

Welcome! Thank You for Worshiping With Us Today!

Welcome to the First Congregational Church of Southington. Ours is an open & affirming congregation dating from 1724 & worshipping in our present Meetinghouse since 1830. One of the larger, more vibrant United Church of Christ churches in New England, our church's 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 our church to be an accepting, caring, non-judgmental community, where faith is renewed, lives are transformed, & power for positive living is received. It's a church where the Spirit is alive & miracles happen! Welcome!

February 25, 2007

CHAPEL COMMUNION

8:00AM

Sometimes being tempted makes us feel dirty. An important lesson for disciples is this: Temptation is not sin. Satan may tempt us by putting evil thoughts into our minds, but we can push them right out again with God's help. I've always appreciated a saying attributed to Martin Luther: 'You can't help it if a bird flies over your head, but you don't need to let him make a nest in your hair.' Temptation is not sin. -- Ralph E. Wilson --

INFANT & TODDLER CARE BY ADULTS DURING ALL SERVICES IN CHURCH NURSERY

PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

Gathering Music
The Welcome/Welcoming One Another
Church Family Announcements

PRAISING GOD

The Call to Worship
PASTOR: We gather to begin Lent as pilgrims on the journey of faith.
PEOPLE: **We come seeking awareness of God's presence with us as we travel on.**
PASTOR: We come seeking light for our darkness and strength in our weakness.
UNISON: **Shine in our hearts, O God, with the light of Your love. Make Your presence known to us in and through Jesus the Christ. Amen.**

Hymn of Praise: #
*Prayer of General Confession (unison)
Holy God, we come asking Your forgiveness and seeking Your direction. The Bible says, *Woe to those who call evil good*, but that's exactly what we have done. We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery and globalization. We have abused power and called it politics. We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it ambition. We have polluted the media with profanity, violence and pornography and called it freedom of expression. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our ancestors and called it enlightenment. Forgive us, O God, and help us stop assuming that there is nothing we can do in the face of evil. 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

LUKE 4:1-13

Sermon

BLESSINGS AND TEMPTATIONS

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. Inside gold container are gluten-free, wheat-free, corn-free, soy-free wafers for those with allergies.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving (join hands)

Benediction

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Flowers: Given in loving memory of Dustin Arigoni by the Dobratz family.

Our Flower Chart to provide flowers in honor/memory of loved ones is now available in Memorial Hall.

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Joys & Concerns for Prayer: We pray for our 21 youth & 6 advisors returning today from our *Youth Mission Trip* doing *Hurricane Katrina* reconstruction in Mississippi. We pray for Bill Korp as he prepares to leave for Uganda, where he will serve in the *Peace Corps*. We pray for Joe Mercuri & Alan Beaudoin, hospitalized this week. We continue to pray for Sue Parsons; Pat Diego; John Zigmont; Mary Carter; Shirley Penfield; Janet Crocker; Betsy Roberts; Maureen Curtis; Pat Livingstone; & our Stephen Ministers & care-receivers.

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LAST CALL! SIGN-UP TODAY! SACRED CIRCLE COVENANT GROUPS FOR LENT: All church members & friends are urged to make a 5-week Lenten commitment (2/26 - 4/1) to spend 1½ hours/week in a group with 6 to 8 others from church exploring & learning to live *The Sacred Circle of Discipleship* (presented by Gordon in a recent 3-part sermon series). Groups meet at different times on different days in different settings for your convenience. Sign-up near our Chapel & ramp (to VGNS).

THE CRISIS IN DARFUR PROGRAM TODAY: Our church & *Gishrei Shalom Jewish Congregation* are co-sponsoring this important educational event **TODAY, 4:00pm**, in Memorial Hall, featuring Christopher Doucet. The editor of *The Hartford Catholic Worker* will offer an historical context to the genocide in Darfur & an update on the current situation there. All are welcome.

GORDON'S SERMON NEXT SUNDAY will be *Divine Improv*, based on Philippians 3:17 – 4:1.

USHERS NEEDED for 1 Sunday/month at 9:30am? It's a great way to meet more people AND serve your church. Training & substitutes provided! Please sign-up next to Gordon's office.

LENTEN NOONDAY SERVICES: Join us for a special 30-minute Lenten service at 12:00N each Wednesday through April 4 in our Chapel. This week's worship leader: **Rev. Linda Fernandes-Bailey**. Lenten luncheons in Memorial Hall follow each Lenten Noonday Service for just \$3. ALL welcome!

HOLY WEEK VIGIL: Sign-up today for our *Holy Week Vigil*, when people will be in our chapel 'round the clock' (Maundy Thursday, 4/5, 9PM, through Easter Sunrise, 4/8, 6AM) for 1 hour each, worshipping, praying, meditating on behalf of all of us. Sign-up next to Gordon's office today!

PROGRESSIVE DINNER: There are only 20 seats at this fabulous meal to benefit *Red Cloud Indian School*. It's Saturday, 3/3, 6pm. Tickets are \$30/person. For tickets, call Paul Vivian (860-621-8729).

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER is Friday, 3/9, 12:00N, *St. Thomas Church* Hall, Bristol Street. Lunch & program = \$8. For tickets, call Doris Smith by 3/2 (860-426-9205).

DVD'S OF WEEKLY WORSHIP: Thanks to Gabe Selmi, our *Church Library* will again have DVD copies of our weekly worship services for those unable to attend. Gabe generally records whichever service is convenient for him, but prior arrangement can be made with him to record a specific service for you & provide you with a copy. Call Gabe to make arrangements (860-620-9587).

REV. DR. DAVIDA FOY CRABTREE, Conference Minister of our CT Conference, UCC, will be our guest preacher on Sunday, **March 11**, at **all 4 services**. Please come welcome her & show her what a special & wonderful church family this is!

A QUIET CANDLELIGHT PRAYER SERVICE in the style of Taize is held **EVERY Tuesday, 6:30-7:00pm**, in our Chapel. All welcome & encouraged to attend for quiet, reflective worship.

PUZZLE SWAP TODAY, all day in Memorial Hall. Bring in & take home puzzles for adults & children (children's puzzles not more than 100 pieces). For info, contact Lois Hall (860-828-4219).

SUMMER CAMP: Our *United Church of Christ* runs a wonderful summer camp experience for children & teens at *Silver Lake Conference Center* in Sharon, CT. Registration is on-line: www.ctucc.org (click on "Silver Lake"). Some scholarships available. (See Karlene Archambeault or Carole Lantz.)

MOVIES THAT MATTER will be offered on the big screen with surround sound **THIS Friday, 3/2**, at **7:00pm**, in *Peace Café*. The movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*, will be shown, followed by a discussion led by Anne McCarty & Janet Crocker. Child care (\$3/child for the evening) will be offered & refreshments will be available. All are welcome! Suggested donation \$2/person. Our NEXT movie will be *Jesus Camp* on Friday, **March 23**, 7:00pm, with discussion leaders, Sue Meissner & Clare Lindsey.