



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025  
SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
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

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*  
Emily Maxon Porter (b. 1942)  
Dr. Craig Scott Symons, organ

### CHIMING OF THE HOUR

### CALL TO COMMUNITY

Reverend Cydney Van Dyke

### THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Jean Bruder & Sheila Tolmie

**Leader:** God leads us into a valley of dry bones. Places that feel lifeless, worn out, and done.

**People:** Yet even there, God asks, “Can these bones live?”

**Leader:** God’s Spirit breathes into what we thought was finished, and scattered bones become a living people again.

**People:** We light this candle for peace.

**Leader:** Come, Lord Jesus, breathe peace into our weary places.

**People:** Let this flame remind us that nothing is beyond your restoring breath.

### MUSIC DURING THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

*Creator Of The Stars Of Night*  
Arr. Cathy Mocklebust (b. 1958)  
The Palmer Handbell Choir

### CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP

*This Little Light Of Mine*  
The Cherub Choir  
Carol Woodman, director  
Lynn Hawxhurst, ukulele

### †HYMN

*Watchman, Tell Us Of The Night*  
109 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

### †PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS (in unison)

O Lord God, our breath fails, our spirits falter, we long for something we don’t even know how to name. We don’t know what’s possible, if anything...but we trust that you are coming.

In yearning that can’t wait, in uncertainty that feels like grief, in anticipation that barely dares to hope, we look for you. Amen.

*\*Moment of silence for personal reflection\**

### †ASSURANCE OF GRACE

†Please rise in body or in spirit



## †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)

*Halle, Hallelujah*



## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

### RESPONSE

*Jesus Loves Me*

*(During the response, the children will return to their seats.)*

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

*The Peace Of Wild Things*

Wendell Berry

Joe McBride

When despair for the world grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
waiting with their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

## SOLO

*The Little Road To Bethlehem*

Michael Head (1900-1976)

Hanna Golondinskii, soprano

†Please rise in body or in spirit

## SECOND LESSON

Ezekiel 37:1-14  
New Revised Standard Version

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophecy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord."

## MESSAGE

*The Moment Of Surrender*  
Reverend Patrick Collins

## †HYMN

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*  
103 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

## THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Invitation

Prayer of Consecration

Words of Institution

Receiving the Bread and Cup

*In the tradition of our church, let us partake of the bread (gluten-free) and the cup together, remembering our individual uniqueness in the eyes of God and our diversity and unity within the Body of Christ.*

*Those receiving communion are asked to come forward by the center aisle,  
receive the bread and cup, then return to their seats by the side aisle.*

†Please rise in body or in spirit

## 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

Fred Laffan

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



### ANTHEM

*Emmanuel, God With Us*  
Mary McDonald (b. 1956)  
The Chancel Choir

### †DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow*

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures  
here be-low; praise him a-bove, ye heaven-ly host; praise  
Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost. A-men.

### †PRAYER OF DEDICATION

### †HYMN

*Lift Up Your Head, Ye Mighty Gates*  
114 Pilgrim Hymnal (red)

### †BENEDICTION

### †CHORAL RESPONSE

### †POSTLUDE

*Ostinato On An Old English Carol*  
Thomas Kuras (1950-1997)

†Please rise in body or in spirit

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.



### 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.



### BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING



Your Parish Nurse, Sue Asselin, RN is available for blood pressure screenings and health consultations following today's worship service, in her office to the right of the Auditorium stage. During the week, she is available by appointment. Email [susana@fccog.org](mailto:susana@fccog.org) or call 203-637-1791 extension 821.

### CONTINUE HARVEST SUNDAY WITH DONATIONS THROUGHOUT DECEMBER

Thank you for the abundance of donations for Harvest Sunday! To date, over 1,200 lbs of fresh food has been donated to Neighbor to Neighbor through #GiveHealthy! 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](mailto:pspeer22@gmail.com) or Kristin Toretta [ktoretta@gmail.com](mailto:ktoretta@gmail.com) . Thank you!


## First Church 2026 Annual Giving Stats



\$505,739

\$750,000

 Pledged To Date (505739)

 Annual Giving Goal (750000)

## ANNUAL GIVING UPDATE

We're well on our way for this year with 104 pledging units and over 67% of our goal! Thanks to all who have pledged. This figure is as of Dec 3.

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.



## 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 19, 2025. 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.



## 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).



## FREE CHURCH WIDE EVENT: Advent Craft Fair



Hosted by FCCOG Church School in Auditorium

## December 7<sup>th</sup> at 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)





The First Congregational Church of Greenwich  
presents the 60th annual

# Messiah

Saturday, December 13 - 4 p.m.

**Join The First Church Festival Chorus**

- **Choir rehearsal** - Monday, December 8, 2025 - 7:30 - 9:00 pm in the Meetinghouse.
- **Dress rehearsal** with orchestra on Wednesday, December 10 - 7:30 - 9:00 pm.  
Attire is solid color tops and dark bottoms for ladies,  
and men in dark suits, white shirts, long solid-color ties.  
There is a refundable score deposit of \$20 (you must use our scores).

There are no auditions; prior experience is suggested, but everyone is welcome.  
Contact Dr. Craig Scott Symons, [craigs@fccog.org](mailto:craigs@fccog.org), for more information.

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



JOIN US IN THE CHORUS FOR  
THE 60TH ANNUAL MESSIAH  
CONCERT ON DECEMBER 13

60<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
MESSIAH CONCERT  
DECEMBER 13 AT 4 P.M.

The First Congregational Church of Greenwich  
presents the 60th annual

# Messiah

Saturday, December 13 - 4 p.m.

Hanna Golodinskii, soprano  
Linnea Conley, mezzo soprano  
Daniel Young, tenor  
Thomas Woodman, bass

First Church Festival Chorus and Orchestra  
Dr. Craig Scott Symons, conductor

No tickets required - Freewill offering received

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

📍 25 Washington Ct, Stamford, CT  
**DEC 14 @ 12:00 AM-2:00 PM**

**PILGRIM  
TOWERS**

**NEW FRIENDS**

**GIVING  
TREE  
GIFTS**

**YOU ARE INVITED TO**

*First Church*  
**Christmas Party**

**SUNDAY  
DEC 14  
5:00-7:30 PM**

In the Meetinghouse  
Hors d'oeuvres & beverages -  
and a carol sing-a-long!

**JESUS  
GIFT  
DRIVE**

**DECEMBER 21-24**

Join us in collecting gifts  
for the children and youth of Kids in Crisis.  
Gifts for all ages will be used year-round!

Unwrapped gifts will be collected during the 10 am  
worship service December 21 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](http://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

