

The First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Bloomfield, CT

An open and affirming congregation

Sunday, December 4, 2016

COMMUNION SUNDAY

PEACE



SECOND SUNDAY

OF

Advent

OUR MISSION

Responding to God's Call, our mission as The First Congregational Church in Bloomfield, United Church of Christ, is to go out into the world proclaiming God's love for all creation, working for justice, bringing Christ's peace and growing in love and faith through service to others. We are a safe and sacred community that welcomes all people and supports each individual journey of faith.



The First Congregational Church in Bloomfield, UCC

10 Wintonbury Avenue, Bloomfield, CT 06002

Gathered as Wintonbury Parish February 14, 1738

Renewing our faith as people of God

8:00 & 10:00 a.m. Sunday, December 4, 2016

COMMUNION SUNDAY

Second Sunday of Advent- PEACE

WE GATHER TOGETHER

PRELUDE

Behold, A Rose is Blooming

Johannes Brahms

WELCOME *please fill out the Ritual of Friendship pads*

LIFE OF OUR CHURCH

WELCOME GUESTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

CENTERING MOMENT *“You are invited to be at Peace and One with
GOD’s Spirit. Let us prepare ourselves to
worship our God. In silence ...be at peace!”*



WE WORSHIP GOD

(+ indicates that those who are able may stand)

INTROIT

Come, Thou Saviour of Our Race

Andreas Vetter

CALL TO WORSHIP

All: This is the day that the Lord has made!
Advent... the season we celebrate!
Advent... the season we welcome!
A season of expectation and hope.
A time to reexamine our Christian values,
as we promote peace and justice for all!
Come... let us worship as one community,
let us be at peace...let us be peaceful!
Let us worship a peaceful God!

+HYMN OF AFFIRMATION

Now Bless the God of Israel

122

PRAYER OF INVOCATION & CONFESSION (UNISON)

Creator God, you have come with us, we are grateful.
We celebrate your presence among us, we are grateful.
In every face around us, we see your presence.
In old and young, in strangers and neighbors.
In all of them ...you reveal yourself.

As light... as hope...as peace!

We are grateful. In you... we are at peace.

Creator God, renew in us a spirit of hope, peace and justice.

Forgive us when our actions are not consistent with our words.

Forgive us for errors of the past, errors of action or omission of action.

Bring new light to our lives and new peace to our world.

We pray to you as you have taught us...

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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING Selections from 6 Variations on *Nel cor più non mi sento* -

Ludwig van Beethoven

Eric Li, pianist

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: THE CANDLE OF PEACE

Pastor: Children of **GOD**, we are blessed by a **GOD** of PEACE, we are blessed by a **GOD** who calls us to be instruments of PEACE

All: Today we continue a journey toward the light that will set us free...
Today we also commit ourselves to bring light to **GOD'S** world by promoting PEACE and by also promoting JUSTICE.

Pastor: Our journey always begins with **HOPE**, our first light declares hope for the world, our burning of the second light...invites us to see a relationship between **HOPE, PEACE** and **JUSTICE!**

All: Yes, we will shine **GOD'S** light by promoting **HOPE, PEACE** and **JUSTICE** for all people, those near to us and those far away.
Including those with whom we agree and those with whom we disagree

Pastor: May we kindle God's light together by witnessing a message of **HOPE, PEACE** and **JUSTICE.**

All: Restore and renew us, **O GOD**; may our faces shine with your light!

CANDLE OF PEACE IS LIT AS WE SING THE ADVENT SONG

Candle lighters today are Kelly, Alex & Allison Correa and Leslie Mills

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

(vs. 1 and 2)

114

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS WITH OUR CHILDREN

Dorine Decarli

GOD IS STILL SPEAKING!

MAY GOD'S SPIRIT FILL OUR HEARTS WITH LOVE

MAY WE DISCOVER GOD'S REVELATIONS IN ALL EXPRESSIONS OF LIFE

LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD...GOD IS STILL SPEAKING!"

