



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DARIEN

United Church of Christ
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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 18 2016

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



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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

Maxim Pakhomov and John Hanulik, oboe

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dale Rosenberger, Senior Minister

PASSING OF THE PEACE

*HYMN

“THE FIRST NOWELL”

1 The first Now - ell, the an - gel did say, Was to
2 They look - ed up and saw a star Shin - ing
3 And by the light of that same star Three
4 This star drew nigh to the north - west, O'er
5 Then en - tered in those wise men three, Full

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; In fields where
in the east, be - yond them far, And to the
wise men came from coun - try far; To seek for a
Beth - le - hem it took its rest, And there it
rev - erent - ly up - on their knee, And of - fered

(continued)

THE FIRST NOWELL (*continued*)

they lay keep-ing their sheep, On a cold win - ter's
earth it gave great light, And so it con -
king was their in - tent, And to fol - low the
did both stop and stay, Right o - ver the
there, in his pres - ence, Their gold and

REFRAIN

night that was so deep.
tin-ued both day and night.
star wher - ev - er it went. Now - ell, Now - ell, Now
place where Je - sus lay.
myrrh and frank - in - cense.

ell, Now - ell, Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

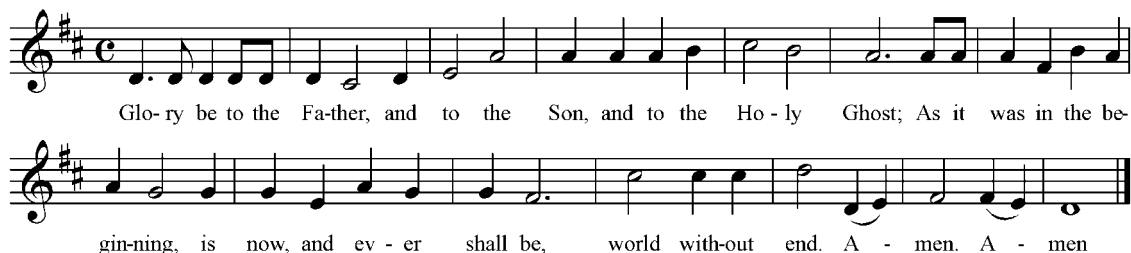
*OPENING PRAYER

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 FOURTH CANDLE OF ADVENT – “JOY”

CANDLE LIGHTERS: Bill Lattimer (8:30 a.m.) and the Swenson family (10:00 a.m.)

DEACON INTRODUCTION

Marianne Lauer (8:30), Kristin Desautelle (10:00)

ADVENT PRAYER (RESPONSIVE)

Family Member: We have prepared ourselves spiritually to the best of our abilities to be ready for the coming of Jesus Christ this Advent season.

Congregation: The anticipation of the wondrous birth of the Christ child fills us with joy

Family Member: It is a joyful time brimming with good will, thoughtfulness and generosity.

Congregation: Among all these good deeds we hope to make time and space for the refreshment of our spirit, time to quietly reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

Family Member: Be mindful of those whose joyful light is flickering and tend to their needs with care.

Congregation: We embrace the coming of the Messiah with both joy and reflection, for these things God has spoken to you, that his joy may be in you and that your joy may be full. Amen

Dear God, we light this fourth candle, to thank you for your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who brings us great joy. We are thankful for the joys this advent season brings and pray for those who cannot find joy in the face of illness, sorrow and adversity. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in your glory, and in the unity of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (10:00 only)


“JOY”

Theo Osgood & Ozzie McCarthy


JOYS AND CONCERNS

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 the nation,
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 Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
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 onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

In unison




1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar-y's lap is sleep - ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate Where ox and ass are feed - ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, Come peas - ant, king, to own him;






Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet, While shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris - tian, fear: for sin - ners here The si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings, Let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.




REFRAIN



This, this is Christ the King, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing:

Haste, haste to bring him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y.



GOSPEL LESSON

MATTHEW 1:18-25

Rev. Rosenberger

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel’,

which means, ‘God is with us.’ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

SERMON

“HOW TO RECEIVE A GIFT”

Rev. Rosenberger

OFFERTORY

“JESU, JOY OF MAN’S DESIRING”

*J.S Bach**(10:00 only)**Senior Choir, with John Hanulik, oboe and Maxim Pakhomov****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)*

Lord God, you grant us life so abounding in possibilities we can scarcely express our gratitude. Then you also give us that opportunity, as we offer our gifts. Use us as ministers of your grace. You honor us by calling us prophets, apostles, and saints. May we act like it in what we joyously offer for you, here and elsewhere. Amen.

