

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GREENWICH



Second Sunday of Advent  
December 7, 2025  
10:00 AM

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

### PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be his glorious name forever; may his glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen.” Psalm 72:18-19

### PRELUDE

*Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen, op. 122, No. 8* Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)  
Jesse Pieper, organ

*Light One Candle for Peace* Natalie Sleeth  
(1930-1992)  
Chancel Choir and All-Age Family Choir

### OPENING CHIMES

### WELCOME

The Rev. Dr. Lindley G. DeGarmo

### LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

The McWhorter Family

One: A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow and bear fruit.

**All: God brings life out of what was cut down and hope out of what was lost.**

One: In the wilderness, John cried, “Prepare the way of the Lord!”

**All: We prepare our hearts for God’s new growth among us.**

One: As we light this second candle, we commit ourselves to the work of repentance and renewal.

**All: Come, Lord Jesus—Prince of Peace, make all things new.**

One: Let us worship God!

### \*HYMN 106

*Prepare the Way, O Zion*

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

### \*CALL TO CONFESSION

### \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The Rev. Andre Castillo

**All: God of new beginnings, we come to you in this season of Advent seeking the life you promise, yet we confess that too often we resist the changes you call forth in us. You invite us to bear fruit, but we cling to habits that drain our strength. You long to plant new life in us, but we hold tightly to what is familiar. You shine light on what needs pruning, but we turn away, afraid of what it might cost. Forgive us, O God. Cut away what is harmful, cleanse what is cluttered, and clear a place within us where your Spirit may take root and grow. Give us courage to repent, to turn toward your wisdom, and to trust that even the stumps of our lives can become places where hope springs up. In your mercy, hear our prayer.**

### \*MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

### \*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

One: Friends, hear the good news: from the stump a shoot shall grow, and from our broken places God brings new life. In Jesus Christ, God meets us with grace—not to condemn, but to restore; not to cut us down, but to make us fruitful. So trust this promise: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, we are renewed, and we are made ready for a new beginning.

All: Thanks be to God!

**\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE**

GLORIA

*Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

**\*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

**TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Kimber Lee

All: Spirit of the Living God, as your Word is read and proclaimed, clear a space within us for your truth to take root. Prune away what distracts, nourish what is good, and help us to recognize the new life you are growing in us and among us. Make us ready for Christ's coming, and lead us in your wisdom and peace. Amen.

**FIRST LESSON**

Isaiah 11:1-10

pp. 640-641 OT

**ANTHEM**

*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*  
Chancel Choir

Michael Praetorius  
(1571-1621)

**SECOND LESSON**

Matthew 3:1-12

pp. 2-3 NT

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

**SERMON**

*"A Shoot, an Axe, and a New Beginning"*

Dr. DeGarmo

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

from The Confession of 1967

All: God's redeeming work in Jesus Christ embraces the whole of human life: social and cultural, economic and political, scientific and technological, individual and corporate. It includes our natural environment as exploited and despoiled by sin. God wills that God's purpose for human life shall be fulfilled under the rule of Christ, and all evil be banished from God's creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in the world, stirring hope in all people and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption. With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God.

**OFFERING**

**Ritual of Friendship:** Please sign the red fellowship pad in your pew and pass it to your neighbor.

## ANTHEM

*Ave Maria*  
Lesley Craigie, soprano  
Chancel Choir  
Jesse Pieper, piano

William Gomez  
(b. 1964)

Translation: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy  
womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,  
now and in the hour of our death. Amen.

## \*DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## COMMUNION

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The 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.**

Words of Institution

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer After Communion

**Gracious and abundant God, even as we wait for the fulfillment of your creation, you meet  
us in Christ at this table, in this meal. We thank you for feeding us the bread of life and  
quenching our thirst with the cup of salvation. Now send us out into the world by the power  
of your Holy Spirit to share your life and salvation with all whom we meet. Amen.**

## \*HYMN 87

*Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

GENEVAN

## \*CHARGE AND BLESSING

## CHORAL RESPONSE

"Amen" from *Peace I Leave with You*

René Clausen  
(b. 1953)

## POSTLUDE

*Herr Christ, der ein'ge Gottes Sohn, BWV  
601*

Jesse Pieper, organ

J.S. Bach  
(1685-1750)

\*Please stand as you are able

## WELCOME!

We are delighted you are joining us in worship! Founded on Easter Sunday in 1881, First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich embraces our mission to nurture and empower people in all stages of life to be Christ's disciples and to actively serve those in need. All children may join the *Time for Young Disciples* during the service and then be dismissed together for Sunday School. **Childcare (Room 350) and Sunday School (Room 343) will remain on the third floor.**

## SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

The Rev. Dr. Lindley G. DeGarmo; The Rev. Andre Castillo; Dr. Caroline Worra, Music Minister; Tara Church, Director of Children's Ministries; Jesse Pieper, organ/piano; All-Age Family Choir; Chancel Choir; Leslie Craigie, soprano; the McWhorter Family, lighting the advent wreath; Kimber Lee, reader.