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 11: 1-10

OT p.784 in black Bible, p.640 in red

SECOND LESSON Matthew 3: 1-3, 7-10

NT p.3 in black Bible, p.2 in red

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet # 297

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path

PASTOR'S REFLECTION "AN ADVENT VISION OF PEACE" Pastor Ayala

+HYMN *Tomorrow Christ is Coming* # 120

WELCOME TO GOD'S TABLE

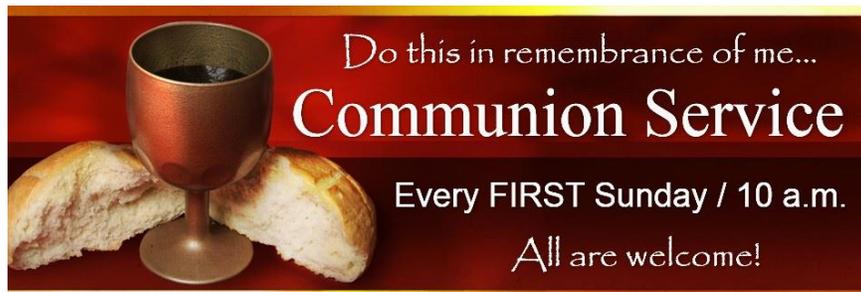
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

COMMUNION PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SHARING THE SACRAMENTS

During communion today please be reminded that there is gluten-free bread available in the cake cup on the communion bread tray.



WE RESPOND TO GOD'S LOVE

OFFERTORY PRAYER "Blessed by Grace...Our financial support builds community"

OFFERTORY *Sortie* Nicholas Jacques Lemmens

PRESENTATION OF OFFERING

+DOXOLOGY # 44

*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

PRAYER AND DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS (UNISON)

God who inspires our journeys, God of grace and new possibilities,
Even when we affirm that you are a mystery, our spirit does feel your presence.
As we bless others with actions of Hope and Peace,
God... promoter of justice for all, welcoming God, God of inclusivity...
Our offerings are expressions of gratitude.
May they be a blessing to the ministries of this congregation.
May these offerings and pledges bless many lives with a message of love,
peace, hope and justice, In the name of Jesus the Christ we pray...AMEN!

SHARING EXPRESSIONS OF JOY AS WELL AS CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

Lord, listen to your children praying,

Lord, send your spirit in this place;

Lord, listen to your children praying,

Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

+ HYMN OF COMMITMENT TO SERVE *Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old* # 113

+BENEDICTION (Receive the blessing while holding hands) Pastor Ayala

“People of GOD...PEACE...SALAAM...ArDievu...Vayan con Dios...SHALOM”

“Go with God’s Blessing!”

GO...BE A GOOD NEWS CHRISTIAN
PROMOTE UNITY, LOVE AND JUSTICE!
PROMOTE A JUST WORLD FOR ALL PEOPLE
GO...SHARE YOUR MUSIC...SHARE YOUR JOY
GO... WELCOME THOSE THAT OTHER REJECT AND PUT DOWN
GO...BE A RAINBOW IN SOMEONE’S CLOUD!

GO... WITH THE BLESSING OF...
GOD THE ALMIGHTY CREATOR,
JESUS THE INSPIRING ONE, OUR SAVIOR
AND WITH THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
GO... LIVE FULLY AND LET GOD SURPRISE YOU!

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE *Amen, Amen, Amen*

POSTLUDE Improvisation on *Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old*

THOSE IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS (AMONG MANY):

- * Prayers for Julie Cato who will soon be the recipient of a kidney transplant.
- * Please keep Jack & Anne Carroll (former members of FCCB) in prayer on the loss of their granddaughter.
- * Prayers for the Ciba Family on the recent loss of daughter Rachel Markowitz.
- * Prayers for Bonnie King’s healing from recent cancer reoccurrence.
- * Keep Calvin and Estelle Cole in your thoughts and prayers. Calvin is at Bloomfield Center for Nursing and Rehab, Estelle is at home, cards and calls would be appreciated.
- * Michael Edwards, praying for release.
- * Prayers that God will speak to us and through us as we seek God's leading and vision for our Church.
- * Family & Friends of All Soldiers Who Have Fallen In Iraq & Afghanistan.
- * Our friends at Community Solutions, Inc., that God will support them as they find new opportunities and hope for the future.