1 It came up - on the mid-night clear, That glo - rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, With peace - ful wings un - furled,
 3 And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load Whose forms are bend - ing low,
 4 For lo, the days are hasten - ing on, By proph - et bards fore - told,

From an - gels bend - ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold;
 And still their heav - en - ly mu - sic floats O'er all the wea - ry world;
 Who toil a - long the climb - ing way, With pain - ful steps and slow,
 When with the ev - er - cir - cling years Comes round the age of gold;

"Peace on the earth, good will to men, From heaven's all gra - cious King."
 A - bove its sad and low - ly plains They bend on hover - ing wing,
 Look now, for glad and gold - en hours Come swift - ly on the wing;
 When peace shall o - ver all the earth Its an - cient splen - dors fling,

The world in sol - emn still - ness lay To hear the an - gels sing.
 And ev - er o'er its Ba - bel - sounds The bless - ed an - gels sing.
 O rest be - side the wea - ry road, And hear the an - gels sing!
 And the whole world send back the song Which now the an - gels sing. A men.

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Rosenberger

POSTLUDE

Mr. Hanulik and Mr. Pakhomov

* * *

TODAY'S GREETERS are the Clough Family: Roland, Cynthia, Ryan (Confirmand) and Erika.

TODAY'S USHERS are Kristin Desautelle, Marianne Lauer (8:30 a.m.) Phil Meyer and Steve Weeden.



CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DARIEN HELPS!

PLEASE JOIN US!



Distribute Hams at the Open Door Shelter - Thursday, December 20, 8:30 to 11:30 am at 4 Merritt Street, South Norwalk.

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 4 Merritt Street, South Norwalk. Please email Heather Raker at hraker@me.com to help. Thank you for your hands on help for those in need!

The First Congregational Church of Darien Board of Outreach is pleased to announce our 2016 beneficiaries!

By year end, we will have distributed over **\$125,000** to nonprofit organizations which serve the disadvantaged, our youth and the elderly. Funds include 10% of pledge donations, proceeds from *The Darien House Tour: Homes with Heart*, and income from designated church endowments.

Beneficiaries include the following agencies: *ABC House, At Home in Darien, Carver Foundation of Norwalk, Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut, Church World Services, Domestic Violence Crisis Center, Elderhouse, Family Centers, Feed My Starving Children, Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County and Habitat for Humanity International, International Institute of Connecticut (IICON), INSPIRICA, Laurel House, Liberation Programs, Neighbors Link, New Covenant House, Open Door Shelter, Our Church's Wider Mission, Pacific House (Shelter for the Homeless), Person-to-Person, STAR, The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis and Education, and the Thriving Youth Initiative of the Community Fund of Darien.*

Just a sneak peek at the incredible impact our dollars will have through these agencies:

\$25 will fund basic necessities such as soap, toothpaste, and other hygiene supplies for a **Liberation Programs** new client who may be coming from the streets, incarceration or a shelter.

\$50 will help heat and light a home through the **Person-to-Person** emergency assistance program.

\$75 will dress an **Inspirica** client in business attire for a job interview.

\$100 buys food, shelter and support services for two clients for one day through **Pacific House**.

\$150 can fund job development sessions and transportation costs for a job-seeking individual with intellectual disabilities through **STAR Inc., Lighting the Way**.

\$250 will fund a new crib with bedding for an infant through **Inspirica**.

\$500 will send a child from a low income Stamford family to camp through Person-to-Person.

\$600 will fund a meal, prepared by and served by members of our congregation, for those in need at **The Open Door Shelter**.

\$875 will fund family night at **Neighbors Link**, during which Spanish speaking immigrants and members of our congregation will gather for a meal and celebration.

\$1,000 is one month's rent for a **Domestic Violence Crisis Center** client moving into safe housing.

\$1,200 will fund emergency shelter for a single client for a full month at **Inspirica**.

\$1,600 will fund a four week Active Parenting Series focused on mentally healthy youth development through the **Thriving Youth Initiative** of the Community Fund of Darien.

\$2,500 funds a security deposit for an apartment for an **Inspirica** client.

\$5,000 will send 3 homeless **Inspirica** children to summer camp for 6 weeks.

\$10,000 feeds a village for one year through **Feed My Starving Children**.

Just imagine what \$125,000 is doing!!!

The First Congregational Church of Darien Board of Outreach

Chair: Heather Raker, Vice Chair: Anna Denoyer, Members: Gayle Appleby, Lindsay Atha, Scott Barrett, Tracey Berry, Elmerina Brooks, Annette Madden-Kline, Bob McGee, Charlie Wetmore, Carol Wilson, Lauren Swenson

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@uccdarien.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. 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.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT TODAY DIRECTLY FOLLOWING THE 10:00 SERVICE!



The Christmas Pageant is finally here and the children have been working hard in preparation. Please join us in the Parish Hall directly following service to see the most magical show performed by our very own Church School children!

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*

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