



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DARIEN

United Church of Christ
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SIXTH SUNDAY OF LENT
SUNDAY OF THE PASSION; PALM SUNDAY
April 9, 2017
8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.



***SIXTH SUNDAY OF LENT
SUNDAY OF THE PASSION; PALM SUNDAY***

*Children are always welcome at our worship services.
A drop-off Nursery is available to children age 2 and younger,
in the Nursery School wing starting at 9:45 a.m.*

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

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dale Rosenberger, Senior Minister

PASSING OF THE PEACE

***HYMN #179**

“RIDE ON, RIDE ON IN MAJESTY!”

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

This is a day of joyous welcome.
Yet joy is tempered by impending doom.

**We welcome Christ with open arms.
We wait with Christ through hours of agony.**

Our leader comes humbly, riding a donkey.
Blessed is the one who comes in God's name.

**Jesus rides into the uproar of our times.
People still oppose the way of love.**

Yet love prevails in spite of opposition.
Give thanks that God's steadfast love endures forever.

**Open to us the gates of righteousness.
Let us enter in the light God offers.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Rev. Rosenberger

***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**

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND DISMISSAL (10:00 only)

JOYS AND CONCERNS

MOMENT OF SILENCE

GOSPEL LESSON

MATTHEW 21:1-11

Phil Meyer, Deacon 8:30
Steve Weeden, Deacon 10:00

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.'

This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

'Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

'Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

GOSPEL LESSON

MATTHEW 27:11-54

Gary Morello, Associate Minister

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ Jesus said, ‘You say so.’ But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, ‘Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?’ But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, ‘Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?’ For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, ‘Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.’ Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, ‘Which of the two do you want me to release for you?’ And they said, ‘Barabbas.’ Pilate said to them, ‘Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?’ All of them said, ‘Let him be crucified!’ Then he asked, ‘Why, what evil has he done?’ But they shouted all the more, ‘Let him be crucified!’

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, ‘I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.’ Then the people as a whole answered, ‘His blood be on us and on our children!’ So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, ‘This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.’

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.’ In

the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, ‘He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, “I am God’s Son.”’ The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o’clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, ‘This man is calling for Elijah.’ At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, ‘Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.’ Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, ‘Truly this man was God’s Son!’

SERMON

"GOD’S BROKEN HEART"

Gary Morello

OFFERTORY

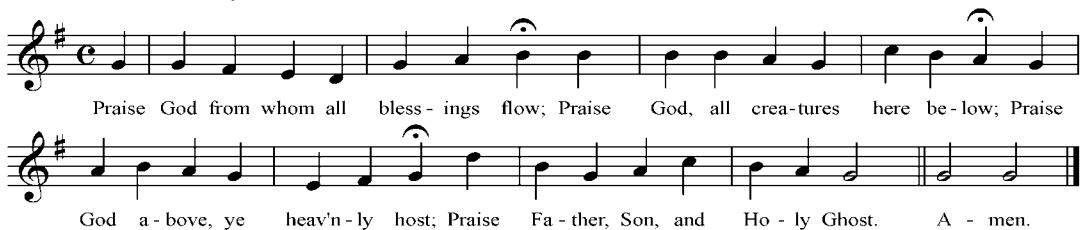
“BLESSING AND GLORY”

Sergei Rachmaninoff

(10:00 only)

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)*

May these offerings bring life-changing good news, both to those who give and to all who are reached by the caring ministries of the church. May they help to restore relationships of trust among us and outpourings of generosity that echo your steadfast love around the world. May your saints be raised to new life that cuts through the deception of society to bring your new order among us, O God of all times and places. Amen.

***HYMN #178**

“ALL GLORY, LAUD AND HONOR”

***BENEDICTION**

Gary Morello

POSTLUDE

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TODAY’S USHERS are Kristin Desautelle, Anne MacInnes, Phil Meyer (8:30) and Steve Weeden.

CELEBRATION OF EASTER

Maundy Thursday

April 13, 7:00 pm service

A quiet, contemplative, "Tenebrae" service (early evening, without lights) with communion.

Good Friday Vigil

April 14, 6am-Midnight.

