

Welcome! Thank You for Worshiping With Us Today!

Welcome to the First Congregational Church of Southington, dating from 1724, & worshipping in this Meetinghouse since 1830. We are one of the larger, more vibrant United Church of Christ churches in New England. Our purpose is to love & worship God; extend God's radically-inclusive love to all people everywhere; make more & better disciples of Jesus Christ; & inspire people & society to become more & more just, loving, compassionate & Christ-like. You will find here an accepting, caring, non-judgmental community, where lives are transformed, faith is renewed & power for positive living is received. Welcome!

January 15, 2006

CHAPEL COMMUNION

8:00AM

In our saner moments, we know full well that justice does not come out of the barrel of a gun but out of the conscience of a contrite heart. And we know, too, that human diversity is not some curse, not some problem to be solved, but rather the supreme expression of the creative spirit of God, a God of unconfined genius & imagination. It was a recognition of this principle, that diversity is a blessing & not a curse, that gave Martin Luther King the courage to dream for all America and for all others in the world. -- C. Eric Lincoln --

PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

Gathering Music
The Welcome/Welcoming One Another
Church Family Announcements

PRAISING GOD

The Call to Worship

PASTOR: We gather to celebrate our calling from God to be instruments of divine love and grace.

PEOPLE: **As people of faith, we are to promote justice and peace in every circumstance, just as Jesus did.**

PASTOR: As people of faith, we believe that all people everywhere are children of God and are to be welcomed, loved and valued, even if we disagree with them.

PEOPLE: **Let us celebrate our diversity as a church family and sing God's praises!**

*Hymn: #

*Prayer of General Confession (unison)

O God, we confess that we have remained cool to the fire of Your Word and not dared to live for others. We have failed as peacemakers and continue to accept violence in our homes, towns, country and world. We have refused Your freedom and remained trapped within our own narrow prejudices and the closed circles of the safe and the comfortable. We have failed to love, turned our backs on those who would love us, and chosen not to see those who need us. Forgive us, O God, and mold us into faithful disciples, following Jesus in the ways of love, justice and peace. Now in the silence, hear our personal prayers of confession.

*Prayer of Personal Confession (in silence)

*Assurance of Forgiveness

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Lesson

AMOS 5:14-24

Sermon

UNTIL JUSTICE ROLLS DOWN LIKE WATER

Dr. Gordon E. Ellis

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Prayers of the Church & Lord's Prayer (using sins)

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Invitation

The Sharing of the Bread and Cup

(Please come forward, pew by pew, starting with the entire left side, front pew first. The right side can then follow, beginning in the rear. Break off a piece of bread & dip it into the cup.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving (join hands)

Benediction

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Flowers:

NEW: To provide flowers in memory/honor of a loved one/event ANY week this year, sign-up on our new FLOWER CHART in Memorial Hall.

Joys & Concerns for Prayer: Timothy James Nivison, son of Dan & Sharon Nivison, & Lillian Amber Eaccarino, daughter of Glenn & Kim Eaccarino, receive *The Sacrament of Christian Baptism* today at 9:30 & 11:15 respectively. Chris Bushnell is SHS Artist of the Month & has his work on display this month at *The Southington Public Library*. Hospitalized: Jeannette Faitella & Lucille Gemmell. Gwen Sunderland is in Plainville Convalescent Center. Andrea Sinclair goes to NYC tomorrow for very intricate, extensive back surgery. We continue to pray for Lucille Gemmell; Diane Lamb; Judy Costa; Maureen Curtis; Walter Smith; Pat Diego; Janis Leger; Dorothy & Clive Greenough; Mary Lou Thompson; Donna Morin; John O'Connor; Matthew Currao; Pat Livingstone; our Stephen Ministers & care-receivers.

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2006 CALENDAR FOR EVERY DOLLAR FEEDS KIDS: For \$25 you get a *2006 Wall Calendar* that puts you in a drawing for a weekly *thank you* gift (average value: \$25). Call Church Office.

HOLY LAND TOUR: Gordon Ellis is considering leading a trip to the Holy Land of Israel & Palestine in March of 2007 to tour the sacred sites of our faith. He would like to know the interest level. Without committing yourself, please let him know whether you might be interested in joining him on this tour.

SAFE CHURCH TRAINING: THIS Wednesday, January 18, 7:00-8:30pm, rooms 201/202.

CPR & AED TRAINING: John Arens will teach **full training** (3 hours, get card) on Wednesday, January 25, and **refresher training** (90 minutes, get card) THIS Wednesday, January 18. Both begin at 7:00pm. Please sign-up next to Gordon's office ASAP.

QUIET WORSHIP IN THE STYLE OF TAIZE is offered **EVERY Tuesday, 6:30-7:00pm**, in our **chapel**. It includes 10 minutes of silence, along with scripture, prayers & simple choruses. Join us!

OUR ADDICTION ASSISTANCE NETWORK is for individuals/families needing confidential assistance with problem drinking, drug use, gambling, etc. Contact Steve & JoAnn Ray (203-591-1291).

CHECK OUT OUR CHURCH'S WEBSITE, www.firstchurchsouthington.org. You'll love it!

VIDEOS OF SUNDAY SERVICES & SPECIAL EVENTS available in our Church Library.

CHILD CARE for infants/toddlers is offered at all 4 Sunday services in our Infant/Toddler Nursery.

EVERY DOLLAR FEEDS KIDS OFFERING ENVELOPES are available next to Church Office.

Proposed Open and Affirming Statement

We, the members of *The First Congregational Church* of Southington, Connecticut, hereby declare ourselves to be an open and affirming congregation. We accept the challenges and joys of Christian faith, a faith profound enough to embrace even uncertainty. We struggle with the difficult issues of our day, understanding that God's Word touches and guides us as a congregation and as individuals.

With God's grace, we welcome and affirm the total identity of all people as beloved children of God. We are a congregation that seeks to break down the barriers of prejudice, declaring respect for the worth and dignity of all persons, embracing differences in age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic status, and physical, emotional, and mental capability. We also recognize and affirm loving, committed, and diverse families. We actively welcome all people to become members of our church and to share fully in our church's life and leadership, ministry and fellowship, worship and sacraments, and responsibilities and blessings.