



**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DARIEN**

United Church of Christ  
14 Brookside Road, Darien, CT 06820  
Phone: 203-655-0491 Fax: 203-655-7620  
E-mail: [office@uccdarien.org](mailto:office@uccdarien.org)  
[www.uccdarien.org](http://www.uccdarien.org)



***THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT***

***December 11 2016***

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



# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 11, 2016

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

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

Mr. Maxim Pakhomov

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dale Rosenberger, Senior Minister

PASSING OF THE PEACE

\*HYMN

“ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH”



1 An - gels we have heard on high Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply Ech - o back their joy - ous strains  
Say what may the ti - dings be, Which in - spire your heaven - ly song.  
Come a - dore on bend - ed knee, Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.



(continued)

REFRAIN

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo - - - - -

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

Mr. Morello

## \*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

## THE THIRD CANDLE OF ADVENT – “LOVE”

CANDLE LIGHTERS: Pankowski family (8:30 a.m.) and John and Sally Bassler (10:00 a.m.)

## DEACON INTRODUCTION

Phil Meyer (8:30), Al Nickerson (10:00)

## ADVENT PRAYER (RESPONSIVE)

**Family Member:** God's passionate love for all creation bursts into a sacred flame, producing a light for all to see. Now may our souls kindle like brushwood —with fire for the third candle of Advent.

**Congregation:** Something new is happening within us. We, who are waiting for the birth of the Christ, catch a glimpse of our reflection, expecting to notice a change. But we, and the holiday bustle of the season, look the same.

**Family Member:** For some, this season arrives with anxiety over changes we had not planned. Yet God works with us, helping to mold the clay of our lives.

**Congregation:** Like an expectant mother, we dream of God's work occurring just below the surface. We wait for the Messiah to meet us again, in fire, water, flesh, and blood.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (10:00 only)

“LOVE”

Ellison, Ted & Lucy Brennan

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
 the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
 like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
 and rejoice with joy and singing.  
 The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
 the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
 They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
 the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,  
 and make firm the feeble knees.  
 Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
 ‘Be strong, do not fear!  
 Here is your God.  
 He will come with vengeance,  
 with terrible recompense.  
 He will come and save you.’

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
 and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
 then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
 and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
 For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
 and streams in the desert;  
 the burning sand shall become a pool,  
 and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
 the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
 the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

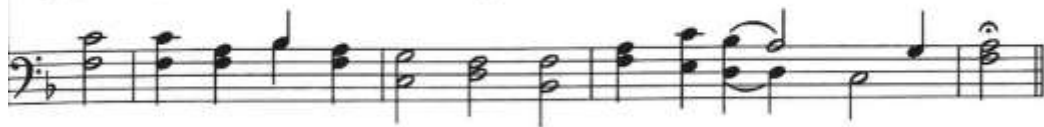
A highway shall be there,  
 and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
 the unclean shall not travel on it,  
 but it shall be for God’s people;  
 no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.  
 No lion shall be there,  
 nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
 they shall not be found there,  
 but the redeemed shall walk there.  
 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,  
 and come to Zion with singing;  
 everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
 they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
 and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

## \*HYMN

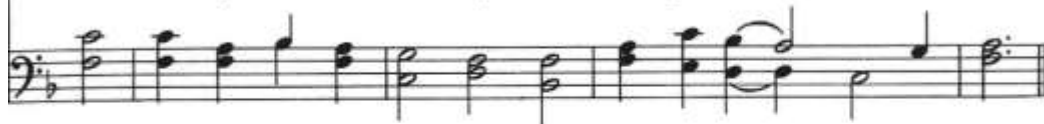
## "LO, HOW A ROSE E'ER BLOOMING"



1 Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom - ing From ten - der stem hath sprung!  
 2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, The Rose I have in mind,



Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing As men of old have sung.  
 With Mar - y we be - hold it, The Vir - gin Moth - er kind.



It came, a flower - et bright, A - mid<sup>7</sup> the cold of  
 To show God's love a - right, She bore to men a



win - ter, When half spent was the night.  
 Sav - ior, When half spent was the night.



**GOSPEL LESSON**

MATTHEW 11:2-11

Rev. Rosenberger

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.’

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.”

