

“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” – Benjamin Franklin

aspire 2 inspire

First Presbyterian
CHURCH OF GREENWICH

# Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
# November 8, 2026
# 10:00 AM

*We worship God, who welcomes us all!*
*Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome, with whatever joys, questions, or tears you bring.*
*We listen for God's Spirit speaking through Prelude music as we open our hearts for prayer and praise.*
** We are invited to rise together in God's Spirit. **

PRELUDE *Come, Holy Ghost, Lord and God* Marcel Dupré

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Let us incline our ears to the teachings of the Lord.
**All: God teaches in parables, unveiling deep truth in our lives.**
One: We pass the parables of God on to our children,
**All: That the generations may know the goodness of God.**
One: May we, like our ancestors of old, put our hope and our trust in the Lord.
**All: Let us worship God!**

*HYMN 37 *Let All Things Now Living* ASH GROVE

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**All: Holy God of Israel, you faithfully keep the promises you made to our ancestors and lead your people into the future, providing hospitality on the way. Yet so often, we reject your hospitality, in a stubborn effort to make the journey by our own strength. Forgive our self-justifying ways. Soften our hearts of stone and give us hearts of flesh, that we may find the abundant life you promise in your loving arms.**
*~ Prayer continues in silence. ~*

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

One: Friends, hear the good news: Do not fear, says the Lord, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. God is doing a new thing; now it springs forth! By the grace of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
**All: Thanks be to God!**

*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*As we conclude passing the peace of Christ, children come forward to share the Time for Young Disciples.*

*GLORIA #582

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,**
**and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,**
**and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free**
**as it was in the beginning, is now and every shall be. Amen.**

TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

*After our shared prayer, children go to the third floor for Sunday School.*
*Following worship, please, pick up your children from third floor classrooms.*

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**All: Loving God, we gather in your holy presence in order that we might hear your voice and be led in your Way. To that end, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.**

## SCRIPTURE Joshua 24: 14-25 p. 216 OT

One: Word of God, for the people of God.
**All: Thanks be to God.**

## ANTHEM *Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burnin'* Traditional Spiritual Arr. by Greg Gilpin

Keep your lamps trimmed and burnin', for the time is drawin nigh.
Soon I will be done with the trouble of the world.
Children don't get weary till your work is done.

## SCRIPTURE Matthew 25: 1-13 p. 28 NT

One: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us.
**All: Thanks be to God.**

## SERMON *Running on Empty*

## *AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Psalm 146)

**Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long. Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help. When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish. Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.**

**The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord!**

## *HYMN 627 *I Love You, Lord* I LOVE YOU, LORD

## THE RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP AND OFFERING

*Please sign the red fellowship pad in your pew and pass it to your neighbor.*

## OFFERTORY MUSIC *Amazing Grace* Arr. By Craig Courtney

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found; was blind, but now I see.
Amazing grace! Amazing grace! So vast and yet so free! The Son of God, the righteous One, is crucified for me.
''Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed.
Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come; 'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below.**
**Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**All: 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;**
**and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**
**For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*HYMN 366 *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* HYFRYDOL
*vs*. 1, 3, 4

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

*Congregational response:* **Alleluia! Amen!**

*CHORAL AMEN DANISH AMEN

POSTLUDE *Fantasia super 'Komm, Heiliger Geist', BWV 651* J. S. Bach

## SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

Andre Castillo; Caroline Worra; Tara Church; Jesse Pieper; Chancel Choir; Heather Antonissen-soprano solo; Elizabeth Peyton Cook-reader.

**Usher Team 1:** Hearst Zhang (Captain), Diane Brown, Carol Barber, Peter McWhorter, Kate Minchin, Heidi Novak, Scott Sternberg.

**Bulletin Cover:** "Five Were Wise" by Kate Lee.

## WELCOME!

We are delighted you are joining us in worship! Founded on Easter Sunday in 1881, First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich embraces our mission to nurture and empower people in all stages of life to be Christ's disciples and to actively serve those in need. All children are invited to stay in worship and join us on the steps during *Time for Young Disciples*. Children can be picked up following Sunday School in Room 343. **Childcare is available for those who are three years and younger in room 350.**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

**Members:** Barbara Freeman and all who grieve her death
**Friends:** Elijah Canty

A service of worship and celebration of Barbara Freeman's life will be held on a date to be announced. Please address condolences to: Elizabeth Masterson. 6 Peeptoad Road, Westerly, RI 02891.

*To focus our collective desire to care, we will plan to announce new prayer concerns each week, keeping members and friends on our Prayer List for three weeks. If you or someone you know would benefit from being added to our weekly Prayer List, please reach out to our church office at info@fpcg.org.*

**Please note:** Pastor Seth will be away November 2-9, leading a CREDO conference – a national Presbyterian Church initiative to nurture clergy wellness. He will return to the office on Tuesday, November 10.

