



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DARIEN

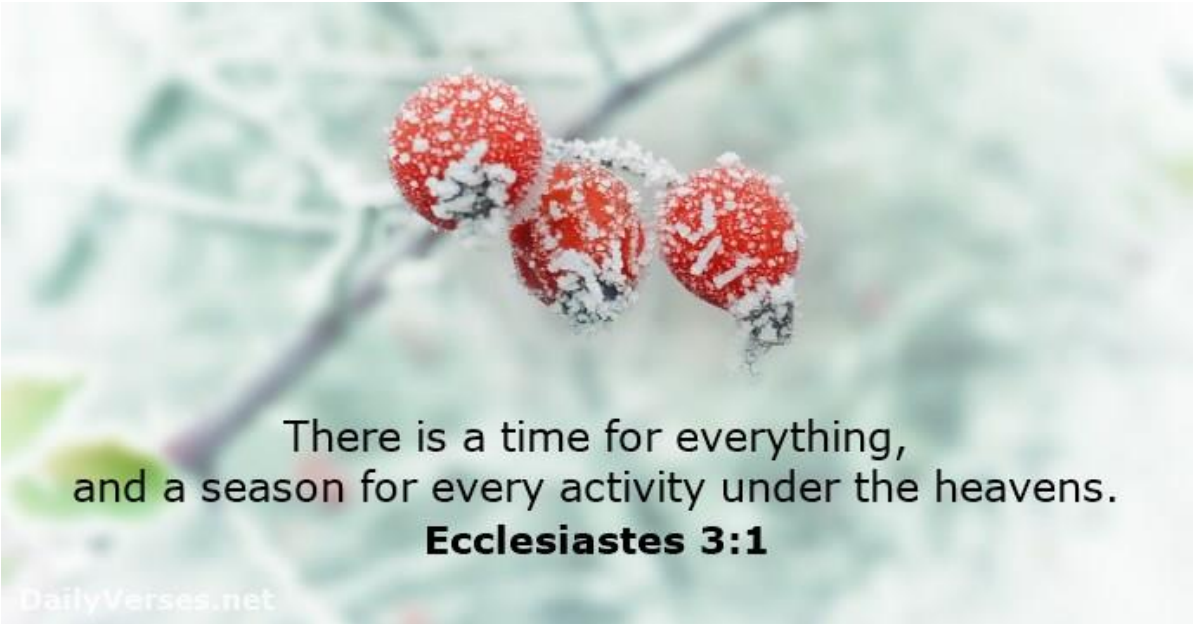
United Church of Christ
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FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 7, 2018

8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.



There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

DailyVerses.net

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 7, 2018

8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Children are always welcome at our worship services.

A drop-off Nursery is available to children age 3 and younger,
in the Nursery School wing from 9:45 a.m.- 11:15 a.m.

Please drop off children ages 0 - 2.9 at or before students are released for Church School.

The nursery is the first classroom in the left hand hallway, after the supply closet.

****Those who are able are invited to stand.***

PRELUDE

Mr. Maxim Pakhomov

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dale Rosenberger, Senior Minister

PASSING OF THE PEACE

***HYMN #258**

“MORNING HAS BROKEN”

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

The Lord's Day is meant for worship and praise.
We pause to make room for singing and prayer.

**God calls us from the tedium of our toil;
to test the meaning of our life and times.**

This much we do know--God wills our well-being,
our best lives; and God gives us all essential work.

**God wants our work to satisfy and please.
God wants our efforts to bring fruitfulness.**

Today, as we reflect on a year past, we look ahead.
But we live in the now, with God's glorious presence.

**A season for every matter under heaven emerges.
This is a time for healing and building up the truth.**

*OPENING PRAYER

*LORD'S PRAYER

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.

*GLORIA PATRI



Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Ghost; As it was in the be-
gin-ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with-out end. A - men. A - men

JOYS AND CONCERNS

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

ECCLESIASTES 3:1-13

Bill Lattimer, Deacon (8:30)

Liz Werner, Deacon (10:00)

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;

a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

a time to seek, and a time to lose;

a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

a time to tear, and a time to sew;

a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

a time to love, and a time to hate;

a time for war, and a time for peace.

(continued)

What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil.

***HYMN #275**

“DEAR LORD, WHO LOVES ALL HUMANKIND”

GOSPEL LESSON

REVELATION 21:1-6

Rev. Rosenberger

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

‘See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.’