As is tradition, FCC will be reading the entire New Testament from the pulpit on Good Friday.

Sign up for 30-minute blocks between 6:00 a.m. and midnight.

The signup sheet is posted in Parish Hall or you can contact Lou Converse at lou.converse@viacom.com.

Good Friday Cross Walk—in Solidarity with Persecuted and Refugee Christians around the World

April 14, 10:30 a.m.

The Darien Clergy Association is dedicating this year's Good Friday Cross Walk through town in solidarity with persecuted and refugee Christians all around the world today. Christians in

Iraq and Syria have been prominent in the news certainly. But Christians in places like Indonesia, the Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and N. Korea are perennially at risk.

Because Christianity remains our majoritarian faith in the US, we too easily overlook that Christianity is the most persecuted religion worldwide—by a fairly significant margin.

Please join our 2017 Good Friday Cross Walk, uniting our Christian communities. We begin at First Congregational Church at 10:30 AM. You may walk part or all of the way. Baby strollers and dogs welcome.

Easter Sunday

April 16

Easter morning will commence with a 7:00 a.m. Sunrise Service at Mather Cemetery on Stephen Mather Road; followed by two identical services at 9:00 am and 11:00 am, complete with balloons and "The Hallelujah Chorus."

Hospitality and Fellowship

In between the two Easter services, please join us for coffee, fruit, and sweets. The Youth Group will be running their annual Bake Sale! At approximately 10:15 - we will have an Easter Egg Hunt for small children on the Nursery School playground. Bring your own baskets. It is rumored that the Easter Bunny will be making an appearance!

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

The First Congregational Church of Darien Helps!

Help us hand out Easter hams! We will be handing out hams and other groceries to those in need at the Open Door shelter on May 13th from 8:30 to 10:30. Available to help? Email [hraker@me.com](mailto:hramer@me.com).

Thank you for supporting the 1,000 pound food challenge! Thanks to our generous congregation and our First Congregational Church Nursery School friends, we reached our goal of 1,000 pounds of food ahead of schedule!! So ... next month we are switching it up with Undies Sunday! Keep reading ...

Undie Sunday! On Sunday, May 7th, instead of food first, we will have Undie Sunday! The Undies Project is working with local churches to gather new men's women's and children's underwear for those in need to help improve their lives. Underwear is the most under-donated, and most needed, item of clothing and no one should be deprived of the simple, daily necessity of clean underwear that many of us take for granted. All donations received from Undie Sunday will be distributed through local organizations such as Person-to-Person, Pacific House, Clothes to Kids of Fairfield County and Project Return, to name a few. Visit www.theundiesproject.org for more information and bring those new undies to church May 7th!!

The First Congregational Church will be honored by Pacific House on May 6th! For over 25 years, our church has steadfastly supported Pacific House by volunteering and with substantial financial support. This generosity has made a difference in many lives. Pacific House is grateful to the church and pleased to honor us on May 6th! The Church will be presented with the 2017 David Mond Award, which is presented each year to the organization providing the most outstanding service and dedication to Pacific House. Please join Dale and members of the Outreach Committee! Come one, come all to support our great work at Pacific House! More info at pacifichouse.org and PLEASE EMAIL [hraker@me.com](mailto:hramer@me.com) if you are interested in attending. Of course we welcome those who are interested in supporting the event by purchasing a ticket, but we will also have underwritten seats available for those who would like to attend!!

Person-to-Person Postal Drive May 13th - Mark your calendars to help Person-to-Person through the annual Postal Drive. Person-to-Person needs volunteers all day to help collect and sort food. Stay tuned for a sign up link

Salam Neighbor and icon - many of you gathered at the Darien Library last week to see Salam Neighbor, a film which takes the viewer into the life of a Syrian refugee through the journey of Chris and Zach as the first filmmakers allowed to be registered and given a tent inside of a refugee camp. If you missed the film, you may take the DVD out of the Darien Library!! The First Congregational Church of Darien was thrilled to sponsor this film viewing and also is proud to support icon, which helps refugees in Connecticut with an array of services.