## COME GATHER AT THE WELL – JOIN US TODAY




We meet each month on the **second and fourth Sundays, 5:00 in the Chapel**: **November 8th and 22nd.** We share a more casual style—chairs circled around carpet with toys for tots (and parents) to settle among us, simple prayers, prelude, postlude, a couple of songs, and scripture reading / connection with life in a more conversational style. We'll offer lessons / activities for school-age kids and nursery care, if desired. Thank you to Bonnie Hann for adorning our carpet with a prayer labyrinth!

Let's lower a bucket into depths of Holy Love among us—*the Well*. We'll see how the Spirit moves organically and adapt as ideas arise! The Well is deep! Get the bucket! Jesus promises that as we drink deeply a spring of living water will gush forth within and among us. Let's *aspire 2 inspire* … together!

## ADULT EDUCATION – SUNDAYS, NOVEMBER 15 AND 22

**In the Chapel - Following Worship 11:30 a.m.** *This discussion duplicates plans for Holy Happy Hour on Wednesday*. Pastor Seth will lead reflection on Thanksgiving, in the spirit of the season ahead. A packet of photocopied resources is available on the table in the third-floor office area, featuring excerpts from scripture and other works centering on living with gratitude. Helpful to read ahead of time, best to simply come in any case! Let's *aspire 2 inspire* … together! Pick up the packet, even if it's just devotional reading for the season!

## PILGRIMAGE 2027 – *EL CAMINO DE SANTIAGO*



We will spend nine days walking the *Camino* together in northern Spain, through rural pastoral landscapes and small towns on our way to the great cathedral in Santiago de Compostela. Pastor Seth has prepared an information sheet availble on the table in the third-floor church office. Exact dates are being finalized, based on input from participants—centering on the last two weeks of September 2027. If you might feel called to join this holy expedition of the heart as much as the feet, contact Seth! Ask questions. Share your interest and availability. A $600 deposit will be due from each participant by Sunday, **November 15.** Scan the QR code to sign up.

## WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

Join us for fellowship and book discussion in the Church Library on the 4th Floor. We gather at 9:15 a.m. for coffee and discussion starts at 9:30 a.m. Contact Colleen Giambo at cgiambo@gmail.com for further information. Here is the upcoming Women's Book Group selection:

November 20 - *Howards End*, by E.M Forster
December 18 - *Cool Machine: A Novel*, by Colson Whitehead

## NEW MEMBERS

The next new member's inquirer's class/dinner will be held on January 31, 2027, from 4PM to 8PM in both the session room and the library.

## HOLY HAPPY HOUR!

**We will pause and return on Wednesday, November 11, 5:00 in the Chapel.** Pastor Seth will lead reflection on Thanksgiving, in the spirit of the season ahead. A packet of photocopied resources is available on the table in the third-floor office area, featuring excerpts from scripture and other works centering on living with gratitude. Helpful to read ahead of time, best to simply come in any case! Let's *aspire 2 inspire* … together!

## FELLOWSHIP

One of our favorite Fellowship events is in season! Please consider hosting a fall Fellowship dinner or a fun gathering of church family and friends. If you have an idea and a date that works for you, please reach out to Kimberly Lee at kimber147@gmail.com. We look forward to gathering to celebrate the feelings of friendship, camaraderie, and fellowship of our wonderful FPCG congregation.

## THANKSGIVING TREATS 2026 FOR THE CHILDREN

Please join us and serve Thanksgiving treats to the children from The Yerwood Center, November 18th from 6-7 PM. The Yerwood Center is temporarily located at the Cloonan Middle School, 11 W. North Street, Stamford. RSVP: YVONNELOUBIERE@GMAIL.COM

## COMMUNITY NIGHT / MUSIC PROGRAM




We have been having great live music each Wednesday at 6:00 during dinner-for-all! Some of our entertainment has been Jesse and his trio, Liz and her musical theatre friends, Fred and his opera classics, and our amazing children who joyfully perform their favorites! Join us for a toe-tapping Veterans Day Concert by our very own Steeple Band on Wednesday, November 11th!

## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AUDITIONS




Come, help us tell the greatest story ever told! Auditions for our annual Christmas Pageant are for speaking and singing roles, and all young disciples ages 4+ are encouraged to audition (younger disciples are more than welcome to participate with an accompanying parent). The pageant itself will be on Sunday, December 20 during 10:00 am worship. For more information and to RSVP, email andre.castillo@fpcg.org.

## 29th ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER FOR SENIORS

Thursday, November 26 – 12 pm (Noon)
One West Putnam Avenue, Greenwich
Free of charge
**To reserve a seat, call Lynda 203 219-8211**
**Reservations required by Thursday, November 19th!**



## KIDS IN CRISIS BREAKFAST

Kids In Crisis is hosting a breakfast on 12/3 in the Cos Cob shelter at 8:30 - 9:30am. The breakfasts are part of a series and casual; they are meant to be a round table and there is always time for questions. Executive Director Shari Shapiro will offer an update on Kids In Crisis and our Norwalk and Greenwich Teen Talk counselors will present on their programs and offer insights into what they're seeing with teenagers today. Please join us! It's a wonderful opportunity to gather at the shelter breakfast table (and tours are always offered after). If you would like to attend, please email Adelaide Mueller at amueller@kidsincrisis.org.

## CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

ALL Presbyterians have opinions. 😀 You, too. Here's your chance. We need your input about an important topic: church communications.

Join the Communications Committee to define and promote communications excellence. We seek thoughtful people of all ages with ideas to share, videographers/photographers, social media gurus, graphic designers, etc. The time commitment is not onerous and meetings will be thoughtfully managed.
Step up. Email Sandy Waters, Communications Elder at swimwaters@gmail.com. Today.

## THANKSGIVING DINNER – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED




## CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE




## STEWARDSHIP 2027

We have launched our 2027 Stewardship Campaign, **"Raise the Sails."**

But even as we look ahead with excitement and optimism, we should not lose sight of the fact that we still have some unfinished business with this year's campaign. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of a couple of families, we are now within striking distance of our **$1,300,000 goal**, having received pledges totaling **$1,224,724—94% of our goal!** We are deeply grateful for their generosity and for the support of everyone who has contributed to bringing us this far.

As we approach the holiday season, let the spirit of gratitude at Thanksgiving and generosity at Christmas inspire us to finish this year's campaign strong.
We invite you to pray over our Generosity Circle guide to determine where you are currently and where God may be calling you to "step up".

**Before we raise the sails for 2027, let's finish what we started in 2026!**

| Generosity Circle – Annual Commitment | |
|---|---|
| **Covenant Circle** | **$1,000** |
| **Cornerstone Circle** | **$2,500** |
| **Stewardship Circle** | **$5,000** |
| **Deacon's Circle** | **$10,000** |
| **Pastor's Circle** | **$15,000** |
| **Apostle's Circle** | **$25,000** |
| **Knox Circle** | **$50,000** |

# LEADERSHIP OF OUR CONGREGATION

## Session

Rev. Dr. Seth E. Weeldreyer, Senior Pastor
Rev. Andre Castillo, Associate Pastor
Michelle Binnie, Clerk of Session

Philip Carrone (Membership)
Delano Copprue (Adult Ed)
Lilian Eng (Nominating)
Lee Ganshaw (Mission Engagement)
Layne Grindal (Finance)
Liz James (Children)
Jim Joyella (Personnel)
Ryan Kim (Youth)
Kimberly Lee (Fellowship)
Lori Mulcare (Nursery School)
Brian Pennington (Stewardship)
Elizabeth Peyton (Worship)
Stephanie Schnabel (Buildings and Grounds)
Sue Sproule (Endowment)
Sandy Waters (Communications)

*Assigned committees are noted (parenthetically) – please contact the elder, if interested in connecting.*
*Messages sent to clerk@fpcg.org go to the Clerk of Session, who then shares them with all elders on Session.*

## Board of Deacons

Julie Mather, Moderator

Wayne Atwell
Renie Blair
Diane Brown
Margaret Copprue
Jennifer Dott
Bob Giambo
Carolyn Hahn-Re
Liz Harden
Betsy Harper
Barbie McKelvey
Judith Riggs
Catherine Stahl

*Messages sent to deacons@fpcg.org go to all deacons.*

## Clergy & Staff Contacts

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Rev. Dr. Seth E. Weeldreyer, Senior Pastor | seth@fpcg.org | Ext. 115 |
| Rev. Andre Castillo, Associate Pastor | andre.castillo@fpcg.org | Ext. 119 |
| Dr. Caroline Worra, Minister of Music | caroline.worra@fpcg.org | Ext. 120 |
| Tara Church, Director, Children's Ministries | tara@fpcg.org | Ext. 118 |
| Heather Antonissen, Director, Bell Choirs | heather.antonissen@fpcg.org | |
| Jestin Pieper, Organ Associate | jestin.pieper@fpcg.org | |
| Erin Moore, Director of Operations | erin@fpcg.org | Ext. 123 |
| Randy Ante, Facilities Manager | randy.ante@fpcg.org | Ext. 114 |
| Rommel Espano, Sexton | rommel.espano@fpcg.org | Ext. 112 |
| Jane Parker, Bookkeeper | jane@fpcg.org | Ext. 128 |
| Linda DiMarino, Office Administrator | officeadmin@fpcg.org | Ext. 110 |
| Megan Florentine, Director, Nursery School | megan.florentine@fpcgns.org | (203) 869-7782 |

Ministers: All members of the congregation.

Our Vision:
*We are a growing community of love and compassion, centered on Christ, inspired by faith and hope, devoted to serve in today's world.*

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GREENWICH

One West Putnam Avenue · Greenwich, Connecticut 06830
www.fpcg.org · (203) 869-8686

We are a Stephen Ministry Church.