And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ Then he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

SERMON

"READING OUR LIFE AND TIMES"

Rev. Rosenberger

OFFERTORY (10:00 only)

“THE SHEPHERD’S FAREWELL”

Hector Beriloz

Senior Choir

***DOXOLOGY (10:00 only)**



Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise God, all crea-tures here be-low; Praise



God a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host; Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (*unison*) (10:00 only)

Lord Jesus, you came to us, empowered by the Holy Spirit. You did not stay at a distance, but took our cause upon yourself, blessing us with your presence. We pray that the gifts we give in your name would work similarly, drawing close to both our human need and our divine empowerment, serving and praising you. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

CALL TO PRAYER

| | |
|----------------|---|
| (Leader) | The Lord be with you. |
| (Congregation) | And also with you. |
| (Leader) | Lift up your hearts. |
| (Congregation) | We lift them up to the Lord. |
| (Leader) | Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. |
| (Congregation) | It is right to give God thanks and praise. |

***SANCTUS**

"HOLY, HOLY, HOLY"
Holy, holy, holy. My heart, my heart adores you!
My heart knows how to say to you: Holy are you, Lord!

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (*unison*)

Almighty God, we praise you, and extol you, for you have satisfied us with the food and drink of eternal life. Having been reclaimed in the sacrifice of your Son, we offer ourselves, our bodies and souls, as a holy and precious offering. May our lives be lived for the glory of your kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***HYMN #524**

"NOW GREET THE SWIFTLY CHANGING YEAR"

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Rosenberger

POSTLUDE

Mr. Pakhomov

TODAY'S USHERS are Bill Lattimer (8:30), Phil Meyer, Dave Sealy and Liz Werner.

ACTS OF FAITH IN A NEW YEAR

Our wonderful run of nine weeks devoted to Genesis, the stories of creation and the patriarchs has just ended. Our attendance mostly numbered from 10 to 15. Our conversations were lively. We were struck by how current and contemporary those ancient stories are to our own stories.

As our last session finished, we decided to keep this good thing going. For at least the next six weeks—maybe more--we will focus on the book of Acts. Again, we cannot help but notice how impressively these stories relate to the present situation of our lives today and the church's life.

How does Acts match up to our challenge of spiritual living in 2018? The Acts of the Apostles unfolds in a world where Christianity had no taken-for-granted status or support in its society. Guess what? The status of our faith has shifted much like this in America over the last 50 years.

America today has finally become officially secular, religiously pluralistic, and ethnically diverse.

Today, like in the book of Acts, we Christians find ourselves in the minority. The church is no longer "established" like it was back in the days of "Christendom," which is now done and gone.

Despite no official standing or anything like respect, the church in Acts becomes a dynamic movement, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit. That is exactly our challenge today, friends. In Acts the Holy Spirit is the invisible main character whom Christians draw upon when they seem totally without options and don't know where to turn to fulfill their divine calling.

In Acts chapter 2 (our second session), the Spirit comes to this scant, fragile community in wind and fire. Suddenly, Jesus' timid, feeble, and reticent followers are galvanized into leadership. Those who went into hiding as Jesus needed them now step forward in his place as he departs. Despite no real standing, Acts reveals a church that is dynamic and alive, not static and frozen. It is where we learn the gospel message and moment don't end with the cross and empty tomb.

Just as we would think the faith must become defensive, rocked on its heels, it becomes gutsy and moves sure-handedly with confidence, power, and dignity out into the rest of the world. Nobody predicted this. Maybe we need to learn to see ourselves like this at this similar moment in history. Maybe, as the play by play announcers have it, "The best defense is a good offense."

Someone said of Jesus, he was always in trouble and yet was forever joyous. Acts shows how to get into trouble for the right reasons, how to give our lives over to God. In Acts, the Roman Empire grows threatened by the striking dramatic change the church kindles. In the face of this, formerly timid Apostles now stand up, “We must obey God rather than any human authority.”

Acts is our scriptural case study in how to be feisty and alive at a parallel moment in history. It trades in issues like leadership and conflict; cultural diversity and staying true to the core vision; the disposal of wealth and possessions; the role of women in the church; how church relates to the state; even the challenge of persecution. It teems with rollicking good tales and adventures.

We will continue with our Wednesday, 9:30 am time. We will use an accompanying Bible Study guide for as much structure as we desire. We’ll hear these ancient stories and also tell our own.

Dale

**A CALL TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHUCH OF DARIEN**

You are hereby called to the First Congregational Church of Darien, United Church of Christ, 14 Brookside Road, for the first portion of the Annual Meeting of the church scheduled for Sunday, January 28, 2018 immediately following our 10 o’clock service of worship.

The purpose of this meeting of the congregation is to:

- * receive the 2017 financial reports.
- * receive the recommendations of Church Council for the 2018 budget.
- * address any other business or concern relating to the life of our congregation, that may properly be brought before the assembled congregation.



FCC Care Circle 11th Hour Discussion:
The Invisible Conversations
With Your Aging Parents

With Author Rev. Shannon A. White
Sunday, January 21, 11:15 a.m.

As an ordained minister, Rev. White has seen countless families going through the aging and dying processes with a loved one—some with joy and peace, able to say everything they needed to say, and others with reluctance and struggle, hampered by “invisible conversations” in operation for decades.

In her book, *The Invisible Conversations With Your Aging Parents*, Rev. White provides practical tools to help families deal better with the aging and dying process, wherever they are on life’s journey. Specifically, she provides guidance on how to discuss tricky topics such as legal documents the elderly and everyone should have in place, dealing with dementia, helping seniors decide where to live, financial oversight by adult children, what to do when a parent’s driving is no longer safe, aging and alcoholism, caregiving, and loss and grief.