**Usher Team 1:** Hearst Zhang (Captain), Diane Brown, Carol Barber, Peter McWhorter, Kate Minchin, Heidi Novak, Scott Sternberg.

**Cover Art:** *Peaceable Kingdom*, Edward Hicks (1780-1849)

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our siblings locally and abroad who are living in areas torn by natural disasters and war; Dimitrios Apostolou, John Awdziejewicz, Renie Blair, Ginny Campbell, Cassandra Fountain, Cadwallader K., Ki Lee, Eric Moy, Adrienne & Don Perry, Nancy Raker, Charlene Roberson, Elly Schafer and David Urion.

## ADVENT FAIR TODAY

Following worship join us in Fellowship Hall for our annual Advent Fair. Crafts for children and adults, face painting, balloon twisting, Christmas carols, hot chocolate bar and more! Also, there will be a section to wrap gifts that have been collected from the Giving Tree which will benefit local families of Greenwich Department of Human Services.

## SENIOR ENGAGEMENT

The Senior Engagement Committee is organizing a trip to the Emelin Theatre on Sunday, December 14, to see *The Nutcracker*. We will meet at the church at 12:30 p.m. after the service. If you would like to go to see *The Nutcracker*, please contact Wayne Atwell at [rwayneatwell@aol.com](mailto:rwayneatwell@aol.com).

## BIBLE STUDY

Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m., all are invited to join Interim Pastor Lindley DeGarmo online for discussion of the Scripture reading(s) for the upcoming Sunday's sermon. No prior preparation is required, and participants are welcome to join in each week as they are able. Zoom Meeting ID: 859 0258 1495. Passcode: 296934. Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85902581495>.

## MUSIC NOTES

Wednesday, December 10, Community Night

Dr. Caroline Worra - FPCG Music

Minister

Saturday, December 13 - 4:00 p.m. - Cookie Reception

5:00 p.m. - Carols by Candlelight Concert

Friday, April 3 - 7:00 p.m. - Good Friday Requiem

Wednesday, May 6 - 6:00 p.m. - Dinner Theater Extravaganza

## FELLOWSHIP

Do you have a special Christmas cookie recipe? Consider making a batch and contributing it to FPCG's special event: Carols by Candlelight on Saturday, December 13.

Drop off your cookies—mark them with or without nuts and gluten or gluten free. Please drop off your cookies in the church kitchen by 3PM on December 13.

## WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

Join us for fellowship and book discussion in the Church Library on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor. We gather at 9:15 a.m. for coffee and discussion starts at 9:30 a.m. Contact Colleen Giambo at [cgiambo@gmail.com](mailto:cgiambo@gmail.com) for further information. Here is the upcoming Women's Book Group selection.

December 19

Run for the Hills, by Kevin Wilson

January 23

Flashlight, by Susan Choi

## MISSION ENGAGEMENT

**Pacific House Cooks:** Join the FPCG team to cook and serve meals for men and young male residents of Pacific House on the second Thursday of every month. Cook in the FPCG kitchen from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. or serve at Pacific House from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Contact Carol Barber: [cbarber@cyburban.com](mailto:cbarber@cyburban.com) or at (914) 490-6621.

**Drivers Needed for Call-A-Ride:** Have a few hours a week to assist elderly members of our community? Drivers are needed! Email or call Terry Lohmeyer: [terryhl@aol.com](mailto:terryhl@aol.com) (203) 249-9412.

## GIVING TREE

"A heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported this mission".

## COMMUNITY NIGHT – WEDNESDAY

**Family Style Dinner Begins at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall**

**Children's Program:** Begins 5:00-5:30 p.m. in the Youth Room - Bible crafts, stories, games and fellowship

for ages 4 and up. Childcare for 0-3 years is available in Room 121 from 5:00-6:30 p.m.

**All-Age Family Choir and Instrumentalists:** 5:30 p.m. - 4<sup>th</sup> floor choir room

**Clarion Ringers:** 5:00 p.m. – Sanctuary

**Holy Ringers:** 6:30 p.m. - Sanctuary

**Steeple Band:** 6:30 p.m. - 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Choir Room  
Room

**Chancel Choir:** 7:15 p.m. - 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Choir

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEACONS



As Deacons, our ministry is one of compassion, witness, and service. It includes services such as hospital visits, meal deliveries, an altar flower to celebrate a birth, arranging rides to worship and generally being available to hear any concerns or questions. We warmly invite you to reach out on your behalf, or perhaps on behalf of another church member who may benefit from a meal, a visit, or just a word of encouragement. Contact the church office at (203) 869-8686 X 110, or one of our pastors, or email our Deacon Moderator, Julie Mather ([matherct@msn.com](mailto:matherct@msn.com)). Your wellbeing is important to us.