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

**SERMON**

“BRUSHING UP AGAINST MIRACLES”

Rev. Rosenberger

**OFFERTORY**

“I SHALL KNOW HIM WHEN HE COMES”

Douglas E. Wagner

*(10:00 only)*

The Show Up and Sing 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** *(10:00 only)**(unison)*

**O God, we welcome your advent with a song in our hearts and praise on our lips. We rejoice that you freely choose to dwell among our likes, Bringer of Salvation. With gratitude for the growing light with which you illuminate our darkened world, we dedicate these gifts to you, Lord God. For your purposes lovingly enfold us. Amen.**

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!  
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And gath - ered all a - bove,  
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, The won - drous gift is given!  
 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem! De - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;  
 While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - dering love.  
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of his heaven.  
 Cast out our sin and en - ter in; Be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last <sup>7</sup>ing Light;  
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth!  
 No ear may hear his com - ing, But in this world of sin,  
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad ti - dings tell;

The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.  
 And prais - es sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.  
 Where meek souls will re - ceive him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.  
 O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Em - man - u - el! A - men.



\***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Rosenberger

**POSTLUDE**

Mr. Pakhomov

\* \* \*

**TODAY'S GREETERS** are the Trager family: Josh, Sue, Tom (Confirmand), Caroline, Brad and Nick.

**TODAY'S USHERS** are April Barker, Phil Meyer (8:30 a.m.), Al Nickerson and Mandy Teare.

***IN MEMORIAM***

Please keep our beloved treasurer Karen Hansen and her family in your thoughts and prayers as they mourn the loss of Neil Hansen, Karen's father.



## CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

***THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DARIEN HELPS!  
PLEASE JOIN US!***



### DOVE BOXES

The holiday season is upon us and therefore so are **Dove Boxes!**

This year marks the 48th anniversary of the Person-to-Person Dove Box Program, which is enthusiastically supported by area churches. Dove boxes provide holiday food to families and seniors in need in our community, while also giving individuals and families the opportunity to share their blessings with their neighbors at Christmas. This is a wonderful opportunity to help your children understand the joy of giving during the Christmas season. Participation is open to anyone and may involve preparing a wrapped carton of food or can be as simple as making a direct donation to families/adults through Person to Person.

Parishioners wishing to participate need only select a White or Green Dove on any **Sunday after Service**, follow directions printed on it and bring joy into another home this Season.

**White Dove:** Fill **1-2 identical reusable bags** with food and love for Christmas Day! (**No boxes this year**) All necessary food items and directions are on the reverse side of the Dove. A \$15.00 contribution is required so Person-to-Person can purchase a supermarket gift card for each family to buy their own choice of meat. Fill in the back dove with your name, address & telephone number and return it (along with the \$15.00) to either Annette Madden-Kline or Gayle Appleby of the Board of Outreach (details below)

**Green Dove:** A financial contribution to Person-to-Person's Scholarship or Emergency Assistance Fund. Scholarship will enable eager students to continue their education. Emergency Assistance Fund will help someone with a fuel bill, rent or a medical bill not covered by Medicaid. Please mail your financial contribution directly to Person-to Person.

**RETURN** your filled **reusable grocery bags** to the Morehouse Room in Parish Hall by **Wednesday, December 14, 2016**. If you have any questions regarding the Person-to-Person Christmas Dove Program, please contact:

**Annette Madden Kline @ [a\\_madden\\_kline@hotmail.com](mailto:a_madden_kline@hotmail.com), or**

**Gayle Appleby @ [gayleappleby@applebycapital.com](mailto:gayleappleby@applebycapital.com).**

### **OPEN DOOR SHELTER**

**Cook/Serve for the Open Door Shelter** - Thursday, December 29, 8 am - cook in the church kitchen. Friday, December 30, 11:45 am - serve at the Open Door Shelter in Norwalk. Please email Heather Raker at [hraker@me.com](mailto:hraker@me.com) to help.

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

## *HAVE YOU MADE YOUR PLEDGE FOR 2017?*



If every member makes a pledge to the 2017 budget, we will be able to continue to support the meaningful and expanding ministries of our church. A pledge from each of us is a commitment to each other, to our family of faith, and to the momentum that we have developed together over the past several years. Please support your church in a meaningful way, the amount of your pledge is secondary to your participation.

Every dollar is significant and gratefully received. Please look for the “pledge” noticeboard in Parish Hall, extra pledge cards are available if you need one, or if you prefer, email your pledge directly and confidentially to our treasurer, Karen Hansen at [khansen@ucc.org](mailto:khansen@ucc.org)

We know that you share our love of this church and all that means to us and to the larger community. **Thank you** for your consideration and generous response to this once a year financial request. We are praying for the full participation of our membership.

*Caroline Burke & Leila Wetmore (Pledge Co Chairs)*

## ***COMPANION HYMNALS - DON'T MISS OUT!!!***



The new blue companion hymnals have arrived!! For \$25 each, why not have one or two in your favorite pew with your name or a loves ones name personalized inside?? These new hymnals will complement the Pilgrim Hymnals. Only a limited number are in stock, so do not delay! Stop by and take a look at our display table during coffee hour!!

