

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF VERNON, UCC

December 2, 2012

First Sunday in Advent ~ Family Communion ~ Hope

GATHERING MUSIC "Pastorale" Gordigiani
"Morning Star, O Cheering Sight!" Pethel
"Coronation March" Meyerbeer

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS The Rev. David Minnick

ACOLYTES

CHIMING of the HOUR

WORDS of REFLECTION

"The essence of spirituality is contained in this phrase: complete and utter abandonment to the will of God." Jean-Pierre Caussade

PRELUDE "One Bright Star" Higgins

CHORAL INTROIT Cherub Choir

LIGHTING of the ADVENT WREATH Julia Assard

Brianna Markunas

*OPENING HYMN #90 "Come, Christians, Join to Sing"

PRAYER of INVOCATION (unison)

Gracious God, we know that we do not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from you. Feed our deep hungers with the living bread you give us in Jesus Christ. May Jesus' promise "where two or three gather in my name, there am I in the midst of them," be fulfilled in us. Make us a joyful company of your people so that with the faithful in every time and place we may praise and honor you, our God. Amen.

ANTHEM "God Will Make a Way" Contemporary Choir

SHARING of JOYS and CONCERNS

MORNING PRAYER and the LORD'S PRAYER (unison... "debts")

PRAYER RESPONSE

ANTHEM "Speak O Lord" Sanctuary Choir

SCRIPTURE Colossians 3: 7-17

COMMUNION MEDITATION Rev. Cynthia Carr

CALL to OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Be Thou Near to Me"

*DOXOLOGY (#46 in hymnal)

*PRAYER of DEDICATION

FAREWELL in MINISTRY (insert)

Recognition of the End of Rev. Cynthia J. Carr's Ministry at FCCV
Vows of Release
Witness of the Association
Prayer

SACRAMENT of HOLY COMMUNION

*COMMUNION HYMN #392 "Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether"

INVITATION

Leader: The sacrament of Holy Communion is open to all who wish to know the presence of our resurrected Lord and to share in the community of God's people. As is our custom here, we will wait

until all have been served before we partake of the bread or the cup.

Leader: God in Christ breaks down the walls that make us strangers to ourselves and divide us from one another. We are the Body of Christ.

People: **As we gather around this table, we enact our faith. The body broken is restored to wholeness; lifeblood poured out brings healing to our world. Come, let us break bread and drink from the cup as one, as the Body of Christ.**

COMMUNION PRAYER

Leader: We dream, O God, of true community, but in waking hours we forget such hopes.

People: **We long for a place, a people, a fellowship where we can truly find acceptance, peace, love and grounding in a common faith in you.**

Leader: And through your gospel message we have come to know that you indeed long for us, too. You call us by name.

People: **With arms outstretched on a cross, you call us to yourself, and you name us as your own people.**

Leader: So with arms outstretched, we now embrace one another as we recognize you in each other.

People: **The body broken and lifeblood poured transform our fears, revive our visions, and bring new hope that wells up within us.**

Leader: Renew us, O God, with your Spirit, that we may receive this mystery of the Body, embracing its many gifts and needs, and bringing it into the world as the light that shines in the darkness.

People: **Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of the bread and the cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the Body of Christ, redeemed by his blood and empowered by the gifts of the Spirit.**

Leader: As the grain and grapes, once dispersed in the fields, are now united on this table in the bread and the cup,

People: **so may we and all your people be gathered from every time and place into the unity of your eternal household and feast at your table forever.**

WORDS of INSTITUTION

SERVING of the BREAD and CUP

(Gluten-free bread is available. Please indicate your preference to a Deacon serving communion. Please wait until all are served before eating the bread and drinking the cup.)

PRAYER of THANKSGIVING (unison)

Eternal God, you have called your people from east and west, north and south to feast at the table of Jesus Christ. We thank you for Christ's presence and for the spiritual food of Christ's body and blood. By the power of your Holy Spirit, keep us faithful to your will and your ways. Go with us to the streets, to our homes, to our places of labor and leisure

that whether we are gathered or scattered we may be the servant church of the servant Christ, in whose name we rejoice to pray. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN #442 "We Are Walking"

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE "Toccata" Widor

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

Participants in Today's Service: Rev. Joanne Myer and Mrs. Virginia Wickersham, Moderator of the Tolland Association

Family Communion Today: No Sunday School but the Toddler Room will be open for children up to 3rd grade. Communion will be open to all ages at the discretion of the parents.