Doris Ahrens	David Berg	Sue Davis	Gladys Dunbar	Carol Johnson
Charles Miles	Charlotte Babcock	Jane Doble	Madge Edwards	Elaine Nelson
Hicksbert (Lloyd) Grant	Faye Smith	Carol Wolcott	Adelle Wright	

Please Remember These Connecticut Conference Churches in Your Prayers

Waterbury

First Congregational Church of Waterbury, UCC

Waterbury

South Congregational Church, UCC

Waterbury

Mill Plain Union Church

Waterford

Waterford Congregational UCC

Watertown

First Congregational Church of Watertown, UCC



ANNOUNCEMENTS Welcome Guests! We are so glad you are here and invite you to join us after Worship for Coffee Hour.

The Coffee Hour Hosts this morning are The Search Team.

Today's Head Usher is Oz Gibbs.

Today's Lay Reader is Peggy Igleheart.

Our Nursery is open every Sunday during the 10 a.m. Worship. Please see one of our ushers and they will be happy to direct you.

The Sunday Bulletin is now available to read at
www.FirstChurchBloomfield.org



This Week at a Glance...

Looking Ahead:

Lectionary possibilities for next week include:

Isaiah 11: 1-10; Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19; Romans 15: 4-13; Matthew 3: 1-12

Sunday, Dec 4	8:00 am	Bible Discussion	Living Room
	10:00 am	Worship	Meeting Room
	11:30 am	Second Hour Listening Circle	Fellowship Hall
	12:30 pm	New Birth Community Church	Metzger Chapel
Monday, Dec 5	7:00 pm	Narcotics Anonymous	Fellowship Hall
Tuesday, Dec 6	9:15 am	Exercise	Fellowship Hall
Wednesday, Dec 7	9:30 am	Jump Bunch	Fellowship Hall
	6:30 pm	Cantata Rehearsal	Music Suite
	7:00 pm	Alcoholics Anonymous	Counting Room
	7:00 pm	New Birth Community Church	Metzger Chapel
Thursday, Dec 8	10:00 am	Bible Study	Living Room
Friday, Dec 9	9:15 am	Exercise	Fellowship Hall
	5:30 pm	Child Dev. Center Family Bingo	Fellowship Hall
	7:30 pm	Alcoholics Anonymous	Counting Room
Saturday, Dec 10	10:00 am	Cantata Rehearsal	Music Suite

BLOOMFIELD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH COMMUNITY FOOD KITCHEN

297 School Street, corner of Wintonbury Ave & School St. Children and Families and ALL are welcome. For information please call 860-242-5641 or 860-874-7679.

Volunteers are needed to help serve once a quarter.

For more information, call Sally Foster 860-243-0274

Saturday, December 10, 2016 EVERY SATURDAY 11:30 AM – 1 PM



NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11TH, 2016

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

CANTATA SUNDAY

NO 8 AM GATHERING UNTIL JANUARY 8, 2017

“COME AND INVITE OTHERS ...SHARE GOD’S

WELCOMING SPIRIT”

TODAY SECOND HOUR!

After Worship

Pastoral Search - Second Hour Listening Circle

The Pastoral Search Team will be hosting the first in a series of Second Hour Listening Circles on Sunday, December 4, 2016.

Please join us in the Living Room after worship for this opportunity to help us discern who we are, where we are going and who we will call to join us in our journey. Refreshments will be served.

Thanks,

Your Pastoral Search Team



Today's Guest Musician

Eric Li, a 7th grader started piano lessons with Lan-Ya Huang when he was 7 years old. He expanded his music studies in 4th grade by taking violin lessons and orchestra in school. He is currently playing violin 1 in the middle school orchestra. Eric will be playing the Theme and Variations I, II, III and IV from a work by Beethoven. We welcome Eric to our worship service.



The Treasure Table on the stage in Fellowship Hall is open to accept contributions. How about putting those unwanted items to good use to support our Christmas Giving to children through Covenant to Care and Bloomfield Social Services. Items such as jewelry, collectables, Holiday decorations, accessories, toys etc. are welcome. Please no shoes, clothing or books except children's books. If you would like to purchase an item, please leave the amount of money you feel is appropriate in the container on the table. Thank you. Judi. 860 242 6192



Help Make UCC Voices Heard at the State Capitol



Michele Mudrick

11/10/2016

Now, more than ever, we need our voices heard.

The good news is that here in Connecticut, we can make that happen.