Questions, please contact [kristindesautelle@gmail.com](mailto:kristindesautelle@gmail.com). Thank you!

## **NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS**



The First Congregational Church Nursery School is offering tours, weekdays at 10:00 a.m., beginning November 28th for the school year 2017-2018. Please call 203 655-3150 to schedule a tour. There will also be an Open House on January 8th, 2:00 - 3:30. Church members receive priority placement.

## ***THE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON!***



**Women of FCC ~ Please RSVP**

**Christmas Luncheon ~ Christmas Music ~ Cookie Exchange**

**Thursday December 15 ~ Parish Hall**

**11:45 - Gather**

**12:00 - Lunch**

**12:30 Heather Raker and the Acabellas**

**Come for:**

**Great food ~ prepared by our own F.E.D. and Shelter Chef, Polly Morehouse**

**Great company ~ FCC's women are amazing**

**Great music ~ led by our own Heather Raker**

**\$5.00 at the door**

**For planning purposes please **RSVP** to  
Debbie Parnon: [dcsp1@aol.com](mailto:dcsp1@aol.com) or **203-505-1726****



*(The Darien High School Tudor Singers)*

*Bring the spirit of Christmas into your heart at the annual  
Candlelight Concert at The First Congregational Church of  
Darien on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 pm.*



The evening will feature performances by **The Darien High School Tudor Singers** under the direction of Chris Andrade, **the church's Senior Choir soloists**, **world-class pianist Max Pakhomov** and a **carol sing-along** by the audience. Refreshments will follow the program.

There is no charge for the concert. A free-will offering will be taken to benefit the Shelter for the Homeless (Pacific House), which assures that some of the poorest and most vulnerable members of our community have respite from living on the streets, a hardship which is both dehumanizing and dangerous. Operating for 30 years, this is the only regional shelter in lower Fairfield County serving the four-town area of Stamford, Darien, Greenwich and New Canaan. The shelter typically houses 60 to 85 men, and up to 110 during extreme weather months. Its doors are open 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. The Shelter also provides client support services for both men and women through its drop-in Day Program. Please learn more at [www.shelterforhomeless.org](http://www.shelterforhomeless.org)



## *Join Us As We Celebrate Advent!*



### TONIGHT

Christmas Candlelight Concert, 7:00 p.m. in the Meetinghouse

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18 - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle – “JOY”

Christmas Pageant, 11:00 a.m.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE

Children’s Service, 2:30 p.m.

Children’s Service, 4:00 p.m.

Family Service, 5:30 p.m.

Service of Lessons and Carols, 10:00 p.m.

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY

Service of Hymns and Poetry, 10:00 a.m.

***Bring a Friend!***  
***All are welcome!!***

# *CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS and DEDICATIONS*



*We are in the season of giving thanks.*

*This is the time to recognize the special people  
and events that make you smile, warm your heart and make your days a pleasure.*

*Memorial poinsettias and evergreens always add a tender touch of grace and color to our  
holiday worship.*

*Then, when shared with church members who aren't able to join us for worship,  
they become an ongoing gift.*

***This year, the smaller space in our parish hall will limit the number of  
poinsettias we are able to use.***

***Excess funds will be used towards the purchase of "Dove Boxes"  
which will feed those in need.***

*You may fill out this form or sign up in the church office.*

*Include your check for \$25.00 to "The First Congregational Church of Darien, and note  
"Christmas Dedication" on the memo line.*

*(Due in the church office by **Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>**).*

*A list of the dedications will be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletins.*

-----  
I would like \_\_\_\_\_ dedication(s).

In Gratitude of/for \_\_\_\_\_

In Celebration of/for \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

***Graciously Donated by:*** \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for: \_\_\_\_\_ (\$25.00 each)

**\*\* Please note:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I will be taking my poinsettia.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **I will not be taking my poinsettia,**  
**so please donate it in my/our name**

## **CHURCH CALENDAR**

### **TODAY**

Annual Candlelight Concert, 7:00 p.m.

### **MONDAY, DECEMBER 12**

Board of Deacons, 7:45 p.m. in the Circle Room  
Board of Stewards, 7:45 p.m. in the Morehouse Room

### **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15**

Bible Study, 9:30 a.m. in the Morehouse Room  
Women's Association Christmas Luncheon, 11:45 a.m.  
Senior Choir, 8:00 p.m.

### **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18**

Worship Services at 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.  
Christmas Pageant, 11:00 a.m.

**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*

Find "First Congregational Church of Darien"  
on Facebook, Google+, Vimeo and "@UCCDarien" on Twitter.

