANTHEM

Sans Day Carol
Ian Higginson (b. 1959)
The Chancel Choir

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

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.

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings,
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

CALL TO OFFERING

Reverend Patrick Collins

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



OFFERING OUR GIFTS

*During our offering time, the ushers will receive your offerings while you remain seated. If you brought a "Jesus 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.
The gifts will be donated to local non-profits for children and youth.*

ANTHEM

The Holly And The Ivy
Arr. Richard Shephard (1949-2021)
The Chancel Choir

SHARING THE CHRIST LIGHT

Please note that the sanctuary will darken at the beginning of the sharing of the Christ light.

PASSING OF THE LIGHT

*Candlelight will be shared with those at the end of each row, who are invited to pass it along.
Light your candle from the upright lit candle.*

CAROL

Silent Night

1- Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

2 - Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born!"

3 - Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

4 - Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born.

†BENEDICTION

Reverend Patrick Collins

Please extinguish your candle after the benediction and return it to the baskets at the back of the Meetinghouse.

†POSTLUDE

Flourish On Joy To The World
Robert Hobby

†Please rise in body or in spirit

Special thanks to our instrumentalists this evening:

Trumpets: Mike Carolan, Joe Spitzer

French Horn: Debbie Schmidt

Trombone: Steve Shulman

Tuba: Vasil Golodinskii

Percussion: Barbara Freedman

OUR FINAL CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

9 p.m. Candlelight Service with Communion - Music with The Genesis/Alumni Choir

TREE OF REMEMBRANCE

At the back of the Meetinghouse is a Christmas tree, and this will be, through Epiphany Sunday on January 4, our Tree of Remembrance. Please take a label and write the name of your loved one, with or without the dates of birth and death, before hanging it on the tree.

Write as many as you'd like. This will be a beautiful way to remember those we have lost and miss, particularly over this holiday period.



For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord.

Romans 14:8

THE 2026 ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN



As of Dec 22, we have received 131 pledges for over \$549,503 (73%) toward our goal of \$750,000 for 2026. You can schedule your giving for 2026 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 amount for 2026, 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.



Thank you
FOR YOUR SUPPORT

YEAR-END PLEDGE REMINDER

As the year-end quickly approaches, please consider your 2025 pledge fulfillment during this busy season. You can complete it online by clicking on the "ACS" button on the upper right corner of the church website.

Thank you for supporting the work of The First Congregational Church of Greenwich.



COZY CAROL SING - DECEMBER 28

On Sunday, December 28, 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.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS & BRASS

The decorations and brass are given in joyful and loving memory of:

Diane, Erling, and Dana Andersen	Their Family
Lydia Tyner Anderson, James Anderson III,	Cyndy & Ty Anderson
Dr. Alan Vance Briceland and Penelope Warren Briceland	Vance Briceland
John and Betty Briggs	Eric, Pam, Chase, & Nina Kreuter
Kay and Joe Browne, and Carol and Jerry Kutzen	Tom, Peter, & Terri Browne Kutzen
Anne, Bill and Sue Denne	Their Family
Joan Denne	Her Family
Pat Geismar	The Kettle Quilters
Marian and Fred Hout	Susie Hout Baker – Sara, Charlie, Lizzy
Joan and Jim Kreuter	Betsy Kreuter, and Eric Kreuter & Family
Phyllis and John Kimball	From their loving daughter & granddaughter
	Karen Pacent & Nicole Pacent-Lindquist
	Their Family
Melita and John Magness	
Kenneth Olson	Erna Olson & daughters Beth & Christine
Kimberly Dawn Pacent, our cherished daughter and loving sister	Paul and Karen Pacent & Nicole Pacent-Lindquist
	Ruth Reed & Claire Henry
Our parents –	
Louise & Harrison Reed	
Margaret & Carleton Gisborne	
Gifford Reed	Love, Ruth
Charlie and Bill Robertson	Betsy Kreuter, and Eric Kreuter Family
Robert W. and Thelma M. Symons	Craig Symons
Purisma and Feliciano Teria, Louise and Richard Haviland	Erlinda & Larry Haviland
Barbara Tufts, and Donald Winston Tufts	Cyndy & Ty Anderson
Charles J. Veith IV	His Sister, Linda Veith Glover
Arthur C. and Catherine G. Weigner	Sons Stephen A. & Ronald C. Weigner
Marian, Warren, Peter, and Lori White	Thomas A. White
Rick Woodman, Harry Woodman,	Edmund Hawxhurst &
Robert Osker, Edmund and Shirley Hawxhurst	Lynn Woodman Hawxhurst

DONATIONS

Kit Mills, Glenn and Donna Hascher, Jane Finch



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
Administrative and Communications Colleague
Livestream Director
Audio Technician
Database Administrative Assistant
Facility Manager
Facility Manager
Sexton
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
Carolyn Samuel
Daniel Lepoutre
Bob Small
Sue Wilder
Julio Yika
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