The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ is made up of 237 churches and approximately 66,000 people across the state of Connecticut.

There are 187 State Legislators (36 State Senators and 151 State Representatives - find yours at www.cga.ct.gov).

That is less than one legislator per church.

What if each State Legislator had a relationship with at least one member of a UCC church in the state? Imagine the impact!

My part-time ministry as your Legislative Advocate seeks to advance the public policy agenda of CTUCC. The agenda is determined by the Resolutions passed at the Annual Meetings of the Conference. You can see what some of those policy issues are on our [Economic Justice](#) page.

Establishing relationships with State Representatives and State Senators is very important in this work. They want to hear from me and, more importantly, from YOU, the constituent. Together we can make it happen.

If you feel called to be that person to call or email your State Representative or State Senator when there is an issue important to CTUCC, please join the new **CTUCC Advocate Corps**,

Survey Indicates Support for Tri-conference Collaboration, Possible Merger

11/28/2016

By Tiffany Vail

Over the last past 9 months, 555 people responding to a survey have indicated their support for the concept of a greater partnership or possible merger of the Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island conferences.

In all, 73% of respondents indicated they were in favor of pursuing a proposal to either federate or merge. Included in that is the 191 (43.5%) who responded “yes, when can we start” and another 129 (29.4%) who chose “I think we should go for it, but I have some hesitations.”

Another 85 people (19%) indicated they were not sure; 24 people (5.4%) said it was



“probably a bad idea” and 10 (2.3%) said “no way.”

[Learn more about the collaboration happening now](#)

[Read more about the Season of Discernment regarding merger](#)

“There is support for moving forward,” said Connecticut Conference Minister The Rev. Kent J. Siladi. “It is our hope that this year of discernment has provided good conversations and questions that have led us in a direction that affirms that God is calling us to exploring further a united mission and ministry. For those who have said, ‘I’m not sure’ we hope to provide more clarity as we move forward together.”

"I find the results of the recent survey very encouraging," said The Rev. Corey J. Sanderson, Vice President of the Massachusetts Conference Board of Directors. "People sense the newness bubbling up in this ‘yeasty’ time of being Christ’s church. Like our denomination’s historic ‘firsts’, where faithful people leaned forward to discern God’s leading, we too hear that beckoning even though the maps have yet to be fully drawn."

Rhode Island Interim Conference Minister The Rev. Barbara Libby agreed.

“The survey responses lead us to believe early on that there was a willingness and openness to try something new, to imagine a new kind of Conference for the future, and to continue to discern where God wants us to go,” Libby said. “Although not everyone was positive or excited about the challenges implicit in a ‘new thing’ we heard from a wide variety of views and are appreciative that folks took the survey and shared their input.”

Using feedback from the survey, a planning team consisting of the three Conference Ministers and representatives from the three Boards is developing a proposal to be presented to a joint Board meeting in January. The Boards will vote on whether to bring that proposal to the joint Annual Meeting of the three Conferences in June.

Siladi said he appreciated the thoughtful responses of many who took the survey, and said the words from many of the comments that were made are being used in the proposal.

“These responses have helped the three Boards of Directors in the discernment process. As we prepare to meet at a joint Board meeting the beginning of January we are indebted to those who have shared their comments, concerns and insights with us,” he said.

Siladi said particularly exciting was the strong agreement in the response to the question: “If the Conference were to invest resources in new ministries, what would you identify as the highest priorities”? Respondents overwhelmingly identified:

1. Opportunities for shared mission/outreach/witness
2. Facilitating connections among our churches-- matching expertise with need
3. Opportunities for shared learning/spiritual growth.

“The yearning for interdependence and building relationships was strongly articulated by the respondents,” Silaid said. “This verified support for creating something new.”

The three Board of Directors voted in the fall of 2015 to enter into a year-long Season of Discernment to discuss the possibility of greater cooperation between the three Conferences, including federating or merging. The survey was launched in February of 2016, and discussions about the idea have been held at Conference Annual Meetings, Super Saturdays, Association meetings and other gatherings. Background information can be found at macucc.org/rimact, ricucc.org/rimact or ctucc.org/rimact.

The survey will remain open until Dec. 31st at: www.research.net/r/RIMACT.

