

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!

March 4, 2007

CHAPEL COMMUNION

8:00AM

The cross leads us to joy & not just happiness. There is a difference.... Happiness is a checkbook that has money, a car that works, a good date for Saturday night. Happiness is the absence of major hassles, or terrorism or crime; happiness is kids' getting good report card and spouse's getting a raise. Happiness is something we know as enhancement or protection of our own lives. Joy comes in connection with another or with Jesus. Joy can happen without money or a working car. Joy happens when we get to the core of life & realize love is at the core. Joy befriends us; love accompanies us. -- Donna Schaper --

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 for this time of worship in reverent awe, for this is holy ground!

PEOPLE: We are here to feel the presence and power of the Living God!

PASTOR: There is so much of God that we do not know or understand. God's purposes are far beyond our comprehension.

PEOPLE: In these moments and in all of life, let us be open to the unexpected. And let us celebrate that ours is a redeeming God, always at work in our lives and world.

Hymn of Praise: #436

God of Grace and God of Glory

CWM Rhondda

*Prayer of General Confession (unison)

Holy God, we are called to be imitators of Christ, but we often mimic the world. We are called to be citizens of Your Kingdom, but we fall in love with the kingdoms of this world. We are called to walk the walk of faith and to place our trust in You, but too often we are content just to talk the talk, as we trust the powers, principalities and pleasures of this world. Forgive us, O God, and help us become the faithful people You call us to become. 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

Sermon

DIVINE IMPROV

PHILIPPIANS 3:17-4:1

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 Sophia George Chaltas by the Chaltas 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 Bill Korp, who left Friday for Uganda, where he will serve for 2+ years in *The Peace Corps*. Diane Lamb had surgery this week. Also hospitalized this week: Alan Beaudoin & Graham Hall. We continue to pray for Sue Parsons; John Robison; Pat Diego; John Zigmont; Mary Carter; Janet Crocker; Betsy Roberts; Maureen Curtis; Pat Livingstone; & our Stephen Ministers & care-receivers.

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NEXT SUNDAY: REV. DR. DAVIDA FOY CRABTREE, our Conference Minister in our *CT Conference* of the *United Church of Christ*, will be our guest preacher. Please come welcome her & show her what a special & wonderful church family we are!

THE EXONERATED: Our adaption of *The Exonerated*, directed by John Baker (who recently toured with *The Sound of Music*) comes to *Peace Café* on **March 30 & 31, 7:30pm, & April 1, 2:30pm**. It chronicles the stories of 4 wrongly-accused death row inmates. Infused with poignant music, it's a thought-provoking start to Holy Week, as we remember another death row inmate, Jesus! Space limited; get **free tickets** at *Coffee & Conversation* or from Shelley Nyren (860-628-2523 or shelnyren@sbcglobal.net). Free-will offering at event. Due to adult themes & language, play is not recommended for children under age 16.

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!

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. Rick Haverly**. Lenten luncheons in Memorial Hall follow each Lenten Noonday Service for just \$3. ALL welcome!

SUMMER CAMP: Our *United Church of Christ* runs a wonderful summer camp experience for children & teens at *Silver Lake Conference Center* in Sharon, CT. Brochure & registration is now available on-line at www.ctucc.org (click on "Silver Lake"). We also have some scholarship assistance available. See Karlene Archambeault or Carole Lantz.

DARFUR INTERVENTION: Chris Doucet, last Sunday's speaker on *The Crisis in Darfur*, urged us to write to former President Clinton, asking him to travel to Darfur to witness & publicize the genocide there. Letters for your signature are in Memorial Hall & next to our Church Office. You may sign & send one yourself, sign one & leave it for us to send or compose your own, but please help the suffering people of Darfur! *Your Missions Committee*

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 loan to those unable to attend. While Gabe generally records whichever service is convenient for him, prior arrangement can be made with him to record a specific service for you & provide you with a copy (such as if your child is being baptized or you are participating in worship). Call Gabe to make arrangements (860-620-9587).

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.

MOVIES THAT MATTER will be offered on the big screen with surround sound on **Friday, 3/23**, at **7:00pm**, in *Peace Café*. The movie, *Jesus Camp*, will be shown, followed by a discussion led by Sue Meissner & Clare Lindsey. Child care (\$3/child for the evening) will be offered & refreshments will be available. All are welcome! Suggested donation: \$2/person. Our April movie will be *Brokeback Mountain* on Friday, **April 20**, 7:00pm, with discussion leader, Rich Szulczewski.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETS TOMORROW, 7:00pm, in room #203. All boards & committees should be represented.

OUR SEEDS OF HOPE GROUP MEETS TONIGHT, 7:30pm, in **room #204**. Check out the group's description on the insert under *Small Groups* & join us tonight! It's extremely IMPORTANT!