Promote a business through The Darien House Tour: Homes with Heart and support our Outreach Beneficiaries at the same time! The Darien House Tour event program offers a great way to promote a business. Over 500 people will attend the tour and use the program as a resource. More information at darienhousetour.org/sponsor. Click on sponsor to see past programs and rates. Reduced rates for First Congregational Church members so please contact Heather Raker at hraker@me.com with specific questions. This is a great opportunity to promote your own business or perhaps the business of someone else - a painter, landscaper, builder, decorator, a financial planner, lawyer, real estate agent, dentist, etc!!!

Thank you for your hands on help for those in need!

The First Congregational Church of Darien Board of Outreach

CONFIRMANDS

- Please mark your calendars for **Easter, Sunday April 16th**. We are meeting at the church at 7:30am to help fill Easter balloons.

2017 OFFERING ENVELOPES

If you made a pledge for 2017, your Offering Envelopes are available for pick-up and are on the table, outside the church office. If you do not see envelopes with your name, and would like offering envelopes, please contact Karen Hansen at KHansen@uccdarien.org.

OPENINGS AT THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH NURSERY SCHOOL

We have a few openings in the 3's and, for the first time ever, the Pre-k. If you are looking for a morning 3's class or are undecided about sending your child on to kindergarten in September, call us at (203) 655-3150. Teri Manning is happy to discuss options!

KNITTING MINISTRY

The Knitting Ministry will break out their needles today, at 11am in the Morehouse Room. Bring your knitting, crochet projects, needlepoint, and join us for fiber and fellowship. New needle crafters are especially welcome. There is nothing like a little yarn therapy to get you through these trying times. For more information, contact Lora Grassilli (646) 932-3735.

DEDICATE A HYMNAL TO SOMEONE SPECIAL WITH A BOOKPLATE

Please see insert. Return your completed form to the church office.

ALL CHURCH MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO A RING IN SPRING DRINKS PARTY

Saturday, April 22nd , 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM

Hosted by the James and Nancy Sheed at
85 Maywood Rd, Darien, CT

- Come when you can, stay as long as you can.
- Feel free to bring a savory or a sweet.
- Please encourage a church friend, old or new, to join you.

Invitations were sent by email but feel free to RSVP directly to Nancy at nmsheed@yahoo.com or call 203-918-5442.

“Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.” - Albert Einstein



Science & Religion 11th Hour **Sunday, April 23rd 11:30am**

The relationship between science & religion has long been debated in philosophy and theology. To what extent are they compatible?



Join the discussion with Rev. Dale Rosenberger and Dr. Fraser Fleming, PhD, Head of Chemistry Department at Drexel University and author of “The Truth of Science and Religion: From Big Bang to Neuroscience”.

Presented by the Board of Christian Education



BAKE SALE

Stop on by after Easter Services and pick up some
yummie treats at the Youth Group Bake Sale
Fundraiser!

Easter Sunday – After the 9:00 and 11:00 Services

We have lots of Cakes, Breads, Pies, Cookies, Rolls,
and all sorts of other good stuff for your Easter
Holiday Dinner.

We will bake so you don't have to!

WELCOME TO THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DARIEN

**"Where God's extravagant love welcomes and affirms,
where Christ's transforming truth enlivens and compels."**

We are an accepting community where faith in Christ makes a difference. We welcome you to worship with us wherever you are on your journey. As a spiritual home, our hallmarks are education, fellowship and pastoral care. Children have a special place in our church family, and are embraced with love, guidance and opportunities for spiritual growth. We are a church of conscience, unafraid of the issues of today and serving as a reconciling force among different faiths.

CHURCH CALENDAR

TODAY

Knitting Ministry 11:00 a.m.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 13

Tenebrae Service 7:00 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 14

Good Friday Vigil 6 a.m. – Midnight

Cross Walk 10:30 a.m.

All-Community Good Friday Worship 12:00 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 16

Sunrise Service 7:00 a.m.

Easter Worship Services 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 23

Science & Religion 11th Hour 11:30am

Ministers: Every member of the congregation.

Clergy and Staff:

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

Gary M. Morello, *Associate Minister*

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

Mary Jo Colman, *Church School Director*

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*