**FIRST 4 FOOD** - Imagine the warmth and comfort of homemade soups delivered right to your door! Our dedicated volunteers are ready to bring love and care to members recovering from physical, emotional, or other challenging situations. Need a meal? Feeling inspired to cook or deliver? Reach out to Renie Blair at (203) 637-1807 and be part of this heartwarming initiative.

**FIRST SUNDAY TRANSPORTATION** - We are offering rides to and from church on the FIRST SUNDAY of each month so that members can participate in Communion, worship, and fellowship. Call Bob Giambo (914) 434-4832 to arrange transportation. We look forward to having you join us

### CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS

To donate Christmas flowers in honor of family and friends, you may visit our website at [www.fpcg.org/christmasflowers](http://www.fpcg.org/christmasflowers) or scan the QR code and fill out the form. The deadline for donations is Friday, December 12

### YERWOOD CENTER



### UPCOMING EVENTS



**PARENTS BIBLE STUDY**

**Tuesday, December 9**  
**1:30 - 2:30 PM**  
**4th Floor Library**

Come as you are, friends are welcome!  
 rsvp: [andre.castillo@fpcg.org](mailto:andre.castillo@fpcg.org)



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GREENWICH**

**Carols by Candlelight**

Saturday, December 13th  
 Cookie Reception at 4pm  
 Concert at 5pm

Sing-a-long with our choirs as we tell the Christmas story through scripture, music, and a live nativity scene.



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GREENWICH**

**Christmas Eve candlelight services**

Wednesday, December 24th

Special prelude music  
 20 minutes before each service.

**10:00 am**  
 family friendly service  
 children-led with  
 worship bags for kids

**6:00 pm**  
 full festival  
 service

**10:00 pm**  
 communion  
 service

Childcare available in Room 350 (ages 0-3)  
 for 10 am and 6 pm services.



## LEADERSHIP

### Session

Rev. Dr. Lindley G. DeGarmo, Moderator  
Rev. Andre Castillo, Associate Pastor  
Laura Geffs, Clerk of Session

Wayne Atwell	Jim Joyella	Brian Pennington
Lynda Cha	Ryan Kim	Elizabeth Peyton
Lilian Eng	Debra Mecky	Stephanie Schnabel
Lee Ganshaw	Kate Minchin	Sue Sproule
Layne Grindal	Mary M. Paretti	Emily Sternberg
		Nancy Yao

*Session members may be contacted at [session@fpcg.org](mailto:session@fpcg.org). Messages go to all Session members.*

### Board of Deacons

Julie Mather, Moderator

Hamish Allan	Carolyn Cleveland	Liz Harden
Olivia Allan	Margaret Copprue	Barbie McKelvey
Wayne Atwell	Bob Giambo	Catherine Stahl
Renie Blair	Carolyn Hahn-Re	Chris Zadik
Diane Brown		

*Deacons may be contacted at [deacons@fpcg.org](mailto:deacons@fpcg.org). Messages go to all deacons.*

### Clergy & Staff Contacts

Rev. Dr. Lindley G. DeGarmo, Interim Pastor	<a href="mailto:lindley.degarmo@fpcg.org">lindley.degarmo@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 115
Rev. Andre Castillo, Associate Pastor	<a href="mailto:andre.castillo@fpcg.org">andre.castillo@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 119
Dr. Caroline Worra, Minister of Music	<a href="mailto:caroline.worra@fpcg.org">caroline.worra@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 120
Tara Church, Director, Children's Ministries	<a href="mailto:tara@fpcg.org">tara@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 118
Heather Antonissen, Director, Bell Choirs	<a href="mailto:heather.antonissen@fpcg.org">heather.antonissen@fpcg.org</a>	
Jestin Pieper, Organ Associate	<a href="mailto:jestin.pieper@gmail.com">jestin.pieper@gmail.com</a>	
Erin Moore, Director of Operations	<a href="mailto:erin@fpcg.org">erin@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 123
Randy Ante, Facilities Manager	<a href="mailto:randy.ante@fpcg.org">randy.ante@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 114
Rommel Espano, Sexton	<a href="mailto:rommel.espano@fpcg.org">rommel.espano@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 112
Jane Parker, Bookkeeper	<a href="mailto:jane@fpcg.org">jane@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 128
Linda DiMarino, Office Administrator	<a href="mailto:officeadmin@fpcg.org">officeadmin@fpcg.org</a>	Ext. 110
Megan Florentine, Director, Nursery School	<a href="mailto:megan.florentine@fpcgns.org">megan.florentine@fpcgns.org</a>	(203) 869-7782

Ministers: All members of the congregation.

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GREENWICH

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