WELCOME TO FCCV!

If you are a guest, please take a moment to sign our Guest Book (on the table in the Narthex) and help yourself to a Welcome Bag made especially for you.

Guests are encouraged to use the Pew Cards to request information about our church, to provide addresses/emails for communication purposes or to ask for a pastoral visit. The Pew Cards can be placed in the plates with the offering.

Greeters and Coffee Hour: Furnishings & Memorials, Library and Memorial Garden Committees

TODAY DURING COFFEE HOUR downstairs in Fellowship Hall

Orders for **Poinsettias**, that are placed in the Sanctuary during the Christmas Season, are being taken today and next Sunday, December 9.

TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

The Christmas Giving Tree, sponsored by the Board of Missions, is once again making an appearance! We are collecting toys for the Vernon Social Services "Toy Workshop" where a family in need can go to choose toys that best fit their children's needs and wants for Christmas. There is a specific need for games, multicultural dolls, arts/crafts, science kits, and other educational toys. You may **choose a tag** from the Christmas Giving Tree, located in the back of the Sanctuary **today** and next Sunday, **December 9**. Each tag will bear the age and gender of a child in need. Place your new, **unwrapped** toy(s) under the Christmas Giving Tree by Sunday, December 16. Any questions? Contact Kenneth Morgan, 860-281-3338. Note: If (only if) inclement weather cancels church on December 16, unwrapped gifts will be collected in the church breezeway between 8-10 AM on Monday, December 17. Questions regarding inclement weather? Call Gilmay Markunas, 860-896-1930.

Youth Fellowship: We'll meet at FCCV at 3 PM and will be cooking, serving and cleaning up at Peter's Retreat in Hartford. Pickup at 7 PM back at FCCV.

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

Evening Circle Christmas Party: Monday, December 3, 7 PM at Paula Dascomb's home. We will be doing a cookie and ornament exchange. Come, join us for some great fun. Contact Pat Lazeren, 860) 644-0475, if you are not on our calling list and would like to come.

Men's Club: Tuesday, December 4, 6:30 AM, Vernon Diner

Council: Wednesday, December 5, 7 PM, Fellowship Hall. Agenda items should be submitted to Moderator Tony Muro no later than today.

Sanctuary Choir rehearsal: Thursday, December 6, 7:30 PM, Choir Room

Support Group: Friday, December 7, 10:30 AM, Library

ADVENT WORKSHOP

Sunday, December 9 after the worship service

Open to everyone

Please bring a snack to share and mittens, gloves or hats for our Mitten Tree.

Mitten Tree: For their mission project, the 1st and 2nd grade is collecting mittens, hats, gloves and scarves for all ages. Please place on or under the tree in Fellowship Hall.

Sunday School classes will resume on December 16. We'll start upstairs for the Children's Message. On December 23, grades 3 years-5th will have a combined Sunday School class in Fellowship Hall. The 6th-8th grade will meet in their classroom.

Reminder - Pledges Were Due November 11! If you have not turned in your pledge, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Your pledge is vital to the planning of our 2013 budget. If you need a pledge packet or have any questions, contact the Church Office (860-875-7580 or fccv@snet.net).

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

presented by Music at First

Sunday, December 9 at 4 PM in the Sanctuary

Featuring the Sanctuary Choir, Soloists, Joyful Noise Bell Choir and Transformers

Celebrate the season with traditional and contemporary Christmas music

Refreshments to follow

Suggested donation: \$7 adults/\$5 seniors and students

Proceeds benefit the Les Childs Music Scholarship

Thank You to all who donated to Button Up CT. The 3rd-5th graders collected 68 coats for men women and children.