Undergirding all these topics are lists of practical questions that should be addressed, tips on how to speak aloud the conversations we have in our minds, and brief case studies that provide powerful examples.

RSVP to Mariann Bigelow (bigelow3@optonline.net).

Refreshments and child care will be provided. Rev. White’s book is available in the church office for those who wish to purchase it before the discussion (\$10).

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

We are still looking for more Church School teachers, subs, and one-time speakers! If you have a talent you are willing to share with the Church School at FCC, please email cgeeding@uccdarien.org.

January 7th : Announcing “**Sing-Along-Sunday**” to kick off our 2018 Church School year! We will have fun singing our favorite tunes from the Pageant, some kid-friendly favorites, and some new ones as well. Your kids won’t want to miss this amazing day of music and fun!

BIBLE STUDY / THE BOOK OF ACTS

Please join us for a 10-week examination of some of the best-known stories from the book of Acts and a discussion about what they tell us about our lives today.

All are welcome regardless of their background in the Bible.

If you can only attend a few of our sessions, that is perfectly fine! Please come anyway. This is a great way to understand how the Bible has relevance to everyone today.

The meetings will be on Wednesdays from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Morehouse Room.

2018 OFFERING ENVELOPES

If you made a pledge for 2017, your Offering Envelopes are available for pick-up and can be found near the stage, in the Parish Hall. If you do not see envelopes with your name, and would like offering envelopes, please contact Karen Hansen at KHansen@uccdarien.org.

NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

The First Congregational Church Nursery School is registering children for 2018-19. Teri Manning is offering tours weekdays at 10:00 and there will be an Open House on January 7th, 2 - 3:30. Please call the school at 203 655-3150 for more information. Church members receive priority placement!

THE CLASSICS BOOK GROUP

The Classics Book Group will be meeting on Wednesday, January 17 in the library at 3:30. We will be talking about Turgenev’s Fathers and Sons. This announcement is very late, but the book is short - try us out: Interesting people and thoughtful, relaxed discussions. Sally Bassler [203-655-9658](tel:203-655-9658) or sbassler13@gmail.com.

The First Congregational Church of Darien Presents:



Join us for our Sunday afternoon Worship Service,
on **Sunday, January 21 at 4:30 p.m.**

Key elements of the service include:

A casual and more contemporary worship service, lasting about 45 minutes. Designed for people of all ages, from teens and young adults, to families with young children and empty-nesters. Led by our Associate Minister Gary M. Morello, with a short message and a combination of contemporary music, familiar hymns, upbeat choruses and prayerful songs.

Hymns of Truth & Light

Christmas is a wonderful time to dedicate a hymnal to someone special with a bookplate!

The cost of adding a personalized bookplate is \$25 per hymnal. Please fill out the following form, printing clearly so that your name and that of a loved one are readable and reproducible on a bookplate:

Your Name: _____ Email _____

>>To honor the memory of a loved one:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

>>To celebrate someone special:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

>>To dedicate a meetinghouse hymnal(s) in your family name:

Your family name: _____

>>Other wording: _____

Total number of hymnals ordered above: _____

Total amount due with this order: \$ _____ (Price: \$25 each)

(Please make check out to First Congregational Church of Darien, with "hymnal" in the memo section, and leave it and the form in the church office.)

Thank you! Through your purchase, you are helping subsidize the cost of these hymnals to the church.



CHURCH CALENDAR

MONDAY, JANUARY 8

Board of Christian Education, 7:30 p.m. in the Admin. Wing Meeting Room
Board of Stewards, 7:45 p.m. in the Morehouse Room
Board of Deacons, 8:00 p.m. in the Circle Room

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

Board of Christian Outreach, 7:30 p.m. in the Morehouse Room

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

Bible Study/Book of Acts 9:30 a.m. in the Morehouse Room
Night Owls Pizza Party, 6:00 p.m. in the Church Kitchen

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

Senior Choir Rehearsal, 8:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

Men's Ministry, 7:30 a.m. in the Morehouse Room

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

Worship Services at 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.

Ministers: Every member of the congregation.

Clergy and Staff:

The Rev. Dale B. Rosenberger, *Senior Minister (emergency pager)* 1- (203) 368-7789

The Rev. Gary M. Morello, *Associate Minister*

The Rev. Ronald T. Evans, *Pastor Emeritus*

Christine Geeding, *Director of Christian Education*

Daniel Hague, *Music Director* Maxim Pakhomov, *Organist*

Teri Manning, *Nursery School Director* Karen Hansen, *Treasurer*

Pamela Toason, *Church Administrator (M, T)* Dennis Hanlon, *Church Administrator (W, Th, Fri)*

Carlos Maya, *Weekday Sexton* Ruth Salazar, *Sunday Sexton*

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