Sunday School Superintendent Needed Immediately. Contact Linda Shivers or Cindy Madden for a job description or if you have questions.

The loose offering collected today is placed in the Deacons' Fund for aid, in time of emergency, to people within the congregation.

You are invited to take a few minutes to browse through the beautiful Memory Book located in the glass top cabinet. Jane Burr has been doing a wonderful job documenting acquisitions. Older books are located in the Sanctuary in the stand in back of the church where the large Bible is kept.

The **Care Network** is offered by the Deacons as a helping hand during difficult times. If you are in need of a ride to church, the doctor, hospital, grocery store, etc., in need of meals or a visit, contact Jan Muro (872-1757 or jmoze@hotmail.com) or Jon Dunlap (875-7254).

A **Crib Room** is available upstairs near the balcony for **parents with infants up to 12 months of age** where the worship service can be heard via intercom. A staffed **Toddler Room** located downstairs in the Kellogg wing is open for **children 12 months to 3 years old.**

Please Wear Your Name Tag! Reach out in fellowship by wearing your name tag. If you need one, please contact the Church Office, fccv@snet.net or (860)875-7580.

Acolytes Needed! To all parents of Sunday School children...if your child would like to be an acolyte, please contact Delythe Kracke at DelytheK@yahoo.com or (860) 872-3004.

Want to Meet New People? Volunteer to Serve! Whether it's welcoming others at the door before the Worship Service or providing a baked good or snack, making coffee or setting up and cleaning up after Coffee Hour, volunteers are needed. A sign up sheet is posted on the refrigerator in the kitchen. All help is welcome.

In Our Ongoing Prayers... Shirley Bryant; Joan McMahon

recovering from hip replacement surgery; **Dick Saich; Mike Kermode** deployed in Afghanistan; **Mike Swan; Claudette and Art Weingart; Pat Lazeren; Meredith Ross**, 3 year old daughter of Megan and Eli (friends of Emily Westerberg), diagnosed with T-cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL); **Deborah Costello**, friend of Angel Hockenberry, (breast cancer); **Richard Brooke**, Betsy Gerakaris' brother; **Stephen Volovski; Ann Garrison; Ray Turner**, father-in-law of Cheryl Turner (stroke); **Martha Fowler** (cancer); **Michael Bebrin**; the leaders, members and friends of **Somers Congregational Church; Joyce Smith; Thelma Gifford; Cooper Doyle**, Al and Marilyn Newton's grandson; **Paul and Susan Shimer; Candy Buswell** (heart); **Mary Jo Simonds-Huneger; Horst Pohlmann**, friend of the Gerakaris'; **John Mayhew; John Kaminski**, Susan Moreau's father; **Bess Howe; Jane Morse; Melissa Morse; Charlotte Driggs; Aaron Huneger; Donald Chase**

FAREWELL in MINISTRY
Recognition of the End of
Rev. Cynthia J. Carr's Ministry at FCCV

Leader: On August 16, 1991, this local church called Rev. Cynthia J, Carr to serve as Associate Pastor.

Cindy: I thank First Congregational Church of Vernon, United Church of Christ, its members and friends, and the community of Vernon for the love, kindness and support shown to me these last 21 years. I ask for forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

People: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

Cindy: I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are part of god's unfolding plan for us.

Leader: Will all who are able please stand? Do you, members and friends of First congregational Church of Vernon, United Church of Christ, release Rev. Cynthia Carr from the duties of Associate Pastor?

People: We do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you offer your encouragement for her ministry as it unfolds in new ways?

People: We do, with the help of God.

Leader: Cindy, do you release this local church from turning to you and depending on you?

Cindy: I do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here and on the relationship with another who will come to serve?

Cindy: I do, with the help of God.

Association Representative: On behalf of the Tolland Association and the United Church of Christ, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness and release. The member churches of our association and conference hold each of you in prayer. We pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service.

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Let us pray: O God, we give thanks for remembered times when we, together, have shared the life of faith. We thank you for the moments we have shared with Cindy in worship, in learning and in service. We pray that she will be aware of your Spirit's guidance as she moves to new and unknown places, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.